ALL-AMERICAN ACTIVISM: ATHLETIC ACTIVISM, REACTIONARY RHETORIC, AND REACTIVE CHANGES WITHIN THE BIG TEN CONFERENCE AS PART OF THE SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT

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ABSTRACT

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This dissertation examines student-athletic protest during the latter part of the Vietnam Era (1966-1975) at four different Big Ten/Midwestern universities (the University of Michigan, Notre Dame University, the University of Minnesota, and Michigan State University) as part of the wider social justice movement in the United States. Utilizing archival research into university documents, personal letters, local newspapers, and letters to the editor, it analyzes the causes – historical, local, and societal – that led student-athletes, considered naturally conservative defenders of the status quo, to take political stands against their coaches, their university administrations, their conference, and even their fellow teammates; and it examines the structures of feeling evident in the rhetoric of the protestors, their allies, and their detractors at each campus and throughout the Midwest during this time period. Student-athletes risked being labeled as trouble-makers, their playing time, and even their educations to advocate for changes, both small and large, that they felt needed to come. For some, this activism was less revolutionary than protests by other activist students campaigning against the Vietnam War, for civil rights, or for gender equality. Indeed, aside from outright boycotts, a great deal of this student-athletic protest has been under-discussed and forgotten, and student-athletes have been left out of the historical memory concerning students of this time period and generalized student protest. Much of the student-athletic activism came through institutional means, working through university channels to bring attention to issues of concern or signing a petition in solidarity with fellow classmates, but still theirs were political acts of dissidence that caught most by surprise

owing to the stereotypical conservative mythology of sports. For others, the activism was bolder: a university-wide boycott of practices or letter-writing campaigns to the student paper to raise awareness. Regardless of the scale or tactic, the activism of the student-athletes often resulted in reactionary outcry from their coaches and the community. Athletic departments downplayed, ignored, or denied the charges raised against them but usually acquiesced to some of the demands for change, eventually lauding themselves for their open-mindedness and progressive stance. However, those changes were slow to come and required continued activism to achieve results. In nearly every case, the universities argued that many of the student-athletic calls for change had been discussed previously by athletic departments and were necessary changes that would have come in time. But the universities' failures to enact such changes without prodding from below belie such arguments. The Big Ten did have a proud history of changing with the times and often before other universities had moved to do so. Especially in athletics, Big Ten schools were praised for their early adoption of athletic, racial integration, yet that integration was only at the playing level and did little to change the structures of feeling that led student-athletes to advocate for change. Within the Big Ten, with their professed commitment to progress and caring about the student-athlete, student-athletes rose up in numerous ways to call for swifter, more comprehensive, or even *any* change at all, challenging the myths of the apolitical or conservative nature of sports and its competitors and turning sports into another medium for social justice.

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To Amy: my best friend, my partner, my love, and my wife. Thank you for being you and for helping me through this process.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 1
History of the Big Ten and its Ideology 3
The Late Civil Rights Era and Student Activism 17
College Football as Naturalized Mythology 25
Literary Review 40
Theory and Methodology 43

Chapter 1: Challenging the "Leaders and the Best": How Student-Athletic Protest Challenged the University of Michigan's Purported Ideology 51
Introduction 51
Activism, Counter-Protest, and the Middle-Ground Majority within the Student Body 55
Political Football and Political Arenas 77
Breaking Down Gender Barriers 106

Chapter 2: Shake Up the Thunder from Below: The Political Student-Athlete at a Perceived Conservative University 146
Introduction 146
Catholicism and Notre Dame: A Story of Assimilation and Insularity 150
Black Student Politics 161
Counterculture Protests and Generalized Activism at Notre Dame 216

Chapter 3: "Firm and Strong, United are We": Battling Inequality and the Overtones of Racial Rhetoric at the University of Minnesota 231
Introduction 231
A Return to Gridiron Glory for the Golden Gophers 232
Unfilled Promises, an Occupation, and Backlash Outside of the Stadium 242
Dissension in the Ranks: Untold Golden Gopher Football History 257
A Fight, Suspensions, Rhetoric, and Change 284

Chapter 4: "Spartan Teams are Bound to Win": Effective Change through Student-Athletic Activism 327
Introduction: Black Athletes and Black Student Culture at Michigan State 327
Black Student-Athlete Activism – 1968-1970 338
The "Structure of Feeling" for Black Student-Athletes on Campus 363
Black Student Activism on Campus 371
Black Athletic Activism and Racial Rhetoric – 1972-1975 382

Conclusion 422
Student-Athletic Activism for Fuller Equality around the Big Ten 422
Student-Athletes, Yet Still Students 426
The Post-Game Analysis 431

BIBLIOGRAPHY 440

Introduction

This dissertation is primarily a discussion of the political in everyday life, that is, the control and flow of power and agency within society. It is an exploration in those naturalized ideas in society that are seen as apolitical because of their seeming naturalness, and it deconstructs and analyzes the naturalized mythologies in our society and our cultural memory. By apolitical, I am referring to the tendency in sports – from fans, coaches, players, administrators, or pundits – to envision sports as a world outside of everyday issues: war, class, race, religion, gender, sexuality, etc. This dissertation looks to (re)discover concurrent and competing historical narratives from the Vietnam Era, narratives that continue to affect our society presently. While this dissertation focuses on college sports, and college football and basketball particularly, sports are merely a lens to look at these naturalized mythologies from our past that have helped to construct our present. This work examines student-athlete protest during the latter part of the Vietnam Era (1966-1975) at four different Big Ten universities.[1] While the Vietnam Era is used as a term to encompass the years this dissertation focus on, the tactics of the

[1] For this dissertation, the University of Notre Dame has been included as a "Big Ten" school for reasons that are explained in chapter two. Also, the term "student-athlete" is used throughout the dissertation because of its ubiquity in the sports world and choosing another term would likely come off as jarring. However, it is a problematic term invented by the NCAA to avoid defining players as workers so as to avoid paying workers' compensation. The term was "deliberately ambiguous. College players were not students at play (which might understate their athletic obligations), nor were they just athletes in college (which might imply they were professionals). That they were high-performance athletes meant they could be forgiven for not meeting the academic standards of their peers; that they were students meant they did not have to be compensated, ever, for anything more than the cost of their studies. *Student-athlete* became the NCAA's signature term, repeated constantly in and out of courtrooms." Taylor Branch, "The Shame of College Sports," *The Atlantic*, Sept. 7, 2011, http://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2011/10/the-shame-of-college-sports/308643/?single_page=true.

students and their causes are also an outgrowth of and a continuation of the social justice movement in other arenas. This dissertation analyzes the causes – historical, local, and societal – that led student-athletes, considered naturally conservative defenders of the status quo, to take political stands against their coaches, their university administrations, their conference, and even sometimes their fellow teammates. These student-athletes risked being labeled as trouble-makers, their playing time, and even their educations to advocate for changes both small and large that they felt needed to come. Many times, their concerns were viewed as trivial or non-existent in the eyes of their coaches, the administration, the fans, or even their fellow students, but they still actively spoke out and advocated for change. For some, this activism was less revolutionary than protests by other activist students campaigning against the Vietnam War or for civil rights. Indeed, aside from outright boycotts, much of this student-athlete protest has been under-discussed and forgotten. A great deal of the student-athlete activism came through institutional means, working through university channels to bring attention to issues of concern or signing a petition in solidarity with fellow classmates, but still theirs were political acts of dissidence that caught most by surprise owing to the stereotypical conservative mythology of sports.[2] For others, the activism was bolder: a university-wide boycott of practices or letter-writing campaigns to the student paper to raise awareness. Regardless of the scale or tactic, the activism of the student-athletes often resulted in reactionary outcry from their coaches and the community. In nearly every case, athletic departments downplayed, ignored, or denied the

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[2] Here, conservative does not necessarily imply "Republican," as is often the present-day case. Instead, it points to the tendency of sports to be seen as a celebration of the past and of naturalized American ideals of God, patriarchy, middle-to-upper-class values, fair-play, and family. Even the progressive myths about sports – their ability to level societal playing fields, reward meritocracy, or combat racism – are arguably conservative, considering that they ask us believe that sports has moved beyond injustices and is somehow above the fray of inequality. Challenging that sometimes there can be negative aspects of sports or that they fail to live up to these myths can often lead to reactionary responses.

charges raised against them but usually acquiesced to some of the demands for change. However, those changes often were slow to come and required continued activism to achieve results. In nearly every case, the universities argued that many of the student-athlete called for changes had been discussed previously and were necessary changes that would have come naturally. But the universities' failures to enact such changes without prodding from below belie such arguments.

History of the Big Ten and its Ideology

The Big Ten Conference, officially founded as the Intercollegiate Conference of Faculty Representatives in 1896 (and eventually referred to as the Western Conference until 1989 when the conference was incorporated as a nonprofit), has long prided itself on integrity, academics, and athletics. As the oldest college athletics conference, the Big Ten has been perceived as one of the best conferences in football for much of its existence and includes many of the strongest academic and research-oriented public institutions in the country. Located within the Midwest, the conference schools can stand in for the American heartland and conservative values as well as the perceived liberal bastion of academia and a center of student activism at the same time. By the beginning of the 1966 football season, Big Ten schools had claimed 32 national championships since the conference’s inception in 1896. If Notre Dame is added to the mix, that number jumps to 39. The conference and Notre Dame were also well-known for their legendary football coaches like Amos Alonzo Stagg, Fielding Yost, Bernie Bierman, and Knut Rockne, to name a few. In basketball, conference teams won four NCAA tournament titles and came in second five times since the tourney's inception in 1939, and the conference claimed five national titles before the tourney with Notre Dame claiming two more. When all of these factors are added together, a strong argument can be made that the Big Ten was the most influential

conference in many ways by 1966, and its influence continued to grow throughout the second half of the twentieth century.

In *The Big Ten*, a book co-written by former Big Ten Commissioner Kenneth "Tug" Wilson (1945-1961) in 1967, Wilson gave the reader a long litany of items, "Stated statistically, and with no attempt to claim more than is universally acknowledged to be true," describing the conference's superiority. He made sure to list the Big Ten's academic qualifications first, a common propaganda strategy of the conference, calling it "one of the most prestigious groups in the field of higher education" and noting that the conference schools had granted more degrees than all of the universities of Europe combined had throughout history.[3] Above everything else, he argued that the "pursuit and attainment of academic excellence has long been the cherished goal of the Big Ten universities, and their record in producing national leaders and in preparing young people for responsible leadership has been a proud one."[4] Despite being an athletic conference, the Big Ten took/takes great pride in positioning itself as an academic and moral leader. And this boasting had merit: when the Association of American Universities was founded in 1900, three of the eleven founding schools were from the Big Ten; by the time that the membership rose to twenty, nine of the schools were conference members. The conference was founded in response to the widespread use of "tramp" athletes – players who played for multiple schools for hire – increasing recruiting wars between schools, paying players for play, and a

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[3] Kenneth L. (Tug) Wilson and Jerry Brondfield, *The Big Ten*, (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1967), 1.

[4] He also noted that the Big Ten had "produced more All-America football and basketball stars; more national championship teams; more national and world record holders; more Olympic team members; more pro ball players; more Heisman Trophy winners; more coach-of-the-year winners; more top-ten teams in the annual football and basketball polls; and more NCAA team and individual titlists than any other collegiate conference in the country." He also noted the spectator interest and attendance of the conference. Ibid., 1.

worry that the game was becoming too driven by money and the want to win at all costs. In truth, they hoped to place a higher emphasis on academics and integrity. President James H. Smart of Purdue University called together the presidents of some of the major universities of the Midwest and hashed out a plan to bring control of the games under a council made up of appointed faculty representatives from each school, a meeting and plan Tug Wilson described as "long overdue […] it was high time responsible people should discuss the problem of, and possible means of control of, intercollegiate athletics."[5] However, two of the first schools to join the conference, the University of Chicago and the University of Michigan, cared a great deal about winning, had few qualms with "dirty" recruiting, and often ran the scores up on their opponents in a strategy that could hardly be described as exemplifying moral integrity.[6]

Regardless, Purdue, the University of Chicago, the University of Michigan, the University of Wisconsin, the University of Illinois, the University of Minnesota, and Northwestern formed together to create the first football conference in 1896. In the years that followed, the University of Indiana (1899), the University of Iowa (1899), and the Ohio State University (1912) received invitations to join the conference (which grew into a full athletic conference beyond football) and what would become known as the Big Ten remained stable at ten teams until the University of Chicago deemphasized its football program and other varsity sports in the 1940s, withdrawing from the conference in 1946. Michigan State University beat out a handful of other schools in 1950 who had hoped to join the conference for many years including, Notre Dame, the University of Pittsburgh, and the University of Nebraska, bringing

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[5] Ibid., 50.

[6] See Robin Lester, *Stagg's University: The Rise, Decline, and Fall of Big-Time Football at Chicago* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1999).

the conference back to ten teams.[7] Over the years, Notre Dame petitioned to join multiple times and has since turned down invitations to join the conference on numerous occasions as well. In 1990, the Pennsylvania State University joined the Big Ten followed by the University of Nebraska between 2010 and 2011. In 2014, the University of Maryland and Rutgers University officially became members of the conference, bringing the total number to fourteen teams.[8]

In an encyclopedia on the conference published by ESPN in 2007, Chuck Culpepper wrote that "Big Ten football long has epitomized the 'Midwest,' the 'heartland' – even, to some, the 'real' America. Long has the nation perceived in these people a certain sanity, stoicism, sturdiness. Long have they attracted such adjectives as 'normal' and 'corn-fed.' […] the Big Ten has stood for common sense, stability, even a smidgeon of dullness for more than a century."[9] Indeed, many of the reforms in college football were often championed by the Big Ten: academic reform, protections against over-signing recruits and forcing them out of the program, academic counseling, instant replay, four-year scholarships, etc. As evidenced above, ESPN, the country's largest and most influential sports media organization, buys into and promotes the mythology of the Big Ten standing in for "real" America. The integrity and right-thinking

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[7] For a decade between 1907 and 1917, Michigan withdrew from the Big Ten. Stanford's president had made public accusations that Michigan coach, Fielding Yost, had recruited professional players to Michigan. In 1906 the Big Ten, in an attempt to bring the game under control, limited football to five games a year, far less than the thirteen Michigan had played in 1905. Players were also stripped of their fourth year of eligibility, meaning that seniors who had played as freshman would not be able to play in the upcoming season. In response, Michigan withdrew from the conference and played as an independent before being unanimously voted back in by the Big Ten in 1917.

[8] The University of Chicago remains an affiliate member of the Big Ten through the conference's Council on Institutional Cooperation, formed in 1958 as an academic cooperation between the conference schools. Likewise, Johns Hopkins University became an associate member of the Big Ten in lacrosse only in 2014.

[9] Chuck Culpepper, "The History of Big Ten Football," *ESPN Big Ten Football Encyclopedia*. Ed. Michael MacCambridge (New York: ESPN Books, 2007), 8.

mythology promoted by the conference has been quite successful in permeating the general discourse of the sporting world, as these notions have become natural to many sports fans. And, in elections of the 21st century, the idea of a "real" America, while incredibly problematic, has taken hold, increasingly turning the "heartland" into a moral compass for the country and an exemplification of "common sense" values and American character.

But, despite their purported commitment to moral integrity and moral reform within college athletics, Big Ten teams have still fallen short of their professed goals. The public chest-puffing over moral and academic integrity by the Big Ten often rubbed other conferences the wrong way, especially conferences from the South where schools more openly offered incentives to players, whether that be through athletic scholarships or direct money from coaches and boosters.[10] The Big Ten objected to scholarships for athletics, a practice they saw as an overt form of professionalism, even though many Big Ten programs found jobs for their players, including Ohio State where athletes had an easy time getting themselves low-stress jobs at the Capitol in Columbus. Likewise, despite self-enforced rules against it, many of the schools within the Big Ten were caught paying players in some form throughout the first half of the twentieth-century, making their boasting about the integrity of amateurism seem hollow. In the 1950s and 1960s alone, Ohio State, Indiana, Michigan State, Illinois, and Minnesota all were found guilty of "major infractions" by the NCAA in football, with Michigan State, Ohio State, Iowa, Purdue,

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[10] Ronald A. Smith, *Pay for Play: A History of Big-time College Athletic Reform* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2011), 89.

and Illinois being found guilty of "major infractions" in men's basketball during the same timeframe.[11]

This hypocrisy can also be seen throughout Tug Wilson's book about the conference. He writes praisingly of the relationship between Amos Alonzo Stagg and Walter Eckersall, a three-time All-American for Chicago, but said nothing of Coach Stagg's strategy of physically removing Eckersall from a train about to leave for Ann Arbor in order to get him to sign with the Maroons, surely an example of questionable recruiting strategies. Wilson also did not mention that Eckersall was a terrible student who barely remained eligible throughout his career and was callously expelled by the university he brought glory to on the gridiron when his eligibility ran out. Similarly, Wilson praises the exploits of Red Grange at Illinois and celebrates him for popularizing pro football, but says nothing about the Big Ten's vindictive decision in 1925 to ostracize Grange and ban professional players from coaching or refereeing in the conference in order to protect "amateurism," despite the fact that those same players brought in money for the universities while they played there.[12] Even Jesse Owens was used by Wilson to exemplify the ideologies of the Big Ten in a rosy rewriting of history. Through Owens, the Big Ten can stake a claim to fighting racism and standing up for America at the same time. A victory for Owens was a victory for the U.S. *and* the Big Ten. Wilson writes about Owens being angered by Hitler's presumed and apocryphal "snub" of the black athlete (in which Hitler left his seat so that he did not have to congratulate Owens), but Owens did not see it as such, telling the *Pittsburgh Courier* that "before [Hitler] left I was on my way to a broadcast and passed near his box. He waved at

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[11] "Major Infraction Search," NCAA: Legislative Services Database, July 29, 2014, https://web1.ncaa.org/LSDBi/exec/homepage.

[12] Kenneth L. (Tug) Wilson and Jerry Brondfield, *The Big Ten*, 67; 119-121; Ronald A. Smith, *Pay for Play,* 67-68.

me and I waved back."[13] Afterward, Owens would tell others that he felt more disrespected by his own country's leader, President Roosevelt, who never congratulated him. Tellingly, Tug Wilson excises any controversy from Owens life caused by racism or the hypocrisies of amateurism, writing that Owens "embarked on a world-wide professional tour which included running against horses and dogs. Later he went into business and youth activities work in Chicago."[14] Not mentioned is that he was stripped of his amateur status for seeking out endorsement deals and was *forced* to race dogs and horses because of a lack of income. He later had to declare bankruptcy and was prosecuted for tax evasion. But such negative accounts and honesty threaten the noble myths of amateurism and the simple, progressive motives of the Big Ten.

Similar stance on amateurism and financial aid for student-athletes led the Pacific Coast Conference and the Big Ten to sign a renewable five year contract to have each conference's champion face the other in the Rose Bowl each year starting in 1947.[15] The conferences played each other until 1959 when the PCC dissolved over, ironically, a pay-for-play scandal.[16] And the Big Ten was not immune from scandal itself; however the conference maintained the narrative that they were somehow above the fray.[17] In 1929 the Big Ten briefly attempted to kick the

[13] UP, "Owens With Kind Words For All Officials," *Pittsburgh Courier*, Aug. 24, 1936, 26.
[14] Kenneth L. (Tug) Wilson and Jerry Brondfield, *The Big Ten*, 206.
[15] 7-2 Illinois defeated 10-0 UCLA 45-14 in Illinois' first post-season appearance in its history. This is widely regarded as the first "modern" Rose Bowl.
[16] For a great discussion of this relationship, see Kurt Edward Kemper *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2009).
[17] 1935, the Southeastern Conference attempted to institute the granting of athletic scholarships to their players. The NCAA and the Northern schools did not approve. The Big Ten objected to this overt form of professionalism, even though many Big Ten programs found jobs for their

University of Iowa out of the conference for illegally operating slush funds, but it was assumed that Iowa officials had enough dirt on other schools to take others down with them.[18] The conference assumed that Northwestern was skirting some of the Big Ten's rules when they had a brief resurgence during the 1930s but no action was taken. And Buddy Young, an African American player for Illinois, claimed to have been paid handsomely by the Illini to play for their football team in 1945.[19] But the Rose Bowl Game continued to invite teams from the former PCC and the Big Ten until a formal agreement was reached between what is currently the Pac 12 and the Big Ten until the advent of the Bowl Championship Series in 1998.[20]

John R. Tunis, a leading sports critic of the mid-20th century, claimed that over half of the Big Ten members provided various forms of financial aid for "good football material," despite

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players, including Ohio State where athletes had an easy time getting themselves jobs at the Capitol in Columbus. In response to the perceived attack on amateurism, the NCAA proposed a reform known as the Purity Code and later deemed the Sanity Code. The Code was widely championed in the Big Ten, the Pacific Coast Conference, and what would become the Ivy League but vehemently challenged by the Southeastern Conference, the Southwestern Conference, and the Missouri Valley Conference. In conjunction with the American Football Coaches Association and the College Physical Education Association, the NCAA passed the Sanity Code in 1949 and gained the power to enforce amateurism, even though student athletes could be paid tuition and incidental fees by the university on a need-based situation, directly in conflict with the concept of amateurism. Realistically, there was no way to enforce the Code and there was little incentive, as coaches were paid to win games and bending the rules seemed to be tacitly understood as necessary. In a debate over the fairness of the Sanity Code, the University of Virginia and other Southern schools even scoffed at the size and power of Ohio State's football program and found their stance in support of the Code hypocritical. Ronald A. Smith, *Pay for Play*, 89; John Sayle Watterson, *College Football: History, Spectacle, Controversy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2002), 217

[18] John Sayle Watterson, *College Football*, 164.

[19] Ibid., 205.

[20] The Big Ten was divided over the game in the first place, and a handful of schools routinely voted against a contract tying the champion to the game. Despite consistently voting against the game in principle, Minnesota accepted bids to the game in 1961 and 1962, causing fans of schools throughout the country and even within the Big Ten to call their actions hypocritical and money-driven. "Complaint Letters," Box 193, "Rose Bowl, Letters of Complaint, 1961 Bowl," Office of the President Records, uarc 841, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, MN.

chastising other conferences for handing out athletic scholarships.[21] During the 1950s, as Michigan State became a football power and joined the Big Ten, Big Ten schools questioned the ethics of a program of financial awards sometimes used by the football team called the Jenison Awards, and allegations came out about slush funds operated by MSU boosters. Michigan led the charge against what they deemed to be scholarships, and Michigan State was placed on probation. One Michigan State coach doubted the integrity of Michigan's program and the altruism of their motives, declaring after a meeting with Wolverine officials: "They [Michigan] have always been that way; they shit in the corner, then point the finger at you," implying that Michigan was just as guilty of ethically flexible practices in recruiting.[22] In March 1962, Burt Anderson and Dennis Nustad of the *Michigan Daily* cynically noted that "Indiana [was] the only conference school on probation by the National Collegiate Athletic Assn. for illegal recruiting practices, perhaps because none of the others were caught doing the same."[23] They noted that the "Big Ten work program which provided many athletes with jobs locally was thrown out when it became known that businessmen sometimes put athletes on their payrolls and didn't even require them to show up to punch the clock." They put the blame not on the coaches, but on football itself for placing an emphasis on winning and creating an environment that simultaneously promoted an archaic idea about amateurism and a tacit encouragement to win at all costs. In 1967, Illinois was sanctioned for players being paid by boosters and other practices forbade by the NCAA and the Big Ten. One "sympathetic Illinois follower" wrote to Harvey Duck of the *Chicago Daily News* and suggested that he look into Minnesota's football program, where the

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[21] Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era*, 44.
[22] The coach is unnamed by Watterson. Qtd. in John Sayle Watterson, *College Football*, 229.
[23] Burt Anderson and Dennis Nustad, "Critics, Cheating Merely Refelction," *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 6, 1962, 1.

Illinois fan had heard rumors that a bank vice president gave out $100 to $115 to multiple players every month, demonstrating that conference teams trusted each other little to follow conference rules.[24] The arbitrary nature of rules put in place to maintain a semblance of amateurism often led to transgressions of rules seemingly made out of concern for the well-being of athletes. Coaches routinely turned in other Big Ten coaches and programs for discretions against conference and NCAA rules – and often had those very same programs accuse them of the same. Such instances and allegations ran contrary to the mythology the Big Ten sold of moral integrity and a unified front against corruption.

But Big Ten Commissioner (1961-1971) and University of Michigan law school graduate William R. Reed felt differently: "First, of course, we seek to obtain any specifics from those who have recently raised the cry that 'everyone is doing it.' I am confident little of substance will come forward from these sources which are, basically, the voices of cynicism."[25] He realized that each transgression of NCAA rules or even of Big Ten rules added to the cries of hypocrisy from outside critics. He noted that he had "been preaching that we are damaged perhaps more than by anything else by the expression and circulation of gossip and rumor," but remained doubtful that "a conspiracy of silence" operated within the conference. He asked coaches to make suggestions "essential to quality athletic representation but not inconsistent with an emphasis upon high academic and high ethical standards." This official stance of solidarity between the

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[24] VP Stanley J. Wenberg to M.O. Schultze, June 15, 1967, Box 2, "Illinois – violations of rules, 1967-1968," Max O. Schultze Papers, uarc 384, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, MN.

[25] William R. Reed to Conference Directors of Athletics and Faculty Representation, Memo, "Subject: Current Rules Compliance Program," March 17, 1967, Box 19, "Violations and Compliance Memos 1962-1973," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, MN.

conference, the faculty, administrators and coaches ran contrary to practice for some coaches and administrators, including MSU's Duffy Daugherty, who – throughout his autobiography – failed to tow the company line about compensation for students.[26] His predecessor, Biggie Munn, made similar statements in 1947, arguing that "In some Big Nine schools it is a practice to hand [money] to the players under the table and then take them into another room and make them sign a paper to the effect [that] they haven't received anything."[27] Michigan's Faculty Representative in 1949, Ralph Aigler, likewise wrote to Commissioner Wilson, arguing that Michigan State had "been as bad or worse" than the Southern schools the Big Ten had railed against, and the Spartans' application should be cautiously weighed as if "we were considering an application for membership from one of the southerners."[28] But the official message from the Big Ten exemplified and instilled characteristics needed to succeed in life and continued to promote the mythology that the conference had more integrity than others even in the face of evidence to the contrary.[29]

The alliance between the PCC and the Big Ten also grew out of their shared incorporation and promotion of integration in college athletics, a practice vehemently opposed in

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[26] Duffy Daugherty, *Duffy, An Autobiography* (New York, Doubleday, 1974), 82.

[27] Qtd. in Murray Sperber, *Onward to Victory: The Crises that Shaped College Sports* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1998), 228.

[28] Ralph W. Aigler to "Tug" Wilson, January 31, 1949, Box 10, "Correspondence 1946-52," Ralph W. Aigler Papers, 87406 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Michigan.

[29] The Tournament of Roses overtly aligned itself with representing American values and characteristics in a press release in 1961: "In these times of international tensions, with the spectre of war and attempted domination casting shadows on a free United States […] the Tournament of Roses lightens the darks corners of fear. […] So long as there is a Tournament of Roses, so long as there is a Rose Bowl … there will be a free United States." Qtd. in Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era*, 27.

the South. To be fair, schools of what would become the Big Ten *were* early adopters of integration within college sports. Dating at least back to the 19th century, a sizable number (when compared to other conferences) of black football players had starred on the gridiron, including Michigan's George Jewett[30] – a medical student and fullback who was repeatedly taunted and provoked by the Chicago Maroons in hopes of him reacting and getting tossed from the game in 1890; he did respond and punched Chicago lineman William Rapp in the nose. Archie Alexander was named to the All-Missouri Valley team at Iowa in 1910 and earned his degree in civil engineering.[31] And Northwestern even employed Roy Young as a line coach at Northwestern in 1912, a rare allowance of a leadership role for an African American at the time. Fred "Duke" Snyder of the Iowa Hawkeyes was a four-year starter on the line from 1918 through 1921, played professional football, and later became a judge. However, he was left off Walter Camp's All-American list.[32] This All-American slight also affected other black players like Bobby Marshall of Minnesota (1904-1906) and running back Oze Simmons of Iowa (1934-1936). Simmons briefly left his Iowa team in 1936 over accusations that his white linemen would not block for him.[33] With Simmons and Jewett, it is worth noting that merely playing for a Big Ten team did not mean that they would not face racism in the North – not even from their own teammates. Similarly, Amos Alonzo Stagg refused to recruit and play African American athletes during the first few decades of the twentieth century. Even schools who had started black players on their

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[30] Richard Pennington, *Breaking the Ice: The Racial Integration of Southwest Conference Football* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1987), 1.
[31] Iowa, while a member of the Western Conference (Big Ten), played football in the Missouri Valley until 1910. Gerald R. Gems, *For Pride, Profit, and Patriarchy: Football and the Incorporation of American Cultural Values* (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 2000), 116.
[32] Richard Penningston, *Breaking the Ice*, 3.
[33] Ibid., 8.

own teams were not free of prejudice. When Minnesota played Iowa State in 1923, the Cyclones' Jack Trice had his collarbone broken in the first quarter and was trampled by three Gophers later in the game. He died of internal injuries two days later. Some of the Cyclones felt that Trice had been targeted for his race, and the two teams did not play again until 1989.[34]

Players like Willie Thrower of Michigan State [1950-1952] – the first black quarterback in the Big Ten and the first African American quarterback to complete a pass in the NFL– and Sandy Stephens of Minnesota [1960-1962] – he led Minnesota to a Rose Bowl victory – added to the perception that the Big Ten was a progressive conference in terms of race and equality. Thrower came out of the suburbs of Pittsburgh from New Kensington High School. He had been invited to a Texas All-Star game but was not allowed to play when they found out he was black. His race eliminated him from the radar of most schools, but not Michigan State. Biggie Munn and assistant coach Duffy Daugherty fell in love with Thrower's arm strength and recruited him to East Lansing.[35] Thrower electrified the Spartan crowds with his play, especially against Texas A&M in 1952 when he scored two touchdowns in less than five minutes, prompting the Aggies' coach Raymond George to allegedly tell Thrower: "You know what? I was proud of my team today—until you stepped into the game. Tell you what. If they don't give you the game ball, you come to my locker room. I got one for you."[36] While never a star player in college, Thrower helped the Spartans to a 48-6 victory and compiled a 9-0 record that earned them a mythical national championship. The decision to recruit African American athletes benefited Michigan State greatly on the gridiron, as Thrower describes: "Later on, the Michigan legislature put it on

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[34] Gerald R. Gems, *For Pride, Profit, and Patriarchy*, 117.

[35] William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile: The Trials and Triumphs of the Black Quarterback* (New York: ESPN Books, 2007), 65.

[36] Ibid., 68.

the record that Michigan State would never take eight boys from one school again because we've got kids from this state who want to play, too. But we got them a championship in 1952."[37] But, even in Thrower's statement, it is easy to read an undercurrent of resentment from the local Michigan population. Perhaps it could be read as "Why were Biggie and Duffy recruiting so far away from Michigan?" Or, "Why were they recruiting so many black athletes?"

Race being a factor seems less like a stretch when one considers an article touching on similar topics that ran in Minneapolis newspapers, regarding the high number of non-Minnesotans playing for the Gophers in the early 1960s. Judge Dickson, fullback for the Gophers, felt that such criticism was racially motivated, arguing that when they "were the last-place team in the Big Ten, the local paper ran a big headline, 'Minnesota for Minnesota Boys,' with pictures of the football players from out-of-state. Sandy's photo was there. My photo was there. There was definitively a racial component to it. There were those in Minnesota who felt the football team should have blonde hair and blue eyes."[38] It is easy to argue that the racism faced by the players was not as overt or as violent as that faced in the South, but it was still real and largely went undiscussed. Instead, the progressiveness of playing someone regardless of color was celebrated and publicized. Word spread throughout the country, and stars from the South like Bubba Smith, Gene Washington, and Jimmy Raye came northward to MSU. Washington explained his decision, noting that he "left because I wanted to be a full American citizen and I'm glad I did it. Back then everything was segregated and the colleges were a part of it. I'm quite certain that if I had gone to the University of Texas and tried out for the football

[37] Ibid., 67.
[38] Ibid., 76.

team, they wouldn't have accepted me."[39] Big Ten universities, and especially Michigan State, became emblematic of perceived equality for African American student-athletes. But was this the case? It would be disingenuous to argue that the racism in the Big Ten was as overt or violent as elsewhere in the country, but it is worth exploring the racism that *did* exist instead of attempting to brush it aside because it was not "as bad" as racism in the South. Furthermore, considering that the Big Ten prided itself on its progressive stance on racial issues, it seems fair to examine its shortcomings. Merely accepting that "it was a different time" or "it was better than other places" neither excuses failures of equality nor does it allow for the dismissal of accusations of discrimination. But first, a bit more context is needed to set the scene for student-athlete activism.

The Late Civil Rights Era and Student Activism

In the late 1960s, African American student-athletes in the Big Ten began to speak out against what they saw as discriminatory or unfair treatment, whether intentional by the coaching staffs or not. Similarly, football players at Michigan in the early 1970s grew bolder in their questioning of coaching authority and prohibitions against political activism as did Notre Dame players discussing the war, while female athletes in the mid-1970s advocated for even the possibility to have a more equitable opportunity to play varsity sports at their university. This questioning of the authority of athletic departments and coaches coincided with athletic protest around the country during the late 1960s.[40] But it also should be viewed as another facet of generalized student protest during the Vietnam Era as part of the social justice movement. In a

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[39] Ibid., 10.

[40] See Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over: Big-Time College Football from the Sixties to the BCS Era* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press, 2009).

report from Robert W. Ross, an advisor in the Office of the Dean of Students, prepared for University of Minnesota Vice President Paul Cashman, Ross listed incidents of student dissent throughout the conference that had occurred between 1967 and 1968. Protests against recruitment by Dow Chemical and the CIA sprung up on most campuses, and police often had to be called in to break up demonstrations. Anti-war rallies and building occupations to bring black studies courses to university curriculums occurred at both Minnesota and Ohio State, while Iowa students held a sit-in to protest unfair housing regulations. Chicago boldly withdrew from the Institute for Defense Analyses after students protested against the university's involvement.[41] In all, the report mentioned large-scale demonstrations at half of the Big Ten's schools in addition to the ever-present campus activism at the University of Michigan. Two years later, a group of Wisconsin students detonated a bomb in Sterling Hall in protest of the Army Mathematics Research Center, killing one post-doctoral student and injuring three others. Student protest throughout the conference and the country grew in numbers and intensity. Teach-ins and moratoriums against the Vietnam War could not help but influence students attending Big Ten universities, regardless of their political beliefs, majors, or their extracurricular activities.

Tom Hayden – graduate of Michigan, New Left activist, and a co-writer of the Students for a Democratic Society's Port Huron Statement – wrote an article for *Ramparts* magazine describing the situation at Columbia University in June 1968. Hayden argued that the occupation of campus buildings at Columbia was a political message.[42] Through student activism, students

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[41] Robert W. Ross, "Study on Student Dissent, 1967-1968," October 28, 1968, Box 5, "Campus Demonstrations," Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs Records, 1941-1977, uarc 436, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, MN.

[42] "Columbia students want a new and independent university standing against the mainstream of American society, or they want no university at all." He argued that the spread of campus

sent a political message that the status quo needed to be reexamined and changed for the better. Students for a Democratic Society, a group formed at the University of Michigan in 1960, helped to lead building sit-ins and other protests at the Ivy League school.[43] The student activism of the New Left had spread throughout the country with each new protest, occupation, and strike bringing more members to SDS chapters, its later splinter groups, and other organizations for change. More and more students became politically active as the conflict in Vietnam lengthened and increased. Equally "as relevant as the youth cohort's numbers was their location. More than ever before, the young were now packed into college dorms, student unions, and lecture halls. In 1960, there were 3 million college students in the United States. In the fall of 1964, the first baby boomers hit the campuses. By the following year, there were 5 million, and by 1973, 10 million."[44] The increasing numbers of college-aged citizens and the increasing enrollment at the nation's universities, along with a war that presented a growing threat to the lives of Americans and a growing realization of societal inequality, created a fertile ground for youth activism.

Meanwhile, the activism of college students emboldened reactionary citizens against what they saw as an encroaching attack on civility and a (in their eyes) natural and comfortable status quo. Students saw themselves as a group united by their age and position and idealistically hoped that their generation could affect historical change. As more and more young people were

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activism was inevitable, as students moved "toward power - the power to stop the machine if it cannot be made to serve humane ends." Tom Hayden, "Two, Three, Many Columbias," *Ramparts*, June 15, 1968, 40.

[43] It should be noted that it would be intellectually disingenuous and even patently incorrect to assert that the SDS and other groups of the New Left emerged whole cloth in the 1960s. They owed much to the civil rights groups of the 1950s and early 1960s, as well as the black activist groups of the 1960s. See Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity: Liberalism, Christianity, and the New Left in America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1998).

[44] Irwin Unger and Debi Unger, *The Times Were a Changin': The Sixties Readers*, ed. Irwin Unger and Debi Unger (New York: Three Rivers Press, 1998), 57.

forced to serve overseas in a war that became increasingly unpopular, they felt further exploited by a government and a society in which they had a limited say. Edward Schwartz, the President of the National Student Association from 1967-1968, wrote that the "students themselves had become a new working class, whose labor was being exploited for invidious campaigns at home and abroad. The seizure of universities in the sixties thus was equivalent to the strikes against railroads in the 1880s."[45] But, much like the railroad strikers, students' actions and ideologies were not wholly understood or supported by many within the dominant culture. Instead, the students were seen as nuisances, children, or even enemy agents controlled by Moscow.

Another blow to the power of student activism came from within the movement itself. Aside from opposition to the war in Vietnam, students had little that united the entire cause outside of a sense of injustice and idealism for progressive change. The SDS had disassociated itself from the League for Industrial Democracy in the early 1960s and found itself broken into splinter groups by the end of the 1960s over differing opinions about how the group should operate and battle for change and for what changes. Likewise, while SDS often allied itself with causes of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee and black campus activism organizations, it remained a largely white organization on most campuses. Furthermore, the very breeding grounds of the intellectual aspects of the counterculture movement – college campuses – tied much of the movement to a privileged position of those who could attend and afford college, and the student population shifted quickly over a four year period. Many of the early leaders in student activism during this time came from white, middle-class families, creating a very limited perspective that often was at odds with the populations they were trying to reach and

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[45] Edward Schwartz, "Keep the Posters on the Walls, Boys," *Change* 3, no. 7 (1971): 58.

mobilize, especially members of the working class, the poor, and minorities.[46] Throughout the movement, generational, socioeconomic, and regional divides grew as older activists clashed over strategies with younger activists, and lived experiences created differing viewpoints over how best to create change.[47]

This inability to unite under a concentrated call for change outside of an end to the war weakened the overall power of the movement and allowed opponents to defend the status quo more efficiently. Indeed, the New Left activists were already fighting an uphill battle. Despite the collective memory produced from popular culture through songs, movies, and the ascetic style of the counterculture, the Vietnam Era was not as simplistic as we are often expected to believe. It was not a neat divide between hippies (or Black Panthers, the SDS, SNCC, etc.) and squares (or the Young Americans for Freedom, the John Birch Society, unbending university officials, etc.), or even between radicals and jocks. As Michael Kazen noted, "the student movement boasted only a handful of Berkeleys. On hundreds of lesser known campuses the national media generally ignored, New Leftists were an embattled minority who could count on neither tolerant authorities nor supportive classmates. The majority of middle-ground students came from white working-class families and often resented radicals for disrupting classes and

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[46] Michael Kazen, *The Populist Persuasion: An American History* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), Chapter 8.

[47] The SNCC had its own internal struggles as members disagreed over whether to follow the nonviolent, early teachings of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. or the call to more aggressive forms of protest along the lines of the arguments of Malcolm X and later Stokely Carmichael. Such a move united many blacks within the SNCC but forced others out, including white, female activists like Casey Hayden and Mary King. Similarly, the focus within many New Left groups, while ostensibly advocating for greater equality, often remained entrenched in ideas of masculinity in their attempts to forge ethnic identities, leading to some female activists feeling ostracized and splintering off to usher in a new wave of feminist thought and action in the following decade. Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 312.

condemning a war their friends and relatives were fighting."[48] Doug Rossinow lamented after finishing his book that he had not concentrated on how *un*representative of much of society the SDS was.[49] He points to *The Andy Griffith Show* being the most popular show on television at the time as basic evidence of this disconnect. The show celebrated small-town values and a perceived by-gone era. While the Billboard charts of the late 1960s were littered with culture-questioning songs by the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and Motown artists, they also featured happy-go-lucky songs and love songs by the Archies, the Monkees, and even Frank Sinatra. Strangely, the collective memory of the times does often boil down to the counterculture versus reactionaries or hippies versus the status quo. Many more people found themselves somewhere in between these two extremes, and even those within these two camps were not of a united mind on all issues, so it cannot be expected that student-athletes were of one, singular mind either.

Furthermore, the changing opinion over the war throughout the country and the adoption of anti-war stances by mainstream political candidates appropriated one of the strongest and most sympathetic causes the New Left had. In its wake, what was left was a collage of progressive ideas that seemed more unnatural and less understandable by members of the dominant society. The war in Vietnam ended, but, seemingly, so too did the power of students to affect large-scale change, a limitation on display now in the reactionary rhetoric employed against the Northwestern football team's attempt to unionize. However, it is hard to dismiss what activists did accomplish during the Vietnam Era. Much like the populists before them, they were a victim of their own position. Once the Democratic Party began to adopt portions of the New Left's ideology in the 1970s, what were left were untenable positions for even some of the more

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[48] Michael Kazen, *The Populist Persuasion*, 208.
[49] Doug Rossinow, *The Politics of Authenticity*, 5.

progressive Americans.[50] But left-leaning student activists' ideas of greater equality, the agency of everyday people to affect change, the personal being political, and a greater questioning of authority did take hold, if not always directly because of the New Left.

Sports were not necessarily divorced from the student experience in the Vietnam Era, even for those involved in student activism. In an article by Alfred Wright in *Sports Illustrated* in 1966, Wright discussed John Rodgers, the sports editor of the student-run *Daily Californian*. Rodgers believed that Cal students were somehow different from other undergraduates throughout the country. An Illinois native, he had turned down a scholarship to the University of Illinois and chastised what he saw as political disinterest on the part of Midwestern students, who drank beer and walked "around the campus in a sweater with the varsity letter on it." At Cal, students were interested in "politics and athletics and the academic life, and [they] trie[d] to blend all three into their proper perspective."[51] Rodgers had written in an earlier column that the "majority of Cal students fall right in the middle" of the political spectrum. He mentioned an anti-Vietnam rally he had attended and noted that a picketer, who had his picture appear in *Newsweek*, only wanted to talk about the Cal-Oregon game and admitted that he was going to skip the upcoming Vietnam Day Committee march to attend the Big Game against Stanford. Before the Washington game on October 16, 1965, 7,000 students marched in a protest parade on Friday night while only 3,500 showed up for the football rally. But, the next day, 2,000 turned

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[50] Or, as Tom Hayden describes it, "As the previously radical reform becomes a norm incorporated into the laws and regulations of the new status quo, however, the popular base of the activist movement declines, leaving the radicals isolated and creating a new professionalized caste of organizers, advocates, and representatives to defend the reform against the rising storm of counterrevolution." Tom Hayden, *The Long Sixties: From 1960 to Barack Obama* (Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2009), 14.

[51] Alfred Wright, "To the Big Game and the Barricades," *Sports Illustrated*, January 3, 1966, 50.

out for a Vietnam protest while 10,000 students filed into the stadium to watch the Golden Bears beat the Huskies 16-12.[52] In Rodgers' mind, Midwestern students were still largely apolitical. But, even at a politically active campus like Berkeley, sports were not divorced from the lives and interests of students.

Two years later, John McCormick wrote another article for *SI* about student activism, arguing that students faced a "subtlety of analysis that World War II never demanded from [his] generation." That war did not have to be justified for most, but Vietnam was different; the agony over how to view this new war and react to it gave the students of this era a "depth and judiciousness that" previous generations "lacked utterly." And McCormick believed that their "depth and judiciousness carri[ed] over from politics to every avenue of their lives."[53] McCormick wrote about the prevailing image of students presented to the public by the media during this era, and in our historical memory of the period: "bearded and barefoot" and thinking about "the draft, drugs" and Marcel Proust. But unlike many others writing at the time, McCormick noted that they were also thinking about Fran Tarkenton, quarterback of the Minnesota Vikings and New York Giants. McCormick mentioned a student at a protest march in Washington, DC taking an early bus back home to make sure that he would not miss the Giants-Packers game on TV. He brings up a dinner conversation he had with a PhD candidate who talked about his dissertation on Wallace Stevens *and* the fight between Joe Frazier and Buster Mathis, a knockout that resulted in Frazier claiming the Heavyweight Championship.[54] McCormick argued that students played squash and tennis or joined intramural baseball and

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[52] Ibid., 53.
[53] John McCormick, "Score One for Today's Students," *Sports Illustrated*, May 20, 1968, 54.
[54] Ibid., 54.

football teams rather than announcing their disdain or disinterest for sports. The sports world did not preclude the political world and vice versa. While he leaned too far to the extreme – considering that there were students who did not care for sports or advocated against them – in his presumption that the "question of sport vs. the intellectual life does not arise anymore," his argument is an important one.[55] Sports had become "a normal, natural part of life, including student life," yet this was often forgotten as students were represented in simplistic and stereotyping terms: radical, unpatriotic, disinterested or disdainful of American values and interests. And student-athletes were assumed to be outside of this simplistic, activist envisioning of the typical student.

College Football as Naturalized Mythology

In *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era* [2009], Kurt Edward Kemper argues that college football was a shifting symbol prior to the 1960s, before becoming a naturalized representation of America, patriotism, and conservatism by the mid-1960s. Kemper states that owing to the anxieties of the Cold War:

> Americans sought out cultural institutions that reinforced their sense of national identity and held at bay their nagging insecurities. As a result, Americans utilized football as a cultural mechanism to rationalize changes they sometimes found alienating, to magnify American distinctiveness in the face of Soviet gains, and to vilify that which they found to be outside the bounds of respectability. They understood football as a broad, though varied, embodiment of national values."[56]

Yet, while college football became that which was inherently American, upon closer examination, it could equally have been symbolic of what many considered to be Soviet. As Michael Oriard points out, during the 1940s, football was not seen as anti-communist, but anti-

[55] Ibid., 55.

[56]Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era*, 1-2.

fascist. With the Soviets as allies in WWII, sportswriters made sure to point out that the United States shared many "sporting traits" with the Soviets and a mutual hate of fascism through sports.[57] The introduction of two-platoon football deemphasized the importance of the individual and promoted a strategy in which every player worked together for the glory of the collective. While many football rooters extolled the importance of the individual in college football, they equally argued for the importance of following the coach's orders without question.[58] One could easily argue that this further placed the importance on the group and glorified a "cult of personality" around the coach. A Motion Picture Association pamphlet titled "The More Common Devices Used to Turn Non-political Pictures into Carriers of Political Propaganda" explicitly warned film-makers not to "deify the common man" or "glorify the collective" as this could indicate Soviet sympathies.[59] Yet, it is hard to imagine a sports article from this time that did not promote both of these as American ideals and indicative of the celebration of individualism. The *Michigan Daily*'s sports section was full of vignettes about individual Wolverines, praising their hard work, their everyday status, and their willingness to be a cog in the well-oiled machine. When Soviet dignitaries visited the United States, they were often taken to college football games to demonstrate American spirit and ideologies. Soviet newspapers helped to cement the American-ness of football by condemning it as "brutal and militaristic," two qualities embraced as needed components for the toughening of American youths.[60] Strangely, when used to describe Soviet sports in future years, these same qualities were seen as

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[57] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 29.
[58] Ibid., 32-33.
[59] Ibid., 34.
[60] Ibid., 31.

negatives, but such is the complexity of naturalized ideologies, as discourse "transmits and produces powers; it reinforces it, but also undermines and exposes it."[61]

Throughout the Cold War, the Soviets became the monster under the bed and the trump card in political arguments. As Louis Althusser argued, Ideological State Apparatuses work differently than the Repressive State Apparatus in that they operate primarily by ideology.[62] The Cold War was largely waged through ideology. Both educational and cultural ISA's helped to naturalize certain ideologies about American-ness, often by creating a binary against what it was not: communism. Of course, this was not a separate and concerted effort by these ISA's but a general instituting of American ideals over time. School children swore allegiance to the flag and sought cover underneath desks during air raid drills. Little Leaguers recited a pledge promising to trust and remain loyal to God and country, while Americans all over the United States rose for the national anthem before sporting events. Even an informative, pictorial collage for the upcoming 1972 football season included an image of a Boy Scout saluting the American flag during a Wolverine game.[63] Both education and sports espoused pro-American ideologies, and this was viewed as unproblematic and natural since ideology "imposes obviousnesses as obviousnesses."[64] Football became a powerful signifier and a part of the discourse of the Cold War. Along with coaches and politicians, sportswriters were able to influence and guide the discourse regarding the game. Any challenge to college football could be debated in the sports

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[61] Michel Foucault, "Method" from *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1* (1976), in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader – 3rd Edition*, ed. John Storey (London: Pearson, 2006), 352.
[62] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader – 3rd Edition*, ed. John Storey (London: Pearson, 2006), 337.
[63] William Alterman, "Football Saturday: The rites of fall," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 17, 1972, 4.
[64] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," 343.

pages, but the discourse was controlled by the sportswriters and sports editors, as they had control over what was printed.

But basketball too was seen as inherently American and representative of the white, heartland of the country. And its natural myths stood on more precarious ground, as talented black players often utilized a different style of play challenging the naturalized dominance of white athleticism and the "proper" way to play. Despite a Canadian creating the game, its early adoption by inner-city immigrants (including the dominant Jewish teams of New York City), and the increasing rise of African American athletes in the college and pro ranks, the sport held great power as a symbol of white, small-town values, a celebrated myth seen in the movie *Hoosiers* (1986) set deep in the heart of Big Ten country in Indiana. This celebration of whiteness in basketball could also be seen in the early reactions to a point-shaving scandal in 1951 involving the City College of New York men's basketball team. Many sports writers and fans wrote it off as players of questionable character, because of their black skin or Jewish religion, being lured by gambling money and the mob. Adolph Rupp, when hearing about the scandal, confidently declared that "gamblers couldn't get at my boys with a ten-foot pole."[65] Rupp famously kept his Kentucky basketball team all-white and lost a National Championship game to a Texas Western team led by five black starters in 1966. Shortly after declaring that point-shaving was only a concern of East Coast city teams, Rupp's players were caught up in a point-shaving scandal of their own, as were Midwestern teams at Bradley and Toledo. Bill Russell's famous poor relationship with Boston media and fans only highlighted the mounting resentment some white basketball fans felt as more and more black players came to dominant the game and have a say in

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[65] Randy Roberts and James S. Olson, *Wining is the Only Thing: Sports in America since 1945* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991), 84.

the culture of the sport. Such racist resentment can be seen in the Minnesota chapter in the rhetoric hurled against black Gopher players and Coach Bill Musselman's willingness to recruit and play black players.

As Cold War tensions rose, many Americans looked to football as representative of America. Kemper argues: "At a time when Americans were increasingly concerned with differentiating themselves from the Soviets, football emerged in the eyes of many as representative of a distinct American exceptionalism."[66] Football grew to become a part of what was assumed to be everyday American life. With its intense physical contact, football certainly did fulfill the calls for a renewed strengthening of physical and mental toughness for American youths; it even garnered the blessing of a strange alliance between the American Medical Association and Billy Graham.[67] It also served as a release valve for the rise (and perceived outbreak) in juvenile delinquency for those who saw football as "not so much as a game but as a 'gut check,' an exercise in toughness, self-deprivation, and the willingness to endure pain."[68] Moreover, we can assume that its lack of popularity outside of North America also helped to mythologize it as something distinctly American. Raymond Williams argues that "'the pattern of culture' is a selection and configuration of interests and activities, and a particular valuation of them, producing a distinct organization, a 'way of life.'"[69] For many coaches and proponents of football, the game became just that. Having lived through WWII during their formative years,

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[66] Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era*, 21.
[67] Ibid., 20.
[68] Ibid., 21.
[69] Raymond Williams, "The Analysis of Culture" from *The Long Revolution* (1961) in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader – 3rd Edition*, ed. John Storey (London: Pearson, 2006), 36.

the "structure of feeling," a term popularized by Raymond Williams to describe the lived experience and quality of life of a particular group of people at a particular time and place, of their generation was greatly influenced by their experiences.[70] This "structure of feeling" was largely more patriotic than the previous one. Whereas baseball had been the "go-to" American sport in past decades, in part as a response to WWII and the Cold War, football became the fascination for a large group of Americans.

Roland Barthes argued that the very principle of myth is transforming history into nature; "the naturalization of the concept [is] the essential function of a myth."[71] The many layers of symbols in the game (its military connection, its rules and standardization, the coach, the players, pageantry, marching bands, the Star-Spangled Banner, etc.) all built on one another until college football itself became a powerful signifier. Let's look at a few examples:

I. The Coach: at the most basic level, the coach signifies authority and leadership. In one line of thought, he is the embodiment of the parental figure at the university. Referring to players as sons, boys, and kids, the coach makes sure that the players are adjusting to college-life, takes pride in their accomplishments, often inquires about their studies, doles out punishments and rewards through playing time, varsity letters, or helmet stickers, and helps the players transition into adulthood. He is a loving but stern role model. With the advent of the family car, the television, family vacations, and other staples of the 1950s, the family became an important signifier of American-ness. At the same time, the coach also signifies military leadership. Along with the

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[70] Ibid., 37.

[71] Roland Barthes, "Myth Today" from *Mythologies* (1957) in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader – 3rd Edition*, ed. John Storey (London: Pearson, 2006), 300.

attachment to the V-5 programs in coaching strategies, the coach shouts orders, demands obedience, turns the boys into men through discipline and hard work, and unifies them by providing a common antagonist. Moreover, many of the coaches of the time had served in the armed forces. Lastly, the coach signifies the role of teacher and mentor. Football was seen by many coaches, sports writers, and politicians as a game that molded bodies *and* minds to win the Cold War. Coaches taught civic values such as diversity (to a greater or lesser degree depending on the school), teamwork, sacrifice, and leadership. Many coaches were hired as academic professors at their universities and taught classes. Woody Hayes famously held a deep love for military history and taught college courses on the subject. In conjunction with being the figure who managed the team, called the plays, and had the wins and losses attached to his name, the coach signified the betterment of the self, family values, military discipline and strength, and the importance of education. These significations were simultaneous and understood. It was understood that the coach *was* these things.

II. Pageantry: pageantry itself is a signifier that encompasses a multitude of signifiers. It *is* the actions and texts of the fans, players, and coaches who support their team, their university, their region, and their conference, much like Americans are "naturally" supposed to support their country. Many of the components of college football's pageantry have their counterparts in patriotic pageantry. Players put on their uniforms, emblematic of the players who came before them, creating a common and agreed upon history. They wear different numbers and play different positions, but they fight for a common goal. The individual is important, but not to the detriment of the whole. Each team has their own specific colors displayed on uniforms, banners,

> and flags. Fight songs, school songs, and often school hymns are written and sung in celebration of and loyalty to the school. Often, these songs reflect an allegiance to God and country. Fans chant cheers and slogans illustrative of the college and invoke the history of the team. All of these reflect the patriotism and pride in America that became expected and natural after WWII and during the Cold War. College marching bands, like their military counterparts, play patriotic marches in formations emblematic of military precision and march in celebratory parades. Adding to all of this is the *overt* signification of patriotism through the playing of the "Star-Spangled Banner," in which all spectators, players, and personnel stand at attention and show their dedication to the United States.

These second-order signs are in turn part of the semiological chain of the signifier: college football. These significations became "naturalized" to the point that they became obvious. The term "college football" and its mythology no longer *had* to explain all of these significations, because explanation was no longer needed. Football was not just a symbol *for* American-ness; it *was* American-ness. And it became highly consumer driven, as the most "successful" programs not only won but filled the stands and great amounts of money are needed to equip successful teams and build larger stadiums, tying in capitalist values as well. As with all myths, college football was given "a natural and eternal justification." Its American-ness no longer needed explained, but instead was understood as a "statement of fact."[72] The naturalness of these myths was further reproduced in movies, television, and popular culture, as could be seen in cover art for football games in the 1940s. Murray Sperber noted the tendency of cover art to depict "college football as part of the natural progression of American males to adulthood," with babies

[72] Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," 301.

holding footballs, young boys learning the game, and men winning the hearts of cheerleaders through their gridiron exploits. And the cover art proved popular, suggesting that "fans agreed with the message, treating it as another link between college sports and the natural order of American life – and not as propaganda for an embattled enterprise."[73] Playing football and enjoying watching football came to define the masculine experience, and arguably a part of the acceptable feminine experience as well, as women were to be helpmates and appropriately composed observers rather than active participants or out-of-control fanatics. The players in the game itself were believed to be representative of this American-ness and defenders of this understood status quo through their playing of the game.

Even today, academe grapples with how to make its ideas and arguments relevant to and heard by the general public. Since many in the public were more likely to read national and local newspapers than college newspapers and academic journals, the public discourse played itself out in non-academic spaces. As part of the superstructure, the ideas which follow from the ideologies are heavily influenced by those who control the means of production: in this case, the discourse existed in the sports pages. Surely, other writers and college administrators could write editorials addressing their concerns, but their “expertise” rested outside of the realm of sports. And, when sportswriters in college newspapers waxed political, letters to the editor often rebuked them for bringing politics into sports. There has long been a belief in this country that politics do not belong in sports, however an exception is made for politics that agree with and support the status quo, for these agreements are seen as natural and apolitical. Only by challenging normalized ideas do people often see the political, so that every protest, sit-in, and criticism was a political act, but the celebration of, defense of, or indifference to the everyday

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[73] Murray Sperber, *Onward to Victory*, 279.

status quo were not. It is not really considered an open-argument because the mythology has been de-politicized.[74] This does not mean that the myth is not political; it means that it is not viewed as political, because it is seen as an obvious "fact." The political aspect has been stripped away.

Proponents saw football as crucial to American morale and a weapon against the Soviets during the Cold War, while many professors and intellectuals saw it as a distraction from the concentrated effort, brain power, and money needed to outpace the Soviets in math and science. Pierre Bourdieu argued that taste is not a natural distinction, but rather learned through tradition, upbringing, and education.[75] Since taste "classifies the classifier," if it was assumed that if you did not like football, this became a question of taste and ran counter to the discourse surrounding college football, and you could quickly be classified as an elitist out of touch with the common man and with common sense, and your opinion could be dismissed easily.[76] Both sides of the political aisle utilized Cold War ideology to justify their claims in an attempt to defeat the USSR, but many who argued for an emphasis on education did so at the expense of football. Because college football had already been so successfully naturalized as American, any questioning of this stance was often met with harsh reprisal and insinuations of Communist leanings, despite logical arguments to the contrary.

Football had successfully come to be seen as everything that America "naturally" was. Therefore, if you questioned or challenged football, you were seen as what America was

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[74] Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," 301.

[75] Pierre Bourdieu, "Distinction & The Aristocracy of Culture" from *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste* (1979), in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader – 3rd Edition*, ed. John Storey (London: Pearson, 2006), 466.

[76] Ibid., 470.

inherently not. By questioning college football, you were questioning America. It is not surprising that such accusations came naturally to many sportswriters, considering the saturation of the ideology. Football was emphasized as an essential aspect of American school life. The local high school team served as a rallying point for the community and was emblematic of "All-American" youth. Academic classes were canceled for school pep rallies and celebrations of the school centered on the football game, where the game served as the focal point of Homecoming weekend (a weekend which celebrates an academic institution). It was expected that parents would want their children to grow up to be the starting quarterback or the head-cheerleader. These became fixtures of American-ness in television shows and movies. Sports and school became further intertwined and mythologized as stereotypical of American-ness. Today, outside of the Ivy League, it would be safe to presume that many are familiar with most colleges because of their prominence in college football or March Madness, rather than because of their academic reputations. In an Althusserian arguement, the perception that to question football was to question the essence of America could only follow from the naturalized ideology already in place.[77] Similarly, the perceived encroachment of "blackness" on basketball challenged previously naturalized ideas about white masculinity and sports and often resulted in reactionary and racist rhetoric from white fans.

Kurt Edward Kemper argues that "to criticize the postwar abuses in college football by stressing its academic improprieties and anti-intellectualism, or the vast sums of money made from the labors of supposedly amateur students, or the segregated practices of southern teams and the corrupt values of integrated teams that scheduled them anyway sounded dangerously

[77] Louis Althusser, "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses," 334.

subversive to many."[78] When Ohio State faculty called for increased academic standards and a reemphasis on education in the late 1950s in an effort to symbolically and tangibly combat advancements by Soviet science, they were instead viewed as elitists in their ivory towers by sports writers from the *Columbus Dispatch*.[79] Worse, in 1961, when they voted to decline an invitation to the Rose Bowl in order to draw attention to the importance of academics as a university and national priority, they were vilified in the newspapers and their loyalty to America was questioned.[80] On top of that, students rioted in the street over the declining of a bowl invitation. Upwards of 2,000 to 5,000 protestors crowded onto High Street and hung effigies of the faculty representative, the leader of the Alumni Association, and the university's president. The protest even briefly made it to the Capitol, where protestors held signs reading "Damn the Faculty."[81] As football came to be seen as inherently American, its defenders viewed the game "as antithetical not only to the Soviets abroad but to effete demonstrators, the pinkish radicals, and the limp-wristed of all shades at home as well."[82] Yet these games existed within the walls of universities rife with student protest and a questioning of naturalized American ideals. And the players in this "antithetical" game were students themselves, many of whom questioned these same ideals but were assumed to represent and agree with the conservative mythology of college football.

[78] Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era* 35.
[79] Ibid., 48.
[80] Ibid., 48.
[81] Ibid., 71.
[82] Ibid., 201.

Despite the Big Ten's stated emphasis on the student-athlete and the importance of the individual's academic integrity, many conference schools were faced with a crisis of ideals versus action in the late 1960s. Off of the fields, the courts, and the tracks, the conference universities struggled to maintain their position as arbitrators of academic integrity and moral authority with their own student populations. Student-athletes were expected to accept the authority of their coach unquestioningly for the good of the team. Michael Oriard rightly questions why such an attitude was viewed as somehow patriotic: "More dispassionate folks today might wonder how unquestioning submission to the coach could be an expression of American patriotism, given the fact that the United States was born in 1776 by rejecting tyrannical authority and rugged individualism has long been one of our most cherished national traits."[83] But the subservient student-athlete and the coach as drill sergeant were accepted as the right way to teach discipline, promote masculinity, build character, and win football games. On the surface it seems ludicrous that football would teach devotion to "marriage, country, and to God," considering that it could just as easily represent a loyalty to "cohabitation, internationalism, and dialectical materialism."[84] But those in the highest positions within the game believed this natural link between football and American patriotism to be true, as evidenced by Big Ten Commissioner John L. Griffith's (1922-1944) contention that there was a direct correlation between sports and "'the American Way,' which was obviously superior to 'the Communist way, the Nazi way or the Fascist way."[85] Likewise, the particular brand of

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[83] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 20.
[84] Ibid., 33.
[85] Ibid., 29.

masculinity promoted by football was assumed to be adversative to the growing questioning of authority in the younger generation as Oriard notes.[86]

Football players in particular were assumed to be reactionary and defenders of the dominant culture. Indeed, Paul Vilardi, a former football and baseball player, was dubbed by the press the spokesman and cofounder of the Majority Coalition in reaction to liberal activists at Columbia University, and the football player as symbol of conservatism and small-town values was used quite frequently in TV and movies. But, James Simon Kunen, author of *The Strawberry Statement – Notes of a College Revolutionary* (1969), was a member of the crew team at Columbia, and a varsity wrestler organized the efforts to bring food to the protesting students. Even Vilardi supported the students' cause, just not their tactics.[87] Oriard points out that "Jocks and pukes, in other words, had more in common than their media stereotypes suggested," but jocks were "more conspicuous than the rest of their classmates, and they were singled out by reporters because they made for good theater, filling a necessary role for a simple morality play."[88] Douglas Noverr and Lawrence Ziewacz argue that, regardless of actuality, "Football players and coaches had also become symbolic of Americanism and discipline – a haven of traditional American values at a time when long-haired draft resisters were burning American

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[86] "Toughness has no politics, but it acquired political resonance in the 1950s and 1960s. The cultural rebellion of the 1960s – free love, getting high, doing your own thing - rejected the cult of toughness. Football meant competing rather than sharing, making a kind of war rather than love, working hard rather than having fun, enduring pain rather than pursuing pleasure, deferring gratification rather than demanding it now, hanging in rather than dropping out." Ibid., 36.
[87] Ibid., 21.
[88] Ibid., 21.

flags and their draft cards."[89] Biggie Munn exemplified this belief when he argued that "I would rather my son be a football player than a Phi Beta Kappa [because] […] you learn democracy and Americanism in the game of football."[90] Similarly, American Vice President Spiro Agnew, while addressing a 1971 college football awards ceremony, described football as a bulwark of "the early American ethic" against "the purveyors of a New Morality and a New Politics" of the Left.[91] But this did not make the players themselves advocates of right-leaning politics or believers in football's inherent American-ness. Yes, there were conservative student-athletes, but it was not football that made them that way. Ohio State football players did not necessarily embrace Coach Woody Hayes' violent and overbearing strategies to coaching as demonstrably necessary for instilling character or winning games or champion his conservative politics, revealing that "Really we hate [Hayes]. But we don't let that hatred get in the way of winning football games."[92] Student-athletes attempted to oust their coaches, have a say in hiring new ones, boycotted practices, joined in protest marches, and advocated for change, even though the myth held that such motives should not have existed within them because of football's inherent ability to mold "desirable" and American characteristics. Surely, "If football had, in fact, been the conservative political and cultural force that its right-wing champions claimed, the protests of the late 1960s could never have happened."[93] We must recognize that "the athletic turmoil of the

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[89] Douglas A. Noverr and Lawrence E. Ziewacz, *The Games They Played: Sports in American History, 1865-1980* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1983), 254.
[90] Qtd. in Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era*, 26.
[91] Ibid., 201.
[92] Quotation from Doug France, former Ohio State tight end and NFL lineman. Qtd. in Douglas A. Noverr and Lawrence E. Ziewacz, *The Games They Played*, 314.
[93] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 41.

1960s came from within, from players who were supposedly molded by their football experience into archdefenders of authority and discipline, God and country."[94]

Literary Review

This generalizing representation of students as New Left dissidents and radicals was recently deconstructed by Sandra Scanlon in *The Pro-War Movement* (2013) who writes about conservative student activism on campuses and groups like the Young Americans for Freedom, noting that "Student groups such as YAF increasingly challenged academic administrations only in regard to their failure to restrain New Left activity on campus."[95] She also argues that not all of those who campaigned in favor of support for the troops were ideologically committed to the war. Many of these counter-protestors "deemed anti-war dissent potentially treasonous and harmful to American society," and promoted naturalized ideas about American culture and identity.[96] Moderate political activists on the right were "determined to counter the dominant image of widespread youthful opposition to the war."[97] Similarly, Penny Lewis argues in *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks* (2013) that our collective memory of this era, "fleshed out in numerous movies, TV shows, textbooks, journalist's renderings, histories, memories, political speeches, and personal collections," splits the country between "doves" and "hawks," in an

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[94] Ibid., 41-42.
[95] Sandra Scanlon, *The Pro-War Movement: Domestic Support for the Vietnam War and the Making of Modern American Conservatism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2013), 242.
[96] Ibid., 9.
[97] Ibid., 249.

overly simplistic and often disingenuous manner.[98] Lewis argues that America's collective memory of this division holds because the "particular political valence" of the working-class, white Silent Majority vs. the liberal and intellectual elites "continues to resonate because [it] fit[s] with our *current* story of the political class divide in this country."[99]

While scholars have continued to analyze protest movements during the Vietnam Era, including student protest movements, little concentrated work has gone into exploring college athlete protest at the university level. Doug Rossinow's *The Politics of Authenticity* [1998] provides a compelling exploration into the student activism of the New Left during the 1960s, explaining that the New Left felt alienated and frustrated with the hypocrisy of the dominant society. He analyzes the importance of "authenticity" in their activism and tied it to the personal spiritual convictions of its early advocates. Through their actions, the New Left hoped to achieve real change that could heal individuals as well as the nation. Rossinow argues that the struggle was quite real for these activists and their lasting impact was not necessarily in revolutionary societal changes, but in the adoption of the power and importance of the individual in political spheres. This dissertation draws from Rossinow's focus on individuals and the importance of the agency of individuals and student groups in bottom-up student-activism, similar to the focus of Sara Evans' *Personal Politics* (1980) which examines the roots of women's activism – the civil rights movement and New Left activism – during the late Vietnam Era. Likewise, this dissertation agrees that the message and act of protest, regardless of successful change, are powerful acts of agency and resistance inside a much larger institution and can influence change

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[98] Penny Lewis, *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks: The Vietnam Anti-War Movement as Myth and Memory* (Ithaca: ILR Press, 2013), 4.
[99] Ibid., 195.

without being entirely successful in their goals. Likewise, merely questioning naturalized ideas can be a powerful step toward illuminating inequalities and harmful assumptions. Similarly, this dissertation is influenced by Doug McAdam's contention that the personal *is* political from his book, *Freedom Summer* (1990). Inequalities, both overt and felt, in our everyday lives are important and they are political in that they are negotiations of power and explorations of interconnectivity between people. In the case of student-athlete protests, they brought about institutional changes that had an everyday effect on the lives of these college students, a result that did not always follow from all student protests during this era. But, even the act of voicing dissent as an athlete was radical as student-athletes were assumed to be inherently acquiescent and conservative.

While Douglas Hartmann's *Race, Culture, and the Revolt of the Black Athlete* [2004] does an excellent job discussing the historical and cultural context of the protests of Tommie Smith, John Carlos, and the other athletes of the Olympic Project for Human Rights leading up to and during the 1968 Mexico City Olympics, his work concentrates on these athletes as Olympians more so than as college athletes. More directly, this dissertation enters a new and underdeveloped discussion on student-athlete protest and the mythological status of college football and its athletes during the Cold War and Vietnam Eras. While Murray Sperber traces the emergence of the mythology surrounding Notre Dame football and college football in general prior to World War II in *Onward to Victory* (1998), Kurt Edward Kemper's *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era* [2009] utilizes the limited school case study approach this dissertation employs, but examines a period prior to the late 1960s and before college football had become cemented as emblematic of conservatism and patriotism. Similarly, Jeffrey Montez de Oca's recently published *Discipline and Indulgence* [2013] examines this

mythological symbolism of college football during the early 1960s. Michael Oriard's fantastic book, *Bowled Over* [2009], covers the era that that this dissertation concentrates on, but in a less focused way, as his book looks at student-athlete protests nationally. Also, his book covers the era from the 1960s to the present and spends only a few pages or less on selected incidents from all over the country, leaving space for deeper analysis and building greater context to the generalized student protests outside of sports going on within the campuses. While a great overview of the past half century, his book allows for greater exploration of different forms of athletic protest and the similarities and differences that united them and tied them to the greater student protest movement, something this dissertation sets out to do. Moreover, this dissertation utilizes the voices of students to tell their stories and limits the discussion to one geographic region, allowing for a deeper analysis of the issues.

Theory and Methodology

Michigan State University was chosen as a case study for its renown for playing a larger number of African American players under Duffy Daugherty than any other school in the country other than the historically black colleges. Similarly, this author previously knew about incidents of student-athlete boycotts on the part of black athletes at the university and felt that the topic provided an outlet for further exploration. During the planning stages of the project, an invaluable collection of documents preserved by Dr. Ruth Simms Hamilton provided a treasure of information on black student life at MSU and information on a protest inspired by racial rhetoric resulting from a fight between Ohio State and Minnesota that resulted in the suspensions of two Minnesota players. This led the author to the archives of the University of Minnesota where he found a history of student activism and an active discourse in the pages of the local student newspaper. The University of Michigan was chosen initially for its history of student

activism and radical politics, but further investigation revealed a more complicated student body discourse than this author had presumed existed from collective memories of this era. Similarly, the rhetorical battle over symbols in the gender integration of varsity sports at the university proved fascinating. From the beginning, there was a plan for Notre Dame to be included because of its historical significance to college football, its geographic location, and both its ties to the conference and its outsider nature owing to its independent status and its religious affiliation, as no schools within the Big Ten are religious ones. Notre Dame was to provide a comparison and also serve as a more conservative case study.

Due to time, travel, and money constraints other schools could not be examined in the scope of this dissertation. However, without restraints of time, money, or page count, Chicago's lack of big-time sports would have provided an interesting counterpoint, as would Northwestern's status as a private institution. At the University of Indiana, 14 black football players boycotted practice over felt feelings of racism and discrimination. The University of Iowa, located deep within the Midwest in a state symbolically tied to farming and rural America could have served as a counterpoint to the urban campus of Minnesota or the liberal atmosphere of Ann Arbor. Likewise, any similarities could speak to the universality of student-athlete protest. Perhaps more than any school absent from this dissertation, Wisconsin, with incidents of violent student protest in its history and known for its liberal politics, would provide an interesting case study for examination. But, the universities in this dissertation provide the opportunity for a thorough and representative examination of student-athlete protest within the Big Ten and demonstrate the need for such protest to bring about changes to the administrative status quo within the conference.

This dissertation draws heavily from primary resources found in the archives of the University of Michigan, the University of Notre Dame, the University of Minnesota, and Michigan State University. Personal correspondence from university presidents, administrators, athletic directors, and coaches helped to rediscover narratives, both public and behind the scenes, surrounding student-athlete activism during this time. Minutes from Board of Trustees meetings and the meetings of university committees and the Big Ten Faculty Representatives were crucial for finding and analyzing institutional stances and responses to challenges on campus. Individual finding aids and collections in university archives helped to assemble narratives and provide context for complicated issues at each university and throughout the conference. Within these finding aids, hate mail addressed to athletic directors, professors, and coaches were also included.

This dissertation differs from previous investigations of student protest in that it emphasizes rediscovering the voices of students and student groups, and not just those labeled as radical or activist. To accomplish this, back issues of prominent campus newspapers – and also local newspapers at each university – were examined to find student editorials and student reporting on incidents that may not have been reported beyond campus walls or provide different angles than the ones reported to the general public. As this is a story of agency and change from below, it was important to incorporate the voices and feelings of the students themselves. In scouring student newspapers, it became clear that each newspaper had its own political stance and reporting style, but all served as public forums at their universities. Likewise, at least in the case of the editors and reporters, these were the voices of students still engaged in campus extracurricular activities, rather than just campus activism. Big Ten student newspapers, including Michigan's *Michigan Daily* and Michigan State's *State News*, were award-winning

papers, widely disseminated and read, with hard-hitting articles appearing daily. In a tactic little utilized, this dissertation includes a great many letters to the editor in its attempt to expose the public discourse permeating the campus scene. Impassioned readers at varying points on the political spectrum used the editorial pages to have their voices heard, call out administrators, chastise the editors, praise groups on campus, worry about the student culture, and mock the actions of both liberals and conservatives. Even those who considered themselves somewhere in the middle took the time to read and write into the student papers. The letters to the editor represent frequently unheard voices on campus – they are often not the ones reporting, being interviewed, or speaking for the university. But their opinions were formed in the furnace of competing opinions and viewpoints in the campus world. They responded to heard and felt opinions and, in turn, affected and molded the competing opinions of others.

Cultures are formed in response and in relationship to existing ones. But they cannot spring into existence whole cloth detached from others, be they the dominant culture or various subcultures. Cultures build off of and respond to other cultures. And, as one culture changes in response to another, that change affects the other culture. These "patterns of culture," as Raymond Williams describes, cannot be understood without also understanding the cultures surrounding and influencing them. He defines a "pattern of culture" as a selection and configuration of interest and activities, and a particular valuation of them, producing a distinct organization, a 'way of life.'"[100] Students protesting in Berkeley influenced the tactics of students on other campuses, just as the teach-ins at the University of Michigan inspired teach-ins elsewhere. But each new incarnation tweaked something of the previous and created something unique yet still traceable and similar to previous demonstrations. Black student-athletes at

[100] Raymond Williams, "The Analysis of Culture," 36.

Michigan State responded to local stimuli and grievances, but their boycotts were inseparable from the greater struggles of black athletes throughout the country and of African Americans living in the Civil Rights era. Students did not live their lives entirely separated from the greater world. The actions of students in California diffused to the Midwest, the East Coast, and the South just as the tactics of Civil Rights activists found their way northward and those of the Midwest spread outward to the rest of the country. There was a distrust of authoritarian figures and unease with the status quo shared by many within the Baby Boomer generation and arguably every new generation, and students across the country voiced their displeasure in many ways. Tellingly, the National Guard firing on and killing students occurred at Kent State University and Jackson State University and not at Cal, Columbia, or Michigan.

But individual narratives at universities also matter beyond the greater narrative of protest. The female athletes at the University of Michigan were instrumental in creating a fairer environment for female sports. Their struggles pushed the athletic department to usher in varsity athletics for women as they fought to be a part of the "Michigan Man" culture permeating throughout Michigan athletics and refused to settle for less. Throughout the country, women were advocating for equality, respect, and a destruction of harmful, patriarchal power structures, but not each battle took the same form. And to forget that it was the athletes who advocated for and forced change, rather than the institution implementing change of their own accord, is an important distinction. Student-athletes attempted to create, with varying degrees of success, new dynamics between athletes and coaches, athletic departments, and universities. E.P. Thompson argued that individuals must be seen as productive forces and integral to the relationships within those forces rather than as part of a predetermined structure. Thompson was adamant that the

working class were active agents in their own creation.[101] Class is not a "structure," but an active process that happens in human relationships. Similarly, students during this time, including student-athletes, were active agents in defining their own roles at the university and negotiating the power dynamic between themselves and their institutions. Thompson argued that working people developed an "identity of interests as between themselves, and as against their rulers and employers."[102] Student-athletes, just like their fellow students, had to find and define their own identities: as students, as athletes, as men and women, as liberal, conservative, or somewhere in between, and by race, religion, and ethnicity. All played a role in how they came to view themselves and attempted to control how others viewed them. But their shared status as student-athletes defined them in the eyes of the media, fans, coaches, and collective memory.

Most importantly, this dissertation connects student-athlete protest of the Vietnam Era to the generalized student protest and "structures of feeling" of that generation. Just like other protesting students, student-athletes felt alienated, disempowered, and frustrated by a system they saw as lacking or corrupt in some way, and they reacted accordingly with different tactics and results, but still united in their active call for change. Student-athletes *caused* change within their own lives, sports, universities, and conference. And, unlike many of their fellow students, they did so under the realization that even speaking out against felt injustices could diminish their playing time and threaten their financial ability to continue their college education.[103] And they did so in an environment that was considered especially reactionary from the administrators

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[101] E.P. Thompson, "Preface" from *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963), in *Cultural Theory and Popular Culture: A Reader – 3rd Edition*, ed. John Storey (London: Pearson, 2006), 41.
[102] Ibid., 43.
[103] That is not to say that activism was without risks for all or even most students. Many students faced expulsion, arrest, prison time, threats, racism, physical harm, or even death.

and coaches within the games, to the media and fans outside of it, and even by many of their fellow students advocating for change around campus. Especially today, in the larger discussion of the rights of student athletes, questions of health concerns, academic emphasis, fair treatments, and compensation are often dismissed with the tired rhetoric of amateurism and the belief in the great deal that student-athletes receive: a "free" education for playing a game. This defense, which falls back on the belief that big-time college sports allow for equal academic emphasis and that change previously addressed and forced upon the universities somehow negates real and felt present deficiencies, has been used throughout the history of college athletics.

Chapter One, "Challenging the 'Leaders and the Best,'" explores student-athlete protest at the University of Michigan, where male athletes struggled with finding their own political voices as varsity football players under the coaching of Bo Schembechler. Schembechler encouraged them to be individuals, but not if it got in the way of football, a directive the players challenged when they supported an anti-war halftime show in 1971. Amidst university-wide accusations of sexual discrimination, female students battled against second-class treatment as they attempted to integrate the cheerleading squad, the marching band, and the student newspaper's sports staff. Female club athletes pushed for funding and varsity recognition for their sports as coaches and athletic administrators looked to protect the symbolic masculine bastion of sports and the cherished varsity block 'M' award. In Chapter Two, "Shake Up the Thunder from Below," African-American student-athletes at the University of Notre Dame, a school steeped in ties to the Big Ten Conference and situated within the Midwest, challenged the symbolic whiteness of their university, the positive mythology of assimilation, and attempted to actively shape what it meant to be a Notre Dame student. As a grossly underrepresented minority group on a

conservative campus, black students grappled with fitting in as students off the playing field and asserting their identity as black men at a school that had been built on Irish Catholicism and an effort to achieve mythological whiteness within American society. Chapter Three, "'Firm and Strong, United are We'" concerns Black student-athletes questioning the rhetoric of colorblindness in sports and the celebration of limited integration – reserved only at the player level – at the University of Minnesota at the end of Murray Warmath's tenure as football coach. It also examines a fight between Minnesota and Ohio State's basketball teams in 1972 which resulted in the season-long suspensions of two black Minnesota players. In the resulting discussion of the incident in the media, the suspended players, their teammates, and their style of play were reprimanded using arguably racist rhetoric, galvanizing the black community of the Twin Cities and challenging the lack of racial awareness in the Big Ten's administration. Lastly, Chapter Four: "'Spartan Teams are Bound to Win'" details the racial situation for black athletes at Michigan State, where black student-athletes held a strike for better treatment both on and beyond the playing field in the spring of 1968. They questioned the sincerity and altruism of the Big Ten's long and celebrated history of integrated athletics and demanded a fuller role as students within their own university. Their activism led to the hiring of black coaches, assistants, and administrators within the university and helped to integrate the cheerleading squad. In 1972, following the racist response to the basketball fight at the University of Minnesota, three MSU professors and a group of black student-athlete leaders petitioned the Big Ten to enact conference-wide changes to fully integrate all levels of the conference and alleviate the feeling of discrimination felt by student-athletes as members of the white community denied and decried their allegations.

Chapter 1

Challenging the "Leaders and the Best": How Student-Athletic Protest Challenged the University of Michigan's Purported Ideology

Introduction

The University of Michigan and Ann Arbor were everything that people loved, hated, celebrated, and feared about universities and college towns during the Vietnam Era. Established in 1817, it had grown to become one of the leading public institutions in the country with top-notch faculty, an enviable commitment to research, a vibrant cultural scene, and a storied athletic history. But it had also grown to be known as a hotbed for political activism of all sorts. Michigan and its students seemed to have a knack for leading the way in student activism and remaining at the vanguard of new youth trends during this time. While nowhere near as serious as teach-ins, sit-ins, or student strikes, Michigan students a decade earlier had helped spark a craze of youthful protest against the perceived, repressive paternalism of colleges (which often regulated the morality and social lives of students) and housing structures inadequate for the challenge of accommodating an increasing student population. As LaDale Winling writes:

> On a warm night in March of 1952, a minor disturbance involving students in the all-male South Quad and West Quad dorms, located across Madison Street from each other, led to a major incident exhibiting frustration with the university's control of residential life. A large group of undergraduates congregated in the street on the west edge of campus, attacked police who arrive[d] to quell the upheaval, and stormed the women's dormitories on the northeast edge of campus, allegedly grabbing women's panties and brassieres. What became known in the popular press as the nation's first 'panty raid' was

> characterized by students as a 'reaction to the university's regulations' and envy toward the luxury of South Quadrangle,' a dormitory less than two years old.[104]

But the more peaceful and less overtly political protests of the 1950s would give way to the large demonstrations of the following two decades. Michigan students continued to influence collegiate movements throughout the country over the following decades, albeit far less playfully in approach. Critics of protesting students looked at the world they had forged for these students and saw it as good. The New Left students were given opportunities unavailable to many within the generations before them, and defenders of the status quo had a hard time empathizing with their calls for greater social justice and a creation of a new society. Many of those same defenders viewed themselves as the makers of this new and prosperous society through their own hard work and sacrifice, including putting themselves in harm's way in World War II.

On a very basic level, it is understandable that the objections and protests of students seemed alien to them. Tradition is a powerful symbol and one that easily demonstrates the naturalization of ideas. Protests against the dominant culture seemed like a personal attack on an older generation and their way of life, as well as a dismissal of their sacrifices. Perhaps it would have been easier to understand a direct criticism of cultural works of art, single speeches, or written, intellectual works. But the New Left found fault with something far deeper: American culture itself. As Raymond Williams explained, cultural meaning also exists in our "institutions and forms of behaviour."[105] And all society does not march toward perfection or an "absolute" ideal, but constantly evolves. However, the learned values of a society can become incredibly important and powerful, as these now traditional values can "contribute radically to the growth of

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[104] LaDale Winling, "Student Housing, City Politics, and the University of Michigan" (master's thesis, University of Michigan) 2007, 69-70.

[105]Raymond Williams, “The Analysis of Culture," 33.

man's powers to enrich his life, to regulate his society, and to control his environment."[106] For instance, since WWII, many of the Big Ten universities had grown in enrollment, research, and revenue through the embracing of government grants or joint ventures with the CIA or through corporate partnerships with large companies like Dow Chemical. The joining of education with business and the government had allowed both to grow and, arguably, allowed more students to seek an undergraduate education. With the values learned and espoused by the previous generation, white, middle-class, American society had prospered, and it is understandable that many would view these values as self-evident and worthy of being defended.

But Williams also noted that we must look at objects as processes and a series of relationships that are inseparable from one another. For instance, art does not just exist as a painting on a canvas. It is an activity reflective of, in response to, and in relationship with its production, the art trade, the political culture it sprang from, and the values of the people producing it (and that people's values were in part formed in relationship with and against other peoples' values).[107] The art is an integral part of the story, but it is inseparable from and could not exist without the others – nor could they exist without it. In terms of this case study, challenges to the status quo of college life, sports, and gender relations from students could not have sprung up whole cloth in reaction to nothing. They are a reflection of and reaction to their present culture. But it is no simple task to examine and understand a "pattern of culture," as culture evolves but not always toward some agreed upon progressive ideal or truth. When a group challenges the status quo, they are reacting to the ideas and actions of others. Without that challenge, defenders of the status quo would not be inspired to counter-demonstrate. And that

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[106] Ibid., 33.
[107] Ibid., 35.

counter-demonstration affects those within the dominant culture, those on the fence, and those already in opposition, leading to further and varied responses. Even within a group arguing for change – for instance, Michigan football players advocating for an anti-war halftime show – not everyone will have the same motivations, criticisms, or solutions. Likewise, as was the case, one player might feel the need to explain that he is politically conservative while another views himself as liberal, but both are opposed to the war and have been shaped by the environment of change on campus and in their own lives.

As Williams noted, "Cultural history must be more than the sum of the particular histories, for it is with the relations between them, the particular forms of the whole organization, that it is especially concerned." The narrative of the evolution of a change in culture is not a story of a progressive march forward: "since the particular activities will be serving varying and sometimes conflicting ends, the sort of change we must look for will rarely be of a simple kind: elements of persistence, adjustment, unconscious assimilation, active resistance, alternative effort, will all normally be present, in particular activities and in the whole organization."[108] And the narrative plays itself out in different arenas. The University of Michigan clings to traditions it views as inherent and well-intentioned as calls for women's varsity athletics increases. Similarly, students viewing themselves as liberal allies of the Women's Movement fall into the same unconscious assimilation of naturalized sexist convictions believed by the dominant culture. And, when changes do come, resistance does not just end. Traditional and naturalized ideas still hold power as even left-leaning students critiquing the conservative mythologies of football and sports fall into embracing naturalized stereotypes of athletes at the University of Michigan.

[108] Ibid., 35.

Throughout this chapter, letters to the editor, editorials, protests, and actions reveal the complexities and challenges of a changing culture, even at a University and town considered a bastion of liberal thought and protest during the Vietnam Era. This chapter looks to complicate the narratives of Michigan's student population as overwhelmingly radical and college athletes, and especially football players, as conservative. That is not to say that there were not radical students at the University of Michigan or that some football players were not conservative. And, in the case of female student-athletes, their activism for increased athletic opportunities was seen as radical by the athletic department and reactionary male sports fans, but their activism operated within institutional boundaries. But we must go beyond generalized narratives built on simplified cultural memories encouraged by the media and politicians. This chapter also demonstrates the reluctance on the part of the University of Michigan to serve as a proactive advocate for change. This is, in part, understandable, as universities and other large institutions often move slowly and cautiously: "It is often an obstacle to the growth of a society that so many academic institutions are, to an important extent, self-perpetuating and resistant to change."[109] But, for a university which prides itself on being a "leader and the best" and encouraging such qualities in its students, a narrative forms of an institution reluctant to actively take the lead. Instead, it continually reacts to or even resists efforts by students to create their own change, while still embracing its public image of leading the way toward progressive changes toward equality.

