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Submission Guidelines for the *Academic Athletic Journal*

AUDIENCE

The primary audience of the Academic Athletic Journal is the membership of the N4A, that is, professionals providing counseling, life skills, and academic support services to student-athletes.

PURPOSE

The primary purpose of the journal is to assist its readers in providing the best possible counseling, advising, and life skills services to student-athletes. Toward that end, articles should add new knowledge, challenge existing opinion, and/or explain the implications of research. The arguments should be well-grounded in theory or research and clearly related to practice. Articles should be original and stimulating, written in a clear and concise style. Where applicable, authors should strive for methodological and statistical soundness, while avoiding unnecessary technical excursions.

SUBJECT MATTER

Relevant topics include, but are not limited to, the following: historical overviews of topics related to student-athletes; reviews of publications related to student-athletes; practical applications of theoretical or research-based conclusions; research on student-athletes and on professionals working in support service capacities, including a full discussion of results and implications. Do not submit a manuscript that has been previously published, is scheduled for publication elsewhere, or is being considered for publication elsewhere.

REVIEW PROCESS

Manuscripts will be reviewed through the blind review process by at least three members of the editorial board. Their comments will be sent to the authors along with recommendations for acceptance, rejection, or revision.

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Manuscripts should be prepared utilizing the format and style described in the fourth edition of the American Psychological Association Publication Manual. Articles should be 1250-5000 words in length (i.e., roughly 5-20 pages of typed, double-spaced text) with ample margins for comments. Amplify the text with appropriate headings/subheadings, figures, and reference citations. The references and all figures and tables should be typed on separate pages in accordance with the APA Publication Manual. Submissions that deviate substantially from Publication Manual format will be returned to the authors.

Authors should avoid sexist language at all times and terms such as subject when describing research participants.

Manuscripts must include the following:

- (1) A separate title page with the names and institutional affiliations of the authors.

(2) An abstract of 50-100 words that briefly summarizes the major points of the paper. The abstract should be typed on a separate page and appear after the title page.

(3) A brief biographical sketch for each author. Sketches may be combined on one page, but must appear on a page separate from manuscript text.

(4) A cover letter briefly describing the nature of the manuscript. Include relevant telephone and fax numbers and electronic mail addresses.

Submit the original manuscript and four copies to: E. Newton Jackson, Jr., Ph.D., Sport Administration Program, Department of Physical Education, 130 Tully Gym, The Florida State University, Tallahassee, Florida 32306-4280.

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EDITOR'S STATEMENT

E. NEWTON JACKSON, JR., PH.D.

THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY

The impact you have on our student's lives can never properly be measured. Each advisor, mentor, and director share in the character building of our student athletes of today, and our civic leaders of tomorrow. The images of dedication, work ethic, sincerity and commitment to the enhancement and development of each student athlete's academic growth and moral responsibility are illustrated daily before their eyes by you. Far too often these contributions are overlooked and under appreciated by various administrators within our system of high education, but the labor of love is truly well worth the daily struggles.

Our nation prepares to face an upcoming political divide striving to identify the best candidate for President. Among the candidates, are former college athletes that learned much from teamwork and equally as much from their classwork. Our elected leaders at the national level have long had a glorious athletic history. The role modeling provided to our student athletes today is largely enhanced by your presence, and sometimes by mature peers. Waalkes, et.al., discuss a concept practiced within our athletic environment, "peer helping." The strengths of such ideal practices are outlined within a stellar academic institution. Michael Allen addresses the differences gender plays among hoopsters at the Division I level, while focusing on the impact of team subcultures and the value placed on academics. Etzel and Lantz examined differences in severity and frequency of life-stresses among athletes and non-athletes. College students were surveyed and the findings identified may surprise you. Barbara Meyer provides critical theory to eliminate the perceived conflict; in elaborate detail, the education of student athletes were examined. Lastly, the membership strongly requested the inclusion of Dr. John Gerdy's speech presented at a previous N4A Regional Meeting. Selected members felt his commentary should be shared among all N4A members.

New areas of discussion lay before us. Violence, integrity (personal and professional), ethics, the role of technology in academic support and learning, are but a few topics we must face and examine in the new century. Papers researching advisor experiences are encouraged among the membership, in addition to those investigating the student athletes. This vital support provided for our student athletes will be more apparent through the production and promotion of quantitative and qualitative research to inform our colleagues, and administrators. Only when numbers and results are thoroughly explained can greater support and emphasis be properly placed among academic advisors for athletics.

Peer Helping in an Intercollegiate Athletic Environment

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Intercollegiate student-athletes face a variety of unique responsibilities and stressors. Balancing practice, training, traveling, and academics can be overwhelming. To assist student-athletes with these issues, the peer helper program called the Student Peer Athlete Network (SPAN) was developed. SPAN was designed to train specific student-athletes in peer helper skills so they, in turn can assist other student-athletes who need support or assistance for certain personal, academic, or athletic concerns. Empowering student-athletes promotes a sense of self-responsibility and benefits the entire student-athlete population.

Intercollegiate student-athletes face a variety of demands and stressors that are unique to their population. In addition to the commitment and long hours that must be put into practice and training, student-athletes must take a full course load to remain eligible, find a way to balance their academic and athletic pursuits effectively, yet still make time for themselves personally (Parham, 1993). The extent to which intercollegiate student-athletes are able to balance the roles of student and athlete is not an easy undertaking (Engstrom & Sedlacek, 1991).

During the season, it is not uncommon for student-athletes to spend an inordinate amount of time preparing for competition and dealing with a variety of athletic stressors, including pressure to perform, ambiguity of team roles, travel to athletic events, threat of injury, fear of failing, and amount of time spent in the weight room and athletic training room. As a result, they often suffer from stress and chronic fatigue, time management and/or other study skill problems, personal identity issues, and interpersonal relationship problems (Petipas, 1981; Sowa & Gressard, 1983). Couple this with the fact that student-athletes have limited opportunities to develop friendships or social networks outside their athletic peer subcultures, and the stress can become overwhelming (Chartrand & Lent, 1987; Lanning, 1982).

Difficulty in meeting the multiple demands and roles may create particular developmental problems for those less prepared for the rigor of life as an intercollegiate student-athlete (Blann, 1985; Danish & Hale, 1981; Danish, Petipas, & Hale, 1990; Ferrante, 1989; Nelson, 1983; Pearson & Petipas, 1990; Petipas & Champagne, 1988; Purdy, Eitzen, & Hufnagel, 1982; Sowa & Gressard, 1983). For instance, freshman student-athletes often struggle to adapt to the unique nuances of college life. Being away from the comforts of home for the first time, they have to deal with a variety of

transition and adjustment issues, such as learning to adapt to a new environment, new living arrangements, new team, new coaches, and new school. In addition, most were the stars of their high school teams and, as freshmen in college, most have to deal with the "little fish in a big sea" syndrome. Similarly, sophomores, juniors, and seniors have their own developmental needs and concerns to confront. If not managed properly, the cumulative effects of stress can undermine an individual's confidence and self-esteem. Consequently, it is not uncommon for student-athletes to question the world of intercollegiate athletics. As a result, they may feel isolated, alienated, unmotivated, or homesick, all of which can possibly lead to withdrawal from the team or sport itself. In many instances, student-athletes do not know who to ask for help.

To assist student-athletes during their collegiate experience, the Academic Support Center for Student-Athletes (ASCSA) at The Pennsylvania State University developed and initiated a peer helping program—called the Student Peer Athlete Network (S.P.A.N.)—for its student-athletes. The purpose of this article is to discuss the history behind peer helping, explain the rationale for and development of a peer helping program implemented within an intercollegiate athletic environment, demonstrate how student-athletes benefit from a peer support network, and highlight areas in which sport psychologists, life skills personnel, and academic counselors can assist in the process.

PEER HELPING AND PEER TRAINING MODELS

Peer helping refers to a process in which caring persons, other than licensed or certified professional counselors, offer a set of interpersonal skills to needy individuals who are trying to work through a difficult situation in their life (Myrick & Sorenson, 1988). The process encourages people who are experiencing difficult situations to explore alternative ways of looking at problem-solving situations so that, ultimately, they can take responsibility and be more accountable for their own actions and decisions (Myrick & Sorenson, 1988; Schrupf, Crawford, & Usadel, 1991). Specific life skills like goal setting, communication, conflict resolution, stress management, responsible decision making, and self-control are often targeted.

Organized peer helping programs came into existence in the mid-sixties (Varenhorst, 1984). The word "peer" connotes that the helper has some type of general association with the person needing help (e.g., something in common such as same age, status, socioeconomic background, or interest area such as a sport team). Researchers have noted that under certain circumstances trained peer student counselors were found to be more accepted, less intimidating, more understanding, and more trustworthy than traditional older professional counselors (Carkhuff, 1969; Myrick & Sorenson, 1988; Varenhorst, 1984).

Although peer-helping programs were extensively utilized in the late sixties and seventies, it was not until the 1980's that sufficient evidence was available to evaluate their effectiveness. Many secondary schools (Bernard, 1988; Botvin & Tortu, 1988) and a limited number of universities have organized successful peer helping programs. In an extensive review regarding the effectiveness of a college-based peer helping program, Giddan (1988) found that trained peer student helpers were as effective or, in certain circumstances, more effective than their professional counterparts, particularly when specific behavior change was targeted.

The initial training model for many peer-helping programs evolved from the work

of Carkhuff and Truax (1967). Their human relations training model was based on identifying effective behavioral qualities of therapists who were believed to significantly facilitate positive change in their clients. Although many training programs are based on Carkhuff's (1969) model, the validity of the model has been criticized on the basis of methodological concerns such as lack of clarity in describing treatment procedures, inadequate use of control groups, failure to identify and investigate relevant outcome measures, and lack of systematic follow-up studies (Gormally & Hill, 1974; Vorenhorst, 1984).

Ivey's "microcounseling" model (1973) has also been used favorably within the context of peer helping programs. Ivey expanded on Carkhuff's model and attempted to convert successful attending behaviors of counselors into behavioral response categories that could be readily taught. For instance, Ivey suggests that while "attending behaviors" such as warmth, positive regard, and empathy are important qualities of an effective counselor, they are not directly observable or teachable behaviors. Using step-by-step procedures, Ivey identified 12 specific skills associated with effective counseling techniques and broke them into four distinct categories for instruction: attending behaviors, active listening skills, sharing skills, and interpretation skills. This training curriculum and educational model has been used successfully in a number of peer counseling programs.

Another useful training model for peer helping is the Helping Skills Model (Danish & D'Augelli, 1983). Within this model, students learn the nature and rationale for appropriate helping skills, observe models demonstrating these skills, then have the opportunity to practice and evaluate their effectiveness to see how these skills transfer to actual helping situations. This type of program provides students with a conceptual understanding of appropriate helping skills, gives them an opportunity to become involved in simulated role playing experiences, and provides a chance to practice modeling appropriate helping behaviors.

Danish, Petitpas, and Hale (1992) recently proposed a developmental model of intervention that would appear to have direct application for sport psychologists, life skills personnel, and others in peer counseling. Their Life Development Intervention (LDI) model assumes that psychological skills acquired through participation in sport are transferable skills that have great value to athletes both in and out of sport. These transferable skills (e.g., dedication and commitment, motivation and persistence, goal-setting strategies, mental focusing skills, poise under pressure, etc.) are life skills that can help the athlete manage present and future stressors that arise in one's journey through life.

Similar to Danish and D'Augelli's Helping Skills Model, peer counselors must first develop an awareness of what constitutes "athletic" life skills and how these skills can be smoothly transferred to non-athletic settings. From a training perspective, peer counselors are sensitized to various situations that cause a student-athlete to be stressed (e.g., injuries, anxiety, transition and adjustment issues, interpersonal communication problems, etc.). Then, through realistic role-playing scenarios and structured assignments, they are given an opportunity to practice various peer-helping interventions under continuous supervision. Thus, LDI specialists (i.e., peer helpers) are taught how to assist other student-athletes in identifying, utilizing, and transferring the skills they have learned through participation in sport to various situations they might encounter in their daily lives.

The potential benefits of a similar model have been recognized by the NCAA (NCAA News, 1993). In an effort to insure that student-athletes leave college with more than athletic skills, the NCAA is encouraging every member institution to adopt a Life Skills Program for their student-athletes. Since the inception of its pilot program in 1994, over 200 NCAA Division I, II, and III colleges and universities have taken part in the program.

Social Support

An area that has received increased attention in the literature in helping individuals cope more effectively with a variety of different stressors and life transition issues is that of social support (Pearson & Petitpas, 1990). According to Albrecht and Adelman (1984), individuals seek out social support in order to reduce uncertainty about themselves, others, and/or the environment with which they interact. College students must establish a new support network they can feel comfortable with during their college years. A strong social support system provides the recipient with a network of people or personal ties from which to derive companionship, empathy, and reassurance (Albrecht & Adelman, 1984; Rosenfeld, Richman, & Hardy, 1989). Designed to enhance the well-being of the recipient, it has been suggested that perceived social support depends on two things: the availability of people to whom an individual can turn in time of need, and the degree of satisfaction with the support available (Sarason, Sarason, & Pierce, 1990; Shumaker & Brownell, 1984).

Researchers have conceptualized social support as a multidimensional construct, with six different types of support being offered (Pines, Aronson, & Kafry, 1981). Four of these types of support can be given by any concerned individual (listening support, emotional support, emotional challenge, and shared social reality), and two types of support require the provider to have technical expertise in the content area of support being offered (technical appreciation and technical challenge). Perhaps the most therapeutic ingredient of social support lies in the individual's belief that he/she has people who value and care about them, and who are willing to help them if assistance is needed (Sarason et al., 1990).

While the concept of social support has been applied mainly to the areas of health, personal adjustment, and social competence, its potential for the domain of sport is intriguing (Hardy & Crace, 1991; Richman, Hardy, Rosenfeld & Callanan, 1989; Sarason et al., 1990). For example, in a study examining social support networks among athletes, Rosenfeld et al. (1989) found that coaches, teammates, friends, and parents each provided their own unique contribution to the athletes' social support network. In agreement with the research of Pines et al. (1981), it was found that friends and parents primarily provided support characterized by a concerned individual would provide (e.g., listening, emotional challenge, and shared social reality). Coaches and teammates, the content experts, were found to offer technical appreciation and technical challenge support.

At the intercollegiate level, peer helping and social support involves student-athletes helping each other deal with the multiple demands and stressors associated with being a student-athlete. A peer helper can provide emotional support and shared social reality by listening to problems other student-athletes have, then offering appropriate guidance, support, and assistance. For instance, if a freshman or sophomore student-athlete is extremely nervous prior to an upcoming competition, a

trained upperclassman can provide support, words of encouragement, and/or technical expertise to help reduce pre-competitive anxiety. Similarly, trained peer helpers can help struggling freshman student-athletes cope with the anxiety and stress associated with mid-term and final exams by giving advice and sharing coping strategies that have been effective for them in the past. These social support experiences can have a direct impact on team building, group cohesion, and team development (Yukelson, 1997).

In summary, most of the curricula in the aforementioned peer helper training programs have focused on teaching individuals general counseling skills associated with fostering interpersonal growth and development. These skills include understanding individual and cultural differences, facilitative conditions associated with effective helping, interpersonal communication and active listening skills, goal-setting strategies, problem-solving techniques, and decision-making strategies (Crosson-Johnson, 1976; Egan, 1994; Myrick & Sorenson, 1988). As a result, peer helpers are trained to assist others in coping with many of life's challenges. In addition, peer helpers are trained to help student-athletes broaden and develop their social support networks so they can deal more effectively with problems that arise both in and out of their sport.

INTERCOLLEGIATE PEER HELPING PROGRAMS

Until the early 1990's, few peer helping programs existed within intercollegiate athletic programs. A select few universities were experimenting with individual versions of peer helping programs which focused on drug prevention and education, peer education, and selected community outreach activities (Carr & Bauman, 1996).

