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**THE BLACK ATHLETE AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY**



**BY**

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THESIS

ABSTRACT



Michigan State University's Athletic Department has been widely praised for the opportunities it has offered black athletes, yet the protests of black athletes have been heard there as well. The purpose of this study was to examine the conditions and perceptions of a sample group of black athletes at Michigan State University.

Forty-four questionnaires were distributed to black athletes in attendance at Michigan State University during January and February of 1969. Twenty-three of the questionnaires (52%) were completed and returned. Ten black and two white former football players, and one black former assistant football coach were interviewed. The athletes examined for the data on degree attainment were black and white letterwinners in football, basketball, track and wrestling who were freshmen from Fall Term, 1960 to Fall Term, 1964.

A great many of the black athletes surveyed, came to Michigan State University with the major intention of receiving an education. Yet only 46% of the black letterwinners sampled had graduated, and only a handful graduated with their classes. While most of the black athletes felt discriminated against by the coaches, on the field and in academic counseling, the claims were difficult to verify in most instances. Hostility does exist between white and black football players, but again it was difficult to prove that discriminatory practices have occurred.

For the most part, the black athletes at Michigan State University feel cheated and discriminated against. The militancy and developing black consciousness among these athletes is not an isolated situation. It is a part of the larger struggle of the black community's fight for survival within white America.

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B.J.S.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

The decade of the 1960's has seen the growth and development of important protest movements within American minority communities against institutional racism. These movements have focused white America's attention to many problems that she never wished to deal with, and sometimes which she was not even aware of.

Since 1967, the sports world has been the scene of several protests of its own; protests that are direct outgrowths of the "Black power" movement. Sports became "integrated" in the late 1940's and early 1950's, and has been looked to as an example of an institution in American society that has provided equal opportunities for black and white alike.

(Southern college athletics were considered the exception.)

Michigan State University's Athletic Department has been widely appraised for the opportunities it has offered black athletes, yet the protests of black athletes have been heard there as well. The purpose of this study was to examine the black athletes own perceptions of the conditions they experience and of the opportunities they are offered. For the most part, the black athletes at MSU feel cheated and discriminated against. The militancy and developing black consciousness among these athletes is not an isolated situation. It is a part of the larger struggle of the black community's fight for survival within white America.

## Review of the Literature

There has been very little written on black athletes as a group or on racism and sports, for the area has only recently been studied.<sup>1</sup> It should be noted that there has been almost no empirical data collected.

Simon and Carey (1965), of the University of Illinois wrote a paper concerning a struggle that took place on that campus during the 1963 academic year, between the black athletes, the NAACP, and the Athletic Association. The local NAACP charged the University's Athletic Association with discrimination against the black athletes without the consent of nearly all of the black athletes involved. The paper attempts to sort out all of the events, to put them into perspective, and to discover if discrimination actually existed at the University of Illinois. The researchers could not prove that discrimination by race actually occurred within the Athletic Association, but they did prove that the NAACP did act without the consent of the athletes they were trying to aid.

Three major books have been written within the area of race and athletics. One of the first books was written by Thompson, an Englishman (1964). Thompson's most important thesis is that sports often reflect a society's characteristics and play a vital role in uniting diverse sections of communities. Thompson states that the United States is an example of how athletics can influence a society.

Modern sport undermines any system of social stratification based on colour. The requirements of sport which brought non-white players into professional teams in the United States demanded a measure of social acceptance, not only on the field, but in the sharing of lockers, changing rooms, travel facilities and accommodations.

(1964:11)

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<sup>1</sup>Dave Maggysay, a former professional football player, has written a book which was not released at the time of this writing. It should be a significant work.

Harry Edwards has written another book entitled Revolution in Sport, which was not in print at the time of this writing.

He also states that when an athlete becomes famous, he becomes a symbol of pride for his community and his prestige enables him to influence the pattern of segregation directly.

The most important contribution of sport to race integration in the United States is, perhaps, the opportunity for Negro sportsmen to be seen by their fellow players and the spectators as individuals, as good football or baseball players, or as athletes, rather than Negroes. (1964:12)

Olsen, a journalist, wrote a series of articles for Sports Illustrated Magazine (1968-a, 1968-b, etc.) which was later compiled in book form (1969) This book discusses the conditions of black athletes in college and professional athletics. Olsen has not done an empirical study, but his book is a descriptive analysis of the conditions of blacks in the athletic world and how they themselves perceive their role within American athletics.

Most Americans believe that sports have been good to blacks.

Olsen finds that this is not so.

Almost to a man, they are dissatisfied, disgruntled and disillusioned. Black professional athletes say they are underpaid, shunted into certain stereotyped positions and treated like subhumans by Paleolithic coaches who regard them as watermelon-eating idiots. Black collegiate athletes say they are dehumanized, exploited and discarded, and some even say they were happier back in the ghetto. (1969:9)

Olsen states that for years ghetto children have been told that sports was a way to escape from the ghetto. Yet only a few ever really become successful and an oppressive system of racism and exploitation is still maintained.

Olsen's position is different from Thompson's. While white America can admire a black athlete's exploits on the field, it does not mean that he necessarily stops being black, or being treated like other

blacks off the field. Olsen examines the hardships that a black athlete faces functioning within a white university; hardships in becoming a successful athlete, maintaining his eligibility, acting as the coaches expect him to act (dating habits, attitudes towards Black power, attitudes towards whites, etc.), submitting himself daily to racist coaches.

The simple fact is that the black athlete who enters a white college must cram his belated education into four hectic years. He must make up for Black schools that are under-financed, under staffed and markedly inferior, and he must excel on the playing field all the while. (1969:78-79)

Most black athletes are ostracized on white campuses, and are told, bluntly or subtly to stay away from white women. Olsen portrays the life of the black collegiate athlete as very lonely.

Not only does Olsen examine the athletes themselves, but he studies their coaches as well. The coach and his staff are very important in creating the collegiate environment of the athlete and yet "some of the best coaches, some of the most patient and understanding, seem to have a blank space where Negroes are concerned" (1969:111).

Olsen concludes that integration in American sports is a myth, that equality is non-existent and that the world of sports reflects the basic problems that exist generally in American society.

Edwards (1969), a black sociologist and ex-trackman, has written a book about the protests of the black athlete. The first chapter describes briefly the general conditions of black athletes, and says essentially the same things as Olsen's book. In chapter two, Edwards indicts the mass media for its relationship to the black community: "As a group, they have seemingly been singularly unmoved by the frustration and fate of Black people, even of Black athletes." (1969:31)

Edwards further says, "that Negro and white sports reporters in America have contributed to the conditions in the athletic industry that have prompted the revolt of the black athlete" (1969:36). Sports reporting often perpetuates the myth that black athletes are not capable of being \_\_\_\_\_ in leadership positions.

The remainder of Edwards' book contains descriptions of black athletic boycotts at various campuses around the nation, and most notably the boycott activities surrounding the 1968-69 Olympics.