Activism, Counter-Protest, and the Middle-Ground Majority within the Student Body

In October 1960, President John F. Kennedy had chosen the steps of the Michigan Union to announce his call for a formation of the Peace Corps (in 1964 President Johnson announced

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[109] Ibid., 39.

his plans for his Great Society program at Michigan Stadium), but Ann Arbor itself was still a conservative town. It had gone Republican in presidential elections in 1952 and 1956 to the tune of a two to one vote for Eisenhower both times (and nearly the same result in favor of Nixon in 1960).[110] Since 1920, the town had voted for a Democrat for governor only twice and went twenty-six years between Democrat mayors (1931-1957). Even during the 1960s, Ann Arbor had a Republican mayor for all but the last year of the decade, and the previous mayor, William E. Brown, Jr., continually made comments about worries over "communistic" and "socialistic" undertakings in and around the city.[111] Between 1960 and 1970, the University grew from 24,000 students and 2,500 instructional staff members to 32,000 and 4,300, respectively, and became known for the presumed leftist leanings of the campus population. While the city itself was still arguably conservative as far as voting records went, the University of Michigan did not have the same reputation.[112]

When discussing the Vietnam Era, too often a sharp divide is made between hawks and doves, reactionaries and radicals, adults and youths, dominant society and the counterculture. Especially at the University of Michigan, it is easy to paint the student population as a homogenous group of countercultural activists or supporters. During the 1960s, concerned students and citizens worked to fight racial discrimination within the campus and city and helped to form an atmosphere of political change. In 1962, the City Council declared that any

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[110] Jonathan L. Marwil, *A History of Ann Arbor* (Ann Arbor: Ann Arbor Observer Company, 1987), 146.

[111] Ibid., 146.

[112] This is not to imply that Democrats correlates to liberal, as the Dixiecrats certainly demonstrated, or that Republican equaled conservative. Within parties, there are different viewpoints and the parties themselves evolve and change over the years. Likewise, people might vote for a politician and still not whole-heartedly agree with his/her platform.

discrimination based on "race, creed, color, or national origin is a violation of the public policy of the city," and progressive townspeople continued to participate in "fair housing demonstrations, obstructed the local draft board and ROTC units, seized a principal thoroughfare in the summer of 1969, and organized themselves into pressure groups – Tenants Union, Black Action Movement, Graduate Employees Union – to protest conditions in the city and university."[113] As historian Jonathan Marwil notes, the activism in Ann Arbor only increased as the decade progressed.[114]

But Marwil also identifies reactionary voices in the city.[115] Increased activism on campus and in the downtown of Ann Arbor worried some townspeople who feared that outsider students would affect unwanted change in their community. Clashes between students and police during demonstrations only elevated this worry, as one police detective opined in 1967: "Now the students are going down the same path that caused the Roman Empire to fall. If they don't like a law they rebel against it. The students are trying to make themselves a group immune to the law."[116] In 1968, Democrats had an 8-3 majority on the City Council, reversing the recent history of Republicans dominating the seats sixty-eight to twenty-one over the previous fifteen

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[113] Marwil, *A History of Ann Arbor*, 152-153.

[114] "Beginning with an organized discussion ("teach-in") at the university in March of 1965, which by setting the example for a hundred other campuses identified Ann Arbor as a center of protest, the war established itself as a real presence in the city. […] Demonstrations, marches, neighborhood canvassing, all were used by the war's opponents to argue their case. Twice petition drives tried to place the war on the ballot, to have citizens testify in their community and as a community." Ibid.,153.

[115] "When speeches at the university turned into sit-ins at the draft board, a Republican councilman, in anticipation of Veterans Day, offered a resolution supporting U.S. policy and condemning those who used civil disobedience as a means of protest. The proposal was withdrawn before it came to a formal vote, but its appearance recalled the patriotism enlisted during former wars, which would continue to be heard." Ibid., 154.

[116] Ibid., 160.

years.[117] By 1972, an activist political party, the Human Rights Party, won seats on the Council from the first and second wards of the city, pledging to "leash in the police, landlords, and City Hall bureaucrats." The student-dominated party helped to push through more lenient marijuana penalties, but these reduced penalties were overturned a year later by a Republican mayor and Republican-held Council. By 1974, pushback from student activists had the softened penalty added to the city charter where it could not be overturned so easily.[118] The rise of the HRP took away some votes from Democratic candidates, allowing a Republican mayor to be elected in 1973, but a push for a ranked ballot in city elections and an instant runoff system allowed Democrat Albert Wheeler to win in 1975, becoming the first black mayor in Ann Arbor's history.[119]

But, not all townspeople found themselves opposed to the politics of the students. And, for that matter, not all students wanted the same things. However, by the early 1970s, students were believed to be a real and potent threat to some members of the Ann Arbor community.[120] Surely, it was easy to see the students as a generalized group and the protests as emblematic of the danger to Ann Arbor's previous political and cultural way of life. With large groups of activist students and young people circulating underground newspapers, closing down the campus for sit-ins, teach-ins, and a Moratorium, and blocking downtown roadways and scuffling with the police, the voices of those young people antagonistic to the status quo were easily and loudly heard. But within the campus itself, a different discourse could also be heard. When

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[117] Ibid., 161.
[118] Ibid., 162.
[119] Ibid., 165.
[120] "With their politics, their music, their drugs, and their liberated sexuality, they were easily stereotyped as a nuisance or worse, and their behavior condemned and lamented." Ibid., 159-160.

faculty and students held a Vietnam protest at the campus "Diag" in March 1965, as part of the spreading teach-ins on campus, not all students were on board. An article in the student newspaper, the *Michigan Daily*, pointed out a "large group of people carrying signs protesting the protest. The chant 'Better dead than Red,' was seen and heard as the delegation of marchers bearing an American flag and numerous signs put one in mind of a DAR [Daughters of the American Revolution] rally."[121] In the middle of the decade, a sizable and vocal opposition existed in disagreement with the New Left protestors.

During these years, the editorial staff and many of the writers of the *Daily* seemed to be more sympathetic to the left-leaning activists than to the counter-protestors, often resulting in right-leaning students writing in to the newspaper's opinion section to critique what the found to be biased articles and editorials unrepresentative of the entirety, or even the majority, of the student body. E.J. Smith, Jr., a student at the university, wrote a letter to the *Daily*, complaining about the slanted writing in favor of leftist politics in the newspaper. He argued that the editors had "self-appointed" themselves as "spokesmen for the students" on the editorial pages and wrote "boring, brassy, monotonous mumbo jumbo." He belittled their discussions of the "Power Structure," and likened them to poor imitators of activists from the "Marxist Thirties." Smith accused them of using the *Daily* as their "personal sounding board" and emphasized that "you and your camp followers don't speak for me and my fellow students." He encouraged them to

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[121] The author continued: "The vocal minority of dissenters in the teach-in made up for its lack of numbers with large football-type jeering sections. The speakers on the Diag were hard pressed to get a word in over the chants, drum beats and flying snowballs. That the spectacle of the radical right was discourteous and a display of immaturity befitting a junior high basketball game is not in doubt. The intriguing question is why these elements refused to participate and present their views in an orderly fashion. The object of the teach-in was not to propagandize but to create a learning situation for anyone interested in the problem." Michael Badamo, "The Viet Nam Protest: Some Chose Not to Talk," *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 26, 1965, 4.

leave if they found campus life "so intolerable."[122] Another such student, David Block, critiqued coverage of a recent protest for its failure to "present both sides of the issue," feeling that it was not a "learning situation" as the *Daily* had argued.[123] The campus chapter of the Young Republicans wrote into the paper to express that they felt that the Faculty Moratorium was "entirely illegal and proper action should be employed to prevent this teachers' strike."[124] The Young Republicans found themselves in agreement with Governor George Romney and University Regent, Frederick C. Matthaei, the latter arguing that the faculty was "robbing the payroll!"[125] But, as a free and widely distributed paper on campus, the *Daily* reached a large number of students and provided them with an outlet to read, write, critique, and debate the politics of campus and the wider world. Even those who criticized the perceived bias of the *Daily* still read and responded to the newspaper. It served as a student-run public forum and allowed for dissenting voices to be heard.

Another student, sophomore Thomas L. Ewing, opined that the "unilateral actions of a few reactionary University professors threatens to destroy the peaceful relations which were slowly developing between the University and the state Legislature. Their tactics of canceling classes are those of extremism and will accomplish nothing […] However I might ask those teachers who plan to suspend classes to examine just who will benefit (and how much?) from

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[122] E.J. Smith, Jr., "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 5, 1965, 4.

[123] Said student also downplayed the success of the event, arguing that the high turnout likely came from student curiosity, female students getting to stay out late, and male students getting a chance to talk to female students. David Block, "… It Was Too One-Sided," *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 26, 1965, 4.

[124] Leonard Pratt, "The Critics Are Mistaken About the Faculty Moratorium," *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 18, 1965, 4.

[125] Ibid., 4.

their walk out and weigh it against those who will be harmed and have their schedules disrupted."[126] As part of the teach-ins, around 500 students listened to "the other side of the controversy," on a Thursday. Led by a group of political science students, the counter-rally hoped to "explain the reasons for a firm U.S. commitment in Vietnam." The discussion remained cordial. However, during other events, a "group of Young Republicans and others carried placards supporting U.S. policy. At least one counter-protestor expressed the belief that the study-in was giving the university a black eye."[127] The *Ann Arbor News* had originally characterized the Teach-In as a "holiday" and deemed it as "unfortunate," perhaps showing the divide between the political leanings of the city's newspaper and the student newspaper.[128] In October, when thirty-eight protestors were arrested during a sit-in at Ann Arbor's draft office, they held a fast in jail. Protestors and counter-protestors lined up outside both in support of the activists and to condemn them. The *Ann Arbor News* reported that "several fights almost erupted" during the standoff.[129] At another point, protestors were surrounded and heckled by high school students and older townspeople wielding rocks and bottles.[130]

That same day, the *Daily* reported on a homecoming float built by students protesting the war that had been destroyed by parade goers during the Homecoming festivities. The students

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[126] Thomas L. Ewing, "Extremism?" *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 18, 1965, 4.

[127] Phil Corner, "Study-In at U of M Acclaimed by Foes of U.S. Viet Policy," *Detroit Free Press*, Mar. 26, 1965.

[128] Mimi Taylor, "Says Protest No 'Holiday,'" *Ann Arbor News*, Mar. 18, 1965, Box 2, Folder 30, Marcia Barabee Papers, 1961-1969, 857 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[129] William B. Treml, "Jailed Demonstrators Fasting," *Ann Arbor News*, Sept. 16, 1965, Box 2, Folder 30, Marcia Barabee Papers, 1961-1969, 857 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[130] "Demonstrators heckled on march, at county jail," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 16, 1965, 1.

and townspeople ripped the float apart and "continued throwing paper, eggs, a few sticks and two or three coke bottles" at the float and at the protestors.[131] Michael Lubin, writing in to the editorial page, acknowledged that the student body could now say that it had "about 200 students who are willing and most pleased to attack violently anyone (women included) who is opposed to the U.S. policy in Vietnam."[132] Lubin noted that the police stood by and allowed it to happen, providing no protection to those marching with the float. Fellow student Michael Gow condemned the "patriots" who attacked the float and chastised them for embarrassing America through intimidating those they disagreed with by force.[133] But Jim Brady, a graduate of Michigan, wrote in to the paper to decry the "virus" of leftism that had infected the pages of the *Daily* and the campus. Pointing to the opinion pages, Brady complained of a "virulent minority, composed of innocents, pro-Communists, plain ole draft-dodgers, and left-wing nuts" who used the paper to "saturate the student body with their anti-American propaganda."[134] T.V. Bede, a senior at the university, called out the editorial staff for not giving a "far larger portion of your editorial page to dissenters from your opinions" – a belief on his part that there were many dissenters writing in to the *Daily* who found the publication of their letters denied. He argued that the editors "certainly [should not] kid [themselves] (whatever you tell others) that [they] represent the majority – or even a large minority of the student opinion on this campus.[135] Another student wrote in complaining about VOICE's loudspeaker by the library on campus

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[131] Judith Warren, "Protest float destroyed by crowd," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 16, 1965, 1.
[132] Michael Lubin, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 16, 1965, 4.
[133] Michael Gow, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 16, 1965, 4.
[134] Jim Brady, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 16, 1965, 4.
[135] T.V. Bede, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 8, 1965, 4.

disturbing people trying to learn.[136] In September of 1965, campus activists from SNCC put up a poster in the Union that empathized with the people of Vietnam. However, the poster depicted US soldiers committing war crimes and contained an arrow pointing to a recruiting station nearby. Students in the Union had very mixed reactions to the poster, and it created a bit of controversy; police were called in and they took pictures of the students, while university officials declared the poster illegal, but allowed the students to keep the poster up for the day.[137] A number of students wrote in condemning the poster and saw it as being in "poor taste" as it "smears the good name and character of hundreds of American boys who have given their lives in defense of their country in the jungles of Viet Nam."[138]

The specter of war and the growing mistrust of government authority brought together a great number of groups with disparate causes and beliefs. As one example, a flyer distributed around campus advertised a rally for September 5, 1968 on the steps of the library to hear "survivors of the Chicago Massacre." The event was jointly sponsored by the Mobilization Committee, Students for McCarthy, VOICE-SDS, Guild House, Resistance, Catholic Peace Fellowship, Interfaith Council, Canterbury House, and the Peace and Freedom Center.[139] But a joint belief in ending the war and a deep skepticism of those in power did not mean that the Left (or Right) was a unified front. Even the existence of so many different political groups on

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[136] VOICE was the local and founding chapter of Students for a Democratic Society. John Lossing, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 8, 1965, 4.
[137] Michael Badamo, "Fish Bowl Poster Attacking U.S. Activity in Viet Nam Sparks Furor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 16, 1965, 1.
[138] Jeffrey Beal, "Some Negative Viewpoints: The Intellectual Underground - The Fishbowl Sign," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 18, 1965, 4.
[139] "Chicago Massacre." Flyer, Box 1, Folder 5, Richard G. Wilson Papers, 1967-1969, 86438 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

campus points to greater complexity than simply "Liberal" or "Conservative."[140] Similarly, liberal, conservative, and anarchistic groups on campus argued over ideology, tactics, and influence. Even when groups were in agreement over their opposition to the war, they found themselves at odds over who would receive credit for protests and the amount of paper space and exposure they received. Gary Barber demonstrated this worry over a hierarchy of injustices when he queried whether any of the Teach-Ins on campus would care at all about the conflict between India and Pakistan in 1965, observing that "the American Left is concerned with peace only when communists are being killed."[141]

Throughout this era, the articles and letters printed in the *Daily*, the University's public forum, point to a much more splintered student body than the discourse about this time usually implies. Yes, those against the war seemed to be more numerous than those in favor, but an even larger number remained indifferent or immobilized. While around three thousand students came out for the Teach-In in March 1965 and one-hundred fifty protested the event, another 26,000 students stayed home.[142] The University of Michigan was home to activists from all parts of the country, including local activists from Ann Arbor. Likewise, it was home to defenders of the status quo who felt strongly that the United States held the moral high ground in the war and was defending the world against the spread of communism. Such was the case when the *Detroit News*

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[140] For instance, Carl Oglesby, President of the SDS, revealed that he didn't consider the government and military officials running the war as "very bad men." He noted that the leaders of the government "are not moral monsters. They are all honorable men. They are all liberals." However, he believed that theirs was an older kind of liberalism, and one that many felt had lost its humanist way, caring more about holding on to power than seeking to improve the causes of battling poverty and war. Carl Oglesby, "March on Washington," November 27, 1965. Box 1, Folder 12, Richard G. Wilson Papers, 1967-1969, 86438 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[141] Gary Barber, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 11, 1965, 4.

[142] Jeffrey Goodman, "Anti-Democracy And the 26,160," *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 26, 1965, 4.

interviewed sophomore Peter Liesak about the Teach-In who stated that Dr. Arnold S. Kaufman, Associate Professor of Philosophy and one of the organizers of the events, had turned down his request to speak in opposition to the protestors.[143]

As the war dragged on, troop levels and casualties increased, and the conflict expanded, more and more Americans became frustrated with the war in Southeast Asia and its purported purpose. This was especially true on college campuses. Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr. expressed the frustration with the current discourse over the war and the vilification of those in opposition to it.[144] Schlesinger provided anecdotes of reactionary tactics, listing military discharges, teachers losing their jobs, beatings, and legal punishments against activists. He found one particular move especially galling: "various draft boards have terminated protestors' deferments, presumably on the weird theory that military service is punishment." This particular issue was especially concerning to university students as well, and faculty members, students, and activists at the University of Michigan continually increased their efforts to promote awareness for ways to

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[143] Kaufman wrote an op-ed piece in response, refuting Liesak's claims and rhetorically questioning if the *Detroit News*, Liesak, and pro-war individuals would be in favor of hearing *all* views on the war, including "spokesmen for the official Soviet or Communist Chinese point of view," as well. Arnold S. Kaufman, "Letter to the Editor," *Detroit News*, Apr. 2, 1965, Reprinted in the Biweekly Information/Action Report of the SDS, Box 4, Folder 27, Arnold S. Kaufman Papers, 1954-1971, 85305 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[144] "As the war increasingly dominates and obsesses our national life, we can look for the appearance of associated symptoms: the oversimplification of issues, the exchange of invective, the questioning of motives and loyalties, and the degradation of debate. As this process continues, the emotional advantage will be increasingly on the side of the flag-wavers. Some of these will be tempted to pay off old scores as they wrap themselves in Old Glory." Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "McCarthyism is Threatening Us Again," *Saturday Evening Post*, Aug. 18, 1966, Box 5, Folder 15, Arnold S. Kaufman Papers, 1954-1971, 85305 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

avoid the draft or file as a conscientious objector.[145] Throughout the rest of the decade and into the 1970s, the articles and the opinion pages of the *Daily* were a rhetorical battlefield between the Left and the Right as students navigated the imprecise boundaries of campus and Ann Arbor culture. But, for the most part, the *Daily* wrote as if the lines between town and gown, Right and Left, Pro-war and Anti-war were hard and immutable.[146] And, such reporting in the media coupled with the politicizing of historical narratives over time tend to color our society's historical memories of the Vietnam Era, creating a picture of a fairly unified and politicized student population.

The events of the late 1960s have been well-documented as Ann Arbor remained a hub of political protest and counter-cultural influence, and it would be beyond the scope of this chapter to address them all or even much of them. However, a few more instances are worth noting to demonstrate the complexities of student activism on campus. In 1968, Robben Fleming began his tenure as Michigan's new president. Known as a mediator, Fleming had previously served as the Chancellor of the University of Wisconsin, an attorney, and a labor negotiator. His mediation

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[145] The faculty in the College of Literature, Science, and the Arts proposed a resolution in 1966 allowing professors to give some male students pass/fail grades so that they would not be playing an active role in possibly damaging the students' rank-in-class position in the Selective Service's draft system. "A Resolution Proposed to the Faculty of the College of L.S.&A., Resolution 5279, November 21, 1966, Box 5, Folder 8, Arnold S. Kaufman Papers, 1954-1971, 85305 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[146] Chris Parks, writing in the "Community Life" section of the *Daily*, wrote about the still-fractious relationship between town and gown in 1971. He quoted Jack Garris, the head of the Concerned Citizens of Ann Arbor, who complained of "Revolutionary elements" that had "turned our youth to drugs, violence, and indiscriminate sex." Garris lamented that the "city has been capitulated to these elements who advocate the destruction of our American way of life." Lindsay Chaney wrote about the "schizophrenic" nature of Ann Arbor and noted that the republicans had run an "arch-conservative" rather than a moderate for mayor for the first time in recent years, advocating a "Vote Republican before it gets worse" ad campaign. Qtd. in Chris Parks, "The uneasy neighbors," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 9, 1971; Lindsay Chaney, "Schizophrenic politics of a college town," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 9, 1971.

and negotiation skills would certainly come in handy over his term as president. In an introductory piece appearing in the *Daily*, he was described as "equally at home with embittered radicals and middle age businessmen, a quality which has given him a growing reputation for having no real ideology of his own."[147] Fleming was sympathetic to the concerns of left-leaning students, believing that "dissent is an integral part of the University," but he also sought to "block the admission of radical students out to 'destroy the University.'" He took an even tone on student protest, looking mostly to defuse situations and avoid outright revolt and destruction. When black students locked themselves into the University's administration building after the assassination of Martin Luther King, Jr., he "excused the students' action as a hasty emotional response to the slaying of the civil rights leader," but still disapproved of seizing University buildings and convinced them to leave within the day by promising to investigate their demands.[148]

Above all else, Fleming wanted to avoid a violent incident like that which had occurred at Columbia University. However, local activists interviewed by the *Daily* doubted that such an outcome would even be likely, considering that they believed Michigan to be a school for "rich, white students" and "not ripe ground for a massive demonstration anyway." Despite the University's status as a leftist campus, its students were assumed to be less radical and more peaceful, even by its own activists. Throughout the 1968-1969 academic year, students continued to protest a wide range of issues on campus with one protest over insufficient county welfare

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[147] Henry Grix and Steve Nissen, "A President, a mediator," *Michigan Daily*, Aug. 27, 1968, 2.

[148] Personally, Fleming considered himself to be a liberal – although more aligned with the Old Left than the New Left – but realized that his penchant for compromise would not go over well with critics worried about student activism. Ibid., 2.

resulting in two-hundred students being arrested and over 1200 protesting.[149] Students called out the injustice of the arrests and the overreaching of the police department – a contingent made up of officers from three counties, with loaded rifles, German Shepherds, and a helicopter – especially considering the peaceful nature of the crowd which included a large number of mothers on welfare.[150] Fleming received praise from the University of Michigan Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs in September 1969 for his concerns for students and faculty, his "candor and courage" in vocally coming out against the war and cooperating with campus opposition to the war, his defense of academic freedom and free speech, and his handling of a student takeover of the L.S.& A. building at the end of the month.[151]

Of particular interest, in February 1970, around 100 students protested General Electric sending eight recruiters to the West Engineering Building.[152] Some of the protestors knocked down Professor John G. Young, breaking his glasses, and took over the building to disrupt any interviews. The police were called in, and some of the protestors threw swore at them and threw stones at them, prompting the police to arrest a few of the students. Around 80 protestors moved on to President Fleming's office, and did around $800-$1000 worth of damage by burning the

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[149] Philip Block and Steve Nissen, "28 'U' students jailed at protest," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 6, 1968, 1.

[150] Mark Levin, "Trying the protestors: A call for reason," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 10, 1968, 4.

[151] "The University of Michigan Senate Advisory Committee on University Affairs," Press Release, n.d., Box 1, Folder 7, David Chudwin Papers, 1968-1972, 861090 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[152] During the 1969-1970 academic year, one-sixth of the University's total sponsored research was performed for the Department of Defense. Richard Lagault, the associate director of the University's Willow Run Laboratories (a multi-million dollar defense contractor), argued that such research was necessary. At the time, only Johns Hopkins, MIT, the University of Illinois, and the University of California received more military research money. Dave Chudwin, "'U' research: Bring the war home," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 1970, n.p., Box 1, Folder 7, David Chudwin Papers, 1968-1972, 861090 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

carpet with cigarette butts, breaking table legs, and marking up the walls. In all, nine students and four non-student protestors were arrested.[153] The Dean of Engineering, Gordon J. Van Wylen, reported that a "number of Engineering students were very disturbed about their inability to interview and to move through the passageway. There was continued danger of confrontation between the Engineering students and the demonstrators." Similarly, Engineering Council President Christopher Bloch argued that the "vast majority of Engineering students believe that it is their freedom of choice to interview with whomever they wish. When the Students for a Democratic Society come to the Engineering Placement service, the damage they do is much more critical than the insignificant incidents of broken windows and bloodied noses. The real damage is the hate and misunderstanding created when one man tramples on the sincere beliefs of others."[154] President Fleming, an arguably sympathetic administrator in regard to the activism of students, agreed with their assessments.[155] The engineering students, faculty members, and Fleming, while respecting the right of students to protest, pointed out an often overlooked aspect of the administration versus student dynamic: not all students wanted the same things. To many of the protestors, interviewing with GE, Dow Chemical, or the CIA was tantamount to supporting and aiding the war. To the engineering students, many of whom likely were against the war, they saw it as a pragmatic move toward the career they wanted, or likely they saw no

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[153] "Report to the University Community," From the Office of the President, concerning the events of February 18, 1970, Box 4, Folder 30, J. Edgar Edwards Papers, 1938-1973, 85142 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[154] Ibid.

[155] Flemming argued: "During the 1969-1970 academic year, one-sixth of the University's total sponsored research was performed for the Department of Defense. Richard Lagault, the associate director of the University's Willow Run Laboratories (a multi-million dollar defense contractor), argued that such research was necessary. At the time, only Johns Hopkins, MIT, the University of Illinois, and the University of California received more military research money." Ibid.

real dissonance between wanting a job with GE out of college while still being opposed to the war. Arguably, still others probably saw it as a way to do their part for the American war effort.

This particular incident highlights once again the myth of generalized student activism. These engineering students were also part of the student voice at the time, but with significantly different goals than those of their SDS counterparts.[156] While it is undeniable that a "structure of feeling" existed during this generation involving a deeper questioning of authority, not every youth experienced that in the same way.[157] The point being, too often our historical perspective becomes simplified as we look for strict and easy classifications and explanations. This is not a condemnation of historians, as the best always complicate our understandings of historical narratives and motivations. But often, our historical memories latch on to the least challenging or simplified images: student vs. townsperson, hippy vs. suit, or activist vs. jock. While such diametric positions did exist at times for certain individuals, the reality was much more complicated and was often amplified by media representations of such divides.[158]

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[156] It should be noted that the above CIA protest occurred during the time of SDS's waning influence and during a time of increased frustration with peaceful demonstrations on the part of the New Left to achieve change. And, it is highly likely that many of the engineering students were sympathetic to at least some of the goals of the SDS, considering that a large number of students were opposed to the war by this point. Similarly, SDS never set out to be just an anti-war movement and was reluctant to originally officially endorse Vietnam activities, as it saw itself as a multi-issue organization, with the war just being one-facet of the United States' institutional problems. See Penny Lewis, *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks*, 80.

[157] For a more thorough discussion of Williams' term, see the introduction or Chapter 4.

[158] Penny Lewis notes that "From 1968 forward, a majority of people in the United States opposed the war and wanted to see the troops come home. Yet, despite this change in actual sentiment and growing working-class involvement in the movement, the media's and politicians' representations of antiwar sentiment and action continued to draw on, and in fact amplify, the earlier anticipations and experiences of class divisions." Penny Lewis, *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks*, 16.

But Ann Arbor was also home to students largely focused on the college "experience": attending class, going to football games, and working toward a degree that would help them get a job after college. And these worlds coexisted and allowed for spillover. While the faculty and students prepared for the Teach-In, the campus still remained interested in the spring practices of the football team, as demonstrated by the seemingly strange juxtaposition of an article detailing the weakening of the offensive line due to graduation, the afterglow of a Big Ten Conference Title and a Rose Bowl victory, and the poor weather's effect on scrimmages with a full-page advertisement taken out by 216 faculty members urging (in capital letters) students to come out to the Teach-In the next day.[159] But, in reality, it is not that strange. It is only in our myths that politics and football are so deviated. However, they exist in the same spaces on college campuses and in the daily lives of Americans.[160] Fans cared about the game *and* elections. Players worried about the threat of the draft *and* the defensive schemes of the Buckeyes.

A cursory exploration of the *Michigan Daily* reveals that recaps of Wolverine football games did not routinely appear on the front page of the newspaper during the mid to late 1960s,

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[159] Gil Samberg, "Graduation Losses Hit Offensive Line," *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 24, 1965, 7.

[160] Similarly, while students on campus were worried about football and the merits of the war, along with how to best discuss that war, other Michigan students were sitting in a jail in Montgomery, AL after participating in a protest against segregation and police brutality. Around sixty Michigan students had travelled to the South to join in the protest. Back at the University, President Harlan Hatcher refrained from making an official statement, stating that he had to remain neutral on the matter. However, President Hatcher did work behind the scenes to support the students, sending a telegram to President Johnson urging him to send in federal troops to Alabama to protect the "right of American citizens to peacefully assemble and petition for redress of grievances." Thomas R. Copi and Julie W. Fitzgerald, "Four Released on Bond From Alabama Jail," *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 25, 1965; Robert Moore, "Student Activists Face Aftermath: Girls Who Neglected to Sign Out Face Dormitory Discipline Charges," *Michigan Daily*, Mar. 23, 1965; Telegram from Harlan Hatcher to Lyndon B. Johnson March 15, 1965, Box 3, Folder 11, Weston E. Vivian Papers, 1964-1968, 86184 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

but they became headline news during the early 1970s. Perhaps this could be seen as an indication that sports were not deemed as important in the revolutionary 1960s, but activism continued to make headlines during the early 1970s as well. Far more likely, the hiring of Bo Schembechler and the upturn in the fortunes of the football team made football important again. As Schembechler remembers, "It was a highly academic and politically active campus – football was not the number one priority. One look at the facilities told you that."[161] But, even in the mid-1960s, the sports pages were sprinkled with political references and connections. Sports editor Lloyd Graff wrote a fictional piece about counter-culture hero Mario Savio as a star halfback, hated by coaches for his individualist attitude and his long hair. Angered by the coaches' demand that he adopt the accepted crewcut, Savio "stalked away and thought of nothing but revenge" as he went on strike and formed his own "anti-team" to "rise up and take over the football field and make California once again a national power."[162] In another fanciful short story, Graff imagined President Johnson as a retiring football coach at San Marcos State University, addressing his team with a pep talk.[163] Coach Johnson implores them to battle for a

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[161] Qtd. in Bo Schembechler and Mitch Albom, *Bo: Life, Laughs, and Lessons of a College Football Legend* (New York: Warner Books, 1989), 52.

[162] Voicing the manifesto of his "Flowing Strands Movement," Savio states that "We believe in nonviolence. We believe in the single wing offense. We believe in never running up the center. We believe in the sensational play. And in the end we will win. Halleluyah. Rah. Rah. And Amen, teammates." The 49ers, serving as the police in this vignette, carry away demonstrators dressed in football pads, as the coach attempts to resign but is asked to stay on and restore "order." However, the coach's attempts, including the hiring of an assistant from a Big Ten school, are thwarted as his own clean-shaven players grow out their sideburns and listen to Bob Dylan, forever changing California football. Lloyd Graff, "The Real Story of Mario Savio and FSM," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 24, 1965, 7.

[163] "Now you young men, the flower of our youth, I wish I didn't have to send you out there to tackle and block other fine young men who just happen to be misdirected, and if possible we can reason this thing out at the fifty yard line before the game starts. But if they refuse to be reasonable and it appears they might win the ballgame, I want you young men to run to the

way of life: "the single wing," an allusion to the Vietnam War, the Domino Theory, and battling for America's way of life. Graff's musings in the sports pages demanded an informed reader and one educated in world events beyond the gridiron and the playing fields. And it also indicates that sports writers at the *Daily* were educated in the rhetoric and beliefs of protesting students as well as the presumed conservative politics of football and sports.

When not writing imaginative football prose laced with political allegories, Graff often made mention of the shifting youth culture in Ann Arbor and the United States. While his own personal appearance (clean-shaven and bedecked in Buddy Holly-esque glasses) did not necessarily reflect the growing counter-culture at the University, he made note of the increase in men sporting beards and haircuts at least a third longer (a trend he partially attributed to The Beatles) than in previous years.[164] Likewise, even his game recaps gave nods to the growing war in Southeast Asia: "They say intense heat and humidity don't bother the Viet Cong. Well, mister, they don't bother North Carolina football players neither. In brutal, suffocating heat a slew of abestos [sic] the Tar Heels gave Michigan one hell of a battle before succumbing to an unquestionably strong Wolverine team, 31-24."[165] Here again, we see that to enjoy college football did not exclude someone from political awareness, even if that awareness manifested itself in the sports pages as pop cultural references.

Even in the heightened atmosphere of 1968, just a day after the street battles at the Democratic National Convention in Chicago, the sports pages did not shut down in favor of wall-

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locker room when the aeroplane with the napalm circles over the stadium." Lloyd Graff, "Coach Johnson Gives a Pep Talk," *Michigan Daily*, Nov. 3, 1965, 6.

[164] Lloyd Graff, "Get mixed up on our conglomeration," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 27, 1965, 3; Lloyd Graff, "Results of a day's (daze?) dreaming?" *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 2, 1965, 8.

[165] Lloyd Graff, "'M' outlasts North Carolina, 31-24," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 19, 1965, 1.

to-wall coverage of the primary; there was a football season about to start.[166] In a scathing article on Michigan football's upcoming season, Doug Heller informed readers that "There's an old myth that the Michigan football tradition means an undefeated season and a crushing Rose Bowl triumph nearly every year." But, the reality since the 1950's to the present could be summed up in one word: "mediocrity."[167] It was not so much that football was merely a distraction from more important issues on campus (although, for some it was), it was that it was a poor distraction. In reality, Michigan football was still important to many students at the University as a symbol, as tradition, and as a college experience. And sometimes, the battle to change the status quo and the sports world were one and the same. David Weber wrote about the racial impact sports have had on society, the progress aided by sports, and the failure of sports to heal divides off the field. Weber argued that "the two worlds separated by color don't really seem any closer together as a result of their mutual experience on the football field or the basketball court."[168] He scripted internal dialogues running through the minds of a blue-eyed, white quarterback and an African American tackle, describing their thoughts after a big game. Through this exercise, he pointed out the issue of stacking, in which black athletes were often grouped at certain positions in competition with one another, limiting the number of black players on the field, and the belief in the natural athleticism of black players and the assumed intelligence of white players. In 1974, three students sought to use postseason football as a medium for charity and change when they proposed a Relief Bowl to raise money toward fighting global starvation. While the idea was improbable and likely impractical, they proposed that the Wolverines face off

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[166] The 1968 team would finish 7-1 in the Big Ten with its only loss coming to hated rival Ohio State.
[167] Doug Heller, "A 'Michigan' season," *Michigan Daily*, Aug. 29, 1968, 2.
[168] David Weber, "Sports Beat," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 1, 1968, 8.

against the Oklahoma Sooners to raise awareness and aid. They argued that "at the same time we are concerned with Big Ten football, however, millions of people are dying of starvation."[169] Liking sports, and football in particular, did not exclude a student from caring about other issues or political activism, and many saw the opportunity football provided to reach large audiences both in person and on television.

During the 1969 season when fourteen black Wyoming Cowboys football players wore black armbands in the days leading up to a game against Brigham Young University to protest the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints' discriminatory practice barring black men from the priesthood, their coach Lloyd Eaton kicked them off of the team.[170] Lee Kirk wrote an editorial on the incident in the *Daily*, arguing that student-athletes had just as much right to protest as their fellow students.[171] Kirk noted that the "old notion that a student-athlete owed first responsibility to his team was apparently dying, but it has been resurrected in the foothills of the Rockies. The assumption that a player could live his own life off the field if he fulfilled his

[169] Ken Kargel, Chris LaBeau, and Norm Nickle, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 4, 1974, 4.

[170] Eaton kicked them off of the team after they showed up to a meeting with him on Friday morning to discuss their position before the game wearing the armbands. According to witnesses, he yelled at and belittled them for their actions, despite the players' willingness to refrain from an overt protest if the coach felt uncomfortable. The coach would "later testify in federal court that he 'told them that if the program at Wyoming was not satisfactory then perhaps they had better think about going to Morgan State or Grambling'—both traditional black colleges." At the time, the Cowboys were having a phenomenal season, holding a 4-0 record, but Eaton's decision led the team to four straight defeats to end the season (6-4 overall) and a 1-11 season the next year. Qtd. in Phil White, "The Black 14: Race, Politics, Religion, and Football," *wyohistory.org,* Wyoming State Historical Society, September 17, 2013, http://www.wyohistory.org/essays/black-14-race-politics-religion-and-wyoming-football.

[171] He writes: "The real concern raised in the suspension of the fourteen players is whether they also have to sell their minds to play the game. The questioning of established authority has spread to all areas of collegiate life in this decade, and athletics are no exception. The image of the clean, crewcut athlete is being overthrown." Lee Kirk, "Wyoming gridiron showdown – discipline or dissent," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 22, 1969, 6.

obligations on it is still apparently a myth in too many places." The irony was that Michigan was arguably one of those places where first allegiance was owed to the team; more correctly, it was owed to Bo Schembechler.[172] Despite the lack of athletic protests in Ann Arbor, students still questioned the all-powerful authority of the football coach, at least in theory if not in practice.

Sports were both separate from the political conscience of everyday life, but also inseparable from it. Students protested (and did not), studied (and did not), had social lives, and attended sporting events. Enjoying or avoiding one did not necessarily exclude someone from the rest. And such was also the case with student- athletes themselves. Stereotypically pegged as jocks, meatheads, and reactionaries, football players were not all cut from the same cloth. Some came from working class families, middle-class families, and conservative, liberal, and indifferent families. Increasingly, they also came from African American families that had differing political viewpoints from one another as well. They grew up in the country, the suburbs, and the city. They majored in the liberal arts, the sciences, physical education, and various other majors. Yet, their prowess in playing football, a gateway to college for many, came to define them in the eyes of many, both defenders and detractors of the game. Somehow, this one aspect of their identity – football player – defined them as interchangeable from one another. They stood for the status quo, conservatism, and blind patriotism, despite evidence to the contrary. In reality, they held a wide-variety of political beliefs and opinions on the place of football, just like the rest of the student population.

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[172] Kirk continues: "Too many members of the coaching profession still firmly believe that discipline is directly proportional to hair length and dedication to football is antithetical to any form of political expression, no matter how subtle or symbolic it may be. While several Michigan [presumably football] captains did sign a letter to The Daily in support of the Vietnam moratorium, their action appears to be sadly atypical. […] To view the problem as racial is to understate the increasingly evident conflict of values. The old idea that an athlete should view his coach as a marine private views his sergeant no longer is universally accepted." Ibid., 6.

Political Football and Political Arenas

On college campuses, sports stadiums and arenas are often powerful markers on campus – geographically, financially, and symbolically. Often, these spaces are some of the only buildings on campus with the capacity to house a significant portion of the school population for events and addresses. At large universities students often start their academic careers within these athletic buildings as they sit in the stands through orientation presentations and end them there again, receiving their diplomas on the hardwood or the field turf. Between these two benchmarks, many students attend sporting events, pep rallies, or job fairs, making athletic arenas important spaces for a variety of collegiate experiences. Likewise, the size of such buildings, often allowing for capacities in the tens of thousands, invites the possibility of renting out these arenas for extra-institutional events, such as playoff competitions, concerts, plays, ice shows, or even political speeches. Even at smaller colleges and universities, a thousand-person basketball arena might be one of the largest venues in the region and a prime spot for a campaign stop or a concert. Often, the concentration of middle and working-class university employees and college-aged youths provide a tempting market for entertainers and politicians looking for sold-out tour stops. More so than almost any other institutional building, the athletic arena transcends the town and gown divide, opening up the campus world to the outside, if only for an evening.

For this reason, the athletic arena becomes an important controlled space through which the university can present itself to the larger community on its own terms. Renting the arena out for a political speech paints the college as an important player in the wider world but also brings into question the objectivity of the school. Allowing the arena to be a tour stop for a popular comedian or band might help the school to be seen as in touch with current cultural trends, but it also bring with it the perils of being connected to controversial acts or opening the school up to

criticisms of "selling out" financially. Even fielding athletic teams can be a risky proposition. Winning brings the risk of being seen as an athletic factory, rather than a serious institution of higher learning, a position the University of Chicago found itself in during the early years of the twentieth century. However, losing can bring with it a loss of prestige and an inference that a school's athletic prowess is representative of its academic prowess, a position also on the minds of University of Chicago officials when the Maroons became the laughing stock of the Big Ten during the 1930s.[173]

In certain situations the university approves of a blending of worlds within the athletic arena: scholastic, athletic, political, entertainment, etc. Students, organizations, and entertainers need university permission, complete with contracts, to utilize university space. In the other chapters within this manuscript, the political world – arguably already present in sports – spills into the athletic world rather spontaneously: a student group silently protests a Notre Dame football game, Minnesota supporters question whether a basketball fight and its aftermath were racially motivated, or Michigan State athletes refuse to attend a football practice until their demands are heard. But in the fall of 1971 at the University of Michigan, home to the largest football stadium in the country, the athletic and political worlds were visibly shown together through a coordinated protest of the Vietnam War by the marching band and varsity football players.

During the 1971 football season, Michigan stormed through their opponents, resulting in an undefeated regular season, a trip to the Rose Bowl, but an eventual loss to Stanford and a missed National Championship. However, heading into the Homecoming game on October 30

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[173] For a great discussion of this phenomenon and Chicago's decision to deemphasize big-time college sports, see Robin Lester, *Stagg's University*.

against the University of Indiana, Michigan sat at 7-0 and had outscored its opponents 255 to 32. The campus was abuzz with excitement over the fortunes of the football team. While many within the campus and the town were still concerned with the escalated conflict in Vietnam and the antagonism of the Nixon administration to the feelings of anti-war activism, the Wolverines played before increasingly larger crowds than in the mid 1960s as Michigan returned to national gridiron prominence under Bo Schembechler. While popular opinion held that football was representative of the status quo and a reactionary bulwark against change, Ann Arbor demonstrated that such symbolism, while powerful, was not always entirely accurate. Surely, the fans in the stadium and the players on the field were not united in their feelings on the war, but it is not likely that the most ardent anti-war activists were taking in the game from Michigan Stadium. However, it is not a stretch to suppose that there was crossover between the football-supporting crowd and the politically active crowd.[174]

Because of its size, historical tradition, and prestige, Michigan Stadium already existed as a potent symbol of the University and the student body.[175] The Vietnam Veterans and Veterans Against the War approached the Michigan Marching Band and suggested that the two should work together to propose a war-themed halftime show for the homecoming game in Michigan

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[174] For example, Bill Ayers, an influential member and leader of the Weather Underground, even tried out for the football team earlier in the 1960s and admitted to watching the Wolverines on television in bars throughout the country while in hiding from the government. Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It: Woody Hayes, Bo Schembechler, and America in a Time of Unrest* (New York: Grand Central Publishing, 2008), 23; 234.

[175] The cartoonists of the *Daily* periodically played off of this symbolism to stand in as a marker for student sentiment. Such was the case in a 1965 cartoon lampooning both the Selective Service and the accepted apolitical nature of football. Students in a packed Michigan Stadium hold up large cards that spell out: "Get Out of Vietnam," playing with the popular practice of card stunts at football games while also critiquing the requirement of draft cards – a poignant statement on the "cards" that hold importance in student lives, even during the presumed break from life of college football. "The Draft Card Selection," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 26, 1965, 4.

Stadium. The Homecoming theme at Michigan that year emphasized the idea of a true homecoming – one in which American soldiers would return home from the Southeast Asian theater of the war. Working in conjunction, the veterans and the band members planned a symbolically charged spectacle. However, the band balked at the veterans' suggestion that they play anti-war songs during their halftime performance, considering that halftime music and shows take weeks of planning and rehearsal to perfect. Instead, they would play their normally planned playlist and opt for a more somber presentation before the teams took the field again.[176]

As word of the halftime show spread, people began to take note of the symbolism involved. American football had grown to be seen as quintessentially American. Football had come to be naturally thought of us patriotic and conservative. It had become part of the common parlance as its terms and situations came to describe everyday situations.[177] Football's attachment to military training during WWII and the previous military service of many coaches had only deepened this connection. As Wilbur D. Jones, Jr. argued in his book examining military football teams in WWII, "The field of organized athletics had a symbolic and rhetorical

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[176] UPI, "Michigan Players Sign War Petition," *The Times-News* (Hendersonville, NC), Oct. 22, 1971, 14.

[177] Even President Kennedy had invoked a football scenario when referring to the need for the Apollo Program. When he announced that the US would place a man on the moon by the end of the decade at a speech at Rice University in Houston, he queried: "Why choose the moon?" He went on to explain that we as Americans do things "not because they are easy, but because they are hard." Inserting the underdog mentality into his speech to depict just how difficult the task would be, he further explained: "Why does Rice play Texas?" This question was met with thunderous applause from the local crowd. His brother, Robert Kennedy, echoed the importance of football as rhetoric and as a metric for everyday American-ness, arguing that "Except for war, there is nothing in American life which trains a boy better for life than football. There can be no substitute for football." Kurt Edward Kemper, *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War*, 23;25.

appeal. […] Sport represented the moral and physical superiority of the United States."[178] Sentiments and rhetoric like these were echoed throughout the '60s and '70s by many on both sides of the aisle, further naturalizing football into the ideology of what it meant to be an American and football as part of militaristic patriotism. Likewise, the inherent violence in the game made its military connections more easily believed, but also made it a target for those who were becoming increasingly horrified by the celebration of violence in American society.

However, while other Big Ten universities experienced student athletic strikes during this era, Michigan avoided an overt incident. This lack of outright athletic protest likely stemmed from multiple sources. Activism had been an increasing part of student life throughout the 1960s, and there were many outlets for students to advocate for change and have their voices heard. When student-athletes throughout the country were striking or making demands of coaches and athletic departments after 1968, it made big news, as sports were seen as a bulwark of conservatism. Perhaps the sheer amount of political outlets already available in Ann Arbor took away the need for athletic protest. Likewise, the success of the team itself may have been a balm for rising tensions, as winning is assumed to heal all wounds. Or, optimistically, perhaps student-athletes felt satisfied in their situation and saw no need to jeopardize their playing time or their ability to attend college by rocking the boat in the athletic arena of their lives. Surely there were aspects of the athletic department at Michigan with which players found fault. At the end of the decade and in the early part of the 1970s, after being prodded by student-athletes and faculty members, Big Ten conference officials took steps to bring fuller integration to the Big Ten at the administrative level, as well as calling for African American coaches, referees, and employees to

[178] Wilbur D. Jones, Jr. *"Football! Navy! War!": How Military "Lend-Lease" Players Saved the College Game and Helped Win World War II* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 2009), 43.

be added to the staffs of the conference and its schools.[179] Michigan's student athletes were certainly helped by this as well. Another possibility exists in the personalities and individuals in charge of the football program and athletic department.

The head football coach at Michigan, Bo Schembechler, had been a disciple of Woody Hayes at Miami University and became well known for combative remarks and actions, though he had nowhere near his mentor's track record of volatile outbursts. Michael Rosenberg writes that Michigan's former coach, "Bump" Elliot, had been beloved by his players: "He rarely raised his voice and treated [the players] like adults, not replaceable parts."[180] Both Billy Taylor and Dan Dierdorf, stars for the Wolverines, had been recruited by Schembechler and his staff at Miami of Ohio, but decided against signing with the man Taylor referred to as "nuts."[181] Schembechler instituted new drills designed to "toughen up" his team and smacked lineman in the calf with a yardstick (that sometimes broke from the force of the impact) if they failed to lineup exactly three feet apart from one another. He chased assistant coaches down the field and berated players for any number of things.[182] When he *thought* that offensive lineman Jim Brandstatter had missed a block in practice, he dove at him and elbowed him to the ground, grabbing his facemask while calling him a "dumb son of a bitch" who would never "play another

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[179] See the Minnesota and Michigan State chapters, especially.

[180] Michael Rosenberg., *War as They Knew It*, 11.

[181] After becoming the coach at Michigan, Schembechler warned them: "You thought you were getting away from me, didn't you?" During his recruitment, Taylor had also referred to Schembechler as "crazy" and a "maniac," going so far as to avoid phone calls from the head coach and his assistants, tearing up recruiting letters from Miami, and warning other recruits to avoid the "crazy man" down in Miami. Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back Up: The Billy Taylor Story* (Wayne, MI: Immortal Investments Publishing, 2005), 15-16.

[182] Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It*, 11.

fucking down for Michigan!"[183] Brandstatter stayed, but Schembechler's inclination toward verbal and physical abuse was evident and likewise remained.[184]

But, when it came to personal issues and personal politics, he was surprisingly lenient. This leniency and his penchant for supporting his players after college led many players to abide Schembechler's intimidating and abusive coaching style and defend it as a useful coaching strategy. Dan Dierdorf (1968-1970), an All-American offensive lineman, explained that Schembechler walked a fine line between intimidation and farce.[185] When Jim Betts, an African American player, approached the coach during the 1969 season about Schembechler's no-facial hair policy, Schembechler listened attentively to Betts' arguments.[186] Betts contended that facial hair and natural hairstyles were an important part of black heritage. Schembechler agreed to lift the ban, but kept it for white players, joking that they had "no heritage." Rosenberg writes that Schembechler had challenged defensive lineman Cecil Pryor to a fight and temporarily suspended him after Pryor had punched a teammate during a drill at practice. Pryor, who happened to be African American, called a meeting with his fellow black players to discuss

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[183] Fellow lineman Reggie McKenzie remembered the incident a little differently, recalling that Schembechler, even after being informed by Coach Jerry Hanlon that Brandstatter had not missed the block, derisively explained, "Well, you needed that anyway because you're a fat ass." George Cantor, *"I Remember Bo ...": Memories of Michigan's Legendary Coach* (Chicago: Triumph Books, 2007), 98.

[184] When a group of players met with the coach to let him know that his tactics were affecting team morale, he responded, "To hell with you," and vowed to make practice even harder. Ibid., 36-37.

[185] "It all worked because he knew how to get us laughing by saying something unexpected and out of character that we'd almost fall down. He'd say, 'The next man who makes a great play gets a milk shake,' and it just broke us up." Qtd. in Ibid., 97.

[186] Betts normally joked around, but he seemed quite serious to Schembechler on this issue, who recalled asking Betts, "Are you for real?" Betts answered: "Oh, I'm very serious, coach. Speaking for the other black players on the team, I'm asking that you let us keep our mustaches as part of our heritage." Bo Schembechler and Mitch Albom, *Bo*, 55-56.

whether the incident seemed to be racially motivated. But, in an era when incidents like these often resulted in strikes or walkouts, the players decided that it was not indicative of any kind of racism on the coach's part.[187] Part of this likely came from Schembechler's private nature. He treated all players equally: poorly (at least while they were on the team). And, he made a habit of not talking about political issues, unlike his former coach, Woody Hayes. Billy Taylor defended Schembechler's racial beliefs in Taylor's autobiography and remained thankful for the coach's support throughout life.[188] When members of the Black Action Movement decided to strike in March 1969, many black players joined the group. Rather than seeking out leadership positions or promoting themselves as football players, they felt the need to join the group as students and as African American men.[189] Rosenberg noted that "Schembechler never expressed a strong opinion on the strike. He simply told his players that he expected them to fulfill their scholarship obligations. He certainly never thought of getting involved – he was there to coach football, not

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[187] Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It*, 60.

[188] "Bo truly was colorblind when it came to his players. He yelled at all players, regardless of their color. In my four years at Michigan, I never saw one instance of a black player treated differently because of his race. That just wouldn't happen with Bo in command." Taylor played high school in Schembechler's hometown of Barberton, OH and went on to hold the all-time rushing record at the University of Michigan by the time he graduated. He had the second-most touchdowns all-time for the Wolverines, was a two-time All-American, and a three-time All-Big Ten selection. He was drafted by the Atlanta Falcons but only played one year in the CFL before his football career was over. After his senior season, a series of family tragedies resulted in Taylor getting involved with drugs. While he earned his master's in education, his dependence on drugs grew and depression left him divorced and homeless in the streets of Detroit. He served two and a half years in prison for knowledge of a bank robbery. While in prison, he devoted himself to religion and earned his Ed.D. upon his release. He credits Schembechler for not abandoning him throughout his life. Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back Up*, 70.

[189] Schembechler argued that "We never had any racial problems, by the way, despite the civil rights upheaval that was going on around the country. Now and then, the more militant blacks on campus would come to our players and say, 'You got to boycott practice. The coach is white. Make a statement.' And our guys would tell them, 'No. this is not the place. There is no problem here.' That made me feel good. I may have treated them all like dogs. But equal dogs." Bo Schembechler and Mitch Albom, *Bo*, 57.

mediate social issues. His primary concern was that the strike did not affect his team, which was in the middle of spring practice."[190]

Schembechler's separation of football from the rest of life was similar to the tactics of some of his fellow Big Ten coaches – Duffy Daugherty and Murray Warmath, included. But this directive to avoid politics was itself a political position even though, on the surface, it did not actively condemn the Left or support the Right. For instance, offensive lineman Billy Caldarazzo recalled Schembechler's hypocrisy in the coach's directive to be true to themselves as men, but only if it did not affect football.[191] Billy Taylor echoed these thoughts, explaining that the "Black Action Movement was starting to gain a foothold on campuses around the country. Bo did not want us to become involved in protests, or even politics of the time."[192] During a heightened period of black activism on campus and around the country, Taylor noted that "Bo was always concerned that we might become too politically involved and lose our focus on football."[193] But, because of his position of power over who played and who rode the bench – or who retained a scholarship and who did not – Schembechler's opinion on politics carried great weight. And his vaguely apolitical stance still remained supportive of the status quo in its appeal for players to not rock the boat while still students. Aside from distancing football players from their fellow classmates in their inability to protest and assert their own political agency, it also

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[190] Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back Up*, 59.

[191] "[Bo] didn't have a prejudiced bone in his body, but he told us that he didn't want us participating in any campus demonstrations. This was 1969, remember, and there was a demonstration of some kind going on at Michigan practically every day. He said it would be bad for the team. But at the same time he was teaching us to be true to our convictions and not be afraid to speak out for what we believed. Only wait until we graduate. He didn't want to hear about it until then." George Cantor, "*I Remember Bo …*" 114.

[192] Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back Up*, 70.

[193] Ibid., 28.

tacitly held up the myth of football players as defenders of the status quo. Moreover, as Caldarazzo points out, it was ideologically inconsistent. If Schembechler was truly teaching his players to remain true to their convictions and supported them in standing up as individuals, why should activism – especially that which did not interrupt practices or games – be out of bounds? But, unlike at the other universities analyzed in this dissertation, Michigan's players heeded Schembechler's pleas and avoided open protest with their coach and kept their activism quiet and off the field. Despite their acquiescence to their coach's wishes, this did not mean that the players all agreed with the politics of the status quo. For example, Billy Taylor's autobiography is rife with political thought, as he explains that "it was difficult not to become involved [politically]."[194]

Popular opinion held that football players had no interest in upsetting the political status quo (or they actively supported it), despite evidence to the contrary, especially considering the

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[194] He continued, "Dr. King had made us all understand the need for black pride. My feelings about racism have also always reflected the idea that I felt I should be racial, but not racist. I certainly understand that even today there is an uneven playing field for African Americans, particularly in education, for example." Likewise, Schembechler's backing of Bear Bryant's decision to start Johnny Musso, a running back from Alabama, over Taylor in the Coaches All-America Game in Lubbock, TX in the Spring of 1972 didn't sit well with Taylor who was still grieving over the recent death of his mother. While he didn't think that Schembechler's decision was racially motivated, he did believe that Bryant's was: "Although I never said Bo was racist, I felt as if there was racism hidden behind Bryant's decision. It smelled of racial politics. Musso was white and I was black. We weren't in the Midwest. We were in Texas where the redneck attitude was still prevalent in 1972." After overhearing Taylor call the decision to start Musso "bullshit," Schembechler shoved Taylor and questioned whether he had called him a "racist." Taylor shoved him back and refused to talk to the coach for a year. In his autobiography, Taylor writes: "Honestly, I never said or even implied, that Bo was a racist. […] However, in my heart, I believed that Bear Bryant had made a racist decision. It came across to me as discrimination. He had a white southern running back and he had a black northern running back. The black running back was better. He chose to start the white running back. I knew I was the best running back on the East squad, and I proved that in that game by performing as well as I did," scoring two touchdowns and being named the game's MVP. Months later, Taylor approached Schembechler in his office and explained his interpretation of the situation, at which point their amiable relationship resumed. Ibid., 70;77-78.

groundswell of football boycotts and strikes throughout the college ranks during 1968 and 1969. Michael Oriard writes that “looking back, someone today might conclude that to play football in the 1960s was to choose authoritarian discipline over personal freedom, violence over peace and love, the war in Vietnam over the revolution at home.”[195] Evidence of such a myth was reinforced by *Daily* scribe Rick Stern when he wrote about Dick Vidmer, the quarterback for the Wolverines. Stern described Vidmer's personal political views, noting a "tendency toward ultra-conservative politics, as well as a firm belief in the ultimate necessity of nuclear weapons for the destruction of the enemies of the American people."[196] But Oriard also notes, from personal experience and through observed evidence, that a right-leaning disposition was not the case for all football players. At the University of Michigan, Billy Taylor and Glenn Doughty, both star halfbacks for the Wolverines, visited Vietnam from mid-December 1970 to early-January 1971 as part of a goodwill tour sponsored by the U.S. State Department (again, connecting college football, the military, and patriotism). Taylor pointed to the trip as a significant catalyst in heightening his sense of racial injustice in the United States.[197] While in Vietnam, both players spoke to numerous U.S. soldiers and asked them about their experiences and their motivations. Their trip also brought them in contact with injured soldiers at numerous military hospitals. Both Doughty and Taylor were struck by the physical and emotional trauma faced by the soldiers.[198]

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[195] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 15.

[196] Rick Stern, "Detonator Dick's a bomb thrower off the field," *Michigan Daily*, Oct., 1966, 7.

[197] Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back Up*, 70.

[198] One soldier hoped to talk to Taylor about football, but Taylor remained distracted by the soldier's head wound and swollen appearance caused by infection. The sight of the soldier's afflictions left Taylor nauseous. The soldiers "only told them what others had suggested: [the soldiers] didn't understand why [U.S. troops] were [in Vietnam], and they didn't see how the United States could win [the war]." Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It*, 90.

In Pleiku, home to a U.S. military base, the duo serendipitously found themselves amongst soldiers from Detroit's John J. Pershing High School, Doughty's alma mater. But their visit was not the patriotic affair the NCAA likely hoped it would be.[199] Taylor found that what he learned from "talking to the troops is that the sooner we get out, the better. The guys over there don't see how they're doing any good for the Vietnamese or for us. Once you're over there and communicating with the troops you can see how it was a mistake. And the Vietnamese people don't want us over there either."[200] Many soldiers of color informed Taylor that they felt as if they had been discriminated against by their own army," and Taylor wondered how black soldiers could be expected to fight for their country when race issues were "still in play."[201] The State Department had sent All-American football players to Vietnam to boost troop morale and send a bit of Americana to Southeast Asia. Instead, they helped to push members of the supposed stronghold for American patriotism and militarism further against the war.

It would be too generalizing and shortsighted to argue that the increasing involvement of football players in the anti-war camp turned the tide of public opinion against the war. However, symbolically, college football players speaking out against the war was incredibly powerful, just as the anti-war sentiments of some college football coaches were. From Michael Rosenberg's

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[199] Taylor was "shocked by what I saw and heard," and quickly noted that "most of the soldiers were numb about the horrors they had seen. They talked as if they no longer valued human life, particularly the lives of the Vietnamese. I hate to say that, but it's the truth." Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back Up*, 71.

[200] UPI, "Michigan Players Sign War Petition," 14.

[201] After his visit to Vietnam, Taylor quickly noticed that "there were an inordinate number of African Americans and minorities fighting in this war" and, according to the soldiers he talked to, an inordinate amount of minorities imprisoned in military jail. By the time he returned to the United States, he "was disappointed about the lack of progress that had been made in the area of civil rights. I felt as if black soldiers were being victimized in their military service. It seemed as if the U.S. government was being hypocritical by trying to defend the Vietnamese people while allowing unfair treatment of black soldiers." Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back U*p, 71-72.

conversations with football players from the late 1960s, being a football player still carried the stereotype of conservatism in 1968 and 1969. Dan Dierdorf opted not to wear his letterman's jacket around campus owing to the judging looks he had received. Identification with football automatically brought with it an assumption that you were opposed to the countercultural movement at Michigan.[202] Tellingly, this suggests that left-leaning students, who stressed the importance of challenging the status-quo and questioning cultural assumptions, also bought into the naturalized conservative ideas about football and athletes. Likewise, Pete Newell, an All-Big Ten defensive tackle, kept his football connection hidden after a philosophy professor asked Newell why, as a football player, he would be taking philosophy.[203] Not only were football players seen as conservative, but they also were assumed to have little desire for an education or independent thought.

On October 15, 1969, students all across the country observed the Vietnam Moratorium by striking in an effort to force an end to the war by the end of the month. At the University of Michigan, only around 10% of the student population attended class that Wednesday.[204] Many students marched to Michigan Stadium to hear Detroit Mayor Coleman Young, SDS member Tom Hayden, and Senator Philip Hart speak out against the war, utilizing a space usually reserved for the perceived celebration of the status quo to challenge the rightness of the war.[205] In a sports book with humorous and noteworthy stories in the rivalry between Michigan and Ohio State, author Greg Emmanuel even notes that "Michigan Stadium, normally reserved for

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[202] Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It*, 9.
[203] Ibid., 10.
[204] Glen Corso, "Record crowds protest at Big Ten schools," *The Observer*, Oct. 10, 1969, 3.
[205] "Moratorium for Peace" Flyer, Box 1, Folder 12, Richard G. Wilson Papers, 1967-1969, 86438 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

protests against pass interference calls and holding penalties, would become ground zero for expanding protests against the Vietnam War," noting that 20,000 people came out to the stadium for the rally.[206] While the Wolverines crushed Iowa 51-6 in Iowa City on November 15, 1969, a Moratorium March was held in Washington, DC, drawing over 500,000 protestors to the Mall. Noting Pete Newell's stance against the war and his political leanings, Bo Schembechler razzed him to the press after the game for his liberal leanings.[207] As for many left-leaning or anti-war sympathizing football players, football still had to take precedence. Other students were freer to make political statements and march in support of their beliefs. But making such a decision for a football player meant automatically being in the spotlight and risking the loss of playing time or scholarship.[208] This threat led many football players to keep their political views quiet and likely further deepened the perception that football players supported the status quo.

However, kicker and linebacker Dana Coin chose the University of Michigan *because* "it is a liberal school where people are free to express their ideas without restrictions."[209] While Coin clarified and limited his own appreciation for liberal thought, he defined himself as against

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[206] Greg Emmanuel, *The 100-Yard War: Inside the 100-Year-Old Michigan - Ohio State Football Rivalry* (Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 2004), 88.

[207] "[Newell]'s our defensive player of the week. And that means an awful lot, because Pete was out there in Iowa City with the rest of the team, and not in Washington with the damn hippies where he really wanted to be." Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It*, 44.

[208] After the season, Newell marched in protest against the arrest of the "Chicago Seven" with two-thousand fellow students and community members through Ann Arbor. When the crowd reached city hall, Newell realized that he was wearing his football letterman's jacket; "Fearful of his photograph appearing in a newspaper, and the newspaper ending up in the hands of Bo Schembechler, he turned around and went home." Even in the offseason, football held power. Ibid., 57.

[209] Coin grew up in Pontiac, MI, an automotive city in the north of Metro-Detroit experiencing a period of race riots over bussing and other civil rights issues. Yet, Coin also had little time for "radicals who do not have causes, but just enjoy controversy." Al Shackelford, "Coin: kicker, concerned citizen," *Michigan Daily*, Nov. 4, 1971, 7.

conservatism. Likewise, Billy Taylor praised Ann Arbor as a "liberal community" that "embraced every liberal cause known to man, including racial equality."[210] Taylor roomed with his fellow "Mellow Men" – a number of black underclassmen on the football team – in a six-bedroom house off campus.[211] Taylor recalls that the Mellow Men would "sit around as a group and discuss problems, or what was happening on campus," again refuting the naturalized belief that football players were both conservative and disinterested in intellectual pursuits. Arguably, the persistence of the myth of the conservative nature of football players likely insinuates that African Americans were not even considered in the minds of many when holding up football players as a conservative symbol, especially considering the uptick in protests by black athletes during this time.[212] Football players were not isolated from the world around them, and they did not magically become conservative because they liked football.[213] In short, like anyone else on campus, Taylor, a football player, was more complicated than stereotypes and myths imply, as no one identity singularly defined him. His teammate, kicker Mike Lantry, had served in Vietnam with the 82 Airborne Division in Vietnam for nearly a year.[214] But Lantry's service in

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[210] Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back Up*, 70.

[211] While Taylor praises the University of Michigan on its liberal stance toward racial equality, he also notes that they sent two of the more "cleancut" members of their group to address Athletic Director Don Canham to gain permission to live off of campus, likely playing off the expectation that their blackness was less challenging and safer. Ibid., 28-29.

[212] Taylor and his friends "felt fortunate to be on the campus at the time we were there. It was such an incredible mix of radical ideas and educational values." Ibid., 30.

[213] Taylor recalls that his friend would often walk through a war protest on the way to his economics class taught by a professor on the economic committee for President Richard Nixon. Taylor and his family had been lifelong Democrats, but also appreciated the fact that many family members found jobs in Nixon's economy. Ibid., 75.

[214] President Nixon's second plan for troop withdrawal brought Lantry home early, but he had hoped to avoid combat altogether. Originally, he had planned to attend Michigan State on a track scholarship, but the offer fell through and he ended up enlisting in the army in hopes of not being

Vietnam left him unsure about how he felt about the United States' role in the conflict. Although he was a football player *and* a veteran, he did not side with the status quo or the anti-war activists. So, when the upcoming anti-war halftime show came up for discussion, he remained conflicted.

An anti-war halftime show at the University of Michigan likely would not have raised many eyebrows throughout the country. After all, Ann Arbor and the University of Michigan had become well-known for protests against the war, drug laws, segregated housing and businesses, and administrative issues. But this protest would be broadcast to those watching and listening to the game. This was not a protest event near the stadium. This was a college football game with a planned protest in the middle of it. It is doubtful that a majority of the roughly 75,000 people in attendance came for the protest; similarly, many were likely in opposition or at least torn over the message presented. What made the story even more newsworthy? College football players were in *favor* of the protest and pushed for it. While the team would be in the locker room during the half, around fifty members of the team signed a petition on the Thursday before the game demonstrating their support for the anti-war spectacle.[215] According to the *Daily*, "The Ann

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sent to Vietnam. After three years of enlisted life, Lantry enrolled at Michigan as a 23-year old freshman in 1971. He walked onto the team as a kicker and won the starting job in 1972. He twice set the record for the longest kick made by a Wolverine, but missed two key field goals in a 10-10 tie to the Buckeyes in 1973; as a result of the tie, the Big Ten athletic directors voted to send Ohio State to the Rose Bowl instead of Michigan. The next season, he set the record for most points after touchdowns kicked and most field goals for the program, but once again missed on a kick against Ohio State that would have won the game for the Wolverines. Instead, Lantry walked silently to the sidelines in front of millions watching on television. After Lantry had graduated , the Big Ten voted to allow its teams to accept bowl bids outside of the Rose Bowl as well after 1975. Jack Berry, "Now 'M' finds an exotic kicker: Ex-GI finds range in time," *Detroit News*, Nov. 19, 1972; Todd Jones, "Michigan," *ESPN Big Ten Football Encyclopedia: The Complete History of the Big Ten Conference*, ed. Michael MacCambridge (New York: ESPN Books, 2007), 64.

[215] UPI, "Michigan Players Sign War Petition," 14.

Arbor Coalition to End the War (AACEW) is asking that either the band march in peace symbol formations during halftime of the Oct. 30 Michigan-Indiana game or that anti-war speakers be permitted to make a presentation at that time."[216] Dave Gordon, the leader of the AACEW, revealed that they already had over 750 signatures, but plans were not yet finalized. Spokesmen for the band clarified that the band refused to center its entire performance around the anti-war theme, "because it had already done several previous anti-war halftimes, some of them on nationwide TV."[217] While Coach Bo Schembechler publically remained neutral to the politics of the halftime show, stating that he'd "consider [players signing the petition] an individual thing," he privately saw it as a distraction from what he saw as the task at hand: winning football games.[218]

The players had decided to make some kind of joint petition after a campus activist asked football captain Frank Gusich how the team felt about the upcoming protest and if they too were against the war: "Of course we're not *for* the war," replied Gusich.[219] But the players, like many other students during this time, did not feel that football, school, entertainment, or any other area of their lives was divorced from or somehow divorced them from the larger issues going on in

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[216] Maria Zoslaw, "Anti-war halftime show sought," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 22, 1971, 1.

[217] The band had rejected the AACEW's idea for peace symbols, but Gordon hinted that such an outcome might not have resulted had he been allowed by band director George Cavender to personally talk with the band. The band pointed to an anti-war halftime show against Ohio State in 1969 and the 1970 Rose Bowl halftime show as part of their evidence. Ibid., 10; Rose Sue Berstein, "Half-time at Homecoming," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 26, 1971, 4.

[218] UPI, "Michigan Players Sign War Petition," 14.

[219] Qtd. in Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It*, 93.

the world. [220] That did not mean they did not care about the game or did not want to win, but it did mean that they did not see themselves as just football players.[221] And, when it came to the war, this was an issue that personally affected them all in some way, whether it be through friends and family members serving or the real threat or promise of serving themselves. Defensive end, David Gallagher, signed the petition, believing that "it's important to get out of Vietnam" and hoping that the protest would remain "orderly."[222] Billy Taylor argued that he did not "know anybody who saw [the petition] who didn't sign it."[223] Mike Lantry did not sign the petition, but many others did, including those who saw themselves as politically conservative.[224] Several other players told reporters before hand that they intended to flash peace signs or clinched fists when they ran off the field at halftime in support of the protest.

Around twenty different campus groups signed a letter to the editor to the *Daily*, calling for President Fleming, Athletic Director Don Canham, and band director George Cavender to

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[220] When Gusich approached Schembechler with his teammates' signatures, the coach wasn't pleased and warned Gusich that "the petition could distract the team in the middle of the season. They were entitled to their opinions, but nothing should interfere with football." Ibid., 93.
[221] The *Daily* reported that Barry Dotzauer and "most of the team who signed the petition, thought it dealt with the general Homecoming weekend theme. [Dotzauer] added that the nature of the halftime show 'doesn't make a difference just as long as it doesn't interfere with the game,'" echoing Schembechler's rhetoric about the importance of football above politics. Qtd. In Maria Zoslaw, "Anti-war halftime show sought," 10.
[222] Ibid., 10.
[223] Qtd. in "Scorecard," *Sports Illustrated*, ed. Robert W. Creamer, November 1, 1971, 13.
[224] Quarterback Tom Slade offered that he was "more conservative than 90 [percent] of the students. I'm pro-Nixon. But I signed with the intention that I'm against the war." Qtd. In Ibid, 13.

allow the proposed show to proceed.[225] In what *Daily* reporter, Pat Bauer, declared a "surprise move," the University agreed to the show and permitted "local anti-war activists to demonstrate against the Vietnam War on the field," but limited the demonstration to the band and the Veterans Against the Vietnam War.[226] Over 1500 people ended up signing the petition, but some within the University were worried about the message it might send. According to an administrative source, "The administration is concerned about publicity. It creates a bad public relations image for the University. There is a great deal of concern."[227] Image and publicity trump the wants of the students and, ostensibly, their football players and marching band. Likewise, Secretary of the University, Richard Kennedy "was not even sure that political demonstrations should be mixed with football." He worried that "People may come here to see a game, and they get duped into something they don't expect or want. It's almost like presenting guerrilla theatre during an intermission at Power Center."[228] Their concerns uphold the cognitive dissonance prevalent in the mythology surrounding football: a protest *against* the war is political because it is visible and challenging to the status quo. However, overt patriotism is *not* political because it had become expected and natural. Spectators would only become dupes to political theater and see an unwanted and unnatural mixing of football and politics when the politics did not support the war in Vietnam.

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[225] "We support the Vietnam Veterans in this request for the field and we urge that you grant them permission for this theme and their show." Qtd. in Rose Sue Berstein, "Half-time at Homecoming," 4.

[226] Qtd. in Pat Bauer, "'U' officials permit halftime peace show," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 26, 1971, 1.

[227] Qtd. in Ibid., 10.

[228] Qtd. in Ibid., 10.

Unsurprisingly, the left-leaning editors of the *Daily* came out in support of the halftime show and praised the political stance of the football team.[229] The editorial noted that "Athletes have long been stereotyped as politically conservative, but by signing the petition they have illustrated their growing interest." While true that the stereotype and mythology of the conservative athlete proved popular, it is too simplifying to assume that athletes were only now growing interested in status quo-challenging beliefs. The pressures placed on athletes by coaches, fans, and the university – who expected them to represent the University in a non-challenging way – dissuaded many from speaking up. While not true in all cases, everyday students did not face the threat of losing their opportunity to attend the University of Michigan if they peacefully protested or spoke out against the war. Likewise, the *Daily* and non-athletes at Michigan and throughout the country only further entrenched the myth of the conservative athlete by going along with the stereotype, rather than questioning why it had become so naturalized and why it seemed that so few athletes challenged the myth openly. Despite this, unlike Schembechler or University officials who worried over the public relations fallout from football players taking an overt political stance, the *Daily* celebrated the agency of the players. The editorial noted that the football players were the reason for the spectacle's significance in the first place, as the crowd gathered to watch them; and the halftime show arguably had importance *because* of the players and "their opinions ought to be granted credence."[230]

Michigan's homecoming festivities, which centered on the idea of a "Real Homecoming" for the troops, challenged the typical inward-looking role of homecoming – a celebration of the

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[229] Arguing that Homecoming had "taken on a new meaning," they highlighted the importance of the "willingness of the football team to lend its weight to the anti-war movement's aims." Rose Sue Berstein, "Half-time at Homecoming," 4.
[230] Ibid., 4.

University and its past and present members – and made it about Michigan's role as part of a larger world and cause. Because of the football game's central role in homecoming festivities, the players and the bands' push for a unified message against the war made the protest central as well. As the *Daily* noted, the football team's signatures added "weight and prestige to the anti-war movement."[231] Coupled with this, the student government gave their endorsement for the halftime show, with two conservative members of the council voting for the show, giving support to President Fleming's assertion at the October 13 Moratorium that nearly everyone at Michigan opposed the war.[232] Rather than tacitly ignoring the call for change and an end to the war for three hours on a Saturday afternoon, the game became one more medium for protest: a medium far more powerful and outward looking than an insular parade or march could have been. The *Daily* argued that "this performance would reach a captive audience of University alumni and local persons unaffiliated with the University – a vast potential group of persons for whom the war may not be quite as clear an issue as it is to many students here."[233] While symbolically true, it is still easy to see the idealism that many outside of the academe found naïve or condescending. Yes, students, owing to their age, faced the threat of the draft or the loss of friends and loved ones, but so too did those less privileged and less fortunate enough to attend college during this time. Likewise, few in society were unaffected by the war at some level – veterans of previous wars and parents, friends, and family members of soldiers included.

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[231] Maria Zoslaw, "Anti-war halftime show sought," 1.

[232] Berstein argued that when athletes and student government concur on something, "the topic at issue must be compelling indeed."Rose Sue Berstein, "Half-time at Homecoming," 4.

[233] Ibid., 4.

However, the *Daily*'s point about the symbolic importance of the halftime show stood.[234] Football was not going to be an escape; it was a bullhorn.

The parade the night before included several anti-war floats, a march by Veterans Against the War, and a collection of anti-war paraphernalia. Rather than receiving complaints about the inclusion of such floats, they proved rather popular.[235] During the halftime protest, the Michigan Marching Band played their regularly scheduled show – a medley from the show *Jesus Christ Superstar*. Afterward, the announcer prepared the crowd for the protest.[236] Fifty war veterans released black balloons as the names of Michigan students who had died in the war were read aloud. The announcer asked the crowd to observe a moment of silence "for those who have died, those who are dying, and may yet die before the war has ended."[237] As the crowd stood silently, the band played taps and one hundred black balloons – each balloon representing more than 15,000 Asian and American deaths during the conflict – were released into the sky. Michigan President Robben W. Fleming said of the event, "I've felt for a long time that students across the

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[234] It was a "chance for us to inject a meaningful political message into what might be an archaic college event of no political significance, a pleasant enough afternoon at the stadium." Ibid,. 4.

[235] University Activities Center Vice President Jeff Kaplan noted that the floats "now reflect a wider segment of campus feeling, and the number of protest-type floats are increasing." Vice President for Student Services Robert Knauss and Regent Gertrude Huebner, a Republican from prosperous Bloomfield Hills, both asked to be positioned near the displays of the Vietnam Veterans Against the War during the parade. Hester Pulling, "The new politics of homecoming," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 31, 1971, 1.

[236] "Ladies and gentleman, we ask you to remain standing. As you know, this year's homecoming theme is, 'Bring all the troops home now. Let's have a real homecoming this year.' In the words of the student body, there cannot be a real homecoming unless a date is set now for the withdrawal of all American forces, equipment, and war aid from Southeast Asia." Qtd. in "Homecoming," *Ann Arbor Sun*, Nov. 12, 1971.

[237] Qtd. in Ibid., n.p.

board are against the war." [238] Athletic Director Don Canham agreed, adding that he was not surprised: "Who the hell is in favor of the war anymore?"[239] But both Fleming and Athletic Director Don Canham made sure to make note that this was a student-run halftime, not a University-endorsed position, likely distancing the University from any controversial fallout.

According to reporters Howard Brick and Marcia Zoslaw, while many questioned the inclusion of the protest in the lead-up to the game, "many spectators agreed that the unconventional halftime was 'an emotional experience in good taste and amazingly effective.'"[240] Most of the fans they questioned about the performance felt that it should be repeated periodically, as they were "pleased with the dignity and solemnity of the show."[241] The game itself was not as compelling, as 75,751 people watched Michigan crush Indiana 61-7, prompting Schembechler to remark: "I don't like to beat anybody that bad."[242] However, not all were pleased with the show. Professor Thomas Dunn of the Chemistry Department voiced his complaints in a letter to the editor, recording his "protest at the increasingly blatant politicization of University events and functions. The most recent example of using the football team and marching band to propagandize a captive audience is a further example of the crass arrogance of

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[238] UPI, "Michigan Players Sign War Petition," 14.

[239] "Scorecard," 13.

[240] Qtd. in Howard Brick and Marcia Zoslaw, "Anti-war halftime presented," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 31, 1971, 1.

[241] Likewise, Lois Epstein, a wife of an alumnus, complimented its ability to get "its point across without being maudilin [sic] or upsetting." Her husband, Marvin Epstein ('51) described the show as "fantastic." A sports reporter did note that one sports pundit in the press-box wondered aloud "whether the alumni band would retaliate" by "forming a huge dollar-sign" as part of their performance after the Michigan Marching Band had played "Taps." Ibid., 1.

[242] Al Shackelford, "Michigan melts Indiana, 61-7," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 31, 1971, 9.

a vociferous minority of University faculty and students."[243] Considering President Fleming's belief that the majority was against the war and the push for the protest included a vast array of students and faculty from throughout the campus, including the stereotypically assumed conservative athletes, it might be hard to categorize those opposed to the war at Michigan as a "minority."[244] Dunn decried the activists for using a football game as a tool, insinuating that they doubted their own "ability to attract an audience at a level based upon the issues," and saw the "real issue" as not one about war, "but the coercion or freedom of the individual."[245] His contention that a captive audience was coerced into observing a protest against the war speaks to the power held by the myth of the apolitical nature of American sports. No letters appeared in previous weeks – from Dunn or anyone else – protesting the playing of the National Anthem, an inclusion of ROTC candidates, or the expectation that spectators would stand at attention for the flag. The protest had been advertised all week and could have been avoided by boycotting the football game, ignoring the protest, or even getting up for refreshments during halftime. Historically, taking bathroom or refreshment breaks during the half receives far less backlash than refusing to stand for the National Anthem, yet Dunn only singled out the former as a challenge to the "freedom of the individual."

The inclusion of protest in a sporting event and the backing of college football players made national news. The UPI carried an accounting of the event throughout the country and

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[243] Thomas Dunn, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 29, 1971, 4.

[244] He further argued that that if "the football team itself wishes to bring politics into its operations then I suggest it adopt new patterns of offensive and defensive lines which spell out their disavowal of violence and their concern with the environmental problems of the world, rather than forcing the expression of such attitudes upon the formations of the marching band." Ibid., 4.

[245] Ibid., 4.

Sports Illustrated made note, reinforcing the naturalized idea of football as protector of the status quo.[246] They predicted that "There won't be too much trouble getting the crowd to pay attention to this halftime show," as this one was indeed out of the ordinary. Rather than maize and blue balloons or the increasingly ubiquitous and seemingly apolitical red, white, and blue balloons of celebration and patriotism, spectators watched black balloons of protest, frustration, and sorrow rise above Michigan Stadium and into the sky. The sporting spectacle was being used to point out the power of sports as a medium and the naturalized and ignored political nature of militarily themed halftime shows. In December, the Rose Parade Committee preemptively blocked efforts to get a similar anti-war show approved. The show would have taken up four minutes of the allotted fifteen minutes given for the band. The bands of Stanford and Michigan and their student governments supported the proposed anti-war themed halftime show, but Virgil White, the president of the RPC, argued that the Rose Bowl was legally prohibited from allowing it.[247] Without irony, he argued that the "halftime show is not a time for publicity stunts," and defended the decision to block the show – not because of its political nature, but because it was "superfluous to an athletic event."[248] However, it is difficult to not see it as a political decision, considering that Michigan's band marched in a peace symbol formation and released white doves to represent the dead the last time they played in Pasadena in 1970. Furthermore, it is hard to argue that halftime shows are not, by their very nature, "superfluous" to an athletic event, as they

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[246] The magazine noted that "Football players are by tradition conservative and apolitical." "Scorecard., 13.

[247] He said that "the proposed anti-war presentation is prohibited by the contract between the Pacific Eight and Big Ten college football conference." Rebecca Warner, "Rose parade chiefs block anti-war action," *Michigan Daily*, Dec. 9, 1971, 1.

[248] Ibid., 1;6.

are not a part of the game itself. They are used exclusively for "publicity stunts," as they often celebrate universities, students, groups, politicians, and charitable causes.[249]

C. Richard King and Charles Fruehling Springwood examine spectacles in sport.[250] While they largely focus on race in their book, they argue that many still view sports as "a fun diversion, a pleasurable release, a cultural time-out that is mere entertainment."[251] Worse, sports and its spectacles often serve to mythologize and reinforce sports as a progressive force for good. While cogent arguments can be made for the use of sports to change the status quo, there are still many examples of the reverse. Every celebration of Jackie Robinson, Curt Flood, and Billie Jean King can only be realized in the context of inequality that made such moments and careers exemplary and game-altering. That inequality also shaped, permeated, and governed sports until challenged. And, even in those moments worth celebrating, we use them as benchmarks that fixed wrongs forever; we have moved past them. Equally troubling, we hold up progressive sports moments as altruistic moments of change: Branch Rickey and the Dodgers sign Jackie Robinson to challenge naturalized ideas about black athletes; Big Ten schools recruit and play black football players to provide opportunities heretofore nonexistent; Texas Western defeats Kentucky with an all-black starting lineup to disprove racist mythology. That is not to say that

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[249] Moreover, some of the very first halftime shows in the NFL were expressly created *as* a publicity stunt, as players on the Oorang Indians, including Jim Thorpe, were expected to interact with the Airedales bred by the team's owner in hopes of enticing members of the crowd to purchase the dogs. Sam Borowski, "Oorang Indians: One of the First NFL Teams," *Indian County Today* (Previously, *Lakota Times*), Jan. 5, 1995, *The Dayton Triangles*, http://www.daytontriangles.com/oorang2.htm.

[250] C. Richard King and Charles Fruehling Springwood, *Beyond the Cheers: Race as Spectacle in College Sport* (Albany: SUNY Press, 2001), 11.

[251] Ibid., 8.

these events should *not* be acknowledged and celebrated. But these decisions were also made to make teams more competitive and win games.

King and Springwood based their examination of the spectacle on Guy Debord's discussion of spectacles in the late 1960s and early 1970s and Pierre Bourdieu's examination of images, commodities, and spectacles from the structuring structures of this televisual world.[252] In their book, they examined "those spectacles that transform the university space into a broader field of public culture," a transformation that was and had been occurring in Ann Arbor over the past decade.[253] Though their book concentrated on spectacles of race, they drew from Douglas Kellner's definition that "Spectacles are those phenomena of media, culture, and society that embody the society's basic values, serve to enculturate individuals into this way of life, and dramatize the society's conflicts and modes of conflict resolution." Our perceptions of what is natural are "mediated by the spectacles of media and culture that dramatizes our conflicts, celebrates our values, and projects our deepest hopes and fears."[254] In sports, the stadium, the uniforms, the play-calling, the music, the pageantry, etc. is controlled from the top downward. The medium is controlled as is, for the most part, the message. But in the moments where the message is not controlled by the University – individual touchdown celebrations, a political message on a smuggled in banner, a political halftime show – the power of the medium can be seen. Few would question the rightness of the National Anthem being played, the appropriateness of a color guard, or a flyover by military jets. These are not seen as objectionable, and thus do not stand out as inappropriate or even obvious to the medium. But a

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[252] Ibid., 11.
[253] Ibid., 11.
[254] Douglas Kellner, "Sports, media culture, and race - Some Reflections on Michael Jordan," *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 13, 458.

message that goes against the standardized grain brings out discussions of bringing politics into sports or arguments that sports are just for entertainment purposes rather than analyzing the politics already involved.[255]

Earlier in American history, the adoption of some of the political goals of the Populists by the Democrats weakened the impact of the Populists' message and power. While their political goals found favor and national spotlight, the Populists lost agency over their message and faded into obscurity.[256] Michael Kazin illustrated a similar point with the New Left, as many of their messages found footholds in various camps. Despite the activists' hope to speak for the poor and the disenfranchised, George Wallace as well as the Republicans found a way to tap into the fears of a large portion of the white working class that they were being forgotten and ignored.[257] While some members of the white working class reacted negatively to what they saw as the privileged status or even condescension of protesting college students (even in the assumption that University of Michigan students had a better understanding of the conflict in

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[255] A month after the halftime show protest at Michigan Stadium, another Michigan sporting arena became the site of a political protest. This time, Crisler Arena, home to the University men's basketball team and the wrestling team [and later women's basketball and men's and women's gymnastics] hosted an ad-hoc political rally. While the University didn't organize or endorse the rally, they rented the arena to known activists and knew the purpose of the rally. Considering there was money to be made in renting out the arena, it's perhaps not that surprising, but the renters were holding a rally for a man imprisoned for possessing marijuana (John Sinclair – noted radical activist) and the renters were well-known activists in the Rainbow Peoples Party, formerly the White Panther Party.

[256] Or, as Richard Hofstadter put it, "Third parties are like bees: once they have stung, they die." Richard Hofstadter, *The Age of Reform* (New York: Vintage Books, 1960), 97.

[257] However, Penny Lewis also notes that "Working-class opposition to the war was significantly more widespread than is remembered, and parts of the movement found roots in working-class communities and politics. In fact, by and large, the greatest *support* for the war came from the privileged elite, despite the visible dissention of a minority of its leaders and youth. The country was divided over the war, alongside many other pressing social issues - but the class dynamics of those divisions were complex, contradictory, and indeterminate with regard to what the future might bring." See Penny Lewis, *Hardhats, Hippies, and Hawks*, 6.

Vietnam than did the everyday fan populating Michigan Stadium), Wallace and later Nixon and Reagan were able to emphasize this importance of this belief in the silent majority and a rhetorical call for "law and order."[258] Many throughout the country could appreciate and even side with the protestor's anti-war theme, but not always with their tactics or their rhetoric, even when it came from a mainstream and "safe" dissident: a football player. And, when the war ended, their greatest symbol of injustice and their unifying factor was gone as groups splintered off, driven away by differing opinions and strategies over racial, cultural, socio-economic, and gender issues.[259]

But, during the Vietnam Era, the University of Michigan itself came under scrutiny for its systemic discrimination against women. The 1960s and early 1970s saw an increase in female students and faculty members speaking out against sexism and discrimination on campus. While the University made continued promises for rectification, they were often surface changes with little real-world effects. As the University faced institutional inquires over charges of sexism in their hiring practices, female student-athletes pushed for recognition as full University of Michigan athletes (as female students also battled to be seen as fully on par with male students). Such pushes coincided with the increasing influence of second-wave feminism and, later, the implementation of Title-IX. As the University of Michigan was forced by female students to open up more and more doors toward greater student equality in gender, the University did so begrudgingly and seemed to push back at every new battle. The University believed that the surface changes that had been forced upon them made things better than they had been for

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[258] Michael Kazin, *The Populist Persuasion*, Chapters 9 and 10.