For instance, the University of Virginia initiated a peer athlete helper program in 1989 called Student Athlete Mentors (S.A.M.) to help with drug and alcohol education. Elected student-athletes from each team were trained in becoming peer helpers and designing appropriate intervention programs for each of the teams. This education-based model focuses on seven segments of programming: peer recruitment practices, expectations and attitudes, drug education and programming, drug policies, drug testing, discipline procedures, and referral and counseling. The S.A.M. program has undergone annual evaluations and has become one of the "standard" peer mentoring programs that intercollegiate athletic departments can choose to utilize for their student-athlete population. This comprehensive peer education model appears to be effective because it emphasizes peer assistance and promotes student-athlete accountability and responsibility.

Similarly, Ohio State University initiated a peer-helping program called Buckeyes Against Alcohol and Drugs (B.A.A.D.) in the 1989-90 academic year. Interested in giving something back to the community, Ohio State student-athletes established organizational guidelines for their peer helping program, signed a drug-free pledge, and became actively involved in educational seminars designed to combat drug use/abuse in the surrounding community. It has evolved into their "Buckeye Power" program, which involved student-athletes in the local D.A.R.E. Program. This program utilizes trading cards for children as promotion of alcohol-free and drug-free pledges and gets athletic department personnel and athletes involved in the "Just Say No" annual rally. Student-athletes also get involved in a separate Speaker's Bureau Program.

These two peer helper programs, in addition to the Penn State SPAN Program,

were three of the predecessors of the NCAA C.H.A.M.P.S./Life Skills Program. The C.H.A.M.P.S. (Challenging Athletes Minds for Personal Success) Program is a model of life skills development that is designed to challenge student-athletes to be a success in life, both on and off the playing field and in life after their athletic career is completed. The C.H.A.M.P.S. Program focuses on the student-athlete as a whole—academically, athletically, and emotionally. Each major commitment of the program—academics, athletics, personal development, campus/community service, and career development—emphasizes individual needs and teaches specific skills needed during and after college.

A major component within the service commitment is a review of peer mentoring programs. Division I, II, and III universities that get involved in the C.H.A.M.P.S. Program find that initiating a peer helper program assists in getting the program off to a good start and generates interest in other spin-off programs/activities related to life skills development.

PENN STATE S.P.A.N. PROGRAM

Objectives and Description

In 1990, the Academic Support Center for Student-Athletes at Penn State University developed and initiated a peer helping program called the Student Peer Athlete Network (S.P.A.N.). S.P.A.N. was developed as a "peer mentorship" program, designed to train student-athletes in peer helping skills so they can assist other student-athletes who are in need of receiving support or assistance for specific personal, academic, or athletic concerns.

General program objectives were as follows: (1) to identify problems faced by student-athletes and to provide peer helpers with information and skills relevant to those problem areas; (2) to train peer helpers in good communication, decision making, problem solving, and referral skills; (3) to establish programs and situations in which peer helpers can use their skills to help others; (4) to provide support to the peer helpers for their own problems and for those they may encounter in helping others; (5) to decrease the incidents of so-called self-destructive behaviors (e.g., drug and alcohol use, eating disorders, etc.) by providing an enhanced support system for student-athletes; (6) to help create a healthier academic, athletic, and personal environment for Penn State student-athletes and staff; (7) to help new student-athletes adjust to the Penn State University community; (8) to bridge the different sport groups at Penn State to more effectively unify the student-athlete population; and (9) to recruit additional responsible upper-class student-athletes to serve as positive role models and mentors to younger student-athletes and children in the community.

The major advantage of adopting a peer helping model is that it capitalizes on the informal peer helper network that already exists among student-athletes (i.e., student-athletes tend to not only spend athletic time together, but many are roommates and spend social time together). In addition, it allows programming to be designed specifically to meet the developmental needs and/or concerns of the individual or sport team. Since college athletes are usually in close proximity with one another, it was hypothesized that they are more likely to turn to each other in time of need. Other advantages include easy accessibility to teammates or helpers and immediate response to concerns that might arise. It is important to point out that peer helpers are not

counselors. They are, however, a unique and important link in providing access to improved care and services for the student-athlete population.

Potential developmental and implementation problems include initial recruitment of student-athletes and lack of time for extracurricular activities. An effective manner in which to deal with this situation includes informing the student-athlete that the time commitment will be minimal and reinforce the idea of learning leadership skills, and the chance to give something back to the community. Evaluations are completed on a semester basis and appropriate changes are made for future semesters.

Currently, there are 80 active members of S.P.A.N. who represent all 29 varsity athletic teams. Every varsity athletic team is required to elect a minimum of two student-athletes to be S.P.A.N. representatives. Three faculty/staff members, including the life skills development coordinator and the sport psychologist, are regularly involved with S.P.A.N. Peer helpers choose how they wish to become involved in the program. They identify the roles and activities with which they feel most comfortable, including being group facilitators, speaking at local engagements, helping freshmen with transition and adjustment issues, providing information and referrals, writing to elementary school pen pals, serving on student-athlete panels, or other miscellaneous activities.

Initial Orientation

Each S.P.A.N. member is required to attend an orientation retreat at the beginning of the year and subsequent planning and educational meetings throughout the year. The goal of the retreat is to learn a basic level of knowledge and standard of practice in peer helping skills and to discuss various issues and concerns that impact student-athlete welfare. Based on the counseling theories outlined earlier (Carkhuff, 1969; Egan, 1994), the retreat begins with an educational orientation on basic helping skills. General topics include ingredients of a successful helping relationship, effective communication and the art of active listening, stress and its impact on motivation and self-esteem of student-athletes, critical problem-solving techniques, and responsible decision-making skills. In addition, peer helpers receive training on how to make a referral and where to find appropriate referral resources within the university community. Appropriate educational materials are provided by both the sport psychologist and the life skills development coordinator (Yukelson, 1993; Yukelson & Carlson, 1995). Other retreat goals include participation in cooperative team-building activities, group discussions regarding individual differences and cultural diversity, and the creation of a S.P.A.N. action plan for the upcoming semesters.

At the retreat, role-playing scenarios are used to sensitize peer helpers to a variety of concerns that can impact student-athletes. General awareness issues and role-playing scenarios typically cover a variety of different concerns, including homesickness and freshman adjustment issues, coping with academic and athletic pressures, interpersonal communication problems with coaches and/or teammates, injury management, stress and/or time management, drug and alcohol use/abuse, eating disorders, or issues pertaining to life after college. The following represents a typical role-playing scenario for peer helpers to discuss:

An 18-year-old female freshman track-and-field athlete, away from home for the first time, feels lonely and isolated in her new environment. Driven by the desire to compete effectively and prove her worth to teammates

and coaches, she becomes overly obsessed with training and competing well, to the point where she is neglecting her schoolwork and withdrawing from friends. To make matters worse, her coach is putting pressure on her to lose weight and run faster. In the dining hall, teammates notice she does not eat much and begin to question her eating patterns. The question posed for discussion is, "What would you do to help?"

Solutions range from ideas of what they, as peer helpers, might do to aid the student-athlete (e.g., teaching the student-athlete how to reframe stressors into things she can control, developing a new social support network, assertiveness training), to referring the student-athlete to the sport psychologist and/or sport nutritionist for individual counseling.

Consequently, peer helpers learn how to handle confrontations, set limits, and offer appropriate referral assistance. It is essential to sensitize peer helpers on how to become an "*observant*" teammate, that is, recognize signs when a teammate may be feeling lonely, isolated, withdrawn, or down on themselves. An important theme throughout the peer helper learning process is that individuals need to adopt a style of helping that fits their own personality and needs (Yukelson, 1993). The goal is for the peer helper to know how to confront a teammate or fellow student-athlete in time of need and, hopefully, keep the situation from escalating. Their main role is to recognize problems faced by student-athletes, provide needed support to their peers, and be the accessible link to available resources.

Other S.P.A.N. Activities

Penn State's "Penn" Pal Program

One of the more popular S.P.A.N. programs in which Penn State student-athletes participate is the "Penn" Pal Program. During the 1994-1996 academic years, over 150 student-athletes were paired with over 800 fourth-grade elementary school students in the Harrisburg, Pennsylvania School District as pen pals. Themes such as the importance of doing well in school, qualities in choosing good friends, goal setting, and negative consequences associated with alcohol and other drugs were emphasized. Current programming efforts include fourth- and fifth-grade students from Warrior's Run School District in Pennsylvania.

Student-athletes commit to write letters once per month to their class of pen pals. The fourth- and fifth-graders also have the opportunity to write to the student-athletes, while learning writing, spelling, and mailing skills. At the end of the semester, the student-athletes have the opportunity to travel to the elementary school and visit with their pen pals.

Speaker's Bureau Program

Another successful programming effort that falls under the S.P.A.N. umbrella is the Speaker's Bureau Program. S.P.A.N. members and other interested student-athletes can choose to participate in public speaking engagements. All must attend a training session before they are allowed to speak in public. Two training manuals, including an overview of techniques for enhancing public speaking skills and a handout of key points to make when talking with kids, are distributed. A program called "C.H.A.M.P.S. for Life" was prepared so the student-athletes have continuity in the subject matter that is discussed. Program topics include what it takes to be a champion both on and off the athletic field, qualities of a good friend, what it is like to be a student-athlete,

how to handle success and failure, and the pitfalls associated with alcohol and other drug use. Requesting organizations range from local elementary and secondary schools, local and regional churches, banquets, and SAAD conferences, to numerous local community organization events and activities.

Big Brother/Big Sister Program

In order to assist incoming freshman and transfer student-athletes with the transition and adjustment to the University and athletic community, a Big Brother/Big Sister Program was developed. Many first-year student-athletes feel a sense of isolation and alienation upon arrival at school. Being away from home, in a new environment, with new teammates, coaches, and surroundings, it is not uncommon for freshmen to question their identity or experience a sense of homesickness. An experienced peer helper can provide a friendly suggestion or a series of suggestions that help with the transition from high school (or another college) to university life.

Any student-athlete at Penn State can become involved in the Big Brother/Big Sister Program. Incoming freshmen that are interested in joining the program get matched up with a responsible upper-class student-athlete who then signs on to serve as a Big Brother or Big Sister. This form of psychological contracting has been shown to increase an individual's commitment, motivation, and sense of responsibility (Kirschenbaum & Flanery, 1984).

Special activities are organized for the Big Brothers/ Sisters ("Veterans") and Little Brothers/Sisters ("Rookies"). At the beginning of the fall semester, "kickoff" events (including informal sporting activities and an ice cream social) take place. These alcohol-free events are avenues for freshman student-athletes to meet one another early in the year and provide a mechanism for developing solid social support networks. As the semester progresses, they get together for movies, educational seminars, bowling, or other informal activities. In general, initial evaluations and reports from student-athletes have been very positive.

Community Outreach

Members of the S.P.A.N. program have also become increasingly involved with community outreach programs. This includes volunteering to work with the Second Mile Program, helping out with Special Olympics, getting involved with the "Penn" Pal Program, or speaking to local elementary and secondary schools about what it is like to be a student-athlete and the importance of getting an education. In addition, student-athletes are actively involved with the United Way Campaign, Red Cross Blood Drives, various State College Jaycee events, and specified campus projects with other student organizations such as the Interfraternity Council's annual Dance Marathon for pediatric cancer patients. By becoming involved in community activities, student-athletes have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership skills and be positive role models.

Student-athletes are in a unique position to influence today's youth. More than just being role models, they have a tremendous amount of experience to share in terms of self-esteem development and handling life's daily struggles. Student-athletes firmly believe that lessons learned through participation in sport with regard to goal setting, commitment and belief, motivation and self-confidence, and overcoming adversity are skills that can be carried over into life and transferred to others.

DISCUSSION

Peer helping programs are increasingly being seen as an effective method to help create a healthier academic and athletic environment in intercollegiate athletic departments. Currently, the use of peer helpers in college athletics has been an underused resource. Initial research in the area of social support (Rosenfield et al., 1989) has shown promise for athletic populations. Peer helping is one form of social support and appears to offer great potential. With proper awareness and training, it will be feasible to produce powerful social support networks within and among various athletic teams on college campuses (Danish & D'Augelli, 1983; Danish, et al., 1992).

The literature clearly points to the potential for peer helpers to be powerful mediators of behavior change in college athletes. As part of the Academic Support Center for Student-Athletes' Life Skills Program, the S.P.A.N. program has begun to tap into the informal human resource pool on athletic teams in order to promote more formalized opportunities for enhanced communication and development of life skill competencies.

Life skills development coordinators, sport psychologists, and academic athletic advisors play a unique role in the peer helping process. Life skills coordinators help design programming efforts based on the five major commitments of the NCAA C.H.A.M.P.S. Program — academics, athletics, personal development, campus/community service, and career development. Each component within these five commitments emphasizes individual skills to be learned both on and off the playing field and for life after sport. Academic athletic advisors play a significant role in assisting the student-athletes by providing academic services in addition to helping them deal with the challenges of their dual roles. In addition, based on the Life Development Intervention model outlined earlier (Danish et al., 1992), sport psychologists can offer training in basic counseling skills and mental training techniques to both athletes and life skill development specialists. Goal-setting strategies, stress-management techniques, concentration training, and communication skills are excellent areas to address with peer helpers so they may assist teammates with strategies on how to cope effectively with both sport and non-sport concerns. Sport psychologists also can serve as a sounding board or resource for peer helpers, life skills facilitators, or other academic support personnel to turn to for direction and guidance on a variety of issues that affect the quality of student-athlete life.

More specifically, Gould (1994) has suggested a specific role for peer helpers in working with sport psychologists and injured athletes. Athletes who have successfully completed their recovery from a serious sport injury could be recruited as peer role models for other athletes undergoing the rigors of rehabilitation. These peer helpers could share feelings and strategies that they found useful during various stages of their recovery from injury. In addition, they could discuss various coping-skill strategies used to help deal with potential unexpected setbacks, or be there to provide emotional support in time of need (Hardy & Crace, 1991). This mentoring model could easily be adopted for other academic, athletic, personal, or social problems experienced by student-athletes in a university or high school setting. Since athletes are in close proximity to one another, they become a ideal source of

social support for teammates when coaches, academic counselors, life skills specialists, or sport psychologists are unavailable to fulfill this role.

The potential implications of peer helper programming are limitless. Empowerment through peer helping enables needy individuals to exercise better control over their own lives by offering social support and promoting a sense of self responsibility for decision making and behavioral change (Giddan, 1988; Myrick & Sorenson, 1988). The knowledge that somebody is there to turn to in time of need enhances motivation and inspires a willingness to move forward.

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Team Subcultures and Academic Values: Gender Differences Among Division I Basketball Players

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This study utilizes a quantitative research design to assess differences that exist between men and women basketball players with regard to the perceived academic subcultures within their teams. A sample of 656 Division I basketball players completed a Team Socialization Scale, which assessed the socializing influences, that college athletes receive from their coaches and teammates. Results indicated that, despite the increased commercialization and professionalization of women's college basketball, members of women's basketball teams remain significantly more oriented toward academic pursuits than members of men's basketball teams. The two primary variables that differentiated between men and women basketball players were the emphasis placed on the possibility of careers as professional athletes by coaches and teammates. The findings from this study have several practical applications for student athlete support personnel and counselors who interact with student athletes on a regular basis.

A primary goal of college coaches and athletic administrators is to have athletes achieve academically and socially at a level that is better than, or at least comparable to, the general student population. Several researchers have argued, however, that the non-academic subculture of athletic teams, the clustering of athletes in classes and majors that do not require extensive out-of-class preparation, and the tremendous time commitment required for participation in intercollegiate sports, severely limit the academic achievement of athletes (Adler & Adler, 1985; Case, Greer, & Brown, 1987; Edwards, 1984; Purdy, Eitzen, & Hufnagel, 1982). This situation is especially limiting for participants in high profile, revenue producing sports where the athletes are subjected to a rigorous, time consuming athletic schedule (Edwards, 1984). The result of the tremendous time commitment required for intercollegiate sports participation and the subcultures among male athletic teams that are termed "anti-intellectual" (Adler & Adler, 1985) is that many athletes underachieve academically and become overly reliant on specialized support personnel for academic and social success.