### Appraisal of the Literature

Simon and Carey stated that black athletes who are not doing especially well in athletics would be more apt to feel discriminated against and would have more resentment towards the university. They also state that complaints about inter-racial dating are not prima facie evidence of discrimination and that ineptitude on the field could have been the reason why the particular athletes involved did not play. Yet, the researchers did not prove that this was the case. The only evidence discovered was that the NAACP did in fact act without conferring with the black athletes involved, and that internal divisions within the black community developed as a result of this. The Simon and Carey study would have been more valuable if it had speculated about why conflicting perceptions about discrimination occurred.

Thompson's book lays a very good foundation for examining race and sport. His statements that sports are a reflection of society were probably accurate, but when he applied his theory to American society, he may have applied it inaccurately. If one accepts Olsen's and Edwards' theories, sports does reflect the values and actions of American society, but the athletic world is stratified by race as is American society as a

whole; and that American athletics has done very little to change the patterns of social stratification with regards to race. If anything, American athletics has perpetuated the existing stratification system by channeling potential black professionals into the world of sports.

At the most, sports has led a few thousand Negroes into a better life, while substituting a meaningless dream for hundreds of thousands of other Negroes. It has helped to perpetuate an oppressive system. For every Willie Mays or Bob Hayes there are countless Negroes who obviously had abundant will and determination to succeed, but who dedicated their childhoods and their energies to baseball gloves and shoulder pads. If there were other ways out and up, they were blinded to them by the success of a few sports celebrities. These are the Negro doctors, who never were, the Negro lawyers who are so desperately needed. . . This has been the major effect of sports on the Negro and it overrides all others. (Olsen, 1969:11)


Thompson states that blacks who become stars are viewed as athletes, not as blacks. Olsen and Edwards state that this is not true. Olsen's book is the most comprehensive of the three books. While he does not tabulate and code his findings, he does provide his readers with a valuable background and with a national picture of the conditions of black athletes. Edwards' book was very disappointing. The bulk of the book is spent describing particular "revolts", and his analysis seems rather superficial compared to Olsen's more extensive work. All of the literature was able to provide the study with a perspective, but Olsen's book was by far the most important in providing this study with a national framework and with a social analysis of the overall situation.

#### Problem Reformulation

In a society that has industrialized so that leisure time has increased to very large proportions, it is crucial for the members of that society to understand the role that the particular forms of leisure activity may take. To many, athletics has been viewed not just as a profession or

as a leisure activity, but also as an industry: big business and a central component of America's economic and cultural life. Yet, as we have seen, there has been relatively little attention paid to the area of race and sport within the social sciences. Moreover, the literature which does exist is highly speculative in nature and the conclusions reached have, generally, not been based upon firm empirical evidence.

This present study is concerned with empirically documenting some of the more speculative ideas of previous authors at one well known Big Ten School, and is somewhat exploratory in nature. More specifically, the present study is concerned with documentation of the following questions at MSU.

- 
- 1) Do black athletes come to Michigan State University to receive an education or to participate in sports?
  - 2) Are black athletes counseled differently from white athletes?
  - 3) Do the black athletes acquire degrees at the completion of four years at MSU?
  - 4) Do the black athletes perceive that they are being discriminated against by the coaching staffs?
  - 5) Do the black athletes feel discriminated against by their white teammates?

#### Methodology

Several methods of research have been employed in this study: survey questionnaire, interviewing, and data collection through the Michigan State University Office of the Registrar. The questionnaire was distributed during January-February, 1969 to 44 black athletes who were, at that point in time, in their second to fourth years of eligibility at MSU. Exactly what percentage of the total of black athletes in attendance

at that time, I was not able to ascertain, for the Athletic Department refused to release "racial" information. A black football player distributed the questionnaire for the researcher.

Twenty three of the questionnaires (52%) were completed and returned. Another five were returned blank with an explanation of fear of reprisal from the Athletic Department. Nineteen questionnaires were returned by football players, two by basketball players and two by trackmen. It should be noted that the directions on the questionnaire itself explained that the form need not be signed. One athlete wrote on the form "Name and state withheld because mass discrimination is still going on." All of the data collected from the questionnaires reflects the bias of football players.<sup>1</sup>

The interviews were conducted with 10 black football players and two white football players who were no longer eligible. The basic format of the questionnaire was used, but the interviews allowed for more freedom in the responses.

The Athletic Department itself was not very helpful. I was able, however, to obtain interviews from a black former assistant football coach, and from a current black assistant football coach. The data on graduation rates was collected through the aid of MSU Office of Institutional Research. Lists of black and white lettermen were used as the sample studied. All of the letter winners were freshman from Fall, 1960 to Fall 1964, and their statuses are current through November 6, 1970. A total of 156 athletes were studied who earned letters in football, basketball, track or wrestling. Nine of the black letter winners earned letters in two of the sports. They are counted only once in the composite tables.

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<sup>1</sup>The questionnaire should have been more flexible to allow for open-ended answers from the athletes.



## CHAPTER II

### BLACK ATHLETES AND EDUCATION

With rare exceptions, the American college coach expects his Negro athletes to concentrate on the job for which they were hired. The aim is neither graduation nor education. The *sine quo non* for the Negro athlete is maintaining his eligibility. . . . At the end of the last second of the last minute of the last hour of a Negro athlete's eligibility, he is likely to find himself dumped unceremoniously into the harsh academic world. (Olsen, 1969:10)

#### Desire For A College Education

It is a common belief that most black athletes go to college to play their particular sport and also as one step on the way to a professional career in athletics; education is rarely mentioned as being important. Surprisingly different results were discovered in this study.

Fourteen per cent of the black athletes stated that they came to MSU only to play ball; 21% said that they came first to play ball, second to get an education; 42% said that they came first to get an education, second to play football; and 28% said that they came strictly to get an education, the athletic tender providing them the funds to do so. That is, 70% of the black athletes surveyed came to MSU with the primary intention of getting an education.

#### Academic Advising

The freshman black athlete, as all other freshman students, is assigned to an academic advisor. It was discovered that nearly all freshman athletes, black and white, are initially assigned to one man, employed by the Athletic Department. (Those athletes who arrive at MSU with a superior academic background are assigned to advisors through

the normal procedure.) This advisor prepares class schedules for the players. The players do have the option of rejecting this man's advise, but most questioned stated that as freshmen they were afraid to stand up to this man for fear of never being given a chance to play ball during the playing season.

The schedules prepared for the athletes (excluding the University College courses which all students are required to take) contain, for the most part, Health, Physical Education and Recreation courses (HPER). Many of the black athletes reported that when they requested other courses for their schedules, the advisor attempted to talk them out of their preferences by telling them that they were not prepared for the academic competition in college, or that they just did not have the ability. Those insisting on determining their own programs were warned that if they got into academic difficulty, they would immediately be forced back into HPER courses or would fail and lose their eligibility and/or be withdrawn from school.