[259] Similarly, as more African American coaches, trainers, doctors, and staff members were hired by athletic departments, the remaining grievances of African American athletes were seen as minor because they were less obvious – both visually and symbolically.

student-athletes, and this belief gave way to the idea that all problems had been fixed, and any further discussion or complaints were likely unnecessary. But these changes were quick-fixes, rather than systemic reevaluations. The deeper societal problems that led to the need to actively campaign for increased roles (or any roles, as was often the case) for women (and, in discussions in other chapters, African American males) beyond the playing field were papered over.

Breaking Down Gender Barriers

Throughout the Vietnam Era the University of Michigan also faced a variety of issues concerning gender restrictions and barriers for University clubs and athletic teams, as well as allegations and incidents of discrimination and inequality throughout the University as a whole. Throughout the early 1960s many women's group were not only active, but at the forefront in political protest and organizing campaigns for change.[260] Even around the city, women's groups like the Ann Arbor Women for Peace advocated for an end to the war as early as 1962 and organized peace rallies.[261] By the end of the year, their activism had aroused the annoyance of at least one man from nearby Ypsilanti, MI. Daniel Clark wrote into the *Ann Arbor News* complaining about the group's peace rallies: "Although for the most part, women have used their vote wisely, I am disturbed by their present interference in affairs of state. After all, what do

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[260] Many female students were members of the SDS, including Sharon Jeffrey who was later instrumental in the group's efforts to connect with the poor and working class. See James Miller, *Democracy Is in the Streets: From Port Huron to the Siege of Chicago* (Boston: Harvard University Press, 1994).

[261] "'Pause for Peace' Planned Here Next Wednesday," *Ann Arbor News*, Apr. 13, 1962, Box 1, Folder 7, Marcia Barabee Papers, 1961-1969, 857 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

Women for Peace know about the strategies of war?"[262] He closed by questioning why women's voices should even be considered, noting that "men are hard-headed realists, whereas women are soft-hearted sentimentalists." In response, Eve Gottesman explained that many women and men were "expressing their deep concern about and objection to the course that affairs of state have been taking in recent years," which she had been taught was a "right and responsibility of **every** [emphasis hers] citizen in a democratic society."[263] Clark illustrated the uphill battle faced by women and minorities during this era (and in the present). They often were not/are not viewed as individuals, but as stereotypical groups. All women were "soft-hearted sentimentalists" who foolishly dared to interfere in weightier affairs.

But women continued to push for a place in the discussion and actively sought to change the status quo for themselves and others. In 1966, Elise Boulding ran as the "Peace" candidate against Democrat Weston E. Vivian and Republican Marvin L. Esch. Boulding worked in the Conflict Resolution Center on campus, served as the editor of the International Peace Newsletter, and published *The Underside of History: A View of Women through Time* in 1976.[264] While she did not win the election, she did bring her expertise and experience to the race and established anti-war discussions as a part of Ann Arbor elections for the foreseeable future. In 1967, groups

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[262] Daniel Clark, "Says Women Should Leave 'Affairs Of State' to Men," *Ann Arbor News*, Dec. 21, 1962, Box 1, Folder 7, Marcia Barabee Papers, 1961-1969, 857 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
[263] Eve Gottesman, "Reader's Thinking Archaic," *Ann Arbor News*, Dec. 26, 1962, Box 1, Folder 7, Marcia Barabee Papers, 1961-1969, 857 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.
[264] In her book, she compares the modern view of women to that of prisoners with limited rights and privileges, serving at the whim of men and (to an extent) children within the home. They are denied their identities and privacy for the sake of the family. "Mrs. Boulding Named 'Peace' Candidate," *Ann Arbor News*, Sept. 20, 1966, Box 1, Folder 18, Marcia Barabee Papers, 1961-1969, 857 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.; Elise Boulding, *The Underside of History: A View of Women through Time* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1976).

including the Ann Arbor Women for Peace and the International Women's League for Peace and Freedom publically petitioned for a halt in the bombing campaigns in Southeast Asia.[265]

On campus, female students bristled against antiquated and paternal rules and codes governing dress, curfews, and actions for women while still advocating for political change. When seventy-four activists were jailed in Jackson, MS as part of a 'sitdown' strike for civil rights, a number of them were female Michigan students.[266] Emily Gordon was arrested and assaulted during the protest, when she was "struck on the head by a State Highway Patrolman, while under arrest and as she was being transferred," requiring five stitches.[267] Other female students also took part in demonstrations in the South, including four who failed to sign themselves out properly before leaving for Alabama. The University threatened to penalize them for their failure to follow procedure with a punishment that could have ranged from two days social probation to expulsion. One woman, who simply wrote "Alabama" under the spaces reserved for "destination, telephone number, and expected return," was not threatened with suspension.[268] No mention was made whether any of the male students faced such punitive threats due to their absence, likely because they were not required to account for their whereabouts. Despite risking arrest and injury thousands of miles from home, women still were

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[265] Jon Lewis, "'Peace' Groups All Ask Bombing Halt," *Ann Arbor News*, Mar. 15, 1967, Box 1, Folder 19, Marcia Barabee Papers, 1961-1969, 857 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[266] "'U' Students Jailed in Mississippi," *Ann Arbor News*, June 25, 1965, Box 3, Folder 11, Weston E. Vivian Papers, 1964-1968, 86184 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[267] University of Michigan Press Release, June 15, 1965, Box 1, Folder 2, Weston E. Vivian Papers, 1964-1968, 86184 Aa 2, Bentley Historical Library, University of Michigan.

[268] Robert Moore, " Student Activists Face Aftermath: Girls Who Neglected to Sign Out Face Dormitory Discipline Charges," 1.

not treated like adults or even full students at their own University, unlike their male counterparts.

At the University itself (and, to a large extent, in American society), women were expected to be happy with the opportunities granted to them, even if those opportunities and expectations were beneath those of male students. Throughout the athletic department – and at the *Daily* itself – there was a felt feeling of discrimination and condescension toward women. In the athletics supplement of the *Daily* for the start of the 1965 fall semester, Tom Weinberg explained to incoming first-year students that football had a certain *je ne sais quoi* to it that appealed to presumably male fans. In his description, he brags about Michigan football's academic standards (not unsurprising, considering the mythology of the Big Ten Conference and its preoccupation with its academic laurels), leadership, and intangibles that made it so great. Yet, there is also an implied sentiment that football is for men, not women, and likely cannot be understood or fully enjoyed by women: "So, when the girl next to you says it's nothing more than a bunch of guys chasing after that funny-shaped ball, just tell her there's more to it. And leave it at that."[269] Either women cannot be expected to grasp the full awesome power of football, or they will be dismissive of it. Regardless, it is assumed by Weinberg that the football foil who questioned the game's importance would be female. And, it would be pointless to attempt to explain why football is important, because it is inherently masculine and ineffable to those excluded from masculinity. One would assume that the defender of football would not just "leave it at that" because football at its essence might be "just a game."

[269] Tom Weinberg, "Michigan football: Why it's the king," *Michigan Daily*, Aug. 25, 1965, 3.

While one could argue that too much is being read into this one line in the football preview discussing Michigan tradition and pride, Weinberg still chose to have a "girl" serve as football's disbeliever (although a nerd or effeminate man might have also illustrated the assumed masculinity of the game), despite the fact that a female reporter served on the football reporting staff of the newspaper. Gretchen Twietmeyer saw her position as a woman as an "invader" of the male world of football and the *Daily*'s sports section. Because of her status as the only woman on the staff, she told the reader that she's a "feminist, a violent advocate of the Public Accommodations Act, [and] a passionate woman's rights picketer," before admitting that she was not really any of those things. However, she was the "only non-male" writer on the sports staff. While played as a joke, because of the lack of women on the staff, she stands in for any and all women. And, because of her interest in sports, she does not fit into the presumed femininity for middle-class, college educated women. Feminism, woman's rights, and violently advocating for anything distinguish a woman from the assumed silence and subservience of femininity. To actively oppose the status quo of gender roles and expectations put one at odds with the naturalized and acceptable ideal of femininity. In her mind, having an interest in sports was just as out there and challenging to gender roles as any of her facetiously purported interests would be. However, we also have to wonder if such is actually true for her, considering that she used those as the extreme markers for challenging femininity, extremes to which she herself did not actually go. Liking sports challenged gender norms and threatened the masculine world of athletics, but it did not challenge patriarchal society in total.

Regardless, despite her description of working at the *Daily* as "pretty nice," she admitted that she was a "mystery to the rest of the staff, who simply cannot figure out why [she] joined in the first place." Even her straight-forward answer – one which would not be at all unsatisfactory

or challenging from a male writer – "I wanted to be on the *Daily* and I wanted to write sports," still could not be comprehended by the males on staff, and even elicited "rumblings from some of the die-hard, anti-feminist traditionalists who believe that only men belong on the sports staff." While allegations of gender discrimination continued to grow on campus, and women increasingly challenged earlier restrictions on mores, sports served as a lightning rod where many men found it more acceptable to question feminist pushes for equal rights and representations. Sports had long been seen as a world away from the domestic world of women and a haven for masculinity.[270] Athletics at the University of Michigan, founded first as a men-only institute, followed the same pattern set at Ivy League schools in the 1800s, where sports became an important part of a well-rounded education as educators believed that a sound body was needed for a sound mind. Women's sports, while also adhering to a similar ideal, functioned in a different way from men's. Men's sports encouraged competition and physicality, whereas women's sports were supposed to encourage teamwork and aesthetics, so as not to stress the presumed delicate reproductive systems of women and threaten their purpose in life: to birth more white, upper-class men. But, in 1971, this view was being challenged as the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women was organized to give women the opportunity to have their own competitive national championships. In a world where the status quo was being challenged on seemingly every front, many males in the athletic department and on Michigan's campus saw sports as one of the last bastions of masculinity and the assumed obviousnesses of the dominant culture.

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[270] For an excellent discussion of the history of women's sports, see Susan K. Cahn, *Coming on Strong: Gender and Sexuality in Twentieth-Century Women's Sport* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1994).

By 1968, and after a few years of football mediocrity, being a diehard sports fan did not seem to be as big of a requirement on the *Michigan Daily* staff. Fred LaBour, writing to interested reporters, cautioned prospective employees that they should not "worry about not liking or knowing anything about sports. Some of us don't either."[271] But his lighthearted call for future writers was wrapped in an allegory comparing working for the *Daily* with being forced to serve as a concubine in a Turkish harem. The "dirty old" sultan in his printed story reassured the scared sex worker that it did not matter whether she was good at being a concubine or not: "you don't have to be good, just willing." Likely, the story was included to be somewhat edgy and shocking, as readers would probably be somewhat surprised that a story about nonconsensual sex would show up in a call for sports writing. Or, it was meant to be funny. But it gives credence to allegations that a culture of discrimination or at least insensitivity existed at the *Daily* and at the University that a joke about the threat of a lifetime of rape could serve as an appropriate intro for a sports writing job.

During that same semester the University proposed a trial run for a female pom-pom squad, challenging the long-held tradition of the all-male cheerleading squad at the University. Just three years earlier, the idea of female cheerleaders was scoffed at by Bob Hartranft, a graduate of the University. In a letter to the editor concerning Cornell University's consideration of adding female cheerleaders, Hartranft mocked the idea, suggesting that a lack of attractive coeds stymied the proposal before it even could be given serious thought.[272] He joked that Michigan would not fare much better, writing that "somewhere on this campus there must be six

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[271] Fred LaBour, "Sports action for you," *Michigan Daily*, Aug. 27, 1968, 2.

[272] "The crucial question was whether six attractive coeds could be found among the Cornell women. As had long been suspected, only two could be found, and the project had to be abandoned." Bob Hartranft, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 28, 1965, 4.

good-looking women." Despite ostensibly serving the same purpose as the male cheerleaders, female cheerleaders would only be of worthy if they were attractive. No mention was made of the male cheerleaders' looks, as it was likely presumed that they met the athletic requirements of the position, and that was all that mattered. Brian Deming, writing on the proposed pom-pom squad, lamented that "the female segment has breached a majority of the barriers guarding what once was religiously respected as 'for men only,' including the Men's Union and other all-male institutions at the University.[273] Deming couched his concerns in the rhetoric of defending tradition, but his description of women "breaching" barriers suggests that he sees it less as progress and more as an unwanted encroachment and a challenge to the meaning of football. He defined any who might be in favor of this move as in opposition to "loyal fans" who had grown up watching the game. The loyal fans were obviously opposed to this attack on a masculine stronghold. He consoled those who might have been worried about this change with the information that the pom-pom squad would not be accompanying the men in their routines during the trial stages, as the squad would perform with the band, not with the male cheerleaders. He admitted that someday female cheerleaders might become a welcome tradition, "but until then it just may not seem the same at the 'ol stadium."

As cheerleading was one of the few athletic opportunities open to female athletes in high school, many participated. However, unlike with male, college cheerleaders, a great deal of emphasis was placed on image and gender roles: skirts, ponytails, ribbons, makeup, etc. In American society, the female cheerleader had become a safe, symbolic counterpoint to the star quarterback throughout much of the country, often depicted as blonde-haired and blue-eyed, conforming to the white, middle-class feminine ideal. Cheerleading was a safe sport (although

[273] Brian Deming, "'M' games add pom-poms," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 11, 1968, 8.

not in physicality) because it reinforced femininity in an acceptable form of physical activity that did not hold the same stigma of homosexuality or mannishness that more competitive sports held for women. Moreover, cheerleaders cheered *for* the male competitors. They were supportive and secondary, serving as helpmates who encouraged rather than actively participating on the field. Yet, despite the unchallenging nature of female cheerleading – a practice that was already widespread at the high school level and throughout the Big Ten, where Michigan stood alone as having an all-male cheerleading squad – Michigan was hesitant to buck tradition. Michigan Athletic Director Don Canham wrote that there was resistance against the move by the male cheerleaders, leading the athletic department to assign them to different events and having the two squads perform on different ends of the football field to appease the male cheerleaders.[274]

But others, like Coaches Orr and Snowden of the men's basketball team, were supportive of the inclusion *because* the proposed cheerleaders were women and could excite the crowd. However, the coaches were not on board until they witnessed "how the Purdue cheerleaders fired up the Boilermaker squad during a game last year," prompting Snowden to say, "We've got to get ourselves some girl cheerleaders."[275] Like most celebrated moments of progressivism in sports, it was not solely or even primarily a matter of principle, fairness, or equality, but a quest for a competitive advantage. If "girl" cheerleaders could help the "men" win, then they should be included. However, no move was made to integrate the squad until a potential athletic advantage could be seen. Over the summer of 1969, fifty-four cheerleaders tried out (including Canham's daughter Clare, who made the squad) as eight were chosen for the squad, after being judged on

[274] Don Canham and Larry Paladino, *Don Canham's From the Inside: A Half Century of Michigan Athletics* (Ann Arbor: Olympia Sports, 1996), 84.
[275] Qtd. in Mort Noveck, "GIRLS at last!," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 24, 1969, 9.

ability, agility, and personality. Reporter Mort Noveck reached out to the "Women's Liberation" group on campus for a comment on the announcement, but they declined, until later clarifying their position due to criticism from the student body. They pointed out the patriarchal nature of a sport that would have women jump up and down cheering for men in a game of little, greater value. They also noted the disparity between men's and women's sports on campus, challenging that women's sports on campus received little to no publicity, while criticizing that male cheerleaders likely would never be assigned to women's sporting events. And, lastly, they pointed out that they just did not see it as a big deal, considering that it was neither their business nor even on their radar, as – in their eyes – cheerleading did little to advance respect for women on campus. While the eight women on the squad and those encouraged by their addition likely felt a deeper inclusion at the University and had another opportunity on campus to do something that they enjoyed and at which they excelled, one could see how it could be viewed as rather inconsequential for greater issues of gender equality on campus, especially considering the conservative symbolism of the female cheerleader in American society. But it is also telling that the *Daily* assumed that the Women's Movement group would have an opinion on the matter, and that there was backlash to the inclusion of women in the first place, highlighting the exalted position of sports in the dominant culture.

By 1971 allegations of sexual discrimination and sexism routinely showed up in the pages of the *Daily*, and soon those allegations would also appear in sporting conversations. While the University grew more progressive in its stance on private gender relations, dropping a rule prohibiting sex in Michigan's dormitories and moving away from a paternal preoccupation on banning premarital sex, it faced public criticism over its alleged cavalier attitude toward

allegations of discrimination.[276] P.E. Bauer noted that six months had gone by since the University had "made a strong public commitment to the elimination of its own sex discrimination."[277] However, Bauer argued that "it becomes apparent that the administrators here are far more committed to avoiding bad publicity than to actually improving the status of women," suggesting that the public announcement of commitment was a publicity stunt, rather than an indication of action. Bauer chided the University for not being more proactive in addressing concerns of fairness and equality, instead only reacting when things had reached a boiling point.[278]

In response, the Department of Health Education and Welfare moved to withhold federal contracts from the University in estimates from anywhere between $350,000 and $3,924,000, according to her article. Despite the Big Ten's promotion of an ideology of progressive reform and the importance of education, equality, and the individual, change came slowly, and not because of any altruistic motive that would have been more in keeping with their purported ideals, but because of accusations, prodding, and the threat of action.[279] Despite making a statement half a year earlier, the University still had not created a grievance procedure for underpaid female employees, and Bauer doubted that "the University [would] treat the complaint appeal procedure as anything more than window dressing. For in the only sex discrimination [case] ever tried at the University, the settlement was grossly unfair, and virtually

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[276] Zachary Schiller, "'U' drops rules on dorm sex," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 9, 1971, Section B, 1.
[277] P.E. Bauer, "'U': Fighting sexism?," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 9, 1971, 4.
[278] "Remaining peacefully unaware of women's problems for 154 years, the University was awakened with a start when the Department of Health Education and Welfare charged it with sex discrimination on all levels." Ibid. 4.
[279] This practice is played out repeatedly in the chapters of this dissertation.

meaningless."[280] Bauer's predictions held true for the immediate future, as new complaints were filed against the University and more people accused the school of being slow to act. [281] As with many other issues emblematic of the Big Ten Conference, Michigan had "succeeded in presenting itself as a leader in the fight against sexism – but without any real intention of changing the status of women."[282] Change would come – and, to Michigan and the Big Ten's credit, before many other institutions in other conferences – but only in response to agitation from below. And, despite the catalyst for change being the University's own discriminatory practices, Michigan could still claim to be leading the charge for equality.

On the campus level, female letter writers to the *Daily* still felt that male chauvinism abounded on campus, despite a continued focus on New Left activism for equality. Kathe Geist took issue with an opinion espoused by a friend of Rick Perloff in an editorial on student culture at Michigan written by Perloff. His friend, after being informed by a woman that she did not intend to have sex with him, opined: "If someone doesn't want to fuck, it's okay with me. But shit, she's no friend of mine."[283] Geist saw this dismissive attitude of women not as emblematic of a liberal view on relationships – a woman should not have to sleep with someone if they do not want to do so – but as "one of the most vicious and dehumanizing forms of male chauvinism existing among the supposedly enlightened students of the university." Rather than a tacit

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[280] In that instance, a woman named Cheryl Clark had claimed that Michigan paid her less than her male coworker for holding the same position. After looking into it, the University argued that her coworker was overpaid after his supervisor had seen potential in the coworker that was never realized. Rather than raising Clark's pay or docking her coworker's, they turned down her request and dropped the claim. Ibid., 4.

[281] Pat Bauer, "Women lodge new complaints over 'U' hiring," *Michigan Daily*, Dec. 3, 1971, 1; Rose Sue Berstein, "Prodding the 'U' on sexism," *Michigan Daily*, Dec. 4, 1971, 4.

[282] P.E. Bauer, "'U': Fighting sexism?," 4.

[283] Qtd in Kathe Geist, "Congratulations," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 1971, 4.

recognition that women (or men) should have agency over their bodies, Geist justly saw it as an example of the objectification of women, and one that held/holds particular sway on campus and in society: "Objects are for use, not friendship."[284]

Sara Fitzgerald, a Michigan student, wrote an editorial that dealt with similar issues. In the essay, she calls out the male populace of Ann Arbor (and the United States) for treating her and other women like "female hamburger."[285] Hers was not just a condemnation of immature, college-aged men, but men in general who felt entitled to objectify and dehumanize women, explaining that some of the worst offenders of all were those expected to keep "law and order" (buzz words of the conservative, silent majority during this time period) – the police. Fitzgerald and Geist wrote of a phenomenon on campus and in society that normalizes the objectification of women and aids in the creation of a culture of tacit condoning of sexual harassment, abuse, or even rape. Anticipating the term "rape culture" by a few years, Geist and Fitzgerald were well aware of and experienced the intimidating atmosphere present on campus that fed into the objectification and inferior status many women felt.[286]

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[284] Ibid., 4.

[285] She details the unsolicited and unappreciated catcalls, wolf whistles, and lewd comments hurled her way while walking around town, explaining that such things weren't complimentary, but threatening and only served to further the myth that women were objects and that men were naturally expected to comment on their looks and helpless not to do so. She explains that she even received such vulgar comments when she walked hunched over with a "bitchy" look on her face. Sara Fitzgerald, "They treated me like a female hamburger," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 18, 1971, 4.

[286] The term "rape culture" first appeared in the documentary *Rape Culture*, directed by Margaret Lazarus and Rennder Wunderlich [1975], but the more theory-driven concept of "rape-supportive culture" appeared a year later in Susan Brownmiller's book, *Against Our Will: Men, Women, and Rape* [1975]. Regardless of the name, the Women's Movement worked to increase awareness about sexual harassment, assault, and rape during this era and counter the naturalized belief that sexual assault was a minor problem or one that was inflicted by strangers rather than close acquaintances.

But this culture was not just sexualized, as it was more about a power dynamic (just as rape is about power, not sex) in which women were often considered secondary to male students or employees. It is not unsurprising that there was a backlash to gains made by women at the University of Michigan during this era, as such backlashes occurred nationally as well. Likely, the idea of the "Michigan Man," played a role too. Popularized by Bo Schembechler, the term has nebulously come to define the positive characteristics of a male (often an athlete) representative of the University of Michigan.[287] But the term has now come to encapsulate the ideals of Michigan students, athletes, faculty, and alumni, despite its use of the word "Man." Schembechler was channeling another Michigan coach, Fielding Yost, who had described the uniqueness of Michigan and its men upon his retirement in 1942.[288] A Michigan Man believed in the supremacy of the University and its endeavors and proselytized about its greatness, embracing the slogan of the University of Michigan: "the leaders and the best."

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[287] When men's basketball coach Bill Frieder accepted a job coaching Arizona State before the 1988-1989 ended, Schembechler (serving as athletic director) famously denied him the opportunity to coach the Wolverines in the current NCAA Tournament by firing him as the head coach, despite having coached them up until that point, decreeing: "A Michigan Man will coach Michigan!" Assistant coach Steve Fisher went on to coach the Wolverines to the National Championship, popularizing the term throughout the sports world. Ironically, Frieder had a degree from the University of Michigan; Fisher didn't. Likely, Schembechler was implying that Frieder's heart and mind were now at Arizona State, and he'd rather have a coach still totally aligned with Michigan. Later, he told assistant coach Lloyd Carr that he couldn't take a coaching job at Notre Dame because Carr was "Michigan," and Notre Dame wasn't. Michael Rosenberg, "'Michigan Man' is too often a misused term," *Detroit Free Press*, Jan. 7, 2011, http://www.freep.com/article/20110107/COL22/101070352/-Michigan-Man-too-often-misused-term; Qtd. in George Cantor, "*I Remember Bo …*" 122.

[288] "But do let me reiterate the spirit of Michigan. It is based upon a deathless loyalty to Michigan and all her ways; an enthusiasm that makes it second nature for Michigan men to spread the gospel of their university to the world's distant outposts; a conviction that nowhere is there a better university, in any way, than this Michigan of ours." Qtd. in Greg Nicholson, "Michigan Man," *UMGoBlog.com*, accessed June 20, 2014, http://umgoblog.com/end-around/michigan-man/.

Greg Nicholson of *UMGoBlog.com*, a blog covering Wolverine sports, defines the term thusly:

> A *Michigan Man* must be loyal to Michigan, this much we all know. However, a true *Man of Michigan* must be the type of man Michigan teaches its students to become. Thus a prerequisite in becoming a *Michigan Man* involves exhibiting the behavior Father Gabriel Richard, Fielding Yost, Bo Schembechler, and Mary Sue Coleman all held in common and all were united in trying to promote. This involves dedication, passion, and leadership. It involves a commitment to academics, loyalty to other *Michigan Men*, and the resolve to accomplish great things in the right legal and ethical manner.[289]

Schembechler used this Michigan Man mythology masterfully in convincing recruits to come to Ann Arbor, a strategy former University of Michigan band leader George Cavender remembers fondly.[290] All of these references and definitions speak to superiority and a moral standard that set the school and its populace apart from and above others, a notion encouraged by the Big Ten Conference itself. But it is strange that the school would continue to embrace such a gendered term for a University that has been coeducational since 1870. Likely, the alliterative allure of "Michigan Man" plays into the promotion, but a look into the battle for varsity women's sports on campus during the mid-1970s reveals some of the undercurrent of resentment for Michigan Women during this time period by Michigan Men protecting a male-dominated University culture (and a larger societal culture).

While the pom-pom squad had been added a few years earlier, the marching band remained a masculine holdout. Nicknamed the "Marching Men of Michigan," the band had been founded in 1896 by Michigan students to raise spirits and perform at campus sporting events.

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[289] Ibid.

[290] "Bo knew how to use that Michigan tradition. Do you know how many kids said they came to Michigan because of the helmet? People laugh, but that's not something to laugh about. That helmet stands for something. It stands for uniqueness. It stands for all the things carried on by Michigan teams over the years. People came to expect certain things. They grow comfortable with it. That's what he understood." George Cantor, "*I Remember Bo…*" 47.

But, the marching band remained all-male until a push in the early 1970s by incoming female instrumentalists. Pat Bauer of the *Daily* reported that a regulation preventing women from trying out had been revoked in 1970, but, in 1971, women were still discouraged from auditioning.[291] Indeed, despite the official change, the one-page memo still circulating throughout the music department indicated that the band was still all-male. George Cavender, the director, informed Bauer that it was not intended to dissuade women from auditioning; the band just had not gotten around to updating the memo and did not want a nearly perfect memo to go to waste.[292] But Cavender admitted that he had not contacted any academic counselors about the policy change allowing women to audition, because he "saw no reason to have done that."

According to Phil Chornor, a freshman orientation leader, numerous incoming female students called the band office asking for updates, but the office kept changing their story.[293] Most grew discouraged and gave up asking. One such individual, Gail Peters, had called in August but was told that "there are no spaces open," and that, regardless, auditions ended on September 5, before classes had even started, making it improbable for her to audition anyway. However, the official memo from the band stated that auditions *started* on the 5th. When Peters talked to Cavender about wanting to audition, he told her that the season would be too strenuous

[291]Even though the restriction had been removed officially, women inquiring about membership had been told that "the band [could] have no women members," according to University women's advocate Claire Rumelhart. Pat Bauer, "'U' band marches on - minus women," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 17, 1971, 1.
[292] As Cavender opined, "After all, 99 per cent of the memo was correct; only one per cent was incorrect." Qtd. in Ibid., 1.
[293] According to Chornor, "Some days they would say girls were allowed in the band, and some days they would say they weren't." Ibid., 10.

for her.[294] Cavender stood by his concerns about women being able to perform under pressure as well as the men did, arguing that most would likely grow bored with it and quit, owing to their feminine nature.[295] Cavender did not seem to care that he equated the incoming women with children or that boys also stopped playing with toys and often quit activities they had enjoyed previously. If giving up childhood hobbies and pleasures are indicative of future behavior, most adults would be written off as quitters; and those who were not would likely be stuck in some kind of arrested development. Cavender also worried about the logistics of having only one locker room for both sexes, stating that he "wouldn't invite a young lady into those conditions," perhaps indicating that there was a sexist culture well-established within the band that he cared little about changing.

But it was not just Cavender who fell back on female stereotypes and the assumed physical and mental inferiority of women; so too did many of the male band members.[296] Without allowing them the opportunity to prove themselves in something they had likely trained for in high school, just as the males had, it was already assumed that women would fail. And, if some women did vomit and found the work exhausting, it would prove their weakness and inability to perform up to standard, despite the fact that male band members exhibited the same

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[294] "It's more violent physical activity that [sic] would be proper for a lady. It would be too hard – we couldn't excuse a woman from rehearsals if she had 'female problems.' I certainly don't excuse any of my boys from practice." Qtd. in Ibid., 10.

[295] "After all, most girls play with dolls when they are young and nobody makes them stop doing it. They join Girl Scouts and nobody makes them quit. Why should they stay with a marching band?" Qtd. in Ibid., 10.

[296] One male clarinetist felt that a "girl would just never make it. It's just too strenuous. […] They'd never be able to lift their legs as we do for any period of time. On the first day of practice, the guys couldn't even take it. Four guys threw up right there on the field." Ibid., 10.

reactions to strenuous workouts.[297] Incoming women did have some cautious allies in the band. Bruce Flynn disagreed with popular sentiment, arguing that he "didn't think that you can say that the work is too strenuous for most females."[298] Flynn believed that arguments against women joining had a lot less to do with physical ability and a lot more to do with frustrations over playing *for* the football players rather than *as* football players. Likely, those frustrations led many men to want to believe that marching band was equally as athletic as sports or was an activity that could not be also endured and embraced by women, because believing otherwise would mean that their activity was somehow less masculine if women could do it too. Perhaps the same sentiment existed amongst the male cheerleaders who felt their masculinity was threatened if female cheerleaders joined the sport, thus shifting the sport from its place as a masculine activity to a more feminine or at least gender-neutral activity. However, unlike in cheerleading, the femininity of band members is not played up, as hats and uniforms cover up most gender distinguishing characteristics and the sheer number of members masks the individuality of the performers. Likewise, they are to be heard more than seen – and when seen,

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[297] A similar argument had been made in the 1928 Olympics as evidence against women's long-distance running abilities. A reporter announced that five women had dropped out of the 800 meter race, while five women collapsed at the finish line, and another woman fainted in the locker room. According to eye-witnesses and the records from the event, only nine women competed and all finished the race; a few, exhausted and disappointed in not winning made their way to the infield where they sat down and rested. But the initial falsified report only strengthened the self-fulfilling stereotypes embraced about women and strenuous activity, and long-distance running was banned for women at the Olympics until 1960. Lynne Emery, "An Examination of The 1928 Olympic 800 Meter Race For Women," Proceedings of the North American Society for Sport (1982): 30.

[298] He continued, "True, it's probably too much for a lot of them, but if a girl has been in marching band in high school, she's already been exposed to a lot of this kind of stuff. Actually, I think that the reason that we haven't got any female members is that there are a lot of frustrated jocks in the band." Likely inherent in this line of thinking, female band members would also learn about any hazing or initiation rituals that might exist as well and might question them. Qtd. in Pat Bauer, "'U' band marches on - minus women," 10.

they are seen as a whole rather than as individuals. Perhaps in this way, it would become hard to tell if the female band members were actually male, or – symbolically threatening to the male marchers – male band members could be confused for female ones.

Despite the official change to policy, women were not allowed to march in the band until 1972, but Cavender still referred to the assembled band members as "gentlemen," and the music catalog description for the band still declared that the band was for "qualified men."[299] A woman in the band, speaking from anonymity, confessed that it "seemed like Cavender didn't want us in the band. He has been giving some girls a rough time, he makes a special point at yelling at some of the girls in front of everyone." A male band member backed up her assessment. With the change, the band grew in number as more incoming students were excited to be a part of a Michigan tradition, but Dean Allen Britton of the music department lamented that "It just seems that things are not the same."[300]

Outside of the band, Michigan football and its male fans seemed to promote a systemic culture that prioritized male fans and patrons while expecting women to take a secondary role in college football fandom. In a letter to the editor in October 1971, a student, writing under the likely pseudonym Jermaine Greer, condemned the practice of "passing up" female students at football games.[301] To celebrate touchdowns male Michigan students hoisted up "certain people" during the games, whether those "certain people" wanted to experience "this highly dubious

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[299] Defending the unchanged error, one music department member shrugged, "It never occurred to us that anyone read the catalog," displacing blame and removing any assumed political motivation to discourage women from joining. Jan Benedetti, "Women take the field," *Michigan Daily*, Sept. 16, 1972, 1.

[300] Qtd. in Ibid., 1.

[301] The name "Jermaine Greer" was likely a play on the noted-feminist Germaine Greer whose book, *The Female Eunuch*, became an international best-seller in 1970.

privilege" or not.[302] In most cases, those being "passed up" were college women. Greer informed the male student body that "We do not appreciate the public displays of sexual aggression employed by some males (if not all at one time or another) as they feel out the helpless victims of such crude sport." While some women likely trusted the men passing them up, some still took the opportunity to touch the women inappropriately in the safety of mob anonymity. Greer informed the readers that "Contrary to popular belief, we do not 'really love it,'" in what could be read as a striking allusion to the rhetoric used to defend unsolicited and unwanted advances of sexual harassment or assault. By invoking the belief that women would enjoy being passed up against their will, the action might be read as justifiable and allow the male to assume that he knew better what the woman would want. Tellingly, it also speaks to the popular but detestable practice of blaming the victim of sexual assaults by inferring that her clothing or attitude invited such advances. But, Greer wanted her male classmates to know that they were "doing us no favors, neither bolstering our egos nor fulfilling latent sexual desires." It is probable that she and others had voiced similar concerns out loud to acquaintances, but they were met with some resistance or disbelief.

Likely, some defended the practice as emblematic of exuberant school spirit and spur of the moment frivolity. To counter such objections, "Greer" queried why "male victims [of passing up] get booed unless they are very old or a boy scout? Why do males involved scream and shout like panting dogs?" If it truly were a show of spirit and an honor, why would males object to being treated in that way? Again, it goes back to the sentiments suggested by Flynn in the marching band. To be passed up meant to be lowered to the inferior status of a woman. The young and the old did not hold the same masculine status as the college-aged males, so their

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[302] Jermaine Greer, "Passing up," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 1, 1971, 4.

passing up could be celebrated or mocked. But passing up women was a display of superiority and power. When women were passed up, it was purported to be all in good fun and even the objectors would enjoy it. When men were passed up, it lowered them and stripped them of their privilege and masculine position, humiliating them. While likely an infrequent and unexamined experience for many men, it was yet one more example of intimidation and a normalization of the lack of personal agency and control of one's own body for women on campus and their secondary status on campus. Even the Athletic Department partook in this normalizing of the secondary status of women in their ticket sales. On the forms to buy season tickets, there were only two blank spaces available: "Wife's Name" and "Student's Name," relegating women to the helpmate role once more.[303] It was assumed that the husband would be the student and fan of Michigan football. His wife, in support, would probably want tickets too, as an afterthought. But what about the thousands of female students on campus who were football fans, many of whom likely had husbands who were not alumni?

In the early 1970s, the *Daily* itself was charged with sexism in its promotion of employees to leadership positions. The accusers wanted a guarantee from the Board of Student Publications that women would get fuller participation in the paper.[304] Despite the *Daily*'s left-leaning sentiments, it too needed to be prodded into action, and was similarly chastised by *Spectre*, a "white revolutionary lesbian" publication that had been left out of the newspaper's article on campus underground newspapers, in a move that could be read as tacit or overt

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[303] Sydney Solbert, David Lutton, and Michael C. Smith, "Wive's tickets," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 1, 1971, 4.

[304] Jan Benedetti, "Women charge Daily with sexism, may sue," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 19, 1971, 1.

privileging of a very heteronormative view of femininity.[305] Following on the heels of the accusation of the *Daily*'s sexism, Rick Perloff wrote an editorial entitled "On arrogance, tolerance and Women's Lib," which condemned the refusal of many women's groups to ask for and listen to the voices of men on the subject of women. He argued that he had "found difficulty in covering women's meetings on campus" and sensed a great deal of "hostility toward men," feeling that "women at all affiliated with the movement do not trust nor take seriously a man's comment about women's role in society or her role as a woman, simply because he is a man, hence a victim of conditioning."[306] He found this intolerance of men's opinions disturbing, suggesting that an outside opinion, "unburdened by the complications of present and past personality," could sense things clearly and give a fresh opinion on the matter.[307]

A series of letters to the editor responding to Perloff appeared over the next week, largely displaying frustration over having to explain their caution with and unwillingness to have their own "predicament" explained to them. Maryann K. Hoff argued that it was not arrogance to be wary of male opinions on the matter, but a "new-found sense of pride" in having a say in their own view of themselves and their place in society – a privilege long held by men.[308] Joan Bernott agreed with her assessment, explaining that "It's a bit much to ask the oppressed to be

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[305] *The Spectre* Staff, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 13, 1971, 4.

[306] Rick Perloff, "On arrogance, tolerance and Women's Lib," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 28, 1971, 4.

[307] "It is precisely because they are different that they can offer insights and provide input that women may not have considered." As evidence of his point, he suggested that D.H. Lawrence "accurately portray[ed] the feelings and temperament of the woman of his time - how else could women point to Lawrence as an exemplar of 'sexism' if Lawrence did not create women who correctly fit the submissive female mold that women claim to have been conditioned to?", Ibid., 4.

[308] She details the flaws in his arguments, but largely boils down her objection to one point: "It is ugly when a man still assumes that he should be giving women his 'intuitions and thoughts' on femininity." Maryann K. Hoff, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 29, 1971, 4.

tolerant of even the **sympathetic** [emphasis hers] oppressor when the oppression is still so fresh in our minds, and so substantial and demeaning a part of our live [sic]." She suggests that the only male advice she might be willing to listen to about arrogance, tolerance, and oppression would be advice that comes from a black male: "He, at least, knows what he's talking about."[309]

Karon VanGelder wrote to the *Daily* on the same day, denouncing Perloff's "trivializing" abbreviation of the term "liberation," calling the movement "Women's Lib," a lack of respect she assumed he wouldn't have shown to "Black Lib or Vietnamese Lib."[310] She argued that the Women's Movement demanded that "women be taken seriously as human beings and not just treated as amusing creatures." Their demands were not trivial or small inconveniences.[311] She found it "interesting" that Perloff would write such an essay "at the same time that women are organizing against sexual discrimination at The Daily." She felt that Perloff's disappointment at women's "arrogance" does not accurately reflect the situation of men and women in society: "Men are not outside observers as he so strongly implies. They are the beneficiaries of the present oppression of women. That's what sexism is all about – one sex benefits at the expense of the other." And, like many people in a position of subjugation, it only makes sense that the oppressed would study and understand the oppressor more than the masters understood the

[309] Joan Bernott, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Nov. 3, 1971, 4.
[310] Karon VanGelder, "Letter to the Editor," *Michigan Daily*, Nov. 3, 1971, 4.
[311] She suggested that Perloff's previous columns that made use of "inaccurate stories and misquotes" likely led to his difficulty in getting women's groups to speak on the record with him, let alone contemplate his opinions on the position of women in society., Ibid., 4.

oppressed. Knowing how a person in a position of authority acts and reacts helps to make the oppression even slightly more tolerable.[312]

In the spring semester, Sara Krulwich, a photographer for the *Daily*, faced discrimination at the hands of the Athletic Department when she attempted to fulfill her assignment of reporting on a hockey game. In 1969, she had been asked to leave the football field when a "kindly gentleman" mistook her for a photographer's girlfriend. He later apologized, saying that he "didn't realize that you were a *real* photographer," illustrating the struggle women faced when they attempted to succeed in professions from which they had been previously discouraged or denied.[313] Moreover, it was assumed that she did not belong on the field because it was a masculine environment, as football remained a male domain and women were assumed to be disinterested; if they had to be there, it was understood that they would fulfill a supportive role – i.e. as girlfriends or cheerleaders. At the door of the hockey arena, a male security guard hassled her for having the wrong press pass, an incident that would have been normal had he not also patronized her, checking all of her bags to make sure she actually had a camera, because her "bag could be filled with booze."[314] When she eventually made her way into the arena, security guards repeatedly asked her for her ID and informed her that she could not stand next to the other photographers because she was blocking the view of paying fans, resulting in a threat to throw her out of the arena. Of the four other photographers standing in the exact same space as her, all

[312] She closes that, just as slaves had to understand the whims and idiosyncrasies of their masters, understanding your oppressor is not just an academic endeavor, "It is but a matter of survival." Ibid., 4.
[313] Italics added for emphasis by the author. Sara Krulwich, "'U' male chauvinism: A sporting affair?" *Michigan Daily*, Feb. 9, 1972, 4.
[314] Before he let her enter the arena, he demanded she take his picture, his friend's picture, and a few other pictures. Ibid., 4.

were male and none were harassed by the guards or told to move. A male colleague of hers told her that the guards had not even said anything at all to them until she showed up. The guards repeatedly hassled her at least six times in the fifteen minutes she spent in the arena. The only male photographer who faced any criticism from the guards was a man who eventually attempted to come to her aid. At that point, the guards stopped talking to Krulwich, a change that she saw as a belief from the guards that arguing with a male was "more dignified," and they seemed to act "as if I didn't have the brains to answer the questions without male help." After this last interaction, Krulwich left the arena, noting that "Michigan was losing [the game] and I couldn't have been happier." Sports, mythically held up as the great equalizer in society, served as the medium for and a perpetrator of exclusion.

As women continued to battle for a place on the periphery of varsity sports at the University – cheerleading, marching band, sports reporting/photography – there was still an expectation that women were largely disinterested in athletics and remained outside of the Michigan Man mythology. For the first time in the history of the University, women were allowed to play in an intramural competition with men in April 1972. When Taylor house of the South Quad played Reeves house in a best of seven volleyball series, female team members, including Cathy Stepien, helped lead the team to a three games to two advantage against the all-male Reeves squad. With victory in sight, Taylor opted to go to an all-male lineup, and promptly lost both games.[315] The decision to then move to an all-male lineup suggests that Taylor fell back on the assumption that male athletes would perform better, despite the fact that they had

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[315] Downplaying the importance of it, Cathy Stepien reasoned that she "played because we're just as much a part of Taylor house as the boys, we're all really close, and we enjoy doing things with them." For Stepien, this wasn't a strange occurrence, but an illustration of the equality for which Michigan was supposed to stand. Jeff Chown, "Females invade IM volleyball," *Michigan Daily*, Apr. 21, 1972, 7.

already won three games *with* the women. Indeed, Stepien's teammate's comments betrayed a sexist viewpoint. Reggie Lewicki noted that "Cathy in her Taylor house T-shirt was really stunning," and credited her appearance rather than her athletic ability for "distract[ing] the guys on the other team." He also believed that Stepien's appearance "distracted the guys on our team and the referee for that matter." Despite helping to lead the team to three victories, Stepien was actually thought to be a distraction and an excuse for their loss, even though she did not play in the final two games. Lewicki saw Stepien as a distraction because of what she was wearing – the team t-shirt that all team members wore.

Bob Kay of Reeves house felt differently, arguing that he "thought it was good [to have a coed team] because girls in our society are forced into roles like staying in the house and playing with dolls. It'd eliminate a lot of hang-ups about sex and we'd have a completely different society if we had more of this." Kay's sentiment flew in the face of the ones held by many men in society, including those at Michigan fighting against the implementation of Title IX, like Bo Schembechler and Don Canham, out of a belief that there was not as much of an interest on the part of women for collegiate athletics which would result in – and what was characterized as an unfair push toward – fairer representation in sports.

Schembechler had strong opinions on masculinity and femininity throughout the 1960s and 1970s. He often questioned his players' masculinity as a motivational strategy. According to Billy Taylor, Schembechler allowed Taylor to wear his blue-suede cleats during games, even though the coach was against non-conformity, but referred to the shoes as being "pansy."[316] Taylor relates that Schembechler coached as if he were General George Patton, commanding his troops and often used "military analogies, saying we were close [as team members] because we

[316] Billy Taylor and Kevin Allen, *Get Back Up*, 45.

had been 'in the battles together.'[317] Schembechler consistently accused players of not being "manly" enough or declared that they ran like a "sissy." Like many of his contemporary coaches, Schembechler was a proponent of the inherent masculinity of sports. Football built manliness and the two were inseparable, harkening back to the arguments of *Mens sana in corpore sano* and Muscular Christianity of the mid-nineteenth century that grew with and flourished in the creation of college and amateur sports.[318] The institutionalization of competitive sports as a part of the education of young men normalized this relationship between manliness and athleticism. For men who did not like sports, their masculinity was suspect, and they easily could be suspected of homosexuality, as could women who had an affinity for sport.[319]

This belief in the natural masculinity of sports influenced Schembechler's opposition to the push for varsity athletics for women during the 1970s. In 1974, in an interview with *The University News* from the University of Michigan – Flint, Schembechler clarified his position. His interviewer reminded the readership that Schembechler had "come out against" the "demands of women regarding equal budgets for sports" in the past, and asked the coach what he felt the

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[317] Bob Ufer, radio announcer and the voice of Michigan football, famously referred to Schembechler as "Bo 'George Patton' Schembechler" and honked the actual horn from Patton's jeep (gifted to him by one of Patton's nephews) when Michigan scored. Ibid., 146.; Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It*, 242.

[318] See Robert J. Higgs, *God in the Stadium* (Lexington: University of Kentucky Press, 1995); Gerald R. Gems, *For Pride, Profit, and Patriarchy*.

[319] Qtd. in Susan Ware, "Introduction: Title IX – Thirty-seven Words That Changed American Sports," *Title IX: A Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford, 2007), 8-9.

[319] As a Connecticut judge said in 1971, in a ruling where he denied high school girls the right to run on the boys' cross-country team, "Athletic competition builds character in our boys. We do not need that kind of character in our girls, the women of tomorrow." Ibid., 4.

"role of women in sports should be in a college like U of M?"[320] Jokingly, the interviewer prodded Schembechler with, "You must like girls?"[321] In response to the leading question from the interviewer, which in its subtext challenged the heterosexuality of Schembechler, the coach replied: "There is something wrong with a man who doesn't like women." To Schembechler, and presumably many football fans, real men liked football *and* women – but you showed your fondness for women sexually, not through advocating for equality.

Schembechler argued that women should be given "an opportunity to play in the games to the extent to which they want to play," but he never gave any evidence that women did *not* want to play sports in larger numbers.[322] The argument centered on the passage of Title IX in 1972 and the compliance of institutions who received Federal financial assistance. Schembechler's argument ignored the great disparity that existed at many schools between men's and women's athletics.[323] With no knowledge of the actuality of the legislation, Schembechler's position assumed that the law would be unfair to men's sports and not something that women would even want. But the elevated position of football on college campuses made any perceived

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[320] "Interview: Bo Schembechler," *The University News, The University of Michigan - Flint*, 1974, 3.

[321] Girls is a common (but still arguably demeaning) infantalization of college-aged women and their sports teams. Whereas male athletes were usually referred to as "men," female athletes were often discussed as "girls." Or, male teams were considered the default (Wolverines, Spartans, Buckeyes, etc.), while women's teams often carried a feminine adjective before the nickname (for instance, the Penn State Lady Lions basketball team).

[322] He continues, arguing that "You don't arbitrarily say '50-50, men and women,' just because we want equal opportunity for women. That's ridiculous." Ibid, 3.

[323] For instance, at the University of Washington, the 1973-1974 athletic budget allocated $2.5 million to the men's programs, but only $18,000 to the women's. At the time of this interview, Schembechler could only speculate about what implementation and compliance would mean, as H.E.W. didn't finalize a draft of regulations for areas covered by the law until 1975. Furthermore, at that time, universities would receive at least three years to come into compliance with the law – and the final guidelines didn't come out until 1979. Susan Ware, "Introduction: Title IX," 4.

change a threat and possible attack on football's prioritization. A great deal of money flowed through football for bowl games, hotel rooms, flights, scholarships, equipment, stadium upgrades, promotional material, coaching salaries, etc., and no other sport came close to matching it.[324] And this myth of the importance of football held strong in Ann Arbor. Rather than question if players needed to stay at a hotel the night before a big game, whether football could function with less scholarships (presently, schools are allotted 85 scholarships – at the time, that number was 105), or if coaches needed high salaries – all areas where expenses could be cut – the fate of smaller men's sports (like wrestling, baseball, or gymnastics) became the issue as the argument went that an increase in spending for women's sports would push male sports out; cutting football expenses or slowly limiting gridiron scholarships were clearly non-starters.

But Schembechler's argument did not even accurately portray what Title IX would become. There are three ways a school can be in compliance with the law: 1) participation opportunities for men and women should be proportional to the enrollment of the university; 2) the school must show a "history and continuing practice of program expansion to meet the interests and needs of women"; 3) a demonstration that the institution's programs "fully and effectively" meet those interests and needs.[325] Schools needed to demonstrate that they were in compliance with just one of the requirements. With just the promise of Title IX's enforcement,

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[324] As Susan Ware notes: "Football programs enjoyed such a mystique in local communities and on college campuses, to say nothing of in the minds of alums, that they were practically sacrosanct. Football's seeming invincibility was also aided by the myth that football's gate receipts and revenues paid for the rest of a school's athletic program." Ibid., 5.
[325] Qtd. in Ibid., 6.

female participation in high school and college sports increased dramatically.[326] For years, the NCAA spent millions of dollars fighting the implementation of Title IX, rather than using that money to fund women's sports.[327]

Schembechler voiced a fairly common opinion, at least within athletic departments and the NCAA on the matter.[328] Schembechler believed that this perceived lack of interest was natural.[329] He assumed that the current disproportionate status of men's and women's sports was natural and also largely women's fault. Despite historical agitation for change (the creation of the AIAW in the first place), the fact that women did not have more opportunities for athletics was a demonstration of them not wanting those opportunities enough and not a lack of awareness or action by the University, or even outright refusal to change. Even the idea that women would want to play sports was ridiculous to the coach.[330] He not only assumed that women had little to no interest in sports, but he also argued that women naturally *liked* housework and the things that have been "predominantly women's things." In his arguments, sports were a fun activity for men;

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[326] In 1970-1971, 300,000 female high school students played sports; by 1978-1979, that number jumped to 2 million. Likewise, for college women, the number went from 31,852 in 1971-1972 to 64,375 between 1976-1977. Ibid., 9.

[327] Also worth noting, when the NCAA eventually embraced the idea of women's athletics in 1981-1982, they forced out the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (an organization founded and run by women) and ran women's sports as they saw fit.

[328] As Ware notes, "many athletic administrators and even leaders of the NCAA argued that the disparities between men's and women's programs were not necessarily the result of discrimination, but were the result of longstanding social factors that meant women were less interested in participating in organized sports than men were." Ibid., 6.

[329] "In sports, men are more prone to athletics than women. Now you can say maybe women haven't had the opportunity, but if they wanted the opportunity, they would certainly have gotten it a long time before now." Qtd. in "Interview: Bo Schembechler," 3.

[330] "That's like me saying that I want 50-50 with the kitchen or the housework or things that have been predominantly women's things. I want all fashion shows to be 50-50; that's ridiculous." Ibid., 3.

housework was a fun activity for women. Rather than questioning or acknowledging the historical power dynamics that had made "women's work" women's, he argued that those chores were womanly because women did them and obviously enjoyed them. To Schembechler and many other men in positions of power in athletics, the idea of women wanting more sports was ridiculous – even when women were saying just that. He further argued that you "don't just say 'well, here is 50% of what men have worked for for hundreds of years.' You just don't do that. … You don't destroy one program so you can build up another." But this argument dismisses that the collegiate athletic system was often built on the exclusion of others, whether it be exclusion by race, class, or even gender.[331]

Don Canham argued the financial aspect of the argument. In 1974, he gave a speech in Houston where he went on record with his opposition to H.E.W.'s guidelines. He argued that the guidelines were not what Congress had intended in 1972.[332] In his autobiography, he admitted that "After 25 years of Title IX it is true women's athletics at Michigan and other institutions are better off," but he believed that the price had been high in regards to cutting men's athletics.[333] He argued that "Everyone would prefer progress without threats and ridiculous lawsuits against institutions for so-called violations," but, even in the Big Ten where they prided themselves on

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[331] Schembechler admits that he'd "love to see a gifted woman athlete," but in his mind it would have to happen organically and not through any kind of change that could affect a male athlete. He also assumes that a program must be "destroyed" to make room for a women's program. Ten lost football scholarships would not create much effect for the program (at the time, that would still leave 95 players on the team), but cutting ten scholarships in another sport would, yet that is the route often chosen.

[332] Although, again, at this point the draft wasn't even in the circulation stage, but behind the scenes maneuvering was occurring. Don Canham and Larry Paladino, *Don Canham's From the Inside*, 248.

[333] Ibid., 250.

progress, those changes were not coming without threats and challenges.[334] The "threats" spurred the changes. Without them, Canham was content to keep women's sports at the club level, even as surrounding schools upgraded their teams to varsity status. Canham also lamented that the "saddest result of the government bungling is that young male "walk-ons" (those not on scholarships) are a thing of the past," although he did not explain why this was the case.[335]

In an article in the *Daily* from April 1975, Canham spoke with Rick Bonino who was writing a series of articles on the Athletic Department at Michigan.[336] Canham explained that budget cuts would likely come in the future. While he did not explicitly state it was because of a result of Title IX, he did suggest that women's sports could still be run differently than the men's. He said that the women's sports were not pushing for scholarships, and would instead recruit from within the student body and play games close to Ann Arbor.[337] But it is doubtful that the women did not want scholarships. Bonino reported that the University brought in $4 million, $80,000 of which was surplus. At the time, women's sports only received $80,000 worth of

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[334] He challengingly notes that "legal fees alone [from challenging lawsuits] would finance a lot of team travel for men and for women," but he fails to mention that the millions of dollars the NCAA spent on fighting the implementation of Title IX could have financed them as well. And, it was the decision of athletic departments to cut the scholarships and programs of other men's sports, rather than the scholarships of the football team, resulting in entire men's sports disappearing or becoming club sports.

[335] There are still walk-ons in sports, but it's likely that they would much rather have a scholarship and not have to pay for their education in full. One has to assume that Canham laments that the sports the University decided to cut were often filled with students they chose not to give scholarships to in the first place. And then they cut their sport, rather than reduce football spending. And, at the time he makes this argument, *all* women were walk-ons, paying their own way, but he says nothing about this. Ibid., 250.

[336] The Michigan athletic department had grown to be the most prosperous in the country under Canham, and other university athletic directors were turning to Michigan as an example of how to turn a profit and market college athletics.

[337] In this case, they would be helping the University save money, as scholarships would not have to be given to female athletes.

funding.[338] So, yes, funding more women's sports would raise costs, but it would be hard to fund them less than they already had been. It is clear that without such "threats," as Canham called them, Universities would not have moved to increase opportunities for female athletes.[339] Scholarship losses in men's sports, and the fractional scholarships divvied out by universities in men's "secondary sports" were a far greater threat to the sports' survival than in football or basketball. Even before the passage of Title IX, the walk-ons, the wrestlers, the gymnasts, and other non-football or non-basketball players were feeling the pressure from the ever-increasing money-grab in college sports. And if it truly was a cost argument or about fairness in numbers, rather than a complaint about an increasing importance on women's athletics, Canham and Schembechler did a poor job of demonstrating their argument.

In 1973, after increasing complaints from female athletes about unequal treatment, "President Robben Fleming established the Committee to Study Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (chaired by Eunice Burns)" in order "to investigate the development of women's intercollegiate (varsity) sports."[340] An article on the history of Title IX at Michigan describes the predicament of women's teams before the "threats" of Title IX: "At home they did not have a dedicated place to practice. Away, they were not provided with a per diem for food. Or lodging.

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[338] Rick Bonino, "Sport budget cuts lurk in future," *Michigan Daily*, Apr. 18, 1975, 10.

[339] And Canham had threatened to put non-revenue sports on the chopping block in the past, even without Title IX's passage and the "threats" of women's sports. In 1971, Canham told the *Daily* that he wanted to suggest to the Big Ten that they cut scholarships to all sports (this just meant men's sports) to lower costs of scholarships and recruiting competitions. But this didn't necessarily mean football and basketball. In the same article, Canham suggested that smaller sports likely should take the brunt of the cuts, because they weren't making money. Jim Kevra and Chris Parks, "The 'U' and athletics: Who are 'The Victors'?" *Michigan Daily*, Dec. 10, 1971, 1.

[340] "A Sporting Chance: Women's Athletics at the University of Michigan," *Bentley Historical Library - University of Michigan*, accessed April 14, 2014, http://bentley.umich.edu/exhibits/womensathletics/.

They were not given sweatshirts, much less uniforms, and what they did wear couldn't sport a Block M—that was for the men."[341] Micki King, later an Olympic gold-medal winning diver in 1972, had to practice her sport off campus until the men's diving coach saw her and invited her to the varsity team's facilities, coaching her into an elite-level competitor. Between 1970 and 1974, many other Michigan universities authorized varsity sports for women, but the University of Michigan still lagged behind, despite their purporting to be the "leaders and the best" and the marketing lengths Canham had gone to in the promotion of football.[342] Canham had turned Michigan into the most profitable college program in the country, paving the way for big money in college football and basketball. Yet, schools who lacked such financial windfalls were supporting varsity women's athletics before a school that could afford it. Few things were provided to the women's club teams that did exist, and club athletes had to pool their money to provide food and drinks. Sheryl Szady remembers that the field hockey team actually looked forward to away games because other schools provided towels in their locker rooms.[343] By 1973, Canham's plan for women's teams to remain club teams and play locally had already grown difficult, as varsity teams at other Michigan schools refused to play Michigan. Female athletes, frustrated with the lack of action by the athletic department, spoke before the Board of Regents in April 1973. In 1973-1974, tennis, basketball, swimming, volleyball, synchronized swimming, and field hockey were added as female varsity sports.[344] Carol Hutchins, who

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[341] Richard Rothschild, "Fight Club," *LSA Today*, Nov. 2, 2012, http://www.lsa.umich.edu/lsa/ci.fightclub_ci.detail.
[342] Ibid.
[343] "[At Michigan] there was a very small locker room with two toilets, one that never worked. […] There were showers that you would never set foot in." Ibid.
[344] Szady recalls: "We were very appreciative. It was a step up but not a big step up. Nobody on our team came to Michigan to play field hockey. You fit the sport into your academic schedule.

became the softball coach in 1985, remembers that Michigan was one of the last schools in Michigan to "come on board" with Title IX. Even in the mid-1980s, Hutchins' Michigan was a far cry from her male colleagues':

> When I became coach it was 50 percent athletics, 50 percent clerical. Men who coached were 100 percent athletics, but I was answering phones from 8:00 A.M. to noon for one of the professors. I was a secretary and a damn bad one. I know the baseball coach didn't do that. The football coach certainly didn't do that. [345]

Marissa Pollick, a freshman on the newly established tennis team, remembers that they were allowed to play in the new tennis building, but Canham had not planned for a women's locker-room.[346] Pollick had previously earned a spot on the men's tennis team at Berkely High School in suburban Detroit because the school had no opportunities for women's tennis. At Ann Arbor Huron High School, two female athletes had sued the school, citing the 14th amendment, for the lack of athletic opportunities for women, and won the case. Pollick recalled that "The impact was really unbelievable. People didn't like it, and it got a lot of publicity, but the next year our school had a girl's team as did hundreds across the state. […] What's ridiculous is the reasons these schools gave to not have programs included that there wasn't sufficient interest in varsity tennis … which is just silly. The interest is a function of opportunity. That's always been

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We only practiced an hour or 90 minutes a few times a week. The coach had the equipment in her car. There were no shoes, no socks, no Gatorade or water. When it came to scheduling facilities and practice times, we were at the bottom of the totem pole. There was no help with admissions, no help with academic schedules, no tutoring, no scholarships." Ibid.

[345] Ibid.

[346] "We used the back bathrooms of the building, and I can literally still smell it." The bathroom served as the locker-room for the women, where they each received a blue folding chair and a uniform; "No cubbies or hooks, no showers or training space — just that blue metal folding chair." Qtd. in Alexa Dettelbach, "Michigan's unsung Title IX hero," *Michigan Daily*, Feb. 25, 2014, http://www.michigandaily.com/sports/michigan%E2%80%99s-unsung-hero-title-ix?page=0,0.

the case."[347] When Pollick spoke out against this unequal treatment at the University of Michigan, Canham's office called her in to talk to her. She was met by a woman who worked for Canham who told her not to talk to the press about the issue anymore, proving that the athletic department cared more about avoiding negative publicity than the concerns of their female athletes.

In the spring of 1975, Schembechler, along with men's basketball coach Johnny Orr, spoke out against female athletes on the newly formed varsity women's teams earning a "block letter 'M' for outstanding achievement," an award they believed should only be reserved for men.[348] They cosigned a letter stating that female athletes "should not receive the same Block M that [football and basketball athletes] have sweated and bled for."[349] No mention was made of other men's sports, indicating that these other men's sports were seen as less important than football and basketball. The athletic department only seemed to care about other men's sports when they could use their financial situations as leverage against women's sports. The letter ended with a threat from Schembechler to change the football award, "rather than give identical awards for football and women's sports."[350] They sent the letter out through the 'M' Club alumni network, even sending one to President Ford, a football alum. The letter listed softball and synchronized swimming as sports in which the athletes were undeserving of the Block 'M';

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[347] She further explained that the women at Michigan were only given three practices per week in the facilities, and those were always at dinner time. If the men's team needed to use the track or the tennis building, the women had to give up the space. Furthermore, they received a per diem for meals that was less than half of the men's. They had a reduced schedule and lagged behind nearly every other school they played, including rival Michigan State. Ibid.

[348] "Sexism on the Athletic Field," *Ann Arbor Sun*, June 20, 1975.

[349] Richard Rothschild, "Fight Club."

[350] Alexa Dettelbach, "Michigan's unsung Title IX hero."

softball was not yet a sport, and the synchronized swimming team was one of the best in the nation, an error that suggests that this was an emotional issue rather than a logical one for the two coaches if they were not even versed in the female sports offered by the University.

At the vote, Orr argued that the "levels of performance that a man has to exhibit [to receive the 'M' award] are far above those of women."[351] Schembechler claimed that if the plan "comes to pass, it will minimize the value of the 'M' in the eyes of not only our players, but the public who place such a high value on it." The 'M' arguably symbolized the masculine mythology of the Michigan Man and the threat of women earning it challenged, by equating the symbol with the performances of great female athletes, the connection between sports and masculinity. One former Michigan player threatened to return his 'M' if women were given the privilege of earning them. He felt that it would no longer mean the same thing. Just like with the cheerleaders and the band members, if women could participate and excel in the same areas as men and earn the same recognitions, then it was an attack on the myth of the superiority of men and the masculinity of sports and somehow a diminishment of male accomplishments and meaning. Yet, tellingly, no argument was made against baseball players earning the same award as football players, despite the athletic differences in the two sports.

They suggested that women could earn a blue 'M' or a script 'M,' but not the 'M' awarded to men. The night before the vote, famed anchorman and sports broadcaster Al Ackerman of WDIV-TV in Detroit opined on the air that “if Michigan [did not] give women the same Block M as the men, ‘[He would] never mention another Michigan score on this broadcast."[352] For many listening at home, this was likely the first they had even heard about the controversy. Little

[351] "Sexism on the Athletic Field."
[352] Ibid.

about the vote appeared in the *Daily*, as Don Canham threatened to stop releasing information from the athletic department to the paper if they wrote anything about the vote before it occurred. The *Ann Arbor Sun* opined that this "prevented any advance publicity which might have helped the women's efforts."[353] Again, if this battle against varsity women's athletics was only an argument over cost, why was there so much grief over a symbol? Before the vote, Canham tried to convince Sheryl Szady and other female athletes to accept a different award than the one given to men, but they declined. Even with the gag order from Canham and the complaints of Orr and Schembechler, the Board in Control of Intercollegiate Athletics voted 14-1 to award deserving female athletes with the Block 'M.' Despite this, when the varsity jackets came in, Szady and the other women noticed that the 'M' was slightly smaller and more orange, rather than maize, than the men's; the athletic department explained that the Block 'M' would not fit on a smaller jacket so they had to order new ones.[354] Pollick confronted the athletic department about the slight and was told: "You girls should be glad with what you have. […] It's smaller because girls are smaller."[355] A few women transferred to other colleges that offered equal opportunities for women, and many refused to wear the jacket. When scholarships were introduced for tennis two years later, only four were available for the ten women on the team. And it was not until 1993 that the 'M' Club permitted women to join. As Rosenberg concludes, "Some women on campus thought Canham and Bo Schembechler were not just against Title IX. The women thought they

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[353] Ibid.

[354] Richard Rothschild, "Fight Club."

[355] Alexa Dettelbach, "Michigan's unsung Title IX hero."

were against women’s athletics, period. Canham and Schembechler gave the women reason to believe that […]."[356]

Hutchins gives Schembechler credit later in his career when he became the athletic director. By that point, he seemed to have adopted women into his Michigan Man mythology. Hutchins remembers that,

> Bo wanted Michigan to win in all sports. He watched one of our softball practices and wondered why we had only one jersey and one sweatshirt. We had new practice uniforms within a week. When Michigan became the first team east of the Mississippi to win an NCAA softball title in 2005, Schembechler placed a congratulatory phone call to Hutchins. Bo wasn’t about men or women. He was about Michigan.[357]

As athletic director he worked to standardize transportation, uniforms, and facility use for men's and women's teams. But, before he and the athletic department came on board, in Pollick's words, they were "so far out of compliance [with Title IX] it was really shocking.[358] The University did not fully meet the compliance guidelines for Title IX regarding scholarships until 1989.[359] Today, the University spends around $19 million on women's sports, a far cry from what it had been. At a meeting of the 'M' Club in 2014, Pollick recalled how far women's sports had come at Michigan, but because of Title IX and, most importantly, because of individuals advocating for change.[360] Change came to Michigan, but it was change due to the actions of those outside of the administration and the athletic department at the University. Without outside

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[356] Michael Rosenberg, *War as They Knew It*, 183.

[357] Richard Rothschild, "Fight Club."

[358] Alexa Dettelbach, "Michigan's unsung Title IX hero."

[359] "A Sporting Chance."

[360] “[Women's varsity sports] didn’t just happen and it’s a function of many people, not just me, and the law. As a lawyer, I’m proud of that because you’d think these changes would’ve happened, but without the law, the Canhams of the world would’ve prevailed.” Qtd. in Alexa Dettelbach, "Michigan's unsung Title IX hero."

pressure, equality remained far from reality. And, when pressure came, the athletic department tacitly and actively resisted it. Despite the progressive mythology of the school (and the Big Ten Conference), they were far from the "leaders and the best."

Chapter 2

Shake Up the Thunder from Below: The Political Student-Athlete at a Perceived Conservative University

Introduction

The University of Notre Dame is not a Big Ten school – technically. Especially now, when Notre Dame's sports (minus football) are housed entirely within the Atlantic Coast Conference and the Irish's annual gridiron clash with the University of Michigan has been mothballed, that point has only been made clearer. But it would be incredibly difficult to talk about the Big Ten without talking about Notre Dame. Notre Dame's athletic and cultural histories are tied to the conference in which its campus geographically sits. The state of Indiana is home to two Big Ten universities, Purdue University and the University of Indiana. The Fighting Irish's home state is bordered by Michigan State University and the University of Michigan to the north, Northwestern University and the University of Illinois (and the University of Chicago) to the west, and the Ohio State University to the east. Of Notre Dame's all-time most common opponents in football, five of them are Big Ten schools. Three of Notre Dame's historic rivals are from the Big Ten [Michigan (41 games played), Michigan State (79 games played), and Purdue (84 games played)].[361] Two apocryphal stories trace Notre Dame's athletic nickname, the Fighting Irish, to games against Big Ten opponents.[362] On multiple occasions, Notre Dame has

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[361] They've also played Northwestern 47 times.

[362] One story claims that it came from Northwestern fans chanting, "Kill the fighting Irish!" during a match in 1899, while another suggests that it grew from a Notre Dame player

attempted to join the conference. Likewise, at other times, Notre Dame has spurned offers from the Big Ten to join the conference.[363] Because of its location in the Midwest and its athletic ties to the Big Ten, Notre Dame provides a lens into student protest during the 1960s and 1970s that both mirrors and differs from that of other Big Ten campuses.

The mythology of Notre Dame and its football team is well known and has been written about extensively.[364] A trip to the archives in the Hesburgh Library at Notre Dame reveals over four shelves of books written about seasons, coaches, players, and what differentiates Notre Dame from the rest of the college football world. The Fighting Irish are often held up as somehow different (both positively and negatively), yet they experienced similar challenges faced by other schools throughout the country. The late 1960s and early 1970s were a time of unrest and protest in South Bend, IN, just as they were in Ann Arbor, Minneapolis, and East Lansing. However, Notre Dame's independent nature and its overwhelming homogeneity in both race and religion make it an interesting case study. Student activism often took a less radical and more religious approach than those of other black student societies, the SDS, the White Panthers, or the Weather Underground.

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admonishing his fellow teammates with "What's the matter with you guys? You're all Irish and you're not fighting worth a lick," in a game against Michigan in 1909. Most are of the consensus that it actually came from the press in the 1920s. In an article from the *Notre Dame Scholastic* in 1929, the writer argued that the name had at first been disparaging, but "took on a new meaning. The unknown [team] of a few years past has boldly taken a place among the leaders. The unkind appellation became symbolic of the struggle for supremacy of the field. […] The team, while given in irony, has become our heritage." "The Fighting Irish," *Notre Dame Fighting Irish Athletics*, July 24, 2014. http://www.und.com/trads/nd-m-fb-name.html.

[363] See David J. Young, *Arrogance and Scheming in the Big Ten: Michigan State's Quest for Membership and Michigan's Powerful Opposition* (Holland, MI: DJY Publishing, 2011).

[364] For a great discussion, see both of Murray Sperber's books on the subject: *Onward to Victory* (1998) and *Shake Down the Thunder* (1993).

And a lack of a sizable African American student population allowed many of the white students to remain more ignorant of or ambivalent to the issues facing their fellow black students both on campus and throughout the country, a sentiment raised by Notre Dame gridiron star and Vietnam veteran Rocky Bleier: "Because the people around me were just like me. They knew what I was feeling, and they empathized. Yet, by a strange dichotomy, that great strength was also Notre Dame's greatest fault. We were *too much* alike in those days. We were 98 percent white and 98 percent Catholic. Too many of us in student politics had similar views. In the classroom, we needed more nonwhites and non-Catholics to expand our horizons. Our thinking was inbred, and therefore restricted."[365] For such a homogenous campus, the student newspapers were still filled with debates over the status quo. It is this homogeneity that emphasized and articulated the problems inherent in the status quo and echoes Bleier's sentiment that the "myth of Notre Dame, as something separate and apart from the mainstream of higher education, should be spiked and put to rest."[366] Myths are powerful tools and can be powerful weapons. Bleier served in Vietnam not because of a conviction that it was a moral crusade or a defense of his country, but because he "didn't want anyone to be ashamed of him."[367] The inscription on the doors of Notre Dame's Basilica of the Sacred Heart offer up an Althusserian message: "God, Country, Notre Dame." But for the inclusion of a Catholic university, this overt reminder of the ideological state apparatuses at work is little different from the ideology at work in schools and through football teams across the country.

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[365] Rocky Bleier and Terry O'Neill, *Fighting Back* (New York: Stein and Day, 1975), 48.
[366] Ibid., 48.
[367] Ibid., 76.

Bleier played for the Irish on their 1966 National Championship team as a running back, served as a team captain in 1967, and graduated in 1968. He played his rookie season for the Pittsburgh Steelers, but was drafted into the U.S. Army. In an attempt to avoid the draft and have some agency in the decision, he enlisted in the National Guard and volunteered to serve in Vietnam. Bleier had sought out the advice of Greensburg, PA native and golf pro Tom DeRosa, who had already served in the reserves. DeRosa advised him to avoid the Marine Corps and decline going in to the war as an officer. Rather, DeRosa felt that serving as a draftee would likely give Bleier the earliest chance of coming home: "You [Bleier] might be able to get an 'early-out' in the summer of 1970, because your occupation is seasonal. Then you'd only miss the 1969 [NFL] season."[368] Similar to the debate on Notre Dame's campus about the ethics of war, Bleier's conscience later battled over the ethics of avoiding the draft if given a chance that others did not have. However, these ethical questions came after he was already serving. At the time, Bleier struggled most with wanting to play football and secretly wished for a late season injury – not to avoid the draft but to have an excuse to continue his football career.[369]

Because the Steelers believed he was talented enough to be beneficial to the team's success, they offered to try to pull some strings with politicians to get him into a reserve unit. Regardless, Bleier declined and volunteered to serve. While serving in Vietnam, he remained detached from the politics of the war but grew frustrated with a total lack of explanation or justification for the soldiers' presence there from his commanding officers.[370] He wrote that he felt like a convict when he got on the bus to boot camp and began to struggle with the unfairness

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[368] Ibid., 69.
[369] Ibid., 71.
[370] Ibid., 75.

of the situation. He grappled with whether it was "right for the Steelers – or for any group or individual – to use the influence of a congressman and a general? Especially when it's clear that not everybody has access" to those influences.[371] These are questions quite similar in theme to those on campuses throughout the Big Ten – questions of privilege, inequality, and hypocrisy. While he did not regret serving per se, he thought about how uninformed he had been about the war. Notre Dame's near-homogenous demographics made it different from many of the schools in the Midwest. Yet, the internal questions raging amongst its students were little different from other campuses. The same issues existed. The students were similar in that they lived under the threat of the draft and questioned the rightness and naturalness of the status quo. Although Bleier was apolitical during college, others were not. But Bleier was neither immune to the presence of these discussions and struggles during his time at Notre Dame nor was his mind unchangeable. While streets and building were not taken over by students as they were in Minneapolis, student-athlete protests were not held as they were at Michigan State, and a national movement was not created as it had been in Ann Arbor, a discourse of questioning and change existed at Notre Dame, and it was heard by students and student-athletes alike. It should be no surprise that, at a university steeped in religious tradition, ideas, feelings, and beliefs became the weapons of an ideological battle, rather than widespread forced occupations or violent protests.

Catholicism and Notre Dame: A Story of Assimilation and Insularity

To understand Notre Dame and Notre Dame football, one has to look into its mythology and lore. For one, Notre Dame continues to pride itself on its academic standards for athletes. While not a member of the Big Ten, Notre Dame has long looked to the Big Ten for competition,

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[371] Ibid., 70.

but also as a model for academic expectations and requirements for its student athletes. During the coaching tenure of Terry Brennan (1954-1958), Father Theodore Hesburgh continued his campaign to improve Notre Dame's reputation as an academic university, rather than as a football team that also fielded a college. He put limitations on the number of athletes that could be recruited to Notre Dame and instituted a policy of twenty football scholarship per year and 120 total scholarships overall.[372] Brennan's teams seemed to struggle, at least by Notre Dame's standards, under these new restrictions and fans worried about a "deemphasis" of football. Brennan explained: "Other recruiters jumped all over it, too. They said, 'Notre Dame's deemphasizing. Notre Dame is going to join the Ivy League.' That made it hard on us for a few years."[373]

But Notre Dame's mythology is also indivisibly tied to religion, Catholicism, and anti-Catholicism. Part of what makes for a good rivalry – as well as what makes it problematic – is the animosity between the rivals. While rivalries help to create community amongst fans of the same team, it often does so through strict dichotomies that rely on "othering" the rival team. Michigan has long referred to fellow Big Ten member Michigan State as a "cow college," while Michigan is seen as privileged and snobbish by the Spartan fan base. One *Michigan Daily* article describing the matchup between the two schools in 1965 intimated as much, reporting that Spartan kicker Dick Kenney "put the farm boys ahead with a 10-yarder in the second period" and later referred to him as the "Hawaiian Hillbilly." Despite the loss to their rival, the Michigan sportswriter, in a very tongue-in-cheek manner, made sure to let the readers know that "Michigan

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[372] The policy was modeled on the Big Ten's model.

[373] Brennan's teams finished with a 32-18 overall record over his career. Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish: The Oral History of Notre Dame Football* (New York: Avon Books, 1998), 77.

was more than hospitable in placing straw in front of the benches to make the visitors feel at home."[374] Considering that many on the Spartan defense and a few players on the offense were black, this slight reference to farm animals could easily be viewed as racial, considering the long history of the myth of the mind/body dichotomy between white and black athletes and references to the animalistic "nature" of black athletes. It is easy to see how tongue-in-cheek ribbing can too often spill into a reliance on hurtful stereotypes or problematic ideologies – whether accidental or intentional. Likewise, because of the antagonistic nature of rivalries, slights, silences, and insinuations are read through suspicious lenses, long-remembered, and rarely forgotten. For instance, Notre Dame tackle Ed Mieszkowski expressed his feelings about the University of Michigan in an oral history of Notre Dame football. Mieszkowski related that Michigan coach Fritz Crisler, after a devastating 35-12 loss to Notre Dame, complained to Fighting Irish coach Frank Leahy that "That was the dirtiest football game I've ever seen. If I have anything to say about Michigan athletics, we will never play Notre Dame again."[375]

Backup quarterback George Dickson elaborated on this event, reiterating the established mythology (from the Notre Dame perspective) of the Notre Dame/Michigan rivalry, saying "Let me tell you something about Michigan and scheduling and all that bullshit. It goes all the way back to Rockne and that goddamn Fielding Yost, Michigan's coach. Yost was pissed off because Rockne was so successful. So the whole time Rockne was there at Notre Dame, Michigan never played us. Then, when we finally got them back on our schedule, Crisler pulls that crap about Notre Dame playing dirty. Which *was* a bunch of crap. Crisler was so pissed off because Leahy

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[374] Jim LaSovage, "MSU Surprise Play Fools Michigan – Once," *Michigan Daily*, Oct. 10, 1965, 6.
[375] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 12.

beat him so bad in 1943. So then Michigan starts dodging us again."[376] In the years to follow, Crisler rarely gave a firm answer as to why they would not play Notre Dame (or at least not one that Notre Dame fans were willing to believe), so rumors swirled about Crisler being anti-Catholic. Whether true or not, the belief was there as was the rumor that Michigan fans were concerned that Catholic Michigan fans would convert to following the Fighting Irish if the two teams played each other.

But overt instances of anti-Catholicism *did* occur throughout Notre Dame's history, and it helped to shape the mythology of the football team and the university. In Jim Dent's narrative on the University of Oklahoma's undefeated streak, he goes into detail about the slurs thrown at Fighting Irish football players and fans when they traveled to Oklahoma. An anecdote describes a group of local Latina girls pleading with the Irish football team to defeat the Sooners: "Did you know that Oklahomans hate Catholics? […] They treat us like dirt. They really hate you, too."[377] The football team also found anti-Catholic rhetoric penned onto their bus windows in red lipstick, reading "Go home Catholics!" and "F--- the Pope!"[378] In Dent's book, he recounts fullback Nick Pietrosante inspiring the team with a pregame meal pep talk:"I guess you guys know by now we're in the land of Catholic haters. These rednecks hate everybody – Negroes, Jews, Mexicans, and Catholics. They gave us shit last year about being Catholic. I say let's whip their asses."[379] During halftime, the team chanted "Beat the Rednecks!" from their lockerrom.

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[376] Ibid., 13.
[377] Jim Dent, *The Undefeated: The Oklahoma Sooners and the Greatest Winning Streak in College Football* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2010), 251.
[378] Ibid., 252.
[379] This quote is particularly interesting, especially considering that Notre Dame was slow to fully integrate their own university and athletic teams. Ibid., 251.

But Dick Prendergast, a wide receiver on the Irish team, denies part of Dent's story, insisting that offensive graffiti written in their locker-room was just normal "ass-kicking" stuff and not anti-Catholic.[380] Again, whether hard evidence or hearsay, the sentiment existed and likely occurred at some level. But the general feeling of being discriminated against united the team and became part of the mythos. According to one football player, in a victory over 10th ranked Syracuse in 1961 after a roughing the kicker call allowed for a stunning victory, a Syracuse cheerleader – distraught over the loss – ran over to Fighting Irish players John Murray and Ed Burke. The cheerleader screamed at them "You dirty Christians! You stole that game!" In response, John Murray, a former aspirant to the priesthood replied, "Fuck you."[381]

In a 2010 interview by Mark O. Hubbard for his book, Hubbard asked Father Hesburgh "if he thought that Notre Dame was ever unfairly treated on the football field or in the press because of religious prejudice." Hesburgh answered that "As a priest, I'd like to believe that didn't happen … But I do think that it was easy to be jealous of our success – and that may have been a factor."[382] While Father Hesburgh deftly downplays the role prejudice played in people's hatred of Notre Dame, Catholic iconography and dogma were and remain fair game for parody or ridicule for fans and sportswriters. At a basic level, Notre Dame cannot be divorced from Catholicism. On their trip northward to East Lansing in 1966, Spartan fans greeted the Irish football team with signs reading "Hail Mary full of grace, Notre Dame's in second place" and

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[380] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 84.
[381] Ibid., 101-102.
[382] Mark O. Hubbard, *Undisputed: Notre Dame, National Champions, 1966* (New York: Vantage Press, 2011), 40.

"Bubba [Smith] for Pope."[383] Tom Pagna, Notre Dame's offensive backfield coach at the time, recollects that MSU players "screamed at our sidelines [in the 1965 game]: "You Catholic mackerel snappers! You Catholic bastards!"[384]

But this felt prejudice did not just show itself against Notre Dame. The United States has had a long history of anti-Catholicism, suspicion of Catholicism, or ignorance toward Catholicism. The anti-Catholicism of the Know Nothings in the mid 1800s, the outright terrorism of the Klan, and the strong anti-Catholic reaction against Al Smith in the 1928 election from much of the South but also from many throughout the rest of the country are some of the more notorious examples. But the specter of the Cold War and the fear of one's allegiance to the United States seemed to stir up these suspicions once again in American society, but wrapped them up in a more innocuous – though equally as insidious – veneer of patriotism and loyalty to one's country. In 1952, the anti-Catholic newsletter, *The Convert*, ran an editorial raging against the President's decision to appoint an ambassador to Vatican City written by the president of the International Council of Christian Churches, Carl McIntire. McIntire wrote that "When the announcement reached the ears of many first by radio, it seemed as though the President had thrown an atomic bomb at the Protestants. We were stunned; we did not think it possible. The President has touched the quick of the most sacred principles held by the American people."[385] He continued, writing that "In the battle against communism we must not destroy our souls. […] How can a man owe allegiance to the United States and to the Vatican at the same time? […]

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[383] Ibid., 223.

[384] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 125.

[385] Carl McIntire, "The Ambassador to the Vatican," *The Convert* 4, no. 2 (Feb. 1952): 3, PANT (Anti-Catholic Printed Material) 5/03, "Anti-Catholicism 1950s, 1952-1959," Archives of the University of Notre Dame (hereafter cited as UNDA).

Are not the Roman Catholics in the United States committed to a foreign power, and do they not owe 'obedience and submission' to its head, the Pope?"[386] The other articles in this issue described Church scandals about priests gambling, marrying, and converting to the Protestant faith.

A pamphlet originally printed by the United Church of Canada was distributed during the 1950s to Protestant churches throughout the United States promising answers to twenty-five pertinent questions about the differences between Protestant and Catholic beliefs. The pamphlet's basic blueprint was posing a question like "What is the fundamental Roman Catholic teaching about the Church?" and immediately answering it with "What is wrong with this Roman Catholic teaching about the Church?"[387] The pamphlet concluded that the Church was deliberately "working for advantage and privilege and power in other ways until the day of 'liberty' when it can rule by sheer force."[388] The election of 1960 only increased this kind of rhetoric with the nomination of John F. Kennedy as the Democratic candidate. In another editorial from *The Convert*, former priest Joseph Zacchello warned against the dangers of a Catholic president: "It is not a question of if Roman Catholic senators, congressmen, governors, mayors of large cities and members of the Supreme Court are or have been free of religious prejudice and are even above average in the performance of their public duties, but for how long the Vatican will allow them

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[386] Ibid., 4-5.

[387] Arthur G. Reynolds, "What's the Difference in Protestant and Roman Catholic Beliefs?: 25 Searching Questions and Factual Answers" (New York: Abingdon Press, 1954), in PANT 5/03, "Anti-Catholicism 1950s," 1952-1959, UNDA.

[388] Ibid., 59.

to be free from Roman Catholic pressure."[389] Zacchello argued that to "gain the votes of non-Roman Catholics their candidates must run as a so-called liberal wing Catholic."[390] The rhetorical argument presented by many who worried about a Catholic president was incredibly totalizing: Catholic politicians would swear allegiance to Rome first and foremost and would put the Vatican's wants ahead of those of their constituents; but, because few if any Catholic politicians actually said this aloud, their opponents believed that they were obviously hiding their real desires and *pretending* to be liberal. It was a rhetorical Catch-22.

Anti-Catholic rhetoric left no room for arguments like those put forth by Cardinal James Gibbons, the Archbishop of Baltimore, who argued that "For ourselves, we thank God we live in America, 'in this happy country of ours,' to quote Mr. Theodore Roosevelt, where 'religion and liberty are natural allies.'"[391] He believed that a Catholic president would remain largely silent about his religious affairs, just as Lincoln had, and sardonically concluded that "if no man were to be considered eligible for the Presidency unless we were certain that under no conceivable circumstances would his conscience come into conflict with any possible legislation, then the first consideration to qualify a man as candidate for the office would be that he should have no conscience at all."[392] He did concede that Catholic politicians would argue against laws and bills

[389] Joseph Zacchello, " A Roman Catholic For President: The Strategy Of The Vatican " *The Convert* 12, no. 4 (April 1959): 1, PANT 5/03, "Anti-Catholicism 1950s, 1952-1959," UNDA.
[390] Ibid., 3.
[391] James Cardinal Gibbons, "Catholic Teaching On Church And State: Cardinal 'Could Conceive' Of No Circumstances To Make Union Desirable In U.S." *Our Sunday Visitor Newsweekly* (Huntington, IN), No. 75, 1959, 18, PANT 5/03, "Anti-Catholicism 1950s, 1952-1959," UNDA.
[392] Ibid., 14.

that they found morally wrong, just as American Orthodox Jews would likely rally against laws passed forcing them to worship on Sundays.

It was in and against this context that the mythology of Notre Dame and its football team was forged. Roland Barthes argued that the very principle of myth is transforming history into nature; "the naturalization of the concept [is] the essential function of a myth."[393] The many layers of symbols in college football (its military connection and rhetoric, its rules and standardization, the coach, the players, pageantry, marching bands, the Star-Spangled Banner, etc.) all built on one another until college football itself became a powerful signifier. These second-order signs were in turn part of the semiological chain of the signifier, college football. These significations become "naturalized" to the point that they became obvious. The term college football and its mythology no longer *had* to explain all of these significations, because explanation was no longer needed. Football was not just a symbol *for* American-ness; it *was* American-ness. As with all myths, college football was given "a natural and eternal justification." Its American-ness no longer needed to be explained, but instead was understood as a "statement of fact."[394]

Just as college football had become a signifier of American-ness and a "statement of fact," as argued by Kurt Edward Kemper in *College Football and American Culture in the Cold War Era*, Notre Dame, its administration, its students, and its fans embraced the game and its signifiers as a medium for Americanization and acceptance within American society. Notre Dame, a school and team made up of Irish Catholics and later Catholic sons from immigrant families from all over Eastern and Central Europe, stood as a symbol of Catholicism in America,

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[393] Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," 300.
[394] Roland Barthes, "Myth Today," 301.

but also a signifier of the American Dream: through the hard-work and dedication of their parents and themselves, second-generation immigrants could achieve a college education and become part of the growing middle-class. And Notre Dame's football team made the University well-known throughout the country through the scheduling of teams from all over the United States, a result partially caused by many Midwestern teams' refusal to play the Catholic university. With each successful victory over traditional football powers, the Fighting Irish's fame grew, as football put the school on the map. This earned begrudging respect from some Protestant Americans and disdain from others, but it also provided a medium for hope and pride for many Catholic Americans yearning for acceptance in American society. Notre Dame too became a link in the semiological chain of college football and its symbolization of American-ness. The big-screen glorification and near-sanctifying of Notre Dame football and its mythology in *Knute Rockne, All-American*, only added to the continuing Americanization of Catholicism in the United States.[395] The movie, preserved by the National Film Registry for its cultural and historic merits, starred future President Ronald Reagan and celebrated Notre Dame football as an underdog against heavily favored West Point. One cannot help but take note of the use of the term "All-American" in the film's title, a football honorific but also a telling description of a man who moved from Norway to Chicago as a child, saved up money to attend Notre Dame and play football, became a celebrated and innovative coach, converted to Catholicism, and led his team to victory over the United States Military Academy. If Knut Rockne could be "All-American," could not other Catholic Americans?