Prior to investigating the nature of intercollegiate athletic team subcultures, it is first necessary to provide a general explanation of what constitutes a subculture and how the behavior of individuals is influenced through their involvement within a specific subculture. Donnelly (1981) defines subcultures as groups or organizations in which "new members begin to deliberately adopt mannerisms and attitudes, and styles of dress, speech, and behavior that they perceive to be characteristic of established members of the 'achieved' reference group" (p. 565). This process is believed to occur primarily through direct modeling of behavior. Through this enculturation process, members begin to adapt to the dominant values and perspectives of the group, taking on new roles and modifying others, and thus

establishing new personal identifications (Donnelly & Young, 1988). The identity construction that occurs as a result of these subculture influences is extremely powerful and can have a profound effect on the behavior of individual team members.

In recent years, several studies have been conducted which suggest a pattern of substantive differences between men and women's intercollegiate athletic teams with regard to the various components of their team subcultures and subsequent levels of academic achievement. Specifically, Adler and Adler (1985) in a study of a men's Division I basketball team, and Meyer (1990) in a study of Division I female basketball and volleyball players, both used single university samples and qualitative research designs to examine how the values, attitudes, and behaviors of intercollegiate athletes are shaped through their involvement within their team environments.

The results from both studies suggested that contrary to popular belief, both male (Adler & Adler, 1985) and female (Meyer, 1990) athletes enter college with optimistic and idealistic goals and attitudes about their impending academic careers and likelihood of graduating. This academic optimism among male athletes, however, has been shown to be very temporary. Adler and Adler (1985) found that gradually, male athletes' classroom, social, and athletic experiences caused them to become "progressively detached" from academic concerns and values. One of the primary contributors to this academic detachment among male athletes was the considerable emphasis that their coaches and teammates placed on their athletic achievements compared to the limited emphasis that was placed on academic success.

Contrary to the subculture of male athletic teams, Meyer (1990) found that the female athletic subculture contributed to the continued educational optimism and proactive academic involvement of women athletic participants. Specifically, most of the female athletes in Meyer's study stated that their teammates were good influences on them academically and that there were not any "anti-academic" or "anti-intellectual" pressures put on them by their peers. Instead, there was a "pro-intellectual" environment that existed among the female athletes, as evidenced by their enjoyment of their major areas of study, and their classes, as well as the positive acknowledgment from coaches and teammates that they received for academic achievements. A second difference between the male and female athlete subcultures involved the influence of future aspirations. While most of the male athletes considered college to be a stepping stone toward professional sports, a majority of the female athletes viewed college as an opportunity to develop their professional (non-athletic) careers and to establish their own families (Meyer, 1990).

In addition to the documented gender differences among college athletes, several studies also have identified a pattern of differences between athletes who compete in "revenue producing" versus "non-revenue producing" sports. In the majority of these studies, football and men's basketball are categorized as revenue producing sports, while the remaining men's sports and women's sports constitute the non-revenue producing category. The majority of research on this topic (e.g., Edwards, 1984; Lederman, 1993; Maloney & McCormick, 1993; Purdy, Eitzen and Hufnagel, 1982; Sack, 1987) suggests that the academic culture and level of achievement among athletes from revenue producing programs is significantly poorer than the academic culture and level of achievement among athletes from non-revenue producing programs. One of the underlying themes from this body of research is the notion that certain non-academic influences from coaches and teammates, combined with a high

level of professional sport aspirations often serve as a deterrent to positive academic values and subsequent levels of achievement among athletes who compete in revenue producing sports.

The present study expands on the work of previous studies by specifically assessing differences that exist between male and female basketball players with regard to their respective team subcultures through a national sampling of college athletes. This quantitative investigation was based upon development of a *Team Socialization Scale* that conceptualizes many of the underlying constructs that were identified in previous studies. This study has become necessary given the substantial changes that have taken place in intercollegiate athletics since the Adler and Meyer studies were conducted; most notably, increased professionalization and commercialization of women's athletics, increased opportunities for women to pursue careers as professional athletes, and increased stringency of NCAA initial eligibility requirements.

Methods and Procedures

Data Collection

Due to access difficulties associated with sampling high profile intercollegiate athletes, a purposive sampling procedure was used. Data were collected using a three-step process. First, participating institutions were selected from the National Collegiate Athletic Association's directory of institutions. In order to obtain a sufficient number of participating institutions, 156 out of a possible 310 Division I schools were selected for inclusion in the study using a systematic random sample. In order to attain consistency among schools with regard to the level of academic standards, institutions that were rated as "most difficult" in terms of a highly selective admissions process in *Peterson's Guide to Four Year Colleges* and community/junior colleges were not included in the final results.

Once participating schools were identified, a letter was mailed to the directors of athletic academic support services asking them to indicate on a business reply postcard whether they would be willing to distribute surveys to the men and women basketball players at their institutions. Due to the focus of the survey on coaching behaviors, coaches were not asked to assist in the distribution of the surveys. Of the 156 Division I schools that were contacted, 72 (46%) agreed to participate.

A non-respondent bias check was conducted in order to identify the various reasons why individuals elected to not have their athletes participate in the study. Through a series of follow-up correspondence, it was determined that the majority of individuals who declined to participate did so because of the extra time constraints that would be placed on their athletes. Potential biases as a result of non-respondents are acknowledged as a limitation to the study.

The third step in the process was to mail the surveys, return envelopes, and instructions to each of the 72 institutions that had agreed to participate. The contact person at each institution was asked to distribute one survey to each member of the men and women's basketball teams. Included in these instructions was an assurance that all of the data received from each institution would be anonymous and confidential and that no data pertaining to any single institution would be tabulated or publicized. Athletes who participated in the study were provided with their own return envelope

in which to return the survey directly to the author. While return rates would have likely been higher if each institution's contact person collected and returned the surveys, it is likely that having the students return them directly back to another university elicited more candid responses from the respondents.

A demographic check was conducted to ensure that a representative sample was obtained, in terms of ensuring equitable distributions between (a) athletes with different roles on their respective teams (starter vs. reserve), (b) the past success of their respective teams (winning vs. losing programs), and (c) athletes' ethnicity and year in school. Outcomes from this demographic analysis are included in the following section.

Respondents

The sample for this study consisted of 656 men and women basketball players who participated at the Division I level of competition. The sample of Division I men was 50.4% African American and 40.7% Caucasian compared to the entire population of Division I men which was 62.6% African American and 31.7% Caucasian in 1996 (NCAA Records). A chi-square analysis of these frequencies was non-significant, indicating that the sample proportions mirrored accurately the racial distribution of the entire distribution. Similarly, the sample of Division I women was 26.5% African American and 65.9% Caucasian compared to the entire population of Division I women which was 35.7% African American and 57.6% Caucasian in 1996. The chi-square analysis for the sample of women athletes was also non-significant. The similarities between the racial composition of the sample for this study and the actual racial composition of Division I basketball players suggests that the sample is reasonably representative of the larger population of college athletes.

Two additional demographic factors were analyzed in order to ensure the representatives of the sample. Since participation from schools was voluntary, it was important to ensure that there was an equitable balance between programs with winning traditions and programs with losing traditions. This variable was operationalized in terms of teams' won/loss records as well as the number of post season appearances that teams made during the past three seasons. Demographic data from this sample indicated that 331 (55.7%) athletes were members of teams that lost more than half of their games during the previous year and 263 (44.2%) athletes were members of teams that won more than half of their games. Additionally, 327 (55.0%) of the athletes who were sampled were members of teams which made 0 or 1 appearances in post season competition during the prior three seasons and 268 (45.0%) were members of teams which made 2 or 3 appearances.

A second important demographic factor was whether there was an equitable distribution between athletes who are significant contributors to their teams athletically and athletes who have somewhat limited athletic roles on their respective teams. This variable was operationalized in terms of whether an athlete was a regular starter or a reserve on their respective teams. The sample for this study consisted of 371 (57.3%) reserves and 276 (42.7%) starters. Considering that a typical intercollegiate basketball team carries between 12 to 15 players and only 5 can start, this ratio of starters to reserves appears to be representative of the larger population of basketball players.

Instrumentation

In order to conduct this study, a "*Team Socialization Scale*" was designed to assess the dominant academic attitudes inherent in team subcultures (See Appendix A). This instrument consisted of 21 self-report items, each rated on 6-point Likert scales. Items were recoded so that in each instance, a "6" reflected a positive academic attitude or behavior and a "1" reflected a negative academic attitude or behavior. Items were based on a quantified version of Adler and Adler's (1985) and Meyer's (1990) qualitative analyses of athlete socialization. Each item was designed to assess athletes' perceptions of the dominant academic attitudes that exist within their team subcultures.

The *Team Socialization Scale* contained two specific subscales; the first assessed influences that coaches have on their athletes and the second assessed the influences that teammates have on each other. Both of these subscales consisted of one grouping of items that pertained to perceptions during recruitment and a second grouping that pertained to perceptions once the athletes enrolled in college. Based on the research of Adler and Meyer, relevant issues such as (a) attitudes toward good academic performance, (b) use of academic support services, (c) acceptability of poor athletic performance, (d) priorities of athletic accomplishments compared to academic accomplishments, (e) the importance of class attendance, (f) emphasis on receiving a degree, and (g) emphasis on a career in professional athletics were addressed from the two perspectives mentioned above.

Developing this instrument involved several phases. First, the initial draft of 56 items was reviewed for content validity by 35 university faculty and professional support personnel who specialize in promoting the academic achievement of intercollegiate athletes. All reviewers were asked to rate each item regarding its relative influence for understanding the academic achievement of intercollegiate athletes. Reviewers were also asked to suggest any additional items that they believed should be included in the questionnaire. Based on feedback from reviewers, a revised questionnaire with 56 items was developed for use in a pilot study.

The instrument development process continued with a pilot test of the questionnaire with a sample of athletes ($n=100$) who did not participate in the final study, followed by statistical assessment of the instrument's internal consistency reliability. Following a Chronbach's alpha analysis, several items were dropped from the questionnaire. The end result of this process was the 21 item *Team Socialization Scale* that was used in the present study. Cronbach's alpha for the scale representing the influence of the coach was .77 and the alpha for the scale representing the influence of teammates was .76.

RESULTS

Results for this study are presented in two subsections, each addressing a specific issue. The first section assesses the general response pattern on the *Team Socialization Scale* for Division I men and Division I women. Results are presented in terms of the percentage of respondents who "agreed" with each item. The purpose of presenting these data in this manner is to simply provide a descriptive analysis of how respondents from the two subgroups responded to the items on the *Team Socialization Scale*. Descriptive results for Division I men and Division I women for all 21 items are presented in Table 1.

The second subsection reports discriminant function analyses that were used to determine whether differences exist between Division I men basketball players and Division I women basketball players with regard to their responses on the *Team Socialization Scale* (see Tables 2 and 3). Group differences were analyzed using two separate discriminant analysis. In the first analysis, the 10 items which assessed the influence of teammates were entered using stepwise discriminant analysis procedures to determine which teammate variables best differentiate the groups under comparison. The second analysis also utilized stepwise discriminant analysis procedures to identify which of the 11 coach-related variables best differentiated the groups under comparison.

TABLE 1

Percentage of Basketball Players Who "Agree" with the *Team Socialization Scale* Variables

	Division I Men	Division I Women
Coach During Recruitment		
1. Emphasized importance of receiving a college degree	94.9	96.1
2. Emphasized career as pro athlete over other careers	33.8	14.1
3. Introduced to challenging majors	75.9	77.3
4. Introduced to faculty/support personnel	94.5	94.5
5. Emphasized athletic over academic success	36.7	22.2
Teammates During Recruitment		
6. Emphasized importance of receiving a college degree	64.7	74.9
7. Introduced to challenging majors	45.1	56.9
8. Emphasized careers as pro athletes over other careers	45.5	11.9
9. Introduced to faculty/support personnel	60.5	68.3
10. Emphasized athletic over academic success	53.4	29.7
Head Coach Behaviors		
11. Encourages to select challenging majors	65.4	70.1
12. Makes demands on time and energy that make it difficult to earn a college degree	45.9	36.8
13. Emphasizes a career as pro athlete over other careers	18.6	5.2
14. Allows to skip practice to attend class	76.0	83.1
15. Makes demands on time and energy that make it difficult to get good grades	42.0	33.7
16. Emphasizes athletic over academic success	28.0	18.4
Teammate Behaviors		
17. Emphasize importance of receiving a college degree	66.8	87.0
18. Select academically challenging majors	61.8	85.7
19. Emphasize careers as pro athletes over other careers	53.8	8.1
20. Skipping classes is an acceptable behavior	45.3	37.1
21. Emphasize athletic over academic success	55.1	28.2

General Response Patterns for Division I Men and Division I Women

DIVISION I MEN

The general pattern of results suggests that the coaches of Division I men portray very positive attitudes and behaviors with regard to academic endeavors during recruitment. For example, 95% of Division I men indicated that their coaches emphasized the importance of receiving their college degrees during recruitment and 95% of Division I men indicated that their coaches introduced them to faculty and/or academic support personnel during their recruiting visits. These overall percentages were obtained by summing across all athletes who scored 4 or higher on the particular item. This positive academic perception of coaches during the recruitment process is to be expected given the fact that many athlete/coach interactions during recruitment take place in the presence of the athletes' parents, who generally are very concerned with academic matters. These positive academic attitudes portrayed during recruitment are also consistent with Adler and Adler's (1990) research pertaining to the pre-socialization process that occurs during the recruitment process.

Descriptive data from the remaining three areas (influence of teammates during recruitment, influence of coaches once athletes enroll in college, and influence of teammates once athletes enroll in college) indicate that considerably stronger non-academic attitudes and behaviors emanate from the coaches of Division I men once the recruitment period is over and athletes officially enroll in college. The attitudes and behaviors of the teammates of Division I men were also particularly non-academic, both during recruitment and while in college. For example, 54% of Division I men indicated that their teammates emphasized careers as professional athletes over other careers during recruitment and 55% of Division I men indicated that their teammates emphasized athletic over academic success while in college. This pattern of relatively non-academic attitudes and behaviors among the teammates of Division I men becomes more pronounced when comparing them to the responses of Division I women (see Tables 2 and 3).

DIVISION I WOMEN

In general, the descriptive analysis presented in Table 1 suggests that Division I women basketball players perceive that their coaches and teammates consistently portray positive attitudes and behaviors with regard to academic endeavors. Similar to Division I men, attitudes and behaviors of coaches during the recruitment process were especially positive. A total of 96% of Division I women indicated agreement that their coaches emphasized the importance of receiving their college degrees during recruitment and 95% indicated that their coaches introduced them to faculty and support personnel during their recruiting visits. Coaches' positive academic attitudes and behaviors during recruitment are consistent with Meyer's (1990) conclusions regarding the positive academic pre-socialization that occurs for Division I women during recruitment.

A second trend among Division I women was that neither their coaches nor teammates appear to place strong emphasis on the possibility of careers in professional athletics. Specifically, 14% and 12% of Division I women indicated that

their coaches or teammates, respectively, emphasized careers as professional athletes over careers in other fields during recruitment. This emphasis grew even smaller once athletes enrolled in college with only 8% and 5% of Division I women indicating that their coaches or teammates emphasize careers as professional athletes over other careers. This trend is particularly notable considering the growing opportunities in professional basketball for qualified women. The considerable discrepancy between Division I men and Division I women with regard to the emphasis that is placed on careers as professional athletes is documented further via discriminant function analysis.