The white athletes interviewed said that the academic advisor, while hard on the players, always had the best interests of the athletes in mind. They said that while he was concerned with the players' eligibility, he was also concerned with their acquiring a degree. The white athletes implied that the advisor was a man they could always go to when they were in trouble and that he always went out of his way to help them. They did not think that he discriminated against anybody because of race. One of the white athletes questioned said that most of the time the blacks are trying to "get off easy" and that's why they have such a hard time with the advisor.

One black athlete, who was interviewed, said that he tried to take

courses outside of the HPER Department his sophomore year. He reported that he was earning B's and C's in Humanities (a University College course) but did need help in his other classes. The Athletic Department required him to attend tutoring sessions in Humanities, which he felt he did not need, and refused to obtain help for him otherwise. Tutoring was taking up too much of his time for studying, so he stopped going. Shortly after that, he said that he ended up sitting on the bench all the time.

A prominent athlete, who played football at MSU from 1964-1966, stated that, "most of the guys don't want to take physical education courses, but they get so hung up in phys. ed. because of the Athletic Department, that by their senior years, they are only freshmen academically. Phys. ed. courses don't do you any good." Another former athlete said that unless one is "valuable" to the team, one does not learn that grades below C should be repeated. Once the athletes attain junior standing credit wise, they are assigned to regular academic advisors. It is at this point that they find out that courses need to be repeated, and that they have a long way to go before graduation. "With \_\_\_\_\_ being our counselor, it's a way of controlling the guys. He is concerned only with big ten eligibility, not with University eligibility. I wanted to be a History major. I ended up in HPER and will graduate in it now because I've got so many credits in it."

#### Degree Attainment

Tables I-XII are concerned with degree attainment for white and black letter winners in football, basketball, track and wrestling. Those four sports were chosen because they showed some significance in integration within the sport during the period studied. All graduated lettermen who attained their letters and degrees during any time period at MSU, but who

were freshmen from Fall Term, 1960 through Fall Term, 1964 are included in the sample. If the sample had included all athletes who had received tenders from MSU, the statistics for both black and white athletes who had not yet graduated may have been proportionately larger.

TABLE I  
DEGREE ATTAINMENT BY RACE, COMPOSITE OVER FOOTBALL,  
BASKETBALL, WRESTLING, TRACK

	White	Black	Total	
Graduated From College	82.3%	46.5%	72.4%	(113)
Not Yet Graduated From College	17.7%	53.5%	26.6%	(43)
Total	100% (113)	100% (43)	100% (156)	
$\chi^2 = 9.419 \quad p < .005$				

TABLE I portrays the relationship between race and degree attainment for all the athletes in the sample. Statistically, there is a dependency between race and degree attainment at the .005 level of significance. Examined percentage wise, 82.3% of the white athletes have graduated through November 6, 1970, yet only 46.5% of the black athletes have graduated. According to MSU Evaluation Services, seven years after the first term in attendance at MSU, 55% of all the male students receive degrees.

Comparing the data, it becomes apparent that on the whole, the letterwinners in the sample have an average higher graduation rate than the male student population of the University. But the rate for black athletes is considerably lower than the rate for white athletes and somewhat lower than that of the male student population at large.

TABLE II

## DEGREE ATTAINMENT AND RACE, FOOTBALL PLAYERS ONLY

	White	Black	Total	
Graduated From College	76%	33.3%	61%	(47)
Not Yet Graduated From College	24%	66.6%	39%	(30)
Total	100% (50)	100% (27)	100% (77)	

$$\chi^2 = 8.058 \quad p < .005$$

TABLE III

## DEGREE ATTAINMENT AND RACE, BASKETBALL PLAYERS ONLY

	White	Black	Total	
Graduate From College	88.9%	71.4%	84%	(21)
Not Yet Graduated From College	11.1%	28.6%	16%	(4)
Total	100% (18)	100% (7)	100% (25)	

$$p = .304 \quad (\text{Fisher exact test})$$

TABLE IV

## DEGREE ATTAINMENT AND RACE, TRACKMEN ONLY

	White	Black	Total	
Graduated From College	86.4%	73.3%	81.1%	(30)
Not Yet Graduated From College	13.6%	26.7%	18.9%	(7)
Total	100% (22)	100% (15)	100% (37)	

$$p = .211 \quad (\text{Fisher exact test})$$

TABLE V  
DEGREE ATTAINMENT AND RACE, WRESTLERS ONLY

	White	Black	Total	
Graduated From College	86.9%	33.3%	80.7%	(21)
Not Yet Graduated From College	13.1%	66.6%	19.3%	(5)
Total	100%	100%	100%	
	(23)	(3)	(26)	

$p = .084$  (Fisher exact test)

Controlling for each sport, there is no significant difference between black and white athletes in basketball (TABLE III) and in track (TABLE IV); but in wrestling (TABLE V); the direction, comparing white and black wrestlers, tends to show that more white wrestlers graduate than black wrestlers and .084 level of significance. The largest discrepancy is found within football (TABLE II), where 76% of the white football letterwinners have graduated compared with only 33.3% of the black athletes.

TABLE VI  
DEGREE ATTAINMENT AND RACE, BASKETBALL PLAYERS, TRACKMEN AND WRESTLERS

	White	Black	Total	
Graduated From College	87.3%	66.6%	81.6%	(71)
Not Yet Graduated From College	12.7%	33.3%	18.4%	(16)
Total	100%	100%	100%	
	(63)	(24)	(87)	

$\chi^2 = 3.65$        $p < .100$

Controlling for the influence of the large number of football players in TABLE I, TABLE VI was developed to examine the relationship of race to degree attainment in basketball, wrestling and track. Examining TABLE VI, there is a significant difference between white and black athletes although the significance does decrease from that of TABLE I. It can be assumed, then, that black athletes, on the whole, do not graduate from college as frequently as white athletes, and that black football players graduate less frequently than black athletes as a whole.

Referring to the above section on "Desire for a College Education", 70% of the surveyed black athletes (most of whom were football players) came to MSU with the primary intention of getting an education, yet only 46.1% of the black letterwinners and only 33.3% of the black football letterwinners have actually graduated. The discrepancy can probably be attributed to many factors: lack of desire, lack of intelligence, lack of good self image, poor educational background; but the black athletes' perceptions of their academic advising may also be a crucial element of speculation for this study. It is probably true that most of the black athletes come to college with inferior educational backgrounds, but if this is the case, it should be the responsibility of MSU and the Athletic Department to attempt to correct this situation.

The second set of tables (VII - XII) examine the relative number of terms completed for those athletes in the sample who have already graduated.





