ANTI-RACISM IN SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

Edited by:
Joseph N. Cooper

TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY
Center for Sport Management
Research & Education

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Chapter 1
Anti-Racism as a New Paradigm for 21st Century Sport Organizations

Joseph N. Cooper

Abstract

Sport reflects the values, beliefs, and power structures embedded within the societies where they are practiced. Within the United States (U.S.), White racism is foundational to the establishment of the nation and its corresponding social institutions (e.g., politics, law, religion, education, business, healthcare, etc.). As a social institution and cultural practice, sport has served as a contested site for the reproduction and resistance of racist beliefs, norms, systems, and outcomes. Throughout the history of sport in the U.S., numerous athletes, coaches, administrators, media, spectators, and community members have challenged racism on multiple levels. These intergenerational efforts embody the legacy of anti-racism, or intentional efforts to dismantle the systemic and everyday existence of racism in and through sport. This chapter presents anti-racism as a philosophy and framework for addressing racism in professional, intercollegiate, interscholastic, and youth sport in the 21st century.

Keywords: anti-racism, sport, deep level diversity, inclusion

Over the past several years, the United States (U.S.) has been unsettled by widespread protests due to the publicity of recorded killings of Black people at the hands of White law enforcement officers and, in select instances, White civilian vigilantes. More specifically, in the summer of 2020, the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement reached a zenith with calls for racial justice in the cases of George Floyd of Minneapolis, Minnesota, Breonna Taylor of Louisville, Kentucky, and Ahmaud Arbery of Brunswick, Georgia. Social institutions, from corporate businesses to schools to sport organizations, felt compelled to create and enhance their racial equity efforts. Several major sport organizations, including the National Basketball Association (NBA), Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), National Football League (NFL), Major League Baseball (MLB), Major League Soccer (MLS), National Hockey League (NHL), National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), and National Association of Stock Car Racing (NASCAR) to name a few engaged in various symbolic gestures to reflect their espoused commitment to combating racism in sport and society. Despite the veneer of sincerity, many questioned the timing, intentions, and long-term sustainability of these initiatives. Surface level efforts ranged from moments of silence before matches/games to the imprint of racial justice messages on fields and courts (e.g., Black Lives Matters, End Racism, etc.) to recorded statements and social media posts about the need for unity. More substantive efforts included financial contributions for social justice causes (i.e., NFL's $89 million support for The Players Coalition and pledges $250 million over 10 years[1]) to voter registration campaigns to the establishment of player led coalitions and committees on racial justice to the

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[1] The NFL's annual revenue for 2019-2020 season was $12.2 billion (Gough, 2021). Thus, the $250 million over a 10-year span for social justice causes is notable, but this amount is almost half of the 10-year contract signed by a single player in a league of nearly 1,700 players (Patrick Mahomes' 10-year contract is $450 million). In other words, based on the revenues generated by a predominantly Black league, I argue the investment in racial justice causes could and should be increased significantly if the message the league is trying to send is Black lives truly matter beyond being entertainment laborers.

adoption of diversity positions and policies (i.e., the NCAA's establishment of the Athletics Diversity and Inclusion Designee (ADAD) position) (Cooper et al., 2020). The recent proliferation of these efforts underscores the reality that these organizations, like the broader society in which they exist, are deeply rooted in racist ways of thinking (ideas, beliefs, attitudes, and values), doing (missions, visions, policies, rewards, penalties, etc.), and being (behavioral norms, practices, etc.). In other words, it took an international racial justice movement during a global pandemic and paramount economic pressures for sport organizations to be more explicit, invested, and committed to using their resources to challenge racial injustice. As such, it is timely to offer a paradigm shift from the colorblind racist status quo of sport organizations to an anti-racist transformational reality.

Time Overdue for a Racial Reckoning: Anti-Racism as a Philosophy for 21st Century Sport Organizations

In 2019, renowned historian Ibram X. Kendi published a best-selling book titled, *How to be an Anti-Racist.* Within this text, Kendi (2019) asserted that racism is not a static state of being but rather fluid in nature. Stated another way, people and institutions have the ability to be racist, non-racist, and/or anti-racist at different points in time. Depending on the extent to which anti-racism is embedded in leadership, policies and practices will determine whether, how, and when racial equity can be achieved in a given context. Anti-racist approaches are distinct from racist and non-racist actions because the former focuses on addressing racial inequities through policy changes (e.g., transforming systems and structures) rather than primarily via intra- and inter-personal dynamics (e.g.., changing beliefs, preferences, and attitudes). According to Kendi (2019), racist and non-racist actions are synonymous because both reiterate the status quo of racial inequities by not directly challenging and changing them.