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[395] For a thorough discussion of the creation of the Fighting Irish football mythology, Knute Rockne, and the film, see Murray Sperber, *Shake Down the Thunder: The Creation of Notre Dame Football* (New York: Henry Holt, & Co., 1993).

This pride in the University and the football team helped to mold the mythology of Notre Dame and its students. As an all-male school until the late-1960s, Notre Dame became a symbol of the acceptance that American Catholic males could achieve in the United States. It also created a notion of Notre Dame brotherhood: a brotherhood of faith, togetherness, and pride that grew from being apart from the dominant culture in American society but still longing to be a part of it. And it also grew from the desire for acceptance, as Irish, Italians, Eastern Europeans, etc. in the late 1800s and early 1900s were not all considered a part of whiteness yet. Their brotherhood as Catholic men and Notre Dame students bonded them against the cultural backlash against their religion and the various hate groups and movements to keep them out of the definition of who was American.[396] In his book, *Whiteness of a Different Color* [1999], Matthew Frye Jacobson discusses race as an ever-shifting historical category and as political and cultural rather than natural.[397] He traces the civic assimilation of the Celtic and Mediterranean "races" into the category of "Caucasian" over time. The United States' history is a continuous redefinition of who is "white" and who is "other." Through this process, Irish Catholic and European Catholics were able to define themselves as part of white culture. Irish immigrants went from being viewed as "savages" and "devils" to more acceptable citizens as more immigrants came from Central and Eastern Europe, and those immigrants repeated the process. By 1960, the Irish were not truly seen as a separate race from white anymore, but as a separate religion. This continual redefining of what constituted whiteness allowed for more and more

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[396] It is worth noting that the absence of women on campus also molded this mythology as it became patriarchal in nature – male priests and coaches were the authority figures and male voices were the only ones heard in classrooms. There was interaction with nearby St. Mary's College, but the Notre Dame Man or the Notre Dame Brotherhood was representative of a white, *male*, Catholic experience.
[397] Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999).

Catholic Americans to be assimilated into the dominant white culture. During Notre Dame's history, the school went from a population of students somewhere on the outskirts or looking in at white culture to a population of white students who also happened to be Catholic. But this striving for assimilation and acceptance into American (and presumedly white) culture was always at the expense of a population of "others." And in American society, the "other" continued to be black. In this context, the formation of the Americanizing mythology of Notre Dame grew in the absence of blackness and toward a symbolic realization of whiteness.

Black Student Politics

Notre Dame's insularity, while a boon for white, Catholic Americans seeking protection, solidarity, and acceptance from a largely white, Protestant society, became a barrier for the African American community in particular. Terrence Moore of the *Atlanta Constitution* elaborates on this problem:

> The irony of Notre Dame being slow to integrate was its extraordinary progressive national image. Notre Dame was once the school of the little guy. It was the school of the ethnic minority. I'm talking about the Irish, the Italians, the Polish, the European immigrants, and so on. There were even some incidents during Rockne's time when Notre Dame was embattled by the Klan. And so by the mid-1920s, Notre Dame had acquired this national following. It had become the beacon for the non-WASP, the nonelite, the newly immigrated, the working-class. But there was a flip side to this. These second-generation immigrant groups have often been notoriously racist themselves. Take a look at the struggles in cities like Boston: the battles between the Irish and African Americans. These are very much a part of our nation's history. And I believe these larger social factors were also being felt at Notre Dame.[398]

Moore, an African American, had grown up in South Bend and cheered for the Fighting Irish with his family. But Notre Dame did not have its first black letterman until Wayne Edmonds in 1953, who was described as their "tan gridder" in the newspaper as he gave the team a "new

[398] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 142.

look."[399] He was not described as just another part of the Fighting Irish, but somehow apart from it due to his skin color. His very skin tone marked him as outside of what Notre Dame had come to represent. In 1966 on a campus of 6000 people, only sixty students were African American and Alan Page was the only black starter on the football team. That is why, when Notre Dame played Michigan State in the "Game of the Century," the black population of South Bend cheered for the Spartans. Howard explains:

> It was 1966. I was ten years old. My aunt's house was packed. But except for me, my mother, and my two brothers, everybody was cheering for Michigan State. It was the racial issue. Michigan State had a black quarterback. Most of its starting defense was made up of black guys. Notre Dame had Alan Page and that was it. So essentially, to my family, it was the white boys at Notre Dame against the black Michigan State team. That's the way it was when I grew up in South Bend. In the black community, Notre Dame was seen as a racist institution. And much of this came from the makeup of its sports teams. The long-time absence of blacks.[400]

While looking at pictures of pep rallies for the game, this author could easily spot a giant sign supporting Jim Lynch that read "LYNCH 'EM!"[401] This play on words seemed to be a theme, as the team's supporters saw the team off while some wore buttons that read "Ara's Lynch Mob."[402] While it is doubtful that the fans and makers of the signs and buttons meant for it to be racial in nature, it is hard to separate the term "lynch" from its racial context. And, when coupled with the uncharacteristically high percentage of black starters [for the historical era] on the Spartan squad, it certainly gives even more credence to Moore's claims and demonstrates an embedded racism or, at best, cluelessness on the part of the Notre Dame supporters. Likewise, as

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[399] Ibid., 140.

[400] Ibid., 142.

[401] Tom Pagna and Bob Best, *Notre Dame's Era of Ara* (Huntsville: The Strode Publishers, Inc., 1976), 114.

[402] Mike Celizic, *The Biggest Game of Them All* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1992), 22.

John Matthew Smith pointed out, Notre Dame fans had "hanged" Smith in effigy next to a similar sign at a raucous pep rally in 1966.[403] To be fair, the African American football players at Notre Dame did not seem to feel that there was an overt racism by some of the coaching staff or players, as many of the black athletes at Michigan State had felt existed at their own university. Tom Gatewood, a star receiver for the Irish, recalls that "The lack of black faces at Notre Dame didn't frighten [him]. The balance on [his] teams in high school was about 30 percent black and 70 percent white, so in terms of race relations and getting along, it was a smooth transition."[404] Gatewood indicates that he had already been used to playing on integrated teams where he was part of the minority, and this was a similar situation at Notre Dame. However, he also reveals that the coaches attempted to switch his position from tight end to fullback without discussing the change during the recruiting process, a tactic that many of the Spartan players and black players throughout the country, in their experiences, found to be racially motivated.[405] Gatewood successfully regained his position as a receiver and went on to be a team captain during the 1971 season. And, despite his insistence that it was a smooth transition, offensive backs coach Tom Pagna reveals in *Notre Dame's Era of Ara* that Gatewood received threatening, racist phone calls during his playing career at Notre Dame.[406]

In *Undisputed*, Mark O. Hubbard writes that there were "so few Black students at Notre Dame (under sixty total) that the national undercurrent of racial unrest largely bypassed the campus. The movement had very few meaningful advocates or outlets for expression, and there

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[403] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane': Integration and Black Protest in Michigan State University Football during the 1960s," *Michigan Historical Review*, 33:2, (Fall 2007), 102.
[404] Ara Parseghian, *What It Means to be Fighting Irish* (Chicago: Triumph Books, 2004), 154.
[405] Ibid., 155.
[406] Ibid., 177.

was little dialogue about it on campus, regrettably."[407] While Hubbard writes about the 1966 season, his statement does not seem to hold true at the end of the 1960s. Furthermore, student newspapers and yearbooks of that era seem to indicate that there *was* a dialogue going on, even if many in the dominant culture were unaware of it, ignored it, or resisted it. The limited number of "advocates" for racial change or the campus's overall lack of response to their message should not discount the meaningfulness of their mission. If anything, the limited number of African Americans on campus makes those who spoke out all the more impressive. As Hubbard writes later in his book, the Notre Dame mythology promotes the ideas that "The University of Notre Dame is a cocoon. It is one of the reasons people go there to begin with and it is one of the reasons graduates keep coming back – to live in a simpler environment where everyone attempts to treat each other with respect and decency."[408] While this insularity strengthened the bonds of similarity between students, it also highlighted differences. The response to advocates for racial equality and the belief in the seriousness of their actions and demands were often not respectful and the legitimacy of black experiences and concerns on campus was frequently questioned as black issues were outside of the shared experiences of most white, Catholic men on campus.

On November 16, 1968, the Fighting Irish played Georgia Tech in South Bend, IN, defeating the middling Yellow Jackets 34-6. It was a typical Notre Dame football Saturday under Ara Parseghian, save for one demonstration. Much like on other campuses, football is an important symbol of the unity of the campus and the importance of the university. Around 100,000 students, alumni, and fans come together in the stadium and the parking lots to celebrate the team, and this public display provides a great opportunity for political publicity. This can be

[407] Mark O. Hubbard, *Undisputed*, 108.
[408] Ibid., 196.

seen in television broadcasts today, where medical research at the University of Michigan is celebrated in one commercial and a lab-coated Willie the Wildcat of Northwestern creates a purplish chemical reaction in his beaker during the next. These are sanctioned political messages from the universities extolling the virtues of the schools. Likewise, universities often use football games to congratulate historically special teams on the anniversary of their accomplished seasons, honor alumni, swear-in ROTC members, or recognize outstanding students during timeouts and intermissions from the game. There are few – if any – venues at universities that will draw more eyes than sporting events and universities and advertisers use this to their advantage to send out their messages. However, students have also recognized the symbolic importance of football games. Oftentimes, students use the medium for individualized or innocuous messages: "Pitt sucks," "Rush Delta Delta Delta," or "Will you marry me?" But when students challenge the status quo through this medium, there is often backlash. In these instances, the mythology of sports being somehow apolitical is confronted and the idea of sports as escapism is challenged.

On that Saturday, members of the Afro-American Society walked around the stadium, carrying various signs outlining their grievances with the university. A sampling of the signs read: "Ara, the day of the lily-white backfields is past. Ask Leroy, Ask O.J."; "ND is the epitome of hypocrisy. Be Christian"; "Hesburgh of the Civil Rights Commission: Check on your own backyard"; and "God bless John Carlos and Tommie Smith."[409] The overwhelmingly white crowd responded hostilely, booing the demonstrators and responding with counter-cheers of "White Power forever!" and "Get off the field, you dirty N—!" Walt Williams, the President of the AAS, was not surprised by the backlash and actually expected it: "We really weren't

[409] "Blacks Demonstrate at Game," *The Scholastic*, Nov. 18, 1968, 2.

surprised. It shows the attitude of the Notre Dame community to us in particular. However, it only makes us more determined." They did not demonstrate solely over a lack of black players on the football team – although this was a visible symbol to many of Notre Dame's lack of racial diversity – even though they used football as their medium for demonstration. Williams explained that it was largely about financial aid and enrollment: "Although the Administration has shown some willingness to cooperate with us on Black enrollment, we feel that financial aid assistance will determine for a large part whether we will have a substantial increase in Black enrollment." They felt that their demands were being ignored by the administration and the student body and were tired of lip service: "We have received a great deal of sympathy and well wishes, but this isn't what we're after. What we want is some definite action taken on our demands." Those demands included more black professors, black counselors, non-discriminatory hiring practices, a scholarship fund, and courses in African American history. Considering that Notre Dame football was the largest and most recognizable venue for public discourse both within and outside of the university, it is hard to take Hubbard's claim seriously that there was little dialogue on campus. It is more likely that a large portion of the university ignored or tried to delegitimize the dialogue. Likewise, the "national undercurrent of racial unrest" could not have bypassed Notre Dame if the protest signs referenced Hesburgh's connections to the civil rights movement or Smith and Carlos' black pride protests at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics during the summer. These were obviously part of the shared cultural capital of the students at Notre Dame. Yes, Notre Dame was a largely conservative university, but it was not disconnected from the outside world. Likewise, ignoring or attempting to shut down the dialogue is evidence that such dialogue *not* absent from the campus.

In a letter to the editor, John T. Martin of Howard Hall joined the dialogue, condemning the actions of the crowd. Martin questioned why merely asking questions or pointing out perceived wrongs was so deplorable. He found it hypocritical that a Catholic institute of learning would turn hateful toward their fellow students and labeled it "ironic" that "we whites can in one breathe boo, jeer, and hiss our black brothers and with the next breath sing about brotherhood in this country." He ended the letter regretting that he had not left the game after the booing started as the rest of the game and its celebration of Notre Dame brotherhood rang hollow.[410]

Earlier that year, the AAS had staged a boycott of the opening of the new Convocation Center. Steve Tapscott, writing about the event while discussing the 'Nutting for President Committee,' insinuated that the university had given in to the demands of the black students not because they felt it was the right thing to do, but because they wanted to avoid bad publicity.[411] But the concerns and demands of the students had not been rectified. On February 11, 1969, another political battle spilled into the sporting arena when black athletes felt that they were booed by the student body during a game after a substitution produced an entirely black lineup for the Fighting Irish.[412] The five players issued a public statement, demanding an apology: "We demand a public apology from the Student Body of the University of Notre Dame for their booing when there were five black players in the game against Michigan State. If we don't get this apology, we will no longer practice or play for the University. You can even throw us out of school."[413] Coach John Dee tried to resolve the situation without an apology, observing that he

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[410] John T. Martin, "Letter to the Editor," *The Scholastic*, Nov. 19, 1968, 3.
[411] Steve Tapscott, "Universities becoming schizoid," *The Observer*, Feb. 27, 1970, 3.
[412] The players were Austin Carr, Bob Whitmore, Collis Jones, Sid Catlett, and Dwight Murphy.
[413] "Black players protest booing," *The Observer*, Feb. 13, 1969, 1.

believed the students were booing his coaching, not the players. Athletic Director Moose Kraus agreed, stating that the "students were not booing the five athletes on the floor. There's no question about it." It is not evident how Kraus knew the motivations of the students or could be so sure, but it is easy to see that an atmosphere of racial tension exacerbated by the Georgia Tech football game could easily lead to the players believing that the booing was directed toward them. Their statement made sure to note that their issue was not with Coach Dee or the administration, but with their fellow students.

Accusations of racism and discrimination on the gridiron or on the basketball court are symbolically powerful. They damage the democratizing mythology of American sports. The mythology of Jackie Robinson integrating baseball empowers sports as the medium for change and places racism in the past. Racism in sports *was*. The mythology holds that sports are devoid of politics. They are apolitical and an escape from the complicated world of race, gender, class, etc. Of course, such a view of sports is undeniably false. Sports are often incredibly reactionary and are used to uphold the status quo, an indisputably political action but one that frequently goes unquestioned because sports help to naturalize our mythologies. C. Richard King and Charles Fruehling Springwood argue that "desegregation has prompted stories that simultaneously materialize and dematerialize race. Although these narratives discuss race relations, they tend to trivialize the continued significance of race. These interpretations invariably are progressive, stressing change, opportunity, and equality; they permit fans, sports writers, players, and administrators to work through past inequities, while explaining away the asymmetries of the present." [414] Because the predominantly white crowd, as well as the white administration and newspaper, saw or interpreted no overt racism or discrimination on the court,

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[414] C. Richard King and Charles Fruehling Springwood, *Beyond the Cheers*, 27.

they could easily fall back on the myth that racism in sports was a thing of the past; or, at the very least, a surmising that there might be some inequality, but it is not as bad as it was or is not as bad as it is elsewhere.

Because the five black players on the court were playing in front of an overwhelmingly white fan base at a school with an overwhelmingly white population, the incident holds even more symbolic significance. Michael Oriard mentions the incident in *Bowled Over*, comparing the basketball players' position to those of his black teammates on the football team, noting that "the basketball players could threaten a boycott and demand an apology because they were five among a dozen, and the five best," and they were bringing national recognition to Notre Dame basketball.[415] But their favored position on the court did not necessarily mean that their demands would be met favorably. On the same day that *The Observer* reported on the booing, they also ran an editorial admonishing the players for their mistaken judgment of the situation and advising them to choose their actions carefully, as their "mistaken" choices could lead to the basketball season being in jeopardy and it could ruin their ability to be "constructive leaders" for the Black movement on campus. The defense of the basketball season obviously held greater importance than accusations of racism or discrimination for many within the white Notre Dame brotherhood. An ambiguous cartoon depicting a gigantic black basketball player being booed by a tiny white fan followed on page four, perhaps mocking the position of the students or falsely claiming that the booing was insignificant. Regardless of the editors' qualms, the Student Body President Richard Rossie decided to meet with and apologize to the players.[416] He felt that an apology was needed whether the boos were directed at the players or not because of the

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[415] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 54.
[416] "Rossie apologizes to players," *The Observer*, Feb. 14, 1969, 2.

atmosphere largely created by the student body that allowed their perception to exist: "After talking to the black members of the basketball team and other students at the game, I felt that I'd give the benefit of the doubt to the black ball players. I'm convinced that they were sincerely hurt by the whole episode and I don't think that any Notre Dame student really desires that such a condition continue to exist."

The following day, Arthur McFarland, Al Dean, and Walt Williams of the Afro-American Society took the editors of the paper to task for their editorial:

> In your editorial "Misunderstanding," you made some gross statements that amount to pure B-S. It is a recognized fact among black people that any time whitey – especially the white conservative press – praises and even envies black "leaders" for their "maturity, good faith and good judgment," let alone their "heroic patience," those black leaders should sense that they have been lax in their responsibilities to black people and the community. If the black athletes have "won respect and admiration," why has not their judgment in this case been respected? They are undoubtedly sure that the booing was directed towards them. Yet you say they were mistaken. Why in this case must their judgment be in error? Is it because this is the first time that they have publicly spoken out against an action by the Notre Dame community?[417]

The rebuttal continued by bringing counter-evidence to the narrative presented by the editors, Coach Dee, and Director Kraus:

> Yet, why in less than a minute after the five blacks were on the court did Johnny Dee substitute two white players to alleviate what the student body thought was the loss of the "great white hope?" He was *definitely* conscious of the student reaction because he confirms this fact in your front page article. And, if, as he says, the booing was directed against him as a coach, why did he yield to it by substituting for the men he thought were capable of doing the best job at a crucial moment in the game?

As the trio pointed out, this was a historic moment, as Notre Dame had never played with an all-black lineup at home before this. They also argued that members of Michigan State's basketball

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[417] Al Dean, Arthur McFarland, and Walt Williams, "In Rebuttal," *The Observer*, Feb. 13, 1969, 8.

team felt that it had to do with race after the game to back up the perceptions of the five Notre Dame players.

They argued that just because the editors did not personally hear racial taunts or did not perceive the booing to be due to racial factors, it did not mean that the players' side of the story and their perceptions were invalid. And this is always problematic when sifting through historical evidence. We can only rely on the testimony of quoted witnesses and those with the privilege of having the ability to present the narrative. That is why letters to the editor like this one are so crucial to better understanding the "structure of feeling" on college campuses at the time. It can both be true that many fans felt that the booing was directed at Coach Dee *and* that the black players and black community felt that they were the object of racial jeering. But the official message of the athletic department from Kraus was that it was not racially motivated: "There's no question about it." Likewise, the coach's opinion was given higher weight than the players'. Further, though not the official mouthpiece of the university, the editorial board of *The Observer* helped push Notre Dame's institutional narrative through their ability to reach the student body. But it is obvious that there *was* a question about it. It is quite evident that members of the black student population saw the incident and the backlash against their offense as stifling and condescending: "You ask the black athletes to reconsider in light 'of definite harm (economically and in terms of publicity) to the whole community;' but what about your reconsidering in light of the psychological effect on the blacks not only as ballplayers, but more importantly, as black men?"[418]

[418] Ibid., 8.

Another letter to the editor on the same day agreed with this interpretation. Gordon C. Hunt, Jr. writes that his "concern is not whether the student body intended to boo our black athletes, but rather that the community has allowed an attitude toward blacks to exist which makes their mistaken notion of being [booed], because of blackness, entirely understandable."[419] It should be noted that he still passes judgment on the case, labeling their notion as "mistaken," but he does cut to the bigger issue at hand. He calls out the separation of black and white students on campus and points out the hypocrisy of a Christian college making a portion of the population feel unwelcomed. For this, he blames the white majority on campus since they have the numbers and the powers to change the atmosphere. He argues that it will take action, not denial, to change the atmosphere: "Standing ovations for Austin Carr or any other black athlete will not change that. In my opinion, Notre Dame is as inwardly racist as any community I have encountered. It is understandable that our athletes assumed that the booing was an outward expression of the race hate found on campus. What is amazing, is that we continue to deny its presence." Here, Hunt hammers at the issue that unfortunately unites the dominant population at Notre Dame with Michigan, Michigan State, Minnesota, and many other colleges, institutions, and communities across the country. Those largely unaffected by the oppression of inequality pass judgment on the validity of the claims of those "othered" by the dominant culture. Likewise, acts of decency and celebration, like ovations for athletes or simply allowing someone to attend a school or be a student-athlete, do not negate or excuse actions which ostracize or demean.

The trio's lack of faith in whether black leaders on campus had actually "won respect and admiration" from the white community – considering the administration and the newspaper flatly denying the players' judgment of the situation – only grew more apparent in the following days

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[419] Gordon C. Hunt, Jr., "Inwardly Racist," *The Observer*, Feb. 14, 1969, 8.

in further letters to the editor by angry students. Four Notre Dame students wrote to the paper criticizing student body president Rossie's decision to apologize and disagreeing with his representing the student body and challenged the validity of the black players' interpretation by putting quotation marks around the word "incident." While denying that the booing was racial in nature, they imply that, even if it were, they "reserve[d] our right to boo whom we please and for the reasons we so choose."[420] Through the inclusion of this statement, they seem less disturbed by an arguably racially oppressive atmosphere existing on campus than by the possibility that their freedom as fans to boo anyone, including for racial reasons, might be curtailed.

In a subsequent letter to the editor from Jay McDonnell of Alumni Hall, McDonnell expressed anger over the "ridiculous" demand for an apology. McDonnell made sure to note that he had "relationships with the Black American," in what is a likely attempt to contextualize his outrage and set himself up as an educated commenter. He is positive that the boos were meant for Dee, not the players, stating: "Hell, I did not realize there were five Black players on the court until just reading the OBSERVER. It so happens that I was wrapped-up in the game – not a racial issue!"[421] While his point is clear that *he* did not think of it as a racial issue, it implies a feeling that his interpretation is somehow more correct or that his experience should stand in for all. That the players on the actual court would not have also been wrapped-up in the game or that other students might have seen it as a racial issue seems lost to him. He falls into the same trap that Hunt had previously warned about a few days earlier as he points out counter-arguments of

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[420] Raymond E. Role, Glenn S. Valenta, Alvin J. DuCharme, and Michael Munsch, "Letter to the Editor," *The Observer*, Feb. 17, 1969, 3.
[421] Jay McDonnell, "Letter to the Editor," *The Observer*, Feb. 17, 1969, 3.

previous black student-athletes being cheered or praised for their athletic feats. [422] He further dismisses the concerns of the black community and the entire premise that there exists an atmosphere of unwelcoming or inequality on campus, writing that "If the Black men here, after thinking about the examples given above, think that the students booed the players because of race, then they are blind!" It is highly likely that, with the limited number of black students on campus, they were well-aware of positive and negative interactions and actions in and around the campus. It is worth noting, despite the university, the newspaper, and select students denying any implication that the booing may have been racially motivated, that the home game on February 17 resulted in "nary a boo to be heard the entire afternoon" and all five starters (presumably black, considering the reporter felt the need to mention it) receiving a standing ovation at halftime as they exited the court.[423] It is extremely telling that the most effective catalyst for change in the arena and the creation of a Black Studies program grew out of the dissatisfaction of black student-*athletes* as the experiences of black students at Notre Dame who were not also athletes were far less discussed.

Freddy J. Williams, a sophomore from Panama City, FL and a pre-med major, had a paper about his experience as a black first-year student at Notre Dame published in *The*

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[422] For instance, he brings up Austin Carr. Austin Carr finished his career as the fifth highest scorer in NCAA basketball history. He holds the NCAA Tournament records for most points in a game (61), scoring average (41.3), field goals in a game (25), and field goals attempted (44). The Cleveland Cavaliers drafted him first overall in 1971, as did the ABA's Virginia Squires, but Carr signed with the Cavs and led them to three straight playoff appearances in the late 1970s. He went on to become the radio color commentator for Cavalier basketball and was elected into the NCAA College Basketball Hall of Fame. Michael Collins, "Austin Carr's NCAA Tournament Records: You Can't Stop That," *Bleacher Report*, Mar. 15, 2009, http://bleacherreport.com/articles/139769-ncaa-tournament-records-and-austin-carr-you-cant-stop-that.

[423] Pete Bruderle, "'Boo-Birds' hibernate, cagers explode," *The Observer*, Feb. 17, 1969, 4.

Scholastic. He had written about the typical freshman issues that all students faced but wanted the larger white population to know about the unique experiences for minority students at the university. In the introduction to the piece, *The Scholastic* observed that

> Social life was not merely a problem, as it is for all ND frosh, but a practical impossibility and a constant reminder of the fearful sexual taboos which provide the psychological keystone of racial hatred. Women were just being allowed to enroll at Notre Dame after a long-fought battle to make the University coeducational. Before then, the only college women near campus attended the neighboring St. Mary's College, but, like Notre Dame, the college was largely white and interracial dating was still taboo in much of white, American society. And while white students had to cope with 'adjustment problems' and 'homesickness,' Freddy and most of the other black freshmen had to face an entirely new, entirely alien culture and somehow find a way to live in it and satisfy its standards for success without repudiating the values of their families and themselves.[424]

Williams worked with Professor Donald A. Barrett in the research of a 90-page paper entitled "The Satisfactions of Negro Students at the University of Notre Dame," in which all fifty black students at Notre Dame were surveyed. One out of four fathers of black students were dead or absent and of those students with fathers in their lives only one third of their fathers had completed high school. Only 20% of the fathers held an executive or professional job, compared to the 70% of fathers for the white student population. While 95% of the black student population was satisfied with their academic life at Notre Dame, around 90% were dissatisfied with racial issues at the university.[425] However, of those most dissatisfied with the racial situation at Notre Dame, 80% indicated that they were incredibly willing to work toward improving that situation. They did not hate Notre Dame – they wanted to be a part of their university and improve it. But, contrary to the many assertions that Notre Dame was a relatively conservative campus in terms of dissatisfaction with the status quo, this excludes the experiences

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[424] Freddy Williams, "A Fly in the Milk Bottle," *The Scholastic*, Sept. 27, 1968, 12.
[425] Ibid., 13.

of many black students, judging from their responses. While one student felt that "no racial problems exist[ed]" at Notre Dame and felt no "racial prejudices from the white students," even this optimistic student still believed that "the treatment of Negroes could be better."[426] But his was the most conservative viewpoint found by Barrett and Williams. Another student felt that the racial tensions on campus mirrored the racial tensions throughout the United States, despite the university being a bastion for learning and the home base of a champion for civil rights in Father Hesburgh. Other students were far more vocally dissatisfied: "Hell No!! I'm not satisfied with conditions here […] I feel that this damn University is too wrapped up in receiving federal grants and aids, rather than helping to alleviate the social and academic problems that exist at Notre Dame for Negroes. I further believe that Father Hesburgh should try to solve the problems here at Notre Dame before he goes all over the nation trying to solve the Negro problems on a massive scale." It seems that the categorization of Notre Dame as a conservative school was just one more way in which the black population was ignored or forgotten.

One student, who had been on the dean's list and held a GPA of 3.439 after his sophomore year, stated that the felt ostracization on campus and the depressing lack of a social life for black students led to his disinterest in classes, resulting in his GPA dropping to 2.432. He felt "overwhelmed by the realization that Notre Dame is a 'rich, white man's college.'" As a whole, the upper classmen were doing well academically at Notre Dame, but 80% of the students recommended special tutoring programs for incoming black students and felt that Notre Dame's administration cared little about the academic struggles some black underclassmen faced owing to their "poor high school backgrounds" and instead were happy to show progress in merely

[426] Ibid., 14.

accepting black students.[427] Williams believed that "there exist[ed] a feeling of isolation, of having to conform to standards and values that hold little meaning or enrichment for Negroes, and an awareness of losing something valuable in their own background as they attempt to fit into the Notre Dame community." Williams further believed that many of the black students feared that they would become distanced from their own backgrounds as well, viewed as "black bourgeoisie" by their home community and as outsiders by the white community at Notre Dame. The lack of racial understanding on the part of their white classmates, the lack of a social life, the lack of black female students at St. Mary's, and the implicit and explicit taboos against dating white women contributed greatly to many students' dissatisfaction at Notre Dame. It is not unsurprising that 74% of the black student population thought about transferring to a better college environment at some point.[428] One such student considered Notre Dame a "living Hell" for black students and resented white students who looked at him like he was "strange or [did not] belong here. The whites don't seem to be that prejudiced, they just seem to be indifferent." For those who did not want to transfer, family pressure and the academic prestige that came with a Notre Dame degree outweighed the reasons for transferring. Williams believed that "Negro students do not, on the whole, act from a policy of deliberate separatism. They want to avoid being lost in the white majority and do not want to be compelled to assimilate totally, and partly because they do not wish to dissociate themselves from the Negro community outside the University."[429] Williams closed with a description of the creation of the Afro-American Society in the spring of 1968, not as a "radical group like the black organizations at Northwestern and

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[427] Ibid., 29.
[428] Ibid., 29.
[429] Ibid., 29.

Howard," but as a forum for wide-ranging opinions and an opportunity to bring "peace and harmony between black and white cultures." Williams made sure to note that nearly all non-athletes were expected to join.

In the spring of 1970, there were 6,194 undergraduates at Notre Dame and only 82 of those students were black. John Keys wrote about this disparity in *The Scholastic* as part of the experience of black students in a white university. He acknowledged that the University was moving toward higher enrollment and recruitment of black students, arguing that "For the sake of its own integrity and its relevance to the society, the University must remain an effective force in the establishment and growth of social justice. Furthermore, it must continually seek internal growth by drawing on the widest possible range of talents available to it."[430] Dave Krashna, Arthur McFarland, and members of the Recruitment Action Program visited city-based schools across the country and told students about the "real" Notre Dame as experienced by black men – not the mythologized one: "My [Krashna's] approach to recruiting was based on honesty supplemented by realism and optimism. I hoped to instill in students a real picture, tell them what it is like here, things like Dow-CIA, football and racism. […] You don't invite them to the guillotine – you tell them what has to be changed."[431] Krashna admitted that the University had tried to be responsive to the needs of its minority students, but "they could only go to a certain point. They are concerned with their image – football, Catholicism, the whole trick-bag."[432] He believed that the administrators hoped to "acclimate our wishes to theirs. But if they want to be actors, not reactors, they must understand what black people are saying." This was the lived

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[430] John Keys, "Black Recruitment: An Inventory of Doors," *The Scholastic*, Feb. 27, 1970, 17.
[431] Ibid., 17.
[432] Ibid., 18.

reality to many actors for change in the black student population: the administration wanted them to adapt to Notre Dame's culture and buy into the mythology; black students wanted to have a say in molding a new culture. Many of the black students argued for a space of their own on campus, a move seen as self-segregation by much of the white population, but viewed differently by the black community. On campus and within the dorms, black students felt pressured to either act "white," the model of the "Notre Dame brotherhood," or felt the pressure of standing in for black men in general to the white student population. On campus, they were part of a white world and were expected to conform to it or to its expectations. Many longed for and sought out spaces where they could be individuals rather than "a black roommate" or "the black student in history class."

However, just as Hunt demonstrated, there were allies of black student groups on campus among the white student population. During the week of February 23-27, the Committee on White Racism held a War Against Racism rally. In February 1970, the history department invited Father William Peil of South Bend's St. Augustine Church to join a series on racism in the United States. Father Peil criticized the Church and scriptural translators for "'blithely ignoring' what [he] considered 'anti-black undertones' in their translations of servants as 'slaves,' government fees as 'poll taxes,' and tribes or relatives as 'clans.'"[433] He also spoke about black being used as the color of sin and death while white stood in for purity, and declared the Church guilty of attempting to remain largely white in the racial makeup of the clergy. He condemned the Church for its historical practice of missionaries paternalistically looking down on natives and their culture and their condescending intent to bring "culture to a nation who had it hundreds of years before they did." But his remarks on the continuing practices of the Church spoke to the

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[433] Mike Mooney, "Peil talks on Racism," *The Observer*, Feb. 27, 1970, 1.

atmosphere present at Notre Dame regarding race. *The Observer* reported: "the church was guilty of preaching a 'pie-in-the-sky' morality that discouraged action against any of the squalor of their condition and encouraged patience and long-suffering in the hope of an eternal reward." Although not exclusive to Catholicism, the Church's focus on patience and long-term suffering might help to explain the editorial stance of *The Observer* a few years prior that encouraged gradual change and deferential protest rather than forceful confrontation and frustration with gradual gains.

But, this gradual change and likely well-intentioned (but not unproblematic) support from white allies often rang hollow to a minority group that felt oppressed on an overwhelmingly white campus as well as the broader society in which they lived. According to Barrett and Williams, 64% of the black student population in the fall of 1967 considered themselves Catholic, far less than the 97% of the rest of the student population.[434] John T. McGreevy's *Parish Boundaries* speaks to the advantages and disadvantages presented to black Catholics in the United States. Often, Catholic schools provided educational outlets and priest-backed recommendations to colleges that public schools did not offer for minority students. Likewise, doctrinal obstacles to full participation in Church positions had largely been phased out by the mid-twentieth century, but internal discrimination remained. While the Catholic Church was a refuge for many European immigrants seeking both to protect their ethnic and religious heritages and traditions and also to gain admittance into dominant American society and the growing racial and cultural category of "white," African Americans largely remained outsiders and were often at odds with their white Catholic brethren. Outside of the church, strikes throughout the country often pitted African American workers against a largely Catholic working-class. Attempts to

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[434] Freddy Williams, "A Fly in the Milk Bottle," 14.

integrate working-class sections of major cities were encouraged, in part, to lessen discrimination by Irish Catholics against Italian Catholics, but it soon united European Catholics as part of white America and left blacks on the outside looking in again.[435] Blacks soon became some of the only minorities to be denied access to Catholic schools, a practice that was not absent from Notre Dame.

In the late 1950s and 1960s, the Catholic Church was at the forefront of cultural calls for civil rights with many of its priests and nuns marching with Martin Luther King, Jr. and speaking out against discrimination. However, at the personal level, members did not always agree with the Church's official position. While interracialism was deemed the official and correct dogma in 1958, segregation in neighborhoods remained culturally preferred by many white Catholics in this time period and, out of want for solidarity and protection, by a good portion of the black Catholic community as well. McGreevy references priests who were booed or mocked for sermons encouraging loving one's neighbors, while others were wary of Martin Luther King, Jr. because of his reported ties to communism. It was during this period that the Catholic Church grew even more splintered as a political entity as members – who had been largely Democratic since the late 19th century – gave their votes to conservative politicians George Wallace and Barry Goldwater in 1964. White Catholics in Milwaukee counter-demonstrated and attacked a march organized by Father James Groppi, a white civil rights activist and member of the NAACP. Father Francis X. Lawlor, a white priest in Chicago, railed against the influx of African Americans to his parish area in South Chicago. By 1972, for the first time in American history,

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[435] John T. McGreevy, *Parish Boundaries: The Catholic Encounter with Race in the Twentieth-Century Urban North* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996), 30; 36.

the majority of Catholic voters voted for the Republican candidate, helping elect Richard Nixon and his myth of the Silent Majority to the presidency.

It is in this context that the frustrations of the black community should be viewed. Surely, their frustrations would not be out of place at any point in American history, but at this moment, when the Catholic Church was preaching brotherhood and equality while many of its members grew more politically conservative and called for gratefulness for previous victories and patience in regard to Civil Rights progress, it is easy to see the frustration that Notre Dame's African American students would have had with any hint, overt or subtle, that they were being discriminated against. According to Barrett and Williams, one black student lamented that "if this school calls itself a Catholic institution, more important [sic] a Christian institution, it should do its all to expel hatred and prejudice."[436] In the same article, Williams claimed that a study by Allport and Kramer showed that "among college students, Catholics lead in anti-Negro bias, followed by Protestants and Jews." Likewise, considering that a largely heterogeneous community of Catholics of many different ethnicities had mostly solidified into a homogeneous category based on whiteness, it is understandable that students booing at the exact moment that black student athletes gained a symbolic victory on the Fighting Irish campus, when five black basketball players were on the court at the same time, would be interpreted by black students as a caustic response to a loss of privilege for a portion of the white student population. They had undoubtedly listened to multiple criticisms of black athletes gaining and excelling in positions that had been previously reserved for white athletes throughout their lives and heard white Americans express worries over a loss in power and privilege, despite still maintaining an overwhelming position of power in society.

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[436] Freddy Williams, "A Fly in the Milk Bottle," 14.

As author Jim Dent writes, "Northern Indiana at the time [1964] held as many orders of the KKK as the Deep South and East Texas. Black people were not allowed in South Bend's white bars, but everyone was welcome at the Flamingo, a traditionally black bar, where on many nights, the whites outnumbered the blacks."[437] This was the world in which the black players lived in and around South Bend but in many other parts of the country as well. Certain housing and stores were officially and unofficially off limits to African Americans, and the spaces reserved for them seemed to be open to the white population as well. With such a limited population to begin with, it is not hard to see how many black students in and around campus felt as if they did not belong to the Notre Dame community. Even in the Flamingo, a black bar, white patrons felt welcomed and used it as a local hangout, invading one of the only spaces blacks could call their own and were *allowed* to call their own:

> One night, Jim Thornburgh, history major from the class of 1965, bumped into one of the regular [African American] patrons who lived in the workaday world of South Bend.
>
> 'So how is it, Thornburgh?' the man said. 'How is it that the black people don't get to go to the white bars, but the white people get to go to the black bars?'
>
> Thornburgh smiled. 'I've been in South Bend all of my life. I went to St. Joe's High School. I know it can be a funny town, but I don't think it's as racist as you think.'[438]

Thornburgh, a white student, dismisses the evident and lived experience of a local black townie – one who presumably also grew up in South Bend. The fact that this conversation takes place in a black bar and not in a white bar bolsters the truth in the patron's query. While Dent uses this seemingly random anecdote about life in South Bend during Ara Parseghian's first season of 1964 to paint a more vivid picture of the everyday culture, it illustrates the lack of understanding

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[437] Jim Dent, *Resurrection: The Miracle Season That Saved Notre Dame* (New York: Thomas Dunne Books, 2009), 130.
[438] Ibid., 130.

or outright refusal to acknowledge the felt experiences of the African American community at Notre Dame and in the country at large (this dismissal of "alternate" experiences from the dominant culture is by no means only a memory of the distant past). This battle over space served as another dividing point at Notre Dame during the late 1960s.

Notre Dame's Professor Robert Burns revealed that Father Hesburgh *did* make a concerted effort to hire more African American faculty members at Notre Dame during the 1960s, "but this was also a time when a Notre Dame Faculty member could still be fired for getting a divorce. The school had a very distinctive Catholic culture. And except for New Orleans and elsewhere in Louisiana, there were not many black Catholics. So when some black professors came to visit Notre Dame, they found the environment too foreign. So they would choose to go elsewhere."[439] While this somewhat explains the lack of black professors (but also places the *blame* on them), it further reveals the feeling of outsiderness felt by African Americans at Notre Dame. While Father Hesburgh had been a champion of civil rights issues and served on the U.S. Civil Rights Commission starting in 1957,[440] journalist Terrence Moore points out the perplexing disconnect between fighting for greater integration throughout the country but the slow actualization of further integration at Notre Dame: "So on one hand, Hesburgh was big on race relations. On the other hand, Notre Dame was slow to integrate. It's really one of life's great mysteries."[441] In *Talking Irish*, Father Hesburgh laments the slow pace of change at Notre Dame but points to the culturally embedded discrimination throughout the

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[439] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 143-144.
[440] John A. Hannah, President of Michigan State University, served as the first chairman of the Commission. It is worth noting that, despite the good intentions of the Commission and its goals, the chairman was still white.
[441] Ibid., 143.

country. He holds up the passage of the Civil Rights Act in 1964 as a catalyst for change against the "deeply ingrained" practice of discrimination throughout the country. To be sure, more and more black students were coming to Notre Dame after 1964, but many still felt like outsiders well after Hesburgh's argument that "those floodgates [the Civil Rights Act of 1964] were open" and "things began moving faster everywhere. Including Notre Dame."[442]

The feelings of the head coach at the time, Ara Parseghian, on further integration at the school are in line with Burns'. He believed that Notre Dame itself and its insular and homogeneous atmosphere were likely more to blame than the era itself. He argues that he "had some outstanding black players on my teams at Northwestern. And when I came to Notre Dame in 1964, we were recruiting black players from the beginning. But sometimes a kid would say, 'Well, where's the rest of the blacks? What kind of social life am I going to have here? Oh, you're a Catholic institution? Hey, where are the women?"[443] He also points to admission restrictions as part of the problem in anecdotes about black players (like a running back from Troy, Ohio) who were accepted at Big Ten universities, but were turned down late in the process by Notre Dame's admissions. He gave the same answer in a conversation that he had in 1972 with Father Hesburgh in which Hesburgh questioned: "How come we don't have more blacks on our football team?"[444] The feeling that he had greater prior success in recruiting black athletes at Northwestern, an academically prestigious school, and examples of academically rejected athletes who were accepted at Big Ten (the conference upon which Notre Dame based much of

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[442] Ibid., 143.
[443] Ibid., 144.
[444] Ibid., 144.

its student-athlete requirements) schools gives further credence to the feelings of discrimination and outsider status felt by many within Notre Dame's limited African American community.

Clarence Ellis arrived at Notre Dame in the fall of 1968 on a football scholarship. He was well-aware of the perception that Notre Dame was overwhelmingly white, pointing out that his incoming cohort of black football players, five in total, was considered a "breakthrough" at the University. Having grown up only 130 miles away in Grand Rapids, MI, Ellis was still overwhelmed by the insularity of the campus: "There were some people there who just weren't ready for us. My academic advisor, for example. The first time we ever met, he said, 'I don't understand why Notre Dame has to bring in all these n——.'" Ellis immediately sought out a new advisor and told him about his experience with the first. His new advisor was not surprised by the interaction, although he was not happy about it, admitting that further integration at Notre Dame "will be a transition for many people."[445] The overt racism and candor of the first advisor were not always, and quite frequently were not, the norm at Notre Dame or other Midwestern universities. Instead, it was often a truly puzzled reaction to a questioning of the naturalized idea of the privileged position of whiteness that many had never thought to contemplate or did not want to consider. Terrence Moore pondered this dilemma: "I'm not even sure I'd call it racism. But I do know race always matters. Race *is* an issue. So when you study Notre Dame, you have to look at the crowds who came to football games. You have to look at the alumni. In both cases, they were predominantly white. So maybe Notre Dame did not want to offend them by bringing in black players."[446] On top of that, if the homogeneous nature of the crowd is considered even further, Notre Dame fandom, and in turn Notre Dame itself, is naturalized as white. For many

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[445] Ibid., 145.
[446] Ibid., 142.

alumni, they grew up in an era when their religion kept them outside of the dominant society. Now, in the late 1960s, they were increasingly accepted as part of that dominant culture. Their religion, their school, and their football team helped to mythologize them as part of "white" society. Notre Dame's culture was a progressive tool toward inclusion in white American culture – a culture held up as the American culture. To question whether that culture now (and previously) kept out/down students of color challenged the mythology of Notre Dame as an avenue for racial and societal progress. After all, the fans at the stadium, able to afford tickets and not work on a Saturday as they enjoyed a sport that exemplified America, epitomized the progress that white Catholics had seen in the United States as they became a part of the burgeoning middle-class. The mythos of Notre Dame *had* worked for them. They would want to believe that their status was fully earned and not partially attained by the color of their skin. At a certain level, it is understandable that such a revelation would be unthinkable and uncomfortable for those who believed in the mythos, but such is the nature of privilege: it is largely unearned, and it benefits from the "othering" of another group.

Moore's continuing thoughts on the complexity of racial issues at Notre Dame showcases an equally problematic concern: "Then you have the fact that Notre Dame was generally successful. If you're winning football games without black players, then maybe it's not a high priority." Part of Notre Dame's success grew out of the natural pipeline for talented high school students they had in place. All across the country, star athletes at parochial schools were expected to, and often did, dream of playing for the Fighting Irish. Moreover, those star athletes were already used to a Catholic education and environment and, many times, a campus devoid of female students. For them, Notre Dame hardly even had to pitch itself. But Catholic players from public schools too could be drawn by the allure of the famous school. Similarly, the large

fanbase and deep connection many Catholics felt with the school meant that Catholic coaches would think of Notre Dame first when helping star players send out their recruiting information and pick a college. After all, it might create a chance for that coach to create a deeper connection to the University. And, the prestige and success of the football team drew non-Catholic players to the team as well. For these reasons, Notre Dame still found success without an increased emphasis on integration.

On one hand, the call for further integration unconnected to concerns about sporting superiority could be viewed as a more altruistic motivation. Certainly, Father Hesburgh's commitment to integration and social justice is unquestionable, and he faced quite a bit of criticism over the students' and alumni's perception of him as an opponent of big-time football at Notre Dame. Michigan State, Minnesota, and other Big Ten schools undeniably benefitted from Southern schools' refusal to admit black student-athletes. Duffy Daugherty even lamented the difficulty he would likely face in recruiting African American players when Southern schools started integrating.[447] Likewise, when integration finally came to the Southwest Conference and the Southeastern Conference, anecdotes and team mythologies preach that black players were brought in not for reasons of social justice, but because coaches were afraid that their teams would be at a disadvantage athletically without black players. Other stories point to Northern and Western schools' eventual refusal to play segregated teams, fewer bowl invitations, and non-consideration in the awarding of National Titles as motivations for integration.

But, on the other hand, Notre Dame's success without further integration likely *did* make it less of a priority in the minds of some administrators, alumni, and fans. Notre Dame's image as

[447] Duffy Daugherty, *Duffy*.

America's Team, a team of European immigrants and their children, was a powerful brand, but a brand devoid of African Americans. Because Notre Dame is a Catholic institution, its culture differs from Southern white universities. Indeed, the Confederate symbolism embraced by many schools in the South during this era, and likewise embraced by the KKK and white supremacists, often invokes a distrust or hatred of the North, immigrants, and the Catholic religion.[448] But the championing of whiteness at Southern schools and the championing of European Catholics at Notre Dame both relied on the exclusion of people of color, overtly and maliciously in the South, and implicitly and sometimes unknowingly at Notre Dame. As Terrence Moore writes in his description of Notre Dame, "this is how racism gets started. It is not George Wallace, fire hoses, police dogs. It is usually more benign. Things fall through the cracks and then perpetuate."[449] For the most part, the discrimination and racism felt at Notre Dame was not overt, but it was systemic and often unthinking. And that made it all the harder for many white students at Notre Dame to view the concerns and criticisms of the African American community on campus as

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[448] It should be noted that the Klan had large memberships in the North as well, especially in Indiana. In fact, in the 1920s, Indiana Klan members began circulating the names of local community members and even some Notre Dame faculty and administrators to the anti-Klan magazine *Tolerance* which printed the names as proof of their membership within the KKK. The Klan spread false rumors of membership in order to create confusion and foment discontent on the campus and in the town. In response, local Protestant ministers demanded a meeting with the clergy at Notre Dame where they railed against the falsehoods in *Tolerance*. In response, Father Cavanaugh questioned why they had not spoken out about the lies and hatred spewed by the Klan's magazine, *Fiery Cross*, in the previous six months it had been circulating around town. A planned parade by the Klan in 1924 through the streets of South Bend was disrupted by Notre Dame students who met the incoming Klan members at the train station and used many different means to disrupt their plans: giving them wrong directions, stealing their white robes, taunting them, and even fighting with them. Father Cavanaugh demanded that the students return to the school ,and they obeyed; but the parade was thwarted. Over the following few months, there were rumors of plans to blow up the school and attack the campus, but such calls slowly trickled away. See Arthur J. Hope, *Notre Dame: One Hundred Years* (South Bend: University of Notre Dame Press, 1979), 371-378.

[449] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 142.

examples of discrimination. There were not fire hoses, dogs, and lynchings, but there were scores of minor and major incidents that underpinned the inequality and ostracization felt everyday by members of the black community at Notre Dame.

In the fall of 1969, a large portion of the African American student population requested to live in off-campus dorms together, creating a space for themselves at the University. When a large incoming first-year class matriculated that semester, the overflow of (overwhelmingly white) students was placed in the University owned dorms. However, a large portion of the incoming students were placed in African American students' rooms. Danny Wilkerson complained about the situation in his letter to the editor published in *The Observer* in October 1969.[450] He claims that every black student in the dorm had to make room for at least one or two white students. It is unclear why Notre Dame chose to place the incoming students in the "black dorm," but Wilkerson and his friends saw it as a punishment or an attempt to break up their community. Using the rhetoric of the time, Wilkerson denounced the move as a tactic of the "colonizers" to thwart efforts of black students from moving "off of the colony." Whether the administrative move by Father Whelan was racially motivated or not, Wilkerson and his friends certainly saw it as such, leading them to denounce Whelan as a "racist and/or pig."

This administrative shuffling was occurring at the same time that the Afro-American Society and the black community as a whole were still waiting for Notre Dame to move forward on promises of a Black Studies program and a focus on making black students feel more welcomed at Notre Dame. In the wake of the threatened boycott by the black basketball players, in December 1968, Father Hesburgh had suggested a committee to investigate and propose ways

[450] Danny Wilkerson, "Two Souls," *The Observer*, Dec. 8, 1969, 6.

to make black students feel more welcomed at Notre Dame. The first committee proposed a Black Studies program in the spring of 1969, but subsequent committees stalled and failed to move forward on the proposal.[451] Around four hundred protestors turned out for a Board of Trustees meeting that month to bring the issues to the forefront. Bill Turner, an African American graduate student at the time, described the delay as a "slap in my face," and opined that he had grown "tired of this Notre Dame bullshit," lamenting the fact that there was even a debate over the need for a Black Studies program in the first place.[452] AAS President Art McFarland echoed Turner's thoughts, describing the meeting as "the most nauseating experience of my four years at Notre Dame" while labeling the BOT members as "bigots." By the end of the month, after an increase in the campaigning for it by the black community, the Black Studies program had been approved.[453]

In mid-October Matt Connelly, a white student, got into a confrontation with a black student and allegedly called him a "n—" As the argument escalated, Connelly, who was much larger than the other student, challenged him to a fight. The student declined, but said he'd be back, and he'd bring his friends. Connelly did not back down and even gave him his room number.[454] The student never showed up to Connelly's room, but Connelly and his roommate Bill Barz, a fullback on the Notre Dame football team, alleged that twelve black men came into their dorm room and said that "We hear you've been calling us n——." Connelly replied that "The way you guys are acting now, that's what you are." Connelly claimed that a scuffle ensued in

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[451] Dave Krashna, "Notre Dame's Greatest Challenge," *The Scholastic*, Sept. 19, 1969, 18.
[452] Dave Lammers, "Students rally at Board meeting," *The Observer*, Sept. 6, 1969, 6.
[453] Jim Holsinger, ”Committee Approves Black Studies, *The Observer*, Oct. 31, 1969, 1.
[454] "Twelve blacks, claim insults, attack student," *The Observer*, Oct. 20, 1969, 1.

which he received a cut to his face requiring ten stitches, but Connelly and Barz fought off the men and chased them away, catching one of them and holding him down in the hallway. Whether Connelly's one-sided account is entirely true or not, it is telling that he felt that he was in the right using a racial slur because the black men were not conforming to an "acceptable" form of black masculinity, one which is deferential to white authority and one that refrains from standing up for oneself. In his own account, the twelve men walked into the dorm room and asked him a question. Rather than denying their charge, Connelly essentially admitted to it and insulted them again. No, this does not mean that violence was the right answer or that it was unavoidable, but it adds even more context to the tense racial atmosphere felt at Notre Dame. And, while somewhat tangential to the incident, it pokes a hole in the mythology that white football players at Notre Dame were entirely outside of the racial narrative at the University.

At first glance, Connelly's story seems embellished, considering that he and Barz fought off twelve men by themselves. Likewise, in a fight between fourteen students, it seems improbable that only one of the involved reported injuries. Regardless, if taken at face value, in many ways it reinforces the atmosphere of unbelonging felt by many in the African American community at Notre Dame. A group of black students may have felt as if they needed overwhelming numbers to confront a white student in a presumably overwhelmingly white dormitory in order to intimidate him or prevent him from reacting physically. Or, the strength in numbers was needed so that *they* felt safe in the confrontation. While it is logical to infer that they came looking for a fight, it could also be surmised that they did indeed want to discuss the issue with Connelly. These questions went unaddressed in *The Observer*, a point made by AAS President Arthur McFarland: "The Newspaper coverage presented a basically one-sided view. I disagree with the entire article. It led white students to a number of assumptions about the

situation that are basically incorrect."[455] McFarland does not address these assumptions, and the incident went fairly undiscussed, at least in *The Observer*. In *Bowled Over*, Michael Oriard, a sports scholar and former Notre Dame football player, illustrates the rhetoric and strategies used by many black football players in the South during the integration of the Southeastern Conference. For instance, he discusses Lester McClain's refusal to speak candidly to a liberal reporter at the University of Tennessee where McClain was the first black football player for the Volunteers:

> McClain's refusal to tell the white journalist what he wanted to hear has its own eloquence. While he and the other black pioneers might not have felt "free" to tell the truth, we should recognize that their refusals, like their [Frank] Merriwell poses, also freed them from having to explain themselves to white writers and readers.[456]

Likely, McFarland's neglect or refusal to elaborate stems from his frustrations with the assumption by *The Observer* that Connelly and Barz were reliable witnesses and had the privilege of guiding the narrative of the confrontation coupled with the repeated attempts to explain the AAS' positions and experiences to the newspaper to little avail. Notably, within a few days, Connelly had dropped all civil charges in the case.[457] Charles Wordell, a white student, had voiced similar concerns about journalistic integrity in a letter to the editor that appeared in the *Scholastic* in November. Titled "Journalistic Lynching," Wordell's letter addressed the racial tropes and rhetoric employed in *The Observer* in their coverage of crime, arguing that *Observer* articles he had read "concerning racial themes are so filled with destructive (and probably

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[455] Paul Gallagher, "Connelly assault case discussed," *The Observer*, Oct. 22, 1969, 1.
[456] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 72.
[457] "Blacks fail to appear at meeting," *The Observer*, Oct. 24, 1969, 2.

unintentional) racism that they represent a threat to the honesty of vision in our academic and social community."[458]

It is evident from discussions in *The Observer* that a significant portion of the white student body felt that there was no problem and grew tired of what they saw as constant criticism and cries of racism over what they deemed as trivial incidents and demands. In a discussion of a student-athlete protest at Oregon State, Oriard examines such "trivial" issues: "The immediate cause – a demand to shave a beard and mustache – was indeed often trivial, but behind it lay a long list of grievances, many of them perhaps trivial, too, but cumulatively weighty and also evoking a long history of racism in the nation. Moreover, 'trivial' was in the eye of the beholder."[459] What might seem trivial to a white student who felt comfortably within the dominant culture and the status quo of Notre Dame's community could understandably seem much more significant or even emblematic of a structural inequality at the University and within the United States in general. While dormitories planned anti-racism campaigns on campus, the student senate denied the AAS a request for funds to bring in African American theatre groups, prompting a walkout by the AAS.[460] These requests and demands for safe spaces and calls for academic and everyday attention to black cultures, coupled with the frustrated and increasingly louder calls for change by black students, further enflamed the confusion and outright entrenchment by some of the white students on campus.

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[458] Charles Wordell, "Journalistic Lynching," *The Scholastic*, Nov. 14, 1969, 6-7.
[459] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 98.
[460] Jim Graif, "Halls to plan Anti-Racism programs," *The Observer*, Oct. 28, 1969, 1; Dave Fromm and Tim Trainor, "Afro-Americans denied; walkout on Senate," *The Observer*, Oct. 31, 1969, 1.

Steve Jeselnick, a student at Notre Dame, wrote to *The Observer* that he was worried about "the Problem" on campus and calls for black separatism. He urged everyone on campus to come together to reject "the Problem." From the letter, it seems that "the Problem" he refers to is not about overt inequalities or feelings of discrimination by the black community but about calls from the black community to "separate" from Notre Dame's culture, a culture they had no say in creating and little say in changing. Jeselnick believed that by rejecting "the Problem" of separatism, "we can prove this is one community – the men of Notre Dame."[461] Here, Jeselnick's argument ignored the complaints of the black community and called for Notre Dame's white community to accept black students into its prescribed culture, molding them into the status quo of what it meant to be a white student at the University. Because of this process, while not likely obvious to many of the white students, the Notre Dame community (and most institutions that had been exclusively white) had in many ways been forged in and as the absence of blackness or at least the absence of aspects of black culture deemed controversial or antithetical to the dominant white society. Jeselnick's call for ignoring or at least downplaying problems of racism looked to move past discrimination without having to question the cultural context and motives that created a discriminatory culture in the first place. Likewise, it called neither for an earnest discussion of the issues nor for a negotiated Notre Dame culture. Dave Krashna had called for such a negotiated culture just a few months earlier in *The Scholastic* when he wrote that a Notre Dame focused on a true community of students would allow "more than a token group of black freshmen to enter Notre Dame per year if the white-oriented environment is changed" and argued that "the white-oriented environment will be diversified by the addition of black and ethnic

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[461] Steve Jeselnick, "Letter to the Editor," *The Observer*, Nov. 12, 1969, 4.

studies programs."[462] Instead, Jeselnik assumed that the status quo would be amenable to or even longed for by the black community, a portion of which were continually frustrated by what they perceived as a University-sponsored dismissal of their demands for a more multicultural approach to life at Notre Dame.

While Jeselnick's was but one voice at Notre Dame, it is interesting that his desire for an end to complaints about inequality on campus found a kindred spirit in the right-leaning editor of *The Observer*. While it is hard to gauge where Notre Dame students fell on issues of the late 1960s/early 1970s: civil rights, Vietnam, etc., evidence from students who attended the University at that time tends to paint the student body as more conservative than liberal, but more likely apolitical than anything else. As mentioned earlier, this was the sentiment of Rocky Bleier. Likewise, Michael Oriard remembered his years at Notre Dame in much the same light. By 1969, this was changing as more and more students were willing to speak out against the United States' involvement in Vietnam. *The Observer* seemed to be a rather moderate newspaper, but *The Observer*'s editor Chris Wolfe usually came down as the reactionary voice for the paper regarding Vietnam, student protests, and pushes for a more multi-cultural Notre Dame experience in a series of editorials during his tenure. For instance, in one editorial, Wolfe opined that a student-group sponsored flyer which used revolutionary rhetoric was racist in nature and inappropriate due to University funds going towards its printing.[463] While Wolfe surely had the journalistic opportunity and freedom to do so, his position also gave a level of authority to his opinions in the campus discourse and served in some ways to set the agenda over what was discussed in the University's public forum. However, considering that Notre Dame's student

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[462] Dave Krashna, "Notre Dame's Greatest Challenge," 20.
[463] Chris Wolfe, "What a joke!," *The Observer*, Nov. 19, 1969, 4.

body had a reputation for being conservative or at least apolitical, it is not surprising that the editor of the student newspaper would himself be right-leaning. It is certainly worth noting that others on the editorial board were arguably liberal. But, in an era when it was becoming increasingly more common for students to question authority (their parents, their coaches, their administration), the fact that the editor of the student newspaper was *also* reactionary may shed some light onto Arthur McFarland's frustration with *The Observer*. Likewise, despite an abundance of revolutionary rhetoric in flyers, lectures, and protest literature on the campus, it could explain why that same discourse was often absent from the student newspaper itself – not that Wolfe shut down the conversation or kept it out of the pages of *The Observer*, but more that those already in a minority position on campus felt that attempts to explain themselves in print would open them up to further misunderstanding or reactionary responses. It was a common tactic in editorials in *The Observer* from 1968 to 1970 to dismiss counterarguments because they did not hold the majority position. However, when the African American community was so small, it was never likely that they would hold the majority position.

But the AAS did find allies to their cause in *The Observer* as well. For instance, a self-identified white student and Student Life Council member, Ed Roickle, wrote a letter in October 1969 admonishing the white community at Notre Dame for dismissing or downplaying the claims of discrimination felt by the black community. Roickle listed many of the instances of discrimination that had occurred over the past few years that personified "the underlying feelings in the great white land of Our Lady of the Lake. Covert racism is an all-pervasive aspect of the

Notre Dame culture which makes the atmosphere here stultifying and offensive to many black students."[464] Roickle continued:

> First, when the blacks say the atmosphere at Notre Dame is stultifying and alien, we as white people cannot say that it is not so. We have to accept the fact that we cannot understand the psychological and social pressures which face a black student at a white middle class university. What we can do is get off of their backs and stop yelling about separatism and try to find out what it is about us and our society that allows and even encourages such deep division between human beings.[465]

Roickle questioned whether the discomfort boiled down to an inferiority complex on the part of the white detractors who worry over a lack of identity or one tied to defining oneself against someone else: "Why is it that the attempts by black people to achieve their own identity provoke a fearful reaction on the part of so many whites? … Could it be that the white man is finally and irrevocably faced with the task of realizing his collective personality without having the crutch of someone to look down on?"[466] Here, Roickle attempted to get to the heart of the issue and attempted to expose the process of "othering" that had been so essential to continual generations of European and Catholic immigrants to the United States. From the pages of *The Observer*, it is unknown what impact if any his editorial had on the discourse, but it is interesting to note that Jeselnick and Wolfe's opinion pieces followed Roickle's and both failed to "stop yelling about separatism" in their critiques of black revolutionary and separatist rhetoric. Jeselnick's letter did receive a response from two white students during the week after it appeared in *The Observer*. Joe Schlosser and Jim Sweitzer, both first-year students at Notre Dame, chastised Jeselnick for hiding from the issue at hand. While acknowledging that they too were new to the Notre Dame community and fairly isolated from issues of racial discrimination, they asserted that they "came

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[464] Ed Roickle, "Racism at Notre Dame," *The Observer*, Oct. 15, 1969, 5.
[465] Ibid., 5.
[466] Ibid., 5.

with the attitude that this university existed to seek solutions to, rather than to hide from, the problems."[467]

And the white population of Notre Dame was not unaware of "the Problem," whether they were arguing that it did not exist, downplaying it, ignoring it, or attempting to change it. For instance, a student hung the Confederate battle flag from his dorm room window in the winter of the 1969-1970 school year. Dennis Wall, a student, wrote to *The Observer* voicing his concern over the symbolism of the flag, arguing that the flag was "not necessarily evil, but what that flag represents *is* wrong."[468] In response, Stephen Hoffman of Little Rock, Arkansas countered that the "Confederate flag no longer represent[ed] the advocacy of slavery, nor Southern resentment of a hostile North," and instead should be seen as a symbol of southern pride, the final word on the subject in *The Observer*.[469] However, such a claim has to be viewed in the historical era from which it grew. C. Richard King and Charles Fruehling Springwood argue that the battle flag "reemerged throughout the Deep South as an important symbol of Southern nationalism, only in the context of a burgeoning civil rights movement in the 1940s and 1950s." The flag was "[…] a common banner at KKK rallies but also at civil government buildings and general protests against federal desegregation orders […] "[470] While the flag *did* stand for Southern pride, it stood for a very particular Southern pride, one which celebrated an era when blacks were not equal and not even considered fully people. To divorce the flag from this symbolic meaning was impossible, but a further sign of the ostracization from the dominant culture and constant

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[467] Joe Schlosser and Jim Sweitzer, "Racism Rapes," *The Observer*, Nov. 14, 1969, 4.
[468] Dennis Wall, "Distressing Incidents," *The Observer*, Dec. 12, 1969, 4.
[469] Stephen Hoffman, "South will rise?," *The Observer*, Jan. 13, 1970, 5.
[470] C. Richard King and Charles Fruehling Springwood, *Beyond the Cheers*, 134.

overt discrimination faced by the black community at Notre Dame – discrimination rarely explicit, but always present and felt.

However, it would be unfair and indeed careless to offer competing viewpoints from the varied white voices in the community and neglect the diverse opinions of those within the black community on campus. In the 1969 edition of Notre Dame's student yearbook, *The Dome*, the editors acknowledged the increased activism and influence of the Afro-American Society on campus. Likewise, they hinted at a supposed divide between the black student community and the black student-athletes at Notre Dame, writing that "the black athletes were embarrassed into joining" the AAS.[471] Similarly, the editors also highlighted the importance of sports to the Notre Dame community's psyche, acknowledging the power of sports as a medium for protest: "The blacks showed at once that they are part of Notre Dame and aware of its way of functioning when they chose athletic exhibition as the scene for presenting their demands."[472] Indeed, the limited number of black students who were *not* student-athletes at Notre Dame was noticeable. Or, more accurately, they were unrecognized. David Krashna became Notre Dame's first black student body president in the spring of 1970. In the run up to his election, he recalled an incident during the previous year in which a group of black students were hassled in front of the administration building by a security guard, questioning why they were there in the first place. The guard assumed that it was an attempted protest or takeover; they assumed that it was perfectly normal for Notre Dame students to pose for yearbook pictures in front of the Dome.[473] Even though Krashna won in a landslide over his conservative opponent Tom Thrasher with

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[471] University of Notre Dame, *The Dome 1969 Yearbook*, (South Bend: Graduating Class of 1969, 1969), 24, UNDA.
[472] Ibid., 24.
[473] Bill Carter, "Krashna Challenges," *The Observer*, Mar. 9, 1970, 3.

63.6% of the vote, black students were still viewed as an oddity at Notre Dame, especially outside of the sporting world.[474] It is worth noting that Thrasher had won every poll run by *The Observer* up until that point and the editor of the paper had written in support of the conservative Thrasher. Conversely, the editor of *The Scholastic* came out in favor of Krashna, writing:

> As a black, Krashna would be in a psychologically difficult position as SBP at a predominantly white middle-class Catholic university. The student body should not elect him [only] with a view to expiating its own guilt over racism: the election of a black will not automatically dissolve racial tensions. But racism is the most potentially explosive issue at Notre Dame, and Krashna could be an effective mediator between the administration and black students. We assert this not simply because Krashna is black, but because of his experience in dealing with the problem here and because he realized the complexities of the issue better than any of the other candidates.[475]

The difference in college experiences at Notre Dame for African Americans who were not student-athletes was highlighted by three African American football players in the spring of 1970. Tom Gatewood, Bob Minnix, and Clarence Ellis spoke out against what they saw as a lack of support for black students at Notre Dame and purposeful misinformation on the part of the administration. The trio acknowledged that Notre Dame gave out financial aid to 91% of the black student population from a total of $174,460. However, of that money, $43,000 went to the 14 student-athletes who represented only 17.6% of the black student population at Notre Dame.[476] Ellis pointed out that such misinformation gives an inaccurate picture of the student experience at Notre Dame for many of the black population: "I think the facts tend to give the impression that the black-non-athlete has it easy."[477] He and his teammates argued that tuition continued to rise but less student aid was going to non-athletes, resulting in black students

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[474] "Krashna new SBP gains office on record percent," *The Observer*, Mar. 12, 1970, 1.
[475] "A Director of Expertise," *The Scholastic*, Mar. 6, 1970, 5.
[476] "Black athletes dissatisfied with publicity on black aid," *The Observer*, Apr. 23, 1970, 1.
[477] Ibid., 1.

becoming more indebted to loans and having less time to study due to the reality of having to hold a job to cover rising tuition. When coupled with their minority position on campus and within the culture of the campus, the trio argued that this imbalance only served to further alienate the black community. However, while he was a member of the Black Student Union and dual majored in Black Studies, Bob Minnix did not feel that overt racial incidents affected him at his time at Notre Dame: "None of my fellow students – or my teammates – ever confronted me on any racial basis. And it wasn't because I shrunk into the background. I was very outspoken at Notre Dame."[478]

For many of the black athletes coming to Notre Dame, they were used to being one of the few black students at their schools. Minnix had grown up in Spokane, where he grew used to the black community being a small minority within a larger white community. As Gatewood, Minnix, and Ellis had addressed, the experience of black student-athletes on campus differed dramatically from that of non-athletes. There was little recognition around campus, and often even less interaction with the larger community. But, black football players at Notre Dame also experienced a world outside of the campus and South Bend during their time at the University, especially when they travelled to the South to play segregated teams. On one trip to Georgia Tech, the inclusion of the above trio disrupted the normal team routine of checking into their hotel. Gatewood describes the experience:

> Normally, at a hotel, we'd be preregistered. Our hotel keys would be in envelopes with our names on them. We'd get them and go to our rooms in an orderly fashion. This time there's major confusion. No one understands what's going on. Our team is in the lobby, but we're not getting checked in. The problem is, this hotel doesn't want us. We are being denied accommodations, because we have three black players on our traveling squad.

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[478] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 146.

> This is 1969, which is not terribly long ago. This is Atlanta, this transition city. This emblem of the South. This was not the first time I experienced prejudice.[479]

This overt prejudice differed from the prejudice members of the black community warned against at Notre Dame. It was up front and could not be misconstrued or reasoned away. However, this kind of prejudice was also the kind more easily seen and felt by those not directly facing its wrath. Parseghian's stance stood out to Gatewood: "I was impressed how calmly – yet with contempt – Ara was able to handle this situation. Staying very controlled, he let these people know that he was vehement. Everyone on our team was staying at the hotel."[480] When facing this more visible injustice, Parseghian – much like Father Hesburgh and his lifetime devotion to promoting civil rights – backed his players. Parseghian had seen such discrimination before while with the Cleveland Browns and again at Miami of Ohio. He and Notre Dame's athletic director, Moose Krause, made sure that every member of the team always stayed at the same hotel and played together on the field. Undoubtedly, it is a great and noble thing that he stood up for his players and for equality. But such stances were thankfully becoming more common by the end of the 1960s. Michigan, Michigan State, Penn State, and countless other teams all have similar stories of a coach standing up for his players against obvious racism during the 1940s and 1950s. But coaches were often less likely to side with their black players against less obvious instances of discrimination back on campus.

On that same trip, Gatewood remembered how strange it was to see just three black faces – their own – in the stadium: "While we were still in the tunnel, waiting to be introduced, their fans were jeering and pointing at our black guys. But not every slur was racial. We were Yankees from the North. We were Catholics traveling through the Bible Belt. So our white

[479] Ibid., 150.
[480] Ibid., 150.

players had their own bones to pick."[481] Whether he means to point this out or not, Gatewood's observations again speak to the dominant culture at Notre Dame. The individual feels the effects and sees the obviousness of discrimination when it is directed at him/her. The entire team felt like outsiders in the South. But this feeling of being an outsider was not necessarily felt by the white players and students back in the insular culture of Notre Dame. The team had dead fish, Coca-Cola bottles, and placards thrown at them. When Notre Dame faced Texas in the Cotton Bowl that season (a historical occasion in itself, since Notre Dame had not played in a bowl game in four decades), Longhorn coach Darrell Royal faced a question about why he did not have any black players on his team. Royal argued that "he had won without 'em, and that he would continue to win without 'em," echoing Terrence Moore's suspicion about Notre Dame's limited integration in football.[482] Bob Minnix, when questioned about the statement, found Royal's response "very interesting. … Because Dallas had such a large black population, and because of the social consciousness of the time. [Minnix] just didn't expect Royal to say that."[483] In this atmosphere of overt prejudice and racism, the black players on the team saw many of their coaches and white teammates stand up for them. Perhaps this act of support and the feeling of camaraderie gave black athletes at Notre Dame a different view of their white teammates than many within the black student population had regarding the white community at Notre Dame. The white teammates backed up their black teammates rather than questioning black students' experiences. Surely, playing together as a team for a common goal can forge bonds and feelings of community that might not be achieved through college experiences off the field. When

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[481] Ibid., 151.
[482] Ibid., 153.
[483] Ibid., 153.

Gatewood, Ellis, and Minnix voiced their concerns about the hardships faced by non-athletes in the black community, they spoke to the alternative experience of black *students* at Notre Dame.

The uphill battle against the status quo and the struggle to carve out a space within the historically white culture of Notre Dame was also evident in *Observer* articles on Chicano students arguing against Father Hesburgh's protest policies and the need for an inclusion of Chicano studies at Notre Dame.[484] Likewise, an open meeting of the Trustees was called in May, but the location of the meeting was not made clear. A group of students representing the Coalition for Political Action, the Women's Liberation Front, and the AAS went door to door throughout the administration building, banging on doors and shouting in an effort to find the meeting. At the meeting, the groups presented their demands for increased minority recruitment, increased black financial aid, and cohabitation at Notre Dame's campus. Two trustees left in protest after they had been "continually shouted down and not allowed to speak by the more militant segment of the audience."[485]

In the spring of 1970, rumors spread that AAS was dissatisfied with student body president Krashna's lack of concern for black causes in the early months of the presidency, but Krashna and the AAS squashed such discourse, presenting a show of unity amongst the black community.[486] From the protest at the Georgia Tech football game in the fall of 1968 to McFarland's remarks about the alleged fight in the dorms during the fall of 1969 to newly elected AAS president Ernie Jackson's remarks over disagreements surrounding a rally for the victims of

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[484] Dave Lammers, "Chicanos blast Hesburgh Policy," *The Observer*, Apr. 23, 1970, 1.
[485] "Attempt disruption; Trustees end early," *The Observer*, May 4, 1970, 1.
[486] Mike Chapin, "Speakers deplore Jackson State killings," *The Observer*, May 20, 1970, 3; "Parties comment on rally for blacks," *The Observer*, May 21, 1970, 1.

the shooting at Jackson State in May 1970, one can see a shift in the discourse and tactics of the black voices for change on campus. In a year and a half black students had gone from attempting to raise awareness and creating a collaborative change with their white classmates to a frustrated resignation that change would neither happen quickly nor would their words likely change the minds of many of their classmates. They had grown tired of denial, condescension, and calls for patience. The AAS's dissatisfaction with their white allies could easily be seen in the organization of the rally for Jackson State. The white organizers for the rally noted that only 35 students showed up for the rally, a far cry from the thousands who rallied after the Kent State shooting for a strike and a mass in memoriam. While the Jackson State rally did occur nearer to the end of the semester when many students were leaving for home, this difference in turnout, while not dissimilar to many other campuses around the country, has to raise questions of whether the Kent State killings sparked more outrage because it occurred at a largely white university and resulted in the deaths of white college students.[487]

Interestingly, of the 35 students at the rally, none of them were African American, a fact that one white organizer of the event attributed to jealousy or spite over blacks not having organized the rally.[488] In response, AAS president Ernie Jackson remarked that the organizers of the rally knew well why black students declined to organize the event: "Black students were offered the opportunity to organize the rally and refused on the basic reason that I gave, that we are no longer concerned in dealing with rhetoric and dealing in demonstrations and fruitless manifestations of frustrations which rallies basically now produce."[489] Part of the AAS's

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[487] Also, it occurred in a mid-Western state at the hands of Midwestern National Guardsmen.
[488] Mike Chapin, "Speakers deplore Jackson State killings," *The Observer*, May 20, 1970, 3.
[489] "Parties comment on rally for blacks," *The Observer*, May 21, 1970, 1.

frustration with the organization also owed to the fact that the rally was not an immediate concern, occurring a week after the shootings. *The Observer*'s reporting of the event turned the rally into a critique of black activism on campus, and the response of the organizers insinuated that the black community cared less about the Jackson State killings than the 35 white students who showed up for the rally. This response and one-sided reporting, which also included the rumor about the rift between the AAS and student body president Krashna, only entrenched the feeling amongst many in the black student population that their continual attempts to educate and explain their feelings of frustration to the white population of Notre Dame were not bearing fruit. Jackson lamented: "It was mutually agreed (in a previous discussion between the rally's organizers and the AAS) that blacks do not have to be educated by leaflets, speakers, rallies, etc., to the reality of racism in America nor should they waste their time to educating whites about it." The event's turnout and the slanted review of the rally left AAS member Bill Golden even more jaded about a change in the culture of Notre Dame: "I compared that rally to the pitiful turnout at Notre Dame and said that was a symptom of Notre Dame's racism. In the face of this sort of racism, Black Nationalism is a necessity, especially here at Notre Dame."[490]

By the close of the decade a large portion of the black community at Notre Dame felt incredibly frustrated with the slow pace of change at the University and with the continued denial of what was to them obvious examples of prejudice and discrimination. Again, there was no monolithic "black culture" or "black thought" on campus or in the country, just as there arguably was not a monolithic "white culture" in total agreement or with one motive in mind. Bill Turner, a graduate student in sociology, surveyed the black undergraduate population in the spring of 1969. Fifty-five students responded, representing 90% of the black undergraduate

[490] Ibid., 1.

population. He argued that he "did not anticipate a 'black mood'" to be found in the black student population and did not discover one by the paper's end. For instance, one informant expressed a startlingly cruel opinion on Jewish people: "The brother was right when he suggested that the only fault of the Hitler program was that he didn't kill enough of them." Turner assumed that Jewish people were seen as white in the eyes of some of the respondents. However, "from the spectrum of images, one basic ideology prevails: black students at Notre Dame are uncompromising in their quest for the liberation of black people."[491] A junior from the South argued that the movement was not about hating white people and considered that a "waste of time." He believed the movement was about loving blackness. One junior who had grown up in the Midwest echoed the frustrations the AAS had with white demonstrators and self-identified allies to the black cause: "Whites should never have been allowed to bring their paternalistic, crying liberalism to the movement. Sure, I regret the tenuous position of the white guys who are ok, but I cannot readily distinguish him from the collective honkey."[492] His sentiments were also expressed by a sophomore athlete: "It doesn't matter whether a white person is clothed in a black robe of the Supreme Court or in a white sheet for the KKK, he'd better keep his [word unclear from copy] right when he starts jiving around with my freedom."[493] By the end of the decade, the black population at Notre Dame as a whole no longer wanted to be a part of the Notre Dame culture or the dominant white culture, as it stood. They wanted to have a say in a new culture while maintaining and promoting their own black culture (a culture that was not entirely without its own pitfalls and inequalities) a point that was often lost on the white students at Notre Dame.

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[491] Bill Turner, "Rebellion, Revolution, & Rhetoric," *The Scholastic*, Oct. 10, 1969, 10.
[492] Ibid., 11.
[493] Ibid., 12.

Turner asked the respondents, "Since the 1954 Supreme Court decision, do you think blacks have made much progress, little progress or no progress at all?" 45% felt that "much progress" had been made, but many couched their response in terms of economic gain and pride in blackness or prefaced it with "things had been so bad that any change was for the better." 47% felt that little progress had been made, while 8% felt that no progress at all had occurred. Another question asked the respondents about their feelings on Civil Rights demonstrations and marches from earlier in the decade and their effect. 96% of the respondents had participated in some kind of demonstration, and 47% felt that, in hindsight, the demonstrations served no purpose, while 40% felt they did some good, and 13% were still unsure. One respondent felt that the demonstrations, "although a fine tactic in their day, have served no overall purpose in changing the conditions of most black people," while others emphasized the demonstrations abilities to draw attention and mobilize people. Detractors felt that the gains won through the demonstrations were token gestures at best.[494]

It is clear that the black population at Notre Dame questioned the philosophies of the Civil Rights movement from earlier in the decade. Blacks who had been "Integrationists" within the past year (44%) were now overwhelmingly "Black nationalists" (86%), and 60% of the respondents belonged to some kind of Black nationalist organization. Likewise, most found the peaceful demonstrations of the past less effective, and 66% believed that an increase in violence would surely follow in the coming years. 96% felt that recent race riots throughout the country had been a helpful thing.[495] Two responses were provided to get their points across. One sophomore from the East Coast argued that "Riots and violence cost the honky some dough and I

[494] Ibid., 12.
[495] Ibid., 12.

believe that the one thing that shakes the beast to sanity is his money." A Southern senior believed that "The only unfortunate thing about black violence is that is has been unorganized."[496] These comments are unsurprising, considering the continued complaints that change occurred too slowly at the University.

In regards to their perception of white attitudes toward black people and whether "Whites have changed positively toward blacks," only 23% thought this was the case, whereas 47% disagreed, and 30% were still uncertain. Turner believed that this suggested that the perceptions of whites were of little interest to the black respondents. In fact, 90% of respondents believed that whites should stay in their own communities. As black pride grew, they found white allies' help misguided and often insultingly paternalistic. A respondent who had worked with white liberals in his Southern hometown offered: "This fellow [the white liberal] […] would do better to go to his own community; for there is a black paranoia in regard to his motivation, which are condescending at best, and outright paternalistic at worst."[497] Turner concluded that 68% of the black population was highly militant by this time. He defined "black militance" as "a spirit, a chauvinism, among blacks which directs them in an uncompromising quest for the social, political, economic and spiritual liberation of blacks in American society."[498] This militancy stressed immediate action against injustice and was skeptical of compromise or alliances. This speaks to some of the confusion on the part of the whites at Notre Dame. Whereas whites felt they were helping by organizing a rally for the Jackson State killings, many in the black community saw it as an attempt to control or dominate the black movement. Turner found that

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[496] Ibid., 13.
[497] Ibid., 12.
[498] Ibid., 14.

66% of black undergraduates felt that "whites really don't desire that blacks be their social equal" and 70% felt that whites were "categorically responsible for the condition of black people in America."[499] The actual feelings of white students and administrators at Notre Dame, while important and discussed in this chapter, do not discount the fact that two-thirds of the black student population believed that no real equality would come. Aside from the recent win by Krashna as the student body president, the AAS and other black organizations had been some of the only spaces on campus where African Americans had full leadership roles and sway in administrative affairs. In nearly every other University aspect of their lives, the black students were under the supervision of white leaders at a Catholic university that had been arguably paternalistic from its start.

And this is one way in which the racial atmosphere differed slightly from those of its fellow Midwestern schools from the Big Ten, as Notre Dame still maintained an official paternalistic culture. The feelings of discrimination and the increasing radicalization did not differ, but the context is surprising. Considering that these were students at a religious institution, one might suspect that they themselves were religious. However, Turner found that "blacks at ND feel that religion clearly inhibits the militant orientation. Religion, to them, orients people to the afterlife, often making them oblivious of the harsh realities of this life."[500] Secular, public universities are not supposed to push students to think about the afterlife, at least not officially. They prepare students for this life and this world, although there is great variance in the agreement of how such goals are reached. No, not everyone who worked at or attended Notre Dame was required to be Catholic or even religious, but it was and is a Catholic school. The fact

[499] Ibid., 15.
[500] Ibid., 14.

that these students at a school presumed, even by many of its students, to be conservative still felt motivated to organize, speak out, demonstrate, and fight for change speaks to their convictions and the "structure of feeling" that they were seen as outsiders in this community. At a school that encouraged prayer and meditation and held a peace mass instead of anti-war demonstrations, the level of black "militancy" at Notre Dame stands out. This militancy also helps to explain the paradox Terrence Moore reflected on regarding Father Hesburgh's devotion to the Civil Rights movement in juxtaposition with the slow changes toward black studies courses and cultural changes at the University. Hesburgh was still fighting the last war, in the eyes of many of the black students on campus. He pushed for inclusion and black students enjoying the Notre Dame community that had existed devoid of black culture. They remained frustrated with changes because the University was on a slower timetable, but also because the changes did little to change the black position at Notre Dame. The black students wanted a "cultural pluralism in America, i.e., inclusion in the 'system' without abdicating that which is unique to black culture."[501] They wanted to create their own Notre Dame experience, not happily adapt to a culture to which they felt little connection, had limited say, and expected them to mold themselves to a culture forged in the absence of blackness.

An example of such a shortsighted and culturally myopic expectation can be seen in a letter written to *The Scholastic* discussed in the same issue that ran Turner's article. A "Concerned Alumnus" wrote:

> Last Saturday at the Notre Dame - Michigan State game [a 42-24 victory on October 4, 1969], I witnessed one of the most flagrant acts of unpatriotism and lack of school spirit as displayed by 12 to 14 Negro students seated in the student section. These students not

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[501] Ibid., 15.

> only failed to stand during the playing of the Victory March but remained seated during the playing of the National Anthem. What are they trying to prove?"[502]

The concerned alumnus posed a great question, but one which ostensibly sought no answer but instead came to its own conclusions:

> If they do not wish to participate when our flag is being raised, then I suggest that they refrain from entering the stadium. They are not worthy to be called Americans, let alone be admitted as student at one of the finest Universities in the land. To many of us who have seen their arrogant, sullen attitudes, we wish to remind them that this attitude and exhibition or lack of patriotism will not further their desire for the gains they wish to achieve.
>
> All in all, it shows their lack of maturity and that they are not worthy to be called Notre Dame men.
>
> P.S. The students should take matters into their own hands and give these individuals a dunking in the lake as had been the policy in by-gone years. Possibly this would make them conformists.[503]

This letter simultaneously encapsulated the lack of comprehension on the part of many within the white community at Notre Dame and the frustrations of the black community. The "structure of feeling" within the black population at Notre Dame – forged in reaction to the culture it was both a part of and apart from, as Williams reminds us – no longer sought conformity or stipulated and paternalistic acceptance, just as they no longer referred to themselves as "Negroes." Rich Moran, the editor of *The Scholastic*, found the letter distasteful and described it as a "pitiful and frightening misunderstanding." However, likely unknowingly, he too exemplified part of the reason for the growing frustrations amongst the black students of Notre Dame toward their white allies. Moran wrote that it was "easy to be outraged at the demands and attitudes of the blacks in this country, of the blacks at Notre Dame. […] They hold little love for the white people of America, and hence, little love for America." While the rest of the editorial attempted to explain

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[502] Qtd. in Rich Moran, "The Last Word," *The Scholastic*, Oct. 10, 1969, 34.
[503] Ibid., 34.

these attitudes and demands, Moran never challenged his own assertion that holding little love for white people of America equated to having little love for America. It propped up the idea that white culture *was/is* American culture. Where was the call to better understand and love black culture, or Latino, Native American, and Asian cultures? Or, where was the demand for a Women's Studies program? While Moran called on his readers to remember that "Two hundred years of enslavement, spittle and standing room on the back of the bus must take its toll on the historical consciousness of a people," his opening statements defined black people as somehow outside of America. Just a generation before, Catholics in America were viewed as unpatriotic and un-American, and still were by some. Even an attempt by an ally to the black cause was steeped in privileged assumptions.

Interestingly, while Bob Minnix feels that he did not face any "racial incidents," he also makes sure to note the conservative nature of Notre Dame: "But you have to remember this, too. Notre Dame is a very conservative school, and that extends to its black athletes. So at Notre Dame, we might have seemed militant. But if you had enrolled us at Berkeley in 1968, we would have seemed more like Clarence Thomas."[504] While it is unclear if this insinuates that Notre Dame recruited, created, or encouraged more conservative African American athletes, Minnix believes that the African American students at Notre Dame were largely on the more conservative side compared to elsewhere. However, Turner's study contradicted Minnix's perception. Regardless, if we accept Minnix's perception, these relatively conservative black students felt that the systemic discrimination they faced at Notre Dame was real enough to question. And despite this perceived conservative nature, Minnix does not appear to buy his own position entirely:

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[504] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 146.

> I saw kids getting killed at Kent State. I saw people getting blown away on TV in Vietnam. I saw a prominent black man, Martin Luther King, get killed while trying to better things for everybody. But when I wanted to demonstrate and voice my concern, some people at Notre Dame would frown on that. So I used to get into it with them. I'd say, 'You went out and found the best and the brightest. Now you want us to pretend we don't have any questions? Asking questions is how we became good students. Well, right now I have a *lot* of questions. And I'm not hearing any good answers on why I should not be allowed to demonstrate.[505]

Minnix's questions confirm Turner's conclusions rather than the belief in the conservatism of blacks as a whole at Notre Dame. Turner found that "the higher the grade point average, as well as the higher the general sophistication [knowledge about black American history, culture, etc.], the more likely the student was to be militant."[506] Even at a school that prided itself on its stance toward inclusion and ethics; even at a school seen as a conservative stronghold; even at a school presumed to have conservative students – a presumption maintained even by some of its own students – students questioned the status quo and the naturalized narrative offered to them by the University.