TABLE VII

LENGTH OF TIME TO GRADUATE, COMPOSITE FOR ALL GRADUATED LETTERMEN  
FOOTBALL, BASKETBALL, TRACK AND WRESTLING

		<u>Race</u>	
Number Of Terms In School As An Undergraduate		$y_1$ = Black	$y_2$ = White
10		1	1
11		0	2
12		1	10
13		2	13
14		2	10
15		0	21
16		3	10
17		3	7
18		3	6
19		1	3
20		2	4
21		0	3
22		0	1
23		1	1
24		1	1
		$n_1 = 20$	$n_2 = 93$
$\bar{y}_1 = 16.75$	$\bar{y}_2 = 15.39$	$s = 1.92$	$p < .05$

TABLE VII is a composite table across the four above mentioned sports. Twelve terms is the normally allotted time for attaining an undergraduate degree. The average number of terms it takes male students at MSU to graduate was not available. But examining TABLE VII, it can be seen that it

takes black athletes 1.36 terms longer to graduate than white athletes. At the  $\alpha = .05$  level of significance, there is a significant difference between the means. According to MSU Evaluation Services, 35% of all males graduate with their classes at the end of 12 terms, or before them. Examining TABLE VII, only 4.6% of the black athletes and 11.5% of the white athletes graduate before or with their classes. Although there is a significant difference between the means in the composite TABLE VII, it should be noted that there is only a significant difference between the means with white and black football players.

TABLE VIII

## LENGTH OF TIME TO GRADUATE, FOOTBALL LETTERWINNERS

Number of Terms In School As An Undergraduate	Race	
	$y_1$ = Black	$y_2$ = White
12	0	4
13	0	6
14	0	8
15	0	10
16	3	3
17	2	1
18	1	2
19	0	1
20	1	2
21	0	1
22	0	0
23	1	0
24	1	0
$n_1 = 9$		$n_2 = 38$
$\bar{y}_1 = 18.5$	$\bar{y}_2 = 14.9$	$z = 3.969$
		$p < .005$

TABLE IX  
LENGTH OF TIME TO GRADUATE, BASKETBALL LETTERWINNERS

Number of Terms In School As An Undergraduate	<u>Race</u>	
	$y_1$ = Black	$y_2$ = White
11	0	2
12	1*	0
13	0	2
14	1	0
15	0	4
16	0	3
17	1	3
18	0	1
19	1	0
20	1	0
21	0	0
22	0	1
$n_1 = 5$		$n_2 = 16$
$\bar{y}_1 = 16.4$	$\bar{y}_2 = 15.43$	$z = .663$
		$p > .100$

\*This individual was in the Veterinary Medicine program which requires more than 180 credits (12 terms) to graduate. He graduated on schedule for his major. (The researcher adjusted for this.)

TABLE X  
LENGTH OF TIME TO GRADUATE, TRACK LETTERWINNERS

Number of Terms In School An An Undergraduate	Race	
	$y_1$ = Black	$y_2$ = White
10	1	0
11	0	0
12	0	4
13	2	3
14	1	0
15	0	3
16	0	2
17	1	2
18	3	2
19	0	1
20	2	1
21	0	0
22	0	0
23	1	0
24	0	1
$n_1 = 11$		$n_2 = 19$
$\bar{y}_1 = 16.727$	$\bar{y}_2 = 15.631$	$z = .834$ $p > .100$



TABLE XI  
LENGTH OF TIME TO GRADUATE, WRESTLING LETTERWINNERS

Number of Terms In School As An Undergraduate	Race	
	$y_1$ = Black	$y_2$ = White
10	0	1
11	0	0
12	0	2
13	0	2
14	0	2
15	0	4
16	0	2
17	1	1
18	0	1
19	0	1
20	0	1
21	0	2
22	0	0
23	0	1
	$n_1 = 1$	$n_2 = 20$

$$\bar{y}_1 = 17 \quad \bar{y}_2 = 15.95$$

Confidence interval for  $\bar{y}_2$  is 14.333 to 17.567 at  $\alpha = .05$

In TABLES VIII, X, and XI, no significant difference can be found. The researcher, consequently, developed a composite table for basketball, wrestling and track (see TABLE XII) to control for the effect of football letterwinners on the composite for all sports. At the  $\alpha = .05$  level of significance, there is no significant difference between the means.

TABLE XII

LENGTH OF TIME TO GRADUATE, COMPOSITE WRESTLING, TRACK, AND BASKETBALL

Number of Terms In School As An Undergraduate	Race	
	$y_1$ = Black	$y_2$ = White
10	1	1
11	0	2
12	1	6
13	2	7
14	2	2
15	0	11
16	0	7
17	3	6
18	3	4
19	1	2
20	2	2
21	0	2
22	0	1
23	1	1
24	0	1
<hr/>		
	$n_1 = 16$	$n_2 = 55$
$\bar{y}_1 = 16.4375$	$\bar{y}_2 = 15.691$	$z = .8194$
		$p > .100$

The mean number of terms it takes white football players to graduate is not significantly lower than the mean number of terms for all white athletes in the sample. But mean number of terms for black football players to graduate is significantly larger than the mean number of terms to graduate for all black athletes in the sample.

No black football players graduated with their classes at the end of twelve terms; while 8% of the white football players did graduate with their classes. Both of these figures are far below the all-university wide average of 35% for males.

A black former assistant coach offered a partial explanation for the low graduation rates for football players, both black and white. Twenty years ago, he had played football at MSU. During the Winter Term, the athletes took heavy class loads to make up for the light loads taken during football season and spring training. He stated that now the athletes are not able to do that, for an "optional" winter training schedule now exists. He stated that it is optional in that the athletes are not required to attend, but their chances of ever playing are highly diminished if they do not attend. This leaves them with a crowded schedule all year long. It should be considered that working out intensively several hours a day, several days of the week is not conducive for creating an academic environment for those already at an academic disadvantage.

Black football players do not perform academically as well as black athletes in other sports. As mentioned above, this could be due to the large amount of time spent practicing. Low graduation rates in football players could also be accounted for (putting individual differences aside,) by the fact that they, particularly are not academically advised correctly, and that special academic assistance in the form of tutoring



and remedial work is not being provided for them.

The above data supports the claim that not only do black athletes not graduate at the completion of their four years here, but also that 53.5% of them do not graduate at all; and that this figure is well below the average for the male population of the University. Compared to white letterwinners in football, wrestling, basketball and track, the figures are even lower. Only 17.7% of all the white letterwinners in the sample did not graduate, which is well above the average for the male population as a whole.



### CHAPTER THREE

#### DISCRIMINATION

##### Discrimination By The Coaching Staffs

Proving that discrimination by race by the coaching staff and white teammates actually occurs is a difficult problem, for nearly all of the evidence was derived from the perceptions of the black athletes themselves. The important aspects this study considered were whether or not the black athletes perceived prejudice and discrimination. Because this researcher was not able to survey the white coaching staff and the white athletes, the results of this study cannot validly be compared with any other sample.

The MSU Athletic Department and Administration pride themselves in the progressive strides towards racial harmony that have been made at MSU. When the researcher was acquiring information for this study from the MSU Information Services, she was told, "We don't collect racial information. We love each boy the same. Color doesn't matter. They are all Spartans." The black athletes feel that this is not true. One ex-football star, who now plays with a semi-professional football team stated in an interview that at MSU, "I found out what it was like to be discriminated against." Another black football player said, "If I had it to do all over again, I would not come to MSU, because you do not get an equal break in nothing -- including football. . . Yes, I do feel the coaches discriminate because of color. Rather than see too many blacks playing, the coaches will stack black players in the same position, even if they have never played that position in their life. . . At MSU, sports is politics; it's not what you know, but who you know."