Comparisons between Division I Men and Division I Women Basketball Players

TABLE 2

Variables Best Discriminating Division I Men (N = 248) From Division I Women (N = 408) on the Academic Influence of Teammates

			Men (Means)	Women (Means)	Standardized Discriminant Coefficient
Teammates emphasize careers as professional athletes over other careers			3.50	1.74	0.66
Teammates emphasized careers as professional athletes over other careers during recruitment			3.31	1.88	0.39
Teammates emphasize the importance of receiving their college degrees			3.88	4.75	0.23
Skipping classes is an acceptable behavior for teammates			3.25	2.90	-0.17
Teammates select challenging majors			3.76	4.57	0.16
Eigenvalue 56	Canonical .60	Lambda .64	Chi Square 267.4	DF 5	Significance p < .001
Classification Rate:			Men 76.2%	Women 80.6%	

In general, data revealed that there are strong differences between the academic cultures of Division I male and female basketball players, particularly with regard to the academic influence of teammates (see Table 2). Specifically, men and women were shown to be significantly different on five of the ten measures, with the teammates of Division I men exhibiting the least positive academic attitudes and behaviors on all five differentiating variables. The most significant teammate difference was the relatively greater emphasis placed on possible careers as professional athletes by team members of Division I men, both during recruitment and once they were enrolled in college. The existing literature (Adler & Adler, 1985; Meyer, 1990) suggests that this emphasis by Division I men on careers as professional athletes over more "traditional" careers has several negative implications with regard to academic motivation and subsequent achievement.

Along with these distinctions regarding the professional sports aspirations of their teammates, men and women respondents also differed on several other teammate measures. The teammates of Division I men were significantly (a) less likely to emphasize the importance of receiving their college degrees, (b) more likely to deem skipping class to be an acceptable behavior, and (c) less likely to select challenging majors than the teammates of the women. This pattern of responses suggests that the peer networks of female athletes provide a significantly more positive academic influence than the corresponding support systems of male athletes.

TABLE 3

Variables Best Discriminating Division I Men (N = 248) From Division I Women (N = 408) on the Academic Influence of the Coach

			Men (Means)	Women (Means)	Standardized Discriminant Coefficient
Coach emphasizes career as professional athlete over a career in another field			2.32	1.60	0.53
Coach emphasizes career as professional athlete over a career in another field <i>during recruitment</i>			2.82	1.90	0.54
Coach encourages selection of a challenging major			3.87	4.09	0.30
Coach emphasized importance of receiving a college degree <i>during recruitment</i>			5.36	5.31	-0.37
Coach provided opportunity to meet faculty and support personnel during recruitment			5.25	5.44	0.23
Eigenvalue	Canonical	Lambda	Chi Square	DF	Significance
.15	.36	.87	85.2	5	p < .001
Classification Rate:		Men 54.8%	Women 72.8%		

The Division I men and women basketball players were also significantly different on five items relating to the academic influence of the coach. Again, the greatest difference centered on the concept of professional sport career aspirations, such that the male respondents indicated that their coaches were significantly more likely to emphasize careers as professional athletes over careers in other fields than were the coaches of the women. This strong emphasis on professionalism by coaches of men was consistent both during the recruitment process and once students were enrolled in college.

Three additional coach-related items differentiated men and women basketball players. Specifically, women's coaches were significantly more likely than the men's coaches to (a) encourage their athletes to select a challenging major and (b) provide their athletes with the opportunity to meet university faculty and support staff during the recruitment process. Conversely, the coaches of men were significantly more

likely than the coaches of the women to emphasize the importance of receiving college degrees during the recruitment process. Given the small mean difference between men and women on the latter two variables, these findings have limited practical significance. However, the fact that both means for these variables were over 5.2 is further evidence that athletes generally perceive their coaches as being very positive regarding academic pursuits during recruitment.

It is particularly notable that the two groups did not significantly differ on items which asked if coaches make demands on their time and energy which make it difficult for them to graduate, or earn good grades in their courses. Considering Edward's (1984) finding that Division I male basketball players often spend over 40 hours per week preparing for and participating in athletic contests, and Sack's (1987) finding that 48% of Division I athletes experience demands from coaches that make it difficult for them to be top students, it is worth pointing out that differences did not emerge between the male and female athletes in this sample. One possible explanation for the lack of group differences on these time measures could be that the increased professionalization of Division I women's basketball programs has caused the coaches of the women's teams to make time and energy demands on their athletes that are similar to the demands made by the coaches of the men's teams.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Findings from this study revealed several trends regarding the academic subcultures of male and female basketball players who compete at the Division I level of competition. Most notably, the academic subcultures of Division I male athletic teams are characterized by weaker intellectual attitudes and fewer academically oriented behaviors relative to female athletic teams. It appears that one of the primary causes of such relative anti-intellectualism among Division I men is an overemphasis on athletic activity that often occurs at the expense of academic commitment. Similar to the qualitative work of Adler and Adler (1985), the findings presented here suggest that the socializing influences of teammates and coaches are primary contributors to the relatively more impoverished academic subcultures that exist within male athletic teams.

While the differences between men and women were shown to exist in several areas (e.g., less encouragement by the teammates of men to select challenging majors, less emphasis by the teammates of men placed on the importance of receiving their college degrees, etc.), the largest differences exist in the area of encouragement to pursue careers as professional athletes. Male respondents reported that both their coaches and teammates placed greater emphasis on the possibility of professional athletic careers, while down playing entry into more "traditional" careers. This overemphasis on professional athletic careers reportedly begins during the recruitment process and continues while athletes are in college.

These findings help explain the conclusions from several researchers who suggest that males from revenue producing sports (Adler et al., 1985; Lapchick, 1991; Telender, 1989), and African American males in particular (Edwards, 1983; Sailes, 1996; Sailes, 1987; Scales, 1991; Simons, 1997), are often encouraged to pursue careers in professional athletics at the expense of preparation for more "traditional" career paths. Current results also support Sailes' (1996) contention that Division I men exhibit unrealistic expectations regarding the possibility of obtaining careers as

professional athletes. These findings suggest that the peer influence of teammates may be a strong contributor to the formation of professional sport aspirations among Division I men.

This relative overemphasis on the pursuit of careers as professional athletes within the subcultures of Division I men's basketball teams is particularly disturbing considering the limited opportunities that exist for success at the professional level. As explained in a recent NCAA Report, less than three percent of college seniors will go on to play one year of professional basketball, and the odds of a high school basketball player making it to the professional level are approximately 10,000 to 1 (NCAA, 1997-98; Harris, 1993). Further, the average NBA career only lasts 3.4 years so many of the athletes who actually participate at the professional level are essentially retired before they turn thirty. As Coakley (1986) suggests, many professional athletes end their athletic careers at about the same time other individuals are just beginning their more "traditional" careers.

In contrast to the pattern for Division I men, it appears that neither the coaches nor teammates of Division I women place substantial emphasis on the possibility of professional athletic careers. Further, even if the coaches and teammates of Division I women actually do consider professional sports to be a realistic option, they do not encourage pursuit of this career path without at least keeping the possibility of other career options open. This pattern in the data is particularly notable considering the increased national and international opportunities for talented women to pursue careers in professional basketball. Even with all of the changes that have taken place in Division I women's basketball during the seven years since Meyer's (1990) study (e.g., growth of women's professional leagues, increased emphasis on winning and revenue production, increased fan support, etc.) it appears that Division I women still maintain a more equitable balance between their academic and athletic commitments than their male counterparts. Despite the growing similarities to male Division I basketball teams, the subcultures of female Division I basketball teams still seem to foster environments that promote a more beneficial balance between the commitment to pursue careers in professional sports and the commitment to pursue academic success and "traditional career" opportunities. This orientation is maintained even though no differences exist between male and female respondents on perceived time and energy demands.

The conclusions from this study reaffirm the need for the coaches and administrators of Division I men's basketball programs to place a stronger emphasis on educating their athletes about the realities of being successful in professional athletics. These findings also suggest that steps need to be taken to prevent a similar pattern from occurring among Division I women basketball players. As the opportunity structure and financial rewards in professional basketball continue to increase for qualified women, there is the strong possibility that the value system among Division I women's teams will start to mirror the value system that currently exists among Division I men's teams. In an attempt to protect against this trend from occurring among Division I women's teams, coaches, counselors, and administrators need to continue to promote team environments that foster a healthy balance between academic, athletic, and career development.

APPENDIX A

The following survey takes 5 to 10 minutes to finish and is **completely anonymous**. Please make an effort to answer **every** question as best you can. Once you have completed the survey, please return it in the attached business reply envelope. Thank you very much for your participation.

Please respond to the statements below using the following scale:
(Circle the appropriate number)

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 6 = Strongly Agree | 3 = Slightly Disagree |
| 5 = Moderately Agree | 2 = Moderately Disagree |
| 4 = Slightly Agree | 1 = Strongly Disagree |

A. Recruitment

**** (If you were not a recruited athlete, please skip to question 11) ****

Items 1-5 are concerned with how the coaching staff at the school you are now attending recruited you for athletics. Please do not consider recruitment by other colleges or universities. Each question begins with the words:

"When I was being recruited by my current school, the coaches who recruited me"

	AGREE			DISAGREE		
1. emphasized the importance of receiving my college degree.	6	5	4	3	2	1
2. emphasized a career for me as a professional athlete over a career in another field.	6	5	4	3	2	1
3. introduced me to challenging academic majors.	6	5	4	3	2	1
4. provided me with an opportunity to meet university faculty and/or academic support personnel (e.g., academic counselors for athletes, tutors, etc.).	6	5	4	3	2	1
5. emphasized my future academic achievements.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Items 6-10 are concerned with your involvement, during recruitment, with athletes who were currently members of the athletic team that **you were recruited to play for**. Please do not consider recruitment by other colleges or universities. Each question begins with the words:

"When I was being recruited by my current school, members of the team I was being recruited for"

	AGREE			DISAGREE		
6. emphasized the importance of receiving their college degrees.	6	5	4	3	2	1
7. introduced me to challenging academic majors.	6	5	4	3	2	1
8. emphasized careers as professional athletes over careers in other fields.	6	5	4	3	2	1
9. introduced me to faculty members and/or academic support personnel (e.g., academic counselors for athletes, tutors, etc.).	6	5	4	3	2	1
10. emphasized athletic success over their academic achievements.	6	5	4	3	2	1

Please respond to the statements below using the following scale:
(Circle the appropriate number)

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| 6 = Strongly Agree | 3 = Slightly Disagree |
| 5 = Moderately Agree | 2 = Moderately Disagree |
| 4 = Slightly Agree | 1 = Strongly Disagree |

B. Behaviors of Head Coach

Please Answer Questions 11-16 Based on the Behaviors of Your Head Coach

	AGREE			DISAGREE		
11. My head coach encourages me to select a challenging major.	6	5	4	3	2	1
12. My head coach makes demands on my time and energy that make it difficult for me to earn a college degree.	6	5	4	3	2	1
13. My head coach emphasizes a career for me as a professional athlete over a career in another field.	6	5	4	3	2	1
14. My head coach would allow me to skip practice so that I could attend an important class.	6	5	4	3	2	1
15. My head coach makes demands on my time and energy that make it difficult for me to get good grades in my courses.	6	5	4	3	2	1
16. My head coach emphasizes athletic success over my academic achievements.	6	5	4	3	2	1

C. Behaviors of Teammates

Please Answer Questions 17-21 Based on the Behaviors of Your Current Teammates

	AGREE			DISAGREE		
17. My teammates emphasize the importance of receiving a college degree.	6	5	4	3	2	1
18. My teammates select academically challenging majors.	6	5	4	3	2	1
19. My teammates emphasize careers as professional athletes over careers in other fields.	6	5	4	3	2	1
20. Skipping classes is considered an acceptable behavior by my teammates.	6	5	4	3	2	1
21. My teammates emphasize athletic success over their academic achievements.	6	5	4	3	2	1

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A Reconceptualization of Student-Athlete Education: Utilizing Critical Theory to Eliminate Perceived Conflict

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The purposes of this qualitative study were to examine how Division I football and basketball players were able to obtain a balanced, comprehensive college education, and to explore specific factors that enhanced the overall quality and symmetry of their experience. Results of this study highlight the inability of role theory to explain and manage issues related to student-athlete education, and suggest that critical theory may best explain how to secure a balanced, comprehensive education. Implications for personnel who provide personal support to student-athletes are discussed.

Over the past 15 years there has been increased interest in reforming college sport (Blum, 1992, 1994b, 1994c; Lederman, 1991a; Telander, 1989; Underwood, 1980). Reform efforts have focused on a variety of issues, but few have been more comprehensive or controversial than those directed at maximizing the quality and balance of the student-athlete experience. Some of the mandates directed specifically at this issue include the (1) eradication of athletic dormitories, (2) institution of a central academic eligibility clearinghouse, (3) certification of athletic departments, (4) passage of various propositions raising the academic standards necessary to maintain athletic eligibility (e.g., Proposition 16, Proposition 42, Proposition 48) (Blum, 1994a; Lederman, 1991b) and (5) publication of institutional graduation rate data. Such reform is not surprising, as both anecdotal and empirical evidence (Adler & Adler, 1991; Blum, 1993; Witham, 1995) suggest that student-athletes may not be afforded the benefits of a balanced and comprehensive college education.

While the academic achievement levels of certain athletes may equal, if not surpass, those of their non-athlete cohorts (cf. Benson, 1996), the grade point averages (GPA) and graduation rates of male student-athletes participating in revenue-producing programs at Division I institutions suggest that this group may have a more difficult time than others in taking advantage of all that a college education has to offer. For example, a 1988 study (Lederman, 1988) comparing the GPAs of student-athletes with non-athletes who were involved in time consuming extra-curricular activities, reported that the student-athletes had lower GPAs than the non-athletes, with football and basketball players recording the lowest GPAs of all athletes. In fact, the average grade for football and basketball players was one-quarter of a grade lower than students participating in extra-curricular activities. Examining a different measure of academic achievement, graduation rate, a 1996 study of Division I institutions indicated that the graduation rates of male basketball and football players who entered college in 1989 and matriculated within 6 years were 44% and 54 % respectively, compared to 55% for male non-athletes (Benson, 1996).

The concerns of those individuals or groups leading reform efforts are further reinforced by research on career development, which demonstrates an apparent willingness on the part of certain student-athletes to sacrifice career exploration in order to concentrate on sport. A study (Kennedy & Dimick, 1987) comparing the career maturity of male basketball and football players with non-athletes reported that college athletes exhibited lower levels of career maturity than non-athletes. In fact, the career maturity score of the athletes was no higher than that of the average ninth grader. Similarly, 65% of the Division I athletes involved in a more recent study (Murphy, Petitpas, and Brewer, 1996) recorded delayed or impaired career maturity scores, with males and those involved in revenue-producing sports recording the lowest scores of all athletes.

As the mandates listed in the opening paragraph suggest, concern about a balanced, comprehensive education for student-athletes extends beyond academic achievement and occupational exploration to include social-environmental issues as well. Findings support such a focus, suggesting that physical, demographic, and geographic alienation from the larger campus community may certainly influence the student-athlete experience. Research has shown that many student-athletes are required to dine at athletic department supervised "training tables," live with other athletes, and until recently, live in athlete-only dormitories (Adler & Adler, 1991; Petitpas, Finley, & Vottero, 1989; Witham, 1995). Inquiry into the friendship patterns of college athletes reinforces such claims, indicating that given a choice, male athletes tend to live and fraternize with teammates and/or athletes from other teams (Adler & Adler, 1991; Meyer, 1991). These findings suggest that athletes on many campuses are not afforded the autonomy that most college students expect, and as a result spend much of their time estranged from non-athletic peers and a variety of university activities. Social-environmental isolation such as this has a definite influence on the scope and quality of the educational experience (Ferrante & Etzel, 1996; Parham, 1993).

While reformers have proposed and passed legislation aimed at addressing the aforementioned issues, educators and researchers have devoted their time to exploring and explaining how student-athletes meet the demands and challenges they encounter in their complex daily lives. A theoretical approach used to understand and conceptualize this issue has been role theory, which is based on the premise that individual behavior results from the practice or execution of various role expectations (Adler & Adler, 1991; Good, Brewer, Petitpas, Van Raalte, & Mahar, 1993; Marks, 1977). The behaviors associated with particular roles or positions are determined and assigned by society to ensure a smooth functioning social order, with the expectation that these behaviors or actions will be performed by *all* individuals who occupy the role, with little if any individual variation (Connell, 1983; Giddens, 1979; Wentworth, 1980). Since individuals may occupy several roles simultaneously, there is the possibility that the demands of one role may be incompatible with the expectations or requirements of another role, thereby creating role conflict (Chartrand & Lent, 1987; Connell, 1983).