Consequently, the outcomes of racist and non-racist actions are persisting racial inequities. The only difference between a racist and non-racist action is the explicit intent to maintain the status quo – the former (racist action) involves explicit, intentional harm to another racial group (i.e., racially exclusive practices such as the gentleman's agreement in MLB from the late 1800s through mid-1940s). Whereas the latter (non-racist action) refers to non-intentional behaviors that nonetheless contribute to the harm of another racial group (i.e., the NCAA's academic progress rate (APR) penalty structure).

In 2014, Donald Sterling, then owner of the Los Angeles Clippers of the NBA, was recorded saying he did not want Black fans at home games; he was communicating a racist belief. In his mind, Blacks were only valuable to him as laborers who could generate revenue for him (at the time, a majority of the team was Black [the star player was Chris Paul], and the head coach was Black [Doc Rivers]). Yet, the spectacle of the sport could only be enjoyed by those Sterling deemed as civil consumers (i.e., White fans). Sterling's view of Black people within a sporting context illustrates Hawkins' (2010) metaphor of big-time sports serving as a new plantation where elite Whites economically control and benefit from a predominantly Black athletic labor group, which has been the case with the NBA since the late 1970s. Unfortunately, Sterling's sentiments are not atypical of White professional sport franchise owners. Additional examples of prominent sport team owners communicating racist beliefs include a) former Cincinnati Reds owner Marge Schott referring to Black players as "million-dollar niggers" and "trained monkey" and players of Jewish backgrounds as "Jewish bastards" and "money-grubbing Jews" in the early 1990s (Shropshire, 1996, p. 24); b) former Houston Texans NFL team owner Bob McNair's reference to players who participated in the peaceful protests in 2016 as inmates who should not be able to run the prison (Darby, 2017), and c) former Washington NFL team owner Dan Snyder's longstanding opposition to changing the racist mascot until major sponsor FedEx threatened to end their partnership unless the mascot was retired (Dale, 2021) – thus reflecting the perpetuation of settler colonialism in U.S. sports (Chen & Mason, 2019).

The racist stereotype of Black people being inferior to Whites is also reflected in the perceptions of requisite leadership and cognitive traits possessed by those granted access to powerful positions within

sport organizations. For example, Al Campanis, former MLB executive director, stated in a nationally aired Nightline interview in 1987 that Blacks lacked the necessary skills and abilities to serve in leadership roles in baseball (Sailes, 2010; Shropshire, 1996). In 2021, a more recent controversy involving Rachel Nichols, former anchor of the Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) television show "NBA: The Jump," revealed a prevailing belief among many White sport industry professionals that Blacks are less qualified for top level positions. In an off-air recorded conversation, Nichols stated she felt the only reason her Black woman counterpart, Maria Taylor, was selected to serve as the lead anchor for the 2021 NBA Finals instead of her was due to ESPN's "crappy" record on diversity (Goldman, 2021). In other words, in Nichols' opinion, ESPN only granted Taylor the opportunity because of the public relations benefits that would come from having a Black woman on the air rather than affording Taylor the opportunity because of her merit and outstanding qualifications as a sports reporter. Nichols, who worked at ESPN in various roles between 2004-2013 and 2016-2021, was considered one of the women faces of NBA basketball reporting (along with Doris Burke – another White woman). Thus, Nicholas held a powerful and influential position as a White woman with the worldwide leader in sport network.

The fact that Nichols expressed these views in private, similar to former Cincinnati Reds owner Marge Schott in the early 1990s and former Los Angeles Clippers owner Donald Sterling in 2014, exposes how seemingly non-racist people and sport organizations harbor racist beliefs and these ideas influence organizational cultures and climates (see the post-ESPN recollections of Black sport journalists and reporters such as Jemelle Hill, Michael Smith, Chris Broussard, and Mike Hill to name a few). Shortly after Nichols' comments were publicized, she was relieved of her NBA reporting duties with ESPN. Beyond implicit bias training or reactive firings, after racist beliefs are publicized (one can only wonder if Nichols' views were not recorded yet known by ESPN producers if any reprimand would have been issued), anti-racist sport organizations must not only be committed to challenging racist beliefs through their hiring, retention, and promotion practices but also through their denunciation of the expression of racist beliefs in any context (private or public[2]). Furthermore, the fact that these examples of powerful White people in high-profile sport organizations expressed similar ideas across a 50-year time span underscores the deeply embedded nature and the pervasive acceptance of racist/non-racist beliefs within these milieus.