The consensus among the black athletes in this sample was that the stacking of positions is a very common occurrence. The black athletes described several instances where black players were playing behind other blacks so that room could be made in the parallel position for a white player, whom they considered to be not as good. They described one incident where the opposite occurred. A black quarterback was moved from a second string quarterback position to one he had never played before, in the defensive backfield. The black athletes thought that the Head Coach had no choice but to play another black in the starting quarterback position, as he was the only experienced quarterback on the team, and had a successful season the year before. But the black athletes felt that the Head Coach did not want to have a black quarterback backing up another black quarterback. Historically, blacks have been excluded from quarterback positions in integrated football teams, professional and college, because the position is considered to be one of leadership, and intelligence. Most white coaches have not trusted the abilities of black quarterbacks or have bowed to the prejudices of sports fans and financial supporters. The result of this particular situation at MSU was that the quarterback turned defensive back broke a vertebrae in his neck and will never be able to play football, or any other contact sport again. The other blacks on the team, secretly held the Head Coach responsible. The coaching staff felt the player in question was too talented to play on the second string, so they thought they were doing him a favor by starting him in another position.

The black athletes feel that many of the coaches talk down to them, and, that they treat them as animals. Some black athletes noted incidences where a white athlete was injured and immediately removed from a game; but should the same injury occur to a black player, he would be given a shot of


novacaine and put back in the game. It was not possible to substantiate this claim at all.

A black ex-assistant football coach, when speaking about one of the white coaches, said that, "He has a tendency to strip them of their manhood because of the way he talks down to them. . . There has to be a certain amount of discrimination." He also mentioned that the athletes are not receiving the motivation that they need to bring out their talents. Rather, their individual needs and personalities are ignored, they are all treated the same because they are black, that is of course unless one comes along who is a super star.

This same ex-coach referred to a case where an extremely promising athlete was "chewed out" so much that he just gave up trying and spent most of his freshman year sitting on the bench. He said he never had and never would recruit a black athlete to play football at MSU.

The coaches' attitudes towards interracial dating, while not explicitly expressed, are still felt by the black athletes. The black athletes surveyed said that the "situation" is a lot better now than it was in the early 1960's; but better, only because the attitudes are not blatantly translated into action. Yet stories of benchings are still handed down as warnings to each freshman group of athletes by the "experienced" varsity members.

One of the better known stories deals with a former MSU football player, now playing for a professional team. This athlete was secretly dating a white girl his first two years at college. One of the assistant coaches discovered this a year or so later. During the player's senior year he was elected co-captain of the football team, but as the story goes, he sat most of that year on the bench. When he was drafted to play football



by a professional team, a letter was sent to the Head Coach of that team concerning the player's social "activities".

Another football player was openly dating a white girl in the early 1960's. After several ignored warnings, it was reported that his scholarship was taken away, and returned only when the girl involved complained to the administration of the University. Whether or not these incidents actually occurred is not the most important aspect to consider. What is important is that these stories act as unofficial warnings to the black athletes. The black athletes surveyed felt that the super stars need not be intimidated, but that the average ballplayer has a lot to lose if he is caught "messaging around".

All of the football players in the sample felt indirectly pressured by the coaching staff, and were indignant about having their private lives interfered with. One athlete was specifically told by the head coach, that he was not opposed to interracial dating per se, but he did not want his players to date "tramps" and girls with bad reputations. An ex-football player said that he was told by a coach that "they didn't go along with that sort of thing here". Many of the athletes said they were, at one point in time, afraid to walk to classes with a white girl for fear of being seen by a coach. Others said that the coaches used to come to the dormitory grills and cafeterias to check up on them.

To consider whether or not punitive actions have been taken in the past or are being taken now is of secondary importance to the fact that a significant number of black athletes perceive it to be true. Should their perceptions be erroneous, the coaching staff has done nothing to counteract these misconceptions; rather their actions reinforce the stories. Black basketball players said that there was no discrimination because of interracial dating. Both said that discriminatory practices did occur, but they declined to give any examples.

A black assistant coach stated that the situation has changed a lot the past two years and that black players are not intimidated concerning interracial dating. Another study should be done to compare the findings of this study with a more current group of athletes, to see if conditions have really changed.

Several white ex-football players were interviewed, though not enough in numbers to be considered a representative sample. Those interviewed, are considered by their peers to be more "liberal" than the average white "jock". These athletes stated that discrimination according to race is very rare. According to their perceptions, stacking does not occur, but that so many top quality athletes are brought to MSU that many good ball players will end up playing second and third string.

One white player characterized football as a military organization, very rigid and authoritarian. He said that many of the blacks have a hard time adjusting to that. These white athletes heavily criticized the Head Coach, but only concerning his technical ability as a coach, not because he was considered to be a racist and discriminatory.

#### Discrimination By White Athletes

The black athletes perceptions of the attitudes of their white teammates was, on the other hand, very interesting to observe. When answering the questionnaire, all but one athlete stated that they experienced no racist behavior from their white teammates. But after observing a situation that occurred after the questionnaires were returned, this was not the case. Rather than asking the straight forward question on the questionnaire, "Is there overt hostility, or racism from white teammates?", it would have been more productive to present a series of situations, and to have asked them to project their reactions and what they would expect





their white teammates reactions to be. Fortunately, a situation presented itself, that allowed an observation of the black athletes perceptions and reactions in this area.

SDS and some other white students had been demonstrating in the Winter, 1969 around two demands: 1) The rehiring of a radical professor, and 2) The implementation of an open admissions policy for all black, third world and white working class people. Several of the white athletes came to an evening rally with the intentions of disrupting it. Fights broke out and the next day, the athletes came back about four times stronger to try to "disrupt" a rally at the Administration Building.

A few black athletes were approached to join the "counterdemonstrators" and they became extremely angered. One of the white athletes asked a well-known militant black athlete saying that, "\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (two white assistant football coaches) said it was ok to go beat up the hippies, come on", and then immediately said, "Oh, I forgot, you're one of those". The blacks quickly organized themselves and went over to the Administration Building to "defend" the white demonstrators. They began to identify with the white demonstrators, viewed them as friends (they were personal friends of some of them) and felt that the white athletes would love to do the same thing to them (the blacks) if the occasion ever presented itself.

When the black athletes arrived at the Administration Building, they were ready to fight. Why did the black athletes become so involved to the extent of engaging in physical struggle? Racial tension must have existed before this incident. Several of the black football players were talked with after this incident occurred. The black athletes said that they knew that the white athletes were encouraged by the coaching staff, whom they considered to be racist. Because one of the demands was in part



a black demand and was as the black athletes perceived it, in their interests, they perceived the coaching staff's encouragement and the white athletes enthusiasm against the demonstrators as being in direct opposition to their interests.