Both empirical and anecdotal evidence support the suggestion that individuals trying to combine the student and athlete roles may frequently experience situations in which the requirements of them in the "student" role are incompatible with the expectations of them in the "athlete" role (Adler & Adler, 1991; Baillie, 1993; Chartrand

& Lent, 1987; DeFrancesco & Gropper, 1996; Gabbard & Halischak, 1993). From the perspective of role theory, then, the incompatible expectations associated with two or more demanding roles may contribute to a student-athlete's inability to obtain a comprehensive college education.

Based on this dichotomized and dualistic conceptual understanding of the student-athlete existence as a problem between two conflicting roles, researchers and practitioners have identified one general strategy for managing such situations which is often adopted by student-athletes and encouraged by others both inside and outside of the athletic department. That is, that the demands of incompatible role expectations can be diminished by reducing or eliminating the importance of one of the competing roles. By reducing, eliminating, or *foreclosing* on the importance of their obligations in one role, individuals *selectively optimize* their overall functioning in another role (Chartrand & Lent, 1987; Danish, Petitpas, & Hale, 1992; Marcia, 1966). The problems inherent in this method of conceptualizing and managing the "incompatible" role expectations often encountered by student-athletes, along with the fact that many student-athletes are able to take advantage of all a college education has to offer without minimizing or neglecting any of their obligations, suggest that alternative approaches may be warranted in studying and facilitating the education of college athletes.

In identifying alternative approaches, it is important to operationalize the specific aspects of role theory which make it an unsuitable choice for explaining and managing issues related to student-athlete education. First, role theory espouses a homogeneous human existence, maintaining similar expectations for each individual who occupies a particular role or position (Connell, 1983; Giddens, 1979; Wentworth, 1980). Role theorists assume that all roles are orderly and stable, and that individuals and their past experiences have little influence on the practice of their roles. In ignoring the dynamic and historical nature of behavior, role theorists suggest that there are finite, standard ways in which to experience the student-athlete role and deal with the conflict of competing role expectations. Second, role theory represents a myopic depiction of individual behavior. In suggesting that individual actions are motivated by psychological constructs such as the need to conform to societal expectations, the theory ignores the importance of social conditions that influence cognition and behaviors (Connell, 1983; Stacey & Thorne, 1985; Wentworth, 1980). Neglecting to consider structural and situational influences on the performance of various role expectations results in the reinforcement of a simplistic, singular approach to the attainment of a comprehensive, balanced college education.

Finally, role theory fails to address issues of resistance or opposition to specific role expectations (Connell, 1983; Giddens, 1979; Wentworth, 1980). Rather, it assumes that in order to keep society functioning in a smooth manner, individuals should be willing to conform their behavior to predetermined role expectations. By failing to acknowledge matters of individual resistance and opposition, role theory ignores important hegemonic forces inherent in the college environment.

The historical, stable, myopic nature of role theory illustrates its limited ability to explain and manage issues related to student-athlete education. The dynamic nature of the college experience along with the interaction of individual and environmental factors in shaping this experience, suggest the utilization of a critical perspective to explain how many student-athletes are able to obtain a balanced and comprehensive

college education. Popular in several disciplines within the social sciences, critical theory combines the notions of constraint, dominant ideology, and hegemony discussed by conflict theorists with the concepts of personal growth and social order espoused by functionalists, to explain how "beliefs and practices are created, reproduced, and changed..." (Coakley, 1990, p. 31).

Critical theorists assume that sport does not exist merely to meet the needs of the social system nor to reinforce the dominance of the powerful (Coakley, 1990). Although power may be in the hands of certain groups, critical theorists argue that sport is created by people interacting with one another, who use their own individual power, resources, resistance, and opposition to make sport into something that is meaningful to them (Messner & Sabo, 1990). In the case of an education for student-athletes, critical theorists understand that athletes do not necessarily progress through college with a false consciousness. Consistent with a conflict theory (which informs the critical perspective) athletes at certain institutions may recognize that their athletic department is protecting its own interest by enrolling them in manageable albeit useless courses, providing tutors to "help" with tough assignments, and monitoring their grades. Student-athletes realize what is going on around them, and depending upon their ultimate goals, can decide if and how to take action. From a critical perspective, individuals and their interactions with others are dynamic and influenced by the situational and structural circumstances surrounding a particular issue.

Critical theorists also acknowledge that through constant negotiation and transformation, shared values and conflicts-of-interest can co-exist in the same society (Coakley, 1990; Sage, 1990). As such, individuals may be oppressed by historical and/or economic conditions, but they do not lose their ability to think critically and to act within the limits of structural constraints. In the current context, student-athletes from working class families may have fewer options for obtaining a college education than those from privileged backgrounds, and therefore consciously decide to endure the hectic schedules, frequent verbal outbursts from a coach, and other inconveniences associated with their student-athlete status "in exchange" for an athletic scholarship. Conversely, those from privileged backgrounds who do not rely on an athletic scholarship to obtain a college education may take a more active approach in resisting and opposing such practices, as the consequences to them (i.e., loss of scholarship) are less detrimental. These examples, in conjunction with the one provided above, illustrate the dynamic, historical, and individually oriented nature of critical theory, and therefore the value of its use to study the education of intercollegiate student-athletes.

Although little research has been focused in this direction, it is the author's contention that in order to gain insight into the development of a well-rounded quality education for student-athletes, researchers should examine the experiences and perceptions of, as well as the strategies utilized by, those student-athletes for whom college was a balanced, comprehensive experience. The purpose of this research is to address the gap in the literature on athlete-centered change by utilizing qualitative methods and a critical perspective to (1) examine how the student-athletes in the sample shaped their experiences, (2) explore specific factors that enhanced the overall quality and symmetry of their education, and (3) provide implications for academic advisors, sport psychology consultants, and others who deal with the educational concerns of student-athletes.

METHODS

Since little empirical evidence exists documenting the nature of the balanced student-athlete experience (i.e., comparable participation in academic, athletic, and social activities) a qualitative approach is most appropriate in examining contributions to student-athlete success. This approach enables researchers to examine previously unexplored areas without the bias of preconceived notions and predetermined hypotheses. Through their actions and words, the student-athletes themselves identify important issues and concerns with educational attainment, thereby ensuring that their experiences and perceptions, not the researchers' predetermined hypotheses, guide the study and help us to understand the factors important in shaping a comprehensive educational experience (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990).

Participants

In an effort to study individuals who were successful in acquiring a balanced college education from a Division I institution (hereafter referred to as the University), the participants were selected purposefully, as is consistent with naturalistic methodologies (Patton, 1990). The criteria for an individual's inclusion in the study were: (1) University graduate, (2) University letter-winner between 1980 and 1990¹ in football or men's basketball, and (3) current residence within 120 mile radius of the University. Potential subjects were identified from a list of current and former student-athletes that was provided by the University Varsity Club. These individuals were contacted by phone, and in the case of unlisted numbers, by mail. Overall, 44% of the former student-athletes who fit the criteria volunteered to participate in the current study, which was approved by and conducted in accordance with, guidelines established by the University's Institutional Review Board. It should be noted that research (Borg & Gall, 1983) has shown that individuals who volunteer to participate in studies tend to have strong opinions about the subject matter. Thus, the men who agreed to be interviewed for the current study may have had either very positive or very negative experiences and/or perceptions that they wanted to report.

Male athletes involved in revenue-producing sports at Division I institutions were selected as the target group because research suggests that they may have a more difficult time than other athletes in obtaining a balanced college education (Adler & Adler, 1991; Kennedy & Dimick, 1987; Lederman, 1988). The decision to conduct face-to-face interviews necessitated physical proximity, thus the 120-mile radius. This geographic area, which has the largest concentration of University alumni, encompassed three states. Former rather than current student-athletes were selected because of the sensitive nature of the topics to be addressed, the politically charged atmosphere surrounding the University athletic department at the time of data collection, and the desire to minimize potential stress to the participants. Although

¹Although the 10-year period under study represents a time of philosophical and legislative change in college sport, it should be noted that none of the men in the sample entered the University prior to the institution of academic reform measures (i.e., Proposition 48, Proposition 42). Similarly, the University community did not become actively involved in reform efforts until the late 1980s and early 1990s.

some of the former student-athletes were affected by the climate surrounding University athletics (e.g., refusal to discuss their experiences, assertions that the research was for a story in a newspaper or magazine, etc.), they clearly had less to lose than current athletes by participating in a study examining the experiences of college athletes. While some researchers (Gould, Udry, Tuffey, & Loehr, 1996; Rhodes, Hill, Thompson, & Elliot, 1994) have questioned the utilization of retrospective data collection techniques, others (Bloom, 1985; Scanlan, Ravizza, & Stein, 1989) report that the viability of retrospective interviews focusing on salient experiences and issues in an individual's life has been demonstrated, and is an acceptable method of eliciting this type of information.

The participants in the study consisted of 26 former male letter-winning football (n=20) and basketball (n=6) players. Nineteen percent of the participants were African-American and 81% were Anglo-American. Approximately 30% of the men in the sample had played their respective sports at the professional level.

The participants graduated with academic majors from numerous University departments and were working in various careers at the time of the interview (see Table 1). The popularity of the Communications major was due in large part to the fact that students enrolled in the Communications degree program were required to complete only 28 credits in major courses, allowing them to fill the remainder of their schedule with electives. Contrary to the suggestions made by other researchers (Adler & Adler, 1991; Brede & Camp, 1987), the men in this study did not major in communications so they could fill their schedules with "easy" electives. Rather, several of the men had hoped to pursue careers in business upon graduation, but could not meet the requirements for admission into the College of Business. The liberal credit guidelines in the Communications Department, however, enabled them to enroll in the more interesting, demanding, and applicable business courses.

Instruments

A semi-structured interview format was employed to understand how the participants were able to secure a balanced, comprehensive college education and explore factors that facilitated their success. By giving each participant a "voice," the researcher was able to understand their experiences and perceptions, their thought and decision-making processes, the culture or climate in which they were operating, and acquire a comprehensive picture of what they were experiencing during their college tenure.

The development of the interview format was consistent with previous qualitative research both inside and outside of the sport domain (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990; Scanlan et al., 1989). Research (Adler & Adler, 1991; Baillie & Danish, 1992; Greendorfer & Blinde, 1985; Meyer, 1990) depicting the college experience as a dynamic, evolving process, dictated the organization of each interview around a discussion of experiences and perceptions in the following time frames: (1) pre-University, (2) freshman year, (3) remaining years, and (4) retirement/transition. In an effort to elicit participants' experiences and perceptions related to the demands placed on student-athletes, factors important in the education of student-athletes, strategies utilized to facilitate their education, as well as issues related to their transition and retirement from organized sport, evidence from empirical studies and anecdotal inquiries in these areas were used to frame questions in the interview script.

A combination of open-ended and then more specific probing questions were asked in an effort to better understand how these individuals successfully obtained a balanced education. Sample questions from the aforementioned areas are provided in Table 2. The interviews took place over a 5-month period, and were conducted in a variety of convenient and quiet locations. While several individuals familiar with the current study and related research reviewed and contributed to the interview script, the author was the only interviewer and attempted to conduct each interview session in a similar, yet flexible manner. Interview length ranged from 90 minutes to four hours, with the average interview lasting 2 hours and 30 minutes.

Establishing Trustworthiness

The theoretical paradigms underlying and informing the utilization of qualitative and quantitative methods are quite distinct, and therefore issues typically discussed in the context of quantitative research (e.g., randomization, sample size, validity, reliability, etc.) are not considered as such in the current paper. Rather, results of the current study should be read and considered in light of the following discussion.

The researcher's interpretation of the data, or credibility, was established through member checking, triangulation, and peer debriefing. Member checking was performed throughout the study by summarizing and paraphrasing participant responses, and by asking participants to review summaries and interpretations of the data. Triangulation was achieved by reading book and newspaper accounts of the University athletic department and the climate or culture that surrounded that era. Discussions with "objective" members of the University community also helped to verify the information obtained in the interviews. The participants themselves also served to verify the experiences and perceptions of the sample, as similarities were reported by participants who neither knew, or played on the same team with one another. A colleague of the author served as a knowledgeable peer debriefer, and as an auditor of the inquiry process.

Thick descriptions were provided in an effort to increase the transferability of the themes and assertions generated by the data. Former student-athletes not involved in the study but possessing characteristics similar to those of the participants, as well as researchers in sport and exercise science, verified through review of data collection and analysis processes, the quality and quantity of the descriptions. The audits of inquiry process and product mentioned above were also used to establish the dependability of the study.

Data Analysis

Each interview was audio-taped, transcribed, developed into a case study, and content analyzed in a manner consistent with that suggested by researchers inside and outside of the movement sciences (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 1990; Scanlan et al., 1989). Specifically, raw data quotes, phrases, and paragraphs were examined, and those with similar meaning combined into groups. The groups or lower order themes were, through both deductive and inductive procedures, organized into meaningful higher order themes and categories (See Figure 1). Consistent with qualitative methods and grounded theory, the data and various theoretical constructs were examined concurrently to identify the theoretical perspective (i.e., critical theory) which best fit or explained the data.

Results

Analysis of the interview data indicate that the results of this study cannot be explained in a manner typically used (i.e., role theory) in texts and other research studies to explain how student-athletes manage their complex lives. The fact that the participants thought critically about their situations (i.e., awareness), acted on this awareness (i.e., agency), had their efforts circumscribed by the University athletic department (i.e., structural constraints) and were impacted by the dynamic nature of their experiences and perceptions (i.e., situation specificity)

suggest that the results of this study, and subsequent discussions of interventions with student-athletes, should be viewed through the lens of critical theory.

AWARENESS

Theoretically, it is suggested that power is dynamic and that people do not have or possess power. Rather, people are placed in relations of power where they experience more power or less power than some; this power is constantly changing in accordance with contextual relationships. Furthermore, critical theorists assert that lack of power does not necessarily hinder the ability of individuals to think critically about their life circumstances (Coakley, 1994; Messner & Sabo, 1990). Intercollegiate athletics, or athletes, are no exception; while power imbalances definitely exist, this does not mean that those who often experience less power (i.e., the student-athletes) have lost their ability to recognize this situation and view it critically (Messner & Sabo, 1990).

The content of the interviews indicated that the student-athletes in the present study were indeed aware of what was going on around them. The oppression or inability of the athletes to make ideas dominant as well as their perceived exploitation or utilization for profit by the University, neither impaired their ability to look at their experiences reflectively nor their ability to obtain a balanced college education. Specifically, the men were aware of the focus of the University athletic department on eligibility as well as the contradictions that existed between what they were told by coaches and other athletic department personnel and what actually occurred. As a result of this awareness, the participants were taking a first step in successfully securing a comprehensive education.

Focus on Eligibility

Interview data indicated that participants were aware that the focus of the University athletic department was on athletic eligibility rather than education. This focus, and subsequent awareness, began for most of the men when they arrived at the University as freshmen. The men received "assistance" in choosing manageable courses and finalizing their class schedules; in some cases, the men had schedules waiting for them when they arrived on campus. As one athlete recalled: "There was no process, my schedule was made out for me by the athletic department... They said, 'first term is going to be a tough one for you with football, with adjustment, so take a light load.'" While it may be wise for all students to take a reduced credit load during the period of adjustment inherent in the first few semesters of college, participants in the current study believed the athletic department was proposing these schedules so that athletes did not have to spend every waking moment studying

and could therefore devote more time and energy to athletics.

The men's awareness of the focus on eligibility was also evident as they described the relationship between the University athletic department and certain University professors. The uninteresting and meaningless classes in which the student-athletes were often encouraged to enroll were typically taught by professors with informal ties to the athletic department. While the participants were careful to avoid saying that they were "given" grades in these courses, they were convinced that University athletic department personnel knew certain instructors would be more sympathetic than others to the time and travel demands faced by student-athletes, and therefore more lenient in assigning grades. Similarly, it was not unusual for the men to have their professors provide extra assistance at athletic study halls and on athletic road trips. One participant shared his recollections about such activities:

I had professors who were at my study table. I can remember an occasion where a natural science professor—I had his class the next day, we had a test—and he's asking some question and there were a couple of other [athletes]... And finally he just goes "God [expletive]," and he opens up his briefcase and he takes out the actual exam and he starts reading the questions on it.