But questions of race were not the only political ideas on the minds of Notre Dame athletes during this time period. Always already assumed to be defenders of the status quo and representative of the "naturally" conservative college football, football players at Notre Dame were not outside of the college experience their classmates lived. Yes, they experienced college differently owing to their status as football players, but they too went to classes, studied, partied, and reacted to or joined in the growing counterculture around them. Too often, college athletes and football players specifically are written out of the narrative of political awareness on college campuses during this era. When they do appear, it is often as a foil to student protest. More often, they are seen as window dressing to history: while students protested, football players played

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[505] Ibid., 159.

[506] Bill Turner, "Rebellion, Revolution, & Rhetoric," 14.

their games. But football players were *also* students who were not just of the body, but also the mind. The next section of this chapter explores the political nature of football players and their coaches at Notre Dame and the perception of the politics of Notre Dame football on campus. It challenges the conservative mythology of college football, even at a perceived conservative university.

Counterculture Protests and Generalized Activism at Notre Dame

Students were intellectually well aware that college football had come to symbolize the myths of the status quo. Likewise, there was a cultural backlash against naturalized conservative myths within the student body at this conservative university that had not just developed on May 4, 1970 with the killing of four students by national guardsmen at Kent State University. Political actions and debates were reported in *The Observer* and *The Scholastic* (and even some stories made waves nationally), but that was not the image of Notre Dame seen by those outside of the University.[507] For much of the United States, Notre Dame was football, and football had become

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[507] For instance, moratoriums and strikes against the Vietnam War shut down the campus but utilized a much more religious tone – one strike turned into an outdoor communion service and call for peace. Students protested against recruiters from Dow Chemical and the CIA much like students throughout the Big Ten had, and a group of students were pepper sprayed and aggressively handled by police when they attempted to show a pornographic film on campus in conjunction with some students from St. Mary's. The scuffle between the police and the students in which the police pushed the students' faces into the snow was the first violent altercation between the police and the student population in the history of Notre Dame. As a result, Hesburgh instituted his nationally celebrated and simultaneously criticized "Fifteen Minute Rule." Students would have fifteen minutes after being told to disperse to leave the premises or face expulsion. When students boycotted a recruitment drive by Dow Chemical by occupying the halls of the building where the interviews were held, the rule was invoked and five students were summarily suspended and five others expelled. In response, activist students released a flyer. Their call to arms utilized a scathing indictment of the mythology of Notre Dame: religion, duty, and football. It read: "We want to make it perfectly clear that we are good Notre Dame men, who want our Notre Dame sheepskins. We are ready on command to employ the most esoteric of ideologies in order to keep our beer, chips, and sports – in order to destroy anyone who may

a symbol of conservatism, patriotism, and the status quo. Yet, at Notre Dame, football remained as a largely unassailable symbol despite football's attachment to pro-war sentiments and a student population's growing frustration with the Vietnam War.

In *Bowled Over*, Michael Oriard argues that football, and college football especially, had been intentionally attached to the beliefs of conservatism and was utilized as a patriotic symbol:

> Actual confrontations became symbolic dramas, as when UC Berkeley football players heckled the speakers at the rally in October 1964 that inaugurated the Free Speech Movement at Berkeley. Or when athletes at the University of Pennsylvania in 1965 chanted, 'Hit 'em again, harder, harder,' while their teammates scuffled with protestors. Or when forty 'burly "jocks,"' as *Time* magazine called them, blockaded Low Library on the Columbia University campus in April 1968 to starve out the student protesters occupying the building. […] Jocks were reactionaries. Football players were quintessential jocks. My country, right or wrong – sis boom bah![508]

Oriard presents convincing evidence of the perceived reactionary character of college football, pointing out Washington State's coach Jim Sweeney who described football as "a fortress that has held the wall against radical elements." Likewise, he mentions the University of Connecticut's President Homer Babbidge who saw college athletes as "the guys in the white hats - they keep their hair cut short, they're clean, they're orderly, aware of the importance of law and order and discipline."[509] Moreover, "the college football establishment, led by the NCAA, officially supported the Vietnam War and opposed student radicalism through the columns of executive director Walter Byers in the *NCAA News*."[510]

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interefere [sic] with our persuits [sic] of our pleasures in our sandbox. […] Our bishops, politicians, corporations, and coaches will again do their part. We must do ours – or else! On to Laos for love of God, Country, and Notre Dame!" Flyer, circa Spring, 1970, "Protests – Student Strike – Invasion of Cambodia, 1970/05," PNDP30-Pr-v5, UNDA.

[508] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 15.

[509] Ibid., 15-17.

[510] Ibid., 47.

Notre Dame's coaches also contributed to this sentiment, although in a far less dogmatic way than others. An assistant coach on the team, Tom Pagna, gives his interpretation of the 1960s: "The face of all college campuses, or at least the personality of schools and students, was changing. The world and its values were being rearranged, and the college people were the ones most responsible for it. […] The seething unrest, the tide of change, the uncontrollable upheaval of values, the realigning of priorities, the constant pursuit of the young to live placidly, to remove barriers and *hang-ups* involved our players, too."[511] He addresses the change in dress, appearance, and attitude of students at Notre Dame, and believed that football players, because of the restrictions placed on them by the coaching staff, were turned into outsiders from the student population and the feelings of the growing counterculture: "We strove to uphold all the values and, therefore, all the restrictions of past years. But while we only had the players for two hours a day, they were with their peers for the other 22. And our guidelines made them the 'odd,' 'established,' 'Uncle Tom,' 'jocks.' They were *out of it* by new student standards."[512] While Pagna strikes a contemplative and sympathetic tone, his words also reveal that he believes that the values of Notre Dame were changing, and not necessarily for the better. Likewise, he tellingly argues that restrictions create or at least encourage values more representative of the accepted status quo.

And the players he uses as examples of upstanding citizens during this era all happen to support the war, at least in his eyes. He compares war veteran Rocky Bleier to other athletes of the era favorably because "unlike other athletes," he did not pull any strings to get out of the

[511] Tom Pagna and Bob Best, *Notre Dame's Era of Ara*, 159.
[512] Ibid., 159.

war.[513] He fails to mention that Bleier was incredibly torn over whether to serve or not and sought out advice from multiple people who suggested that he attempt to pull some strings. Pagna holds up Bleier's sense of duty and obligation, whereas Bleier argues that he remained fairly detached from analyzing his true feelings about the war for a long time and instead fought because he did not want to let people down.[514] Pagna held up another Fighting Irish football player as a patriotic hero as well. He mentions the tale of All-American Larry DiNardo, who went on an NCAA-sponsored trip to Vietnam to raise the spirits of the troops and further cement the relationship between the military and college football. Pagna writes that DiNardo left for Vietnam "violently opposed to war, especially the current one" and returned after his trip a changed man after the "soldiers he spoke with over there convinced him the U.S. was serving a purpose in Vietnam, and Larry was open-minded enough to admit they had more right to make that judgment than he."[515] But, according to Oriard, a teammate of DiNardo, "Larry returned from Vietnam to declare the war 'a total waste' – in an interview in the football program for the Purdue game, no less – and promptly found himself receiving requests to speak at [anti-war] rallies."[516] Granted, DiNardo did consider himself conservative and did not want to be attached to the "New Left," but he made it quite known that he was opposed to the war after his return – both in Notre Dame's football program and in a *Sports Illustrated* interview, where he rhetorically questioned: "I mean, who's *not* against the war?"[517] Writing his book after the Vietnam conflict, Pagna still considered supporting the war as "open-minded" and worthy of

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[513] Ibid., 134.
[514]Rocky Bleier and Terry O'Neill, *Fighting Back*, 76.
[515]Tom Pagna and Bob Best, *Notre Dame's Era of Ara*, 181.
[516] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 47.
[517] Ibid., 47.

praise, well after coaches around the country came to realize that current student-athletes were not responding to the militaristic coaching of the past two decades with the same enthusiasm. It is also unclear whether Pagna deliberately distorted the stories and feelings of Bleier and DiNardo to find athletes he could relate to and hold up as bastions of the Notre Dame values yesteryear, or if he was just far more removed from the lives and thoughts of his players than he wanted to believe.

Oriard remembers that "in the midst of Notre Dame's student boycott of classes over the invasion of Cambodia, Ara refused the request of a handful of underclassmen to wear black armbands at the final scrimmage in sympathy with the protest. The next fall, in the words of *Sports Illustrated*'s Jerry Kirshenbaum, Ara gave 'a guarded go-ahead to several players who wanted to take part in a campus demonstration.'" Likewise, former player Bob Minnix recalls that during that same spring [1970], "about seven football players, white and black, actually went to Ara and asked if we could skip a day of practice. We wanted to participate in a moratorium march against Vietnam. Ara did not get into the politics of it. But he warned us not to miss practice."[518] The players demonstrated anyway and received a call from Parseghian the next day, who indicated his unhappiness and had them pick up trash at Notre Dame Stadium as a disciplinary action, a far less extreme punishment than coaches at more liberal schools meted out. Pagna backs up this representation of Parseghian as caring more about issues of authority than the political implications of the war:

> Insofar as it didn't affect the team, Ara let the players be individuals off the field. A group of them approached him to get permission to march in a 'Stop the War' demonstration. Most of the assistant coaches would have refused, but he told them, 'If you feel in the

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[518] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 159.

> depths of your heart it is meaningful for you to do that, I have no objection. Make sure it's a peaceful demonstration and don't allow yourself to be coerced into doing this.[519]

Parseghian does not remember the particular event discussed by Minnix, but he too reiterates his relatively lenient philosophy regarding student-athlete protest at Notre Dame. Class came first, then practice, and "if you want to demonstrate, that's your decision," if the first two requirements had been met. But Parseghian seems to have come to this relaxed philosophy after the spring of 1970, when many Americans grew disenchanted with the war and the government after the Kent State shootings.

Oriard reveals that Parseghian despised the hippies of Haight-Ashbury, calling them "scum" and criticizing their "shiftlessness," but, simultaneously, he privately opposed the war.[520] He even had the players file past him to inspect their hair length and facial hair during practices before loosening such restrictions for the 1971 season. In 1970, Will Grimsley of the Associated Press quoted Parseghian as believing that "wearing a beard or a mustache gives empathy or sympathy to a movement that is certainly the direct opposite of what we strive for in college football," defining college football as antithetical to more liberal ideas.[521] But while Pagna and his fellow coaches considered "Ara conservative by nature" and fully expected him to instill discipline in that manner, Parseghian attempted to change with the times and the feelings of his players. In fact, despite his opposition to hippies and the stereotypical image of football coaches as staunch defenders of the status quo, his friend, Dr. Nicholas Johns, felt that "the truth is, Ara was a liberal." Perhaps Parseghian's occupation and authoritative role led many to believe that he was far more conservative than he actually was. Or, more likely, Parseghian too faced the

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[519] Tom Pagna and Bob Best, *Notre Dame's Era of Ara*, 161.
[520] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 46; 50.
[521] Ibid., 17.

powerful symbolism of college football which always already hailed its coaches and players as defenders of the status quo. Unfortunately, when you are paid to win football games and are in a position of authority, there is a great deal of expectation that you will continue traditions from the past, whether they are relevant to the changing times or not. But Parseghian seems to have attempted to balance the two: "But geez, there were a lot of things happening from 1964 to 1974. We coached through the Vietnam years, the hippie years, the dissenting years. And I tried to move with the times. Nobody really respects a dictator."[522] In actuality, Parseghian could easily disagree with the counterculture's beliefs and style of dress while still opposing the war. One did not negate the other on the individual level.

Pagna also remembers these years as a challenging time for coaches who expected absolute devotion and submission from their players:

> For the first time in our careers the players responded to our criticism with, 'You screamed at me, Coach. I don't think that's right. I'm a person and I have feelings." Our staff meetings were filled with more sociology than football strategy that year [1969]. […] All of our biases came to light during these sessions, and for most of us the generation gap was a reality. We had to decide how to cope with this new dilemma.[523]

He further believes that with "all the distractions and liberalism the late sixties dangled in front of our players, football wasn't as important for many of them anymore. Their desire was fading, and it didn't stop with three or four of them." Pagna and many other college coaches of this era saw conservatism as what was natural. It was the status quo, and its normalcy and rightness was unquestioned. He lumps in liberalism itself with other distractions. Being politically conservative was not a distraction in his mind as it was not viewed as inherently political, just self-evidently reasonable. But to become politically active, that is to question the status quo, was synonymous

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[522] Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 159.

[523] Tom Pagna and Bob Best, *Notre Dame's Era of Ara*, 159.

with losing a desire for the game. Because questioning coaches or the way coaches had talked to and treated players for years showed not a contemplative mind, something encouraged by the University, but a distracted and dangerous one. Pagna's interpretation gets to the heart of the generation gap. Again, the "structure of feeling" for many youths in the country was changing in ways that seemed totally unexpected and inexplicable to coaches and those who had come to know college football as America incarnate. Much as Raymond Williams explained, many of these players, successfully raised by parents who had lived through WWII and taught by coaches influenced by military coaching approaches, questioned the status quo of physically and mentally abusive coaching strategies, non-integrated coaching staffs, and the assumption that "jocks" always sided with the Establishment.[524] This "structure of feeling" was not unique to football players, as youths around the country created their own culture(s) distinct from the culture of their parents' generation.

For Pagna, an Air Force veteran who reached the rank of Captain, and others of his generation, war had been a part of his life as had the chain of command and the expectation of a respect for authority that came with it. But players from this newer generation did not have the same life experiences and questioned the need for the militarism in coaching and football. And, especially at other universities, black players had entirely different experiences outside of those lived by their white teammates and coaches, further widening the gap between coaches and players. Likewise, the conflict in Vietnam was not viewed in the same light as World War II had been. For nearly a decade, debate had raged over the rightness of the appropriateness of the United States' role. There had been no Pearl Harbor moment uniting the country nor was there any threat of the conflict coming to the United States. Moreover, the criticism of college students

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[524] Raymond Williams, "The Analysis of Culture," 37.

by politicians and the killing of United States citizens by United States soldiers gradually shocked and hardened even more students against the war. Michael Oriard shares that he had not been some kind of radical student during his years at Notre Dame: "I grew up thinking my country had never done a bad thing."[525] For Oriard and students like him, "Kent State was a kind of an awakening for me. Not that I suddenly became radicalized. My experience, I think, was more typical of most students from that generation. […] Gradually, thoughtfully, we started taking a harder look at our country." The student strike at Notre Dame and those held throughout the country back up Oriard's contention. What had been a vocal but smaller activism on campus grew to become an influential opinion at Notre Dame. In Oriard's words, "After the Kent State massacre, my guess is that mainstream America did the same thing. Kent State was a galvanizing moment – the most explosive moment – because mainstream America began to realize: Something has gone horribly awry. American soldiers are killing American students."[526]

Football arguably existed and exists as a symbolic representation of patriotic America, conservative values, and a defender of the status quo, but being a player or coach did not necessarily mean that one actively supported the naturalized mythology. Parseghian makes a case for divorcing the political from football in his own mind. But, leaving the symbolism unquestioned serves to further reinforce the naturalness of the symbol. Choosing not to point out or challenge the political nature of the status quo must be considered a political act. Indeed, without challenging the assumption that college football reinforces the status quo, the game is allowed to be viewed as somehow apolitical, and the challenge becomes viewed as a political attack on a seemingly apolitical and normal part of life. Considering the great deal of pressure

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525 Steve Delsohn, *Talking Irish*, 158.
526 Ibid., 158.

placed on college athletes and their playing time and futures often being contingent on staying in the good graces of their coaches, it is largely unfair to expect them to endanger their position on the team, their respect amongst their peers, their role as a student, and their futures. Similarly, the power of myths and naturalized ideas *comes* from the ability of myths to seem natural, and questioning them would seem abnormal or ridiculous. Having grown up within a society that preached the values of football and their connection to hard work, sacrifice, duty, and loyalty, it is incredibly easy to see why football went and goes unquestioned. But the political nature of football often did not just go unquestioned by the coaches and players on the team. Politically active students at Notre Dame still went to football games and supported the team. In *Bowled Over*, Oriard writes:

> Obviously, not everyone at Notre Dame felt sheltered, but football and the antiwar movement coexisted comfortably. The *Observer*, our campus newspaper, would report a local demonstration on the front page, print an antiwar editorial on page 2, and celebrate our victory over Iowa or Navy on page 8. I knew no one who supported the war, although there must have been some who did, perhaps among my teammates. I also knew no one who boycotted our games on Saturdays because they were fascist or imperialistic.[527]

An *Observer* article from May 1970 questioned this seeming paradox of wanting to move Notre Dame forward in regards to social justice and student agency but never questioning the place of football within an academic institution: "Almost every conceivable facet of Notre Dame's tradition and methods of education has been reviewed and placed in the framework of the 'new university' – with one large exception. The exception is the athletic department."[528] While Father Hesburgh attempted to reign in football in prior decades, some current campus activists saw it as symbolic of the reactionary nature of the University and feared and were awed by the power it held as a symbol:

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[527] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 41.

[528] Frank Vatterott, ""ND athletics - are they a paradox?," *The Observer*, May 20, 1970, 8.

> Notre Dame students, whether they are labeled leftists, priority pushers, pursuers of relevance, anarchists, or self-styled muckrakers, have all stayed away from a confrontation. The athletic department has remained in its respected place despite the fact that many activists despise its glorious position, which, they say, contributes heavily to the unsatisfactory conditions at Notre Dame. The Students feel that the department has been complacent too long and no longer is in tune with the progress of the university. No one, however, has done anything about it.[529]

Former student body president, Phil McKenna, believed that football was too controversial to go after, and "We didn't want to alienate ourselves from a lot of people by taking off on the athletic department." Similarly, a controversy arose when Notre Dame accepted a bid to play in the 1970 Cotton Bowl (and the 1971 Cotton Bowl), which many critics saw as a cash grab for a school that had not accepted a bowl invitation in decades. But, Notre Dame's decision to give a portion of the bowl money to scholarships for incoming minority students only further increased the dilemma for proponents calling for a change. Rick Libowitz likely represented the feelings of many activists on campus who felt that the athletic department was not "atrocious" like at places like "Alabama," but it still could be improved: "The great majority of athletes here are intelligent people. And great guys. Let [Athletic Director] Moose Krause sit in his twin-domed pleasure palace. It is the athletes who are important, and they for the most part are responsible people."

The fact that Notre Dame was one of only three schools in 1970 to turn a profit through athletics led many of the informants to cynically surmise that football would remain "untouchable" because it brought money and prestige to the University. NSA Coordinator Steve Novak showed concern about something he labeled "football syndrome" at Notre Dame: "Football is a symbol of what's wrong with this place. But the answer is not to get rid of the sport but to change the symbol. Trouble is, if you attack the symbol, you attack the sport, which of

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[529] Ibid., 8.

course isn't evil."[530] Novak expressed the frustration that comes with pointing out that the "obvious" should not be considered so obvious. And, for the most part, left-leaning students at Notre Dame did not consider sports inherently evil or student-athletes as part of the problem, but rather the symbol itself and the privileged status of football had become the problem. Ed Roickle agonized that "As far as student mentality goes, the worst problem around here is that damn stadium. The activists I know and myself came here as fans and gradually lost interest. Football became trivial." To Roickle, football and "that damn stadium" masked the real problems at the University. Yes, Notre Dame football was fun and exciting, but it distracted students and the community from larger issues: racial inequality, the Vietnam War, and intuitional problems. The activists interviewed by Frank Vatterott did not hate football or see it as inherently reactionary, but they did recognize that it had come to be viewed as such and became a distraction from real problems at the University. The informants agreed that change would have to come from within the student body, but football was so beloved and unquestioned that change seemed highly improbable.[531] Even more problematic for proponents of change was the fact that Notre Dame appeared to run a relatively clean program. When *The Voice*, a student periodical, proposed a scathing critique of the athletic department and the practice of preferential treatment for athletes a few years earlier, the idea had to be scrapped when no stats could be found to back up that assertion and no faculty would support their contention. However, most activists interviewed did hold a good deal of contempt for the conservative leanings of Moose Krause. One respondent remembered a broadcast against Kentucky where Krause commended himself on helping to keep

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[530] Ibid., 8.

[531] And, until Lou Holtz became the coach, Notre Dame was considered to run a "clean" program. See Don Yaeger, *Under the Tarnished Dome: How Notre Dame Betrayed Ideals for Football Glory* (New York: Touchstone, 1994).

down campus radicalism through the victories of Notre Dame's sports teams, a hypothesis that rests somewhere between Marx's opiate for the masses and the catharsis theory of physical activity releasing pent-up aggression. He had also confided to a reporter that he feared that "Commies" would infiltrate America's athletic departments, 'just as they've gotten into education and religion."[532] Again, it is assumed that sports, by their very nature, are still safe from leftist viewpoints, whereas the other facets of the University are under attack. Sports were assumed to stand alone as a bulwark against radicalism.

Yet, even the activists in Vatterott's article considered Krause to be a fair athletic director who was good at his job. Krause even implemented an effective outreach program in an attempt to lessen racial tensions between the University and the minority neighborhoods of South Bend. Called "Reach Up," the program ran for two years in the late 1960s as the Notre Dame basketball team played pick-up games in city parks throughout South Bend as upwards of 3000 citizens came out to watch some of the games.[533] But, Krause's conservative viewpoint and his anti-activist beliefs annoyed many of the left-leaning advocates on campus. It likely did not help that the Assistant Athletic Director, Jack Stephens, was a decorated WWII veteran (both Krause and Parseghian were also veterans of WWII, although, this was not an uncommon occurrence) and retired colonel, deepening the ties between Notre Dame sports and military rhetoric.[534] Likewise, Krause's statements implying that leftist students cared little for sports did not sit well for some of the informants either. One junior, who happened to have long hair, argued that "Hell,

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[532] Frank Vatterott, ""ND athletics - are they a paradox?," 8.
[533] Jason Kelly, *Mr. Notre Dame: The Life and Legend of Edward 'Moose' Krause* (Diamond Communications: Lanham, 2002), 130.
[534] Ibid., 145.

I play basketball at the Convo all the time, but that doesn't mean I believe in [the expansion of the war into] Cambodia."[535]

And this was the point made by Oriard and his fellow players: "As a student at Notre Dame from 1966 to 1970, I was not alone in playing football while opposing the war, wearing my hair short for football without intending a political statement – and even doing these things without feeling hypocritical."[536] Just as Parseghian disagreed with the ideals and appearances of the counterculture but still opposed the war, college football players opposed the war, grew out their hair, demonstrated for change, and embraced the youth culture movement while still playing football: "Whatever short hair and football meant to Ara Parseghian and Hank Stram [coach of the Kansas City Chiefs], or to any number of their coaching colleagues, we players were individual citizens, not a political team."[537] This too is a problem inherent with symbols, which stand in as signifiers for countless signs often without regard to actuality: playing football for Notre Dame means "God, Country, Notre Dame"; playing football means being clean-cut and reactionary. While football was changing, those signs remained, to the detriment of the individual. The symbol of college football always already defined football players as symbolic defenders of the status quo, regardless of their own beliefs and actions and even in the face of evidence to the contrary.

However, rather than painting this as a picture of an unwinnable battle versus predetermined ideology, perhaps it should be viewed more along the lines of E.P. Thompson's contention that there *is* agency for those outside of the positions of power. Thompson argued that

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[535] Frank Vatterott, ""ND athletics - are they a paradox?," 8.
[536] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 17.
[537] Ibid., 20.

"class is defined by men as they live their own history, and, in the end, this is its only definition."[538] Therefore, he sees class (and in his example, the British working class) as a series of relationships that develop historically in specific and unique circumstances where people "feel and articulate" their identities through common experiences and interests, and against those of other people who hold different experiences from and interests often opposed to their own.[539] Rather than the pessimistic outlook presented previously where a refusal to challenge the status quo or a disinterest in the political position of football at the University could be viewed as an unintentional reinforcement of the status quo, we should instead also look for those instances presented throughout this chapter and this dissertation where student-athletes and students chose to *break* with naturalized ideas on their own terms and in their own ways. To speak out against the naturalized beliefs of the majority is a brave act whether it brings change or not because it is unexpected and revolutionary. To do otherwise gives too much power to naturalized ideas. Just because larger numbers of students at Notre Dame did *not* advocate for change as loudly, as numerously, or even as violently as students at other universities throughout the Midwest does not mean that their attempts to "feel and articulate" their displeasure with the status quo, as Thompsons reminds us, should be overlooked or even downplayed. Yes, the larger events happening at Notre Dame were tied to cultural and societal changes throughout the country as part of a larger movement and structure of feeling. But they also were the lived experiences of *individuals* at Notre Dame, not just groups of people powerless to affect change.

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[538] E.P. Thompson, "Preface," 42.
[539] Ibid., 43.

Chapter 3

"Firm and Strong, United are We": Battling Inequality and the Overtones of Racial Rhetoric at the University of Minnesota

Introduction

The student-athlete activism at the University of Minnesota centered on a growing feeling by black athletes of tacit and likely unrealized discrimination on the part of a coaching staff and administration known throughout the country for a history of willingness to recruit and start African Americans on Golden Gopher teams. Not only that, throughout the 1950s and early 1960s, black football players from the South specifically had chosen Minnesota because they often heard from previous black alumni that the University would give them a fair shot at playing time and a solid education. This chapter examines the local campus context and the greater societal context that motivated African American athletes to speak out against this felt discrimination and the racial overtones prevalent in the discourse surrounding black concerns and activism. To further explore this context, this chapter also examines the occupation of Morrill Hall by black protestors demanding educational and financial reform at the University and the responses of that event in the local media and within the local discourse as a pivotal event in the formation of the "structure of feeling" of a felt discrimination amongst the dissenting black student-athletes. Furthermore, the racial overtones and the discourse surrounding the occupation created a charged atmosphere that – a few years later – turned a fight on a basketball court, deemed unmotivated by race by those involved, into a discussion of racism and discrimination owing to the heated rhetoric used following the fight and suspensions of two of

the athletes involved. The racial discourse in the aftermath of the fight exposed the frustrations of the black community of Minneapolis and the undercurrent of race in our society's rhetoric and shared history. It also forced the University of Minnesota to reexamine the truth of its ideological commitment to fighting equality and revealed the hypocritical stance of the Big Ten's purported commitment to integration and ethical integrity with the actuality of the Conference's actions.

A Return to Gridiron Glory for the Golden Gophers

Murray Warmath, the coach of the Gophers' football team, was born in Tennessee and played for Robert Neyland at the University of Tennessee. Bill Britton, who served as head coach after Neyland was reassigned by the army to the Panama Canal Zone, hired Warmath as an assistant coach for the Volunteers after Warmath's playing days came to a close. Warmath later coached the lines for a time at Mississippi State, before serving in World War II. Mississippi State was forced to temporarily drop their football program during the war after they had lost most of their players to the draft and enlistment, so the jobless Warmath signed up to serve as well.[540] After the war, he returned to Tennessee before taking a position at West Point under Earl "Red" Blaik as Blaik's defensive coordinator. With Warmath's help, Army went 17-1-0 during his first two seasons as the defense gave up an average of six points per game and pitched seven shutouts. In that second season in 1950, the undefeated and heavily favored Black Knights squared off against a 2-6 Midshipmen squad but fell to their rivals 14-2, ending what could have been their second consecutive undefeated season.[541] The following semester, ninety cadets were found to be in violation of the Academy Honor Code owing to a cheating scandal surrounding

[540] Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior: Murray Warmath's 65 Years in American Football* (Edina, MN: Burgess International Group, Inc., 1992), 34.
[541] Ibid., 46.

the passing of knowledge about upcoming tests and quizzes and complicit silence by other cadets who knew about the cheating.[542] Those found in violation of the Code included thirty-seven letter-winning members of the Army football team. In response to the scandal, West Point dismissed the players (including Blaik's son, Bob Blaik). After originally resigning and appointing Warmath as interim coach, Blaik was convinced to return by Warmath and the other coaches (and General Douglas MacArthur), but Blaik's previously dominant team was decimated by the dismissals and fell to 2-7 in 1951 in what would be Blaik's only losing season at Army. Following the dismissals, Warmath helped a number of the disgraced players find spots at other schools and left Army at the end of the season to become the head coach at Mississippi State.[543]

According to former Mississippi State sports information director Bob Hartley, Murray "had a reputation throughout the American collegiate football scene as one of the country's best assistants," and Bulldog fans were eager to see what he could do.[544] After a 5-4 first season in 1952 and a 4-0 start to the second, the Bulldogs finished with a 5-2-3 record in 1953.[545] At the end of the season, he left Starkville, MS to coach the Gophers in Minneapolis. He had first applied for the position in 1951, but was less than thrilled about the cold weather and the University's apparent lackluster commitment to big-time football (unlike in the South and many other parts of the country, Minnesota only gave out a handful of full-ride athletic scholarships,

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[542] Ibid., 47.
[543] David Maraniss, *When Pride Still Mattered: A Life of Vince Lombardi* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 131.
[544] Qtd. in Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior*, 54.
[545] Ibid., 65.

depending instead upon a complicated need-based system).[546] Minnesota alumni and fans longed for a return of pre-WWII Gopher football, when teams delivered six Big Ten titles and five National Championships. In 1954, Minnesota had come calling again. Dr. James Morrill, Minnesota's president, was honest about his feelings with Warmath. Morrill told Warmath that "he felt all intercollegiate sports should be relegated to the intramural level, but he wasn't going to push his personal views on [Warmath], the athletic department, or the school."[547] In his first two seasons with the Gophers, Warmath led them to a 13-3-2 record, but three losing seasons quickly followed in which the team finished in 8th, 9th, and 10th place in the Big Ten, respectively.

Warmath irked some older Minnesota fans who agreed with former coach Bernie Bierman's assessment that championships could be won with local Minnesota players. Part of Warmath's recruiting strategy was to bring in players from outside of the Midwest. In 1958 alone, Minnesota signed Sandy Stephens, Judge Dickson, John Mulvena, Bob Frisbee, and Tom Hall from outside of the Upper Midwest. Furthermore, Warmath recognized the advantage gained by actively recruiting and playing more African American players.[548] Future Hall of Famer and Heisman candidate Bobby Bell of North Carolina came to Minnesota on the recommendation of Maryland coach Jim Tatum, who contacted Warmath about the star athlete. Tatum knew that Bell would not be allowed to play for Maryland in the segregated Atlantic Coast Conference, but he knew that Bell would be a star.[549] Bell joined other black players from

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[546] Ibid., 67.
[547] Qtd. in Ibid., 70.
[548] Ibid., 111.
[549] Ibid., 122.

outside of the Midwest on the Minneapolis campus. As later All-American quarterback Sandy Stephens recalled: "It's tough enough for any kid to go away to school, but if you are black and going to a place like Minnesota with a very small minority population, it's doubly intimidating."[550] Carl Rowen, a local black columnist, aided in the recruitment of black athletes, vouching for the University and the character of Warmath. Judge Dickson recalls that he told Warmath that he had some doubts, as "[Dickson] was black and [Warmath] was a white Southerner. This was 1958, remember, and the South was still steeped in Jim Crow."[551] But Warmath assured him that Dickson's race did not matter to him, and Sandy Stephens emphasized that he respected the coach's honesty and willingness to give Stephens a shot at quarterback, a role still traditionally considered the domain of white players as many whites doubted the ability of black players to intellectually grasp the intricacies of the position. But the talent and leadership evident in this incoming class would not be seen for a few seasons, and the Gophers struggled on the field. At the end of 1958, Warmath declared that he "plan[ned] to coach at Minnesota the rest of [his] career," perhaps attempting to get ahead of criticisms that would only increase.[552]

But, while the team showed signs of improvement on the field in 1959, their record did not show it as they fell to last place in the Big Ten. At the end of November, a group of over thirty-five local business men offered to raise $40,000 to pay Warmath to step down as head coach in hopes of bringing in someone who would lead the team back to its storied days.[553]

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[550] Qtd. in Ibid., 111.
[551] Qtd. in Ibid., 112.
[552] Qtd. in Ibid., 121.
[553] Ibid., 134.

Warmath insisted to the press that the team was better than their record and would be a contender the following season, but fans responded by dumping garbage in the front lawn of his Edina home and burning him in effigy around town.[554] One particular student critic, David Butwin, inspired Judge Dickson and other Gophers to tape his disparaging newspaper comments to a punching bag as inspiration.[555] The situation grew so heated that a few players thought that Warmath had been fired and were surprised to see him walk into the field house for practice.[556] However, some fans did call out the hypocrisy of the boosters' stance. Minnesota Representative Walter K. Klaus, a Republican farmer from Empire City, wrote to President Morrill, describing his annoyance with the demonstrations against Warmath and the hypocrisy such actions exposed:

> […] despite all our lovely words through the years that the purpose of an intercollegiate athletic program is to develop character in the participant, and that as long as we play our best 'it matters not the score but how we play the game', we would be conceding that these are only fine words, perhaps consoling for purposes of rationalization, but the fundamental, coldblooded purpose of any school's athletic program is to go out and beat the other fellow at whatever cost, even to the point of the offering and the acceptance of outright bribes to and by head coaches.[557]

Klaus echoed the long-held feelings of many University of Minnesota faculty and even President Morrill. Despite the Big Ten's claims of emphasizing academics and football's role in complimenting academics, the pursuit of big-time football and basketball and the resulting need to out-recruit other colleges and win at all costs appeared to work in opposition to those stated

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[554] Ibid., 135.

[555] David Butwin, "First Person: Human Tackling Dummy," *Minnesota Magazine*, Fall 2011, http://www.minnesotaalumni.org/s/1118/content.aspx?sid=1118&gid=1&pgid=3221&cid=5266&ecid=5266&crid=0&calpgid=3146&calcid=5178.

[556] Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior*, 138.

[557] Walter K. Klaus to James Morrill, January 15, 1959, Box 97, "Football 1955-1962: 1959," Office of the President Records – Athletics and Physical Education, uarc 841, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

goals. Klaus also looked unfavorably upon recruiting players from outside of Minnesota, viewing them as hired "Hessian" troops.

At the beginning of spring practice in 1960, Warmath called Bell into his office. Bell had been a quarterback in high school and had practice as a tailback on the freshman team, but Warmath informed him that he would know be a tackle to shore up the line. As Warmath explained the need for Bell to switch positions, the coach casually pulled out a rolled-up tube sock from his desk drawer, stuffed with a pearl-handled revolver inside of it. As he explained the situation to Bell, he casually twirled the revolver around his finger. Bell remembers: "I couldn't imagine being a tackle, but in no way was I going to argue."[558] Minnesota tore through the 1960 season, starting out 7-0 while outscoring their opponents 181-41 and moving up to #1 in the Associated Press Poll after defeating #1 ranked Iowa in early November. However, they lost to Purdue the next week and defeated Wisconsin to finish the regular season 8-1. They were named the National Champions but lost to the #6 ranked Washington Huskies in the Rose Bowl.

The following year, the Gophers sported an 8-2 regular season record with losses to Missouri and Wisconsin to bookend the season. However, they did shutout the top-ranked Michigan State Spartans 13-0. Especially of note was Sandy Stephens' time at quarterback. As a black man, his chances of playing quarterback at the college level were especially slim. Besides the historically black colleges, the Big Ten provided some of the only opportunities for playing time under center. In the 1962 Rose Bowl, Stephens completed 7 of 11 passes for 75 yards while rushing for 45 yards and scoring two total touchdowns.[559] Stephens became the first person of

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[558] Qtd. In Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior*, 140.

[559] Coincidentally, this was also the first college football game to be nationally broadcast in color. John Rosengren, "Scorecard," *Sports Illustrated*, June 19, 2000,

color to be named the Rose Bowl's MVP and was later inducted into the Rose Bowl Hall of Fame in 1997.[560] Eleven years after his death in 2000, Stephens was inducted into the College Football Hall of Fame in 2011. While a well-deseerved honor, his former teammate Judge Dickson saw the recognition as twenty to thirty years overdue: "Maybe people weren't quite ready then. Maybe they still had stereotypes when it came to black quarterbacks."[561] This implicit racism and discrimination motivated Stephens throughout his career and stuck with him. As Dickson recalls, when Stephens was not named to the first-team All-County squad for Fayette County, PA in high school, Stephens vowed that he would not be buried in the county.[562] Similarly, Stephens had been denied access to the YMCA's pool in Hershey, PA when he had been a member of the Big 33 All-Star squad during high school. When he returned to Hershey while on a tour promoting the All-American team in college, he made a point to swim in "that damn pool."[563] Western Pennsylvanians Stephens, Dickson, and Bill Munsey, Stephens' best friend from Uniontown, PA, formed three-fourths of the backfield for Minnesota in 1960.[564] Stephens came to Minnesota specifically for the chance to play quarterback: “I went to Minnesota because I thought I would get a chance to play quarterback and I wanted to play in the Big Ten. I wanted to go where I thought it was the toughest and roughest league because of the

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http://www.si.com/vault/2000/06/19/283258/scorecard-gopher-pioneer--seinfeld-on-sports--beach-ball--casting-call.

[560] "All-American Sandy Stephens Dies at Age 59," *Gopher Sports: Football*, June 2000, http://www.gophersports.com/sports/m-footbl/spec-rel/060700aaa.html.

[561] Patrick Ruesse, "U's Sandy Stephens was ahead of his time," *Star-Tribune*, Dec. 6, 2011, http://www.startribune.com/sports/gophers/135070673.html.

[562] When Stephens died in 2000, he was buried in nearby Allegheny County. William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile*, 171-172.

[563] Ibid., 76.

[564] Dave Mulholland of Fargo, ND also played halfback.

fact that they felt like I couldn't play quarterback and I wanted to go where the toughest league was to disprove them."[565] He had been recruited by Ohio State's Woody Hayes, but Hayes insinuated that Stephens would be moved to another position.[566]

Around Stephens' time at Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa also started black quarterbacks (Sidney Williams and Wilburn Hollis, respectively), but Stephens had the most success.[567] Serendipity had brought Stephens and Dickson to Minneapolis, as the mayor of nearby McKeesport, PA had served in the navy with Gopher hockey coach John Mariucci and informed him to tell Warmath to start recruiting both players.[568] After his college career, Stephens was drafted by both the NFL and the AFL, but neither league would sign him as a quarterback, so he played in the Canadian Football League. After a serious car crash in 1964, Stephens rehabbed and signed with the Kansas City Chiefs as a running back in hopes of getting a chance at quarterback, but the chance never came. Stephens played in the league until retiring in 1968. In an unpublished book about his life, Stephens wrote: "My experiences leave me feeling like the Moses of Black quarterbacks – able to see the Promised Land, but unable to enter it."[569] Like Dickson, Bobby Bell recalls that Stephens saw his position as quarterback as a mission for blacks everywhere: "Sandy knew he was playing for black players down south, who didn't have a chance to play football."[570] But, he was an inspiration for black football players all over. Jimmy

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[565] John Rosengren, "Scorecard."
[566] William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile*, 75.
[567] John Rosengren, "Scorecard."
[568] David Butwin, "First Person: Human Tackling Dummy."
[569] Qtd. in John Rosengren, "Scorecard."
[570] Phil Miller, "Gophers great Stephens makes college football's hall of fame," *Star-Tribune*. May 18, 2011, http://www.startribune.com/sports/gophers/122108904.html.

Raye, Michigan State's National Championship winning quarterback, counted Stephens as his role model: "I sing [Stephens'] praises whenever I can, because without Sandy Stephens, there would have been no me. He gave me hope—the will to go forward." Similarly, Tony Dungy (Minnesota's quarterback during the early 1970s) counted Stephens as evidence of Minnesota's and the Big Ten's willingness to start black quarterbacks.[571] However, Stephens did not *just* want to be known as a good black quarterback; he wanted to be a great Big Ten quarterback.[572]

Stephens led his team to two Rose Bowls, finished fourth in the Heisman Trophy voting in 1961, and became the first black man to be named an All-American at the quarterback position for a major college team.[573] Sandy Stephens earned the Chicago Tribune Silver Football after being voted the Big Ten's Most Valuable Player. In the Michigan game, trailing the Wolverines 20-8 in the fourth quarter, Stephens led the Gophers back behind a rushing touchdown, a passing touchdown, and a goal line interception on defense.[574] Stephens had married his wife just two days earlier.[575] His interception to seal the game was a one-handed snag as he was falling backwards near the endzone. During the season, he was third in the conference in passing yards, second in rushing yards, second in passing touchdowns, second in

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[571] William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile*, 64-65.
[572] Ibid., 74.
[573] Wilburn Hollis, the losing quarterback in the Minnesota – Iowa game that year, was named a second-team All-American, becoming the second African American All-American at quarterback for a major college team.
[574] Patrick Ruesse, "U's Sandy Stephens was ahead of his time."
[575] Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior*, 174.

rushing touchdowns, first in total touchdowns, second in total yards, second in pass attempts, and also led the conference in total plays.[576]

The following season, Minnesota had a chance to win the Big Ten going into the final game against Wisconsin, but came up short in the fourth quarter. Warmath and his players blamed the officials for a series of controversial calls, and one player actually hit a referee with his helmet while leaving the field. Sports journalist Sid Hartman informed the player, Julian Hook, that he would tell everyone that it was a fan who hit the official, helping Hook avoid any kind of penalty.[577] Bobby Bell, the player called for one of the controversial calls – a roughing the passer penalty – remembered that President Kennedy even mentioned to him how bad the call was at that year's Army – Navy game.[578] Athletic Director Ike Armstrong and Big Ten Commissioner Bill Reed had to come down to the field and escort an enraged Warmath to the locker room. After the game, Warmath barged his way into the officials' locker room. Warmath recalled that he "grabbed the official who had opened the door by the throat and pushed him up against the wall." He went around to each official and berated them. The altercation after the game remained untold until a biography written about the coach was published in 1992.[579] The following few seasons were a series of mediocre ones, save for a shared conference championship in 1967 that saw perennial doormat Indiana go to the Rose Bowl. And, despite an 8-2 finish, attendance had dropped to an average of just 48,000 for home games, far short of the

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[576] "Sandy Stephens," *Sports Reference*, accessed July 8, 2014, http://www.sports-reference.com/cfb/players/sandy-stephens-1.html.
[577] Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior*, 212.
[578] Ibid., 215.
[579] Ibid., 214.

60,000 plus crowds earlier in the decade.[580] But Warmath's reputation as a great strategist and a racially progressive coach were well-established, and, at the end of the season, Warmath was elected the president of the American Football Coaches Association for the 1968 year by his fellow coaches.

Unfulfilled Promises, an Occupation, and Backlash Outside of the Stadium

The end of the 1960s was a time of protest around the United States and especially on college campuses. The University of Minnesota was no different in this regard. Students took to the streets, the quads, and campus buildings to protest, strike, and occupy. However, to understand the atmosphere that motivated black football players to speak up about felt inequality in a program celebrated for its history of playing black athletes, a deeper analysis of local context is needed as well.

Minneapolis grew to prominence as a mill city in the late 1800s. The Minneapolis-St. Paul area, located on the Mississippi River, grew to prominence as an industrial center, and the growth of the city brought with it waves of immigrants and workers looking for jobs. In the late 19th century, an influx of Jewish residents coincided with a rise in anti-Semitism in the city and housing restrictions against Jewish families as Minneapolis came to be known as one of the most discriminatory cities in America toward Jewish people. During Prohibition, a Jewish mafia grew in influence in the northern part of the city and the Irish-American-run police department grew corrupt as they often took bribes to look the other way in illegal dealings. Herbert Humphrey was elected mayor of the city in 1945 with the support of the city's growing African American population. Humphrey helped to establish a civil rights commission for the city and pushed

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[580] Ibid,. 277.

through a fair housing and fair employment laws that helped integrate the city's workforce, a strategy soon emulated by other Northern cities. But racial tensions still existed in the area.

In a survey by the newly formed Committee on Human Rights in the late 1940s, the Committee found that white citizens of Minneapolis had strong, negative opinions about their Jewish and black neighbors: "Forty-three percent of whites objected to Jews living in their neighborhood and eighty-five percent objected to blacks." Despite (or because of) the housing and employments laws, the city soon saw an increase in white and Jewish flight as northern Minneapolis became an increasingly African American neighborhood drained of its previous wealth, creating an immediate socioeconomic problem. B. Joseph Rosh notes that "when it came to social issues in Minneapolis, both politicians and citizens perceived themselves to be fair-minded and enlightened when compared to the vast majority of the United States." But they did not think about or care about the inequality faced by the black population whose children were excluded from summer programs, who were restricted to certain parts of the town through systemic red lining, and who were ignored because of their limited population and political sway.[581]

Black youths grew increasingly frustrated by the lack of jobs open to them and the felt discrimination they faced, issues that they felt went ignored by the white population and politicians. In 1966, around fifty black youths vandalized a handful of businesses on Plymouth Avenue and stole televisions and merchandise from local businesses, asserting power in the only way they felt would make a difference: affecting the wallets of the white population.[582] The

[581] B. Joseph Rosh, "Black Empowerment in 1960s Minneapolis: Promise, Politics and the Impact of the National Urban Narrative" (master's thesis, St. Cloud State University, 2013), 28.
[582] Ibid., 31.

actions created a conservative backlash as young African Americans expressed their frustrations with being told that they were not "qualified" for jobs beyond dishwashing. Middle-class blacks attempted to bring change through the slow process of politics, but poorer residents of the neighborhood demanded swifter, immediate change, taking it upon themselves to have voter registration drives, snow and garbage removal services, and mentoring and educational programs centering on black heritage. But Jewish business owners felt that little had been done to rectify the damage to their stores and began leaving for the suburbs. Similarly, the black community grew angry over perceived racist interactions between the police and the local population.[583]

In a city largely considered liberal, and with a relatively small black population who had a history of working together with white allies, black residents took to the streets on Plymouth Avenue in the summer of 1967 and burned a number of local businesses. Around ten people were sent to the hospital and thirteen black men were arrested. Rosh argues that this violent activism also stemmed from a growing divide between the newly formed middle-class black community and the working-class black community and the class divide between Jewish business owners and working-class blacks.[584] It should be noted that the riots involved blacks attacking white property, not persons, further illuminating that this was about systemic inequalities regarding socioeconomics, not just racial discrimination (although that was a part of it). Likewise, the local black newspaper condemned the violence, illustrating the divide between middle-class and working-class and the civil rights advocates versus the advocates of the new

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[583] One pregnant woman was treated "roughly," resulting in a miscarriage. Police stood idly by as four black commuters were attacked by a group of whites when the African Americans had attempted to board a southbound bus. And, lastly, 13 black youths were arrested for their part in a "riot" that included no widespread property damage or injuries. Ibid., 46.

[584] Ibid., 5.

Black Pride.[585] Local and national media, especially the local newspapers of Minneapolis and their increasingly reactionary bent, blamed the violence on newcomers to the city and ill-informed notions about Black Pride, resulting in a liberal city temporarily adopting a reactionary political stance preoccupied with the rhetoric of "law and order."[586] This reactionary conservatism on the part of the overwhelmingly white, Minneapolis community, the feeling of exclusion and being ignored by the black community, and the mistrust of the police felt by the black community only heightened the situation on the University of Minnesota's campus.

On January 14, 1969, a group of students from the Afro-American Action Committee met with a number of University officials in the administration building, handing them a list of three demands to be answered by 1:00 PM the following day.[587] Throughout the meeting, around seventy members of the AAAC had stayed in Morrill Hall, escorted a number of staff out of the building, and barred the doors to anyone attempting to enter. During the night a group of white students (mostly from Students for a Democratic Society) joined the AAAC in their occupation of the building and taught many of the assembled protestors how to guard against teargas and police action, as the SDS assumed that the University would attempt to remove them forcibly from the building.[588] At this time students started to move desks and tables in front of doorways as barricades and removed various files from cabinets in the Records Office. The meeting the following morning eventually took place at 10:00 AM, allowing time for community members to

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[585] Ibid., 58.
[586] Ibid., 7.
[587] Included at the meeting were Vice President Paul Cashman, James Reeves, Gene Briggs, and Fred Lukermann.
[588] Keith Kellogg, "70 black students close Morrill Hall," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 1, 1969, 1.

observe the proceedings. By a little after noon, the AAAC and the University had come to an agreement acceptable to both sides, and the groups dispersed.[589]

A crowd of white students gathered around Morrill Hall after hearing about the initial occupation. Many were outraged at the AAAC's protest, seeing it as an immature attempt at blackmail. But, the occupation and the demands did not just materialize out of nowhere.[590] A series of promises made to the AAAC and the black students on campus had gone largely unfulfilled. The AAAC's actions were influenced by the riots the previous summer, the perception that their concerns were being ignored by the community and misrepresented by the media, and the greater battle being waged nationally for the recognition of the importance of black culture and heritage.[591] Much like many other universities throughout the country, changes often were initiated from below, rather than from the top. One witness before a commission created to investigate the Morrill Hall occupation described a systemic

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[589] On March 5, three members of the AAAC were arrested and charged for their role in the occupation. Rosemary Freeman, Horace Huntley, and Warren Tucker faced a felony charge for property damage for "mutilating defacing, breaking, destroying, tearing, smashing, littering, scattering, piling, and barricading" and inciting a riot. They also faced two counts of unlawful assembly. All told, the charges could lead to up to five years in prison and over $6000 in fines. Keith Kellogg, "Three AAAC members arrested and released," *Minnesota Daily*, Mar. 6, 1969, 1.

[590] The three demands all grew out of a series of previous promises made by the University to the AAAC – promises the AAAC viewed as unfulfilled and largely ignored. The AAAC demanded that the University fund the upcoming national conference for black students to be held in Minneapolis, explain why the recently created MLK scholarships lacked the necessary funding which resulted in recipients being given loans rather than scholarships, and allow the promised Afro-American Studies program to proceed forward more quickly. Rosemary Freeman, President of the AAAC, explained that "They told us we'd get money [for the black conference] but we haven't received it. We want to know why they lied to us." She also argued that the University promised that minority students were "supposed to get scholarships, but they get loans. People are going to have to start doing what they say they're going to do." Yvonne Thayer, "Blacks leave demands for Moos," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 15, 1969, 1;9.

[591] Likewise, the most outspoken leaders of the AAAC came from the South and had served on civil rights campaigns and faced arrest multiple times.

discrimination or ignorance at the University: "the University had never done anything to recruit racial minority or disadvantaged students. The University was just there. If you wanted to attend and could make it, well and good. If not, forget it."[592] While it is commendable that Minnesota allowed minority students to attend the University when schools throughout the country were not even allowing that much, minority students were still frustrated that they were expected to traverse an environment and culture often largely alien to them with little guidance from people who understood their experiences.[593]

The group saw the occupation of Morrill Hall as both necessary to their cause, but also powerfully symbolic, as AAAC member Horace Huntley explained: "We've turned the tables on them. These doors have always been closed to us. Now we're closing the doors on them."[594] Tellingly, once the University felt more pressure to move forward with their promises, they found the funds quite quickly. The ability of the University to find the funds when their unfulfilled promises were exposed to the media went largely undiscussed as part of the overall discourse outside of the lives of minority students. But Huntley also made sure to emphasize the orderliness and the overall peacefulness of their demonstration, as he was well aware that negative publicity would follow, regardless of their restraint: "The press has a tendency to always distort. […] The average TV viewer is going to react to it the way the press presents

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[592] "University Report on the Morrill Hall Takeover," Box 5, "Campus Demonstrations – Morrill Hall Take-Over, January 1969," Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs Records, 1941-1977, uarc 436, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[593] The University approved the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs in September 1966, but they had not hired a director or opened the program until almost two years later when a director was officially hired in August 1968. For students hoping to utilize the services of the Center and the new programs, their time was running out. Instead, half of their undergraduate careers had already passed and promises had not been fulfilled. Many students grew tired of being told to be patient, as patience failed to bring tangible results.

[594] Ibid., 7.

it."[595] Whether it was through press distortion or not, his predictions came true for many citizens throughout Minneapolis and Minnesota.

But the protestors did not find unanimous support from other members of the community. Governor Harold LeVander commended President Moos for handling the situation swiftly and peacefully, but called the demonstration "absolutely unjustified" and he "promised that future disruptions would not be tolerated, and advised that the students involved should be disciplined."[596] The *Minneapolis Daily American* ran with the headline, "U of M Protest Ends: Moos Gives In," and the article emphasized the mess made by the students and the disruption it caused for employees hoping to get their paychecks.[597] The headline seems to paint the interaction as a defeat by the University, rather than a negotiation, a distinction that would likely influence public opinion. Most members of the Twin Cities community saw the demands and actions of "militant" students as outside of the proper behavior of American students of previous generations. They questioned whether their protest actually came out of frustrations from real problems or through a desire to act out and be noticed. Or, more nefariously, they wondered if they were part of some anti-American plot hoping to destroy the United State from within. In a *Minneapolis Star and Tribune* poll, six hundred adult men and women from Minnesota towns and cities responded to questions about the occupation of Morrill Hall. 46% approved of the University's response while 31% disapproved. One affirmative voice reasoned that "There was no violence and it was kept from becoming a major incident." Around half of the respondents felt that the University was right not to call in the police, while a third felt police action was needed.

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[595] Jay Peterson, "Perseverance will succeed," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 15, 1969, 1-2.
[596] "Keep the noise down: an editorial," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 17, 1969, 4.
[597] Richard McFarland and Philip Reed, "U of M Protest Ends: Moos Gives In," *Minneapolis Daily American*, Jan. 16, 1969.

However, regarding the students and their cause, 89% of those polled thought the AAAC was wrong in their occupation of Morrill Hall. Only 5% found them to be in the right.[598] The *Star and Tribune*'s failure to thoroughly explain the protest in their poll likely moved public opinion even further against the protestors. Their poll merely explained: "About three weeks ago, some black students occupied Morrill Hall on the campus of the University of Minnesota. Do you think it was right or wrong of the students to occupy Morrill Hall?" No motive was given, the AAAC was not identified, and their cause was not explained; they were merely "some black students" occupying a campus building for some unknown reason. It likely did not help that local papers like the *Tribune* incorrectly reported in an October article that the three arrested members of the AAAC were accused of damaging and destroying property, rather than "aiding and abetting unknown persons."[599] It did not help calm the flames of public opinion against the protest when one local news station reported the damage to be as high as $150,000.[600]

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[598] The date on this clipping was not listed, but it was in reference to the Morrill Hall takeover. "46% Approve 'U' Action in Sit-in," *Minneapolis Star and Tribune*, 1, Box 5, "Campus Demonstrations – Morrill Hall Take-Over, January 1969," Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs Records, 1941-1977, uarc 436, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[599] Likewise, following the peaceful end to the occupation of Morrill Hall the University assessed the damage and a formal investigation followed. The University initially reported the damage to be in the area of $11,000 but that figure eventually came down to less than $6000. "Morrill News Reports Criticized by Three Accused Black Students," *Minneapolis Tribune*, Oct. 4, 1969; "A Chronicle of Events from April 4, 1968 to March 7, 1969," Box 5, "Campus Demonstrations – Morrill Hall Take-Over, Janary 1969," Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs Records, 1941-1977, uarc 436, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[600] The Morrill Hall occupation only heightened misgivings that many parents and community members already had about student protests in general. A 1967 *Minneapolis Tribune* article noted that, following the announcement that the University backed students' right to dissent, many parents felt that student demonstrators ought to be "dealt with by power and force," instead. Keith Kellogg, "Moos calls for demonstration probe," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 17, 1969, 1;

Seventy percent of the 1967 freshman class came from families with little or no college education. This foreignness to university life coupled with a generational divide only exacerbated feelings of fear or annoyance with student protest during an era when protest became more and more frequent and visible. Complicating an already heightened issue for many Minnesotans, the occupiers of Morrill Hall were black. For many white Minnesotans, they had few interactions with African Americans and even fewer with a concentrated population of African Americans, let alone one advocating for change and vocally questioning the naturalness of (white) Minnesotan and American culture. From 1950 to 1970, the black population of the entire state rose from 13,775 to 34,868, but this constituted less than one per cent of the entire state's population in 1970.[601] For Minnesotans outside of the Twin Cities, they had little to no everyday contact with black people. And, on a campus where there were only 135 black students by 1968, black observations on daily life at the University and experiences of inequality were alien to most of their fellow Gopher classmates. Repeated attempts by members of the AAAC to raise campus awareness often resulted in white students dismissing black claims or countering that they were tired of black students making such a big deal out of what they viewed as minor inconveniences or manufactured problems.

People are often inclined to fear that which they do not understand and assume the worst of those pushing for change. Paradoxically, those same citizens who argue that the experiences and cultures of many outside of the white, dominant culture do not bar minorities from the American Dream or make their journeys that much more difficult in a society clinging to the

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Brian Anderson, "Some Parents Restive as Dean Backs Student Right to 'Dissent,' *Minneapolis Tribune*, Nov. 8, 1967.

[601] Shandira Pavelcik, "Minnesota," *Black Demographics*, accessed July 10, 2014., http://blackdemographics.com/states/minnesota/.

myth of equal opportunity are often the very same who believe that these groups hate America and are inherently somehow alien.[602] The University's insistence upon the American myth of equality of opportunity set many black students and students of lower socio-economic backgrounds up to fail from the start, but provided a seemingly altruistic justification: the University believed that all students are equal, regardless of race, so any admission that minority students had a different lived experience from many of their fellow students or came from a poorer background would poke a hole in the myth. So the University could point to its athletics team as evidence of integration and equality, but the everyday lives of black students off the field suggested otherwise. Daryl Royster, a *Daily* writer, felt dissatisfaction with officials within the University falling "all over themselves to get the best Negro athletes," but caring little for recruiting black students outside of athletics or helping them achieve academic success.[603]

Letters to the editor discussing the takeover demonstrated the inability of many white students to recognize the imbalanced power dynamic on campus or their own positions of privilege.[604] Likely, people do not feel compelled to write letters to the editor if they do not

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[602] Daryl Royster, a junior and a reporter for the *Daily* had grown cynical during his time at the University as his belief in the myth of equality and hard work leading to acceptance and success waned: "When I first came here, I asked a man in the loans and scholarships bureau why they don't have special programs to help Negroes who can't afford to go to school. He told me they consider everybody equal and all that trash. You're not equal if you don't have the same background and haven't had a good education." Susan Wells, "Black Power or Black Apathy: Negroes on Campus Speak Out," *Ivory Tower* XV, no. 5 (March 1968): 33.

[603] He also pointed out that there was a pressure placed on members of the black community who went off to college that most of their white peers did not face. He felt that black students had to be "great – not just average." Ibid., 33.

[604] A letter from freshman Michael Miller decried the takeover and the demands as "reverse discrimination," misinterpreting the demands as a call for "lowering standards" for minority students. Raymond H. Stadum, a fellow freshman, argued that he was proud of his own Irish heritage and sarcastically wondered why the University did not have a department devoted to Gaelic studies and whether he should occupy a men's bathroom to get his point across. He freely

think that they have something logical or impassioned to say. In employing a strategy of *reduction ad absurdum*, one letter writer demonstrated the inability of many within the dominant culture to see the significance of the demands made by the AAAC, likely due to neither sharing the experiences of those he ridicules nor understanding the meaning of what they are saying.

Bob Klepinski of the *Daily* wrote a pointed editorial on these overtones of racist sentiments in the reactions to the occupation of Morrill Hall. He argued that one dominant truth united the crowd outside of Morrill Hall: "hard, though dormant, racism" justified by a concern with the law.[605] Surely, not all students who opposed the actions of the AAAC had racist motivations, but it certainly echoes the rhetoric of Nixon's "law and order" campaign that coincided with race riots after the shooting of Martin Luther King, Jr. Klepinski argued that students could feel safe criticizing the AAAC and their call for change because their demonstration went against University policy. Instead of discussing their grievances, the entirety of their cause could be dismissed through a discussion of rules. But this fixation on rules and

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admits that he likely does not understand the point of the protest and assumes that "some well meaning liberal will sit back and say that I've missed the point or accuse me of being glib about a matter which should demand our attention. Just what is the point?" But if he stuck to the logic of his own point, he might arrive there. If he argued that the history of anti-Irish sentiment and a history of inequality in the United States required the dominant culture to make a concentrated effort on understanding Gaelic culture and emphasizing its importance on the creation and continual influence on American culture, then the same argument could be made for an emphasis on African American culture. Likewise, if his point is that Irish Americans, Polish Americans, Italian Americans, and other groups who had gradually been enveloped into the fold of American whiteness don't demand their own programs, then he could examine how those cultures had been systematically brought into the dominant culture, often under the understanding that they were closer to white than they were to black, as black was viewed as outside of the dominant culture. Michael Miller, "Letter to the Editor," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 25, 1969, 5; Raymond H. Stadum, "Letter to the Editor," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 25, 1969, 5.

[605] He explained that "Moving among the rabble was a disgusting experience. There was blood in the eyes of those who were decrying the violence of moving desks. The racial hatred normally suppressed could now be shouted, for it carried the hollow support of the letter of the law. Those blacks had stepped out of line and we now had the means to beat the hell out of them legally." Bob Klepinski, "Editorial," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 20, 1969, 4.

rightness only followed when the rules broken were *by* the AAAC, rather than the promises broken by the University.[606] Poignantly, he zeroed in on the issue Big Ten universities would face throughout the Vietnam Era. Because the discrimination or inequality was not as violent, thorough, or noticeable as in the South, it was not seen as problematic by the dominant culture. Because token opportunities existed at the ground level, it was expected that African Americans would be satisfied with some citizenship rather than full citizenship, just because it was not the explicit racism of the South. But he argued that the AAAC had "committed the fatal error. They stepped out of line in the North. That sort of thing is all right in the South and where they had been victims of prejudice, but not here in Minnesota."[607]

Months later, Donald Zander, the Assistant to the Vice President for Student Affairs, responded to an article from Ben "Mr. Fixit" Kern of the *Tribune*, defending the University's actions and their decision not to call in outside help. He argued that Moos was "guided by the experience at forty other universities over the past year. In all but one campus demonstration during that time, the cost of individual effort and institutional funds was greater when the police

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[606] Klepinski continued: "Those who could stand silent at centuries of inequality and unheeded laws now had a chance to turn the tables and vent their hatred because they had felt for one instant their right to enter a building denied. […] Separate facilities had never phased them. That a man could not choose which restaurant or rest room he used was simply misfortunate. That was some distant land. But this was different. We are upstanding white Midwesterners and they are in our building [emphasis in the original]." He noted that the crowd called for violence and the use of tear gas to drive the demonstrators out of the building, and even while "our administrators were keeping their cool and negotiating, the real will of the people was being yelled in the street, Hate. The generation gap was certainly shown to be a myth in Minnesota. Students, parents, and legislators were all joined together in the common bond of racism." Ibid., 4.

[607] The following day, a junior at the University confirmed Klepinksi's observations, arguing that the crowd outside of Morrill Hall "was as racist, narrow-minded, and bigoted as any Mississippi mob could ever hope to be," and noted with disgust that the last chant he heard emanating from the crowd before he left was "burn the books." Ibid., 5; Ron Rosenbaum, "True nature," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 25, 1969, 5.

or National Guard were moved in to the situation than when discussion and persuasion were persued." He noted that the "Morrill Hall sit-in lasted less than twenty-four hours. The damage was about $5,000."[608] K.K. Rietman opined to Moos:

> I have heard Black People riot and burn in Washington D.C. and other cities. Black students take over a University building and do $11,000 damage. Who will hire these people? No one. Who will hire students that have been in the organization of the S.D.S.? No one. These militant students may do OK at a University that has no moral standards but they will never get a job in the business world. I would think that the University would teach some of the facts of life.[609]

Rietman's outrage and perplexity at what would drive black students to do things that would threaten their own hireability demonstrated a disconnect between generations and likely between classes. Members of the older generation who had achieved financial success had trouble understanding why others did not embrace the same myth of the American Dream. They did not understand the countercultural argument that a capitalistic definition of success left much to be desired ideologically and spiritually. And, in the case of African American students, they did not understand that the American Dream did not apply the same standards for black students and asked them to conform to a set of expectations many black students found constraining, demeaning, and hypocritical. Perhaps the more compelling question Rietman needed answered was "What would compel students to feel that the only option they had left was to jeopardize their own status as students, law-abiding citizens, and hireable candidates?" Rather than a discussion about the motives of the protestors or the rightness of their cause and the culpability

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[608] Donald R. Zander to Ben Kern, June 17, 1969, Box 5, "Campus Demonstrations – Morrill Hall Take-Over, Janary 1969," Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs Records, 1941-1977, uarc 436, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[609] K.K. Rietman to President Malcolm Moos, January 20, 1969, Box 5, "Campus Demonstrations – Morrill Hall Take-Over, Janary 1969," Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs Records, 1941-1977, uarc 436, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

of the University or society, the overall discourse still remained a discussion about violence and money.

For his part, Moos took a very diplomatic line, even asking for the public to consider the justness of the demands of the protestors and complimenting their tactics and restraint.[610] Moos decided against suspending the three from the University, pending the results of the trial. He also attempted to silence those critics who condemned the protestors for "shutting down" the University: "I've said that the Morrill Hall sit-in did not disrupt the educational process on campus but the administrative process."[611] This distinction is a significant one, considering that the national debate on student protest (strikes, marches, sit-ins, teach-ins, etc.) often centered over what should be considered a university's educational purpose. If these students' actions did not disrupt the learning of others and helped to bring about educational changes, then they did little to nothing wrong.

Whether misinformation, slanted writing, or vague reporting had a large effect on public opinion cannot be entirely known, but public opinion outside of campus did seem to fall against

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[610] President Malcolm Moos' tenure at Minnesota was one of nearly constant demonstration and negotiation. When he took office in 1967, he noted his tacit support of student activism, observing "If you participate as an activist in some of the causes of today's nagging society, the stars will not fall from the heavens." During his time at the University, he was instrumental in promoting the health sciences, reaching out to the community, and establishing many new areas of study, including African American Studies, American Indian Studies, Chicano Studies, and Women's Studies, and opening the Center for Urban and Regional Affairs. Moos eventually left the University for a position as executive director of the Center for Democratic Institutions in Santa Barbara, CA. "Malcolm Moos," *University of Minnesota*, June 9, 2011, http://www1.umn.edu/twincities/presidential-history/Malcolm-Moos/.

[611] While he noted that destruction of property should "never be condoned," he praised the University community for its restraint in keeping the incident from becoming a riotous affair and the protestors for their cause: "One, of course, should never conclude that violence or destructive demonstrations are the way to get things. One could also say that by demonstrations of a certain type – an orderly, constructive way – students can get what they want and maybe they should." Keith Kellogg, "Moos calls for demonstration probe," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 17, 1969, 1.

the protestors. Lonnie T. Morgan, a 1966 graduate and a social worker on the lecture circuit, addressed the Greater Minneapolis Area Board of Realtors in late January. He attempted to explain the context of the sit-in to a largely white audience.[612] However, much of his speech concentrated on the cultural and historical context that led to the students' desperation, context that seemed unknown to his white, affluent audience. He pointed to racial exclusion in downtown housing as a lasting form of inequality that often went unseen or was ignored by many white people: "When your neighbors look down at you for selling your home to me, the problem is not in my community but in yours."[613]

The eventual trial in November resulted in Tucker being acquitted of all charges, while Freeman and Huntley were placed on one year's probation and convicted of "one count of unlawful assembly," a misdemeanor charge accompanied by up to ninety days in prison and a $300 fine.[614] The University of Minnesota decided to take no further action against the three. However, the media backlash against the initial occupation, the inability or refusal of many white students to empathize with or better understand their situation, and the feeling that the University failed to live up to their promises or initially support the accused only deepened the felt divide between the black community of Minneapolis and the white community. Likewise, it hardened

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[612] He explained that "Kids were told they signed up for scholarships but they found out they signed up for loans." He also pointed to a lack of black courses and a feeling of systemic discrimination at the University as causes for the occupation. He shared that he felt worse things were going on *outside* of Morrill Hall than inside. For example, he saw reporters egging student outside to break into the building [the University report found that a few white students had forced a door open to allow members of the media to get footage], and had been told by another witness that a group saw a couple of black women walking toward the building and suggested, "Let's get them now." "Morrill Hall Takeover Resulted from Tuition, Curriculum Complaints," *Minneapolis Sun*, Feb. 3, 1969.

[613] Ibid.

[614] "Miss Freeman, Huntley placed on year's probation; Tucker acquitted of all charges in Morrill Hall," *Minnesota Daily*, Nov. 10, 69, 1.

the belief that black students faced a different standard from the dominant culture when it came to kneejerk reactions and the law. Each successive incident seemed, to many in the black community, to be more and more like a narrative tied together by race than by independent and unconnected events. Talk and promises by the University regarding efforts for greater equality and the importance of black concerns often went unfulfilled and were under-explained to the wider public. The University's stance became the official story, whereas protestors were painted as rabble-rousers. The discourse that led up to and followed the occupation of Morrill Hall, based largely on discussions of race, character, and tactics rather than on the larger societal and historical context, played itself out routinely in the Twin Cities and throughout the country; it also provides context for the motivations of black athletes on the Minnesota football team to speak out about and act upon the injustices they felt as black athletes at Minnesota.

Dissension in the Ranks: Untold Golden Gopher Football History

Murray Warmath is rightly celebrated, along with fellow Big Ten coaches Biggie Munn, Forest Evashevski, and Duffy Daugherty, for being early adopters of recruiting black athletes in football. Likewise, they were all willing to buck tradition and stereotypes in starting African Americans at quarterback. Even by the 1950s, the Big Ten was already well-known for its long history of integrated football. By 1955, there were already 63 black football players in the conference.[615] However, such a seeming nod to equality should not go unexamined or be assumed to be entirely altruistic. For instance, many of these coaches chalked their position up to colorblindness. In a book on the history of black quarterbacks, Warmath emphasized his own racial colorblindness: "We didn’t just recruit a guy because he was white. You can get a horse’s

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[615] Michael Oriard, *King Football: Sport and Spectacle in the Golden Age of Radio and Newsreels, Movies and Magazines, the Weekly and the Daily Press* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 9.

ass no matter which color. We wanted to know what kind of guy he was."[616] While giving black athletes the opportunity to play is commendable, it certainly is not entirely altruistic. It was not as if talented black players did not help Big Ten football teams achieve victory on the gridiron. And, because of the way that intercollegiate football works at the highest levels, coaches must win or they will not remain the coach for very long. And it was largely the most talented black athletes who were offered a spot on the team. For the most part, black players started; most of the benchwarmers were still white.

While Warmath and other Big Ten coaches found gridiron success in their recruitment of black athletes from all over the country, some black players questioned whether the fans actually agreed with Warmath's contention that talent and not race mattered. It is a commendable goal to strive for where character and ability matter and race is not involved, but the players themselves did not even see that as reality. Judge Dickson recalled that one of the local papers in 1959 had run an article questioning the perceived high volume of out-of-state players on the football team. He felt that such questioning was racially motivated, recalling that when they "were the last-place team in the Big Ten, the local paper ran a big headline, 'Minnesota for Minnesota Boys,' with pictures of the football players from out of state. Sandy's [Stephens] photo was there. My photo was there. There was definitively a racial component to it. There were those in Minnesota who felt the football team should have blonde hair and blue eyes."[617] Minneapolis already had a history of anti-Semitism, so this implicit preferencing of white players does not seem out of the ordinary.

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[616] William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile*, 75.
[617] Ibid., 75-76.

Just a few years later in 1961, when Minnesota sat atop the Big Ten and had just won the National Championship, critics still questioned the reliance on non-Minnesotans despite results on the field. Vice President Stanley J. Wenberg sent a letter to Associate Dean of the General College A.L. Vaughn concerning the continued publicity in the local sports pages concerning out-of-state Gophers. Part of this publicity likely included the article mentioned by Judge Dickson. He questioned whether these students were admitted into the University merely because they were good football players and wondered if they were academically up to the challenge, since he had heard rumors that many of them were enrolled in the General College (including African American players Bobby Bell and William Munsey).[618] Wenberg also initiated the formation of a committee to examine whether the out-of-state players were academically suitable for the University, how they were performing in the classroom, and if their high school achievements warranted a spot at the University of Minnesota, and sent a letter to Associate Dean Marcia Edwards in the College of Education asking for the records of nine football players.[619] While this was not necessarily a racial issue, many of the highly rated recruits from out of state were black, and it seems somewhat unusual for a Vice President to initiate such an investigation based on the writings of local sportswriters.

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[618] Similarly, considering the misfortunes of the football team before its recent resurgence, Wenberg questioned if the players were performing academically as well under the assumption that it is unlikely for great athletes to also be great students – despite the Big Ten's promotion of this ideal as a cornerstone of their conference. Stanley J. Wenberg to A.L. Vaughn, May 17, 1961, Box 28, "Correspondence 1926-1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[619] Stanley J. Wenberg to Marcia Edwards, May 17, 1961, Box 28, "Correspondence 1926-1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The Committee set out to find if "University athletes, as students" were "subjected to essentially the same academic standards as students who are not athletes."[620] The report was a preliminary report, largely confined to data regarding the varsity football team for the 1961 season. The Committee found that fifty-nine out of the sixty-five football players received some form of financial aid from the University. Since the academic requirements for eligibility and for financial aid were judged by identical standards at the time, a huge majority of the players were in good academic standing.[621] With new Big Ten rules implemented in 1962, only five of the players receiving aid would have been ineligible to enroll under the current guidelines.[622] They could find no real correlation between poor performance and out-of-state players and noted that graduation rates for football players had actually gone up in the past decade. In the end, the Committee noted that no real generalization could be made about the academic performances of football players, as members of the team had a wide range of GPAs and majors.[623] Despite the concern from local papers and Wenberg about the geographic (and possibly the racially diverse) nature of the team, the national recruitment of athletes continued under Warmath. However, race, as a topic of discussion within Minnesota football – except as a positive talking point regarding

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620 "Report of AAUP Special Committee on Academic Aspects of Intercollegiate Athletics at the University of Minnesota," 1962, 1, Box 29, "College Testing Program 1961-1962," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

621 The University of Minnesota's scholarships were need-based at the time, and the scholastic requirements for keeping funding depended on a GPA of at least 1.7. However, the committee did find that thirty-two of the players had been on academic probation at some point in their career, fifteen of them during 1961. But, the Committee also noted that students placed on probation are routinely cautioned by their academic counselors to curtail all non-academic activities while they faced probation, but the same suggestion – unsurprisingly – was not made for football players. Ibid., 2;4.

622 Ibid., 7.

623 Ibid., 10-11.

the opportunity Minnesota gave African Americans to play football – would remain undiscussed until the end of the decade.

In May of 1968, Randy Staten, a former member of the New York Giants, alleged that he and other black athletes had faced discrimination and unequal treatment by their coaches and the athletic department at the University of Minnesota during the 1960s.[624] Staten, a lineman for the Gophers from 1963 through 1965, approached the newly formed University Task Force on Human Relations and told them of his experiences as a football player at the University. Staten related stories about black players who had been "told they would not play if they dated white girls."[625] A native of North Carolina, Staten also had been "called in by an unnamed department member and warned against dating white girls." He also claimed that African American players had been systematically "excluded from outside work opportunities that were available to white athletes at the university." Staten did not blame this exclusion on the companies themselves, but on an Athletic Department that failed to inform black players about these job opportunities. He further claimed that black players had been warned by the department that they should not "take part in any controversial activities while at the university." Staten called for changes and the hiring of a black assistant coach. In light of his allegations, Professor George Donahue, head of

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[624] Staten played one season in the NFL and went on to become North Minneapolis' representative in the Minnesota House of Representatives. After switching from the Republican Party to the Democratic-Farmer-Labor Party, Staten became the only serving African American member of the House in 1980. However, despite fighting for economic programs for his district, Staten wrote $8,200 worth of bad checks to finance his drug habit and was accused of filing late and incomplete campaign expense reports, becoming the first Minnesota legislator to be publically censured. He later served jail time. After prison, he became an ordained Baptist minister and the chairman of the Coalition of Black Churches. See Shawn Lewis, "Busted and Disgusted Randy Staten has redeemed himself: Will he try to return to public office?" *The Rake Magazine*. December 2005, https://www.mail-archive.com/mpls@mnforum.org/msg42810.html.
[625] Peter Vaughan, "'U' Negro Athlete Makes Charge: Discrimination Claimed," *Minneapolis Star*, May 15, 1968.

the Task Force, promised to follow up on the claims and asked Staten to produce witnesses to substantiate his charges.

Earlier in the spring, the Big Ten Conference had held its seasonal meeting and had discussed racial issues affecting the Conference. A Faculty Representative from another school shared that a group of "negro athletes" had presented an "extensive statement of grievances" to their university. Minnesota Athletic Director Marsh Ryman and Faculty Representative M.O. Schultze discussed the matter and decided that if similar charges were made against Minnesota they would be "without substance." Schultze believed that "some of our student-athletes could well be the target of militant agitators," so Minnesota had to be "very alert on this score. We have known for a long time that athletic operations in the Big Ten schools, including Minnesota, have been under surveillance by the NAACP." Schultze noted that some of the other Faculty Representatives were "much alarmed" about the thought of such grievances.[626] Tellingly, the Big Ten representatives at the meeting assumed that accusations of discrimination or racial tension were untrue and the work of outside, "militant agitators." Surely, black student-athletes would never find fault with the progressive Big Ten athletic departments that gave them the opportunity to play sports and attend prestigious Northern colleges. The worry was not whether such charges were true or not or that changes needed to be made, but rather that black student-athletes were vulnerable to being led astray by black activists inciting them to cause trouble for the status quo.

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[626] M.O. Schultze to Malcolm Moos, March 25, 1968, 4. Box 28, "Correspondence – 1968," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Clippings and Miscellaneous, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The day after Staten's allegations, Gerald Annis, the defensive line and linebacker coach for the Gophers, denied Staten's charges, indicating that he had no knowledge of any kind of discrimination occurring within the football team. Staten had also claimed that coaches always assigned roommates based on race and rarely assigned two players of differing races to the same room for away games. Annis agreed that the coaches took care of the room assignments, rather than the players, but denied that racial considerations went into the decisions. Rather, he explained that room assignments were assigned based on position, and argued that "we have many colored boys living with whites."[627] While still used in print and within certain segments of the dominant culture, it is interesting that he chose the word "colored," considering that Staten and others advocating for change on campus were pushing for the use of the term "black." That is not to say that Annis specifically ignored the increasingly preferred term or that he knowingly used the term "colored" condescendingly. More likely, Annis used a term that he had grown up with and saw as acceptable and apolitical. But, it gives credence to later claims by black members of the football team that their coaches were out of touch with the lives and mindsets of their team members.

The following week the student-run *Minnesota Daily*, which – unlike the Minneapolis newspapers – largely stood in support of political activism from an editorial standpoint, polled members of the African American athletic community on campus about Staten's charges and published some of their findings. They received a number of cautious responses backing up Staten's claims, along with flat-out denunciations. Ray Stephens, a member of the football team and Sandy Stephens' younger brother, cautioned that the paper was not "going to get a true

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[627] "Athlete Charges 'U' With Bias; Assistant Coach Denies It," *Minneapolis Tribune*, May 15, 1968.

reaction from all of the black athletes because of possible jeopardy to them." But he felt that if the paper did not print the names of the respondents, "they will talk."[628] A number of informants backed up Staten's claim about a flat-out or implicit ban against interracial dating. One athlete claimed that he had been benched for dating a white woman. He admits that no coach actually sat him down and said that such a situation would result in less playing time, but the athlete felt that this was the reason for his benching. He argued that if coaches saw a white woman outside of the locker room waiting for a black player, the player's days were numbered. He indicated that dating a white woman would not be used as the official reason for diminished playing time. Instead, a coach would badger the player about it, regardless of the injustice of the implicit rule against interracial dating, until a player would grow frustrated, lose his cool, and mouth off. Then the coach would use this infraction of respect to claim that the player was insubordinate.

Jimmy Johnson, a member of the basketball team, revealed that his coach had explicitly "told players not to mess around with white women." But Johnson argued that the scarce number of single and interested black women to date on campus and in the immediate vicinity of the University made it hard to abide by such a rule. While Johnson was let go from the team at the end of 1967, he felt that he had never been given a sufficient reason as to why he was dismissed and assumed that his infraction of the rule against interracial dating was the biggest cause. Johnson found the off-the-court expectations for black athletes stifling, explaining that he had "to be an ideal person – hang around with certain people and dress in a certain way." He felt that the coaches expected their black athletes to conform to a culturally acceptable form of black masculinity – one that was inoffensive, unthreatening, and largely mirrored the dominant culture's expectations for white, middle-class masculinity, though with far less leeway for

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[628] Alan Held, "Athletes polled on alleged discrimination," *Minnesota Daily*, May 22, 1968, 1.

deviation than white players had. For these reasons, he argued that Minnesota had "a racist Athletic Dept., definitely in football and less so in basketball." Another African American athlete backed up these prior claims, suggesting that there was a general feeling among black athletes that coaches would punish them in some way for dating white women, even if it was never explicitly said.[629]

Going further, this same athlete argued that the Big Ten itself had less than altruistic motivations for their emphasis on integrated teams, sharing that the conference's underlying belief was that "if you're going to have Negroes on your team you'd better win." And herein rests the often unexamined aspect of the early adoption of athletic integration in the Big Ten Conference. Surely, the early approval of providing the opportunity for people of color to compete in an integrated environment in athletics is a commendable and progressive idea lacking throughout many of the other athletic conferences in the country. Especially when compared to the Southeastern Conference, where some schools did not integrate their athletic teams until the early 1970s, the Big Ten's position as a forerunner for athletic integration is worthy of the praise that it receives. The refusal of many Big Ten teams to play teams from the South and the early integration of many Northern and Western teams played a visible part in the struggle for civil rights as African American newspapers as well as immigrant newspapers throughout the country paid special attention to teams who had truly integrated squads.[630] Likewise, the acceptance of people of color into the nationally respected, academically influential, and highly funded universities of the Midwest was a development also worth celebrating – provided that the people attending and earning their degrees are also remembered and celebrated, not just the institutions

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[629] Ibid., 1.

[630] Ibid., See the last third of Michal Oriard, *Bowled Over*.

and administrators. But the recruiting and playing of African American athletes were not merely altruistic gestures of humanitarianism by the Big Ten.[631] To a point, coaches and schools *did* care about equality, but the benefits of bringing in star athletes from untapped recruiting avenues cannot be ignored. Likewise, recruiting and playing African Americans brought the teams and the Big Ten goodwill, esteem, trophies, and, most importantly, revenue.

The campus newspaper poll also found a few athletes who disagreed with Staten's statements, but most of the discrepancy came from a former player [who was more cautious than unbelieving] and the white Athletic Director, Marsh Ryman: "[Athletes] have got to present a good image to the public. I mean a scholastic, behavior, and attitude image. And when I say 'behavior' I don't mean black or white."[632] While not defending an alleged practice of enforcing segregation in dating, Ryman defends the position that coaches take an interest in athletes' personal lives out of concern for the athlete and the publicity of the University, rather than for nefarious or even racist reasons. Bob Stein, a former All-American linebacker for the Gophers and also a Jewish-American, agreed that coaches were just looking out for an athlete's personal interests and felt that it was an image issue, not a racial one, and akin to a parental figure protecting his child.[633] Yet, the image that is being protected is one of black players not overstepping "acceptable" cultural boundaries that could enflame the public. While the motivation for such precautions might not be racially based, the cultural taboo that is being preserved certainly is. Likewise, at a University struggling and actively seeking to change itself from a symbol of parietal protector and enforcer to an active partner in the creation of a well-

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[631] As Harry Edwards argues, "“What changed was not the brotherhood, but business — the dynamics and realities of the game.” Qtd. in William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile*, 168.
[632] Alan Held, "Athletes polled on alleged discrimination," 1.
[633] Ibid., 8.

rounded and more effective education, the mythic role of coach as father figure had become increasingly more problematic and less acceptable to college athletes of the late 1960s, and especially to African American players who questioned whether they were seen as fully men at all by white society.

Judge Dickson reserved his judgment for Murray Warmath and the coaching staff until he learned more about the situation. As a black player from Pennsylvania on a predominantly white Minnesota football team, Dickson had faced his own share of felt discrimination at the University. However, he also respected Warmath for the opportunity the coach provided to him through an offer to play for and attend the University of Minnesota:

> Murray Warmath is one white man I hold in high esteem. It is because of this respect for Murray Warmath that I am confident that he will examine the findings of the Kerner report for a further understanding of the cry of black athletes as part of black America for the self-dignity and self-respect to which it is entitled. As he has never deserted me in a time of need, I will not desert him at this trying hour.[634]

Dickson recalled how Warmath had trash dumped on his own front lawn by fans and received threats for playing black players when Dickson had attended the University and felt sure that Warmath would seek out a fair compromise if the allegations against his staff were true. However, Dickson also understood the feelings of discrimination experienced by the black players. In an interview with ESPN Books in 2007, Dickson recalls his playing days and experiencing discrimination throughout his life: "You become very distrustful. In a discriminatory environment, you're constantly thinking, am I being treated unfairly, or is this happening because of my color? It can be a huge inhibitor, a terrible burden for a young person

[634] Ibid., 1.

to have. And if you talk about it, you're a complainer, a whiner. It's a downward spiral."[635] In the coming years in Minneapolis, members of the black community continually had to ask these questions in response to media reactions to racial events.

Six days later, the *Daily* published an article providing thoughts from the thirteen black members of the football team. The players released a statement reading: "We have not experienced any racial discrimination from Coach Warmath and/or from any other member of the football staff." Despite this statement, the players did not discredit Staten's claims, indicating that they were not speaking for previous Gophers. Rather, they themselves did not feel that discrimination affected them as football players. However, within two years, many of those same players no longer felt the same, and joined a significant number of their fellow students advocating for change within the University as a whole. By June, Schultze wrote to University President Malcolm Moos again about the most recent Big Ten meeting. He noted that "allegations of discrimination and requests for changes in practices or policies have been made at several Conference institutions including Minnesota, Michigan State, Wisconsin, Iowa, and Illinois."[636] However, the Faculty Representatives and ADs did not discuss the issues in depth, nor did they get into the veracity of the allegations or the specifics of any kind of changes. But, despite not getting into any specifics, they were sure that "it is certain that there exist no Conference policies which could be properly alleged to be discriminatory. Any shortcomings in

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[635] William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile*, 169.

[636] M.O. Schultze to Malcolm Moos, June 20, 1968, 7, Box 28, "Correspondence – 1968," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Clippings and Miscellaneous, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

this area, therefore, are the result of local attitudes."[637] Schultze's statement is both insightful and troubling. On one hand, he is correct that the policies of the Big Ten did not overtly discriminate or legislate based on race. He is also correct that the implementation of policies, hiring practices, and coaching strategies were all dependent on "local attitudes" or even national attitudes to create an atmosphere of equality. But, on the other hand, it is incredibly significant that the administrators at the meeting had very little actual discussions about events or their specifics. Instead, it remained incredibly theoretical and ideological: the Big Ten prides itself on doing things the right way and has been at the forefront of integration, so obviously the Big Ten would never discriminate – no discussion is needed; case closed. But Minnesota would not be able to refrain from discussing specifics for much longer.

In July, the Athletic Department and the Task Force on Human Rights met again to discuss "Negro athletes" at the University. Schultze noted that for years Minnesota had benefited from "the lack of opportunities [for black athletes] to participate in athletics at some schools."[638] Earlier in the meeting, James Reeves had indicated that the University was making an effort to "improve the social climate" for African American student-athletes once they were on campus, an indication that the University realized that they should do more for their students than merely recruit them to play sports.[639] Nevertheless, they seemed to draw the line at student-athletes exercising their rights as students during this era of protest and political activism. Reeves "asked about prohibition concerning participation in demonstrations," and Schultze personally felt that

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[637] Ibid., 7.
[638] "Athletic Dept. & Task Force on Human Rights Minutes," July 19, 1968, 4, Box 28, "Correspondence – 1968," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Clippings and Miscellaneous, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
[639] Ibid., 3.