Moreover, the prevalence of racist beliefs held by several sport industry professionals also unveils how the ideology of White superiority among the leadership ranks of an organization can influence every aspect of its culture from employment policies and practices, marketing and branding, partnerships (private, public, and non-profit), sense of welcomeness and belonging, philanthropic efforts, and labor compensation to name a few (the concepts of racialized organizations, in general (Ray, 2019), and racialized sport organizations, more specifically (Keaton & Cooper, 2022) are discussed later. Although the concept of homologous reproduction has primarily been used in sport literature to examine systematic sexism in leadership positions (Cunningham & Sagas, 2008), I surmise this bias practice applies to race and racial ideologies. The fact that all major professional, intercollegiate, interscholastic, and youth sport leagues did not desegregate[3] on a national level until the early 1970s illustrates how racist beliefs are entrenched (and dare I say synonymous with) the structures and processes of mainstream (read: White) sport organizations dating back to the mid-1800s (Sailes, 2010). Since many sport organizations and the sport industry more broadly were founded under racially exclusionary/discriminatory premises, ideological and structural transformation are essential for achieving true diversity, equity, and inclusion (Cooper et al., 2020).

Beyond team owners, the proliferation of racist actions by individuals and organizations within sport is undeniable. For example, in 2021, then head coach and general manager of the Las Vegas Raiders,

2   Notable exceptions for the expression of racist beliefs should be during structured dialogue where personal and professional growth is centralized (i.e., diversity trainings).
3   The term integration is intentionally omitted here since my colleagues and I assert this action has not fully be enacted or pursued sincerely– see Cooper, Cavil, and Cheeks (2014) for additional discussion on this topic.

Jon Gruden, was forced to resign after a series of racist (and homophobic and sexist) emails were discovered by a non-NFL official (Damien, 2021). One of the emails referred to NFL Players Association (NFLPA) Executive Director DeMaurice Smith as "dumb" and described his facial features in terms of a 19th-century minstrel show caricature ("lips as big as Michelin tires"). Both these racial stereotypes (Blacks being innately less intelligent and possessing sub-human and animal-like features) have been ubiquitous in mainstream sports in the U.S. for over a century (Sailes, 2010). Hawkins (2010) noted how Black males are perpetually subjected to caricatures such as the sambo (immature and incompetent) and brute (animalistic) stereotypes, which have been used to justify their exploitation as athletes in sports while simultaneously denying them equal access to leadership positions. Not ironically, a head coach and general manager who just three years prior was awarded a 10-year $100 million contract knowingly (to those within the high ranks of the NFL) expressed these views and was not forced to resign until a journalist exposed him is very telling of the embedded racist culture in one of the highest profile professional sport leagues in the U.S. In other words, the timing and reasons for Jon Gruden's resignation suggest his comments were not antithetical to the sentiments of other NFL coaches, general managers, and team owners.

Even more troubling, the ubiquitous nature of such racist beliefs led to the creation and sustainment of the insidious practice of race norming. Race norming was a testing procedure enacted by NFL medical staff to assess the declining cognitive functioning of players (Paras, 2021). The underlying racist assumption that informed the baseline and subsequent test results was that Black players possessed innate cognitive functioning levels that were lower than non-Blacks, which meant the likelihood of Black players receiving compensation for concussion claims post-retirement was significantly lower than non-Black players. This irreprehensible practice directly resulted in significant economic deprivation from scores of Black players. Concomitantly, White players who were evaluated more equitably were provided access to economic remuneration for their concussion claims. As a result, the NFL's systematic discrimination through race norming for nearly half a century exacerbated Black players' health issues (e.g., suicide, dementia, abuse, family dissolutions, etc.), which caused irreparable harm to their families and communities.

Bear in mind that the practice of race norming was still being practiced when NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell issued a recorded statement saying the league condemns racism and the systematic oppression of Black people and believes in Black Lives Matter (Associated Press, 2020). These statements signified a preference for non-discrimination and the need for racial equality in the U.S. On the surface, this statement is non-racist. However, these sentiments were expressed during the Summer of 2020, over a year before the NFL officially ended its race norming practices. The tangible harms caused by covert racist policies and practices of sport organizations such as the NFL stands in stark contrast to their overt performative non-racist claims. The hypocrisy between the rhetoric (statements, gestures, and short-term actions) versus reality (policies, practices, and outcomes) of these sport organizations reveal what Kendi (2019) surmised as the inextricable connection between racist and non-racist actions in terms of material outcomes for groups subjected to racial oppression. Hence, this analysis of the NFL as a case study underscores the importance of understanding the connection between ideologies (i.e., White superiority), schemas (i.e., racist beliefs and attitudes), and structures (i.e., policies and practices that render racial inequities) for transforming systems from being racist or non-racist to anti-racist (Cooper et al., 2020; Kendi, 2019; Ray, 2019).