Similar examples were provided when describing the tutoring services available to University athletes. Tutors were available at study hall on a "first come-first served" basis, and were present primarily to help the athletes with their general education courses. Tutors for specialized and upper-level courses were available at the request of the student-athlete and the approval of the athletic academic advisor. The following experience with tutors is consistent with that of all the participants, and illustrates the perceived strengths and weaknesses of such a service.

You had the tutor who legitimately tutored you, especially for the guys that were business [majors] and they were taking [upper level math courses]. I understand that was a pretty tough class. But then there's guys getting tutored for [English Composition]. Well basically the tutor would come in and write the paper and say "write this out." You know, give 'em all the ideas and "here you go," and then he'd write it.

While the men were occasionally grateful for the "assistance" provided by tutors and certain faculty members, they knew these services were being offered so that they could pass classes and remain eligible for athletic competition. The participants also knew that such perquisites would ultimately undermine their abilities to obtain a well-rounded college education.

Contradictions

In addition to their awareness of the University athletic department focus on eligibility, the participants were also aware of the contradictions that existed around them, particularly those involving (1) others' assessments of their chances in professional sport, (2) the loyalty of athletic department personnel to the University and the athletic program, and (3) the loyalty of athletic department personnel to student-athletes. Awareness of these contradictions served to reinforce participants' impressions that the University, and athletic department in particular, were only concerned about them as athletes, and would do little to ensure that they received a well-rounded college education.

Professional sport. During the data collection process, each participant admitted that he had dreamed of one day playing his sport at the professional level. This dream was reinforced by coaches during the recruiting process, and then again later during their college playing days. One athlete explained how his dream of playing professionally had been reinforced: "Just the process of being recruited, and all the major colleges wanting you. And they're saying you're the greatest thing since pockets. They make you feel like you can play anywhere." While some of the men initially believed this assessment, there came a time when they realized that the coaches were just "feeding them a line." The athletes in this study perceived the reinforcement of their dream to be in the best interest of the coaches, who wanted to win games and build players' sport-related egos; a player who thought he might have a chance at a professional contract might devote more time and energy to furthering his athletic abilities than anything else. While he may not succeed in athletic, academic, or social domains, he would have served his coaches and the athletic department well.

The majority of the student-athletes in the study realized early in their college careers, however, that they did not have the talent to play professionally. Watching more talented teammates get cut from professional teams, or assessing their size and ability against that of others were just two of the ways the men came to realize they may not make it to the professional ranks. Still, the men felt that coaches continued to reinforce their athletic abilities and encourage them to work harder so that they might have a chance at a professional career. The men admitted that it was good for their egos to hear such things, but because they were aware of the hypocrisy, were not deterred from concentrating on education and non-athletic careers.

Loyalty. In addition to an awareness of the contradictions that surrounded their professional sport opportunities, the student-athletes in the study were also aware that the University athletic department benefited economically from football and basketball, and that they as athletes were often commodified in the process. In other words, the men perceived that they were valued not so much as individuals, but more as products or objects used to win games and make money.

The numerous coaching changes endured by the football players in the study reinforced this perception. The fact that coaches were not honest about accepting other job offers served as indicators to the men that coaches did not care about them. Many of the football players in the study had played under three head coaches and numerous assistant coaches during their college tenure, contending with changes in coaching style and philosophy as well as changes in off-

season and off-field regulations. As the men's experiences suggested, lack of continuity in the coaching staff served to strengthen their perception of contradictions.

The participants' treatment during the process of retiring from college sport was another indicator that they were seen merely as a means of winning games and making money. Although the men had invested much of themselves in their respective sports, little if anything was done by University or athletic department personnel to ease their transition from athlete to non-athlete, or facilitate their overall personal development. As one participant recalled:

When you're done with that last bowl game that last year, that's it. I mean that's it. You very seldom have anything to do with—I don't know it's like a long lost relative. You walk in one day after that last bowl game,

you walk in, you're like that's it; you're not part of the family anymore.

You're just kinda kicked out of the nest.

As the words of this athlete and others suggest, it was "out with the old and in with the new"; the men were no longer directly valuable to the athletic program, and were treated as such.

Overall, the student-athletes in this study were very aware of what was transpiring around them; the athletic department overtly stressed academics and obtaining a solid education, but their covert actions suggested otherwise. In theory, study hall, grade monitoring, and class schedule assistance were developed to help athletes who were devoting 40 or more hours a week to athletics, as well as those individuals who may have come from overcrowded and underfunded high schools; it seemed as if the athletic department was doing these men a favor. In reality, the athletes perceived that the University athletic department had developed a method for controlling them, making certain that they did not neglect their athletic-related responsibilities. By trying to enroll them in manageable albeit useless courses, provide tutors to assist with tough assignments and/or papers, monitor grades, and reinforce athletic achievements, the athletic department seemed to be encouraging the men to put athletics ahead of a balanced education. A consistent theme throughout the study was that coaches and the athletic department were perceived as being more interested in the men as athletes than as students or human beings. The athletes were being exploited, and they knew it.

The scenario described above is a perfect example of the hegemonic process, whereby the group in charge uses their power and resources to make their ideas and perceptions dominant. Consistent with critical theory, this hegemony was incomplete, as the athletes in the current study did not progress through college with a false consciousness; rather, they retained their ability to think reflectively, and examined their situations objectively. By doing so, the student-athletes became aware of what was going on around them and could then decide how to progress or act in such a way as to secure a comprehensive, well-rounded education.

AGENCY

As discussed earlier, critical theory stresses "agency" or individuals' abilities to think critically, and to reshape and redefine oppressive situations. The student-athletes in this study were no exception, which explains why their perceptions and experiences help to refute the assumptions inherent in role theory. As illustrated above, the men were aware of what was going on around them. And as will be shown in this section on agency, the majority of the participants chose in one way or another to act on this knowledge, which served to facilitate their attainment of a symmetrical and complete college education.

Defying Dependency Training

The primary way in which the men acted on the environment created by the University athletic department was to defy athletic department personnel and the dependency training they promoted. Dependency training, or doing things for others instead of teaching them the skills which enable them to be independent, is unhealthy because it develops in less powerful individuals little sense of control. Completing class schedules for players, hiring tutors to assist them with homework, and guiding

them toward manageable majors are just a few examples of dependency training used by the University athletic department. As stated above, these tactics did not always work, as the participants often resisted and/or defied these attempts. For example, several of the athletes exercised agency by attending the *normal* freshman orientation rather than that offered by the athletic department. One student-athlete who attended normal freshman orientation and continued to design his own class schedule remembered:

They have a special orientation for athletes... I just went to the normal student orientation, sometime in July or August or something like that, and I just did it myself. I took a natural science, I took a math, and I took [English]. Eleven credits, and then I took one other class to give me twelve credits. So that's all I did. I wasn't gonna take the chance of letting someone in the athletic department screw me up. There was no way.

Similarly, other participants completed their own class schedules and consulted regular academic advisors rather than those employed by the athletic department. One such participant, a basketball player, recalled his attempt to register for classes his first semester at the University:

He [academic advisor for athletes] called me in and told me to go where all the black athletes go. He said "Jim, I'm gonna get you a good grade point." And I said "[expletive] the grade point, I want an education." I said "you got me in a class that I don't want to take." I said "I don't need to take basketball, I'm pretty good at it." I said "I don't need to take two criminal justice courses because you know the prof." And unfortunately instead of them saying "[expletive], this is a pretty good guy"... They didn't care where I went to high school. They didn't care about that stuff.

As a result of concerns such as those voiced above, many of the student-athletes in the study refused to trust individuals employed by the athletic department with their college education. This was their way of acting on their awareness, and ultimately taking responsibility for their own education.

Mainstreaming

Student-athletes in the study also acted on what was transpiring around them by trying to *mainstream* themselves into the typical college environment. Instead of associating primarily with teammates and other athletes, as so many intercollegiate athletes tend to do (Adler & Adler, 1991; Meyer, 1990), the majority of the men in this study were part of a non-athletic subworld². Despite the dependency training, special privileges, and family atmosphere created by the coaches, the men chose to be more like their non-athlete peers. Many of the participants despised the special treatment and notoriety they received as student-athletes, and felt like they were missing out

²See Crosset & Beal (1997) for a complete discussion of terminology in sport-related ethnographic and/or qualitative research.

on the true college experience. Joining fraternities and rooming with non-athletes were just two of the ways the men tried to integrate themselves into the college environment.

The men's inclusion into a non-athletic subworld also prompted them to take educational and occupational planning cues from their non-athlete peers, instead of the athletic department.

For example, when an athlete's non-athlete roommate declared a major (per the advice of his academic advisor), the athlete decided that it must be time for him to declare a major. Job fairs, resume and interview workshops, as well as other career guidance services were also discovered via friends and roommates who were not athletes. While the coaches seemed to spend quite a bit of time trying to shield athletes from the typical college environment, the participants realized that they may not have been getting the real story from their coaches, and thus decided to assert their independence. By doing so, the participants were taking an active role in obtaining a comprehensive college education.

Overall, the men in the study were quite adept at acting on their awareness of the University athletic environment. Specifically, the participants chose to defy the dependency training espoused by athletic department personnel and mainstream themselves into the college milieu. The resistance of some student-athletes, however, was intermittent; possession of power, access to resources, and differences in circumstances played an important role in which athletes acted and when the action occurred. Even when the student-athletes obeyed all of the established rules, they did not necessarily believe them. The participants may have been prevented from acting on their awareness by factors out of their control, but that did not strip them of the ability to think critically and take small steps toward obtaining a complete college education.

Structural Constraints & Situational Circumstances

As indicated by the preceding discussion, increasing athletes' awareness about the environment in which they exist and the circumstances they encounter may facilitate their abilities to act on this awareness, and in the current context, to succeed in obtaining a balanced education. According to critical theorists this process may not be as simple as it sounds, as awareness and agency are greatly influenced by ideological and structural constraints built into that particular society, and dynamic situational factors which may vary across time, place, and within a group of people. (Coakley, 1994; Messner & Sabo, 1990). This appeared to be the case with the student-athletes in the current study, whose actions were often circumscribed by structural and situational forces present in their environment.

Sport and Team Factors

The structure of the teams and/or sports of which the men were a part may have played an important role in their college experiences in general, and their ability to obtain a well-rounded education in particular. The fact that the participants were all members of revenue-producing teams meant that they may have devoted more time and energy to their respective sports than did participants in non-revenue producing sports. The time spent in practice and related sessions, coupled with the amount of traveling done by these teams may have prevented the men from devoting more time

to other components of a college education.

Situational factors related to the sport in which the men participated may also have influenced their college experiences. For example, the sheer number of individuals on the football team may have affected how the men felt about their education. The fact that the football coaches had more players to monitor may explain why the football players in the study often complained about the superficial relationships they had with their coach(es). The type and amount of traveling done by the two teams may also have been responsible for some of the different experiences reported. Similarly, the win/loss records of the two teams may explain some of the changes that occurred in the programs during the men's careers. A string of winning teams may have changed the coaches' focus to athletics, while a few losing years may have led the athletes to focus more on academic success. In the end, the different characteristics of the two teams represented in the study may have influenced the experiences and perceptions of the participants and the paths they took to secure a complete education.

Personnel Factors

In addition to the structural constraints and situational complexities associated with specific sports and teams, University personnel and their respective philosophies may also have influenced the participants' abilities to proactively acquire college education. In most universities the formal nature of the sport experience is defined primarily through the head coach, and ultimately the athletic director and president of the institution; the mission of the institution and philosophy of each president eventually trickles down into athletics (Bicknell, 1989; Single, 1989). For example, a presidential focus on the arts or research may mean a disinterest of sorts in athletics, and less power for head coaches. A presidential focus on athletic supremacy, however, may mean that a head coach has power and authority on campus, and people (i.e., administrators, trustees, and faculty) may tolerate a more professional sport atmosphere among these teams.

Personnel changes were expressly reflected in the experiences of football players at the University, who encountered several presidents and three head coaches during the time period under study. The first and third coaches, for example, ran their teams with a professionalism often seen in the NFL. Winning games was the focus of these teams, with academic achievement and a well-rounded education taking a decided backseat to eligibility. Comments made by the athletes regarding their coaches' lack of attention to academic and career plans served as evidence of this focus. For the second coach, however, winning was not as important as the development of responsible, decent citizens. The success of his players off the field appeared to be just as important as their on-field accomplishments. As one football player recalled:

Our position coach really took an emphasis in it [a total education] and was concerned about what we were doing. He'd actually come in and instead of talking about football, he'd talk about what you were gonna do when you graduated and stuff like that. He was good. I think it was kind of uncommon. He was really concerned about the total person rather than just the football player. He was more concerned about manners and trying to educate people from a social standpoint as well as football.

Unlike their football playing cohorts, the basketball players in the study played for the same head coach throughout their college careers. Such continuity may have

led to less pressure and more confident athletes; the men were aware of what was expected of them, and did not have to go out of their way to learn a new system and impress a new coach. Several of the football players, however, had three different head coaches and various key assistant coaches during their college careers. These men were admittedly frustrated by this situation, as they never had a guaranteed position or role from one year to another. Similarly, the football players recounted how schedules and time demands fluctuated with the change in coaches. From these comments it becomes clear to see how it may have been difficult for these individuals to "let down their guards" so that they could devote time to the other components of a college education.

The aforementioned differences and/or changes in University leadership, coaching staff, and coaching philosophy further illustrate how structural constraints and situational differences, along with their contextual and temporal elements, may have affected the participants' abilities to take an active role in obtaining a well-rounded college education.

Social Network

Like personnel and sport/team factors, social networks also appeared to influence the college experience of the participants in the study. Since the men had little choice in selecting teammates, they often looked outside of sport—or associated only with certain teammates—in an effort to surround themselves with people who shared similar goals and nonsport interests. As one athlete explained, "I didn't want to come home and talk about football. I want to come home and say 'What'd you guys do? What's up?' Get a taste of the real world outside University sports. I liked it. I chose to do it that way."

Additional analyses highlighted situational differences, indicating that those men who associated primarily with non-athletes tended to place an even greater emphasis on a well-rounded education than those men who associated primarily with other athletes. As the interviews illustrated, those men who placed more emphasis on a complete education were the same men who wanted to be like normal college students. These individuals were not comfortable with all the hype surrounding their athletic prowess, and in an effort to progress through college like other University students, utilized their non-athlete friends as barometers to help guide academic and other decisions. Conversely, the men who associated primarily with other athletes tended to be somewhat more invested in their athlete status and the athletic subworld, occasionally using their status as University football or basketball players to get preferential treatment.

These differences in friendship patterns reinforce the view of critical theorists that structural and situational factors must be considered when explaining or predicting behavior. While selecting friends with similar values, interests, and dedication to the total college experience empowered the men in this study and mobilized them to pursue a balanced education more actively than the other men, the overall outcome (i.e., successful in obtaining a balanced education) for all men was the same. The men may have intended to actively pursue a balanced college education only to have their actions undermined or influenced by structural constraints and/or situational factors that were outside their control.

The results of this study suggest that a critical perspective, which takes into account more than the needs of the social system, provides extensive insight into how student-athletes involved in Division I revenue-producing programs are able to obtain a balanced, comprehensive education. Although University athletic department personnel tried to make their ideas dominant by keeping the athletes eligible for competition and reinforcing their dreams of professional sport careers, the participants were not blind to these "tactics." Rather, they were aware of the focus on eligibility as well as the contradictions that existed in coaches' assessments of professional sport opportunities and their loyalty to the athletic program. This awareness was translated into action, which resulted in the men defying the athletic department's dependency training and mainstreaming themselves into the general college environment. Those individuals who were less active or explicit in their resistance were not necessarily less dedicated to securing a well-rounded education; rather, structural constraints and/or situational complexities may have prevented them from speaking or acting at that time. Such factors may have prevented overt resistance, but did not prevent the participants from examining situations objectively and thinking about them critically.