"since an athlete is good newspaper copy and a representative of the University, he thought that discouraging such participation was correct." Reeves agreed, but cautioned that "we should be careful not to threaten to impose sanctions" on outspoken athletes, a sentiment with which Ryman concurred.[640] Student-athletes, because of their recognition on the field, were better newspaper copy than non-athletes as they were some of the only university students known to the public at large. For this reason, if they spoke out negatively against the University, it would create unfavorable publicity and challenge the accepted mythology so athletes had to be dissuaded from doing so. By October, this worry over student-athletes over-stepping the implied bounds of athletic departments, the NCAA, and sports in general became codified. The NCAA moved to punish student-athletes who exhibited "manifest disobedience" with a loss of financial aid, after a hearing decided their fates. This disobedience was defined as "disruptive actions which interfere with the normal and orderly conduct of an institution's athletic program, refusal to meet the normal good conduct obligations required of all team members, and defiance of the normal and necessary directions of departmental staff members."[641]

Vietnam veteran, *Daily* writer, and current Minnesota sophomore Richard Jenkins and Melvin R. Smith intimated in an editorial in the student newspaper in late October 1969 that there was "strong dissension on the Gopher football team between the players and Coach Warmath."[642] Warmath's response to the allegations was picked up by the Associated Press: "I am not ashamed of my record or my relationship with the black athlete, and I'll put it before

[640] Ibid., 4.

[641] "Council Defines 'Manifest Disobedience," *NCAA News*, October 1968.

[642] Richard L. Jenkins and Melvin R. Smith, "Voices from the Bleachers," *Minnesota Daily*, Oct. 29, 1969.

anybody to question it."[643] In early November 1969, a group representing the majority of black football players on the team approached Coach Murray Warmath in his office to present him privately with a list of two proposals that they had agreed upon during a black players' team meeting the night before.[644] The group elected Jenkins to represent them to the public. Jenkins had returned from the war with an impassioned emphasis on activism. He had joined the Afro-American Action Committee and started writing editorials in the *Daily* advocating for a more militant black movement.[645] He resented that he needed to fight for his people's equality in a country for which he served as a soldier, ostensibly promoting freedom, and refused to continue to "accept tokenism in the place of dignity and pride." [646] The University heard the proposals of the black athletes, with Jenkins serving as the players' spokesman, at the Union.

Members of the team had been discussing the issues they found unsatisfactory for months, but finally held a meeting and put them in writing on Monday, November 3. They made sure to characterize their issues as proposals, rather than demands, in order to emphasize their commitment to the team, to separate their demonstration from other more public athletic revolts around the country, and to avoid negative reactions from the public. Likewise, they had considered presenting their proposals earlier in the season, but wanted to wait until the team had

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643 Qtd. in AP, "Gopher Coach Defends Stand With Blacks," *Los Angeles Times*, Nov. 1, 1969.

644 Phil Lewenstein and Tony Bute, "Black athletes present proposal: ask Warmath for black coach," *Minnesota Daily*, Nov. 5, 1969, 1.

645 Jenkins went on to become the Coordinator for the University's Council for Health Interdisciplinary Participation (CHIP) in 1973. Jenkins was a physiology student at the time and used his experiences as a person of color to help minority students get into Health Sciences and succeed at the University. "CHIP: Student Action for Total Health Care," *Alumni News*, September 1972, 15.

646 Richard L. Jenkins, "Black veterans no longer turn a cheek," *Minnesota Daily*, Oct. 16, 1969, 4.

won a game so that their action would not be painted as the whining of losers.[647] They asked Warmath to consider hiring a black assistant coach and a black guidance counselor for the upcoming season, and pushed the coaches to undergo a "sensitivity training" in order to better understand their black players and their culture.[648] They stressed that a black guidance counselor would help the players feel more like part of the Minnesota community, aid them in the construction of class schedules, and keep them on track for graduation. Jenkins reported that "All the black athletes at the University are behind the black football players, both morally and spiritually," and announced that this was "the first time we've been able to unite the black athletes to go and see the coach." He stressed that while these proposals were mainly for football, as most of the black athletes at the University were football players, the effects of progress would help black athletes in other sports as well. *Daily* reporters attempted to get comments from a number of black players, but to a man they declined. A tackle on the team, Al Hawes, succinctly said "As an individual I have no comment, just what the group says." Reached for immediate comment, Athletic Director Ryman countered that they had not "hired a black assistant coach because there haven't been any openings. If we did have an opening, we would be looking for persons who are qualified."[649] However, no black assistant coaches had been hired

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[647] Going into November, the Badgers were 0-5-1, not winning a game until November 1. The team did go on to have a four-game winning streak to end the season.

[648] Phil Lewenstein and Tony Bute, "Black athletes present proposal: ask Warmath for black coach," 1.

[649] He offered Al Nuness, a black assistant coach for the basketball team as proof of the University's commitment to further integration. He also explained that they had considered Maurice Forte, a former fullback for the Gophers and current St. Louis Cardinal, for a coaching position, but doubted that he would leave the NFL for the position. However, one black assistant coach out of multiple varsity programs, especially considering the high number of black players in basketball and football, is not an incredibly persuasive argument.

in the previous years either, despite the prevalence and important role of black players on the team.

At the public announcement of the players' proposals, a number of reporters and onlookers asked Jenkins about the connection he had with the football team, and he explained that he had "approached them on an objective basis. I was aware that a problem was developing for years but the players lacked the unified motivation to bring it up."[650] Marion Wagner of the Zoology Department wrote in to the *Daily* congratulating the athletes and Jenkins on their brave stance, writing that it "would be an interesting project to ascertain the financial gains the University has enjoyed through athletic events over the years because of the participation of black athletes. I would suppose that it would overwhelmingly exceed property damage that occurred during the Morrill Hall occupation last winter."[651] However, aside from Wagner's supportive letter, little discourse over the rightness or wrongness of the players' cause showed up in the student newspaper. But some of the players' attempts to distance themselves from Jenkins indicate a shift in the discourse on campus from the validity of the players' claims to a discussion of Jenkins and his politics. The continued discussion of Jenkins as a radical became the story and strengthened the presumptions of those who believed that the athletes were being led astray, preserving the myths that athletes were apolitical, followers, and less intellectually inclined.

After the season ended, Warmath agreed to meet with Lillian Anthony, the acting Director of the Afro-American Studies Department. Rich Crawford, a linebacker for the team, indicated that the four-game winning streak the Gophers had to close out the 1969 season raised the spirit of the team, and he believed that it would "become more of an internal, family-type

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[650] Phil Lewenstein, "Jenkins speaks for black athletes," *Minnesota Daily*, Nov. 5, 1969, 13

[651] Marion Wagner, "Letter to the Editor," *Minnesota Daily*, Nov. 7, 1969, 4.

discussion between players and coaches, with Richard Jenkins being phased out as a spokesman for the group."[652] Another player on the team, Walt Bowser, argued that he was not really sure how the situation was looking, as it was "too shaky to predict." However, he did feel that "the papers keep making Richard Jenkins look like a militant and a racist, and he isn't any of that. He's still with us." Regardless of Jenkins' role, team member Terry Addison was beginning to step to the forefront of the situation. It was Addison who suggested that Warmath meet with Anthony, the latter serving as his advisor within the Afro-American Studies program. Anthony met with Warmath and Ryman in early December, and the three agreed to continue the discussion again when the semester started again in January.

The *Daily* interviewed Addison earlier in the week to get his thoughts on the proposals. Whereas just a year and a half earlier Addison and his fellow black teammates had denied that any kind of discrimination on the football team existed, the situation had changed. Or, perhaps, their feelings, experiences, or willingness to speak out had. Addison hoped that the sensitivity program would "humanize the coaches toward the outlook of a black athlete and his wanting to carry himself as a respectable person in the black community."[653] Addison's own transition from a tacit defender of the coaching staff to a vocal leader for change mirrored the changing outlook and strategy of many black people in the country, but also the increased activism of black students on campus in general following the occupation of Morrill Hall. He explained that being "a black person has changed radically in the last 10 years, from Martin Luther King [Jr.] right on down to Rap Brown." He continued, explaining:

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[652] Greg Gordon, "Afro-Studies head, Warmath to discuss sensitivity program," *Minnesota Daily*, Dec. 3, 1969, 1.
[653] Ibid., 10.

> […] the black athlete is made to look at himself and see the role he is serving. And being an athlete, contrary to what many people think, is twice as important now. You can do your thing for the black movement, and still be a good ball player. Take the black power demonstration of Tommy [sic] Smith and John Carlos at the Olympic games. In the eyes of the upcoming high school kids, they were really impressive.

But Addison and the others did not see their proposals as extreme or even ones that would make serious waves beyond the everyday workings of their own team. Addison did not expect overt changes from the coaches or within the program, but the coaches "should at least be aware of the problems, and avoid certain words that may carry ethnic connotations. When Warmath says 'boy', we don't know if he means 'boy' or 'n-----.'" This particular point was certainly complicated by the fact that Warmath hailed from Tennessee, attended the University of Tennessee as an undergraduate, and coached at Mississippi State University before coming to Minnesota. The coach had grown up in the South and retained his Tennessean accent, so Warmath's use of the term "boy" to refer to players likely triggered memories of discrimination and outright racism for many black players (especially those from the South themselves, like Addison who was also from Tennessee). Indeed, in Wilkinson's biography of Warmath, he celebrates the fact that Warmath "In every way Murray represented the fighting qualities of the Rebel soldier and the decency of the Southern gentleman."[654] "And dress codes and [hairstyles] should be a little more lenient for the black athlete," explains Addison. "We don't dress like blacks did in 1950." The players wanted to feel that they were a part of the team and had a say in that team, rather than feeling like outsiders expected to conform to an identity not of their own choosing. Theirs was not a revolution, but a negotiated change, and a change that they spurred. Unlike the celebrated history of allowing black athletes to play football and attend Big Ten universities by academic officials and coaches, changing the atmosphere of the team and how it

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[654] Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior*, 49.

is run was a change made from the bottom up: "Our white teammates have been perfectly understanding. But Warmath has got to bend, rather than break the system. Being southerners, he and some of the assistant coaches should know that certain words carry racial overtones, and they should be able to understand."

While the team pushed for proposals rather than demands and post-season mediation rather than striking during the season, Addison believed that merely the symbol of calling for change was a powerful one. After all, Smith and Carlos did not disrupt the 1968 Mexico City Olympic games or refuse to participate, as they and the other members of the Olympic Project for Human Rights had originally contemplated. Rather, their stoic gesture during their own medal ceremony made waves despite their silent protest. Both further explained the symbolism and their motivations to the press before and after the medal ceremony, but the most powerful reactions seemed to be in response to the symbolic act itself. Avery Brundage, the President of the International Olympic Committee, called their protest "an insult to their Mexican hosts and a disgrace to the United States."[655] He issued an apology from the IOC to the people of Mexico for the "discourteous" and "immature" behavior of Smith and Carlos and suspended them from the American team and from the Olympic village. Smith, Carlos, and Peter Norman – the silver medalist and a white Australian who wore a pin supporting their cause on the podium – received death threats from those angered by the protest. Brent Musberger, writing for the *Chicago American* wrote that "One gets a little tired of having the United States run down by athletes who are enjoying themselves at the expense of their country," and compared them to "a pair of dark-

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[655] Quoted in Douglas Hartmann, *Race, Culture, and the Revolt of the Black Athlete: The 1968 Olympic Protests and Their Aftermath* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003), 155.

skinned storm troopers."[656] Surely, Addison and the other black student-athletes were well-aware that questioning the status-quo of sports at any level could make serious political waves. After all, nine athletes had been involved in the occupation of Morrill Hall on the University of Minnesota campus the previous spring.

But their activism was neither less serious nor less notable just because they suggested proposals rather than demanding changes. Part of their reasoning for a less overt and publically confrontational action was their own competitive desire to have a winning season, as Addison explained: "Strategically, walking out would have been a very good tactic. But there is enough competiveness among us that we wanted to prove we could win. We hadn't won a game at that time. We'd rather present situations and circumstances than injure the institution and football team."[657] Even though they found some aspects of the University and the football coaches' approaches toward understanding cultural differences wanting, they still felt an attachment to the school and to the team. After all, this was also *their* team. They wanted to reform, not tear down. But the importance of their suggested changes and the willingness of coaches and officials to hear their thoughts and worries weighed on their minds. Addison argued that the "racial problems have had damaging effects on the play of several individuals, and it was definitely a contribution to our losing season early in the year. And if changes are not made, there's a strong possibility that some players won't return to Minnesota next year."[658] Student-athletes faced challenges uncommon to their fellow non-athlete students in their protesting, be it about sports,

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[656] Ibid., 11.

[657] Greg Gordon, "Afro-Studies head, Warmath to discuss sensitivity program," 10.

[658] However, changes were made by Warmath and the Athletic Department. Addison lettered in 1968 and 1969 but appears to have left the team by 1970. Although, as he went on to graduate Magna Cum Laude and earn his M.A. in AAAS from the University, he also could have left to concentrate on his studies.

civil rights, or the war in Vietnam. Whereas students partaking in general protests rarely had to interact with the administration or recruiters outside of protesting, student-athletes were under the constant presence and control of their coaches and the athletic department. While colleges had been forced to abandon the parental and moral control they had over the general student population, the accepted myth of the need for authoritative control in sports still reigned (and continues to reign). For student-athletes, they were using the tactics of student protest but against a system still arguably embracing the parental control of earlier decades.

Ernie Cook, a fullback from Florida, apparently disagreed with the other black players on their approach. While Cook said little to the *Daily*, Addison made reference to comments Cook made to the press, but insisted that Cook still had sympathies with their cause. He insinuated that Cook did not disagree that their suggested changes would not be positive ones, but Cook did not feel that there was an atmosphere of racial tension because of the coaches. But Addison indicated that the changes were for the benefit of "future black athletes who are incoming," perhaps even more so than they were for the current players.[659] Cook had turned down the chance to be the first black football player at Florida State to play for Warmath and likely felt a strong connection to his coach, just as many of Warmath's players had. After announcing that he intended to sign with Florida State, Cook received multiple threatening letters filled with racial slurs and death threats from outraged, white Seminoles fans. Cook decommitted and visited Minneapolis, where he felt that Warmath and the staff valued him more as a student and as a person, encouraging his

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[659] Ibid., 10.

desire to become a medical doctor.[660] Cook had advocated for civil rights as a Boy Scout and took it upon himself to change schools and integrate the local Father Lopez High School football team. But, despite being the valedictorian of his high school and a highly ranked prospect, Cook quickly saw that he would not be accepted at Florida State where white players enjoyed campus life, while he was told he would likely have to spend his evenings at Florida A&M's campus, a traditionally black college. After "NAACP Executive Director Roy Wilkins, journalist Carl Rowan and other black Minnesota alumni" wrote Cook letters urging him to consider Minnesota, Cook visited and came away impressed.[661] Instead, Calvin Patterson became the first black football player at FSU, but he never played a down for the varsity team and ended up taking his own life in 1972. Surely, Cook's experiences and comparisons to the atmosphere at Florida State influenced how he viewed the racial atmosphere at Minnesota. And it is important to remember that his view and personal feelings about the situation were just as valid. But many others on the team felt strongly that changes needed to occur and pushed forward.

The day after Addison spoke with the *Daily*, Jenkins wrote another editorial for the newspaper, clarifying some of the proposals suggested by the football players. Again, while there is not evidence in the pages of the *Daily* of resentment or resistance to the proposals or to Jenkins' politics neither on campus nor in the articles of the local papers, the continuing assurances and clarifications from the players and Jenkins suggest that such a conversation was

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[660] Josh Robbins, "Bigotry Couldn't Stop Ernie Cook," *Orlando Sentinel*, Dec. 16, 2007, http://articles.orlandosentinel.com/2007-12-16/sports/erniecook16_1_ernest-cook-daytona-beach-university-of-minnesota.
[661] Ibid.

going on outside of the printed world.[662] In his editorial Jenkins reassured the readers that a black coach was not merely beneficial for only black players and perhaps here we see Jenkins' reaction to his critics accusing him of racism: "I strongly feel that a black coach will be an asset to the whole football team. The black coach can work in the capacity of liaison among white players, black players and the coaching staff."[663] He further argued that a black coach would give the black players someone who could relate to their experiences, but white players would still be able to relate to him as a man, as a coach, and as an asset to the team. Moreover, he argued that a black coach would provide to the eighteen or nineteen black players on the team, most of whom were from the South, a symbol of hope for progress and an example of black men in positions of authority, an argument seemingly in line with the Big Ten's own mythology of progress and equality. He noted that a large, public University, especially a University within the Big Ten, was long overdue to have at least one black coach on the football team.

Jenkins made the same argument about a black guidance counselor, questioning why the University had not hired one earlier. They had known that issues outside of football arise for many of the African American football players, but they made no move to hire anyone whose main job would be to "help implement a program in which the black athlete may select a sound major in college and graduate as soon as possible." While he admits that this position would be entirely beneficial to black athletes specifically, he notes that this history of the University ignoring the academic problems for many minority athletes was one that needs to be corrected:

> Many black athletes here, I feel, are exploited for their total physical ability and endurance, with less emphasis put on the academic role of college life. This could be the

[662] Sadly, my time in Minneapolis was limited to three days in the archives, and I was not able to check the editorials or letters to the editor of the local city papers.
[663] Richard L. Jenkins, "Toward Sensitivity," *Minnesota Daily*, Dec. 4, 1969, 4.

> fault of the school as well as the athlete. Many black athletes end up taking irrelevant courses that are unrelated to their field, and therefore do not have enough credits in the correct areas to graduate. Academic standing and graduation should be emphasized just as much as the top plays mentioned during a practice session. At the present time there are very few athletes on the team who have their goals already selected concerning what they want to actually do after college, and this is especially true among black players.

For Minnesota to truly care about its *student*-athletes, Jenkins argued that the players needed to see an emphasis placed on academics. He felt black people "must be represented in other areas of life beside sports and entertainment." Success for a select few on Saturdays, or possibly Sundays, was not enough.

The editorial staff of the *Daily* stood behind the players.[664] Still, they unquestionably paid homage to the mythos of the progressive nature of Big Ten football, noting that the conference's "Athletic institutions were among the first to accept participants on the basis of individual ability rather than discriminating because of race."[665] But they argued that past laurels were neither enough, nor did they go far enough. They opined that "Despite these initial advantages, those who have considered sports the high road for the liberation of blacks should take another look at the slow progress that has been made." Instead, they urged the University to consider seriously the proposals and move swiftly to enact change and "step beyond the limited offering of civil rights" presently served by the myth of the progressive racial power of sports. To its credit, the University did make changes. In February, Warmath, his coaches, and many members of other coaching staffs and the Athletic Department attended a two-day workshop on

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[664] At this time, I have not been able to examine the city papers, but, judging from the responses to athletic protests at other universities (Wyoming, for instance), we can assume that sentiment came down against the athletes, as many would likely see it as a privilege and an honor to play for the Gophers and receive a scholarship to a fine university to play football. While fans are willing to cheer for players on the field, perceived disruptions to the game or challenges to the apolitical nature of sports are often met with ambivalence, denial, or argument and accusations about entitlement.

[665] "Players rights," *Minnesota Daily*, Dec. 4, 1969, 4.

racial sensitivity. Ryman explained that the program stemmed "from a proposal made by the black athletes on the football team last November. It is our intent to participate in this kind of a laboratory to exemplify to our black athletes that we are interested in their problems."[666] Paul R. Barrington, a former player for the Gophers and current public speaker, led the voluntary workshop. Furthermore, Warmath asked the Board of Regents to approve the hiring of two black assistant coaches. Warmath suggested Roger French, a former assistant coach at the University of Wisconsin, and the aforementioned Maurice Forte. However, Forte would not be able to start for another four mounts, as he was currently serving a four month military commitment. But it is certainly telling that the athletic department was able to quickly find suitable black coaches when pushed to do so, despite having claimed such a thing was impossible in prior coaching searches.

Through peaceful means members of the football team brought about changes on their own terms and did not wait for University officials to slowly implement changes. Jim Carter, a white linebacker for the team and future NFL player, was rather dismissive of the need for the proposed changes when interviewed by Mike Wilkinson for Murray Warmath's biography, *The Autumn Warrior*. Carter referred to their activism as a "supposed dissension" and labeled their concerns "minor."[667] While Carter likely did not mean to dismiss or belittle the concerns and actions of his black teammates, his language downplays their experience and their perception of their own treatment. Carter's is the only mention of the black players' proposals in the book, and even his reference is short and rather minor. By denying the black players a voice in the book, whether intentionally or not, their concerns and actions are downplayed and neutralized as a

[666] Greg Gordon, "Coaches attend sensitivity lab: Blacks' proposal granted," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 10, 1970, 1.
[667] Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior*, 342.

footnote and as the perceptions of a white football player raised within the perceptions of the dominant, white culture steers the narrative.

Strangely, a larger discussion of the issue would not have been damaging to Warmath's racially progressive image in a largely hagiographic book, especially considering the coach's track record of starting African American players. Furthermore, Warmath agreed to meet with his players, listened to their proposals, pushed for the proposed changes, and even attended sensitivity meetings, demonstrating an ability to listen, adapt, and respect his players, something that many other coaches of the era failed to do. But, instead, Carter and others throughout the book stuck to the story of Warmath's colorblindness toward race, emphasizing his commitment to playing the best player regardless of race and his long history of recruiting black athletes to Minnesota while ignoring challenges to this narrative from black Minnesota players.[668] By listening to the concerns of his players and acting on them, Warmath stepped outside of the trite "the best man should play, regardless of race" theme and demonstrated that he had concern for black players as students and men, rather than just as football players who could help the team win. But such an overt statement would challenge the colorblind rhetoric of the Big Ten and hint that it was not necessarily just a lack of opportunity facing black athletes. Systemic inequalities, discrimination, and misunderstandings created an unequal playing field that asked black players to just ignore and accept what they perceived as discrimination. To admit that the status quo defaulted to whiteness and assumed that black players should just adapt to what was assumed to be the natural state of football and a predominantly white college would reveal the privilege inherent in the system and would challenge the narrative of equality and fairness promoted by the Big Ten. Sadly, that side of Murray Warmath – the side who evolved as a coach and as a man

[668] Ibid., 342.

and was willing to listen to his players when other coaches throughout the country would not – gets buried to promote the whitewashing, colorblind rhetoric of the Big Ten.

A Fight, Suspensions, Rhetoric, and Change

This discourse discussed earlier surrounding the occupation of Morrill Hall repeated itself a few years later in response to an incident that occurred on a basketball court. The wider community largely condemned the incident and took to theorizing about the character of the individuals involved and assigning guilt before any kind of investigation occurred. In response, members of the black community saw a parallel to earlier snap judgments against people of color and mobilized to combat the vitriolic response. In 1972, Minnesota's basketball team quickly ascended the conference rankings and became a force in the Big Ten. Led by new coach Bill Musselman and a predominantly black starting lineup, the team became known for their intensity and a warm-up routine that included dunking and rock 'n' roll music and for the high number of black players playing significant minutes for the team. Coming into their game against Ohio State on January 25, both teams were undefeated in Big Ten play and good bets to challenge for spots in the NCAA tournament.

Over 17,000 fans turned out in Minneapolis to watch the game. Fans and players described the game as excessively physical leading up to halftime and this physicality continued into the second half. As both teams were heading to the locker rooms, Ohio State's center, Luke Witte, elbowed the Gophers' Bobby Nix in the jaw as he walked past him. Gopher supporters saw it as flagrant, while Buckeye fans deemed it accidental. Regardless of Witte's intent, Gopher players and coaches ran over to the referees to draw their attention to the incident, but no penalty was called. In the locker room, the Gophers were fairly riled up, and Coach Musselman told the

players that they had to "forget what happened and to concentrate on the game."[669] In the second half, Ohio State slowly took control of the game and led 50-44 with thirty-six second left. As Witte went up for a shot, Minnesota's Clyde Turner blocked his path and Corky Taylor fouled him hard to the head with either a fist or a forearm, knocking Witte to the ground.[670] The referees called the flagrant foul on Turner. As a dazed Witte moved to get up, Taylor offered his hand but kneed him in the groin as he pulled Witte to his feet. Taylor claimed that Witte had spit at him as he went to help him. Soon, other players joined in the fight. Ohio State's Dave Merchant ran over to confront Taylor, but Minnesota's Jim Brewer punched him multiple times as he and Turner chased him back up the court. The Gophers' Ron Behagen, who had fouled out earlier in the game, rushed off of the bench and ran over to the still prone Witte and kicked him multiple times in the midsection and possibly the neck, before rushing off to fight another Buckeye. Future Major League Baseball player Dave Winfield also ran off of the bench and started fighting Ohio State's Mark Wagar. A handful of Gopher fans rushed onto the court and started fighting with the Buckeye players. Minnesota Athletic Director Paul Giel and the referees called the game early as police and Minnesota officials attempted to clear the courts while coaches shepherded their players back into the locker rooms. Witte and two other Buckeye players had to be moved to the campus hospital for observation and treatment.

The following day, Giel received at least fifteen calls about the basketball fight. Eight were from Minnesota fans and alumni, angry and ashamed over what transpired. Three more

[669] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, "A Report of the Events Which Terminated the January 25, 1972 Basketball Game with the Ohio State University," Aug. 1972, 17, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
[670] Ibid., 50.

came from Ohio State fans, echoing the sentiments of the Gopher fans. Four other Gopher supporters expressed outrage against the officials for allowing tempers to build throughout the game and wondered why Ohio State's players were not also noted for their roles in the fight. Don Weiss, a Minnesota fan, blamed the officials and supported Musselman, but felt that Behagen in particular was out of line. He also noted that Ohio State's Athletic Director Ed Weaver "should look at Woody Hayes [Ohio State's football coach] before he criticizes other's unsportsmanlike behavior." Whitey Windahl, an alum of Minnesota, felt "ashamed" to be associated with the University and blamed the players, and Gopher fan John Vold was angry with the coaches for not doing enough to stop the fight.[671] After just one day, opinions were incredibly divided – not over whether or not the actions of the basketball players should be tolerated, but where blame rested, who should be punished, and what motivated the fight in the first place. All agreed that punishment should be meted out. Coach Musselman initially suspended Taylor and Behagen, who had been deemed responsible for the most violent actions during the fight, for one game. The University, owing to the violent nature of the incident, wanted to act quickly and decisively. The Athletic Department stepped in and decided that the two should be suspended for the remainder of the season and contacted the Big Ten Conference and commissioner Wayne Duke, who agreed with the decision. However, as public sentiment both for and against the suspension of the two built, the University decided that they had acted too swiftly in response to the growing public outcry and had not offered the two players a fair trial, let alone any trial. The Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics met on January 28 to discuss the fight and the appropriate punishments. A motion was suggested and seconded that Taylor and Behagen be suspended for the remainder of the season, as initially suggested. Yet, a range of opinions came out in the

[671] A collection of phone call messages to Giel were gathered from a folder on the "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight" cited above.

meeting, and the Committee decided to suspend the two until February 15 as a temporary action until they thoroughly investigated the incident. During the meeting, they called Commissioner Duke, but Duke refused to change his mind from the initial decision.[672] Part of Duke's refusal likely stemmed from unfavorable public sentiment around the Big Ten for his inaction during the fight. As the *Michigan Daily* noted, "Many Big Ten leaders were already upset with the fact that Duke did nothing while the disturbance was actually happening. He just sat in the stands and watched the fight without making an effort to help."[673]

President Moos wrote to Jerome Moss, Jr., Chairman of the Committee, and indicated that he was:

> particularly concerned that allegation suggesting that racial factors were at work in the situation are fully investigated, and I believe that the entire environment in which the game took place, including pre-game activities, coaching, officiating, and any other factors you feel may be involved are reviewed so that important questions surrounding the game may be resolved.[674]

The Committee continued to meet every few days throughout the next few months and set up an investigation into the incident, inviting the players, witnesses, advocates, and anyone who

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[672] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, "Minutes of the Special Meeting: Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics," January 28, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[673] Mort Noveck, "Continuing controversy … on a slow decision," *Michigan Daily*, Feb. 1, 1972, 7.

[674] Malcolm Moos to Jerome Moss, Jr., January 31, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

wished to speak to address them. They also watched game film and sought out technical assistance from athletic officials and referees.[675]

By the time that M.O. Schultze, Minnesota's Faculty Representative, met with other Big Ten faculty members via phone on February 2, public opinion had dragged Taylor and Behagen through the mud to the point that the Committee felt that their character was unfairly under attack. Schultze moved that the pair be allowed to practice with the squad for the "welfare and rehabilitation of the two young men." The motion failed.[676] The court of public opinion against Taylor and Behagen had started immediately after the fight. Michigan's basketball coach, John Orr, appeared on Vince Doyle's radio program on WWJ out of Detroit and heavily criticized Musselman and his players: "Well I think they brought in some very shaky players up there Vince, and I think that's general knowledge. They are not super citizens or anything like that and when you are going to have those it is going to be hard to control those guys and I think the thing just must have gotten out of hand there." He continued to rail against the Gopher players: "I am not talking anything about their academics, I am talking about them as citizens."[677] Orr received

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[675] Big Ten Conference, "Minutes of the Intercollegiate Conference Special Meeting," February 3, 1972, 1, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[676] Big Ten Conference, "Minutes of the Intercollegiate Conference Special Meeting," February 2, 1972, Pg. 32 of Appendix B, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[677] The transcript was provided in a letter on January 27, 1972 to Paul Giel from Robert W. Hefty of Dearborn, MI, a graduate of the University of Minnesota and an employee of the Ford Motor Co., Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

a letter condemning his statements from Gopher fan Robert W. Hefty and wrote back to him, explaining:

> I am sure that if you knew the background of the players I called shady citizens, you would be real proud that it is the worst thing I called them. I think what happened at Minnesota is absolutely deplorable and inexcusable, and if I was making the decision, the penalty would be much, much greater and would not only penalize the players but the coach and the entire school. […] I know plenty of facts about the ballplayers that Minnesota recruited last year and I have not said anything about that, but as a Minnesota graduate, you can certainly not be proud to have those type of young men representing Minnesota.[678]

While Orr's words did not specifically indicate anything about Taylor's and Behagen's [and, for that matter, many of the Gophers] race, his disparaging remarks were similar to the rhetoric used by many in the following days and weeks.[679] Most assumed that the incident was entirely the fault of the black players on the team and not a reaction to in-game physicality that sometimes happens in sports, but an unavoidable consequence of recruiting emotion-driven black players.

The severity of the violence in the Minnesota – Ohio State fight prompted media outlets, other coaches, and fans to condemn Minnesota and their coach, Bill Musselman. Musselman was new to the Big Ten and encouraged his players to play aggressively. While the Big Ten ruled out racial motivations for the fight, race was frequently used when describing the incident. William F. Reed, writing for *Sports Illustrated*, made sure to note that Witte was a "talented seven-foot blond center" in his column about the event, and a photograph of Witte appeared on the cover of

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[678] Johnny Orr to Robert W. Hefty from February 1, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[679] Orr later refused to take it easy against the banged up Ohio State squad in an 88-78 victory for the first time in nine tries for the Wolverines. Orr saw it as "poetic justice" for the previous season when Ken Brady went down and conference foes had little sympathy for Michigan's situation. John Papanek, "Wolverines Bomb Bucks," *Michigan Daily*, Jan. 30, 1972, 7.

the magazine.[680] Yes, Witte did have blond hair, and it is not entirely odd to describe the physical characteristics of an athlete, but Reed does not tell the reader what hair color Behegan or Taylor had – or even Nix for that matter. While a small point, it is hard not to wonder if Witte was not being painted as the stereotypical All-American sports star – tall, blond, and white. The Buckeyes were predominantly white, whereas the Gophers fielded a starting lineup that was – at times – all black. Reed describes Minnesota's coach, players, and fans as an "emotional lot who apparently would not stomach the idea of losing to the Buckeyes in their Big Ten showdown." Despite the protestations from Taylor that he had been provoked by Witte and who believed Witte spit on him, Reed was convinced that Taylor and the Gophers fought for no other reason than the hatred of losing and the inability to control their emotions, a link that could easily be read as insinuating that the black players were inherently less in control of their minds and selves and were instead driven by body and emotion. One has to wonder why fights did not break out during the Gophers' earlier losses to Bradley, Marquette, and Temple. Reed notes of the starting lineup that they were an aggressive bunch owing to the fact that "all except Nix were blacks who had learned the game on city playgrounds."[681] Aggressive play was somehow expected and at the same time deemed inappropriate for African American players. Yet, the Big Ten fully admitted that Witte had elbowed Nix in the face at halftime and played aggressively throughout the second half. Surely, aggressive play on the part of Witte is no excuse for assaulting him, but it was also ridiculous for Reed and others to suggest that the emotion of Minnesota's black players was an inevitable time bomb that would go off if they lost. To suggest this eliminates the

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[680] William F. Reed, "An Ugly Affair in Minneapolis," *Sports Illustrated*, February 7, 1972, http://www.si.com/vault/1972/02/07/565933/an-ugly-affair-in-minneapolis.
[681] Ibid.

possibility that they had been provoked and paints them as wild men. And what was the excuse for the aggressive play of the Buckeyes?

Ohio State's coach, Fred Taylor, was understandably shaken by the fight but chose to portray the brawl as an expected consequence of playing Musselman and the Gophers: "It was bush. I've never seen anything like it. But what do you expect from a bush outfit?" Luke Witte's father made similar comments, describing his lack of surprise at something like this occurring because of Musselman's "win at all costs" mentality: "His players are brutalized and animalized to achieve that goal."[682] Again, the context of the situation – a father commenting after his son's has been shockingly injured on a basketball court – needs to be front and center. But we also cannot ignore rhetoric that dehumanizes the Minnesota players as animals considering the long history of rhetoric comparing black men to animals and wild men driven by emotion. Before the game, the Gophers made trick shots for the fans to loud, rock music – a practice quite common today but somewhat out of the ordinary at the time. Again, any possibility that the Buckeyes could have taunted or instigated Taylor is not even contemplated for a moment. Instead, Ohio State Athletic Director J. Edward Weaver cited the unusual warm-ups – a practice the Gophers had used for much of the season without incident – as the "underlying cause" of the riot. This is just one more example displaying the antiquated and reactionary views of many in positions of authority in sports: for example, rock music would inevitably lead to delinquency and violence, a belief more tailored to a PSA from the 1950s rather than 1972. Reed notes that the game up until the half was cleanly played by both teams. He concedes that Witte elbowed Nix in the jaw, although he goes out of his way to alert the reader that it was an extremely accidental elbow to the jaw that was itself a response to Nix celebrating going into the locker-room. Here, Witte's

[682] Ibid.

violence is acceptable because he is reacting to a black player not displaying sportsmanship. This violence is apparently OK because it teaches the black player that he must respect the game and play it the right way. Almost as an afterthought, Reed grants that Musselman pointed to that moment as the inciting moment for the brawl. Considering that they played a clean game up until that moment – despite the rock 'n' roll warm-ups, despite their aggressive style of play, and despite their racial and cultural background – perhaps their contention that they felt instigated by the aggression of Ohio State had some merit to it. Reed even notes that the crowd threw peanuts and debris onto the floor as Minnesota fell behind late in the game, but "the players remained under control."

But still he argues that the clash was inevitable because of who the Gophers were: city-blacks who did not play the game the right way – that is, the white way. Especially in the Midwest, where *Hoosiers* celebrates the small-town values and scrappy play of white basketball in a game increasingly influenced and dominated by African American players, such arguments – particularly ones voiced in the most significant sports periodical in the country – held great sway and went largely unquestioned by a predominantly white fandom. Furthermore, because the fanbases of college teams rely heavily on alumni for support, and Northern schools, despite being integrated, still had very few African American students (let alone graduates), college basketball was still perceived as a domain for white values and a white style of play played in front of predominantly white crowds, as opposed to the increasingly black NBA (though the NBA still had a mostly white ticket-buying audience). Likewise, college sports grew from a privileged position that was set up as a haven for white, Protestant, middle-to-upper-class men and protected a mythos that championed the noble ideal of amateurism versus the money-driven immorality of professionalism. As the NBA became more and more integrated and dominated by

black athletes, college basketball became even more the domain of white basketball as white players and traditional (i.e. white) styles of basketball could flourish in a division requiring a larger pool of athletes.

Following the game, Benny Allison, a guard for the Buckeyes who was also African American, suggested: "It was a racial thing. You will remember that Wardell [Jackson] and I were right out there in the middle of it, just like everybody else, but nobody swung on us. They just passed us up and went for the other guys. Sometimes things like that happen."[683] It is also relevant to ask why only Taylor and Behagen were suspended. Dave Winfield came off of the bench, just like Behagan, "dodging to mid-court where some Minnesota reserves and civilians were trying to wrestle Ohio State substitute Mark Wagar to the floor. Winfield leaped on top of Wagar when he was down and hit him five times with his right fist on the face and head."[684] Buckeye players fought back with enthusiasm as well, and critics wondered why Witte's elbow to the head of an unsuspecting Nix at the half was not equally condemned. Such inconsistencies led many to question if Taylor and Behagen were not being partially scapegoated. Reed (and many others) rightfully condemned the violence of the affair, but placed the blame solely on Minnesota and again fell into a questionably racist line of thought in describing why the melee was so horrible: "Instead of a fight erupting from blows struck in the heat of competition, this was a cold, brutal attack, governed by the law of the *jungle*."[685] But, from his own article, it is

[683] Ibid.

[684] Perhaps Winfield escaped the wrath of the anti-Minnesota mob because he was a home-town hero of Minneapolis, a multi-sport star, and already a sure-bet to be a force in Major League Baseball, a league governed by unofficial codes of conduct crafted in the absence of blackness. Taylor and Behagen were from Detroit and New York City, respectively, and played aggressive basketball, rather than excelling primarily in baseball. Ibid.

[685] Italics added for emphasis by the author. Ibid.

clear that Witte struck the first blow – which was not in the heat of competition – even if Reed downplayed its seriousness. The Gophers felt it was serious, as indicated by Musselman. Fights often occur during sports, a point Reed accepted. Baseball quite frequently leads to bench-clearing brawls where most of the participants have little to do with the primary combatants. Clearly, this particular brawl was severe and indefensible, but it is easy to see why many saw the reporting of it and the resulting punishments as just another dismissal of the black athlete – his claims, his concerns, and his motives.

Paul Giel, angered by the vitriol and misinformation spread against the Minnesota basketball team and especially against Taylor and Behagen, wrote a lengthy and impassioned letter to executive editor of *Sports Illustrated*, Roy Terrell, although *SI* published an abbreviated letter and defended Reed.[686] Giel made sure to note that he did not condone the actions of the Gophers that night, but he had to "strongly protest the reporting" of William F. Reed, which he felt only fanned the flames against Minnesota's student-athletes through misinformation and biased reporting. He expressed that any "reaction from Minnesota fans in the waning moments of the game is far overshadowed by the nation-wide reaction [Reed] has precipitated by (1) Highly inflammatory rhetoric (2) Strongly biased editorializing (3) Slanted reporting (4) Many flagrantly untrue statements to the discredit and detriment of the University of Minnesota, its athletic department, Coach Bill Musselman, the University of Minnesota basketball program, and the black community."[687] Giel called out Reed for indicting all fans present that night for the

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[686] Paul Giel, "The Minnesota Affair," *Sports Illustrated*, February 21, 1972, http://www.si.com/vault/1972/02/21/576376/19th-hole-the-readers-take-over.
[687] Paul Giel to Roy Terrell of *Sports Illustrated*, February 7, 1972., Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012:

actions of a few and took exception with Reed's tactic of painting Musselman as a win-at-all-costs coach while neglecting to mention that the state of Ohio awarded Musselman with the "Coach of the Year for Ohio" award in 1969. Giel had been part of the hiring process of the coach that the Ohio Senate had singled out for instilling "in his players a keen desire to excel coupled with a sense of sportsmanship and fair play that will unquestionably serve them well in all fields of endeavor in the challenging years ahead."[688] Giel also questioned Reed's objectivity when he described Witte as having clipped Nix "lightly on the jaw" as Nix passed by him at halftime. From footage, it showed that Nix was standing still as Witte went by *him*, and the blow caused Nix's head to snap back as two players and an assistant coach rushed in to distance the two and call attention to the refs, who did nothing.

Reed's account in *Sports Illustrated* angered Giel and the Minnesota community for its portrayal of Ohio State as inactive victims throughout the whole game. Giel argued that Reed gave but one side of the event and did not even bother to reach out to Minnesota's Athletic Department.[689] He accused him of flat-out lying when Reed claimed that Musselman did

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Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[688] During Musselman's time at Minnesota, the team started winning again and consistently packed Williams Arena for the first time in years. In subsequent years, the *Daily* lightheartedly reported on the tactics Gopher coaches used to lure potential student-athletes to Minnesota, including "luncheons, films, trips to the top of the IDS tower, and blind dates" with attractive coeds. While NCAA rules prevented "excessive entertainment" on recruiting trips, the rules remained vague as the Big Ten competed with other schools for high profile stars. Perhaps unsurprisingly, after Musselman left for the ABA in 1975, the NCAA found Minnesota in violation of 128 NCAA rules, and Musselman was named in nearly half of them; Minnesota faced two years of sanctions, three years of probation, a partial television ban, and a loss of scholarships. Carol Gilbert, "U coaches use 'gimmicks' in attempt to temp recruits," *Minnesota Daily*, Mar. 8, 1972.

[689] Giel had been a standout quarterback for the Gophers during the 1950s, a two-time winner of the Chicago Tribune Silver Football, a two-time All-American, and the runner up for the

nothing to stop the fight and "showed no remorse afterwards," considering that the video evidence showed the coach holding Turner back. And, when Musselman tried to apologize to Ohio State's coach after the game, Fred Taylor rejected his attempt with "words that could not be put in print." After the game, Musselman even visited University Hospitals to check on the three injured Buckeyes and apologized to multiple coaches on Fred Taylor's staff.[690] But Coach Taylor remained livid for days after. Minneapolis' black community especially took exception to Fred Taylor's description of Minnesota's players as "bush." While "bush league" has long been a term used to describe actions in sports deemed as unsportsmanlike or unprofessional, when put in juxtaposition with references to "animals" and the "law of the jungle" in Reed's article, along with the Governor of Ohio referring to the incident as a "public mugging," it is understandable that members of the black community would view it as a racial codeword.

But Giel's response to Reed's one-sided diatribe likely neither was motivated solely by Reed's mischaracterizations of the incident nor by coded racial rhetoric. In the months after the game, Giel received dozens of angry letters from Buckeye fans filled with hateful remarks, decrying the character of Taylor and Behagen. But the unifying factor in the majority of letters is the overt, racist language used by the writers. One letter, from a "MAD OSU FAN!!!!!!!!!!!" from Gahanna, OH called them "ANIMALS" who should be put back in their cages and "GOPHERTROTTERS," an attempt at wordplay based on the uniformly black Harlem Globetrotters who performed what could be described as a basketball form of minstrelsy for largely white audiences. To the writer's credit, she left out what she deemed "strong language" in her letter, but still felt the need to call Musselman "queer" and insinuate that Taylor and Behagen

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Heisman Trophy in 1953. He went on to play in Major League Baseball for seven seasons and served as a color commentator for the Minnesota Vikings' radio broadcasts during the 1960s.

[690] Paul Giel to Roy Terrell of *Sports Illustrated*, February 7, 1972.

were " GORILLA'S!!!!!!!!!!!!" who might be of use to the Chicago Zoo, falling back on stereotypes of race and sexuality as somehow incompatible and challenging to the expected and acceptable white, heterosexual masculinity of college sports.[691] Keith Magnuson of Chicago felt that the Gophers should be suspended from post-season competition and that Giel, or possibly the basketball program, should die, because "[Giel] and the whole University suck." He declared that Minnesota, "Brewer, Turner, Winfield, and your crazy n----- fans" were lucky that they did not have to play in Columbus that season. Twice in one letter, he used a racial slur, and twice he misspelled it – two different ways.[692]

An anonymous fan wrote to Musselman describing that:

> when the Ghopers [sic] come to Columbus to play and win I will shoot you in the head and kill you. Knowbody [sic] will find out. Then I will take a crowbar and mash your center['s] face like you did Luke Witte's, and I will burn your house down, and blow up the basketball arena. If Minnesota looses [sic] I will just do minor things throw [you] in a lake in the winter time, so you better quit or [illegible] because this is not a fake letter you stupid coward womenhead n-----.[693]

He concluded his letter, promising that "everyone who had something to do with beating up Ohio State will be punished like skull fracture."[694] One writer from Columbus opined that "the 'Black' players and fans set their race's cause back another five years," showing clearly that the race of the athletes mattered at least as much as the incident to him and felt that the actions of these individuals was representative of the entire race. Likewise, the writer insinuates that the only

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[691] All of these letters can be found in the same folders. "MAD OSU FAN!!!!!!!!!!!" to Paul Giel, n.d., Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[692] Keith Magnuson to Paul Giel, n.d.

[693] Anonymous to Bill Musselman, January 26, 1972.

[694] Ibid.

fans involved in the incident were also black, which was not the case, considering the large majority of white students at Minnesota and in the crowd.[695] S. Scandalito of Columbus threatened the team when they next came to Ohio State and referred to them as "ANIMALS!" and warned that Buckeyes would follow the advice of history books which reminded: "Don't Forget the Alamo!"[696] Pat Fallon informed Giel to tell Musselman "to take his circus act and the bunch of animals he calls basketball players to the zoo where the act belongs."[697] Mrs. William V. of Columbus expressed her concern about this group of "wild animals," noting that she could understand socking someone in the midst of losing one's temper, but "any man that would do this act of viciousness to another man should have a knife taken to him and his groin."[698]

Murray Katz described Ron Behagen as an "animalistic bastard" who does not "belong in college," and another Buckeye fan made reference to Minnesota's "Black Bastards."[699] After the season, a "pissed off fan in Columbus" explained that he would "be rooting for your opponent to beat your fucking ass" from now on because Giel was "too fucking yellow to see that Winfield and Turner got punished for their part in your ghastly crime. You responded to the black pressure on campus with cowardice."[700] An anonymous letter writer explained that the Gophers were coming to Dayton, OH [site of their post-season matchup] "with two less n------ than you started the season with," and warned that they "might just go back to Minn. with two less than you came

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[695] Ibid.

[696] The irony of misquoting "Remember the Alamo" brought a smirk to this author's face. S. Scandalito to Paul Giel, January 26, 1972.

[697] Pat Fallon to Paul Giel, n.d.

[698] Mrs. William V. to Paul Giel, n.d.

[699] Murray Katz to Paul Giel, March 4, 1972; Anonymous to Paul Giel, March 13, 1972.

[700] "A pissed off fan" to Paul Giel, March 17, 1972.

to Dayton with."[701] A "pissed off sports fan" blamed Musselman for getting "the natives stirred up" and labeled him as a "N----- loving coach" who would be shipped "back to Georgia in a pine box" the next time he came to Columbus, while M.S. of Columbus referred to the "animals that play basketbrawl."[702] And a letter from "Ha Ha Ha" called the players "pampered high priced n------." He noted that there were:

> NO n------ not even the squads which should prove to you that there are fine young talent even though they do not have black skin, but then you people must love your n------. A couple of Allie McGuire's [the head coach] Marquette n------ started something too the other night when they were beaten by Ky [Kentucky] but they were taken care of but fast.[703]

In all of these letters race is at the forefront, and many seemed to view Minnesota's significant number of black players as somehow political in its challenge to how basketball should be played – by white players – and worthy of scorn. Like David Zang argues, the increasing prevalence of black players in sports did not sit well with displaced whites who saw their unquestioned place in society changing and viewed it as "reverse racism," rather than as a loss of privilege.[704] The last letter writer likely sees all black players as a group and a negative one at that. Other letters point to black groups on campus as trouble-makers. Nearly all of them fall back on the historical stereotype of the athletic black male. David L. Andrews notes the close tie between the "stereotypical media representation of the pathologically violent and criminal black body" and "the popular fascination with the supposed natural athleticism of the African

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[701] Anonymous to Paul Giel, n.d.

[702] "A pissed off sports fan" to Paul Giel, n.d.; M.S. to Paul Giel, n.d.

[703] Here, Kentucky basketball is invoked as a defender of whiteness against Marquette, as Kentucky's coach, Adolph Rupp, was a noted racist and opponent of integration. Ibid.

[704] David W. Zang, *Sports Wars: Athletes in the Age of Aquarius* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 2001), 148.

American Other," which is a common theme throughout these letters.[705] Kobena Mercer argues that such "Classical racism involved a logic of dehumanization, in which African peoples were identified as having bodies but not minds: in this way the superexploitation of the black body as a muscle-machine could be justified. Vestiges of this are active today.[706] And these vestiges are vividly seen in the letters to Giel and Musselman, and overtones are arguably seen in media coverage of the incident and the discourse which followed.

On January 31, the *Daily*'s editorial page was covered with reactions to the game and to the fight. Jeff Johnson, a first-year student, reprimanded Fred Taylor for failing to admit that his team played a part in the charged atmosphere of the night and suggested that his team was just as "bush league." As with many of the Minnesota fans writing to the *Daily*, they seemed driven to write, in part, because they support their team and their players, often leading to mixed messages: "No one ever likes to see anyone get physically hurt but you've got to admit [Witte] deserved what he got."[707] Ron Lippi blames the refs for letting the game get out of control, but he also blames the team for not controlling their anger and the fans for encouraging it.[708] Jeff Gordon, the sports editor for the *Daily*, puts the blame on the Big Ten conference for the vitriolic response the incident was receiving. He believed that they singled out Taylor and Behagen as scapegoats, taking the "two most blatant violators of sportsmanlike conduct and simply eliminat[ing] them for the rest of the season. Not only was the punishment too severe, but it was

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[705] David L. Andrews, "Excavating Michael Jordan's Blackness," in *Reading Sports: Critical Essays on Power and Repression* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2000), 169.
[706] Kobena Mercer, *Welcome to the Jungle: New Posititions in black cultural studies* (London: Routledge, 1994), 138.
[707] Jeff Johnson, "Deserving," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 31, 1972, 5.
[708] Ron Lippi, "Message," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 31, 1972, 5.

a failure on the part of the Big Ten to confront the real problem": there was no rule in the Big Ten prohibiting fighting or defining sportsmanship. He laid the blame for the escalation of the incident at Big Ten's failure to address gray areas in their own rules. Once again, the Big Ten fell victim to believing its own mythology: its players, teams, and universities, were somehow inherently above such indiscretions and practices that went against the amateur ideal and good sportsmanship, despite innumerable instances of injuries and fights throughout the entire history of college football and basketball. Another editorial blamed the importance placed on winning and the culture of college athletics itself for the fight, continuing that "the very people who condone and even encourage the trend of professionalism in college sports are the most scandalized when the athletes respond predictably – and violently – in the face of imminent defeat."[709]

But not all Minnesotans blamed Ohio State or the refs. A quartet of students wrote a letter claiming that the fight did not stem from an isolated incident, but was indicative of a culture of intimidation that eventually had to spill out onto the court. They cited a previous game against Iowa State in which Gopher players kicked basketballs into the stands while the Cyclones were shooting around. They also pointed to Behagen and Clyde Turner's practice of mocking opponents as they came out of the huddle as a demonstration of this culture. The four students vowed that they would no longer support the team.[710] Three other students wrote that they were disgusted by the "Roman spectacle" they witnessed, claiming it "made a mockery of the

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[709] A clipping of this article was found in the folder. "Foul," *Minnesota Daily*, n.d., n.p., Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
[710] Ron Erickson, Kent Spellman, Scott Wolgamot, and Tom Edgerton, "Why did it happen?," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 31, 1972, 5.

University, its athletes, its students and its staff."[711] Interestingly, just a few days before the game, this intimidating style of play had been celebrated by the *Daily* in an article entitled "Opponents leave when Behagen's elbows enter rebounding scene," but no letters appeared before the fight condemning any of the Gophers' styles of play.[712] Here again, we must be careful to note that students should not be generalized as holding the same beliefs, but the majority of letter writers came down against the Big Ten's one-sided response.

Days after the game, around 150 people gathered outside of Morrill Hall to protest the length of the suspension and the lack of due process involved. University Vice President Paul Cashman came out to address the crowd but was shouted down in favor of President Moos. Lorraine Page, wife of Minnesota Vikings player Alan Page, told Moos that she thought it was wrong to suspend Taylor and Behagen. Moos agreed that it was "wrong to single out two individuals when there was corporate responsibility. However, I cannot lift the suspension imposed by the Big Ten commissioner Wayne Duke."[713] But the story of the fight had shifted from the fight itself to the rhetoric of the reaction to the fight. Josie Johnson, the only black Regent of the University, believed that public and official reactions to the fight had "very strong racial overtones." She demanded that the two be reinstated until a proper investigation occurred, and pointed out that, to the best of her knowledge, the suspensions were the severest ones in the history of the Big Ten. Johnson pointed to members of the media blaming the "barbaric" music played before the game as a leading cause of the fight, the Governor of Ohio calling the fight a

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[711] Mark Jefferson, Dick Winston, and Sue Turner, "Spectacle," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 31, 1972, 5.

[712] Dave Zunker, "Opponents leave when Behagen's elbows enter rebounding scene," *Minnesota Daily*, Jan. 21, 1972.

[713] Bill Morlock, "Crowd demands Gophers reinstated," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 1, 1972, 1.

"public mugging," descriptions of Gopher players as using "back alley tactics," and Fred Taylor's reference to Minnesota as "bushers" all as having "very strong racial overtones." The reference to the fight as a "public mugging," the race of Taylor and Behagen, and the suggestion that such a fight was bound to happen because of their inherent aggression can easily be read as linking black males and crime. She argued that "All of us who are black knew that [the rhetoric had strong racial overtones] immediately," responding to suggestions from public officials and the media that the black community was overreacting.[714]

Members of the local black community demanded that the University open up the investigation to the public and called for a meeting with Minnesota officials. Francisco Lloyd argued that they "were taking our own action because the whites aren't going to take any action." The lack of any kind of action against Witte or even investigation into his role in the matter angered Lloyd. He explained that a lack of black alumni led him and others in the black community to come out and protect Taylor and Behagen. A number of people suggested calling for the entire team to refuse to play further games until the two were reinstated. Robert Ross, a staff member of the Student Activities Bureau, had argued that calling for a suspension of games would hurt the other four black players on the team as well. Graduate student Anna Stanley shouted him down, arguing that by suggesting that supporting Taylor and Behagen would adversely sacrifice other black men, Ross was blaming them.[715]

The *Daily* joined the discourse on the racial reaction and printed a cartoon satirizing the flag raising at Iowa Jima with a black Gopher basketball player tied to a cross being lifted by

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[714] "Regent: racial overtones in brawl reaction," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 1, 1972, 3.

[715] Robert Ross was a minister and PhD student who went on to work for the University as an assistant professor. He had written his dissertation on student activism. Bill Morlock, "Blacks demand meeting on players suspension," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 8.

members of the Ohio National Guard, simultaneously painting Taylor and Behagen as martyrs and victims of a corrupt culture that had bred the extreme over-reaction at Kent State two years prior. Earl D. Craig, a junior at Minnesota, voiced his support of the protest against the suspensions: "the University should not be intimidated by racist opinions without or within the University community. […] There has been little impartial investigation and no assumption of 'innocence until proven guilty.' There has not even been any assumption of shared guilt." He pointed out that other sports also include spontaneous fights that are dismissed as tempers "flaring up in the heat of battle." But "When the athletes are black the language changes to 'barbarians,' 'Musselman's jungle team, 'tramp athletes' and other such assumptions of innate barbarity."[716] Hattie Webb's letter seconded Craig's arguments, calling the suspensions "another victory for open racism." She described that the "fact that none of the Ohio State players received as much as a reprimand for their initial part in the brawl, the fact that Ohio State coach Fred Taylor continues to receive encouragement in his condemnation of 'those bushes at Minnesota,' and that the encounter was predominantly black against white, is proof that this incident is indeed racial, not athletic." She warned that every "black athlete in the Big Ten should closely examine and analyze from this just exactly how 'limited and expendable' his time and talent is, and will realize that one step out of line even to protect himself will mean that he is really out there by himself when judgment time comes."[717]

Lorraine Page wrote in, arguing that the "expulsion of Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen from the Gopher basketball team cannot be viewed as an isolated event because it isn't. It is

[716] Earl D. Craig, Jr., "Racial overtones seen in players' suspensions," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 5.
[717] Hattie Webb, "Victory," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 5.

closely related to what is happening in all sports, professional sports." She felt that neither Taylor nor Behagen were being given due process and were being tried before all of the evidence was in. She wished that their suspension was "pending further investigation," a motion the University tried to implement but which was turned down by the Big Ten, rather than an indefinite one. She too called for Witte's investigation and punishment and urged that the violent reaction of the Gophers be viewed at least contemplated as a response to Witte's actions. She suggested that it did not need the attention of state governors, state legislatures, or lawyers.[718] R. Nathaniel Scott, a doctoral candidate in history, also pointed out the seeming injustice of their suspensions: "I have never deluded myself that equality and justice in American society are realities to America's minorities." He argued that the move to suspend only Taylor and Behagen, and the University and the Big Ten's decision to go along with that plan, "overtly places all responsibility" on those two. He lamented:

> The establishment is willing to exploit the black player, but it is little concerned if he is educated. Moreover, a black cannot hope for equality in employment even in 'liberal' Minnesota. Head coach, athletic director and department head positions are usually reserved for third-rate white 'All-Americans' and bench warmers. If a black fails to make the professional league in his specialty, he finds himself thrust into a society that offers him no economic security.[719]

Here, Scott attempted to move the conversation from an isolated incident and contextualized it within the society that led many African Americans to view the reaction to the fight and the suspensions as racially influenced, but such nuanced arguments were easily ignored by those who could not or would not get past the violence of the act.

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[718] Mrs. Allen Page, "Happening all over," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 5.
[719] R. Nathaniel Scott, "Suspension mirrors minority players' exploitation," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 5.

Behagen felt that their suspensions should have immediately been reviewed more thoroughly: "I feel the fight was provoked by members of their [Ohio State's] team coming off the bench." He believed that the game had been fairly rough and the incident had been set off at the end of the first half when Witte elbowed Nix in the head. Taylor was frustrated that he was "out for the rest of the season for two seconds of anger." He told the *Daily* that he "saw Witte fall. I was worried that he might be hurt. I grabbed his hand to pull him up, and at that point he spat at me." In the same article, Jeff Gordon reveals that Ohio State coach Fred Taylor expressed an interest in filing legal charges against the two, but his players asked him to refrain.[720] An article in the *Michigan Daily* quotes Coach Fred Taylor as saying: "The only penalty is that [Behagen and Taylor] will miss nine games. They are still on scholarship and they are still practicing with the team. […] We must seek legal counsel about civil or criminal action on behalf of Witte and Wagner and I hope our school would instigate it."[721] It seemed that Ohio State's players were far less outraged by the fight than fans, their coach, their legislature, and even their governor. Despite numerous apologies by Musselman and Minnesota officials, Ohio State was still upset because they had not received an "official" apology.[722] Lee Nesbit, a student at Minnesota, tried to put the incident and its reaction into context in his letter to the editor. He argues that it is ludicrous to think that Musselman has so much power that he can turn

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[720] Jeff Gordon, "Taylor, Behagen frown on ruling," *Minnesota Daily*, date unknown, but likely around this timeframe, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[721] Qtd in Mort Noveck, "Continuing controversy … on a slow decision," 7.

[722] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, "Minutes of the Special Meeting: Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics," February 3, 1972, 1, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

his players into "vicious automatons," claiming that such an inference is a "gross insult to the men he coaches." Rather, he notes that "Corky Taylor said it best and simply: 'I lost my head.'"[723] Many Minnesotans were attempting to make the point that what the two did, while wrong and unacceptable, should not be used to condemn the entire team, the fan base, and even the entirety of the players as individuals. And this is intriguing, considering that the black protestors who occupied Morrill Hall received far less support when theirs was a non-violent act. But perhaps, the prowess of the basketball team served as a unifying factor for Minnesotans. These were plays who helped the team win and were more visible and more tangibly affected the lives of white fans through their success on the court than they felt the occupiers did. But, other Big Ten coaches, the media, and the public in general were painting Taylor and Behagen with a wide brush as out of control and animalistic.

The state of Ohio, conversely, attempted to turn the incident into a much larger issue. Ohio Governor John J. Gilligan claimed that the fight was "the most shocking thing I ever saw" and members of the Ohio Legislature introduced a resolution which would have banned any athletic contests between Minnesota and Ohio State for two years. Minnesota Representative Roger H. Scherer of Hennepin wrote a scathing response to them in early February. With biting sarcasm, Scherer commended them for "restoring my somewhat shaken faith in the innate sense of proportion and justice possessed by the politicians of Ohio. I had thought that their generally passive response to the Kent State slaughter of 1970 might perhaps be indicative of a certain moral lethargy in the face of a public outrage."[724] He mocked Gilligan's comment about the fight

[723] Lee Nesbit, "Athletic department draws unfair criticism," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 5.
[724] Roger H. Scherer to Governor Gilligan and Ohio Legislature, February 3, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics

being the "most shocking" thing the governor had ever seen, remarking that it "clearly showed a man who had his priorities straight." He made note of Witte's unpunished elbow to Nix's face and commended Ohio State for taking their ball and going home, awarding them the "'Woody Hayes sportsmanship and good taste award' – a silver yardmarker broken in half," a reference to Hayes' violent outbursts and destruction of Big Ten property.[725] He scolded them for wasting time with such a frivolous resolution and apologized for Minnesota's slowness at responding, explaining "it's because we are usually preoccupied with such problems as fair taxation, good schools, clean waters (cleaner, for instance than the Cuyahoga River) and an efficient system of justice. It must be wonderful to be an Ohio legislator and have nothing more important to get exercised about than a college basketball game."

Scherer was not the only Minnesotan to point out the hypocrisy of Ohio State fans complaining about unsportsmanlike behavior, considering the "unsportsmanlike" record of football coach Woody Hayes. William English, Elmer Childress, Nellie Stone-Johnson, and Ronald A. Edwards, activists in the Twin Cities area, sent a telegram to President Moos, asking for his support "in seeing that justice and even handedness is administered in this issue."[726] They noted that the suspension of the two players by the University and the Big Ten, when taken in conjunction with Governor Gilligan calling it a "public mugging," had created an even more heightened atmosphere surrounding the incident and wanted to make sure that they received a

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Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[725] Ibid.

[726] Telegram from William English, Elmer Childress, Nellie Stone-Johnson, and Ronald A. Edwards to Malcolm Moos, January 29, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

fair and impartial hearing. Likewise, they asked through Moos that "the Big Ten and its commissioner make public the findings and action, if any, in the Woody Hayes incident of last fall." Hayes had torn up a yard-marker, swore at and berated referee Jerry Markbreit, and received an unsportsmanlike penalty. In response, Hayes tore up more markers, threw the first-down marker like a javelin, and had to be held back by his own coaches to stop him from doing more damage. The writers of the telegram were pointing out the inconsistency in how the Big Ten did business. By making official statements about Taylor and Behagen, suspending them without due process, and questioning their character, the Big Ten had enflamed the public controversy.

The Urban League also pushed for full, public disclosure over Duke's actions against Hayes, both in a private letter to Duke and in a public meeting. At the meeting, Gleason Clover, the Executive Director of the League, expressed his belief that the punitive action against *only* Taylor and Behagen "smacks of racial overtones."[727] In his letter to Duke, documenting his concern over the rhetoric and circus-like atmosphere instigated by Governor Gilligan and Coach Taylor, because of the level of official authority their opinions carried to the discourse. He noted that "many who were in attendance at that basketball game, feel that there is a definite degree of racial overtones involved in this incident that is obvious to large segments of the Black community."[728] While he did not condone the behavior of those involved in the fight, he

[727] "Local board condemns punitive action taken against U basketball players," *Twin Cities Courier*, Feb. 4, 1972, 1.
[728] Gleason Clover to Wayne Duke, February 1, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

conveyed that the League did "not feel that equal opportunity [had] been given these athletes to present their side to the picture."

For at least one Gopher, sophomore Tom Johnson, the reactions by the AAAC and the Minneapolis Urban League to the suspensions were not about inequality or a failure of due process, but grew out of paranoia and a false feeling of victimhood. He felt that the groups were entirely out of line and displacing responsibility, calling it "the most ridiculous and paranoid reaction I have ever heard. The fact that Taylor and Behagen are black has absolutely no bearing on the suspensions and I resent the insinuation that it does. Clearly, these groups of blacks are groping in the dark for issues to exploit […]"[729] Johnson doubted their sincerity and assumed that the groups were actually saying: "Sure, what these men did was wrong, but they are black and therefore should not be punished." Johnson's reaction demonstrated an undercurrent of reactionary thought present at Minnesota and throughout the country. Rather than questioning why the fight was between black and white players or why the players did not receive due process or why the players were belittled as animals, Johnson saw the inclusion of race as ancillary or even irrelevant to the issue. However, for members of the black community, the race of Taylor and Behagen was incredibly germane and seemed to follow a history of racially-based public reactions in the Twin Cities. And, considering that they were advocating for due process and defending individuals rather than defending violence, it does not seem as if they are blowing an issue out of proportion.

In early February, Coach Taylor and Governor Gilligan denied any racial intent with their statements to the *Daily* via phone calls. When informed by the reporter that University officials

[729] Tom Johnson, "Paranoid," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 5.

were attempting to have the suspensions appealed and were pushing for an investigation into punishments for Ohio State players involved in the fight, Coach Taylor responsed: "Shit! What in the world is going on? Who started the fight, anyway?" Gilligan's press secretary, Bob Tenenbaum, replied: "Anybody that tries to make a racial incident out of this [Gilligan's remarks] is a racist." Rather than explaining the governor's remarks or attempting to understand why the AAAC and the Urban League might have viewed his words as inflammatory, the press secretary resorted to calling the Governor's critics racists. He saw their tactics as ludicrous and an attempt to draw attention away from the fight: "It is very easy to say that the aftermath of the fight was racial because it is impossible to prove otherwise. Anybody who says that is trying to make the public forget what happened that night."[730]

But, for many members of the AAAC and their sympathizers, who agreed that Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen's actions were condemnable, the reaction to the event, the lack of due process, and the arguably racial rhetoric surrounding the discussion were all incredibly relevant to the situation. Members of the AAAC met with officials from the athletic department on February 2 to discuss "the racial overtones which they feel [were] evident in public and official reaction" to the fight.[731] Later that day, a crowd of about 150 students – not just members of the AAAC – met to hold a panel discussion, presided over by Francisco Lloyd. Well aware of public opinion painting them as crying wolf about what had been deemed as a non-racial event, Lloyd cautioned that they "didn't want any shouting or screaming because we know what the news

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[730] "Ohio coach, governor deny racial overtones," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 8.
[731] Bill Morlock, "Blacks question athletic officials on suspension," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 2, 1972, 1.

media will do with that, so keep cool."[732] Anna Stanley gave an impassioned speech calling for the University to make some kind of statement on their commitment to due process and their students and assuring that investigations into the apparent racial response over the fight would be investigated. She argued that "People are trying to skirt the issue that race is involved." She condemns the rhetoric of the wild, animalistic black male being flung about by officials, media outlets, and fans alike: "All of a sudden Sambo becomes the savage and goes racing across the floor inspired by the drums of ancient Africa. This is how [the incident] was presented. I don't think you'd have this much going on if there were only two white players involved. The University has, by its silence, acquiesced to the accusations."[733] The Twin Cities Intercollegiate Athletic Committee – composed of faculty, students, and alumni as well as two nonvoting members appointed by Moos from the black community – continued to hold investigative hearings about the fight to ascertain what exactly happened, suggest proper punishments, and recommend ways to prevent future incidents, but their findings remained private until their report was published in March. With little official word emerging, many assumed that the University was indifferent or antipathetic to the concerns of the AAAC and to the support of Taylor and Behagen.

Terry Addison, the former Gopher football player and current graduate student at the University, penned an editorial with seven others to the *Daily* that appeared on February 4. Having experienced racial insensitivity – or at least racial ignorance – in the athletic department

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[732] Ibid., 1.
[733] Ibid., 1.

during his time at Minnesota and having earned a degree in African American Studies, Addison was well-positioned to comment on the current situation.[734] The letter writers stated:

> It is imperative that we denounce the castration of Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen. Certainly the University and the metropolitan media have editorially 'lynched' our brothers.' Traditionally, blacks have been defined and stereotyped by Euro-Americans as Samboes or devils. In this context, the fight at the Minnesota-Ohio State basketball game is a historical reincarnation of Nat Turner's march through South Hampton County, Va. – overnight the Sambo has become the Devil.[735]

They pointed to the expectation that black athletes should remain quiet and do their "job," remaining thankful that they were given the opportunity to attend school and play basketball in a predominantly white society. This expectation demanded a "neutered" version of the black male, making him "safe" for white consumption, and negating the perceived sexual threat of black masculinity. bell hooks described the rhetorical power in terms like "animal" and "savage" to control and attempt to negate agency: "As long as black males were deemed savages unable to rise above their animal nature, they could be seen as a threat easily contained. It was the black male seeking liberation from the chains of imperialist white-supremacist capitalist patriarchy that had to be wiped out. This black man potential rebel, revolutionary, leader of the people could not be allowed to thrive."[736] This rhetorical movement of Behagen and Taylor from Sambo to Devil firmly kept them within their allowed space without granting them agency. Instead, they were driven by "natural" and animalistic instincts: "Sambo does his job, draws sellout crowds, never

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[734] Terry Addison also earned his master's degree in history from the University and was appointed to the Interim Advisory Committee on Afro-American Studies in 1973 while he was still a teaching assistant. He has served in higher education for much of his career. "Russ Hamilton Heads Afro-American Advisory Group," *University of Minnesota News Service*, March 9, 1973.

[735] Terry Addison, Ralph Crowder, Robert Fikes, Robert Scott, Malik Simba, Carl Gaines, Howard McGary, and Herbert West, "Sambo or the Devil," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 4, 1972, 4.

[736] bell hooks, *We Real Cool: Black Men and Masculinity* (London: Routledge, 2004), x.

questions, and most importantly never acts. The Devil is any brother who steps outside of the above role. This is no different for the day-to-day black who is no superstar. To survive, he must face a segmented definition of his humanity."[737] They argued that this was not just a sports issue and it certainly was not a non-racial issue – at least the rhetorical response to it.

They felt that talented black athletes – not coaches, fans, or cheerleaders – had led to a resurgence of Minnesota basketball and a packed arena. But this success on the court led to little gratitude for blacks as people: "When any black athlete steps outside of his traditional role of Sambo – the verdict is guilty, e.g. Tommie Smith, John Carlos, Muhammad Ali or Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen."[738] They dismissed the defense of Witte's father, Governor Gilligan, Coach Taylor, and sports commentators who denied any racial overtones in their words, pointing to the history of such rhetoric to silence and dehumanize African American males who stood up for themselves, and compared it to "Ronald Reagan's classic assertion that ghetto rebels are 'mad dogs.'"

But this overt discussion of racial rhetoric and the perceptions of members of the black community provoked annoyance or anger in some of the white students. The editorials and letters to the editor in the *Daily* upset Tom Schuster, a senior at Minnesota. He longs "for the day when the mood on campus will change so that many students can begin to overcome their view of life as a brutal struggle in a cruel world, where everyone is out to 'exploit' and-or 'oppress'

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[737] Terry Addison, et al., "Sambo or the Devil," 4.

[738] They also brought up Frantz Fanon's defense of violence as a political act of colonized peoples: "the Jan. 25 fight was in a secondary sense an outcome of the tensions and emotions that arise when any group of blacks confronts whites athletically, academically or socially. Yet, in a primary sense (i.e. the gut level) violence by blacks toward whites (in the context of this world) is a political manifestation - Sambo is liberated! Certainly confronting the legacy of black athletic exploitation in any form (words or actions) signs and seals the fate of the black athlete." Ibid., 4.

them."[739] Tom Kenderson, a sophomore, reckons that if you are a "white, Anglo-American, male with no handicaps or deformities, you are at a disadvantage."[740] He feels that the AAAC and the Urban League were making something out of nothing, and felt that being part of a minority group gave you an advantage when it came to culpability in life: "If you want a job, get caught smoking pot, don't get a promotion, don't get a scholarship, don't get accepted to University or have any type of legal action taken against you, you can't scream any type of prejudice and you are stuck with the outcome." He reasons that prejudice still exists in society, but he believes that "opportunistic bastards [were] using the prejudice to further their own case when there [was] no prejudice."[741] Both students doubted the claims of the AAAC and the Urban League, likely owing to their own personal experiences with relatively little "brutal struggle," exploitation, or oppression. And it is interesting that Kenderson believed that minority groups escaped the outcomes of their actions, considering that both Taylor and Behagen were facing the consequences of fighting – consequences beyond what the Big Ten had ever seen.

By this time, most in the Minnesota community had learned about the University's attempts to overturn the suspensions and about Commissioner Wayne Duke's refusal to reconsider. On February 4, the Committee had formerly voted to reinstate both players, considering that it was unfair to suspend them without due process.[742] They wanted to

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[739] He suggests that only by conquering these "paralytic influences" could students "create of ourselves happy and joyful beings." Tom Schuster, "Is the Conventional Wisdom," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 12, 1972, 5.

[740] Tom Kenderson, "Majority," *Minnesota Daily*, Feb. 14, 1972, 4.

[741] Ibid., 4.

[742] Twin Cities Assembly Committee for Intercollegiate Athletics, "Report of an Action of the Twin Cities Assembly Committee for Intercollegiate Athletics," February 10, 1972, 2-3, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics

temporarily remove the suspension because of the "undue harassment and character vilification" the two had faced from the media and public and university officials.[743] But Duke refused to give in and upheld the suspension on February 10. The *Daily* editorialized that "Duke's actions seem to assume that athletes possess different or fewer rights than other students and citizens."[744] Duke had "suspended the players after viewing the game films, conferring cursorily with University administrators and cross-examining the Gophers for only 15 minutes. The players did not have the benefit of legal counsel during the meeting with the commissioner, and a public hearing was not called to consider the failure of University officials to support the players' rights until black students agitated vigorously for explanations." Once again, progressive change and adherence to the Conference's own rules did not come until they were demanded from those outside of the official power structures of the University. Without following their own procedures, the Big Ten had levied an unprecedented suspension, with little to no discussion. The *Daily* argued that individual rights still had to matter in dire situations. The Committee wrote to Duke and noted their annoyance with his "unbending" nature. Duke wrote a letter to Moos, Schultze, and Giel shortly after, arguing that he was merely protecting the "welfare of the Conference" by sticking to the originally agreed upon suspension.[745] A week later, the *Daily* ran another editorial, pointing out that "the secrecy surrounding the hearing has served to perpetuate

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Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[743] They cited "jungle tactics" and "public mugging" as two examples that failed as "adequate criteria for judging the acts of these individuals" and were "unnecessarily inflammatory." Ibid., 2.

[744] "Basketball court," *Minnesota Daily,* Feb. 16, 1972, 4.

[745] Wayne Duke to Malcolm Moos, M.O. Schultze, and Paul Giel, February 17, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

the doubts" many had over whether Behagen and Taylor were receiving a fair trial or any trial, for that matter.[746]

Mike Davis and Joe Hudson, chairmen of the Black American Law Students Association, wrote in to the *Daily* expressing their disgust over the University's actions. They write that it was more than a "due process" issue. They argue that "Racism in America, and specifically, institutional racism on the University campus are these underlying" issues.[747] They believe that the fight *had* to be discussed through the lens of race, considering that it "was black against white at its very roots. Even one of the black Ohio State players said it was a 'racial thing.' Black Minnesota players came to the aid of their 'brothers' after the Ohio State bench came onto the floor. The University failed to recognize this situation." Davis and Hudson call out public commentators who they believed exposed their "white racism," and point to the remarks of Gilligan and Coach Taylor. They call for Moos and Schultze to face suspensions because they "failed to provide Behagen and Taylor with the adequate procedural safeguards," and "succumb[ed] to the intimidation of racist opinions of certain public officials."

When the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics finally released their report on the incident in March, they came to the conclusion that the fight itself was not racially motivated, but the outcry and discourse that followed arguably were. Some debate arose over whether Witte actually spit on Taylor or not. Taylor gave two versions of the story, with one indicating that Witte looked as if he were about to spit on him, but he eventually insisted that Witte did indeed spit. A witness who had sat ten rows back claimed that he saw Witte spit, but

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[746] "Duke's court," *Minnesota Daily,* Feb. 18, 1972, 4.

[747] Mike Davis and Joe Hudson, "Turnabout on Suspension," *Minnesota Daily,* Feb. 25, 1972, 44.

the Committee felt that he would not have had a clear view of the action. Film of the moment was inconclusive, but the medical staff member who examined Witte that evening testified that Witte likely would have been in a semi-comatose state and unable to spit at Taylor.[748] While the Committee allows for the possibility that the fight was in response to Witte's hard elbow at the game's half, they felt that the two events were too far apart to constitute motive. They also doubted Behagen's claim that he took the "straightest line" to help out Jim Brewer, who was being attacked by OSU players, considering that he found his way over to Witte lying on the floor and kicked him between two to five times. At that point, a player pulled him off of Witte and Behagen swung at another Ohio State player and ran to the other side of the court to kick yet another Buckeye.[749] Behagen denied any personal hatred toward Witte, noting that he had played against him in the Pan-American Camp the previous summer. He did note that he thought Witte did "a very good job in faking fouls," and that is how Behagen collected his fifth foul during the game.[750] Minnesota coaches mostly agreed that the refereeing during the game was inconsistent, but not biased, a sentiment Arthur Erpelding, a former official and present observer of referees for the Big Ten backed up.[751] Clarence Mueller, the official time keeper for Minnesota athletic events, disagreed, blaming the refs for allowing the game to get out of hand by not cooling tempers. He especially singled out Red Strauthers, a referee from Ohio whose impartiality he found questionable. Julius Perlt, the PA announcer, saw it as the "worst job of

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[748] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, University of Minnesota, "A Report of the Events Which Terminated the January 25, 1972 Basketball Game with the Ohio State University," 52.
[749] Ibid., 52.
[750] Ibid,. 69.
[751] Ibid., 16.

officiating in thirty years."[752] As most in the Minnesota community had argued, the fight may have been instigated, but that did not make it justified; the players should have due process; the reaction to the fight was racist in nature.

In the end, the Committee's report could not do anything to change the mind of Wayne Duke and the Big Ten. Behagen and Taylor served out their suspensions; Minnesota won the Big Ten, but lost to Florida State in the first round of the NCAA Tournament.[753] The Committee criticized the Big Ten's own procedures for part of the ensuing crisis after the fight. The Conference had no clear procedures in place to deal with an altercation on the court. In fact, when Wayne Duke pointed to the punishment being over "unsportsmanlike" conduct, the University of Minnesota's attorney R. Joel Tierney queried "What are the Conference's standards for sportsmanlike conduct?"[754] In short, they had none. In an injunction motion filed by

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[752] Ibid., 16.

[753] Just after the tournament, student protests against a renewed, escalated bombing campaign in the Vietnam War fanned out across the campus, resulting in some of the largest and most violent (although not necessarily on the part of the students) altercations seen in the University's history. In mid-April students protested outside of an Air Force recruiting station in Dinkytown (a student community next to campus) and stormed the Armory Building on campus. The following month saw off-campus police intervention in response to escalating demonstrations and multiple allegations of police brutality in their use of tear gas and batons. At one point, a police helicopter dropped gas on Dinkytown, but the gas drifted toward a local high school and nursery school. Tear gas used on campus also affected students walking across the campus mall to attend classes. Protestors took over streets next to campus and erected barricades at multiple points during the demonstrations. After investigating the protests, the University decided that nothing could have really prevented the outbreak, but they felt that Minneapolis police (the University investigation labeled police action as "abominable" and "out of control") only served to escalate the demonstrations and make them more dangerous. They argued that it was sheer "luck" that nobody was killed. University of Minnesota Commission of Inquiry, "Report of the Commission of Inquiry," *University of Minnesota*, Nov. 27, 1973, Box 175, " Student Strike 1970-1972," Office of the President Records – Protests and Disputes, uarc 841, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, MN.

[754] R. Joel Tierney to Wayne Duke, February 21, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics

Behagen and Taylor in a federal court, Judge Larsen agreed with Tierney and found that the Big Ten failed to follow its own procedures, citing Section VI (C) paragraph 1 of the Big Ten's handbook:[755] He found that the "lack of structure in the Conference contributed to the controversy" as did "needless post-game comments by supposedly mature individuals," fanning the "emotional aspects of the original altercation."[756] However, because Duke merely followed the original suggestions of the University of Minnesota, his suspension could not be considered arbitrary, and the punishment was upheld. Later that week, the Faculty Representatives of the Big Ten voted (with the representatives from Ohio State and Minnesota recusing themselves) 8-0 to uphold the suspensions for the rest of the season.[757] Schultze agreed to the decision on Minnesota's behalf but indicated that any further sanctions would go unannounced due to previous negative reactions.[758] The University quietly put Dave Winfield on probation for the

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Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[755] "The Directors shall afford the institution, its employees or students, concerned an opportunity to appear at the meeting in which the Commissioner's report is made and to be heard in defense against charges." Qtd. in "A Report of the Events Which Terminated the January 25, 1972 Basketball Game with the Ohio State University," 44.

[756] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, "Minutes of the Special Meeting: Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics," February 22, 1972, 1, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[757] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, "Minutes of the Special Meeting: Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics," March 8, 1972, 1, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[758] M.O. Schultze to Wayne Duke, March 8, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

rest of the academic year for his role in the fight; he was informed that any further incidents would result in a four game suspension and a hearing.[759]

However, the report also addressed the often racially motivated responses that followed and enflamed the discussion. The committee concluded that if "one were to assume that the present American culture in general is racist, as has been suggested by a number of analyses, then one logically might conclude that any behavior involving the participation of blacks and whites would of necessity have racial overtones."[760] They decided that "very little, if any, racial animosity was present initially between Minnesota and Ohio State personnel." But the ensuing "reaction plus postmortem analyses in the press and elsewhere are replete with phraseology that could hardly be interpreted as other than a reflection of the general charge of racism which is said to exist in the system as a whole."[761] While players denied that the fight itself was racially motivated, "a great deal of publicity after the game appeared to be racially biased." Likewise, on the very first day of the Committee's investigation, members of the Minneapolis and St. Paul Urban Leagues and former black athletes from the University spoke to the Committee about their worry that "any penalty which might be assessed would be racially motivated."[762] They granted that it was incredibly difficult and irresponsible to pretend to assess the impact of society's racist nature on this one particular event, "but it is quite clear that such a condition constitutes a part of

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[759] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, "Minutes of the Special Meeting: Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics," March 3, 1972, 1, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
[760] "A Report of the Events Which Terminated the January 25, 1972 Basketball Game with the Ohio State University,"15.
[761] Ibid., 15.
[762] Ibid., 28.

the context in which all athletic as well as non-athletic events occur within our system."[763] As a result of their findings, they admitted that they still had little idea regarding what would have been an appropriate punishment, largely because of the lack of clear Conference procedures. However, they did argue for the Big Ten hiring more black officials (as opposed to the *one* who was currently employed). In March, Schultze had noted that the Conference was moving toward finding, hiring, and training black officials beyond just referees.[764]

But this decision to hire more black officials and referees and to seek input from black student-athletes also sprung from the pressure being placed on the Big Ten by three African American professors at Michigan State, angered by the racist backlash to the fight and the racial inequality still holding back black student-athletes in the conference. By May, Schultze reported that the Big Ten was setting up an Advisory Committee of black, Big Ten athletes to look into Conference changes toward racial equality, and he requested that Judge Dickson and Ernie Cook serve as Minnesota's representatives for they had "achieved prominence and respect in their communities."[765] However, neither were basketball players, even though the issue that largely motivated the change involved said sport. Both Dickson and Cook agreed to serve on the committee and Dickson became the chair. He addressed Big Ten officials in December, pointing out that black committee members felt "they are being watched by the Black community and are

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[763] Ibid., 15.

[764] M.O. Schultze to Malcolm Moos, March 9, 1972, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

[765] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, "Minutes of the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics," May 4, 1972, 2, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

expected to be more than just a token organization. They are concerned that black athletes should obtain their degree, and that athletes not be 'used.'"[766] They asked that the Big Ten survey its schools regarding counseling services for black student-athletes and called for a rule change that would force student-athletes into definite progress toward their degrees, spelling out personal course suggestions and a plan that would move them toward a degree. And they also pushed for financial aid for a fifth year for students who could not finish in four due to the constraints of playing sports. The Big Ten changed, but not without pressure from below. These changes, on their surface, did not make teams more competitive on the playing field – an understood though not explicitly stated motivation for the integration of sports within the conference. But, by giving African Americans more say in how the Big Ten operated, by opening up positions of authority and advancement, and by demonstrating to students-athletes that they were seen as students as well as athletes, these changes helped move the Big Ten closer to the ideology of progressiveness the conference championed and the ideals it felt had been achieved already through integrated athletic teams.

In the following years, minority students, student-athletes, and their allies continued to voice their concerns with the University's commitment to progress and equality. Just weeks before the basketball fight, the MSA had asked the Board of Regents to postpone their appointment of a new Athletic Director and football coach at Minnesota. They wanted the board to "consider the implications of the lack of consultation with students and faculty regarding these

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[766] Twin Cities Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics, "Minutes of the Assembly Committee on Intercollegiate Athletics," December 7, 1972, 1, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

appointments."[767] They did not object to the full-time hiring of Paul Giel or Cal Stoll, but, "based on concern for the lack of consultation in an area which directly affects students, and in a department which is partly supported by student fees," they felt that they had a right to request a say in the matter. Student life had surely changed. Students no longer tolerated or accepted the paternal myth universities put forth of knowing what was best for their students (and it usually was not necessarily in the students' best interests, but more a means of controlling extra-curricular activities, morality, and student free speech), nor did they quietly accept that which they found unfair, even within the still paternal world of college athletics. They wanted more transparency from their University, questioning whether Minnesota followed their own affirmative action hiring policy and pointing out that "administrative vacancies may not be filled if no effort to recruit minority and women applicants has been made."[768]

Even five years later, student-athletes did not feel that the University was living up to its ideals and promises. The *Daily* conducted a survey that found that "despite good feelings toward sports and coaches, many athletes were dissatisfied or disillusioned."[769] 224 athletes returned the survey to the *Daily*. Seventeen percent said that they received less financial aid than their recruiters led them to believe they would get. Over thirty percent said that their coaches still berated athletes in front of teammates ,and "23 percent said their coach primarily relied on negative reinforcement – yelling and criticizing – in coaching." One respondent questions the

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[767] "Students Ask for Postponement of Appointment of Athletic Director and Football Coach," MSA Press Release, January 11, 1972, 1, Box 30, "Ohio State versus Minnesota Basketball Fight 1972," University of Minnesota Athletics Records, 1876-2012: Men's Athletics Administration – Committees, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.
[768] Ibid., 3.
[769] "Athletes rate (and berate) coaches, resources and U priorities," *Minnesota Daily*, Oct. 25, 1977, 1.

entire mythology of fighting one's "foes" in the arena: "[…] perhaps you can work up a sense of anger as the coach exhorts you to 'destroy' the 'enemy' that is invading Minnesota to degrade the fine institution you attend. But you neither own that institution nor belong to it." He notes:

> In essence, then, college football amounts to a large theater of the absurd held on Saturdays during the fall; brutally staged to supply maximum emotion to an excitement-starved crowd; acted by strong young men fueled by fabricated hatreds; choreographed by immature incompetents; heralded as a catharsis to an automaton society that long since lost the value of human emotion.[770]

A similarly disillusioned respondent reveals that, were he presented with the opportunity to do it all over again, he would not, because he would have liked "to be able to concentrate on my studies," a powerful and sadly controversial thought at an institution of higher learning.

Joe Walsh, the men's tennis coach, saw little value in authoritarian coaches, noting that "the amount of time spent in athletic meetings on the discussion of athletes' hair is atrocious and ridiculous." He feels that "Today's athlete is more intelligent and he doesn't like the old methods of coaching."[771] In the paternal world of sports, his was largely a lone voice. He found Harry Edwards' *Revolt of the Black Athlete* (1969) fascinating and tried to incorporate its message into his own coaching and everyday conversations with other members of the Athletic Department; most had little interest in the book: "Some people refer to me as a rebel. I really don't think I am. I differ from many coaches, including probably about 90 per cent of them right here at the University." He contemplates the troubling myth about athletics that dominant society celebrates and to which it clings – a myth that the Big Ten trumpeted even while facing continual calls and demands for change from students, faculty, and community members alike: "Sport has been a

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[770] Ibid., 1.