Their perceptions of discriminatory practices on the field by coaches led to a lot of resentment of those white athletes who they felt should not play in starting positions. One of the most interesting things observed was that the black athletes were not surprised by the actions of the white athletes. Many black players stated that they knew the white athletes were like this all along and knew that a showdown would come sooner or later.

Hostilities began to develop in May, 1968 when the black athletes boycotted all activities of the Athletic Department. One of the organizers of the boycott did not play football the following season because of a leg injury. One black football player said that several of the white athletes were openly glad that the athlete in question would not be playing because they said it would improve the morale of the team.

An ex-assistant coach mentioned that the white athletes' counter-demonstration was initiated by the Varsity Club, a predominantly white organization. This incident further polarized the football team along racial lines. The black athletes felt that the white athletes would love to try to beat them up as well. They were very sensitive to the fact that several of the coaches were present at the Administration Building and seemed to be enjoying the whole situation until the black athletes arrived with the intentions of stopping the whole incident. The coaches appeared to become disturbed only when they realized that an intrateam fight might occur.

The MSU Black Athletic Boycott, May, 1968

Nearly all of the black athletes at Michigan State University boycotted all athletics for several days, in the spring of 1968. The boycott came as a surprise to many observers who felt that Michigan State University was a haven for black athletes. The list of grievances is noted in the Appendix. A major focus of the protest concerned employment practices of the University in the area of athletics. Yet, two demands specifically dealt with areas of academic counseling for blacks. Nearly all of the white athletes were angered with the boycott itself, the demands and/or the methods of boycotting per se.

Michigan State University should be credited with dealing successfully with most of the demands. As of November, 1970, there is one black assistant football coach (out of a possible 8), there is one black assistant basketball coach (out of 3), and one black assistant track coach (out of 3). More blacks have been hired servicing the athletic facilities, there is one black trainer (out of 4), and there are at least two black cheerleaders.

The athletic counselor does not have a black assistant, and it appears as if the quality of academic counseling has not yet changed.

This action was political in nature, yet only two of the athletes surveyed participated in any black political organizations. Most of the athletes supported the black student group on campus at the time, but never went to the meetings. Black liberation movements have had an effect on black athletes though. As one black ex-assistant coach stated, ". . .they can't divorce themselves from events in their community or from being black. They feel that 'we are in this thing together'. They are a very close knit group." These black athletes are stopping the perpetuation of the myths that athletics are not only the way out of the ghetto, but also the model for integration in society.

## CHAPTER FOUR

## CONCLUSION

Conclusion

Several individuals have attempted to describe the conditions of black athletes in America. This particular study was concerned with investigating and describing the conditions of black athletes at Michigan State University. If sports are a reflection of the society as a whole, its values, attitudes and class make up, then investigations in the area of race and sports should prove beneficial to the development of social knowledge.

Several things can be concluded from this study. A great many of the black athletes surveyed came to Michigan State University with the major intention of receiving an education.

While it could not be verified that black athletes are counseled differently from white athletes, most of the black athletes felt that they were. It could also not be verified that the coaches systematically discriminate against black athletes, yet the athletes feel discriminated against. These contradictions do raise several points though. Why do most of the black athletes blame their grievances on discriminatory practices? Many blacks do not trust white people. Because of that, ambiguous actions on the part of white coaches could reinforce all of the blacks' negative feelings of being oppressed. While most of the white coaches are not avowed racists, and probably do not go out of their ways to hurt black athletes, they, as most of white America, possess stereotypes about black people. If they believe the stereotypes that blacks are lazy and stupid, then they might push black athletes very hard, and more often than not, be patronizing and condescending to them. Coaches do not live in a vacuum;

they are products of their environment. They live and work in a racist society, and are certainly not immuned to it merely because they are athletic coaches. Social distance is not an influencing factor, because if they become involved with blacks who do not fit the stereotype, those individuals become, to them, exceptions to the stereotype.

The emphasis of sports over education, as an effective means of social mobility, has had repercussions within the black community. Newsweek states that "the explanation for black pre-eminence in sport is social not scientific. . . . The Negro does not have more muscles: he has fewer opportunities." (Newsweek, July 15, 1968). Since less than 50% of the black letterwinners graduate, compared to 80% of the white letterwinners, one could speculate that the academic counseling of black athletes, especially black football players, is a major factor; but at this point, that is only speculation.

Discriminatory behavior by white athletes towards their black teammates was difficult to pinpoint, except for the incident in February, 1969 described above. There does appear to be a great deal of hostility between the two groups.

The development of the militancy of black athletes did not occur in a vacuum. Black athletes were beginning to, in an active way, identify themselves with the struggles of the black community. As they became more accepted within the realm of sports, their alienation from society increased, for they were still not accepted as men by white America, and at the same time became divided from the black community because of their incomes and alleged opportunities.

While Michigan State University has made great strides in providing educational opportunities for minority group members, it has neglected

to seriously deal with educational problems of her black athletes. Dr. Robert Green, Director of the MSU Center for Urban Affairs once stated that, "Black students on predominantly white campuses are openly expressing their disgust at an educational system which reflects most of the racist aspects of American life." (State News, February 19, 1969.) — The MSU Athletic Department is an integral part of the University and shares in the responsibility for perpetuating the status quo.

#### Implications For Further Study

As this study developed and progressed, ideas for other studies, were discovered. The most obvious idea would be to refine the elements of this particular study or to develop two sets of questionnaires, one for black athletes and one for white athletes to compare their attitudes, as well as to discover if the black athletes sampled in 1968 had different opinions from those black athletes who are in college in the 1970's.

Stecklein and Pilapil (1965, 1970) conducted two identical studies of the athletes at the University of Minnesota, during two distinct time periods. Their studies are extensive concerning the academic progress made by the athletes. The two samples were athletes and non athletes. They did not make any distinctions between races. A study similar to the Stecklein and Pilapil (1965, 1970) studies, using racial distinctions as well, would truly give a comprehensive picture of the academic progress made by athletes, black and white alike.

Another area of research would be to investigate the extent that the opportunity to participate in intercollegiate athletics is a force in upward social mobility. It would also be interesting to analyze the data in this particular study by utilizing the socio-economic statuses of the athletes.

There is an increasing growth of what is known as "jock's lib." (Scott, 1970:15) around the nation. This is a positive white response to the protests of black athletes. Options for study open up in this area as well. There has been the development of the Institute for the Study of Sport in Society, in California. Very interesting and much needed research may begin there.



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## APPENDIX I

## Questionnaire

Age: \_\_\_\_\_ Year in college: \_\_\_\_\_ Sport: \_\_\_\_\_

Father's occupation: \_\_\_\_\_ Mother's occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

What state are you from? \_\_\_\_\_

1. What position did you play in high school? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What position did you play as a freshman? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What position were you put into on the varsity? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Why do you think you were switched?
5. Why did you want to go to college (i.e. to play football, to get an education, etc?)
6. Why did you come to Michigan State? (Versus another large school; versus a small college; versus a black college, etc.?)
7. Do you like Michigan State? Why or why not? Are you sorry you came here? Are you sorry you came to college?
8. What kind of grades did you get in high school?
9. What did you want to major in when you first came here?
10. What are you majoring in now?
11. Why is there a difference? (Answer this if it applies.)
12. What kind of grades are you getting now?
13. Does the athletic department encourage you to study? If so, what reasons do they give you. (to learn? to get by enough just to stay eligible? etc.)