Note that the preceding results and explanations are decidedly different from those that would be offered from a role conflict perspective. Specifically, role theorists may claim that the men in the study were able to secure a balanced education because they did not experience role conflict; that is, the demands of them in the athlete role were not incompatible with the demands of them in the student role, the friend role, or any other roles they "occupied." As data from this study suggest, taking advantage of all that the college experience has to offer was not easy for the participants, but they learned to manage the demands in much the same way that students with heavy job-loads and family responsibilities do. Proponents of a role conflict perspective may also claim that in order to secure a comprehensive education the participants in the current study "must" have foreclosed on or selectively optimized one or more of their roles (thereby engaging in socially desirable dialogues during the interviews). Both study criteria and data serve to refute this suggestion, as each of the participants achieved the grades necessary to graduate from the University and earned a varsity letter in his respective sport. These points, along with the fact that 30% of the men played their respective sports at the professional level, contradict the assumption that one role must be compromised to ensure success in the other.

While the preceding examples illustrate how role conflict theorists may have interpreted and explained the results of the current study, it is very possible that an examination into the development of a well-rounded quality education for student-athletes would not be undertaken by such individuals in the first place. Role conflict theory deals primarily with issues of conflict and incompatibility, therefore role theorists would likely ignore situations like those in the current study where athletes are successful and few conflicts exist. As suggested in the introduction of this paper, models of success must be examined in order to gain insight into the development of a balanced, symmetrical education for college athletes. Then, and only then, will advisors, counselors, and other support personnel be adequately prepared to provide student-athletes with specific strategies and techniques for securing a comprehensive education.

IMPLICATIONS

As the results of this study demonstrate, the athletes' success in obtaining a well-balanced college education cannot be attributed solely to the institutional and national athletic systems in which they operated. While these systems and the resulting structural changes (i.e., reform) that are occurring in higher education to improve the educational experiences of intercollegiate athletes are necessary and have proven to be somewhat successful, results of this study suggest that athletes can succeed with little if any outside assistance, and may succeed at even higher levels if introduced to athlete-centered strategies facilitated at the micro-level by sport psychologists and other personnel who provide personal support to student-athletes. Based on the results and interpretations of the data in the current study, the following suggestions are offered to individuals who interact with student-athletes in the context of maximizing the educational experience.

First and foremost, practitioners trained in psychology and related disciplines need to recognize the inherent weaknesses in using role conflict theory to explain how student-athletes handle the contradictory expectations and demands they face in their daily lives, and subsequently its limited ability to explain and manage issues related to the educational experiences of this population. The dynamic, historical nature of human experiences cannot be ignored, and direct us to examine how individual and environmental factors, along with structural and situational circumstances, unite to shape an athlete's educational experience. Recognition of this merger in shaping behavior reinforces for practitioners, the importance of considering individual difference in service delivery.

The dynamic, historical nature of human behavior illustrated in the current study also demonstrates how individuals, athletes and non-athletes alike, are active participants in the shaping of their own experiences. Awareness is a precursor to many types of action or behavior change, and an initial step in resistance or opposition; therefore, practitioners should encourage athletes to examine all sides of an issue and the entire realm of possibilities before deciding if, and how, to behave. Similarly, practitioners should encourage athletes to gather information from as many sources as possible before taking action; by triangulating their "data," athletes can maximize their awareness and base their actions on a valid breadth of information.

As suggested above, awareness does not always lead to overt action or behavior change. Some individuals may gather information and decide to take no action, whereas others may choose to offer little overt opposition, preferring instead to exert agency more subtly by working within the system. It is important for practitioners to understand that these less active positions are not necessarily the result of apathy or strategies resulting from role conflict (i.e., role foreclosure, selective optimization) but rather the result of the historical influence of structural constraints and/or situational circumstances. For example, an athlete who appears to "buy-into" a coach's suggestion that he has the talent to play at the next level and should devote more time to his sport may simply be waiting for certain situational or structural constraints to be lifted (e.g., scholarships for the upcoming year awarded) before openly defying or resisting the wishes of the coach and focusing once again on a comprehensive education. Practitioners must realize that while many student-athletes may strive to obtain a comprehensive college education, underlying historical factors, as well as

structural and situational elements, influence the different processes through which a balanced education is ultimately achieved. As the findings of this and other studies suggest (Adler & Adler, 1991; Chartrand & Lent, 1987; Parham, 1993), professionals working with student-athletes must be aware of the diversity and individual difference that characterize this population.

A final suggestion for individuals who interact with student-athletes in the context of maximizing their educational experiences is to reinforce, through actions and words, the importance of assuming personal responsibility for their education. Although practitioners may embrace alternative theoretical approaches for managing issues related to a balanced education and possess experience implementing strategies and techniques that facilitate the achievement of education, such knowledge and skill are of little value unless they help to develop in athletes an expectation of independence and an acceptance of personal responsibility. By accepting responsibility for their lives athletes assert their independence, an important step in increasing their awareness of the aids and impediments to, and appropriate course of action for, securing a complete college education.

TABLE 1

Sport Played	Academic Major	Current Career
Basketball	Building & Construction Management	Employee, family-owned construction company
Basketball	Business (advertising)	Bank manager
Basketball	Criminal Justice	Counselor for juvenile delinquents
Basketball	Communications	Salesperson
Basketball	Criminal Justice	Sports broadcaster
Basketball	Business (general)	Investment broker
Football	Business (general)	Salesperson
Football	Business	(HRI: hotel, HRI manager restaurant & institution management)
Football	Communications	Employee, family-run title search Co.
Football	Packaging	Manager, packaging industry
Football	Communications	Salesperson
Football	Communications	Salesperson
Football	Communications	Salesperson
Football	Business (advertising)	Owner, real estate company
Football	Communications	Salesperson
Football	Recreation & Youth	High school coach
Football	Communications	Leadership
Football	Communications	Musician
Football	Business (op mgmt.)	Salesperson
Football	Physiology	Pharmaceutical researcher
Football	Communications	Salesperson
Football	Park & Rec. Resources	DNR agent
Football	Business (HRI)	PhD student/teaching assistant
Football	Criminal Justice	Federal law enforcement officer
Football	Civil Engineering	Engineer
Football	Studio Art	Artist & Bartender
Football	Business (operations management)	Salesperson

TABLE 2

Sample Interview Questions

Time Frame	Sample Question(s)
Pre-college expectations & experiences	What did you think it would be like to be a University student-athlete?
Freshman year	Describe the process you went through to complete your academic schedule and course of study. Tell me about your relationship with coaches and other athletic department personnel.
Remaining years	Describe for me what it was like to be a student-athlete during this time. Assess your attentiveness to educational and career plans.
Retirement and/or transition from organized sport	Tell me about your transition from college to "the real world."

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Stress Sources and Responses of Student-athlete Counseling Service Clients, Non-student-Athlete Clients and Non-athlete Non-clients

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It is widely believed that because of the unique demands of their lifestyles, college student-athletes often experience greater levels of life-stress than do non-athlete students. Limited research on this topic has provided inconsistent support for this notion. Quick Stress Questionnaire (QSQ) responses of student-athlete counseling service clients, non-athlete student counseling service clients, and a non-client sample were compare to examine differences in the frequency and severity of life-stress and life-stress responses. All groups reported moderate to moderately high stress levels, but student-athletes reported fewer sources of distress and fewer serve stress-related symptoms than non-athlete clients or non-clients. Findings are discussed in the context of the student-athlete lifestyle and recommendations for further study are provided.

A growing amount of information has emerged about the lifestyles and psychosocial development of college athletes and the provision of counseling services to this population (Blann, 1985; Chartrand & lent, 1987; Etzel, Ferrante, & Pinkney, 1996; Greenspan & Anderson, 1995; Jordan & Denson, 1990; Kirk & Kirk, 1993; Parham, 1993). Student-athletes' life experiences are often thought to be quite different from those of other students, which may complicate their working through the development tasks of college students (Sowa & Gressard, 1983). Of particular concern is the role that life stress appears to play in athletes' personal development. For the purpose of this study, stress was considered a complex process characterized by the presence of various stress sources, perceptions of threat or danger to self, and cognitive, affective and/or behavioral, and physical reactions to these phenomena (Spielberger, 1989). Accordingly, stress response may be manifested cognitively (e.g., worry), behaviorally (e.g., avoidance behaviors), emotionally (e.g., depression), or somatically (e.g., muscle aches).

Based on their clinical work with this population, Pinkerton, Hinz, and Barrow (1987) suggested that student-athletes represent a group "at risk" for experiencing several life stress sources, stress responses, and developmental crises. In particular, those authors pointed to potential difficulties with individuation and separation, identity and role conflicts, relationships, and educational-vocational concerns. Conflicts with coaches and teammates, depression, eating disorders, substance abuse, and coping with injury are also common issues for these young people (Etxel, et.al., 1996; Hinkle, 1996; Parham, 1993). It has been suggested that student-athletes as a group often lead unusually stressful lives (Bergandi Wittig, 1984). This stress appears to be associated with the extra demands and pressures of sport training and competition (Lanning, 1982) which may make working through normal developmental tasks and succeeding as student more difficult than for students who do not

participate in athletics (Selby, Weinstein, & Bird, 1990). Beyond meeting the challenges of college life, these young people may be more negatively influenced by life stress and have special personal needs.

Although the above views are often assumed to be true, the sources and levels of stress student-athletes encounter has not been well researched. Perhaps the most extensive investigation was undertaken by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) President's Commission, which studied the effects of athletics participation on Division I athletes (American Institutes for Research, 1988). Conducted by the American Institutes on Research (AIR), the study was a survey of 4,083 male and female athletes from 42 member institutions. Many respondents said that they experienced academic difficulties, psychological distress, multiple personal problems, mental and physical abuse, and feelings of isolation. These difficulties were more commonly reported by participants in highly competitive, so-called "big-time" sports like football and basketball.

Etzel (1989) investigated life stress sources, stress reactions, and locus of control perceptions of 263 male and female athletes across sports at a medium-size land-grant institution that competed at the NCAA Division I level. Participants said that they experienced high levels of overall life stress and cognitive stress symptoms (e.g., anxiety, worry). They also reported owning a chance-oriented, external locus of control.

Further evidence of student-athletes' life-stress has been provided by Selby, Weinstein, and Bird (1990) who examined sources of stress. A total of 267 varsity athletes at Stanford University completed a 52-item survey that addressed, among many other things, stress factors, alcohol and drug use, and issues related to diet and body image. The perceived threats of physical injury and academic concerns were the greatest sources of distress for both males and females. Other stress sources included sports' time demands, perceived coach expectations, sport competition demands, general health concerns, social life, athletic scholarships, weight and eating behaviors.

More recently, Smallman, Sowa, and Young (1991) asked 53 male and female, African American and Caucasian student-athletes about the sources of stress in lives and their and their perceptions of those stressors. More than 25% of the respondents indicated experiencing high levels of stress. No gender or race differences were observed in reported levels of stress. Further, African American and male student-athletes perceived stressful life events as more aversive than non-African Americans and females.

Are the life experiences of the student-athletes truly different from those of non-athlete-students? To address this question, the two purposes of this investigation were: (a) to identify the sources of life stress for help-seeking athletes (i.e., those who sought assistance from a university counseling service) as compared with non-athletes who sought counseling assistance, and a non help seeking non-athlete control group, and (b) to investigate the severity of responses to those stressors for these comparison groups. Based upon the literature and clinical lore, it was hypothesized that student-athletes would report experiencing a wider range of life stress sources, and frequent severe stress responses compared with non-athlete students.

METHODS

Participants and Procedures

Quick Stress Questionnaire (QSQ) (Otani, 1985) of student clients were obtained from the counseling service closed files at a, medium sized, land grant institution. The QSQ is a problem checklist completed by clients, as a routine part of all intake assessments and becomes a part of each student's permanent, confidential file. Clients did not provide consent to access their QSQs. The QSQs of 91 athlete clients (i.e., those student-athletes who had sought counseling) were examined, although a random sample of 207 QSQs was obtained from the non-athlete client population over a three-year period. These two sets of QSQ data were compared with non-athlete, non-client QSQ student norms ($N=218$) developed from the general student population over the same period of time.

Instrument

The QSQ is a 25 item, self-report inventory designed to measure sources of stress and stress related symptoms along a nine-point Likert scale, from 1 (little) to 9 (extreme) (Otani, 1985). Clients are asked to rate the impact of nine sources of stress (e.g., academic, personal/social, financial) on their lives. The QSQ also measures three categories of stress symptoms (i.e., cognitive, somatic, behavioral). The checklist can be completed in approximately five minutes.

Support for the QSQ's construct validity has been established through Maximum Likelihood Factor Analysis (MLFA) (Otani, 1985). MLFA revealed that the nine stress source items loaded on a single stress source factor and identified three symptom factors labeled cognitive, somatic, and behavioral. The cognitive factor was comprised of items 10 (depression), 11 (anger), and 12 (fear). The somatic factor was comprised of items 13 (muscle tension), 14 (indigestion), 15 (tics), 16 (sleep), and 17 (eating). Items 18 (drinking), 19 (forgetfulness), and 22 (avoidance) loaded on the behavioral factor. Items 9 (other), 20 (hypertension), 21 (acne), 24 (overall stressors this year), and 25 (stress level at first appointment) are not used in determining factor scores (Comer, 1994). Omega coefficient estimates of internal reliability for the cognitive, somatic, and behavioral factors were observed to be .89, .83, and .79, respectively.

RESULTS

QSQ item means and standard deviations for the student-athlete clients, non-athletes clients, and non-clients are presented in Table 1.

TABLE 1

QSQ Item and Factor Means, Standard Deviations for Athlete Clients, Nonathlete Clients and Nonclients and One-way ANOVAs for QSQ Items

	Athletes		Nonathletes		Nonclients		p
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	
1. Academic/work concerns	6.20	1.83	6.78	1.55	6.25	1.96	.037*
2. Social/personal relationships	5.63	2.54	5.09	2.16	5.82	2.38	.013*
3. Family concerns	5.16	2.52	4.72	2.28	5.14	2.33	.031*
4. Financial concerns	4.87	2.55	5.84	2.12	5.14	2.48	.003*
5. Self-image	5.02	2.45	4.90	2.21	5.19	2.46	.586
6. Health concerns	4.22	2.54	3.87	2.08	3.91	2.36	.336
7. Sexual concerns	3.58	2.41	3.79	2.26	3.80	2.41	.732
8. Day-to-day Hassles	4.76	2.01	5.01	1.98	4.45	2.29	.186
9. Other	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10. Feelings of depression	4.99	2.66	4.66	2.17	5.80	2.47	.001*
11. Anger and hostility	4.96	2.40	5.08	2.04	5.23	2.36	.542
12. Apprehension/worrying	5.79	2.17	5.84	2.02	6.23	2.29	.531
13. Muscle tension ... headaches	4.06	2.42	4.34	2.31	4.23	2.44	.905
14. Indigestion Stomachaches	2.79	2.52	3.31	2.36	3.70	2.58	.047*
15. Tic/Tremors	2.20	2.02	2.05	1.64	2.19	1.99	.617
16. Sleep disturbances	4.58	2.62	4.56	2.40	5.20	2.55	.016*
17. Eating disorders	3.37	2.52	3.59	2.53	4.04	2.59	.330
18. Drinking/drugs	2.50	2.14	3.65	2.59	3.15	2.40	.001*
19. Forgetfulness	4.41	2.65	4.82	2.45	5.40	2.54	.001*
20. Hypertension	1.67	1.44	2.05	1.62	1.91	1.73	.055
21. Acne/Eczema	2.66	2.12	2.91	2.09	2.58	2.20	.169
22. Avoidance behavior	4.12	2.74	4.75	2.38	4.85	2.75	.158
23. Current overall level of stress	5.44	2.35	5.38	2.16	6.19	2.13	.001*
24. Overall stress level, past year	5.81	2.16	5.89	1.98	6.19	2.21	.773
Cognitive Factor	5.27	2.00	5.24	1.60	5.82	1.79	.002*
Behavioral Factor	3.39	1.64	3.57	1.52	3.87	1.68	.089
Somatic Factor	3.69	2.02	4.40	1.94	4.44	2.01	.014*

Note: Item 25 is an optional item examining the level of stress prior to the first counseling session. This item is often omitted by clients and was omitted for the purposes of these analyses due to missing data. *Denotes statistical significance ($p < .05$).