[771] Considering that Edwards' book came out in November, 1969 and Walsh was no longer the coach at Minnesota after 1971, it likely appeared between 1970 and 1971. Mike Hannaher, "Coaching liberalism," *Minnesota Daily*, n.d.

sacred area, where average Americans figure blacks and whites are equals. Middle America doesn't want to see these problems when it turns on the television. Sports has been a progressive area, but it still has a long way to go."

Chapter 4

"Spartan Teams are Bound to Win": Effective Change through Student-Athletic Activism

Introduction: Black Athletes and Black Student Culture at Michigan State

In 1913 Gideon Smith became the first African American varsity athlete for Michigan State as a tackle for the football team, beginning a relationship between black football players and Michigan State that would be trumpeted by the University in years to come.[772] Despite Michigan State's perceived progressive stance on integration on the field, many African American students still felt ostracized on campus and in East Lansing. While Booker T. Washington gave the commencement speech in 1900 and Mrs. G. Mowbray became the first African American graduate of Michigan State in 1907, larger integration did not come until much later.[773] That is not to say that Michigan State was not ahead of the curve for many universities throughout the country in regard to accepting black students at the school; however, that inclusion was still not without its problems. In 1917 Michigan State College had five black students with that number increasing to thirty-seven by 1949, although this represented less than

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[772] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'"103.

[773] This unpublished report was gathered under the direction of Dr. Ruth Simms Hamilton from five black Michigan State University administrators (Dr. Lloyd Cofer, Consultant to the Provost; Dr. James Hamilton, Assistant Provost for Special Programs; Dr. Joseph McMillan, Assistant Vice President and Director, Human Relations Department; Dr. Gwendolyn Norrell, Assistant Director, Counseling Center; and Mr. Charles Thornton, Special Programs Advisor, Center for Supportive Services) and 20-25 black students who had attended MSU in the prior 25 years. Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University: A Preliminary Research Report," June, 1973, ii, Box 2359, Folder 14, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

0.003% of the school's population.[774] This rise in the black population coincided with an influx of government money coming into the college, the GI Bill allowing returning veterans to pursue higher education, and Michigan State's increasing dominance on the football field.[775] Michigan State's recruitment and use of African American athletes surely helped them on the gridiron, and a significant number of the black students on campus were the recipients of athletic scholarships in some form.[776] Most of the black students on campus were from working-class to middle-class families and received little to no scholarship aid.[777]

The decades after World War II were a time of huge growth for Michigan State, as the school's enrollment ballooned from 14,000 to well over 40,000 by 1970. Despite this leap in overall student growth, the black student population only increased to roughly 300 by the early 1960s, an increase of only about 250 students.[778] In 1966, less than 600 African Americans were students at Michigan State. Black students were generally ignored outside of the athletic arenas, and policies regarding students rarely took them into account. Indeed, "blacks who attended MSU from 1948 to the mid-sixties gave credence to the statement that the black student was on his own – sink or swim – and that he and his life style were invisible to white MSU, unless, of course, he 'stepped out of his place' which, from all accounts rarely happened."[779] Thankfully, a

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[774] Ibid., 2-3.

[775] Although, it was quite difficult for many black veterans to receive their GI benefits. See Margot Canaday, *The Straight State: Sexuality and Citizenship in Twentieth-Century America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2011).

[776] Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University," 3.

[777] This information was estimated from black alumni who attended MSU during this time. Ibid., 13.

[778] Ibid., 3.

[779] Ibid., 4.

record of their time at Michigan State University and a glimpse into the evolving "structures of feeling"[780] that existed throughout the black student population throughout the 1950s, 1960s, and early 1970s survives in an unpublished report from 1973 supervised by Dr. Ruth Simms Hamilton, a faculty member in the Department of Sociology and the African Studies Center.[781] In the report, Charles Thornton, a former administrator of the Developmental Programs, recalled:

> Many of the blacks who started to [come] MSU in the late sixties did so because, while the University had instituted policy changes geared toward increasing black enrollment, members of the black community began to react to the fact of increased possibilities for blacks going to college. The same people who in the fifties might have considered that it was not feasible for them to even think of going to college were seeing in the sixties that some of their peers were being recruited to MSU, that financial resources could be had to allow for their education and that, in short, going to college was not an impossibility.[782]

Increased job opportunities for black college graduates and financial aid helped lead many more students to MSU, but responses in Dr. Ruth Simms Hamilton's report suggest that said students

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[780] This helpful term comes from Raymond Williams' *The Long Revolution* (1961). Williams, dissatisfied with "cultural treasures" held up by traditional historical narratives, argues that "the real record is effectively recoverable, and many of the alternative or opposing practical continuities still available." In other words, he encourages the search for actively lived "structures of feeling." Rather than accepting the traditional narratives and naturalized ideologies of history, forged by hegemonic forces and repeated and internalized mythologies, Williams argues that we must use "modes of analysis which, instead of reducing works to finished products, and activities to fixed positions, are capable of discerning, in good faith, the finite but significant openness of many actual initiatives and contributions." Many "structures of feeling" coexisted with the dominant narrative: the New Left and all of their denominations; the Right – young, old, moderate, reactionary, etc.; Civil Rights activists – the followers of Martin Luther King, Jr. and black power supporters, the Chicano movement, the Women's movement (including feminists who felt excluded by the white, middle-class viewpoint, etc. These differing "structures of feeling" were "present" and "in a living and inter-relating continuity," forming with and against one another so that one couldn't truly be understood without the context of the others. Raymond Williams, “The Analysis of Culture," 32-40.

[781] Ruth Simms Hamilton came to MSU in 1968 as a member of the Department of Sociology. Later she was a core faculty member in the African Studies Center, and the Center for Latin American and Caribbean Studies. Dr. Hamilton was also the director of the African Diaspora Research project for 17 years.

[782] Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University," 15.

were expected to assimilate into the collegiate atmosphere of the predominantly white campus. Again, as Raymond Williams cautions, we must be careful not to assume that "the structure of feeling, any more than the social character, is possessed in the same way by the many individuals in the community. But I think it is a very deep and very wide possession, in all actual communities, precisely because it is on it that communication depends."[783] Evidence in the report, articles and editorials from the *State News*, a student paper on campus, and Lansing-area newspapers, letters to the editor, and personal correspondence depict that from the mid-1960s onward, black students increasingly lived such a shared "structure of feeling" and stepped out of the place that had been made for them and began to firmly demand a say in their place at the University.

In the decade following World War II, Michigan State's campus was an integrated campus, but this integration was at times in name only – especially as far as dorms were concerned. President Hannah had integrated student dorms in 1941 and removed racial identification as a category on student records.[784] Despite this, most African American students were housed together in dormitories – a decision implemented by the University: "although MSU had no stated policy toward residence-hall segregation, it seems that behind the scenes work was carried on to keep blacks separated off from whites."[785] When students applied to MSU, they needed to include a picture with their application, and, "curiously enough, upon arriving on campus each black student found that out of the 500 or so residents in each of the

783 Raymond Williams, "The Analysis of Culture," 37.
784 John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 109.
785 Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University," 20.

dorms, only two or three were black and those two or three just ‘happened’ to be roommates.”[786] This practice seemed to have ended by the early sixties, considering that Bubba Smith writes humorously of his interactions with his white roommate assigned to him in his freshman year.[787] However, black women still were not very represented at MSU, considering that Smith complained that there were only forty-seven black women on the entire campus.[788]

Around this time, a local chapter of the NAACP opened under the direction of President Maxie Johnson (a student) and Dr. Robert Green as its faculty advisor.[789] The University employed roughly four black faculty members and the black student population totaled fewer than 600. The first tangible effort on the part of Michigan State, outside of athletic scholarships, to reach out to the black community began with “Project Ethyl” – a plan to bring in twenty-two students (eleven black; eleven white) from the Detroit area based on their potential, rather than through standardized criteria of GPA and testing scores. University officials in charge of the program monitored their progress and helped them deal with acclimating into a new environment. By 1967, 41% of them had graduated on schedule (no record was kept of whether or not the others graduated at another time).[790] However, more substantial changes and concerted efforts to raise admission efforts for black students came in the late 1960s, changes that came not just from the administration but also from the students themselves. From 1967 to 1970, the black students among the freshman class rose from 157 to 688 (2.2% of the class to

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[786] Ibid., 20.
[787] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 78.
[788] Ibid., 78.
[789] Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University," 5.
[790] Ibid., 5.

9.8%), and, by 1971, the total number of black undergraduate and graduate students at the University reached 2,509.[791] This growth brought with it new student organizations and previously unavailable avenues to have their voices heard (such as an increased voice in student government, resident assistantships, and the creation of the Black Student Alliance), so that "although it can be convincingly argued that blacks occup[ied] hardly more than a token role at Michigan State University at present, even such tokenism [was] totally new to an institution which is supposed to have represented educational opportunity for the less than privileged for well over a century."[792]

Project Ethyl was expanded into the Detroit Project which eventually brought in over 600 students to MSU by 1972, and the support systems put in place for it led to the creation of the Center for Urban Affairs and the Equal Opportunity Programs in 1968, a development pushed for by black student groups on campus. In its first few years on campus, the CUA became the College of Urban Development and the "Center" became a central part of many black students' everyday lives by providing a place for employment, social gatherings, and support, but student-led organizations soon rose to take the "Center's" place as many students soon felt that the "Center" had "lost touch" with their interests and constantly evolving student cultures.[793] The Center was under the direction of Dr. Robert Green who had previously worked for two years with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and had been a

[791] While this total black enrollment in 1971 was only 4.86% of the total student population, it was a significant rise from what it had been, but still lagged far behind the black portion of the state's population: 11.2%. Ibid., 6-7.
[792] Ibid., 7.
[793] Ibid., 10.

counselor for both John and Robert Kennedy.[794] Green was suggested as a candidate for director by Acting President Walter Adams, an economics professor who was appointed to lead MSU after John Hannah resigned to head the United States Agency for International Development in 1969.[795] When Adams suggested Green to the Board of Trustees, he recalled in his autobiography that "All the stale objections raised by white faculty and white administrators were discussed and rehashed."[796] Adams listed Green's credentials and pointed out that he had "extinguished embryonic revolts on campus" in prior years, but did not hide the fact that Green would be "dedicated to the attainment of equal rights by the black community and its full participation in American democracy." Despite his defense (and likely because of it) some of the trustees asked him to "withdraw the nomination because it was controversial." Adams refused and told them to vote against Green if they disagreed, but the vote went in Green's favor. Adams astutely observed that the white establishment "preferred black leaders who were cooperative, complying, and perhaps complacent—leaders who would patiently play the old game by the old

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[794] Walter Adams, *The Test* (New York: Macmillan, 1971), 90.

[795] Hannah resigned after 26 years amidst growing student protest over the Vietnam War and outcry over the public discovery of CIA infiltration of the former Michigan State University Vietnam Advisory Group (MSUG), a technical advisory group which had aided South Vietnam. A *Ramparts* article in 1966 downplayed the educational role Michigan State played in South Vietnam and insinuated that the University was largely providing firearms training in connection with the CIA. The controversial article concluded, "what the hell is a university doing buying guns, anyway?" Adams had been notably critical of the University's role in Vietnam and the article only increased student and faculty outcry against the war. However, Hannah felt strongly that the MSUG was a well-intentioned program. Years after the article, he reasoned: "We never felt any need for the University to apologize […] for what we tried to do in Vietnam. I think that if Michigan State were to face the same choice again in the same context, it might well agree to assist the U.S. Government as we did then." Warren Hinckle, Robert Scheer, Sol Stern, and Stanley K. Sheinbaum, "The University on the Make," *Ramparts*, 4.12 (April ,1966), 11-22.; Qtd. in Paul L. Dressel, *College to University: The Hannah Years at Michigan State, 1935-1969* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 1987), 279.

[796] Adams, *The Test*, 90.

rules, and couch their request in rhetoric pleasing and reassuring to white audiences."[797] But, as the newly appointed Director of the CUA would demonstrate in the coming years, he was not that kind of leader.

During the decades after WWII a few male black students did live in some of the neighborhoods of Lansing, but East Lansing was not an option. Some East Lansing residents who had rooms for rent reportedly ignored inquiring black students while watching them through the window.[798] As far as social life went, black students frequented the MSU Student Union, the black Masons' and Elks' clubs of Lansing, campus dances, parties thrown by off-campus black students, black fraternity/sorority parties, and, infrequently, East Lansing bars. By the late 1950s, informants revealed that blacks continued to maintain an isolated social life, both of their own choosing and also dictated by the mores of the campus, and remembered few racial incidents or conflicts due to black students acting in their expected "place."[799] In the early 1960s, the University stopped intentionally assigning roommates by race, but social lives remained largely segregated, spurring many students to make frequent trips home. Billye Suttles, a former student, writes:

> One could go to parties and churches that one was used to attending before coming to college. One could get "soul food" and get ones [sic] hair cut or done. There were also more sources of entertainment that appeal to black [sic] in their home communities. And lastly, it was a release from the predominantly white atmosphere of school.[800]

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[797] Ibid., 89.

[798] Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University," 21.

[799] Ibid., 22.

[800] Billye Suttles, "Life Styles of Black Students," 1973, Pg. 2, Box 2359, Folder 10, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

Further into the decade, newer dormitories built closer to the athletic complexes implemented coed dining halls that became popular hangouts for both black and white students. East Lansing housing still remained unfriendly to prospective black residents as late as 1967 despite lifting discriminatory housing ordinances in 1965, but overt incidents of housing discrimination were on the decline.[801] Stringent restrictions on alcohol, curfews, and visitation constraints in the dorms inspired many juniors and seniors to seek off-campus housing, and, for some black students, off-campus housing provided an escape from the predominance of white students in the dorms.[802]

During the mid-1960s, as more African Americans students came to campus, black fraternities and sororities grew in importance, and members of the black student body did perceive a preference for lighter-skinned students and students from richer backgrounds, especially in black sororities.[803] Likewise, the increase in black enrollment led to a felt divide between blacks in Lansing and black students in East Lansing.[804] While the black Greek organizations led to some splintering within the black population at MSU, it also provided some of the only outlets for socializing in East Lansing, as the Greek organizations sponsored dances and parties: "they were the only all-black or black-oriented organizations on campus and their gatherings were the only social events where blacks could act completely within their own life-

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[800] Ibid., 2-3.
[801] Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University," 25.
[802] Ibid., 25.
[803] Ibid., 26.
[804] Ibid., 28.

style."[805] The late 1960s also brought an increase in interracial conflicts in the dorms, as white parents complained to dormitory leaders about their child's roommate or disgruntled roommates requested a release from their assignment and wanted to move in with a new roommate of their same race.[806] The student activism of the late 1960s brought to an end the "know your place" acquiescence of previous African American students, as more and more students began to speak out against discrimination and unfair treatment. Black political groups began to fight the splintering amongst the black population caused by Greek life and social class earlier in the decade as they attempted to create a unified front for black rights. Dr. Ruth Simms Hamilton's report found that recent graduates and current students saw the black Greek organizations as divisive and detrimental to racial cohesion.[807] Even the tension between the black community of Lansing and the black student population of East Lansing lessened, but this was largely due to the population of black women on campus rising and the black male population lowering due to Vietnam, decreasing competition between the two male populations.[808]

Conversely, organized sports – this time controlled by the students, rather than the University – helped to foster a semblance of unity through the implementation of campus-wide intramural basketball by the Black United Front on the weekends in the Intramural Buildings.[809] The games proved popular, and crowds of black men and women turned out to play and watch, as had been the case with the rise in popularity of the Union as a hangout due to its bowling lanes

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[805] Ibid., 41.
[806] Ibid., 29.
[807] Ibid., 41.
[808] Ibid., 33.
[809] Ibid., 43.

and billiard tables. However, racial inclusion in this instance – like in many others during this time period – did not mean gender equality as the games were only for men, and women were merely expected to be on the sidelines. Unsurprisingly, athletics played a large part in the social lives and cultural pride of the black population at Michigan State: "Informants from the early and mid-sixties remember that during those years when so many of MSU's black football players were attaining national recognition for themselves and the team as well, attendance at the football games was a part of the social agenda of almost every black student at MSU."[810] But informants believe that it was the abundance and success of black athletes that encouraged black students to attend football and basketball games: "Blacks are strikingly absent from gymnastics, fencing, hockey, baseball, tenis [sic] and golf. […] One finds that blacks participate in more sports on the dormitory level such as bowling, badmitton [sic], basketball, volleyball teams."[811]

The 1960s also saw an increase in interracial dating, although it was still held as taboo by many in the area. During the 1960s the informants estimated that at least ninety percent of the black male population had an interracial dating experience during college, and this was overwhelmingly the norm for interracial dating: black man – white woman. In his autobiography, Bubba Smith discussed his own long-term relationship with a white coed, a discussion that involved thoughts on marriage, parental disapproval, and the dangers for black athletes found dating white women. The reverse was largely looked down upon within the black population:

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[810] Ibid., 44.

[811] Billye Suttles, ""Lifestyles of Black Students," 3.

“although it was fashionable as a status symbol for black men to date whites, black women who did so were heavily criticized not only by black men, but women as well.”[812]

Not surprisingly, campus cafeterias played a role in promoting black unity on campus, as it gave a chance for black students across campus to eat with each other, although not always without having to sneak into other cafeterias. Having prepared food for a predominantly white population for years, cafeteria staffs were not often adept at preparing soul food and other cultural foods favored and celebrated by many of the black students on campus from other regions of the country. While many students ventured home on the weekends for traditional foods, churches, barbershops, and clubs that were severely lacking in East Lansing, other students took matters into their own hands. Suttles reminisced that most university “cooks were unfamiliar with the preparation of diskes [sic] like collard greens, chitterlings, etc. therefore students (black women) would prepare these meals for the whole dormitory. Word would spread from one dorm to the next and a large segment of the black community would get meal transfers or sneak into the cafateria [sic].” Black students were able to appropriate the dorm cafeterias, at least on some nights, as spaces for the promotion of black culture and unity. But black student-athletes looked to remake their own role in the University as well.

Black Student-Athlete Activism – 1968-1970

1968 was a year of civil unrest throughout the country, and the sporting world was not exempt. In Mexico City, Tommie Smith and John Carlos received much of the attention for their silent protest against poverty amongst many African Americans and all blue-collar workers during the playing of the “Star Spangled Banner,” symbolized through the removal of their

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[812] Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University," 51.

shoes, a shared pair of black gloves, and black pride salutes. But other athletes that summer also made political statements: Peter Norman of Australia joined Smith and Carlos on the podium with them by sporting an Olympic Project for Human Rights badge, while Lee Evans, Ron Freeman, and Larry James all wore OPHR bracelets when receiving their gold medals for the 4 X 400 meter relay. Conversely, a young George Foreman wrapped himself in the American flag after his receiving his gold medal in heavyweight boxing, itself a political act, albeit one naturalized as somehow apolitical. While some might argue that political protest was in vogue and a popular rite of passage in the late 1960s, it was often an effective tool that could grant a limited amount of power to marginalized groups. With this in mind, it is no surprise that black athletes on Michigan State's campus chose to protest what they viewed as unfair treatment at the hands of the Spartan administration and athletic department through a list of demands and an organized boycott in the spring of 1968.

It should be noted that this was not the first time Michigan State's athletic department was questioned over its commitment to equality, but it was one of the first times that the protestation came from the student-athletes themselves. In 1947, Coach Clarence "Biggie" Munn agreed to bench Horace Smith, a black player, against Mississippi State, a move denounced by both the *Michigan Chronicle* (the state's African American newspaper) and the Detroit chapter of the NAACP.[813] Numerous "Civic and religious leaders throughout the state sent letters to [Governor] [Kim] Sigler and Michigan State officials protesting the decision to remove black players when the team played southern opponents."[814] President John Hannah banned this

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[813] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'"104.
[814] Ibid., 104.

practice and made it known that Michigan State "would no longer bow to the demands of their opponents from segregated institutions."

The 1950s saw an influx of African American players to the Spartan football team. One stood out especially: Willie Thrower (1949 - 1952).[815] When Thrower came to Michigan State, he played behind All-American quarterbacks Al Dorow and Tom Yewcic. In the 1950 season, Thrower's first year of on-field eligibility and Michigan State's second season in the Big Ten (although conference play would not begin until 1953), he became the first black quarterback to play for a Big Ten Conference team.[816] However, in the 1951 and 1952 campaigns, he only threw 14 combined passes.[817] In the 1952 season, a mythical national championship for the Spartans, the aptly named Thrower completed nearly 60% of his passes and connected for five touchdowns and 400 yard passing over nine games of work. Despite being viewed as a strong passer, Thrower often came off the bench behind Yewcic[818], who described that Thrower

[815] For more on Thrower, see the Introduction of this dissertation.

[816] Thrower was also the first African American to complete a pass in the NFL when he threw for 27 yards for the Chicago Bears against San Francisco at Soldier Field on October 18, 1953. Thrower came in off the bench and drove the team from their own 40 yard line to the opponent's 15 before Coach George Halas pulled him to put starter George Blanda back in to the game. According to an interview with Thrower, the fans were calling for Halas to keep Thrower in to score. But Fred Morrison took the ball in off-tackle in a 35-28 loss. Just like at Michigan State, Thrower played behind a star, as Blanda was eventually inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame. However, Thrower recalled Blanda sharing that "If [Blanda] could throw a football as good as [Thrower], [Blanda would] be playing for the next 25 years." Thrower played in the CFL for a few seasons but retired at the age of 27 from football. In Koerner, Katie and Ben Phlegar, "Willie Thrower: Breaking Barriers," *Michigan State*, February 24, 2010, http://www.msuspartans.com/genrel/022410aae.html.

[817] Ibid.

[818] Yewcic went on to play for the Boston Patriots of the AFL and played one game at catcher in 1957 for the Detroit Tigers.

"Probably threw the ball as good as anyone in football."[819] Head coach Clarence "Biggie" Munn would often call Thrower into special teams practices to simulate punting, as Thrower could throw the ball farther than the team's kickers could punt it. Thrower helped to clinch the mythical national championship for the Spartans with a 7 for 11 performance for 71 yards and a touchdown in a 62-13 win over Marquette on November 22. He also scored his only rushing touchdown of his career that day, sneaking it in near the goal line. The *Detroit News* reported that "no cheer was louder all day than the one Willie Thrower received when he quarterback-sneaked six inches for the fourth touchdown."[820] Thrower had come to Michigan State out of Pennsylvania, where his New Kensington High School team had dominated its competition, compiling a 35-3-1 record over his high school career in the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic League. Thrower was named All-WPIAL, was named to the all-state team, and was named captain of the All-American squad representing high schools east of the Mississippi River. The New Kensington Red Raiders were invited to play in the Peanut Bowl, a high school invitational football game held at Miami's Orange Bowl. However, the Peanut Bowl asked New Kensington to travel without Thrower and black teammate Flint Green after discovering that Thrower was black when the bowl's organizers saw a picture of him. The team declined the invitation.[821]

In 1960, Professor Walter Adams, a member of the Athletic Council and future Acting President of the University (1969-1970), petitioned the Council, requesting them to endorse

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[819] Qtd. in Ibid.
[820] Qtd. in Ibid.
[821] Stephen Catanese, "New Kensington standout France's memories still vivid," *Pittsburgh Tribune-Review*, Apr. 1, 2012, http://triblive.com/x/valleynewsdispatch/sports/s_789386.html#axzz36nxH65z3.

resolutions denouncing segregation and any act that would tacitly imply that Michigan State approved of segregation. The baseball team had recently toured the South over spring break, and Adams found that they had trouble finding lodging for the whole team due to the Spartan team being an integrated squad. He asked the council to endorse resolutions that would ensure that “no Michigan State University Athletic team shall take part in a contest where any athlete is barred from participation because of race, religion or national origin,” accept no “engagements in any area where a team member may be barred from equal access to housing or team facilities,” and would not “participate in any contest where participation is denied to others” because of their race, religion, or national origin.[822] Unfortunately, “Not only did the Athletic Council defeat these proposals (‘for fear of stirring things up’), but they also struck all mention of the resolutions from the minutes.” In response, Adams contacted Hannah, who talked to Biggie Munn, and the “spirit of Adams’ resolutions [was] followed,” but Hannah did not confront the Athletic Council or censure them in any way.[823] This practice of "'segregated integration,' where integration was accepted in some spheres of both public life and private life, but not in others," was a common practice for many Northern schools who still saw themselves as racially progressive.[824]

The genesis for the specific grievances of the thirty-eight male black athletes involved in the 1968 boycott are historically tied to both the overt and systemic inequalities and racist ideas in our society, the segregation of Southern colleges and universities that created the potential for

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[822] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University; or 'the difference between good and great is a little extra effort'" (PhD diss, Michigan State University, 1982), 40-41.
[823] Ibid., 41.
[824] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 104.

Michigan State to become a perceived bastion for black athletes, the often less explicit but no less real racism of the North, and the unique racial history and culture of East Lansing. The catalyst for the boycott came during the 1967 football season. LaMarr Thomas, the student-athlete representative for the football players, argued that there was a feeling that black athletes were being “messed over” by the athletic department and were treated largely as “black stock” by the university. In short, they felt “used” by a system that benefited greatly from their athletic prowess and the positive press that they generated, but cared little about their academic progress, social experiences, and general well-being beyond the gridiron.[825] The possibility of a protest of some kind was not beyond the thoughts of Michigan State’s Athletic Department. Three weeks before the 1965 season, such a possibility was to be discussed, as illustrated in a letter written to President Hannah from Athletic Director Munn:

> “Demonstrations and Civil Rights” were also discussed and as far as Michigan State is concerned a meeting will be held with [Director of Public Safety] Dick Bernitt, [Athletic Director] “Biggie” Munn, [Manager of the Athletic Ticket Office] Bill Beardsley and [Business Manager of Athletics] John Laetz so that we will be ready in case there is a sitdown on the football field, basketball court and such. We plan to have stretchers, photographers and to identify people to prove non-brutality by the policemen. If there are women involved, we can remove them by stretcher without any force. A meeting of the above group will take place long before the football season starts.[826]

However, as the letter indicates, Munn anticipated that it could turn violent or that police intervention would be needed. Neither was the case.

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[825] “Athletic Boycott: Spring 1968,” 2, Box 2359, Folder 26, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[826] Clarence "Biggie" Munn to John Hannah, August 24, 1965, Box 41, Folder 13, John A. Hannah Papers, UA.2.1.12, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

The students originally thought about boycotting the November 4, 1967 game against Northwestern but chose instead to organize with students from other sports and seek out faculty advice. High amongst the grievances for the football players was the perceived practice of "stacking." This was a strategy of grouping many African American athletes together at one position, often running back, wide receiver, or cornerback, a practice that many black players felt led to the inevitability of more white players being starters at other positions. While Michigan State has rightly been lauded for its pioneering role in playing and starting African Americans, statements from ex-players give credence to claims of stacking. For instance, Jimmy Raye quarterbacked the Spartans to a 10-10 tie with Notre Dame in the "Game of the Century" in 1966. However, when Raye arrived on campus, Coach Duffy Daugherty attempted to convert him into a cornerback:

> When I went to Michigan State, Duffy Daugherty told my mom I could play quarterback until I decided to switch. Little did I know they were going to make me switch. They told me they were recruiting one other quarterback. When I got there, there were nine and I was number nine. The idea was to bury me so low that, if I wanted to play, I'd say, "Okay, I'll play defensive back."[827]

To be fair, Raye held no hard feelings for what Daugherty attempted to do and revealed that his coach even showed the quarterback threatening letters the coach had received for even contemplating starting Raye. Moreover, MSU had started eight black players on defense against Notre Dame, including Bubba Smith, and their entire offensive backfield, save for the fullback, was made up of black players, as were half of their starting wide receivers. Conversely, Notre Dame only started one African American player, Alan Page.[828] In an article on integration and black protest during the 1960s, Dr. John Matthew Smith notes that the sheer number of black

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[827] William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile*, 77.
[828] Ibid., 78.

players on "Michigan State's 1965 and 1966 football teams were unlike any others in the prior history of integrated college football."[829] However, despite this history of playing opportunity, the *perception* remained, as did black student-athletes' feelings that they were disregarded as anything more than "black stock." Or, as *Sports Illustrated* scribe Jack Olsen wrote in 1968: "In return for what he was supposed to be getting out of sports, the Negro athlete was expected, until very recently, to stand fast and take it, keep his mouth shut, and perform valiantly in front of cheering white audiences." [830] To even voice these feelings to a coach or the athletic department, regardless of whether they believed them or not, was revolutionary.

Michigan State recruited black players from the South who were excellent football players, most of whom were not recruited by any other major institutions because of legal and institutionalized segregation.[831] This gave Big Ten schools, and especially Michigan State, a distinct advantage. Quarterbacks like Jimmy Raye and Tyrone Willingham, both from North Carolina, cited the Big Ten's history of playing black quarterbacks and their history of recruiting black athletes as a huge part of their decision to come to Michigan State and Minnesota, respectively.[832] Dr. Beth Shapiro's research in her dissertation on black athletes at Michigan State University confirmed this sentiment as well. "Interviews with former athletes and my own observations showed that black athletes at M.S.U. and black alumni encouraged other blacks to attend the University," because of perceptions from some that the coaching staff was sensitive to

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[829] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 102.

[830] Jack Olsen, *The Black Athlete: A Shameful Story; The Myth of Integration in American Sport* (New York: Time-Life Books, 1968), 17.

[831] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University," 142.

[832] William C. Rhoden, *Third and a Mile*, 64-65.

their needs or that they would "get to play even though they were black."[833] The argument that Michigan State long sought out black athletes because they helped the team gain a competitive advantage is not very helpful in calming racial concerns. According to Shapiro, "Blacks have consistently earned varsity awards at significantly higher rates than their white counterparts [at Michigan State University]: 76 percent of the black football players, 73 percent of the black basketball players, and 89 percent of the black baseball players earned varsity letters." She reaffirmed the belief held by many advocates for black student athletes of this time: "black athletes are not recruited to sit on the bench. They are recruited to make a significant contribution to the team."[834] Their recruitment of black athletes was not some kind of altruistic mission to give education to poor, Southern black students. Obviously, a great education could often be a positive side effect, but it was not the motivating factor. Winning was paramount, as Houston quarterback Warren McVea corrected his Houston coaching staff after they reminded him about how great the university had been to him: "I think I've been pretty damned good to this university. I want you to remember one thing: you came to me, I didn't come to you."[835] The Spartan coaching staff was not looking for decent black football players to round out their roster; they were looking for star athletes. Just being OK at football or being a scholar would not garner an athletic scholarship offer from MSU for black males.

The Big Ten's commitment to recruiting and starting African American football players should not be dismissed, as it did open up doors for educational opportunties to which many of them likely would not have had access. This led to a large number of African American students

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[833] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University," 142.
[834] Ibid., 147-149.
[835] Jack Olsen, *The Black Athlete*, 9.

playing for Big Ten schools. When Michigan State joined the Conference in 1953, the Big Ten had thirty-three black players on nine different teams, with eight of them playing for the Spartans.[836] Within two years that number was sixty-three, and every Big Ten team had at least one black player and "more black players than any other conference."[837] Duffy Daugherty's team in 1955 defeated an integrated UCLA squad in the Rose Bowl, and Daugherty was named "Coach of the Year" by the largest margin ever recorded in the twenty-one year history of voting for the award. Smith noted that Daugherty's "example of playing black players promoted Michigan State as a symbol of all that was good in sports – fair play, equal opportunity, and sportsmanship." This symbolism was embraced and promoted by the Big Ten.[838] But praise should be coupled with context: Big Ten coaches realized that recruiting African American players gave them an advantage over schools that did not, as they could find star players without competition from Southern conferences and segregated teams. Dr. Harry Edwards drove home this point when he argued that “Black students aren’t given athletic scholarships for the purpose of education. Blacks are brought in to perform. Any education they get is incidental to their main job, which is playing sports. In most cases, their college lives are educational blanks.”[839] Ohio State's Woody Hayes seemed to echo this point, nothing that "[Ohio State] had a Negro problem

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[836] Smith makes note that the number of black players should be used with caution, as white newspapers rarely mentioned black players, and black newspapers used different guidelines when it came to distinguishing between being on the team and having a significant role. John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 105.
[837] Ibid, 107.
[838] Ibid., 107.
[839] Jack Olsen, *The Black Athlete*, 10.

once, I know. That was in 1959, when we had no Negroes on the team and we lost four [conference] games. I hope we never have a problem like that again."[840]

Duffy Daugherty frequently visited the South looking for black football stars and admitted the added difficulties to recruiting when Southern universities began to finally integrate their athletic teams during the late 1960s and early 1970s.[841] By 1964, ten of Michigan State's twenty-one black football players were from the South, while only three of the fifty-seven white players haled from there.[842] Michigan State and the Big Ten enjoyed the publicity they received by fielding integrated squads and saw it as one more area (along with purported emphases on academics and amateurism) in which they stood apart from many of the other conferences. While a commitment to integration (even one driven partly by other motives) should be lauded, that integration largely remained at the entry level position within the athletic departments: the players themselves. Furthermore, it was viewed through the eyes of how did athletic integration help the University, moreso than how it helped students. In 1958, Michigan State's sports information office "distributed a press release that read 'MSU's Grid Squad Lists 9 Negroes.'"[843] As John Matthew Smith noted, "the university and the football program were aware of the potential benefits of being known as the Brooklyn Dodgers of college football. What better way could the university promote itself as an institution that believed and supported equality than by fielding an integrated football team that millions of viewers could see on television?"[844] The

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840 Qtd. from "'Colorless' Cast Lost Big Ones," *Pittsburgh Courier*, Oct. 24, 1963, 15.
841 Duffy Daugherty, *Duffy,* 7.
842 John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 114.
843 Ibid., 110.
844 Ibid., 110.

recruitment of more black athletes and the fielding of more competitive football teams was aided by the added exposure that the rise of television broadcasts of football games brought. Black players throughout the country came to see Michigan State as a place where "black players could get a chance," the sentiment of Herb Adderley of Philadelphia who came to East Lansing to play for Daugherty.[845] Whether by the visual medium of television, the printed word of respected newspapers praising the integration of Michigan State and other Big Ten schools, or by word of mouth, the Big Ten came to be seen as a bastion of racial progress. But such promotion was only helpful if it was reaching their intended audience in the "right" way. In 1962, the Associated Negro Press ran an article, picked up by *Muhammad Speaks*, praising Michigan State for having "probably the largest delegation of Negro players in the history of major college football" with seventeen. On the copy of the article found in the Michigan State University Archives and Historical Collections, a note from President Hannah's assistant James Denison reads that there "are places I'd rather have publicity than in the Black Muslim newspaper!"[846] It was good to be viewed as progressive, but in more conventional and less "radical" publications, lest Michigan State's motivations be confused with those of Black Muslims. After all, sometimes the medium is the message.

During the winter term of 1968 each team for which black athletes competed at Michigan State chose a leader to represent them in the strike: basketball – Lee Lafayette, track and field – Don Crawford, soccer – Tony Keyes, and football – LaMarr Thomas. These four student-athletes, along with leaders from the Black Student Alliance, met with Dr. Robert Green,

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[845] Ibid., 111.

[846] "MSU's 17 Negro Players May Top Major Colleges in Football," *Muhammad Speaks*, Oct. 31, 1962.

Associate Professor of Educational Psychology and an African American, to organize their complaints and demands. After the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in April, the students felt that a boycott of black athletes would be an appropriate, effective, and immediate strategy.[847] According to Dick Schaap, when black athletes approached a white assistant coach about missing practice to participate in events honoring the slain civil rights leader, the coach responded that the assassination had "nothing to do with practice."[848] Such a statement "typified the insensitivity of many white coaches to the problems faced by African Americans, including their players."[849] While MSU hired Don Coleman – a principal from Flint, the first African American All-American from Michigan State, and the first player to have his number retired – as an assistant professor and the first black assistant coach of any kind hired by MSU in mid-April, black student-athletes remained unconvinced of the University's concern for them.[850] Under the advice of Dr. Green, Jack Pitts (a Spartan football player), and Don Crawford sent their list of grievances and demands to President John Hannah and met with Athletic Director Biggie Munn on April 22.[851] Among the grievances the student-athletes included the lack of black coaches and assistant coaches and demanded at least one black coach for each sport, the perceived discouraging of blacks athletes from playing baseball for MSU, the lack of black employees at Michigan State athletic buildings and events, the lack of black medical trainers and doctors, the need for a black Athletic Counselor for black athletes and the poor record of academic assistance for black athletes, the shepherding of black student-athletes into classes that helped to maintain

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[847] "Athletic Boycott: Spring 1968," 3.
[848] Harry Edwards, *The Revolt of the Black Athlete* (New York: Free Press, 1970), 72.
[849] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 125.
[850] "Trustees approve grid appointment," *State News*, Apr. 19, 1968.
[851] "Athletic Boycott: Spring 1968," 4.

their eligibility but did not help them graduate, and the lack of black cheerleaders on the MSU squad. According to Crawford, Munn laughed at many of their grievances and demands and crossed out some of them straightaway deeming them "invalid" or "unjustifiable."[852] In response, Jack Pitts picked up their list and walked out.

The next day, while President Hannah was away attending a U.S. Civil Rights Commission, Dr. John Fuzak, Chairman of the Athletic Council and MSU's Big Ten Faculty Representative, and Munn met with the black athletes in Holden Hall. According to Thomas, now the representative for the group, Munn remained negative and arrogant throughout the meeting, but Dr. Fuzak indicated that their demands would be addressed by President Hannah upon his return the following Wednesday. On April 25, thirty-eight black athletes boycotted their practice sessions. President Hannah was not able to attend the Wednesday meeting, but Dr. Fuzak and Munn met with the athletes and agreed to the following demands: a black football coach and black track coach would be hired by September 1; the athletic department would make an active effort at recruiting black swimmers and baseball players; a black athletic counselor – a position they had hoped Don Coleman could fulfill on top of his other duties – would be hired; and more black people would be hired as employees for athletic and intramural operations at Michigan State.[853] In all, the protestors missed two practices and returned to the team. Michigan State agreed to meet with the protestors again in June to check on the progress of their demands.[854]

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[852] Ibid., 5.
[853] Ibid., 8.
[854] "Black Athletes Cite Distortion, Misquotation," *State News*, May 1, 1968.

As stated earlier, the Black Student Alliance came out in solidarity with the boycott and voiced their support in an editorial in the *State News* on May 1, arguing that the boycott was necessary, the grievances were not just "alleged," and that the "concerns of black athletes are the concerns of all black students and citizens," a point lost on many who felt that it was entirely about football and not for equal treatment and equal opportunities for all black students and members of the Spartan community. Alumnus Edward Soergel cancelled his season tickets and voiced his displeasure with the "demands" of the black athletes whom Soergel had referred to as the "privileged few" in a personal letter to President Hannah, arguing that he could not "support a University or an Administration that doesn't have the guts to stand up to a minority group of any students," let alone one who was not even "poor and downtrodden." Hannah responded to Soergel writing that "Black athletes are not calling the shots for the Athletic Department. The University was already committed to taking several of the steps they listed among their so-called 'demands', such as the employment of Negro coaches in the major sports."[855] He also took Soergel to task for questioning the sincerity of the protestor's claims, continuing that he "must dispute your assertion that black athletes are the 'privileged few'. Most of them are indeed poor, and could not hope for a college education if they did not have athletic ability. So they were in a real sense offering to sacrifice their hopes for the future to accomplish what they believed to be right," language consistent with Hannah's commitment to civil rights throughout his career. Hannah's claims of having previously initiated a coaching search have merit, considering that Athletic Director Biggie Munn had written to him in September 1967:

[855] John Hannah to Edward Soergel, May 22, 1968, Box 51, Folder 36, John A. Hannah Papers, UA.2.1.12, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

> After receiving your letter this morning, I will certainly be on the lookout for someone who is well qualified because, as you know, I have absolutely no objection to any color, race or creed. … It certainly would not have hurt our situation, if one of our nine football coaches had been colored. At this moment I do not have anyone in the Athletic Department that I feel isn't doing an excellent job but you can be sure that I will be on the lookout for a qualified person.[856]

Another alumnus wrote that many alumni felt that "Negroes have been treated more than fairly in the athletic department, and scholarships to these students have almost outnumbered those to white athletes."[857] As John Matthew Smith indicated, the perception among a portion of the white community was that "black athletes not only took positions away from white players on the field, but also their activism threatened the social order and political power held by whites at the university. To many whites the presence of too many blacks in the athletic program endangered the prestige and good image of *their* [emphasis in the original] school."[858]

Those involved in organizing the boycott were discouraged by the lack of progress in resolving the demands and promises agreed upon in the spring, leading to follow-up letters from Dr. Green to Dr. Fuzak suggesting the names of seven undergraduate cheerleading candidates supplied by Thomas, and another letter on July 18 requesting a meeting to address the athletic department's progress toward their goals. LaMarr Thomas argued that the boycott occurred because of the general abuse of black athletes the previous season: "The black athletes are treated like dogs … The whole thing was to take advantage of young black people. It is animalistic … It really did nothing to change the program. It really ended up being a symbolic protest. I think we

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[856] Clarence "Biggie" Munn to John Hannah, September 14, 1967, Box 41, Folder 16, John A. Hannah Papers, UA.2.1.12, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[857] L.J. Vincent to John Hannah, April 30, 1968, Box 55, Folder 45, John A. Hannah Papers, UA.2.1.12, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[858] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 127.

messed up when we called off the boycott after only two days, because … like whities will make promises just to keep blacks quiet for the moment. The short time of the boycott made it appear as if it was no big deal."[859] William Triplett did not feel that they were treated as animals, but he did believe that coaches felt that black players were more inherently more durable. To him, "there seem[ed] to be a lack of communication between blacks and whites as far as athletics go."[860] And Dr. Robert Green, looking back on the situation, believed that the boycott "put the fear of God in the athletic department and John Hannah."[861] At the end of July, the athletic department announced that Morris Kinsey, a graduate student in physical education, would become an assistant football coach. However, action was coming too slowly or not at all for the black student-athletes. Excerpts from a letter written to John Fuzak from Barry D. Almis of the Black Student Alliance on October 24 follow below:

> To date, none of these commitments nor any of the others have been fulfilled. […] Of the many problems facing us as black students attending a white university the matter of two or three cheerleaders would appear to be of minor import. One would suspect that the University would add a few black cheerleaders just to humor us. But no. even in such a minor area the University has refused to make concessions to its black athletes and students. […] As black students and athletes we cannot forget that we live in an alien world. We cannot forget what happened to our brothers Tommie Smith and John Carlos and we too shall proclaim our dignity and exhibit our pride. We'll no longer be your gladiators and faithfully do battle for you every week – end. […] In the past, we have shunned non – functional demonstrations and theatrics. Yet, perhaps it was our very willingness to deal with you, to cooperate with you as "rational" beings that led you to doubt our total committment [*sic*]. Possibly we need to demonstrate our resolve in order that we may overcome the present impasse. I apologize that my gullibility led you to doubt our commitment; I apologize for being so presumptuous as to believe that you would deal with us honestly and straightforwardly; and, finally, I apologize that we as

[859] "Athletic Protest: Spring 1968," 8.

[860] Ibid., 9.

[861] Ibid., 11.

sensitive and warm human beings may be compelled to employ "your" callous and unprincipled tactics.[862]

A follow-up meeting on October 25 left many of the boycotters dissatisfied, as no concrete results came from the meeting.[863]

Despite the Athletic Department agreeing to act on many of the demands of the striking student-athletes, the boycotters felt that their concerns were not being seriously addressed, as evidenced by the letter from the BSA. But their dissatisfaction cannot just be dismissed as mere rhetoric. And it is important to note that, even if there were no evidence, there was definitely a perceived feeling that they were being ignored, and the administration realized as much. In a letter between Hannah and Fuzak from April 26, 1968, Hannah wanted Fuzak to

> State that it is the intention not only of the Athletic Department but of the entire University to move forward in the direction of activating the report of the Committee of Sixteen as it was approved last evening. I suggest that you emphasize the fact that there is no reason why there should not be more black Americans employed in the athletic and intramural operations of the University as rapidly as they can be identified and as there are positions or spots for them to fill.[864]

The letter also stated that Jim Bibbs, former Eastern Michigan athlete and head coach of the Ecorse High School track and field team, the Detroit Track Club, as well as the U.S. Women's Track Team, would be discussed at the next Board of Trustees meeting as a possible addition to the track team's coaching staff. Bibbs was eventually hired as an assistant coach in mid-May.[865]

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[862] Barry D. Almis to John Fuzak, October 24, 1968, Box 2359, Folder 26, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[863] "Athletic Protest: Spring 1968," 6.

[864] John Hannah to John Fuzak, April 26, 1968, Box 2359, Folder 26, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[865] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 128.

Bibbs went on to become the University's first African American head coach in 1977, retiring in 1995.[866] Another initiative in the letter addressed the need for a “vigorous” search for a “competent black physician to add to the staff of the Health Service, although it should not be indicated that he will be assigned specifically to Negro athletes. He should be available to all students of the University.” Hannah also called for a black admissions advisor and the need for a “real effort” to hire a black assistant basketball coach.

This last item is perhaps the most intriguing, as Hannah mentions Pershing High School’s coach, Will Robinson, although he does not mention his name, just the school. Interestingly, Dr. Green revealed to Irvin Vance in a letter dated December 28, 1970 that MSU never seriously appeared to contact Robinson about the position.[867] Vance, an assistant professor of mathematics, had been appointed to the University's Athletic Council the previous year by Adams and became the Council's first black member. Adams was surprised by the Council's lack of diversity and saw that it had "assumed symbolic significance" for its whiteness at a school (and under a previous administration) that had built a reputation, and received favorable publicity, by promoting civil rights.[868] Robinson went on to become the first black head coach at a Division 1 basketball school when he accepted the job at Illinois State in 1970. Robinson confirmed that Michigan State showed no serious interest in him, even as an assistant: “[…] in years gone by I’ve asked for coaching jobs at Michigan and Michigan State. Fritz Crisler and Biggie Munn – close friends – always put their arms around me. They said, ‘You’re a great

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[866] "MSU Athletics Hall of Fame Class of 2010: Jim Bibbs," *Michigan State*, September 30, 2010, http://www.msuspartans.com/genrel/093010aau.html.
[867] Robert Green to Irvin Vance, December 28, 1970, Box 2359, Folder 26, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.
[868] Adams, *The Test*, 87.

coach, a fine man, but …' It wasn't that I was too old. I was too black."[869] In regard to the cheerleading issue, to his credit, Hannah did indicate to Fuzak in mid-June that he hoped that "whatever needs to be done is being done so that these black girls are given some opportunity to try out for the cheerleading squad. I recognize that it may be too late now, but I will appreciate it if whoever is in charge of this operation will make it clear that black girls are welcome, at least, to try out."[870]

Within a year, Don Coleman stepped down as an assistant football coach due to feeling overwhelmed by changes to the game from when he had played and accepted a position within the residence halls program at the University. While Coleman continued to advocate for black student-athletes from this new position, his hire and quick resignation struck some in the black community as typical of the disregard for black athletes after their four years of eligibility had ended. In an article from January 21, 1969, Sam Lacy of the *Washington Afro-American* expressed cynicism over the short tenure at MSU, though not necessarily blaming Coleman himself who resigned in part to pursue his doctorate:[871]

> He got the chance, which is what "A to Z" [his newspaper column] insists is all it wants for any qualified colored man … and that should be the end of the story. It would be if only it weren't so typical … Michigan State was forced to leave her ante-bellum philosophy of lily-white hiring (in athletics) by the quiet but firm demands of a militant, forward-looking student organization … one which punctuated the campus demonstrations going on at major universities throughout the country, with its own

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[869] Charles Chamberlain, "Coach Will Robinson Intends to Have the Last Laugh," *Lansing State Journal*, Dec. 20, 1969.

[870] John Hannah to John Fuzak, June 12, 1968, Box 2359, Folder 26, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[871] Coleman earned his PhD in the Department of Administrative and Higher Education from Michigan State in 1971, writing his dissertation on "The Status of the Black Aide Program and the Black Student Movement at MSU."

dignified approach to the problem of ending years of frustration among the school's colored administration.[872]

Lacy hypothesized that Michigan State, like many other universities, had begun to see the problem with using so many black athletes for on-field glory over the years and instilling a proud tradition amongst them without providing them with a future or a say within the athletic department:

> Although young men were being graduated with degrees in physical education from Michigan State – and for that matter from every school in the Big Ten – if they wanted to work in their field, they had to find jobs in predominately-colored institutions […] and the latter, understandably enough, were beginning to feel a greater obligation to their own alumni, people who had played for, and brought glory to them in their undergraduate days.

Lacy goes on to write that Michigan State came out looking generous by hiring Coleman and then offering him another position, while student protestors appear to get a win in a demand being met. Lacy understandably, but wrongfully, believed that the first hiring followed the boycott; again, although this is not true, this column likely represented at least a facet of how some viewed the situation. The general public calling for change saw the slow, but steady erosion of a 'whites only' mindset in college athletics administration. But Lacy countered this amiable perception:

> Michigan State was pressured into hiring a colored man for her athletic department. As do so many other white-controlled establishments, they went to a nice fellow they had known many years ago. They chose a man who had not been connected with football since he was graduated in 1951. Why not Jimmy Raye, a quarterback of much more recent vintage [Raye joined the Spartan staff in 1971]? Or Clint Jones or Gene Washington or Lonnie Sanders or Dick Gordon or Ernie Clark, all of whom are sufficiently schooled and talented to be holding assignments in pro football? After SEVENTEEN YEARS, why shouldn't the game have passed Don Coleman by? Tokenism, thou art a jewel.

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[872] Sam Lacy, "A to Z," *Washington Afro-American*, January 21, 1969, http://news.google.com/newspapers?id=RbYlAAAAIBAJ&sjid=8_QFAAAAIBAJ&pg=800,329369&dq=don-coleman+%26+michigan-state&hl=en.

While the former players he puts forth likely would not have shortened their NFL careers to go into coaching, his point stands: Don Coleman was qualified to serve in an academic and advising role at Michigan State; his coaching qualifications *were* arguably outdated, as he had left the game nearly two decades before. In a strange twist to the typical story, it almost appears as if Coleman was hired first for an academic role and football was an afterthought, giving credence to cynical arguments alleging that he was set-up to fail – or at least not overly succeed.

Going into the fall of 1969, two black cheerleaders had successfully been added to the cheerleading squad, though not without controversy. Despite the University promising to move on the demand that black cheerleaders be allowed on the squad, it still had not happened by the summer of 1969. When Acting President Walter Adams learned about the continued lack of African American women on the squad despite the promises of the previous administration, he "could hardly bring himself to take [the issue] seriously," because he could not understand why such a demand could not be resolved quickly and without incident.[873] In his book, *The Test*, he could not believe that any kind of principle was at stake in *not* integrating the team; but he had to wonder *why* the problem had not been rectified. He also noted the seeming incongruity of MSU's lack of an integrated cheerleading squad with its history of integrated athletic teams. Adams also recollected that he "could not recall having seen a single black cheerleader performing for any Big Ten university."[874] It could be possible that administrators saw it as an inconsequential demand, but, in the eyes of a black student population immersed in the "Black is beautiful" cultural movement, the cheerleading squad arguably continued to exist as a preserve of the dominant forms of beauty and femininity: whiteness.

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[873] Adams, *The Test*, 85.
[874] Ibid., 85.

Pauline Hess, in addition to her full-time teaching load and duties as coach of the fencing team, had been the cheerleading coach at Michigan State since 1956, and members of the black student community saw her as the roadblock to the squad's integration. According to Adams, he called a committee made up of the Vice President of the University, the Athletic Director, and the president of the student government to investigate the matter and report on the holdup, but they came back to him still lacking answers. The president of the student government suggested that change would come if cheerleading became part of student government's purview, like many other student activities; after Adams threatened to adopt the student's suggestion, two black students made the squad.[875] Celeste M. Moy went out for the squad, as did decorated high school cheerleader Lynn Weaver. There was a perception amongst African American females on campus that Coach Hess was racist or at least unfair in her decisions regarding the squad: "Miss Weaver stated that many Black girls have not tried out for the squad, because they felt that they would not be chosen because of race and that she felt herself well qualified and determined to test this belief."[876] Moy backed up this perception, adding that "it was the attitude of the Black girls that Miss Hess was a racist – so they never tried out for the squad because they felt that they would not be welcome."[877] According to Moy and Weaver, Hess declared that she would not "put anyone on the squad under pressure," a reference they felt was directed toward them. Later, in an interview by the *State News*, Hess argued that she definitely felt pressured to put them both on the squad: "Marge Smith [the assistant cheerleading director] and I firmly disrespect the

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[875] Ibid., 86.
[876] "Cheerleaders Conflict: Background Information Packet," 11, Box 2359, Folder 33, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.
[877] Ibid., 12.

decision of the MSU administration in requesting that both black cheerleaders during last year's four weeks of tryouts make the squad, regardless of ability."[878] Hess felt that Weaver earned her position and Moy did not, but Hess never provided Dr. Green with a reason for announcing to the cheerleaders that she would not place anyone on the team under pressure. The relationship between Moy and Hess only devolved from there.[879]

When they had tried out during the summer, all of the cheerleaders were allowed to sign up for a chance to do some modeling gigs around the area for $150. Weaver originally declined, but Moy added her name to the list. Having heard nothing about it from Hess, Moy inquired a few times about it, but Hess told her that no decision had been made. During halftime of one of the football games that fall, half of the cheerleading squad left for a modeling gig, an unannounced surprise for those who had not been chosen. Hess claimed that the cheerleaders had been chosen randomly, but Weaver and Moy "were informed by Miss Hess that there was a qualification which they were lacking of which she would not disclose; even after further questioning."[880] Later that season, local newscaster Charles Demery (who happened to be African American) of Channel 10 contacted Weaver about getting a few MSU cheerleaders, including Weaver and Moy, to appear on his "Sights and Sounds" TV segment. Weaver informed Demery that she would have to first check with Hess, as that was procedure, but she was excited about the opportunity. Hess proceeded to have the head cheerleader pick three other

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[878] "'U' cheer head charges racism," *State News*, May 12, 1972, 3.
[879] Moy was from inner-city Detroit and was involved with black activism, whereas Weaver was from a middle-class (her father was a dentist) family in Flint, MI. The two agreed that there was a perception that Hess was racist, but Weaver didn't share all of Moy's feelings about discrimination, although Weaver was "surprised" by Moy's "blowup" with the team as she assumed that she herself would be the "rebel" of the squad. "Cheerleaders Conflict," 11.
[880] "Cheerleaders Conflict," 11.

women to appear on the show; they were all white. Hess justified the decision by pointing out that the women chosen had seniority, even though Weaver and Moy were specifically requested.

In Moy's opinion, Hess singled her out quite often and punished her unfairly. Once, she was suspended for two games after missing practice when she went home to spend time with her ailing father. When two white cheerleaders showed up late for multiple practices, Hess changed the practice time rather than punish them; the new practice time bumped up against already scheduled classes for Moy, making it harder for her to get to practice. In another instance, Moy showed up late for a basketball game and moved down the court to a section of the stands filled with black students to cheer in front of them, an action that was not allowed under the rules of the squad if a cheerleader showed up late. A white cheerleader acting on behalf of Hess called her out on it, and Moy left the arena. After the game two white, male cheerleaders did ask to meet with both Moy and Weaver to express their sympathies, but Moy and Weaver never quite felt included during the season and indicated that they were not always included at every meeting. Weaver revealed that one male cheerleader continually referred to her as "Celeste," confusing her with the only other black cheerleader on the squad.

Moy charged Hess with discriminating against her due to her race, and Hess countersued her for racism and harassment. The Michigan State Board charged with investing the claims, which included Don Coleman – now the Assistant Director, Dean of Students – and William H. Powers – the Chairman of the Investigative Task Force of the Black Liberation Front – found no conclusive evidence on either side to indicate race being a factor in the dispute. However, "the Board did find that there was a lack of communication and there was misunderstanding due, it

believes, to differences in cultural or racial background."[881] The Board also found that Moy and Weaver felt "discriminatorily treated which seems to have been generated by a lack of affirmative leadership for their inclusion on the squad."[882] In response, Hess stepped down as the cheerleading coach and many of the white cheerleaders followed suit, disbanding to show their support for their former coach. Weaver was hurt by their action, stating: "they [the disbanding cheerleaders] ignored the fact that wrong had been done to black cheerleaders. Ordinarily they're nice people, but they seemed to change overnight."[883] In the following years cheerleading became more of a club sport, with leadership coming from within the squad, although it retained its varsity letter status. Speaking on the subject, Dr. Green felt that Hess likely did not even realize that her actions and decisions could be seen as racist, but he viewed the entire incident as "just another small piece of racism, as it is seen throughout the Athletic Department. I feel that Blacks have never been treated fairly in the Athletic Department at MSU."[884] Dr. Green's determined battle to right the slights of the Athletic Department would continue into the next decade.

The "Structure of Feeling" for Black Student-Athletes on Campus

While more and more students and student-athletes made themselves heard in the late-1960s, their grievances did not just come into existence during their own years at their

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[881] Helen Clegg, "Charges of Racism Ruled Unfounded by MSU Board," *Lansing State Journal*, Sept. 2, 1970.
[882] "Cheerleaders Conflict," 9.
[883]Jeanne Saddler, "'U' cheerleaders disband in support of Coach Hess," *State News*, n.d., 1-2. Box 2359, Folder 33, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.
[884] Cheerleaders Conflict, 12.

universities. Although the catalyst for actively confronting inequality and unfair treatment came in the latter parts of the decades, feelings of resentment, especially amongst black student-athletes, were already prevalent on Michigan State's campus in the early-1960s. While an MA student in sociology at Michigan State during the late 1960s, Dr. Beth J. Shapiro sent out a questionnaire to student-athletes as part of her Master's thesis on the experiences and feelings of black athletes at MSU from 1960-1964. Twenty-three were returned with nineteen of those from football players. Similar to many other instances involving Big Ten athletic department throughout this time period, overt acts of racism, discrimination, or unfair treatment were not always provable by Shapiro, but it is quite evident that the student-athletes *perceived* that they were being treated unfairly. A number of the respondents indicated that they feared they would see a reduction in their playing time if coaches found out that they had helped with Shapiro's questionnaire.[885]

Duffy Daugherty, repeatedly referred to the student-athlete boycott in his 1974 autobiography as the "so-called 'black problem,'" a dismissal of the validity of the protestors' claims.[886] Similarly, despite being "in sympathy with the things the black athletes were striving for," he argued that the football team was the victim due to bad publicity from the boycott. Likewise, he felt that the demands should have been kept in-house because "they were not great demands which the University would have difficulty meeting."[887] It is reasonable that Daugherty might have been caught off guard by the accusations considering MSU's and

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[885] Sharon Peters, "Black Students at Michigan State University," 8.
[886] Duffy Daugherty, *Duffy*, 128.
[887] "Athletic Boycott: Spring 1968," 12.

Daugherty's established history of recruiting and playing black athletes.[888] As John Matthew Smith notes, Lawrence Casey of the *Michigan Chronicle* had even suggested that Daugherty be considered for the NAACP's Spingarn Medal to "distinguish merit and achievement" among African Americans, with an emphasis on those who were good examples for young people. While Duffy was not black, Casey noted that Daugherty helped black students get a college education at a predominantly white school.[889] Likewise, Smith cautions that, while Daugherty "played African Americans to win, not to be known as a civil rights activist," he still "risked his career by recruiting so many black players."[890] Daugherty's strategy, had it not brought wins with it, could have likely led to his dismissal, considering two anecdotes from his autobiography. He related how one man at a press conference had asked how many "n------" Duffy planned on playing that season. Daugherty chastised him and asked him to step forward and identify himself. Another time, at a party, a fellow partygoer cautioned that Duffy had been "playing a lot of n------ lately. You know, the minute you start four or five of them in the same backfield, you've lost me." Daugherty claimed he looked the man in the eyes and declared: "Then I've lost you right now."[891] Daugherty saw himself as colorblind, espousing a philosophy that the best man should play, regardless of race. But Daugherty goes on to describe the Black Student Alliance on campus as "so-called" as well. While his explanation of the situation is logical, his dismissive language seems to underestimate the legitimacy the players felt their claims had. In an anecdote from Charles "Bubba" Smith's autobiography, Smith mentioned a story about his brother Tody,

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[888] Daugherty even recruited Willie Thrower to MSU back in the 1940s when he was an assistant to Biggie Munn.

[889] Qtd. from John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 113; Lawrence Casey, "Sports Ledger," *Michigan Chronicle*, Nov. 10, 1961.

[890] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 114.

[891] Duffy Daugherty, *Duffy*, 29-30.

a member of the Spartan football team, being disciplined by Daugherty. In the confrontation Daugherty allegedly told Tody that the coach understood “nigras.” Smith wrote that “It was the first time in his eighteen-year life that Tody had heard the word *nigra*. Tody knew what it denoted but could not believe that he had traveled from Texas poverty to Michigan splendor to hear it.”[892]

Dr. Beth J. Shapiro concluded that “most of the black athletes felt discriminated against by the coaches, on the field and in academic counseling.”[893] Warnings against dating white women were passed down from upperclassman to freshman with the fear of reprisal from the coaching staff through benchings or future negative references given to NFL teams, discouraging many from challenging the validity of the stories. In her dissertation Shapiro argues rightly that “what is important about such stories is that regardless of the behavior of the coaches, as long as these stories get handed down from one generation of athlete to another, the athletes’ perceptions of racism are reinforced.”[894] Bubba Smith himself wrote that he received such a warning from departing senior Herb Adderley:[895] “Direct from the horse’s mouth – Herb Adderley had just been drafted number 1 by the Green Bay Packers, but he had paid the price for his curiosity in

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[892] Bubba Smith, *Kill, Bubba, Kill!* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1983), 100-101.

[893] Beth J. Shapiro, "The Black Athlete at Michigan State University" (master's thesis, Michigan State University, 1970), ii.

[894] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University, 155.

[895] Adderley, of Philadelphia, played for MSU from 1958 to 1960 at running back, was a co-captain of the team in 1960, was named All-Big Ten his senior year, and played in three post-season all-star games. He was drafted 12th overall by the Packers in the NFL draft. He appeared in four of the first six Super Bowls, was named to the All-NFL team six times as a cornerback, and was elected to the Hall of Fame in 1980. While Smith's claim that Adderley played "only sixty minute the entire football season," Adderley did see his yards rushing and receiving go down, as well as his touchdowns and total plays from his junior to senior seasons.

his final season at school, the same school Bubba was arriving at. Adderley played only sixty minutes the entire football season because he had been *seen* with a white woman."[896] Shapiro wrote that "the black athletes feel that many of the coaches talk down to them, and, that they treat them like animals."[897] John Matthew Smith noted that MSU fans likewise "animalized" Bubba Smith with their shouts of "Kill, Bubba, Kill!," pointing out the similarity between the cheer and a command more suited for an attack dog.[898] Misunderstandings and outright dismissals by coaches of situations like this happened all over the country. At Minnesota, white linebacker and hockey player Jim Carter described a "supposed dissension," another dismissive term, of black players but labeled their concerns "minor" and reiterated that Coach Murray Warmath did not care about race and had a celebrated history of recruiting black athletes.[899] As Jack Olsen writes, "the coaching world is full of well-meaning figures who fail to come to grips with the needs and sensibilities of the black athletes who perform for them on the field. Some of the best coaches, some of the most patient and understanding, seem to have a blank space where Negroes are concerned."[900] I'm not suggesting that either of these Big Ten coaches were actually racist; there's a great deal of evidence that they do deserve credit for the opportunities they gave to African American athletes, but I am suggesting that early integration, playing the best players in order to win regardless of an athlete's race, and dismissive rhetoric are not the best counterarguments to concerns over present equality, representation, and appropriate

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[896] Bubba Smith, *Kill, Bubba, Kill!*, 71.
[897] Ibid., 25.
[898] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 115.
[899] Mike Wilkinson, *The Autumn Warrior*, 342.
[900] Jack Olsen, *The Black Athlete*, 111.

treatment. Simply being allowed to play because you can help the team win does not preclude feelings of mistreatment.

Black athletes felt that their playing time was in jeopardy if they admitted they were injured. Rather than having a guaranteed spot when they returned, there was a feeling that the next black player would take their spot, a practice they did not believe was the same for white athletes.[901] Black athletes were recruited because they were the best athletes; they were not recruited because Daugherty thought that they would ride the bench or help out the practice squad. John Matthew Smith pointed out that "only relatively exceptional black players were recruited in the expectation that they would start for the team, while white athletes disproportionately earned scholarships in reserve roles."[902] It is reminiscent of the joke by Chris Rock regarding his waiting years to see an average or mediocre black player in Major League Baseball: "The true equality is the equality to suck like the white man." [903] So, many black athletes played through the pain, exposing them to more risks and, at times, further injuring themselves. To admit injury brought with it not only the risk of reduced playing time, but also the stigma of being labeled a whiner. Tody Smith informed the coaching staff of a leg injury during the 1968 season, but he was told to keep playing and stop whining: "Tody was in pain and the team coach and doctor were treating his ankle injury as though it were cry-wolf time."[904] When he was finally taken to another doctor, the new physician estimated that Tody would never

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[901] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University, 153.
[902] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 118-119.
[903] *The Black List: Volume 1*, directed by Timothy Greenfield-Sanders (New York: HBO Documentary Films, 2008).
[904] Bubba Smith, *Kill, Bubba, Kill!*, 114.

play football again and operated on his ankle. Yet, even after the surgery, the coaches continued to label him a whiner for complaining about the injury months after the operation: "Tody was being called everything from a fake to a prima donna by the coaches of Michigan State."[905] After another checkup, the doctor found that he had accidentally left a wire in Tody's leg, leading to the discomfort. Duffy and the coaches apologized to Today in front of the whole team, but the damage had been done, and Tody transferred to USC where he starred for two seasons as part of their defense's famed "Wild Bunch, leading the team to an undefeated season and a victory over Michigan in the Rose Bowl in 1970."[906]

But issues off the field also showed the disconnect between the coaches and their black athletes. For instance, a few respondents to Shapiro's questionnaire referenced an incident in the winter of 1969, when members of the football team had heard that coaches were encouraging football players to break up a meeting of the Students for a Democratic Society. Many of the black players felt that the SDS and their demands were helpful to the black cause and did not want to disrupt the meeting. Attending the meeting could have pitted them against their white teammates: "The black athletes said that they knew that the white athletes were encouraged by the coaching staff, which they considered to be racist."[907] For those who showed up to defend the SDS, one informant indicated that "when it appeared that white and black athletes might face

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[905] Ibid., 116.

[906] Tody Smith was a member of the USC team that crushed the Alabama Crimson Tide 42-21 in Birmingham, AL on September 12, 1970. Many Alabama fans point to Trojan running back Sam Cunningham's performance in that game as the moment that sped up the school's integration. However, the motivational part of the story is likely apocryphal, considering that two black players were already enrolled as freshman during that season. Alabama finally integrated its football team in 1971. Smith was drafted in the first round by the Dallas Cowboys in 1971 and played for six years in the NFL.

[907] Beth J. Shapiro, "The Black Athlete at Michigan State University," 29.

off against one another, the white coaches stepped in and dispersed the white athletes."[908] At Michigan State, much like at other Big Ten universities, outright acts of racism by coaches or players were not frequent. Instead, black athletes at Michigan State felt an undercurrent of racism within the Athletic Department that could never be entirely pinned down and exposed for the world to see as racist, but most of them felt it was there. One respondent to Shapiro wrote: "The coaches come to recruit you and sing songs of the beautiful times you will have and all the opportunities you will get to play. But when you have been here a while, you find out the songs are out of tune and all of the jobs have just been filled up."[909] But the intangibility of such discrimination and feelings of inequality was hard for many within the white community to grasp. After all, black players were allowed to play, which was better than in the South, and the coaches were not overtly discriminating against them. As John Matthew Smith noted, "many whites could not understand why black athletes were speaking out against racism in sports. In their view, sports had always been 'good to the Negro."[910] Student-athletes, despite having what many white fans saw as a "privileged" position within the Michigan State community, actively took the lead in demanding change to the status quo of incomplete integration. In short, "They realized that their own athletic achievements meant little if they were not treated as equals off the field as well. For these athletes, Black Power meant more than dominating their opponents on

[908] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University, 157.
[909] Ibid., 46.
[910] John Matthew Smith, "'Breaking the Plane,'" 126.

Saturday afternoons – Black Power meant using collective resistance to end racial inequality throughout athletics."[911]

Black Student Activism on Campus

However, unequal treatment and a lack of agency were not just concerns on the field. The late 1960s and early 1970s were a time of revolution, both politically and socially, for many black students at Michigan State. Perhaps reminiscent of protests at the soda stands, restaurants, and cafeterias of the South during the Civil Rights era, MSU’s cafeterias became more overtly political battlegrounds at times as well. On April 28, 1969, one hundred black students (including football player LaMarr Thomas) shut down the dormitory cafeteria in Wilson Hall after three full-time black employees had walked out following comments of a racist nature made by Joseph Trantham and Jennie Miller, the food service managers of the dining commons.[912] Waiting outside, an angered group of white students questioned MSU's Acting President Walter Adams over what he would do about the situation. One student questioned whether the University forcibly remove white students occupying the cafeteria. Many of the white students saw the sit-in as an insinuation that the white students of Wilson Hall were racist or that the black students were picking on them. They saw the situation as equivalent to any other political action on campus, rather than seeing the power dynamics in play. Adams explained to the student and the crowd that he doubted than the white students would ever feel the need to stage a sit-in: "They weren't angry. They had not suffered deprivation. They did not belong to an

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[911] Ibid., 129.

[912] "The Wilson Hall Incident: A Case Study," 8, Box 2359, Folder 14, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

oppressed minority, were not subjected to indignities and discrimination. They really did not have any deep-seated, long-festering grievances against society."[913] His explanation encapsulated much of the confusion over racial protest for white students (and whites in general). Hypothetical comparisons over how the University would react to white sit-ins and protests were non-starters because there was not a systemic history of white oppression. The media began to show up outside of Wilson Hall as if anticipating or even hoping that national news was about to be made, but the situation was peacefully resolved over the next few days. The two cafeteria supervisors were removed from their position and threatened to sue the University, but both dropped their suits.[914] As a result of Adams' diplomacy, Adams received a large quantity of telegrams and letters: "A handful were commendatory and signed; a larger number, critical and signed, but the largest number were abusive and unsigned."[915] In his book, he mentions a significant use of the term "n-----" in many of them along with disparaging remarks about "liberals." One particularly abusive letter called the protestors "black baboons" and called for them to be mowed down "without mercy – carpet the street with their dead – and the survivors will become the 'good n------.'"[916] The local chapter of the NAACP, the Greater Lansing Community Organization, and the *State News* criticized much of the press coverage of the event and felt that it only inflamed the situation.[917]

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[913] Walter Adams, *The Test*, 64.
[914] Ibid., 71.
[915] Ibid., 70.
[916] Ibid., 71.
[917] Ibid., 74.

As a result of the sit-in, the Black Student Alliance in association with the Resident Hall Management created a residential Student Aide program in which male and female black students would receive training in the operations of the University in order to serve as aides to their fellow black undergraduates in the dormitories to better help black students "feel they are an integral part of the University community, and that they have a 'stake' in the community."[918] Don Coleman became the coordinator of the program (and wrote his dissertation on the topic of the program) and instructor of record of Education 416: The University, a course focusing on the everyday workings of University bureaucracy and the proper channels to file grievances and bring about change.[919] In December of 1969, Sam Riddle, the student coordinator of the Aide Program, entered the Holden Hall cafeteria, but was stopped by Tom Harring, the meal checker for the cafeteria.[920] Riddle explained that he had the authority to be in the dining commons, but the argument escalated and Harring punched him, and Riddle fought back (Harring countered that Riddle was attempting to eat for free). Soon, five white cafeteria workers joined the scuffle

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[918] However, black students grew concerned that the aides didn't take their jobs seriously and saw it more as a popularity contest. "Proposal for Paid Student Aides from the Black Liberation Front," July 14, 1969, Box 2359, Folder 2, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[919] Within the year, the BSA fell out of power and was replaced by the Black Liberation Front, a name reflective of the more urgent tone of the late 1960s. The following year, the Black United Front unseated the BLF.

[920] Sam Riddle entered politics, unsuccessfully running for mayor of Flint, MI. In 2010, he was convicted of bribery and sentenced to thirty-seven months of prison as part of the corruption charges surrounding former Detroit City Council member Monica Conyers. Riddle served as her chief of staff. After being released from prison, Riddle became the political director for the Michigan chapter of the National Action Network. Ron Fonger, "Kwame Kilpatrick guilty verdict: Sam Riddle says he'll pray for ex-Detroit mayor," *Michigan Live*, Mar. 11, 2013, http://www.mlive.com/news/flint/index.ssf/2013/03/sam_riddle_says_hell_pray_for.html.

in support of Harring. Afterwards, Harring attempted to file charges of assault and battery against Riddle. In response, the BLF peacefully occupied the cafeteria the following evening.[921]

The following day, the *State News* reported that “many” black students were carrying dangerous weapons and terrorizing the white students in the cafeteria, painting the demonstration as hostile; in reality, only one of the dozens of protestors had a blackjack (a nightstick) on his person.[922] In response to the protests in Wilson Hall (and later Holden Hall), the Michigan Legislature released a resolution, condemning the black protestors. The original version of the resolution called them a “group of black hoodlums and bums,” a response that the BLF understandably read as racist. Acting President Adams was also exasperated by such rhetoric and met with Rep. Joseph Swallow (Rep., Alpena) to discuss the protest over lunch. Swallow, who had introduced the resolution which was cosponsored by thirty other representatives, listened to Adams' description of the events and his thought-process in avoiding violence and negotiating; Swallow and his colleague withdrew the resolution.[923] Adams noted that local TV stations remained rather neutral on the matter, but local newspapers "fan[ned] the flames of sensationalism."[924] Newspaper articles used words and photographs to equate the protests with a protest at Cornell University where armed black students had occupied the Student Union. The *Detroit News* and other local papers condemned the actions of the University for "reward[ing]

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[921] "The Holden Hall Incident," n.p., Box 2359, Folder 38, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.
[922] Ibid.
[923] Adams, *The Test*, 72.
[924] Ibid., 73.

anarchy].[925] Dr. Allan Mandelstaman, a professor of economics wrote into the *State News* condemning Adams' reaction to the incident and the student protestors, labeling the protestors' tactics as "Nazi"-like. While ninety-four faculty members released a statement commending Adams for his response to the protest, the Academic Council attempted to censure him, but – after three days of debate – came around to the conclusion that it was a complicated issue and Adams' actions had likely prevented violence; Adams believed that the protests "taught the Council (and the faculty at large) the difficulty of enforcing law and order—with justice. It showed the impossibility of ignoring the realities of the world in which academicians have to live. It forced the faculty to confront the race question squarely—on center stage."[926] While two members of the Board of Trustees defended Adams to the press, four others grilled him on the dangerous precedents that might be set by negotiating with the students and failing to follow proper protocols and channels.[927]

Adams noted that "Wilson Hall [and, presumably, Holden Hall too] was no panty raid, no casual fling, no night on the town, no search for kicks. Nor was it an act of violence, either by intent or in execution. It was an angry cry, born of long suffering—a reaction to what more mature minds had labeled white racism, not alone in white universities but in this society. It was black people shouting so loud because for so long no one had listened."[928] More started to listen and ask questions, but the racial tension was far from over. In response to the incident, Michigan State formed the "Holden Hall Committee for Racial Understanding," a biracial committee that

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[925] Ibid, 74.
[926] Ibid. 75.
[927] Ibid., 76.
[928] Ibid., 77.

led to the creation of a black cultural room in Holden Hall. In January of 1970, MSU's recently appointed President Clifton Wharton, the first African American university president of a major northern university, called for a campus Black Cultural Center as a “permanent monument” to the “causes of freedom and justice for minorities.”[929] More black cultural rooms sprung up in more dormitories around campus too, but not without some backlash from the white students on campus who challenged what they perceived as an exclusionary space. In response, students like Debbie O’Neil, a black aide in Holmes Hall, argued that all of the reading materials available within the rooms could be found in the library, but the space itself was needed as a retreat from the dominant white culture of the rest of the campus.[930] White students did venture into the black cultural rooms, but black aides reported that the number of those who did so was very small.

By the start of the 1970s, perceived discrimination within the dorms and around town increased, as black students questioned if there was racial bias in the selection of Resident Advisors in Hubbard Hall. While the official investigation found no concrete evidence of race weighing into the decision, it only heightened racial tensions on campus. On March 6 in Phillips Hall, Enora Brown served as one of the RAs and found herself the victim of racial intimidation. Students found the message “For N------ only – since you have everything, here’s your own bathroom” scrawled on a bathroom stall. Soon after, she received a note referring to her as a “n------" and castigating her for causing trouble. In the following week, more carvings were found that read: “Kill a N----- for Christ,” “Entering N----- Land,” and “Leaving N----- Land.” The

[929] "MSU Black Cultural Center: Progress Report No. 2," January 27, 1971, Box 2359, Folder 3, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.
[930] Irene Evans, “Culture rooms for blacks gain popularity, use,” *State News*, Feb. 9, 1973, 1.

words “N----- RA” were carved into her dorm room door as well.[931] As a result of this intimidation, Brown and members of the black community called for an increase in the number of RAs and more representation on campus. In early April two hundred protestors took to the streets of East Lansing when many banks refused their request to close for the day in memoriam of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. While the First National Bank closed from 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm, others remained open, including the East Lansing State Bank and the East Lansing Savings and Loan Bank. A representative from the East Lansing State Bank explained to the *State News* that banks need at least ten days to get permission to close a bank, to which protestor and Detroit senior Bob Elliot replied: “They’ve had two years to think about closing.” The bank’s explanation also rang a bit hollow when employees at the bank instigated the protestors with signs of “Closed for Washington’s Birthday.”[932] Even if the excuses of the banks are taken at face value, the fact that the majority of the banks remained open and unsympathetic to the protestors’ cause only added fuel to the perceived dismissal of African American concerns over inequality.

The following month, the shootings at Kent State and the escalation of the fighting in Vietnam and its neighboring countries inspired numerous student strikes around the country on college campuses (the Jackson State shootings only heightened the sense of urgency). At Michigan State, along with the student strikes, black faculty members proposed “liberation workshops,” arguing that a strike without purpose was not enough. They had sympathy with the victims, but they also wanted to address the “protracted struggle” in American history:

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[931] "Phillips Hall Incident Report," Box 2359, Folder 43, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.
[932] Barney C. Young, “E.L. banks give reasons for failure to shut doors," *State News*, Apr., 1970.

> This is an action – oriented project and reflects a new black activism with the tactics and strategies for obtaining meaningful and profound social change. […] We further resolve that whereas the United States has continually taken the position of racist, imperialist aggressor, as witnessed by her blatant tactics of political intervention, suppression, counter-revolution and economic exploitation of various third world peoples, we declare the recent invasion of Cambodia as a more blatant indication of a systemic process of genocide and ever more vicious attacks upon the darker peoples of the third world.[933]

Out of the workshops grew a more unified call for an end to inequality for blacks on campus and within the United States as a whole. While a seemingly eclectic list of demands, the changes sought for all dealt with systemic oppression within American society: show unity with KSU students while also addressing larger issues, end the war in Southeast Asia, free Bobby Seale, begin open admissions at MSU, address the predominant whiteness of the ROTC program at the University, and address the undercurrent or racism in the graffiti on campus and the editorial choices of the *State News*. They questioned whether minority representation on academic committees was on the way or whether they should help to accelerate it. Moreover, they wanted to have serious discussions on whether the perceived undertone of racial tension was real or imagined – and should that matter?

While some protest on campus took the form of peaceful protestation and educational questioning, others took a more physical approach. In early May, student protestors occupied the Union and others vandalized windows in the IBM Building and parts of the Administration Building. Students also spoke out about the presence of the ROTC program on campus. In response, President Wharton wrote that "the university cannot tolerate such wanton violence and disregard of the law. It is the students who have no part in these activities who, in the long run, will suffer the most [monetarily too, as Wharton used student fees to pay for it at around $1.50

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[933] "Black Faculty proposes 'liberation' workshops," *State News*, May 12, 1970, 4.

per student].”[934] Even though the charges against the eight students who were blamed for illegally occupying the Union were dropped, Wharton still grouped them in with the vandals, unlike his predecessor, Dr. Walter Adams, who saw peaceful student activism as understandable and to be encouraged, rather than feared. Just months earlier, U.S. Vice President Spiro Agnew had blamed educators and administrators for student protests, decrying that “the true responsibility for these aberrations and the nurturing of arrogance and contempt for constitutional authority rests not with the young people on campuses, but with those who so miserably fail to guide them.”[935] Not surprisingly, their reasons for protesting and their criticisms against those very same administrators as well as government officials were ignored by Agnew. But students and universities were not just chastised by the federal government, but by the local state government as well. Just days before the protest, the Michigan legislature passed a bill to dissuade students from occupying campus buildings, punishing those found guilty with up to thirty days in prison or a fine of $500.[936] After the protests at Michigan State, Representative William R. Copeland, a Democrat from Wyandotte, urged the Michigan House to cut funding to its universities to teach the protestors a lesson: “If I had my way I’d cut the hell out of them [appropriations] until these kids decide they want to go to school. We’ve put up with their [students'] disgusting behavior long enough. It’s time we took a stand, and I’m going to do it.” Copeland vowed to hold appropriations for universities hostage further arguing that “they [students] can all march down here and stand out in front of the Capitol yelling and screaming all

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[934] Clifton Wharton to the community, May 19, 1970, Box 2359, Folder 79, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.
[935] AP, “Agnew blasts faculties for campus riots,” *State News*, Apr. 30, 1970, 1.
[936] Larry Lee, “Bill thwarts occupation of buildings by students,” *State News*, May 4, 1970, 1.

they want it won't impress me. It's the ones that stay back there and study that impress me."[937] The Michigan government attempted even more measures to crack down on student protest, but an anti-riot proposal that allowed for local areas to declare a state of emergency failed by four votes. Voting against the proposal, Representative Jackie Vaughn of Detroit argued that "a bill like this [was] the first step toward instituting a police state."[938]

In October of 1970, even more controversy spilled out on the pages of the *State News* when Dr. Shirley Thomas spoke on campus about the women's liberation movement, arguing that "white women in the women's liberation movement talk of separating from their men for thrust, while black women are joining with black men for thrust."[939] Previously, her husband had made similar comments. During October, a series of letters to the editor appeared, both championing and decrying the women's liberation movement's motives and goals.[940] In the passionate exchange, one thing was clear: Michigan State hired very few women and even fewer African American women. As of 1971, Michigan State employed 2189 faculty members, 250 of whom were women, and seven were black.[941] Many of the black respondents in Hamilton's report felt an undercurrent of racism or at least insensitivity in the *State News*, dating back to at least the mid-1960s. Billye Suttles writes: "When I first came to MSU in 1966 many blacks were angered and annoyed with the intentional and unintentional negative racial overtones in articles

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[937] Jeff Sheler, "Copeland hits dissenters, urges greater fund cuts," *State News*, May 26, 1970, 1.
[938] This newspaper clipping was labeled as being on June 2, but it couldn't be found on that date in back issues of the *SN*. UPI, "Anti-riot proposal voted down in Michigan House," *State News*, June 2, 1970.
[939] Wanda Herndon, "At Women's Talk: Black unity stressed," *State News*, Oct. 12, 1970.
[940] Javon Jackson, "Thomas Claims women's lib exploits black experience," *State News*, Oct. 9, 1970, 4; Carol Ingal and Lola Hill, "Letter to the Editor," *State News*, Oct. 14, 1970, 4.
[941] Wanda Herndon, "Jobs for black women urged," *State News*, Nov. 19, 1971.

concerning black people."[942] She remembered that Jeanne Sadler was the Associate Editor for Minority Affairs from 1969 to 1970, but felt sure that they were not other African American students who served in permanent positions on the staff of the *State News*. This lack of representation led to misunderstandings and misrepresentations about black culture, ideas, and motives, as was the case when the paper reported that Gwendolyn Moss stated that her mother had the "worst" afro in Indianapolis when she actually used the colloquial term "baddest," assigning an entirely different meaning to what she said.[943] While this mistranslation could be viewed as trivial, it points to a disconnect between the *State News* and minority cultures on campus. However, while the *State News* employed very few black students, at least one made her opinions known in the editorial section of the newspaper, warning freshman black students to wake up to the revolution brewing at Michigan State. Jeanne Saddler writes: "Black students of the freshman class of 1970 – welcome to the struggle of the black people in Lansing." The editorial was both a warning about the racism and obstacles they could expect in mid-Michigan, as well as a call to become educated about the issues and get politically involved. She argued that a revolution was coming because the oppression long felt by the black community, and even parts of the community lacking in greater agency against the establishment, was no longer just perceived or spoken about in closed quarters; it was out in the open, for "even they, the white establishment, are waking up. The white nation has experienced Kent State. They know that they have created a monster."[944] The subsequent years brought a great deal of racial discussion and

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[942] Billye Suttles, "Life Styles of Black Students," 6.
[943] Ibid., 6.
[944] Jeanne Saddler, "Blacks: prepare for revolution," *State News*, Oct. 1970.

protest to Michigan State's campus as teachers and administrators joined in and advocated for minority students' rights.

Black Athletic Activism and Racial Rhetoric – 1972-1975

In the following years both students and the administration felt the growing racial tension on campus and legitimately feared that it would turn violent. After a basketball game between Ohio State and Minnesota on January 25, 1972, the Big Ten Conference suspended two Golden Gophers after they kneed and stomped on three Buckeyes during an on the court fight. Commissioner Wayne Duke suspended Ron Behagen and Corky Taylor for the remainder of the season after a fight ensued after Taylor had flagrantly fouled Luke Witte in the closing minute of the game. Video evidence indicates that Witte had appeared to elbow Minnesota player Bobby Nix in the jaw as the teams headed into the locker-rooms at the half. While helping Witte up from the floor after fouling him, Taylor kneed Witte in the groin and punched him in the head. Running in from the bench, Behagen stomped on Witte's head, knocking him unconscious. Other players jumped into the brawl, including future baseball star Dave Winfield. After the melee the game was called prematurely with 36 seconds left to go, and three Buckeyes ended up in the hospital, with Witte receiving nearly thirty stitches to his face. Commissioner Duke and Minnesota suspended the two players on January 28, but Minnesota reversed their support citing a lack of procedure in giving the players a proper hearing and the racial overtones in the discourse surrounding the fight. The Big Ten concluded that "there was no reference or suggestion made by any of the parties or witnesses that racial factors influenced any of the

various actions taken in this matter either by the University of Minnesota or the commissioner."[945] The Big Ten considered the case closed.

However, on Michigan State's campus, this incident that did not even involve the Spartans served as a catalyst that unleashed decades of racial frustrations, both in athletics and within student life in East Lansing. Concerned black students and faculty members saw the fight as emblematic of the Big Ten's problems with racial issues, despite the conference's contention that race played no part in the altercation and the conference's sterling national reputation for racial pioneering in athletics, and another example of the racial overtones present in many media representations of black athletes. On February 9, Dr. Robert L. Green – Director of the Center for Urban Affairs and Professor of Educational Psychology, Dr. Joseph H. McMillan – Director of the Equal Opportunity Programs, and Dr. Thomas S. Gunnings – Assistant Director of Minority Counseling at Michigan State University submitted a letter to Big Ten Commissioner Wayne Duke addressing their concerns about the current state of the Big Ten. In the letter, they wrote: that "recent events in the Big Ten suggest that equal opportunity is not a fact of life in Big Ten athletics, and, in fact, racial discrimination is very real. … The history of athletics in this country, both collegiate and professional, has time and again exhibited overt racism."[946] They expressed concern that black student-athletes were valued only for their abilities in athletics, were given little to no helpful academic advising, and were discarded when their eligibility and funding ran out, a claim that Beth Shapiro found was not necessarily the case at Michigan State:

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[945] Pat Thompson, "Big 10 Athletic Panel Completes Hearing," *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 25, 1972, C-1.