## APPENDIX I (continued)

14. Do you want to get a degree?
15. How many terms from graduation do you estimate you will be when your eligibility is up?
16. What do you want to do when your eligibility is up and/or you graduate?
17. Were you ever pressured or threatened by the Athletic Department about dating white girls? If so how?
18. Do you attend BSA meetings? Why or why not?
19. Does the Athletic Department pressure you about BSA or black fraternities?
20. Do you feel that the coaching staff discriminates because of color? If so why? Give examples if you can--personal, or those of other people still at MSU or those who have left. Please go into detail if you can.
21. Is there hostility, overt racism from white teammates?
22. Why do you play your sport? Only because you like it? To make a lot of money in the Pro's? As a step in getting a better job? To increase your social status with your peer groups, both white and black, male and female? Etc. . .

## APPENDIX II

MSU BLACK ATHLETES' BOYCOTT, (MAY, 1968)  
LIST OF GRIEVANCES

1. MSU is not hiring enough Negro coaches.
2. MSU is discouraging black students from participating in certain sports -- especially baseball.
3. MSU does not employ enough blacks in jobs in Jenison Fieldhouse, the Intramural Building, the Ticket Office and the Ice Arena.
4. There are no black trainers or doctors to treat all athletes.
5. The athletic counselor is "under undue pressure" assisting all athletes and should have a black assistant.
6. Academic counseling for blacks is designed to place them in courses where they will maintain eligibility. They are forced to take non-academic courses rather than academic courses that will enable them to graduate in four years.
7. MSU has never elected a Negro cheerleader.

## APPENDIX III

December 9, 1969

REMARKS OF THE PRESIDENT  
AT THE NATIONAL FOOTBALL FOUNDATION  
AND HALL OF FAME DINNER  
THE WALDORF-ASTORIA

Mr. Chairman and Mr. Toastmaster, Your Eminence Cardinal Cooke, all of the distinguished guests at the head tables and all of the distinguished award winners and all of those who are here on this very momentous occasion:

It would be momentous because of this organization meeting to honor the man that you have honored and I speak of others, of course, than myself and it would be momentous too because it is the 100th year of a very great game.

I was trying to think of something that would appropriately describe how I feel in accepting this award. I would have to be less than candid if I were not to say that because of the offices I have held I have received many awards.

But I think Archibald MacLeish, in that perfectly eloquent tribute to football, quoting Secretary of State Dean Acheson, put it very well. He said, "The honors you don't deserve are the ones you are most grateful to receive."

I simply want to set the record straight with regard to my football qualifications. This is a candid, open Administration. We believe in telling the truth about football and everything.

I can only say that as far as this award is concerned, that it is certainly a small step for the National Football Foundation and a small step for football, but it is a giant leap for a man who never even made the team at Whittier.

I have looked around that wall. Whittier is not up there, I can assure you. I didn't hear the Whittier song, either, a moment ago. In fact, only the coach from Loyola knows where Whittier is. We used to play Loyola.

I got into a game once when we were so far behind it didn't matter. I even got into one against Southern California once when we were so far behind it didn't matter.

## APPENDIX III (continued)

Just to tell you a little about Whittier so the record will be straight, it is a school with very high academic standing. We had a very remarkable coach.

Today as we pay tribute to the players, I am glad that one of those who made the Hall of Fame is a coach, Bud Wilkinson.

I pointed out in my acceptance address in Miami that one of the men who influenced me most in my life was my coach and I think that could be true of many public men.

My coach was an American Indian, a truly remarkable man and a great leader. I learned more about life from him than I did about football; but a little about football.

One of the reasons he didn't put me in was because I didn't know the plays. There was a good reason for that. It wasn't because I wasn't smart enough. I knew the enemy's plays. I played them all week long. Believe me, nobody in the Southern California Conference knew Occidental's or Pomona's plays better than I did, because I was on that side.

I learned a lot sitting by the coach on the bench -- learned about football and learned about life.

Incidentally, since this is a night for confession, I want to tell you one thing about Chief Newman. He played for Southern California. He played on their first Rose Bowl team and that first Rose Bowl team beat Penn State in the only game Penn State ever played in the Rose Bowl.

Now, because Governor Shaffer is here and because I had an uncle who taught at Penn State and had a very distinguished record and because somebody suggested that some day I might want to visit the campus -- after I have left the Presidency -- I can only say that they have a great football team.

As a matter of fact, I was going to suggest that we have a super college bowl after the November or January 1 games and then I thought I was in deep enough already because look what could happen: Southern California could beat Michigan and they would claim they were Number One; Notre Dame might beat Texas and they would claim they were One; and, of course, you never know what would happen with Penn State and Missouri. I understand they are pretty good.

So I can only say this: I understand that Penn State certainly is among those that should be considered for One in the United States of America.

## APPENDIX III (continued)

Now, could I share with you for a moment, in a somewhat serious vein, what football means to me? I think that is what the man who receives this award, particularly one who really doesn't deserve it because of his football prowess, that is something he is expected to do.

First, without talking about those factors that are tremendously important that Archibald MacLeish touched on, the character, all of the great spirit that comes into individuals who are either participants in the game, participate in it or watch it, I look back on football and have many pleasant memories: I just enjoyed playing it, watching it, reading about it over the years.

Among all of the people who have been honored tonight, let me just say a good word about sports writers. After all, I must say that this is not an unselfish statement, most sports writers become political writers in the end -- "Scotty" Reston, Bob Considine, Bill Henry. So I am just planning for the future.

But, in any event, thinking of sports writers for the moment, they have made football live before the days of television and even now for many who never got to the games.

My first recollection of big-time college football was Ernie Nevers against Notre Dame in 1925. I see Ernie Nevers here and I sat in the stands with Father Hesburgh when Southern Cal played and lost to Notre Dame and I know the great spirit between those two schools. But I remember that game. I remember the score. I think it was 25 to 10 or four touchdowns to a touchdown and a field goal and I remember that the sports writers, Bill Henry of the L.A. Times, and others, were writing about the game, wrote about one play where Nevers went through the line close to the goal and there was a dispute about whether he went over and was pushed back.

I wonder whether or not, with the replays we have on television, the game might have turned out differently if we had had television in 1925. I am not saying it would, Father Hesburgh. I have enough trouble with Penn State. I don't want any with Notre Dame.

Then my memory goes on, just to share them with you, and interestingly enough I remember performances by men who lost as well as who won. That is rather natural, I am sure you can understand.