Items concerning stress symptoms were averaged to provide a composite index for each symptom factor (i.e., cognitive, somatic, behavioral). This provided an estimate as to the modalities in which individuals experienced their stress. Means of each composite factor are presented in Table 1.

Three one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA) are computed to determine if any differences existed among the groups on their cognitive, behavioral, and somatic symptom factor scores. Significant differences among the groups on the cognitive and somatic factors were observed, but not for the behavioral symptom factor (see Table 1).

To determine which differences between group means were statistically significant, Tukey's Honesty Significant Difference (HSD) multiple comparison tests were conducted on the cognitive and somatic factor scores. This post hoc comparison was employed because of its rather conservative approach to determining statistically significant differences between group means. These comparisons indicated that student-athlete clients reported significant lower levels of somatic symptoms than either the non-athlete clients or the non clients (see Table 1). Student athlete clients' QSQ responses did not significantly differ from non athlete clients or the non client sample on the reported levels of cognitive stress symptoms. The conservative nature of the HSD procedure may have contributed to the lack of significant differences between these groups.

Independent one-way ANOVAs were calculated on the eight QSQ stress source items. An ANOVA was not calculated for item 9 due to the nature of the item, which asks each participant to identify and rate any other personally unique sources of stress that they may be experiencing. The resulting F values are presented in Table 1.

Tukey's HSD multiple comparison tests revealed that athlete clients reported significant lower academic or work related stress (item 1) than did non athlete clients, but not the non client sample (see Table 1). Student-athlete clients and non clients reported significantly higher levels of social and personal relationship stress (item 2) and family stress (item 3) than the non athlete client sample. Non athlete clients reported significantly greater financial stress (item 4) than either student-athlete clients or the non client sample. There were no significant between group differences observed on the self-image, health concerns, sex concerns, or day-to-day hassles items.

DISCUSSION

The results of this investigation suggest that athletes who sought assistance at a counseling center experienced fewer disturbing sources of stress and less severe stress-related symptoms than non athlete clients or student non clients. Specifically, athlete clients in this study indicated that the only sources of stress that were more upsetting than for other help seeking students were social/personal concern and family concerns, versus other that have been reported (e.g., anxiety, worry,

depression). Interestingly, student athlete clients reported lower financial related distress than non athlete clients and non clients. This finding deviates from the popular view that athletes experience greater financial stress as a result of long-standing NCAA limitations regarding the employment of student athletes, which very recently have changed and that many come from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

It should be noted that all three groups in this study reported experiencing moderate to moderately high stress in several stress source and symptom areas (see Table 1). This supports the observation that life is stressful for college students in general (O'Malley, Wheeler, & Murphy, in press). From this prospective, athletes may be seen as more like other students than not, in particular those who seek help at counseling services. Theoretically, all college struggle to work through aged developmental tasks and events (Chickering, 1969; Farnsworth, 1966). They often experience distress associated with these struggles, and encounter other psychosocial problems (Pinkerton et al., 1987; Parham, 1993). With the exception of the observation that our student-athlete sample reported more social/personal and family distress, our findings did not lend support to our hypotheses. Further, our data were they generally inconsistent with the views of other researchers and clinicians who have suggested that athletes are more vulnerable to excessive stress than their peers because of the unique and complex personal challenges they often face (Ferrante & Etzel, 1996). How can these findings be understood?

Several explanations are plausible. First, lumping all athletes together may mask individual differences and special subgroup (e.g., people of color and women) differences in QSQ data (Lent, 1993; Smallman et al., 1991). Just as all college students are not alike, surely all college student-athletes are not alike. Another factor that may have attenuated both student-athlete and nonathlete client QSQ scores was the fact that these young people came to the counseling center to address a variety of presenting concerns, which ranged from the serious (e.g., depression, career-ending injuries, eating disorders) to the relatively less serious (e.g. major selection, time management, and sport performance enhancement). The diversity of presenting concerns and their varied severity may have had a leveling effect on their responses to these difficulties.

Perhaps differences in responding to QSQ items were in part a function of the dissimilar situations in which people completed the instrument. The student-athlete client and nonathlete client responses, which tended to be consistently lower than those of the control group, were not produced under conditions of complete anonymity. Although it would seem in the respondent's best interest to be open and honest, it is possible that members of the nonclient control group felt more free to answer honestly and so reported greater distress, that social desirability influenced the responses of both client groups.

It is also conceivable that some of those who sought help may have denied having difficulties or downplayed them. Indeed, there is some support for athletes doing so as a group (Ferrante & Etzel, 1996) and under-utilizing helping services for a variety of reasons (Carmen, Zerman, & Blaine, 1968; Pierce, 1969; Rheinhold, 1973; Segal, Weiss, & Sokol, 1965). Athletes may have an unrealistic sense of self-reliance or a "macho" attitude that can make them reluctant to admit to distress and to seek

help for fear of being seen by themselves or others as weak people (Ferrante & Etzel, 1996).

Another explanation for the athlete client scores is the possibility that both client groups experienced some relief after they had decided to seek assistance at the counseling center. In fact, there is evidence that the expectation of relief can facilitate change or "spontaneous improvement" and so reduce perceived and felt stress (Hoyt, Rosenbaum, & Talmon, 1992). It is also possible that the student-athlete who completed the QSQ were somehow better adjusted than the other participants.

Although our student-athlete sample did not differ much from samples of their peers, there was some support for the notion that student-athletes experience more stress in the areas of personal/social and family concerns. This finding points to the importance of helping student-athletes cope with various life stresses by fostering connections with sources of social support (Albrecht & Adelman, 1984). Student-athlete support networks often include family members, coaches, advisors, athletic trainers, physicians, teammates, and various helping professionals. Indeed, a growing number of institutions have begun to provide support services to meet their needs (Denson, 1996; Jordan & Denson, 1990). Perhaps the formal and informal sources of support available to student-athlete clients on the campus which data was collected (e.g., advising, counseling, sports medicine) diminished the amount of reported stress assessed by the QSQ.

In retrospect, the findings of this investigation point to the need to conduct more systematic research on stress and its influences on college athletes. Although it appears to many that concerns athletes experience comparatively high life stress, this notion has not been consistently supported empirically. Although our findings provide some needed empirical insight into the nature of stress experienced by some college student-athletes, given the limitations of our methodology, readers should use care in generalizing our findings to other student-athlete populations on other campuses.

Future research needs to be conducted to paint a more reliable picture of what stressors and stress-related symptoms athletes experience. Furthermore, investigating other salient variables would seem useful such as stress responses of athletes with different types of presenting concerns, differences in individual and group perceptions of stress, the influences of various sources of social support, and the stress experienced by athletes based on gender, racial backgrounds, the competitiveness of the institution, and by whether or not they received an athletic scholarship. It would also appear worthwhile to investigate the stress experienced by student-athletes who are not counseling service clients.

Tens of thousands of college students participate in the usually rewarding, yet taxing activities associated with intercollegiate athletics. In the late 1990s, especially at schools involved in so-called big-time athletics, student-athletes will continue to toil for their institutions and themselves, working hard to entertain and support fans and programs (Sperber, 1990). Along with this "job", they struggle to obtain meaningful education and to grow as people. There obviously is much more to learn about the life experiences of this diverse group. Researchers and helping professionals have a responsibility to understand their unique challenges better so as to help them develop into well-adjusted young people.

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Luncheon Address to N4A Region II Meeting

John R. Gerdy, Ph.D.

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Lexington, Kentucky

Three years ago, I left the Southeastern Conference. With the birth of our first child and after being in a relationship with my wife for 14 years, only one of which did we live in the same time zone, I figured it was about time that we lived together. Despite this move, I don't consider myself "out" of college athletics. I regularly write, teach and speak on the subject. I think about it a lot. I am however, out of the daily grind of it. And this group knows as well as anyone, that when in the daily grind, you have a tendency to miss the forest because of the trees. You simply don't have the time to reflect on the big picture.

I have been fortunate in that my move to New York City, and then Dayton, Ohio, and now to a farm in Lancaster PA. has given me the opportunity to stand back and critically evaluate our "business". After careful and sometimes painful consideration, I've come to realize that what we "do" in college athletics, which is conduct games, is ultimately meaningless. We conduct games that have no lasting significance and contribute very little of substance to our culture. If you don't believe me, answer this. Who played in last year's Final Four? The year before? The reason that what we do is increasingly meaningless is that college athletics has become more about entertainment than education, or even sport, for that matter.

This realization hit me when I attended an ECW (Extreme Championship Wrestling) event. I was amazed at how worked up the fans got over it. They really believed that it was *real* sport. But we know that professional wrestling is not *real* sport. Everyone *knows* it is fake. But as the evening wore on, it began to dawn on me that what I was watching sure looked like the *real* sporting events I had seen recently. For example, during "player" introductions, there were flashing, glittering, and whirling lights, pounding music, and lots of smoke. Athletes preened, pointed, chest bumped, and "high five-ed". Every other match, a scantily clad woman accompanied the wrestler to ringside under the guise of being a "manager" or "ring mate".

Then, somewhere around the third match, it clicked. It wasn't that the ECW looked like a "real" sporting event, but rather, that the last NBA game I watched, and more and more college games, not only look, but feel, like a professional wrestling event. I couldn't distinguish between the opening introductions of the Chicago Bulls, the tag team of Rob Van Dam and "The Great Sabu", or the grand entrance of Rick Pitino minutes before tip-off in Rupp Arena. There was every bit as much preening, pointing, chest bumpin' and high fivin' — every bit as much pomp, pageantry, glitter, and glam. There wasn't much difference between Bam Bam Bigelow's "ring assistant", "The Lovely, Lady Francine" and the Laker Girls or UNLV's cheerleaders. All women portrayed as sex objects in a side show as the men duelled it out in the real event.

The ECW fans in Dayton, Ohio were every bit as vocal and serious about the fate of The Sandman and the Dudley Boys as those in Knoxville were over that of Peyton

Manning. On occasion, the fans, sweaty and red-faced, burst into a wild-eyed, lung-busting, fist-waving chant of "E-C-W, E-C-W". They could have easily been chanting "Let's Go Cats!" The same sweaty, red faces and wild-eyed looks I had seen on numerous occasions at the SEC tournament.

There was a time when the thought of comparing professional wrestling and the NFL or ACC as sporting events was unthinkable. The lines of distinction were simply too clear. Wrestling was staged. It was entertainment, pure and simple. *Real* sports were something entirely different. They were serious. It was the game that mattered. But have you been to an NBA game recently? They are no different than an WWF event. They are not games. They are entertainment spectacles. The lines of distinction between professional wrestling and professional sports — these so-called "real" sports — have become blurred. And college athletics is blindly following suit.

To describe The Final Four as a "sporting event" is no longer accurate; it is an entertainment extravaganza, subject to all the promotional and marketing distortions of a three ring circus. It is packaged, merchandised, and marketed as entertainment. It is more about money, television ratings, advertising rates, and corporate skyboxes than it is about education, or even sport. As Dick Vitale might say, "It's Showbiz, Baby!" But the problem with this evolution of college athletics is that in transforming our student-athletes into entertainers, we have trivialized sport, but more important, education.

As a result, universities are facing increasingly difficult and controversial decisions about what form the relationship between athletics and the university will take in the future. Specifically, universities must decide the type of athletic program that will best serve the institution in the 21st Century. Driving this decision will be many factors. In addition to athletics' increasing focus on entertainment, I will highlight three: impotent governance, fiscal reality, and political consequences.

While the NCAA has served its purpose well since its inception in 1906, three recent legal decisions, the restricted earnings case, the Jerry Tarkanian settlement, and the ruling that NCAA is subject to Title IX and other anti-discrimination laws, have seriously undermined its' ability to govern effectively. What, for example, would be the impact of a weakened NCAA with an impotent penalty structure? Would it result in a college athletic environment ruled by the "free market" with few restrictions on the way in which athletic departments run their affairs? Would it result in an "athletic arms race", where only a handful of schools could continue to compete as scholarship limitations and recruiting rules cease to exist? What would happen if the NCAA's ability to enforce academic standards erodes? If the NCAA's governance authority is weakened, the issue of just how far universities are willing to go in compromising academic and fiscal integrity in the quest for athletic success will intensify dramatically.

Financial realities will also drive university policy making in the 21st Century. We all know that most NCAA Division I athletic programs lose money. And, as institutions are forced to begin to appropriate the long-overdue resources necessary to meet the demands of Title IX and gender equity, not to mention the ever-increasing travel, salary, equipment, insurance, and facility costs of running a big-time athletic program, future financial figures will be even more sobering. That being the case, schools will be forced to decide how much more of the university's resources they are willing to appropriate to underwrite a program with a financial history that is spotty at best and

a future that promises even less. This, all against a backdrop of increasing costs and declining resources for higher education.

Finally, universities will be challenged to weigh the political consequences of athletics' effect on the declining public trust in higher education. Many argue that it is athletics, with its scandals, coaches being paid more than presidents, student-athletes being exploited in the name of generating ticket sales and television revenue, and disregard for academic integrity that has contributed more than anything to this loss of public trust. Just how much damage to institutional integrity can be absorbed as a result of the widespread perception that big-time college athletics are out of control?

These trends are already forcing many universities to begin to honestly consider whether the tremendous resources lavished upon athletics in the form of money, energy, and emotion continue to be justified for an activity that contributes to the mission of the university in no more timely and relevant ways than simply providing entertainment on a Saturday afternoon in the Fall. Such debate will force the issue of institutional priorities to the fore as no other issue will. Athletics' continued movement toward entertainment and away from education, coupled with higher education's struggle to address increasingly complex public demands for solutions to issues like poverty, illiteracy, multiculturalism, environmental degradation, ethical standards, and preparing our workforce to compete in the global economy of the 21st century, will result in a period of change more significant than we have ever seen in the history of intercollegiate athletics.

This brings us to the question of how you respond individually and how the N4A responds as an organization. My advice? Stay the course. Stay the course because your most valuable asset as individuals and as an organization, and the reason why I have always enjoyed spending time with this group more than any other, is that you have always been able to distinguish between what we in college athletics *do* (conduct games) and what we are *about*, or should be about, (education). So while what you *do* may ultimately be meaningless, what you are *about* as individuals; what the N4A is *about* as an organization, is not. In fact, it is critically important. As John Kenneth Galbraith writes in *The Good Society: The Humane Agenda*, regarding the importance of education, "In this world, there is no literate population that is poor, no illiterate population that is not." You are about education. That is important. It is important because you know that championship banners fade and trophies tarnish with the passing of time. It is important because you know that our most significant product, indeed the only product we produce that has a lasting impact upon our society, is not the event that appears on television but rather the young people we send out into our communities. It is important because you know that a university's most important function is to develop a student's educational potential rather than their time in the 40 yard dash.

So, stay grounded in your belief in the importance of education; your belief in the potential of your student-athletes — not athletically, but educationally and personally and your commitment to help them realize that potential. Keep talking about student-athlete welfare. Keep challenging coaches to be educators. Keep reaching out to the academic community. Keep working to help student-athletes understand that yes, in fact, they can be both a great student and a great athlete.

Don't forget what you are about. Education is your foundation and that foundation will serve you well in the tumultuous times ahead. Because ultimately, despite what the media might write, despite what coaches may preach, and despite what those rabid fans may scream, the success of our nation's colleges and universities will be determined on their ability to develop the educational potential of our populace, not by their ability to score touchdowns and generate television ratings.

Thank you and good luck.

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