[946] Robert Green, Joseph McMillan, and Thomas Gunnings to Wayne Duke, February 9, 1972, Box 2359, Folder 28C, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

"During the 1950's and 1960's, if an athlete was within one year of completing his degree when his eligibility expired, he was provided with an 'undergraduate' assistant's position to help defray his educational expenses."[947] However, it was still a real concern of black student-athletes who felt that their best interests were ignored in academic counseling in order to ensure that they remained academically eligible. Drs. Green, McMillan, and Gunnings further argued that black student-athletes "have not been able to move into the more lucrative coaching and managerial positions in collegiate and professional athletics. Frequently, when the question of black employment is raised, the argument is made that there are not enough qualified blacks to fill the positions. Certainly this is not a valid argument in the area of athletics." The three called for the Big Ten to hire more black officials and coaches: "A check with knowledgeable sources indicates that this season there is only one black official refereeing Big Ten basketball games. […] Although blacks have won numerous honors both in the classroom and on the playing field by participating in Big Ten athletics, there has never been a black head athletic coach in any sport at any Big Ten university." And, in response to the incident in Minneapolis, they questioned the fairness of the procedures and conclusions of the Big Ten:

> Although we do not condone violence at any level, why is it that whenever violence erupts related to any conflict, blacks are the ones who are punished? […] Could not the incident at Minnesota have been provoked? […] We are also very concerned over the fact that the Big Ten representatives who took the final action to suspend the two black Minnesota players were all white. Furthermore, we are distressed over reports in the press following the Minnesota game inferring that Minnesota Coach Bill Musselman had succeeded in animalizing an essentially all-black basketball team. This more than anything highlights the racism in organized collegiate athletics and characterizes black athletes in an unfair and negative light.[948]

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[947] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University," 112.
[948] Ibid.

The letter concluded with topics for discussion and issues that they felt need to be changed about the conference, including at least one black official presiding over each basketball game for the rest of the season, the hiring of enough black officials for each Big Ten competition by the fall of '72, and the conference meeting on March 6 - 8 addressing the "status of black athletes in the Big Ten." Furthermore, they argued that the conference should invite black athletes and faculty members to testify and make recommendations for the future.

Their arguments illustrated the point made by many advocates like Harry Edwards for equality in sports, summed up nicely by Jose and Noel Parry: "The black experience has been that the abolition of formal segregation has not led to equality of opportunity but, rather, has been replaced by other discriminatory practices which have the effect of managing and controlling black participation."[949] The immediate response to the trio's letter was relatively positive, as evident from an article in the *State Journal* on February 13, in which Fred Snowdon, a four year assistant coach for the University of Michigan men's basketball team and an African American, came out largely in support of Green, McMillan, and Gunnings: "All the things that he [Green] said were legitimate. Don Canham [Michigan's athletic director] has expressed that concern and he's working for it. But the machinery sometimes works very slowly. Two years ago, I sat down with Canham, [Coach Johnny] Orr and Dave Strack and we talked about the very same things. We've got to start. If you never make the start, it won't get done."[950] Clearly, this was neither just an MSU issue nor merely a perceived slight against African Americans in the Big Ten. It was a systemic problem in sports in general, and that included the presumably

[949] Jose Perry and Noel Perry, "Sport and the Black Experience," *Sport, Racism, and Ethnicity*, Ed. Grant Jarvie (London: Falmer Press, 1991), 152.
[950] "U-M Aide works for Integration," *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 2, 1972.

progressive Big Ten Conference. The following day, three members of the MSU Board of Trustees came out in support of the three faculty members.[951] Dr. Green became the de facto spokesperson for the trio and sought the guidance of Louis R. Lucas, a veteran attorney of school desegregation cases for the NAACP, in case the Big Ten refused to meet with them. Green contended that "sports at every level are controlled by white, male Protestants, from 21 to 80," and noted that "desegregation cases have been fought in almost every level except for sports."[952]

However, in response to this petitioning of the Big Ten, the *State News* printed two editorials on February 16, questioning the racial motivations of the trio and ostensibly downplaying their concerns. Rick Gosselin wrote the first, suggesting that the issue is "not a question of race. It doesn't have to be."[953] Gosselin interviewed assistant basketball coach Matthew Aitch, who agreed with the trio: "What he said is true. If a black athlete doesn't turn pro and did not complete his education during his athletic eligibility, he doesn't have a damn thing." But then Gosselin attempted to eliminate race from the discussion, writing:

> But let's face reality. The same situation applies to many white athletes as well. […] Green's one mistake was in singling out the black athletes as scapegoats of the Big Ten. Maybe the Big Ten is wrong in its methods. I don't know. But why point an accusing finger at the Big Ten and cry "Racist!" when white athletes face identical problems? It's not a question of race. […] Many white athletes stand in the same position as blacks in

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[951] The Trustees in support were: Mrs. Patricia M. Carrigan, D-Ann Arbor, Dr. Blanche Martin, D-East Lansing, and Don Stevens, D-Okemos. "3 MSU Trustees Support Reforms Sought in Big Ten Conference," *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 15, 1972, C-1.

[952] It is worth noting that Dr. Green's argument regarding who controls sports wasn't always the case concerning women's sports. Until Title IX which came into existence later that summer, women's sports operated largely outside of the male sports model and its obsession with revenue and victory. Ironically, one unfortunate side effect of Title IX was the decrease in control female administrators, coaches, and players had over their sports. Judy Saks, "Trio charges discrimination against black athletes," *East Lansing Town Courier*, Feb. 15, 1972.

[953] Rick Gosselin, "Green's demands of Big Ten: Is it a question of race?" *State News*, Feb. 16, 1972, 4.

> regard to being “out in the pasture at 21.” The pasture doesn’t discriminate. […] Green said there weren’t enough black coaches and referees in the Big Ten. He pointed out former Detroit Pershing High School Coach Will Robinson (now with Illinois State) as a classic example. But aren’t many white coaches passed up as well?[954]

Gosselin entirely ignored their point, instead giving his opinion that life can be unfair to all. In that truism, he is right. There were plenty of white student-athletes who did not graduate and did not become referees or coaches, but there were only two African American referees out of seventy-two total overseeing Big Ten football and basketball matches, a handful of assistant coaches, and no head coaches.[955] He falls into the optimistic and shortsighted viewpoint of the dominant culture described by Jack Olsen: “To the white sports follower this upheaval has come as a surprise; the man in the grandstand, comfortable in his feeling that sports is his own pet province, accustomed to regarding the Negro athlete as a symbol of integration, has failed to see the disillusion beneath the surface.”[956] This mythology of the athletic world as some kind of arena free from racism or inequality – or even an arena inherently built against such things – was hard for many white fans and administrators to reject. Commenting on the 1968 boycotts, "Biggie" Munn restated the "colorblind" rhetoric of playing the best man for the job, regardless of race. But he went even further: "In the athletic world there is no discrimination."[957] Just as in 1968 with Michigan State's athletic department, rather than taking black students, student-athletes, and faculty members at their word, Gosselin dismisseded their concerns. And, in terms of academic support and success, black student-athletes felt they were receiving far less than their white counterparts, a perception supported by Dr. Beth J. Shapiro’s graduate research on

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[954] Ibid.

[955] “MSU Black Officials Request Big Ten Changes at Meeting,” *Jet Magazine*, March 3, 1972, 53-54.

[956] Jack Olsen, *The Black Athlete*, 27.

[957] "Athletic Boycott:Spring 1968," 12.

the subject.[958] They did perform better than the general non-athlete population, but it still remained true that white football players seemed to perform better and were happier with their academic counseling, and she concluded that the "differences may be as a result of poor preparation for college in high school or the result of institutional racism that may pervade the University and the Athletic Department."[959]

Seventy percent of the black respondents to Shapiro's questionnaire indicated that they came to Michigan State first and foremost for a college education, and many were distraught by the lack of help they received from academic counselors who seemed to push them into easier classes that would keep them eligible rather than help them towards graduation. One black athlete wrote that he "wanted to be a history major. I ended up in HPER [Health, Physical Education, and Recreation] and will graduate in it now because I've got so many credits in it," indicating that his academic counselor kept suggesting that he take more and more HPER courses.[960] Shapiro later found in her dissertation that student-athletes in the 1960s enrolled in an "unusual number" of physical education courses.[961] Numerous black respondents complained about academic counselors who seemed to merely want to keep them eligible. However, at least one white respondent put the blame on black athletes, opining that they were trying to "get off

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[958] While her doctoral research, with its wider timeframe of study, lessened the academic divide between white and black athletes found in her master's thesis, she still concluded that "Across all sports, black athletes were found to have higher attrition rates, lower graduation rates, and lower grade point averages than their white counterparts and football players generally performed less well than athletes in other sports." Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University," 22.
[959] Ibid., 135.
[960] Beth J. Shapiro, "The Black Athlete at Michigan State University," 11.
[961] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University," 89.

easy" by scheduling easier classes, but this statement does not seem to hold true for a majority of the black respondents, and instead perhaps reveals part of the perceived implicit racism that many black student-athletes felt at Michigan State from the largely white population. One black respondent claimed that it was not until he came to Michigan State that he "found out what it was like to be discriminated against."[962]

The second editorial, endorsed by the staff of the *State News*, likewise attempted to agree with the trio's concerns but only if race was removed from the discussion. The editorial asserted that Taylor and Behagen were suspended, "not because they were black, but because of the deeds they committed."[963] Getting caught up in the violence of the incident, the editorial failed to note that the Minnesota incident was merely a catalyst, and the trio of Green, McMillan, and Gunnings was largely condemning the rush to judgment and the total lack of African Americans involved with the decision or *any* decision by the Big Ten. The editorial went on to disagree with the trio's suggestion for integrating the hierarchy of the conference: "Green wants one black official to be present at each sanctioned Big Ten athletic event. The imposition of such a quota system can only have detrimental effects. Such artificial integration only serves to *remind* [italics added for emphasis by the author] us of our failure to achieve the real thing. […] Surely it is but a matter of a couple of years before one of the Big Ten schools hires a black coach."[964] What are these detrimental effects that would result from hiring more black officials – embarrassment over not having achieved greater integration already, or, as he notes, a vivid reminder of the Big Ten's failure to fully integrate while still celebrating its own progressive ideology?

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[962] Beth J. Shapiro, "The Black Athlete at Michigan State University," 24.
[963] "Green vs. the Big Ten: where reside the facts," *State News*, Feb. 16, 1972, 4.
[964] Italics added by the author for emphasis. Ibid.

These editorials by the *State News* aroused a flurry of responses in the subsequent days and weeks, revealing that the populace *was* thinking about race and inequality, whether they were supporting the trio of professors, denying the scale of inequality in our society, or condemning the trio, although Dr. Green became the singular lightning rod of their frustrations. On the 18th, dt ogilive and Clark White, graduate students at MSU, wrote a response (the letter states that they spoke for 15 others as well) expressing their anger and disagreement with the *State News* editorials:

> As concerned black and white students at MSU, we would like to call attention to the bias inherent in the State News coverage and lack of coverage of issues important to black people on the his campus. […] In both columns (two appeared in one day) you called Dr. Green to task because he has made race the issue. He has not made race the issue. The white population made race the issue a long time ago. […] You agree with Dr. Green about the need for change in Big Ten athletics, but you qualify your agreement by saying that he should not be concerned solely with the plight of black athletes. But if Dr. Green did not articulate the concerns of black athletes – and it was perfectly legitimate for him, as a black administrator, to do so – who would have drawn the public's attention to this problem? […] It seems that the only time the State News seeks to editorialize on issues relating to black concerns and problems is when it can be critical.[965]

They also questioned whether the newspaper had any black students in editorial positions, considering the tone deaf nature of the piece. The trio's concerns also received the support of the Black United Front, writing that their "black brothers are more than just "slaves" to bring glory to the hallowed halls of the Big Ten."[966] On the same day, Drs. Joseph H. McMillan and Thomas S. Gunnings wrote a response calling the *State News* to task:

> Your editorial in the Feb. 16 issue of the State News is another example of how the news media sets out to destroy the creditability of one black man who has dedicated his life to social change and progress through nonviolent means. Any black man, regardless of his political persuasion, who makes demands of the white power establishment is

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[965] dt ogilive, Clark White, and fifteen others, "*SN* controlled by white liberals," *State News*, Feb. 18, 1972, 5.

[966] David Kinchen and the Black United Front, "Support Green," *State News*, Feb. 18, 1972, 5.

> immediately vulnerable to the most savagely racist instrument of our times, the editor's pen. […] To single out Dr. Green and pit him against the Big Ten is another attempt on the part of the press to malign one black man who is dedicated to social change.[967]

Even with their protestations and insightful observation that the trio's spokesperson was being singled out and vilified, Green continued to receive the lion's share of support as well as denunciation.

Despite the debate quickly igniting in the pages of East Lansing area newspapers with one side denying any problem within the Conference, the Big Ten intended to hear the concerns of the trio, as indicated by Indiana University's Dr. Edwin H. Cady, Chairman of the Big Ten Agenda and Rules Committee, who stated that "there's no question that the Big Ten will discuss the charges. Yes, of course we will hear the black faculty from MSU and most probably from other Big Ten schools as well. But just what the arrangements will be, I don't know." Likewise, Michigan State's representative to the meetings, Dr. John Fuzak, agreed that the issues needed to be discussed and were of "great importance."[968] Soon, black student-athletes on campus made their own concerns and demands known. Spokespeople Allen Smith, Herb Washington, Nigel Goodison, and Billy Joe DuPree presented their demands to the media:

1. The appointment of a black academic adviser in the athletic department.
2. Financial assistance for the black athlete after eligibility ends.
3. The immediate formation of a grievance board composed of black athletes, coaches and faculty.
4. The total renegotiation of the present tenders of black soccer players, tenders described by Goodison as 'slave contracts.'
5. Institution of a medical program that will cover the athletes irrespective of season, starting role or place of injury.
6. The immediate representation of athletes on the screening committee for the new athletic director, urging the placement of at least two black athletes on the committee.

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[967] Joseph H. McMillan and Thomas S. Gunnings, "They're also juvenile," *State News*, Feb. 19, 1972, 5.

[968] "Big Ten to review segregation claims: Plans Incomplete," *State News*, Feb. 18, 1972.

7. More black athletic officials, varsity coaches and trainers, imploring President Wharton to advocate settlement of the presently 'appalling situation.'[969]

Goodison, recruited to MSU out of Jamaica by the soccer coach, expressed his frustrations with the lack of academic expectations and guidance given to black students: "The average athlete finishes from 12 to 20 credits shy of graduation when his eligibility ends. We want some leeway. We want to go away from here with something."[970] Goodison further argued that international student-athletes were lied to: their scholarships were cut, so they had to find low-paying jobs for room and board, leaving little time for studying.[971] Moreover, the student-athletes were especially interested in the search for a new athletic director. Burt Smith had stepped in as the acting athletic director and was quite unpopular amongst the black student-athlete population, all of whom had dealt with him as their freshmen and sophomore academic advisor. Shapiro acknowledged their distrust of Smith, writing that "Athletes interviewed during the 1960's did not like Smith and believed him to be racist and saw him as the cause of their academic difficulties."[972]

On the 19th, frustrated with negative and aggressive reactions to their petition, Dr. Green challenged his detractors to a debate: "Anyone who would like to publicly debate me on this issue, tell them to name the date and time. And I am specifically referring to those who are intimately involved with sports at the moment, not the fans who have been sending me hate mail,

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[969] Rick Gosselin, "Black athletes want aid – list 6 other demands," *State News*, Feb. 23, 1972, 1.
[970] Ibid., 1.
[971] Lynn Henning, "Jamaicans' soccer gripes traced to financial problems," *State News*, Feb. 19, 1972.
[972] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University," 161.

for they do not know the issues and do not have the data I have."[973] For an editorial staff (and soon a portion of the local populace) arguing that race was not an issue here, the negative response to the trio's petition was certainly about race. Dr. Green revealed that he received more hate mail than he had "ever received when I was involved in open housing protests and busing. […] It appears as though I have hit the heartstrings of American and upper middle-class white racism. The hate mail I have received during the last four days only reinforces my determination to work against racism and bigotry in sports."[974] Community members also called his house at all hours with one caller telling him, "N-----, we gonna run you out of East Lansing yet" with another adding that "when the faculty becomes more effectively organized, we're gonna run you and all the other blacks off this campus"[975]

Bob Hoerner of the *State Journal* offered his support to Dr. Green in an op-ed entitled "Dr. Green Seeks Black Equality" on February 20, arguing that "this is not Green against Michigan State University or Green against the Big Ten. The entire sports system must change."[976] But, in the same article, Hoerner refused to believe that Duffy Daugherty, "probably the fairest man I know in sports" had abandoned former athletes, a reference to Green's earlier contention that "black athletes are used for four years, then dumped to pasture, at age 21." Hoerner believed that Daugherty had "shown concern for the players and has given assistance to all of them." Years prior, John Hannah had sent a request to Vice President Philip May at the behest of Daugherty asking for the University to loan former African American player Blanche

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[973] "Green offers to debate issue of bias in Big Ten," *State News*, Feb. 19, 1972, 1.
[974] Ibid., 17.
[975] Ibid., 17.
[976] Bob Hoerner, "Dr. Green Seeks Black Equality," *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 20, 1972, E-1.

Martin money for dental school, supporting Hoerner's claim.[977] Again, Daugherty was likely not a racist, and there are numerous instances of him looking out for former players, but the perception amongst the players was there. For instance, Bubba Smith was impressed with Daugherty's foresight in recruiting African American players from the South like him and his brother, but he also wondered whether Duffy truly trusted him like he did the white players.[978]

On February 25, the MSU Board of Trustees met and publically came out against the trio 5-3 in a resolution passed at their meeting. Blanche Martin, Patricia Carrigan, and Don Stevens opposed the resolution. Despite Trustee Stevens pointing out that "[Trustee] Martin[979] [was] in a better viewing position on the matter than many others [on the board]," the trustees who voted in the affirmative for the resolution "did not approve of the methods used by three black MSU administrators to protest the handling of blacks in Big Ten sports. Those voting for the [approved] resolution made it clear they opposed discrimination but only objected to the administrators making it appear they spoke for the university" and using the local media to do

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[977] John Hannah to VP Philip May, November 21, 1963, Box 41, Folder 12, John A. Hannah Papers, UA.2.1.12, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[978] Bubba Smith, *Kill, Bubba, Kill!*, 54;81.

[979] Born in Detroit, MI, Blanche Martin, an African American, had lettered three times in football for Michigan State as a halfback during the 1950s before a knee injury in a game against alumni players ended his career. In one game against Minnesota, Martin rushed six times for 122 yards in a 42-13 victory. He also earned Academic All-American honors three times during his career, earning degrees in mathematics and physical science. Martin played for the AFL's New York Titans but injured his knee again. After being cut by the Titans, he signed with the Los Angeles Chargers and played in the AFL's first championship game in a loss to the Houston Oilers. After the season, he enrolled in graduate school, spending two years in zoology and two more in biochemistry before attending dental school at the University of Detroit. He went on to have a 38 year career as a dentist in the Lansing-area and served on the Board of Trustees from 1969 to 1984, becoming the Board's first African American member. He held the position of Chair from 1974-1976. While on the Board, he worked to increase opportunities and improve conditions for minorities at the University. "Blanche Martin: Something Special On And Off The Field," *Michigan State*, February27, 2009, http://www.msuspartans.com/genrel/022709aaa.html.

so.[980] They wanted to make it known that they urged “discretion to those who would employ their stations within the university to implicate the university on a sensitive issue in an insensitive demeanor.” However, at no point in their petition did any member of the trio of professors indicate that he was speaking for the University.

Moreover, the resolution stated that the "Board is confident that Commissioner Duke based his disciplinary edict against two Minnesota basketball players upon fundings [sic] consequential to deliberate research, including exhaustive study of the game films, hearing where witnesses testified, consultation with game officials, and testimony from the participants. The Board is not aware of similar research on the part of plaintiff (Professor Green et all)," but this ignores the fact that Duke had already suspended Behagen and Taylor *before* any of this "research" had occurred.[981] And, it dismisses the validity of the concerns of systemic discriminatory practices by the Big Ten raised by the trio of professors, regardless of the motivations of the fight or the suspensions of Behagen and Taylor. Those in favor of the resolution seemed far more concerned with the appearance that "Professor Green et all" spoke for the University, arguing that the professors' "untimely actions preempted the Board from assisting in a manner which, in the opinion of the Board, would have been appropriate to seek remedy for alleged discrimination."[982] Also, in the official resolution, the Trustees mockingly conceded that waiting for the Board to act would have "deprived the plaintiff of significant publicity," casting "official" doubt on the motives of the professors. And, now given the opportunity to respond to and move to correct the allegations of discrimination and inequality

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980 “MSU Trustees Protest Protest, 5-3” *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 26, 1972, C-1.
981 "Resolution Regarding Black Student Athletes," *Michigan State University Board of Trustees*, February 25, 1972, 7356.
982 Ibid., 7356.

within the Conference – an opportunity they argued had been denied by the professors' statements and actions – the Board failed to come out in favor of investigating said allegations or denounce, even tacitly, any discrimination that may have existed. Instead, the Trustees chastised "Dr. Green, et all" for, what they saw as, acting outside of institutional guidelines and resolved that the Board "proudly continues affiliation of Michigan State University with the Big Ten Conference and recognizes the historical excellence of the administration of Conference policy."[983] Yet, this same "Conference policy" with its "historical excellence" would be called into question and ridiculed by a federal judge in Minnesota regarding the quick suspensions of Behagen and Taylor by the Big Ten Conference.[984]

And the resolution passed only after Trustee Blanche Martin's resolution failed. Martin's resolution argued that the Board should *side* with Drs. Green, McMillan, and Gunnings and their petition. Martin urged the Board to support the trio of professors and MSU President Wharton in calling for an investigation of the trio's charges and "corrective action where warranted" if such investigations revealed problems.[985] Martin noted that the University had "in the past taken the lead in confronting discrimination, and is pledged by policy to affirmative action against any and all practices that may result in unequal treatment and/or opportunity for individuals or groups within the university." Michigan State University, "as a member of the Big Ten Conference," should continue to share in concerns about discrimination and inequality as those concerns

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983 Ibid., 7356.

984 See Minnesota Chapter.

985 "Resolution Regarding Black Student Athletes," 7355.

"affect the welfare of student athletes and of Big Ten athletic programs generally."[986] But this first resolution never came to a vote and was abandoned.

After the substitution resolution passed, Trustee Stevens pointed out that there "had been times when the black community in the University has had to call attention to glaring examples of discrimination," insinuating that this could be one of those times;[987] waiting for corrective action on the part of the Conference might be an act of futility, as the overwhelmingly white administrations of Michigan State and the Big Ten might not recognize or might possibly ignore injustices that seem self evident to those oppressed by said injustices. Trustee Carrigan expressed her "disappointment" in the Board's action "in refusing to support affirmative action against discrimination in this matter," instead focusing on the medium and its particulars rather than the message itself.[988] Moreover, she noted that it should not even be an issue, considering that none of the professors referred to Michigan State University, nor did they purport to speak for the University. She called it a "slap in the face" to the black community as the Board "closed its eyes to" and made a "sham out of University policy" over a technicality in procedure. Trustee Stevens agreed with this assessment. Trustees Thompson and Hartman, who presented and seconded the resolution, respectively, argued that they were in "complete accord with everything" that had been suggested about correcting injustices, but they could not agree with the actions of Drs. Green, McMillan, and Gunnings. Hartman argued that this failure of the trio of professors to follow proper procedure absolved the "supporters of the resolution from not recognizing racial

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[986] Ibid., 7355.
[987] Ibid., 7356.
[988] Ibid., 7357.

discrimination."[989] Nowhere in the resolution does it even imply that the Board cared about the validity of the allegations. When given the chance to support its professors and student-athletes and actively "take the lead" in confronting institutional Conference discrimination, those Trustees voting for the substitution resolution chose inaction and trusted in the believed altruistic nature of the Conference and its administration rather than believing its students and faculty, and even actively cast doubt on those calling for an investigation into discriminatory practices. They acknowledged that racial discrimination might exist, but they absolved themselves from having to do anything about it. To use a sports analogy, they punted, a move Walter Adams, in *The Test*, noted was a tendency of establishmentarians who used "'due process' to legitimize [their] rules for doing thing [their] way, and 'morality' to justify a *modus Vivendi* [they] [have] found comfortable and advantageous."[990]

While the majority of the trustees disagreed with the trio's medium for getting their message out there and what they perceived to be an abuse of protocol, one local resident from Holt, MI was angered by the petitioners' actions and the actions of black student-athletes who felt mistreated by the University and the Big Ten. In fact, he somehow found their accusations of mistreatment racist. Writing to the *State Journal*, he argued: "Having been born and raised in South Central Michigan I have, since a child, followed with great interest the accomplishments of the Spartan athletes at Michigan State University, I now feel I can no longer support any phase of MSU athletics. The demands by black athletes (Wharton's Warriors) naturally follow the example set by Professor Green. Augmenting changes at MSU or with the Big Ten Conference

[989] Ibid., 7357.
[990] Adams, *The Test*, 91.

would be racist."[991] The letter does not explain how examining and addressing concerns about racial inequality and fair treatment would be racist, but he felt disturbed enough by possible changes to be compelled to write a letter to the editor.

On the 27th, sport was once again used as a political arena as around 100 black students assembled on the floor of Jenison Field House before the Spartans' men's basketball game against the Iowa Hawkeyes, delaying the game by forty-five minutes. During the National Anthem the protestors marched to center-court and attempted to read their proclamation which supported a fair trial for Corky Taylor and Ron Behagen and denounced the Big Ten for being an "administratively segregated conference in athletics," an undeniably accurate claim.[992] Black student-leader Sam Riddle and the protestors intended for the presentation to be around five minutes, but insistent attempts to remove them from the court and the angry booing from a largely white crowd who wanted to watch a basketball game extended their demonstration. At one point Vice President Jack Breslin had to be called, and he gave them permission to read their statement and later hurried over to the arena from his house. For those who did not attend the game or could not hear their message because of the booing, the protestors told their story and their demands to the *State News* the next day. Among their demands was a more open admissions policy that would raise the current black student population of seven percent to one closer to the state's black population of fifteen percent and the reinstatement of Eileen Van Tassell, a white assistant professor in the natural sciences.[993] Protestors had read a similar

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[991] Gary W. Lyon, "Racist Changes," *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 27, 1972, C-2.
[992] Bob Hoerner, "Protest by Black Students Delays Start of MSU Game," *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 27, 1972, A-1.
[993] Crispin Y. Campbell, "Blacks reveal demands before MSU-Iowa game," *State News*, Feb. 28, 1972, 1.

statement at a Western Michigan basketball game Saturday evening, and Riddle explained that the protestors were "in contact with several Big Ten progressive black student organizations and it is very likely that if they [Taylor and Behagen] are not reinstated or reviewed by an impartial board … there won't be any more Big Ten games taking place."[994]

Dr. Green (notice again that he is the one taking the abuse) found himself the subject of another letter to the editor on Tuesday when a local Lansing woman suggested that MSU fire him, explaining that she was "fed up with Dr. Green and his tirades too. Dump him. With that Doctor before his name he should have no trouble obtaining another position."[995] The next day, the editors of the *State News* jumped back into the discussion, coming out in support of the resolution passed by the Board of Trustees: "We congratulate the Michigan State Board of Trustees for its recent majority decision refusing to support Dr. Robert L. Green and two other faculty members for the tactics used in attacking Big Ten athletic programs and raising the charge of racist policies."[996] The *State News* editors charged that Dr. Green was not "helping" by "simply branding every incident that may occur between black and white athletes in sports competition as racism, regardless of the circumstances and the outcome of public hearings," and claiming that it was "unfair and a practice which is certain to promote racial dissension rather than bring solutions."[997] Just as before, they singled out Dr. Green (even though multiple letters had now been sent to and printed within their newspaper pointing out the problems and detriment of doing so) and largely ignored the underlying causes and concerns pointed out by the trio,

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[994] Ibid., 1.
[995] Esther McFarlane, "She Says 'Amen,'" *Lansing State Journal*, Feb. 29, 1972, A-10.
[996] "Green Not Helping By Tactics," *Lansing State Journal*, Mar. 1, 1972, A-4.
[997] Ibid., A-4.

instead focusing on the one facet they could question: Taylor and Behagen. Instead of addressing the systemic issues, feelings, and statistics the trio of professors brought up, a large number of editorials and letters to the editor instead admonished Dr. Green and the black community for allowing this incident to incite them to action. And, by focusing on an undeniably violent confrontation – and one that had been deemed unmotivated by race, despite it involving black players attacking white players and one possible white aggressor (Witte) receiving no punishment or further scrutiny – the trio's opponents ignored or shouted down the more important accusations of inequality and the lack of integration within the workings of the conference.

Behind the scenes, Board of Trustees member Patricia Carrigan wrote a letter to her fellow board member, Kenneth W. Thompson, who had presented the substitution resolution censuring the trio's actions. Carrigan cut to the heart of the matter and the problematic vein which ran through nearly every criticism of the trio. In censuring their actions, Carrigan argued that the Board "dodged the substantive issue completely. In so doing, it failed to indicate any concern on the Board's part about allegations of discrimination in Big Ten Athletics, or about the feelings of MSU blacks in this matter. That, in turn, suggested that the Board's commitment to affirmative action against discrimination was shallow, or selective, or both."[998] She continued:

> Despite cautious wording, the implicit censure of Drs. Green, Gunnings, and McMillan and the attack on their motives could scarcely be missed. In supporting that part of the resolution, I wonder if the Board isn't encroaching on the academic freedom of those involved. […] I have looked carefully at the statements which have appeared, and I find no evidence that Dr. Green and his colleagues represented themselves as official spokesmen for MSU. In fact, their statements seem to make it clear he <u>is</u> speaking as an

[998] Patricia M. Carrigan to Kenneth W. Thompson, March 1, 1972, Box 2359, Folder 28C, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

> individual. […] That fact [Dr. Green being a long-standing faculty member] does not, however, deny him the right to speak as Bob Green, black man (or black faculty member) concerned for black people. […] Those of us who are not a part of the day-to-day situation on campus cannot fully appreciate the pressures and problems that must be dealt with, and dealt with expeditiously.[999]

The next day, Dr. John Fuzak announced that Dr. Edwin H. Cady would allow Dr. Green and one athlete of his choosing to attend and address the Big Ten Faculty Advisors and the Commissioner at the next conference meeting.[1000] Despite the Big Ten believing that the issues raised by the trio and the students were worthy of further contemplation and discussion, debate still raged in the pages of East Lansing area newspapers over the legitimacy of said issues. In another letter to the editor of the *State Journal*, a Lansing man wrote about being upset with the support of Taylor and Behagen and explained that black people can be racist too, and that backing someone because of their race proves nothing.[1001] This is certainly true, but the trio and the students were not making this point. They were arguing for a fair trial and an examination of why black athletes seemed to be overwhelmingly punished when compared to white athletes and why those deciding their fates were all white, despite the large number of African Americans representing the universities of the Big Ten on its playing fields and courts. But racial concerns did not just exist in the pages of newspapers; as the *State News* reported, a growing number of people at Michigan State perceived a rise in racial tensions on the campus as well. Administrators moved the start time of the upcoming men's basketball game against Michigan and all further home games up to 2:00 pm to avoid a more hostile atmosphere. Likewise, "staff in residence halls report[ed] informally that the number of individual white – black confrontations

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[999] Ibid.

[1000] "Green will address meet of Big Ten reps," *State News*, Mar. 2, 1972.

[1001] Dennis B. Williams, "Supporting the Wrong Guys," *Lansing State Journal*, Mar. 2, 1972, A-15.

among students [had] increased in the past several weeks" and "administrators say they perceive a black – white polarization among students, faculty and staff that could lead to violence if current emotionalism is not cooled.[1002] The article went on to describe that "the mood of the predominantly white crowd at the Saturday basketball game has been described as 'ugly, very hostile to the black tactics by those in attendance." Further worries involved a future protest leading to the forfeiture of a game which "most administrators" believed could "trigger the hostile atmosphere on campus into violence."[1003]

While the article likely took some liberties in stating that "most" administrators believed that violence might be coming, it is quite evident that it was an incredibly tense atmosphere. However, if the article is correct in stating that "overall, most officials characterize the situation as one where *blacks are taxing the tolerance of formerly silent whites* to the point white militarism may develop," then the administration was placing the blame squarely at the feet of Professors Green, McMillan, and Gunnings, black student-athletes, and black protestors.[1004] If these are not the thoughts of "most" of the administration, then it is another example of the ignorance or ineloquence of the *State News*. If black faculty and students questioning why only two out of seventy-two referees were black, why no Big Ten athletic directors or head coaches in football and basketball, sports with high numbers of African American student-athletes, were black, and why none of the administration within the Big Ten was black were enough to incite white militarism on campus, then clearly there was more going on than just white tolerance being "taxed" by blacks on campus. That kind of tolerance sounds much more like the acceptance and

[1002] Michael Fox, "Rise in campus race tension seen," *State News*, Mar. 2, 1972.
[1003] Ibid.
[1004] Italics added for emphasis by the author. Ibid.

comfort with the status quo of white privilege and the "structure of feeling" on campus felt by many blacks during earlier decades when they were expected to remain quiet and “know their place.”

In the reactionary response to the actions of Professors Green, McMillan, and Gunnings, the black student-athletes, and black activists on campus, African Americans at Michigan State had their perceptions confirmed: if they remained quiet, issues of race would go unchallenged and a significant portion of the white population dismissed or could not understand their concerns. Another *State News* editorial the following day further illustrated the disregard for the perceptions and concerns of the African American population on campus: “The result of all these events has been to raise a specter – once hoped buried – on this campus. As in the troubled year of 1970, the academic community has once again become sensitized to the potential of ‘racial trouble.’ At present this is an illusion, but free floating anxieties have an awful way of becoming self-fulfilling prophecies.”[1005] The editorial staff dismissed the concerns as mere illusions and considered “racial trouble” a thing of the distant past of two years prior. They continued: “Suddenly, in the light of MSU’s heightened ‘racial’ consciousness a shoving match between two freshmen in a residence hall becomes, not a happening repeated anonymously a hundred times a day, but now a sinister ‘racial incident’ since coincidentally the individuals involved were of different skin colors. A joke yelled down the hall by a white to his black colleague suddenly becomes suspect where it never was before. A black man accidentally splashes [water on] a white with his car and the white wonders: was it intentional?” Out of context, they are correct: two people of different backgrounds can have an argument without it being about race, religion, gender, etc. But their continued use of quotation marks around the word “racial”

[1005] “‘Racial confrontation’ more illusion than fact," *State News*, Mar. 3, 1972, 4.

suggests that they are entirely skeptical of and trivialize the concerns raised by the African American community. The editorial staff's doubting of the legitimacy of the concerns did not mean that the issue was settled. They closed their editorial with their own, privileged version of life at Michigan State: "Occasionally we may not agree and there are still many things to iron out, but mostly we are making it." It is a hopeful sentiment, but one that seemed to ignore African American perceptions of Michigan State.

That same day, an article in the *State News* addressed President Wharton's concerns with the basketball game protests, condemning the protestors for abusing "principles of freedom of speech and the free exchange of ideas."[1006] Wharton did not criticize their message but their choice of venue and tactics, arguing that they should have gone through the proper channels open to students and faculty members. In response, black student-leader Sam Riddle found Wharton's criticisms "pure, unadulterated, concentrated bullshit," arguing that the only tool of the powerless is the disruption of "business as usual." He saw it as not just a "reflection of a problem in the athletic department, but societal problems" as well. Riddle vowed that he and the protestors would continue their efforts and seek out signatures from the black population to censure the Board of Trustees over their February 25, 1972 resolution against the trio of professors (it is worth noting that he includes all three, not just Dr. Green). He also made sure to note that he did not speak for all black students, but for those "progressive blacks who want to 'back theory with action.'" A letter to the editor a few weeks later pointed out the absurdity of those arguing that the protestors should have scheduled their protest beforehand and chosen a venue that would not have interrupted a sporting event: "Better should Riddle and friends have staged their protest in Spartan Stadium where not so many people would have been

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[1006] Randy Garton, "Wharton criticizes blacks' tactics," *State News*, Mar. 3, 1972.

inconvenienced. Martin Luther King should have conducted civil rights demonstrations in the Mojave Desert and antiwar protestors should march on Yellowstone Park."[1007] Anger over a disruption of a basketball game put sports above issues of equality and discrimination and fell back on the convenient argument that sports are somehow apolitical, an argument that strangely is ignored when sports are held up for their early implementation of integration. Sports, apparently, are allowed to be political if the change is deemed positive in retrospect. Along with those condemning the petition against the Big Ten, individual members of the community continued to write in to the paper in support of the trio, as was the case in a letter to the editor on March 3: "The Board of Trustees should rescind its censure of Green, McMillan and Gunnings. The point has been made that they do not speak for the total university on this issue. I don't think they ever purported to do so. The Board should, at the same time, highly commend these men for the work they have been doing on this campus in relation to the black community and for equal opportunities."[1008] The trio found further support from a local Chicano group that also wrote to the *State News* on the same day. In reaction to the backlash the trio received in the newspaper and on campus and "recognizing the previous effects of discrimination on all minority groups in this society, La Raza Unida cannot ignore the far reaching implications of these charges against the Big Ten and their implications for the Spanish-speaking community and all other disadvantaged minorities in this country. In this regard, La Raza Unida totally supports and commends the actions" of the trio of professors.[1009]

[1007] We can assume that this is not the same Jim Delaney who became the Big Ten Commissioner. Jim Delaney, "*SN* Riddle err," *State News*, Mar. 12, 1972.

[1008] Beckie Brenneman,"Conflict Brewing," *Lansing State Journal*, Mar. 3, 1972, A-10.

[1009] La Raza Unida de Michigan, "Chicanos applaud prof's bias claims," *State News*, Mar. 3, 1972.

Drs. Green, McMillan, and Gunnings seemed to appreciate the support, but they also called for caution from the students, stating that they "strongly encourage all students in the University community to support us in addressing these issues in a rational and orderly manner and to refrain from overt actions that are counterproductive."[1010] The worry seemed to be that the students would detract from the issues at hand, instead provoking more criticism over their chosen medium rather than a response to the message itself. The trio received formal support from the Michigan Chapter of the American Association of University Professors, which criticized the Board of Trustees' resolution. They referred to the resolution as "an open attack on faculty members who express their opinions to the community at large."[1011] Furthermore, they argued that it violated the 1940 Statement on Academic Freedom and Tenure, it demeaned and deprecated the academic status of Dr. Green's colleagues by not addressing them all by name, and it inserted itself into an area that was the "the prerogative of President Wharton and not the board to see that proper procedures are followed." That same evening, WJIM-TV, a Lansing television station, ran an editorial supporting the trio, but questioning the emotional rhetoric used by Dr. Green in his presentation to the media (the fact that a public press conference had been called in the first place angered many): "The five concerns outlined by Green and two of his MSU faculty colleagues were not without substance, as former MSU President Walter Adams made eloquently clear in a commentary on this channel a week ago…but this legitimacy was obliterated by the style of the Green rhetoric. Once the curtain was raised, what followed was

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[1010] Robert Green, Joseph McMillan, and Thomas Gunnings, "Restraint Necessary," *State News*, Mar. 3, 1972.

[1011] Barbara Parness, "AAUP hits resolution of board in bias case," *State News*, Mar. 3, 1972, 1.

ritual, predictable choreography from that traditional impresario – emotion."[1012] While they focus mostly on Dr. Green, they do point out an important component in all of this: rhetoric and emotion. Yes, the emotion and rhetoric Dr. Green used in his announcement and further public appearances disturbed many respondents in the local papers, but it was likely hard for Green to separate emotion from the issue at hand. Having worked on civil rights issues, hearing instances of discrimination from students for the past decade, and having received numerous death threats couched in racial rhetoric for pointing out inconsistencies many in the black community found discriminatory, it was likely difficult for him not to be emotional about his concerns. However, WJIM-TV made a cogent point in that the general public, spurred on by "superficial press coverage" of the petition and emotional condemnation of the basketball protest by the media, latched on to the emotion and rhetoric as being in support of the two University of Minnesota student-athletes, rather than examining the points raised by the trio's petition.

The controversy did not die down over the weekend, as more editorials appeared in the *Lansing State Journal* the following week. The first, from Prof. Barry Gross of the English Department, came out in support of the trio, arguing that "the attempt to shift attention from the accusation to the accusers does real violence to the issue of justice which must be dealt with. There are undoubtedly many who are tired of hearing blacks charge racism, but there are countless years of unimagined tiredness behind those charges and many thousand gone in whose name those charges must now, by whomever and however, be uttered."[1013] The second, on the same day, merely proved the point of the first: "May I say amen to your editorial of March 1,

[1012] WJIM-TV, "Editorial," March 3, 1972, Box 2359, Folder 28C, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.
[1013] Barry Gross, "Motives not the Issue," *Lansing State Journal*, Mar. 7, 1972, A-10.

which labeled Dr. Green's recent press conference a publicity stunt. Dr. Green's conference was called to protest what he calls racism in the Big Ten Athletic Conference. In my opinion the only color that the good doctor cares about is Green. His approach serves only to further the polarization of blacks and whites."[1014] Rather than address the actual issues raised by the trio, nearly every letter or editorial opposing the petitioners attacked them rather than their positions or focused on the violence of Taylor and Behagen. That same day, the Lansing branch of the NAACP contacted the Board of Trustees asking them that they should reconsider and rescind their recent resolution in the "interests of better Human Relations in this area."[1015] Three days later a letter to the editor appeared from a local graduate student, calling for a nuanced discussion of the issues, more information, and less of a rush to judgment. He pointed out that he sensed that many whites felt that accusations of racism on campus were not "just" or were "a tool of power used by various racial groups to intimidate when their position is not agreed with or supported."[1016] Conversely, he believed that many minorities believed that whites were inherently racist and could not, "because of their lack of experience, know or understand the subtleties or implications of race."

The graduate student's take, while quite generalizing, at least took a step towards addressing the point: the perception of discrimination and inequality by peoples of color in the Lansing area and beyond, regardless of dismissals or incomprehension by those in a more

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[1014] The writer of this letter to the editor, R.L. Moore was a noted conservative resident of Lansing who often wrote in to the *LSJ*. R. L. Moore, "Amen to Editorial," *Lansing State Journal*, Mar. 7, 1972, A-10.

[1015] Vence L. Bonham, President of the Lansing Branch of the NAACP to the MSU Board of Trustees, March 7, 1972, Box 2359, Folder 28C, Ruth Simms Hamilton Collection, UA.17.269, Michigan State University Archives & Historical Collections, East Lansing, Michigan.

[1016] S. George Field, "Racism: let's get the facts first," *State News*, Mar. 10, 1972.

privileged position, still existed and had to be addressed. And while African Americans' concerns and feelings of being discriminated against were not the overt abuses of previous years (Jim Crow laws, segregation on the playing field, housing laws, etc.), they were still concerns over inequality and areas in which society had to move forward. For a Northern conference and a campus that prided itself on its early implementation of integration within its walls and on the playing field, this likely made it harder to see the discrimination and "know your place" attitude that still existed. Yes, the Big Ten and Michigan State were far ahead of many other conferences and universities throughout the country, especially compared to the Southeastern Conference where some schools were just now becoming integrated, but the black population wanted more walls to come down. The opportunity to have a college education was a great thing, but black student-athletes wanted academic advising that would move them toward a degree, not just one that kept them eligible to compete for the University. If sports writers and administrators were going to talk about black student-athletes growing up with different experiences and different cultural backgrounds as a celebration of the progressive power of college football, then the black population wanted more leaders who came from and understood those experiences. If review boards were going to explore whether incidents on the court arose from racial tensions, then they wanted members of those boards to also be members of the black community who had likely experienced inequality and feelings of discrimination in their own life. And if the Big Ten was going to pride itself on its defense of integration, then they wanted it to be integration throughout the Conference, not just at the bottom.

When Drs. Green, McMillan, and Gunnings, as well as four assistants and Nigel Goodison, did attend the Big Ten meeting in Chicago at the end of March, they addressed the ten white faculty members and ten white athletic directors seated in the conference room. The trio of

professors and persons on their staffs had visited seven Big Ten universities in the previous few weeks and came prepared with a twenty-page report entitled "The Status of Blacks in the Big Ten Conference: Issues and Concerns."[1017] Dr. Green made note of the historic importance of the day, stating that "Blacks were sitting in on a meeting of officials" of the Big Ten for the first time.[1018] Reading from a report written by L.T.B. Johnson, Green revealed that "100 percent [of black athletes] reported that their coaches expected them to remain eligible, but only 7 percent reported that their coaches expected them to receive a degree." Furthermore, "70 percent reported that their white coaches and professors and white students expected them to be weak academically." He, with personal testimony from Goodison, revealed that many black athletes did not graduate during the four years of eligibility, often owing to advisors keeping them eligible rather than moving them toward a degree or practice time leaving little time to study, meaning that their financial aid ran out before many could earn a degree. Green further admonished the conference for hiring a scant number of black officials and disclosed that the seven schools they visited employed "no Black clerical employees, no Black secretaries, no Black publicity directors, no Black team physicians, and no Blacks employed in any other capacity by the athletic departments except for a few Black custodians and two Black trainers, and only a few Black assistant coaches or freshman coaches."[1019]

In response, one athletic director interjected that when they request secretaries, the personnel office sends "who they [the personnel office] want," presumably shifting the blame. Dr. McMillan cited the affirmative action mandate from the federal government requiring all

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[1017] "MSU Black Officials Request Big Ten Changes at Meeting," 53.
[1018] Ibid., 53.
[1019] Ibid., 54.

schools that received federal funding to hire black employees and corrected the athletic director, telling him that he "should *demand* that the personnel office send you a Black secretary, and you'll get one."[1020] Dr. Gunnings recalled that a friend had told him that even Commissioner Duke's office had no black employees, an accusation that Minnesota's faculty representative Max Schultze challenged. Duke replied that he "did have a Black girl, but she's no longer with us." The trio recommended that the Big Ten make serious efforts to hire black personnel at every level, devote money toward ensuring changes that would aid black student-athletes in their academic progress, and suggested an associate commissioner be added to Duke's staff to help implement the changes. The group left the meeting with assurances from Duke that they would consider the suggestions and reply directly to the trio before the next meeting in May.[1021] Taylor and Behagen's suspension was upheld by an 8-0 vote with two abstentions. By early May, Dr. Green felt that the Big Ten was moving closer to "more equitable hiring practices" and was pleased with the gains they had achieved: a grievance board for black athletes, at least one black athlete on the screening board for Michigan State's next athletic director, and a black academic advisor.[1022] Clarence Underwood, who had been hired in 1969 as the Assistant Ticket Manager, became the Assistant Athletic Director for Student Academic Services in charge of over 700 student-athletes and the administration of athletic scholarships and financial aid as well as NCAA compliance rules for the University in August 1972.[1023]

[1020] Ibid., 54.
[1021] Ibid., 54.
[1022] George White, "Quiet, negotiated gains for black athletes cited," *State News*, May 10, 1972.
[1023] After serving in the 82st Airborne Division, Clarence Underwood of Gadsden, AL moved to East Lansing with his wife and young child to attend Michigan State University. He had come to MSU after seeing an integrated Michigan State defeat UCLA 28-20 in the 1954 Rose Bowl on

While gains were won in athletics, members of the black population continued to press for equality in other areas and stressed the inequality they perceived on campus. A Detroit sophomore wrote a letter to the editor in February of 1973 that integration was in and of itself discriminatory, explaining: "In the 1960s, white Amerikka was treated to a series of statements on how blacks felt about this country and its tired programs of appeasement and apathy in relation to human rights and dignity, including the Detroit riot of 1967 and Watts. […] Integration has thus become the cry of these who either are too naïve to understand that assimilation into the white society calls for the acceptance of white values, or consider this alternative to be more conducive to us."[1024] One need only look to the reverse effects of the integration in baseball to see some of what he's talking about. While black players were finally allowed to showcase their talents and compete against the greatest white athletes of the time on a larger stage, they became absorbed into an established culture that celebrated a different kind of gamesmanship, one that frowned upon the "cool pose" and more individualized style of play of black baseball players, who were expected to adapt appropriately. And, except for the Brooklyn/Los Angeles Dodgers, Major League Baseball's racial integration on the playing field alone was slow and rather piecemeal. Meanwhile, a vibrant system of professional baseball died away as the Negro League teams lost their best players, meaning that African Americans lost

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television. Underwood faced racism in his attempts to find local housing and was struck by the lack of black students at the University. After earning his degree in physical education, he taught locally in the Lansing area while working on his MA. He worked at a women's rec center at Northern Michigan University and the University of Wisconsin as an organizer for a new program for black students, but left to work for the Michigan Department of Education after consistent underfunding to his efforts at Wisconsin. Underwood had been hired at MSU in response to the student-athlete boycotts of 1969. After becoming the Assistant AD, he earned his PhD from MSU in 1982 and served as the Deputy Commissioner of the Big Ten until 1990, when he returned to MSU and eventually became the Athletic Director from 1999 to 2002. "Clarence Underwood: Athletic Administrator and Educator," *Michigan State*, February 15, 2008, http://www.msuspartans.com/genrel/021508aaa.html.

[1024] Billy R. Malone, "Black image framed by whites," *State News*, Feb. 15, 1973, 4.

their jobs in baseball organizations and their celebrated baseball teams and traditions, and many black patrons could no longer afford to watch their favorite players as they were priced out of Major League stadiums or shifted into segregated sections. However, the heightened rhetoric and repositioning of integration – something celebrated and seen as a positive to a large portion of society – did not garner the same kind of support that the trio of professors and earlier protestors had in the pages of the *State News*. Instead, most letters denounced Malone or objected to his separatist message.

However, more tangible racial issues still existed at Michigan State, as evidenced by black students reporting shoplifting accusations by store employees suspicious of the student because of her race, while others wrote about the need for more racially sensitive and relevant courses. In an article about humanities courses, George White reported that some of the black students on campus complained about courses "oriented toward white Western culture, history and accomplishments four days a week" while their own heritage was ignored.[1025] Billye Suttles' report reveals that many of the students found the courses that were offered in the 1960s and discussed black history and heritage wanting, noting that they contained merely a speech by Booker T. Washington, a rebuttal from W.E.B. Dubois, and a speech from Martin Luther King, Jr., all sources that at least one respondent found "a bit on the uncle tom side."[1026] A few social science courses lightly touched on problems on the urban scene and in underdeveloped countries, but humanities courses "made no reference to black artists, black or African art, scupture [sic], etc."[1027] However, Suttles admitted that more were added and, "surprisingly enough, MSU had

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[1025] George White, "Humanities hurts blacks," *State News*, Apr. 2, 1973, 4.
[1026] Billye Suttles, "Life Styles of Black Students," 29.
[1027] Ibid., 29.

quite a few courses dealing with black culture in 1965 and most of them were retained up to present but the course content in most are of a different nature from the course content in 1965."[1028] But again, it is clear that there was a feeling amongst some of the black students that there was still a large emphasis on the dominant white culture in many courses to the detriment or ignoring of minority cultures.

By 1975 the culture of feeling of the previous ten years seemed to be on its way out – as is usually the case – but one last incident deserves attention. On Saturday, January 4, 1975, ten black basketball players for Michigan State disagreed with a decision by their coach Gus Ganakas and quietly filed out of the locker room. In response, Ganakas suspended all ten of them for the game against the Indiana Hoosiers, ranked second in the country. The incident stemmed from Ganakas' decision to start Mike Tropf against Indiana's Steve Green. Tropf, a 6'7" freshman from nearby Holt, had been averaging 5.5 points per game off of the bench and also happened to be white. Because of this, the initial reaction from many was an assumption that it was racially motivated: ten black players were uncomfortable with a white player starting. When Ganakas announced that Tropf would start, Spartan forward Lindsay Hairston responded with "It can't be that way." Ganakas countered that "I'm the coach and that's my decision."[1029] The players filed out and expected to play in the game later in the afternoon; instead, Ganakas started Tropf and a collection of junior varsity players, including a number of black players. Indiana destroyed them 107 – 55[1030]. The *State Journal* understandably suspected that race was the issue: "The quickest explanation involved race. MSU has a mostly-black team, a white coach,

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[1028] Ibid., 31.

[1029] "MSU Cage Team Left in Shambles," *Lansing State Journal*, Jan. 5, 1975, A-1.

[1030] Interestingly, a few of the substitute players were hours away in Bay City and Flint while others were rounded up from the campus IM buildings.

and only one black assistant coach. Back in 1972, some black fans seized the public address system at an MSU basketball team [sic] and demanded more black coaches and referees."[1031] But Ganakas himself doubted it was racially motivated, but this again seems congruent with other racially motivated protests at Michigan State: the coach publically assumes that nothing is wrong, and that he is in the right. What separates this issue is the players' contention that race had nothing to do with it. They even asked Tropf to march out of the locker room with them, urging him to come with them. According to an initial informant and friend of the suspended players, he felt that it was more a question of seniority: "The team wants to win, they've worked hard, but they don't feel they can win with Tropf in there. They believe there are more qualified people on the bench."[1032] Tropf was a freshman, and they felt he had not earned his playing time yet. And Tropf insisted that it was not about him, as his teammates talked to him when they filed out and said that he was "a victim of circumstance."[1033] Their complaints had more to do with disagreements with Ganakas' coaching strategies and what they felt were inadequate facilities at Jenison Field House.

The Office of Black Affairs ran an op-ed in the *State News* siding with the suspended players, questioning "Since when does a protest warrent [sic] such a harsh and rigid disciplinary action? After all, in a democratic society all people have a right to dissent."[1034] They went on to question whether the issues of three years prior were not still in play: "The latest action by a group of black athletes at MSU is an indication that racism in the Big Ten is not dead." While

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[1031] Ibid., A-1.
[1032] Ibid., A-1.
[1033] UPI, "10 Spartan Cagers Are Reinstated: They'll Play OSU Tonight," *Detroit Free Press*, Jan. 6, 1975, 1-D.
[1034] Office of Black Affairs, "Back Black Cagers," *State News*, Jan. 6, 1975.

Joe Falls of the *Detroit Free Press* backed Coach Ganakas, he realized the implications of the coach's action. Regardless if race was a motivating factor in the walkout, it could easily be perceived as such because of the race of the players and the history of racial protest at Michigan State. Perceptively, he noted that it "certainly can't help the recruiting program in basketball. How can Ganakas go into Detroit City League now and expect to convince the black players that Michigan State is the place to play? Racial overtones will be read into this situation whether or not they exist."[1035] Here, despite a denial of race being a factor, it was certainly still fresh on the minds of African American students and faculty at Michigan State. And, in the response to the OBA's op-ed, the mere insinuation that race *could* be a factor did not sit well with at least some of the white students on campus. David Radelet (who was a member of the football team) displayed his annoyance that again, "the accusing cry of 'racism' has emerged to refer to a sticky situation where the people involved just happen to be of *different* racial backgrounds," noting that the players involved denied race being a motivating factor.[1036] He continues, agreeing that they had the right to protest but should also face disciplinary action for their protest, arguing that it "matters little what skin color they have." However, he also takes the opportunity to mock the OBA, writing that he would "like to take this opportunity to strip the basketball team of their billing as 'the flakiest team in the nation' and bestow the title on to the Office of Black Affairs. I hope those who went to Monday nights [sic] OBA meeting had fun – I went to the basketball game." It is understandable that someone would feel compelled to write in to the campus newspaper when the players themselves denied that their action had a racial component to it, but his letter seems particularly dismissive of the OBA, not just their letter. Also, as a member of the

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[1035] Joe Falls, "MSU Question: Who Runs the Show?" Jan. 6, 1975, 1-D.

[1036] Italics added by author for emphasis. David Radelet, "Who's racist?" *State News*, Jan. 8, 1975, 5.

football team, it is interesting that he would be in support of suspensions for organized protests by student-athletes, probably an indication that he saw no particular reasons in his own personal experiences to protest. However, his letter is quite tame and does not have the same kind of anger as letters from previous years.

The other letter to the editor by Leland K. Beggs, a Phi Kappa Phi student at Michigan State, argued that the basketball program was racist, but against white athletes. While the letter may have been part satire, its arguments are ones often brought up in discussions of affirmative action. Beggs dismisses the players' issues as "minor things" and chastises Ganakas for showing "poor judgement [sic] in awarding scholarships and positions on the team to such irresponsible people."[1037] He argues that "while whites constitute approximately 90 per cent of the student population, only two whites are on the varsity basketball team. Moreover, scholarships are also unequally distributed. Such unequal racial distribution appears to contradict not only the law of averages but also the spirit of the University's affirmative action programs." For Beggs the advances of scholarship opportunities for African American student-athletes had gone too far. Whereas Michigan State and the Big Ten point to the inclusion of black student-athletes as something to celebrate and a point of pride, this letter uses it to lambast the arguments and statistics used by protestors for equality at Michigan State in the previous decades. In a way, it also harkened back to the point made by Spartan quarterback Jimmy Raye nearly a decade earlier: "Let's face it, M.S.U. couldn't put a team on the field and win without any black guys on it. You got to have the good black athletes to win. That's why they're recruiting them in the

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[1037] Leland K. Beggs, "Too few whites on MSU cage team," *State News*, Jan. 8, 1975, 5.

South now."[1038] Recruiting black student-athletes to Michigan State and other Big Ten universities was not entirely altruistic; it gave the Conference schools a competitive advantage as they were able to recruit talented athletes who had heretofore been ignored and ostracized. But for many, black student-athletes were still seen as athletes first, and students and human beings with actual complaints – although not *everyone* saw the legitimacy in their complaints – later, if at all.

When the players were reinstated for the next game against Ohio State – an 88-84 victory for MSU – they returned to "scattered boos" that were "muffled under a bevy of cheers" while Jeff Tropf "drew a thunderous ovation" as the announcer read his name off as the starting forward.[1039] Perhaps this was progress of some kind. The battles of previous years meant that the students could protest over issues beyond race. But the result was still the same: athlete first, student later. Winning the game came first and was the most important issue. To disrupt that was dangerous and somehow selfish, even if done to improve what the players viewed as legitimate grievances. Standing up for oneself as a student was "irresponsible" because it questioned the system. It questioned whether the game always came first. Arguably, the "structures of feeling" had changed at Michigan State and most would agree that student-athletes deserved better treatment, academic support, and representation. But it is often far easier for people to agree with the results of past battles won than the current battles being fought, as the hope is that each step brings us closer to equality, and newer battles often deal with less overt forms of discrimination and chip away at the privileges enjoyed by the dominant white culture – privileges that are

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[1038] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University," 140.

[1039] Fred Stabley, Jr., "Back on Track, State Drops OSU," *Lansing State Journal*, Jan. 7, 1975, C-1.

naturalized and often go unnoticed by the privileged. Even within the past few years at Michigan State, graffiti has sprung up on the walls of buildings and dormitories every bit as threatening and discriminatory as those directed at Enora Brown over forty years ago. Michigan State truly *was* viewed as a good place to go to school by many black student-athletes and seen as more progressive than Southern schools of the era. But that did not make it free of racism, discrimination, or inequalities. To its credit, the administration at Michigan State often did listen to the advice of protestors and reformers and implemented changes (even if they did not always act with haste), allowing the university to far outpace many of their national rivals in terms of academic support and graduation rates to create meaningful changes that allowed black students, faculty, administrators, and staff to feel more welcomed in East Lansing. But it is evident that most of the black student-athletes interviewed by Dr. Beth J. Shapiro for her 1982 doctoral dissertation at Michigan State University felt that their coaches *did* treat them differently, whether the coaches meant to do so or even realized they were doing it. And nearly all of them felt that there *was* racism at Michigan State, but they felt that the good outweighed the bad.[1040] Shapiro concluded that "Michigan State University could not expect to completely overcome the racial problems so prevalent in society at large. The differential educational and occupation experiences of black athletes reflect some of the basic structural problems inherent in all of our education institutions."[1041] But those structural problems and the recruitment of African American student-athletes to MSU to win sporting events did not stop a generation of black students and their allies from attempting to change from within the University and the Conference that could be and should have been better. They were their own agents, developing

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[1040] Beth J. Shapiro, "Intercollegiate athletics and big-time sport at Michigan State University, 143.
[1041] Ibid., 181.

tactics to bring about changes to the system, not just for their own benefit, but for their fellow non-athlete students and those who came after them as well.

Conclusion

Student-Athletic Activism for Fuller Equality around the Big Ten

These were not the only instances of student-athlete activism within the Big Ten Conference. In 1956, the University of Wisconsin's athletic director, Ivan Williamson, canceled a two game series against the Tigers of LSU set for 1957 and 1958 after Louisiana lawmakers passed legislation outlawing integrated athletic events in the state, a progressive strike for the rights of Wisconsin's black athletes and a move not driven by revenue.[1042] But, twelve years later in 1968, eighteen black football players threatened to boycott the Badgers' final game of the season against Minnesota.[1043] Similarly to the situations at Minnesota and Michigan State, the Badgers players had previously submitted a list of grievances to the UW Athletic Board, arguing that "the coaching staff lacked rapport with the black players and that coaches stacked black players at one position."[1044] The black players boycotted a team awards banquet at the end of the season to advocate for the removal of an assistant coach, Gene Felker. Their action led to Felker's resignation, and saw the former coach complain about "weak, frightened administrators, black athletes and their grievances."[1045] Despite their commitment to equality on the field, the UW athletic administration and coaches did not fully understand what the black players wanted

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[1042] Todd D. Milewski, "Madison's African-American history timeline," *The Capital Times* (Madison, Wisconsin), Dec. 12, 2013, http://host.madison.com/ct/topics/race-in-madison/madison-s-african-american-history-timeline/article_904abab8-e5b4-11e3-87a8-001a4bcf887a.html.

[1043] The Badgers went winless in 1967 and 1968 under coach John Coatta. Coatta lost his first twenty-three games before winning three in his last season in 1969.

[1044] Ibid.

[1045] Ibid.

or the culture of discrimination they felt, as evidenced by Wisconsin's athletic director, Elroy Hirsch, naming Wyoming's Coach Lloyd Eaton as a prime candidate for the Badgers' head coaching position in 1969, just weeks before Eaton kicked all of the protesting black Cowboys football players off of his Wyoming team.[1046]

At the University of Iowa, sixteen of the football team's twenty-two black players boycotted the first day of spring practice in 1969 in response to head coach Ray Nagel's suspension of two other African American players for "personal problems." Nagel retaliated by dismissing all sixteen of the boycotting players.[1047] But, as elsewhere, this was not a spur of the moment decision driven by emotion on the part of the black athletes. Oriard notes that the athletes had been in conversation with the athletic department throughout the previous year to "address what they vaguely called 'an intolerable situation.'" But, as was the *modus operandi* at schools throughout the Big Ten, words and discussions changed little. The universities were willing to hear the grievances and felt concerns of the athletes, but they were not willing to act. And, because of this, student-athletes felt that their only recourse for change was action. Their boycott of one practice was coupled with an airing of their grievances to the public. They called for a black academic counselor, a black assistant coach, and extended scholarship help for players requiring a fifth year to finish their schooling (a common occurrence considering the demands of football). They also accused Coach Nagel of lying to them during the recruiting process, "ridiculing" two black players and, when called out for it, giving an insincere apology.

When Nagel kicked the boycotting players off the team, he argued that they "dismissed themselves" by their actions, again highlighting the authoritative power held by coaches in one

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[1046] Phil White, "The Black 14: Race, Politics, Religion, and Football."
[1047] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 102.

of the last bastions of accepted paternalism on campus.[1048] According to Oriard, there was little press coverage of the incident, aside from a defense of Nagel's authority and actions by Al Grady of the *Iowa City Press Citizen*. Unsurprisingly, Grady trotted out the university's history of integration as a defense of Nagel, as if simply allowing black students to play football was a one-sided benefit to the students and proof that a felt culture of discrimination could not possibly exist. In August, Nagel allowed the dismissed players to petition their remaining teammates to accept them back on the team. Twelve of the sixteen accepted Nagel's offer, but the team only approved seven of them after hearing them plead their cases.[1049] Rather than discussing the situation with them, Nagel placed himself in the role of the gracious father allowing his prodigal sons to return if only they would apologize and beg for mercy from the teammates they had wronged. Rather than the conversation focusing on the accusations and felt concerns of the black players, their concerns were outright denied. Instead, they had to accept that they were in the wrong and pray that their white teammates would forgive them for questioning the status quo.

In November 1969 at the University of Indiana, all fourteen black football players boycotted practice. Coach John Pont announced that if they returned the next day they would not be punished. Four took him up on the offer. The players did not initially give a reason for their boycott, a slightly different tactic than their fellow Big Ten brethren. But, just like at other schools throughout the conference, the players had already been in discussion with the coaching staff and the athletic department about concerns over playing time and position stacking. When the players' demands were made known, they listed an inconsistency between how coaches treated white and black players and with expectations about injuries, "harassment,"

[1048] Ibid., 102.
[1049] Ibid., 103.

"discouraging and degrading remarks," "stereotyping," "demoralizing suggestions or implications," and the creation of an "atmosphere that [was] mentally depressing and morally discouraging of blacks."[1050] For those who did not return to practice, Pont promised that the sophomore and juniors could return to the team in the spring. Pont's actions received high praise from a large portion of boosters and fans, but others were mixed on the incident, including Pont himself. Indiana's black faculty and staff called for an investigation of Pont, and black members of the band and cheerleading squad boycotted the game on November 8, a 28-17 loss to the Iowa Hawkeyes.[1051]

But, at Indiana, Pont stood out for his realization and admission that for the black players, "[their concerns] are real, not imagined." He acknowledged that there was a structure of feeling that made black players feel that they were treated differently because they were black. Despite this admission, because of his role as coach, Pont upheld his decision. But his refusal to dismiss the concerns of his black players gave their feelings a bit of legitimacy to the public. Sadly, it is likely Pont's authoritarian status as coach and his privileged position as a white male that gave their concerns this authenticity. In nearly every other instance throughout the conference, the words and experiences alone of the black players were not enough to get administrators and the public to admit that there might be a problem, let alone spur them to active change. But Pont's stance seemed to encourage a more nuanced discussion of the situation. Indiana's president and the faculty officially supported his actions, but made sure not to dismiss the concerns of the players. Edwin Cady, Indiana's Faculty Representative to the Big Ten, congratulated the protesting student-athletes for conducting themselves as gentlemen, while the student newspaper

[1050] Qtd. in Ibid., 111.
[1051] Ibid., 111.

discussed how casual racism could sometimes be more demoralizing than open bigotry. Even the local papers seemed to view the situation with sadness rather than outrage.[1052] As Oriard notes, the situation at Indiana gave a "sense of mostly conscientious people on all sides struggling to deal with racial and social upheaval in the context of a 'game' that had become something much more."[1053] But, despite this call for understanding, as Oriard points out, "it was only the ten black players who forfeited the remainder of the season."[1054] Coach Pont, white football players, white students, and white members of the community possibly learned a lesson; the players lost their spots on the team.

Student-Athletes, Yet Still Students

At Wisconsin, Iowa, Indiana, Minnesota, Michigan State, and even Notre Dame, there was a felt feeling by many black athletes that they were still outsiders at their universities, even within the mythologized world of racial progressivism that was sports. Big Ten schools and football teams welcomed black student-athletes onto their teams because they gave them a better chance of winning. That is not to say that this was the only reason, but it was a big reason. If they were invited to be students then players would not have had to push for academic advisors who understood their experiences and did not shepherd them into classes and majors that left them eligible but nowhere closer to graduation goals. It is doubtful that coaches and athletic departments did not care about the players as young men; after all, they were not evil. But, despite the purported progressive racial ideology of the Big Ten, the main purpose of the coach was to win. Molding boys into men, instilling character, teaching life lessons, etc. were all well

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[1052] Ibid., 112.
[1053] Ibid., 112.
[1054] Ibid., 116.

and good, but they would not save a coach from being fired. Likewise, winning allowed for a lot of leeway when it came to coaching strategies, as Bear Bryant's brutal conditioning at Texas A&M can attest. And athletic departments, despite their purported purpose to promote sports for the student body, had to worry about the bottom line, first and foremost.[1055] So they likely did not see it as in their best interest to hire more coaches, academic advisors, and staff.

Just like Jackie Robinson and the Brooklyn Dodgers, black athletes in the Big Ten made for great visual symbols of racial progress in an increasingly televised world, but it was a limited progress and a limited integration and one that surely created positive press for the universities. After all, integration within Major League Baseball remained piecemeal for decades with the Boston Red Sox playing their first black player twelve years after Robinson first played for the Dodgers. And, like Robinson, they were expected to remain quiet and celebrated for emulating white attitudes toward race and assimilation.[1056] Robinson, while undeniably a powerful symbol and catalyst for change for many, did not end discrimination and inequality in sports. The League did not see its first manager until Frank Robinson in 1975 for the Cleveland Indians, nearly thirty years after Robinson "broke" the color barrier. Similarly, the Big Ten did not hire its

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[1055] This defense of intercollegiate sports as good for the student body was itself a mythologized remnant of the Muscular Christianity and *mens sana in corpore sano* ideologies of the late 19th century. After all, were students at the University of Chicago worse students now that they didn't have a football team? At Michigan, where Don Canham turned the Michigan Athletic Department into the richest program in the country through branding, merchandising, and selling out Michigan Stadium, more and more money was reinvested into building the brand, rather than solely improving the education of Michigan students. However, students constantly complained during this time period about the lack of intramural facilities. Only a select few (those on scholarship) were able to enjoy the athletic aspect of education deemed so important to the collegiate experience and necessary for a well-rounded life. The initial goal of intercollegiate athletics was to create a fuller educational experience, but fewer were enjoying those benefits as the goal continued to shift toward bring in the most money possible. Jim Kevra and Chris Parks, "The 'U' and athletics: Who are 'The Victors'?" *Michigan Daily*, Dec. 10, 1971, 1.

[1056] As soon as Robinson stopped turning the other cheek, he was portrayed as an aggressive and dirty player.

first black head coach in a major sport until 1976 when Wisconsin appointed Bill Cofield as their men's basketball head coach. In 1979 Willie Jeffries became the first black head football coach at a Division 1 program when he took over at Wichita State, and the Big Ten did not see a black head football coach until 1981 when Northwestern hired Dennis Green; Green, likely not coincidentally, was one of the Hawkeyes Coach Nagel allowed back on his team. But still, fuller integration and a commitment to racial progress and equality do not preclude negative atmospheres, incidents of racism, or feelings of discrimination.

And, throughout the country, the sports world, and the Big Ten, African Americans struggled to get the dominant white culture to understand their feelings and concerns. Because of America's attachment to the immigrant tale in which the outsider leaves his or her homeland to find a better and freer life in the United States as they slowly but enthusiastically embraced assimilation into the American way of life, it was hard for many to see the objection to such goals. Assimilation was seen as a good thing because everyone else was doing the assimilating, and they all were expected to change toward the culture and values of the dominant, white culture. So when African American students were expected to embrace a culture both known and still foreign to them, it was viewed as a largely impossible and often unwanted demand. For one, blacks had historically been viewed as the ultimate "Other." While generation after generation of immigrants from across the world were accepted into the ever-shifting definition of Whiteness, they remained on the outside as a binary opposite of what Whiteness was not – even at the legal level with one-drop definitions of blackness. And, as generations of black people in the 1950s and 1960s rejected this stipulated and bounded expectation for assimilation, they continually looked to define themselves and form their own identities rather than be defined from without. However, the embracing and championing of a culture defined outside of what had been

naturalized as American – or "All-American" – and inherently understood to be White, was viewed as antagonistic and incomprehensible for much of the dominant white culture.

Because Whiteness in America, at universities, and in sports itself had become so naturalized, it was hard for black athletes to fully explain their grievances and harder still for whites to understand as the grievances were against a system that had become naturalized as American, normal, and unconsciously white, not to mention beneficial to whites.[1057] Unlike their white teammates, black players could not just leave politics on the sidelines. The overwhelming Whiteness of campus followed them into the sports world. In Tug Wilson's book on the Big Ten, there's a section entitled "The Official Families," displaying pictures of head coaches, athletic directors, and Faculty Representatives from all of the Big Ten schools in 1967; every single face is white.[1058] The players' positions as minorities in society, on campus, and on the team were a constant reminder of the inequality faced by minorities in American society. White players had the privilege of not having to wonder if they were being singled out for derision by a white coach because of the color of their skin. They did not have to worry about being seen with a white woman on campus or feel alien at their own school. Because those were not part of their everyday lived experiences, they likely did not even think about such privilege. So, when statements were made by student-athlete protestors about the ineffable "structure of feeling" they lived and experienced, those benefiting from their privileged position within society and the game often viewed blacks them as confused youths at best or whiners and race-baiting trouble-makers at worst. But, owing to the small minority enrollments at most Big Ten

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[1057] Such was the case with Clarence Price, one of the spokesmen for the boycotting Hoosiers in 1969, and reactions to his statements: "Nothing's overt. It's just an attitude. It's a feeling we all have that we are discriminated against." Qtd. in Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 115.
[1058] Kenneth L. (Tug) Wilson and Jerry Brondfield, *The Big Ten*, 38-47.

schools, unlike many of their fellow white students, football and basketball players interacted with black students on a daily basis in practice and in athletic activities. So when black athletes spoke up, wrote letters to the paper, or boycotted practices or games, it was not just an act by an abstract person to them, but an act by someone they personally knew, at least at a basic level. The politics of black activism was humanized for them through sports.

But white athletes too could not escape the everyday on the gridiron or the court. As demonstrated at the University of Michigan, the football field could only provide a momentary distraction from the overwhelming presence of the Vietnam War. Student-athletes were some of the only students on campus who still had faced the constant expectation to respect administrative authority in nearly every aspect of their collegiate life. And for women, the sports world did not offer an escape from discrimination and second-class citizenship. Arguably, it opened up even more opportunities for discrimination as women transgressed symbolic domains of masculinity beyond the everyday battles of the Women's Movement. The very fact that they *played* sports let alone were interested in them was a political act challenging the status quo and perceived naturalness of sports as masculine. The Big Ten's two most well-known and celebrated coaches, Bo Schembechler and Woody Hayes, both shared similar sentiments on the role of women in society and in sports. In an interview for a book written by Robert Vare of *Harper's*, Woody Hayes opened up on his feelings about the growing sentiments of Women's Liberation and women in athletics:

> They've gotten so goddamned liberals up there at Oberlin they don't even give a shit about sports anymore. I hear they're even letting w-o-m-e-n in their sports programs now. That's your Women's Liberation, boy—bunch of goddamned lesbians … you can bet your ass that if you have women around—and I've talked to psychiatrists about this—you ain't gonna be worth a damn. No sir! Man has to dominate. There's just no other way.

> Jeezus Christ, I'd like to get that goddamned Oberlin on our schedule. We'd show them what *de*-humanization is about.[1059]

For many within the sports world and even those merely interested in it or critically against it, sports were naturally assumed to be a male domain. Women challenged femininity, heterosexuality, masculinity, and the natural order just by playing or being interested in sports at a time when the privileged status and spaces of men were being challenged throughout American society.

The Post-Game Analysis

This dissertation has thoroughly shown two naturalized mythologies to be false: sports are both apolitical and, simultaneously, naturally conservative. The two seem to be at odds with one another, but that is not necessarily the case. It comes back, once again, to the naturalization of ideas. Sports, as representative of American-ness, were seen as naturally all that was right about the country. They were not viewed as political because the status quo is not seen as political; it is not seen as contrary, revolutionary, or challenging – it is viewed as how things are and how things are supposed to be. The status quo is seen as natural. Therefore, the idea that sports and college football in general represent and support this status quo is not seen as political, but as common sense. Only a challenge to what is deemed natural and commonsensical is viewed as political.

At Michigan State and the University of Minnesota, the athletic departments and coaching staffs did not fully anticipate or truly understand the concerns of their black student athletes, but they were at least willing to listen and meet with them. Michigan State's acting president, Walter Adams, wrote in his memoir that he had incorrectly assumed that the

[1059] Robert Vare, *Buckeye: A Study of Woody Hayes and the Ohio State Football Machine* (New York: Harper's Magazine Press, 1974), 45.

university's racially progressive past would shield the university from any kind of racial protest.[1060] Both Duffy Daugherty and Murray Warmath enjoyed a well-earned respect in regard to issues of race because of their long-commitments to recruiting, playing, and starting more African American players than most coaches during the 1950s and 1960s. Because of this, there was a history of black athleticism in both football programs (and also the basketball programs). Former alumni of the football programs reached out to recruits and incoming freshmen to give them advice and encourage them to attend their alma maters. While this history encouraged and brought in more black athletes to East Lansing and Minneapolis, it also created a stronger black community who had already fought symbolic battles for integration. The players of the late 1960s were no longer content with being *allowed* to play and attend their Big Ten universities. Having heard the voices of those who came before them, they could also see their futures. There were still few to no black referees, counselors, assistants, staff members, or coaches in the programs they were instrumental in building and improving. The promise of an education rang hollow if that education came second to football and was steered by counselors and coaches who cared more about eligibility than academic progress toward a degree. And the stories and beliefs passed down from previous generations of players only further cemented the apprehension and feelings of discrimination experienced by the players in a group already affected by the civil

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[1060] "When I took office in the spring of 1969, I believed that Michigan State University was a bulwark of education democracy – offering equal opportunity to rich and poor, black and white, foreigner and native son. President Hannah had for years been chairman of the U.S. Civil Rights Commission. We had 1,000 black students including a large contingent of black athletes. We had more black faculty than most institutions of similar size and standing. […] I did not sense the mounting frustration and growing resentment in the black student community." Walter Adams, *The Test*, 59

rights movement, generalized student protest on campus, and images of black pride in literature, film, and television.

Perhaps because Michigan State and Minnesota's programs were built on a celebrated history of integration, the administrations could ill-afford to alienate black athletes. Or, also likely, that history of experience with black athletes had led them to a willingness to consider their claims. While neither school anticipated the needed changes demanded by their athletes, the changes were made, even if both Daugherty and Warmath did not quite understand the charges of an atmosphere of discrimination in their programs leveled by their players. Both coaches relied on a defense of colorblindness, opining that race did not matter to them. All that mattered was talent and work ethic. But the concept of race *did* (and does) matter in this world. How could it not when a significant portion of the limited black populations of both schools were there because of athletics? Tellingly, most of their requests and demands for change concerned issues off the field, not on. A great number of them had to do with education, social lives, respect as individuals, and their futures. But coaches needed to win to keep their jobs, itself a perversion of the ideals espoused by the Big Ten and the amateurism of college athletics. In their minds, the game came first. They could give lip service to turning boys into men and caring about education, but neither would save their jobs if the teams lost on the field. But the players themselves were not just athletes or cogs in a machine; they were individuals striving to forge their own identities as students, athletes, and black men.

At the universities of Michigan and Notre Dame, both athletic departments seemed to exemplify a more paternalistic attitude, slow to change, slow to move, and quick to question the demands of their players. While Warmath agreed to meet with his players and discuss their requests, and the athletic department met with a professor from the Afro-American Studies

department to better understand their players, black basketball players at Notre Dame were denigrated and had their concerns dismissed by much of the student body, their coach, and the athletic director. Likewise, female athletes had to fight coaches for men's teams and the athletic department to even be allowed to play varsity sports. And then they had to wage a battle over the symbols of athletic achievement in a medium still considered masculine. At both schools, black football players shied away from direct activism for change, preferring to advocate for change outside of the athletic arena. Likely, this stemmed from the sheer symbolic power and tradition of Notre Dame and Michigan football. Both were considered untouchable because of their symbolic power representing decades of football dominance, campus significance, and national repute. At the same time, the University of Michigan provided numerous outlets for political expression for players. And black athletes at Michigan did participate as members in protests for black studies courses. Likewise, black players at Notre Dame advocated in the student newspapers for an examination of financial aid for non-athletes. Similarly, as Notre Dame was considered a conservative school, it is not surprising that any student-athlete activism came in less overt forms.

However, it would be disingenuous not to speculate about the role immediate success played in the want to boycott too. As the saying goes, winning covers all sins. The Spartan and Gopher football teams were mired in mediocre seasons when the black players boycotted, whereas Notre Dame and Michigan were riding high.[1061] It could be that this disappointment on the field made players more in tune to discrimination off it or less likely to ignore it. Similarly, coaches may have been more likely to belittle and criticize players during average and losing seasons both out of frustration or in hopes of rallying the team against a common opponent.

[1061] Indiana, Iowa, and Wisconsin all similarly faced average to mediocre seasons at this time too.

Genial attitudes and the believed camaraderie of sports often disappear when desperate and pervasive negative attitudes take over. Even if this was the case, that does not make feelings of unfair treatment or discrimination any less real, important, or worthy of discussion.

Likewise, both Notre Dame and Michigan celebrated a patriarchal mythology of the Notre Dame Man or Brotherhood and the Michigan Man. Both revered a form of masculinity exemplifying a devotion to school, sports, and character (and God explicitly at Notre Dame) that developed through the success and importance of their football teams. At Notre Dame, whether consciously or not, this masculinity represented a white masculinity built on the hope of assimilation into the white, dominant culture of America. It was also built in a culture devoid of female students until the 1970s, further cementing athletics as a masculine domain. At Michigan, the Michigan Man was built on the myths of Fielding Yost, Fritz Crisler, and Tom Harmon and at the exclusion of women. The exclusion of women in sports was not particular to Michigan, but the continued exclusion and reluctance to include them into the fold was. It is telling that the cheerleading battle fought at Michigan State was over why there were not any black female cheerleaders, whereas at Michigan the battle was over why there were not any women at all.

The Big Ten does have a proud history of changing with the times and often before other universities have moved to do so. But the argument that it was worse at other schools does not absolve real and perceived problems. At these very same schools, with their professed commitment to progress and caring about the student-athlete, student-athletes rose up in numerous ways to call for swifter, more comprehensive, or even *any* change. It is interesting that all of the schools in this dissertation featured university presidents of varying political persuasions but all committed in some way to racial progress or liberal ideals. Both John Hannah (MSU) and Father Hesburgh (Notre Dame) served on and were leaders in the United States

Commission on Civil Rights. Walter Adams (MSU), Malcolm Moos (Minnesota), and Robben Fleming (Michigan) all believed in the importance of student protest, spoke out against the Vietnam War, and were willing to listen to their students. Athletic departments provided scholarships to students from various backgrounds from all over the United States, regardless of race, religion, or ethnic background. And Daugherty and Warmath actively recruited black athletes while Parseghian stood up for his black players facing Jim Crow laws in the South. But when it came to combating less obvious inequalities, discrimination, or even suggestions of how to make life better for their student-athletes, most within the athletic departments were still slow to change and some outright hostile to the suggestion. Change only came when demanded from below, despite the conference and the universities' claims to moral integrity, fair play, and the importance of the student-athlete. And similar narratives played themselves out all over the Big Ten's footprint: at the protest-filled and liberal campus in Ann Arbor to the scene in East Lansing, where activism was led more by religious groups than the SDS;[1062] and in a city filled with racial tension to a smaller, religious campus in South Bend where protests were often driven

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[1062] Lingg Brewer, in a book detailing the counterculture at MSU, described the contempt many East Lansing activists had for their counterparts down the road in Ann Arbor. The University of Michigan's academic schedule ended before Michigan State's and Michigan students would often drive up to East Lansing and attempt to dictate how protests should be run to the frustration of EL activists. In East Lansing, the Vietnam Veterans Against the War and local non-denominational religious groups organized a lot of the rallies and didn't appreciate the attempts by the University of Michigan chapter of the SDS or the Weather Underground to intervene. Brewer writes that the Veterans "regarded the Weather Underground from the University of Michigan, without concerns about political correctness, as 'a bunch of upper-middle class faggots who want to fuck each other' and chased the radicals out of town." Similarly, MSU's chapter of the SDS resented Michigan's for their perceived snobbery. Maggie Hackett, the president of the MSU chapter recalled: "The U of M SDS'ers were the people with money, the people with their noeses in the air. They were in part reacting against the authoritarian domineering ways of their parents, but were acting just like them, only with different politics." Again, we can see that students shared similar feelings on the need for change, but weren't all alike in their tactics, goals, or even camaraderie. Lingg Brewer, *Dreams Gone Wrong: Peace, War, and Murder at Michigan State University* (Brewster, MA: Paraclete Books, 2013), 218-219.

by theology and ideological discussions. While the scenes and specifics changed, the larger narrative still reflected a "structure of feeling" composed of misgivings about authority figures and the inequality of the present dominant culture.

Michael Oriard writes that "For the black players at all of the schools the losers [those who were dismissed] were immediate and in some cases irremediable, yet those young men, whether as willful or reluctant rebels, were agents of change: change in the consciousness of race for coaches, white players, and college football fans and change in the fundamental relationship between coaches athletes."[1063] Student-athlete activists of all races, genders, and backgrounds ran risks not faced by many of their fellow students. First, because they were already assumed to be representative of the status quo, their activism was all the more surprising. Second, because they spoke out against a naturalized institution of conservativism (the status quo was correct and natural) – sports – their protests were often immediately met with doubt, incomprehension, and outright hostility. Athletes were the people going to college for free to play a game, a game that *was* America and all that it stood for, and they had the audacity to force people to pull back the curtain and examine what they deemed flaws in the system and compelled sports fans to view them as more than athletes, but as students and people.

The student-athletes were also advocating for change against authority figures they saw every day, as opposed to university presidents and administrators only seen by students if they so chose to interact with them. But coaches and athletic directors had great power over the student-athletes' everyday lives, power to promote or hinder future athletic careers or power to keep a player on scholarship. For many student-athletes, just speaking out came with consequences not faced by many other student protestors. For one, they could be labeled as trouble-makers and

[1063] Michael Oriard, *Bowled Over*, 119-120.

their character could be questioned, a red flag for those with NFL or NBA aspirations. They could be singled out by coaches looking to stamp down on individuality, judged problematic for team unity. For black players, speaking out at all could see a player labeled as "uppity" as he no longer fit the non-threatening role of the subservient black man. And, it is worth considering how daring this questioning of the status quo was for student-athletes depending on an athletic-scholarship to get them through college. For many athletes, both black and white, they did not often always come from middle-class or affluent families. College was not an expectation or a guarantee in many of their homes. Through athletics many students from poor families or with transcripts that would not normally get them into college were able to attend world-class universities. If they fell into the bad graces of a coach or were dismissed from their team for a boycott or protest, paying for college was not a reality. For female athletes already facing catcalls and discrimination on campus, merely playing sports brought with it questions of their femininity, their sexuality, and their politics. Playing sports exacerbated the sexist environment they already faced. If sports were naturally conservative, how could women be interested in them without challenging the naturalized masculinity and the subservient role of women in athletics?

Our collective memory of the Vietnam Era over-simplifies many issues from this time. Students were not just hawks or doves, squares or hippies, jocks or nerds. Some jocks were nerds. Some hippies liked sports. And some students did not know where they stood. There was more to their identities than their race, their gender, their political beliefs, or their status on campus. Student-athletes were not unaffected or divorced from the general "structures of feeling" of their generation that questioned authority in a variety of ways. Writing in response to a worried women from Blue Earth, MN, the University of Minnesota's Vice President, Paul Cashman tried to explain this "structure of feeling" as best as he could, concluding that "those of

us who work with young people continue to find almost all of them responsible, idealistic, and devoted to democracy."[1064] There *were* radicals, revolutionaries, and anarchists – and they often spoke the loudest or received the greatest press coverage – but most were students somewhere in the middle of the political spectrum, faced with the threat of war, the realities of discrimination, and the everyday worries of college life as they struggled to define who they were as individuals, where they felt they belonged, and how best they could advocate for changes – issues faced by all students. Some students held placards and marched against unfair housing practices. Others chanted and threw fruit at protestors burning the American flag. A great many ate the bread and drank the wine at Notre Dame during an outdoor Eucharist ceremony for peace in Vietnam. But other students boycotted football practices, wrote letters to the newspaper demanding apologies for perceived racist behavior, called for sweeping academic and athletic changes, or even dared to play at all. Some acts were bolder, more overt, and had longer lasting effects, while others were simpler, less radical, or even failed to bring about change. But the strength, boldness, and effectiveness of the activism do not determine the importance of actively questioning the status quo in a mythologically constructed, conservative medium. They were all students with something to gain and something to lose, and they all used their personal agency to call for both personal and structural changes in their own ways from the bottom up. In the end, defenders of sports should be proud – it was a team effort by individuals.

[1064] Cashman writes: "[…] most of American society seems to feel the war has been beneficial. They indicate they don't support it in polls because it is not 'nice' to support war, but they are isolated from it. Only those who must assume leadership of the war and the young are asked to suffer. If we add to this the fact that the war has been very long – and that is a complex war to explain –one can understand the disillusionment of the young." Paul Cashman to Maurine Carison, July 13, 1970, Box 27, "Student Strike – 1970," Office of the Vice President for Student Affairs Records, 1941 – 1977, uarc 953, University of Minnesota Archives, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

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