The first Rose Bowl game I saw was between one of the great Howard Jones' teams of the early '30s and Jock Sutherland's Pitt teams. Pitt was overmanned. They had a fine quarterback in Warren Heller; a good passer. And Howard Jones had a team that beat them 35 to nothing.



## APPENDIX III (continued)

But my memories of that team was not of the awesome power of Howard Jones' team moving down with the unbalanced single wing going down, down, down the field and scoring again and again with that tremendous blocking, but of two very gallant Pittsburgh ends, Stedani and Dailey.

For the first half, I remember they plowed into that awesome USC interference and knocked it down time and time again and held the score down. The game was lost, but I remember right to the last they were in there fighting and that spirit stayed with me as a memory and the years go on.

I think of another game, Southern Cal and Duke, 1938. I had attended Duke University for law school and I remember that Duke came there undefeated, untied, unscored upon. The score was three to nothing going into the last few minutes of the game. So out came a fourth string quarterback, not a third string, Doyle Nave, and he through passes as they throw them today, one after another, to Al Kreuger, an end from Antelope Valley, Southern California scored. It was seven to three.

I must say that I was terribly disappointed, of course, but the woman who was to be my future wife went to Southern Cal and that is how it all worked out. We met at that game.

The years go on and I am not going to bore you with more of my own recollections, except to give you a feel of what football has meant to me as a spectator, and college football particularly.

I remember some Ohio State games. I recall going to Ohio State to a football game, and until you have been to Columbus to see an Ohio State game -- in fact, until I went to Fayetteville, Arkansas, I thought the Columbus crowds were the most exciting. But in any event, that year, I think it was about 1958, I went there with Senator John Bricker. Iowa had a great team. They were a favorite over Ohio State.

They led going into the last quarter. Woody Hayes -- in those days, it was just three yards and a cloud of dust. They didn't have the passers. But he had a great big fullback by the name of White and he ran him, starting at the 35 yard line of Ohio State, ten different times over the same hole in the Iowa line, going off the left side, until they scored, and they won the game 17 to 14.

If you think enthusiastic crowds developed in other places, you ought to see an Ohio State crowd when they beat anybody.

But in any event, on through the years, I come to more recent years, years that these younger men here will remember and recall with the same zest and enthusiasm, I am sure, that I do.

## APPENDIX III (continued)

This year, 1969, certainly of all the hundred years of football none could be more exciting. There were never so many great teams, never so many Saturdays when the favorite could not be sure that he was going to come through, never so many times when a team that was behind came on to win or tie in the last quarter.

I am referring, of course, to Southern Cal, what they did to UCLA.

If you talk to somebody from UCLA they say it should not have happened. So, watch out, Michigan, for SC, it could happen. I am not predicting now. I have had enough trouble with Penn State. I don't want any with Michigan. Before I get through I will only have friends in Texas and I didn't carry Texas. So let's not talk any further about that.

But now, one serious moment. Archibald MacLeish did say what I wish I could have written about what football means to this country, what it means to me as an individual, what it means to me as one who is serving a President of the United States. I can only tell you that in the Cabinet Room there are the pictures of three men who I consider to be great Presidents; President Eisenhower, President Woodrow Wilson, President Theodore Roosevelt. There were other great ones, but these three in this century, I consider to be among the great Presidents.

All of them had one thing in common. They were very different men; Eisenhower, the great general; Theodore Roosevelt, the tremendous extrovert, explorer, writer, one of the most talented men of our time in so many fields; Woodrow Wilson, probably the greatest scholar who has ever occupied the Presidency, a man with the biggest vocabulary of any President in our history in case you want to put it down in your memory book.

But each of them had a passion for football. Woodrow Wilson, when he taught at Wesley and used to talk about the spirit of football, and later on when he was President of Princeton, he insisted on scholarship, but he recognized and tried to encourage football. T. R. was dictating a speech one day, a very important one. He got a call telling of two of his sons participating in a prep school game which they had won. He dropped the speech and ran shouting for joy to his wife and said, "They won, they won."

I remember President Eisenhower talking to me after his heart attack. He said one of the things he hated to give up was that the doctor said he should not listen to those football games because he got too excited and became too involved.

## APPENDIX III (continued)

What does this mean, this common interest in football of Presidents, of leaders, of people generally? It means a competitive spirit. It means, also, to me, the ability and the determination to be able to lose and then come back and try again, to sit on the bench and then come back. It means basically the character, the drive, the pride, the teamwork, the feeling of being in a cause bigger than yourself.

All of these great factors are essential if a Nation is to maintain character and greatness for that Nation. So, on the 100th year of football, as we approach the 200th year of the United States, remember that our great assets are not our military strength or our economic wealth, but the character of our young people and I am glad that America's young people produce the kind of men that we have in American football today.

I close on a note that will tell you why I think Texas deserved to be Number One. It was not because they scored the second touchdown, but it was because after the first touchdown when they were ahead (behind) 14 to 0, the coach sent in a play. They executed the play and they went for two. When they went for two and the score was 18 (8) to 14, they moved the momentum in their direction. They were not sure to win because Arkansas still had a lot of fight left and I remember the great drive in those last few minutes. But Texas, by that very act, demonstrated the qualities of a champion, the qualities to come back when they were behind and then when they could have played it safe just to tie, they played to win.

This allows me to tell a favorite anecdote of mine in the world of sports. In another field, one of the great tennis players of all time, of course -- the first really big tennis player in terms of the big serve and the rest, in our time -- was Bill Tilden.

When he was coaching, after he completed his playing years, a young player had won a match in a minor tournament and won it rather well. He came off the court and expected Tilden to say something to him in words of congratulation, and Tilden didn't.

The player said, "What is the matter, I won it, didn't I?" Tilden said, "Yes, you won, but playing that way you will never be a champion, because you played not to lose. You didn't play to win."

That is what America needs today. What we need in the spirit of this country and the spirit of our young people is not playing it safe always, not being afraid of defeat -- being ready to get into the battle and playing to win; not with the idea of destroying or defeating or hurting anybody else, but with the idea of achieving excellence.

Because Texas demonstrated that day that they were playing to win, they set an example worthy of being Number One in the 100th year of college football.

Thank you.

## APPENDIX IV

## A STATEMENT BY AN MSU BLACK ATHLETE

I think that it is totally deplorable the way Black athletes especially, and white athletes up here (and probably nationally) are treated. The coaches come to recruit you and sing you 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.

This is just an immoral decadent system which literally destroys dudes beliefs in himself and mankind. So many times I have heard how football builds moral courage and all that stuff but as far as I can see it has too often built inferiority complexes and savage unthinking robots out to brutalize and hurt people. Some one should rename Jenison the Halls of Schizophrenia. There is no doubt that many a beautiful soul has been crushed around here.

Seemingly, without any kind of afterthought or regret, these Omnipotent Administrators destroy dream after dream, life after life. Probably enough tears have been shed by "big grown men" to flood the Red Cedar. But let it be known that one day the Serpent of Justice shall raise its head and devour all of the greedy crooked pigs (better known as football coaches) who stand in its way.







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