Anti-racist organizations assess racial equity based on policy outcomes rather than solely or primarily on intentions. In my work, I have recommended sport organizations adopt the A.R.C. of Justice framework as a tool for enacting anti-racism. Within the A.R.C. of Justice framework, sport organizations are called to enhance the following areas through policy and practice: a) five As agency, advocacy, allyship, activism, and alliances; b) five Rs: respectful relationships, representation, resources, redress, and results; c) five Cs: consciousness, care-to-conviction, cross-cultural collaborations, courage, and commitment (Cooper, forthcoming). Racist and non-racist organizations position the perspectives, needs, and

outcomes of privileged Whites at the core and those of Blacks, Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans at the periphery. In contrast, anti-racist organizations center the perspectives of stakeholder groups who have been historically marginalized at the core and measure organizational effectiveness based on the progress of these groups (i.e., reduced racial inequities). More specifically, an anti-racist approach would prioritize the insights of specific stakeholder groups from within (i.e., Black women across all levels of employment – entry level to senior leadership) and beyond (i.e., Black communities who experience intergenerational economic deprivation) their sport organization to signify an authentic commitment to inclusive excellence (Carter-Francique, 2018; Cooper, Newton, Klein, & Jolly, 2020).

Moving Beyond Surface-Level Diversity to Deep-Level Diversity

A cursory analysis of the racial demographics of ownership, management, coaches, administrative staff, media, and players across various sports signifies the prevailing racialized structure of these spaces. The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport (TIDES) has published Racial and Gender Hiring Report Cards for select professional and intercollegiate sport organizations since the late 1980s (TIDES, 2021). These reports assess the extent to which management and leadership levels of sport organizations reflect the racial diversity in the broader U.S. society. A consistent theme across the past four decades of TIDES reports is racial progress in sport organizations is gradual at best and stagnant at worst. White males continue to dominate a vast majority of the leadership positions in sport. Even though demographic shifts in the U.S. have changed drastically over this period, and currently, White males only constitute roughly 30% of the U.S. population (Villareal, 2021), they persistently represent over 50% of those in sport leadership positions (TIDES, 2021). In some cases, such as ownership of the NFL, NBA, NHL, MLB, MLS, NASCAR, and senior level leadership in the NCAA, White males constitute over 90% of key decision makers.[4] Stated differently, TIDES reports indicate sport leadership continues to lag behind the broader society in terms of diversity and inclusion at its highest ranks, reinforcing the prevailing racial hierarchy in the U.S. that disadvantages Blacks, Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans.

Notwithstanding, a noteworthy limitation of the TIDES reports is the grade assessment based on aggregating multiple racial groups with the term "people of color," which does not allow for a more nuanced analysis of which racial groups are represented at higher rates. For example, in a recent TIDES report, the following description is provided for how grades are calculated:

> The Institute issues the grades in relation to overall patterns in society. Federal affirmative action policies state the workplace should reflect the percentage of people in the racial group in the population. When we first published the Racial and Gender Report Card in the late 1980s, approximately 24 percent of the population was comprised of people of color. Thus, an A was achieved if 24 percent of the positions were held by people of color…The change in the nation's demographics has been dramatic with the most recent census making all people of color and minorities closer to 40 percent. To be fair in transition to the organizations and sports, we examine in the Racial and Gender Report Cards, we decided to increase the standards in two ways…To get an A for race, the category now needs to have 30 percent people of color. (Lapchick, 2021, p. 24)

The aggregation of multiple racial groups with the term "people of color" is intended to challenge hegemonic Whiteness. Still, the conflation of different racial groups and concurrent signification of collective racial progress can be problematic. Therefore, building on the benefits of the current TIDES reports, I posit an expanded anti-racist approach would assess grades based on the disaggregation of these racial

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4   The WNBA had 66.7% White ownership (male and female) and 33.3% people of color (TIDES, 2021). Although, these numbers are more racially diverse than other professional sport organizations in the U.S., these numbers are still starkly different than the 80.1% of WNBA players who are people of color. This racial disparity between players and owners reinforces the prevailing racial ideology of White superiority in terms ownership and leadership.

groups whereby if racial progress was noticeable with one group (i.e., Asian Americans) and not with others (i.e., African Americans) then multiple grades would be assessed to indicate which groups are progressing and which groups are either remaining stagnant or regressing. Elsewhere, I explained how the use of the term "of color" simplifies racism and racialized experiences and ignores the nuances of distinct types of oppression and discrimination, such as anti-Black racism (Cooper, 2016a). Bonilla-Silva (2018) described cultural racism as one of the four frames of colorblind racism practiced in the U.S. Similarly, I argue anti-racist actions must involve a level of attentiveness to how racism manifests itself in intersecting and distinctive ways for different groups. For example, a recent TIDES report revealed the NFL received a B grade for racial hiring (Laphick, 2021). This grade was issued based on the increased hiring of people of color for leadership positions. However, when one contrasts this B racial hiring grade with the fact that 0% of NFL owners are Black (zero out of 32), 15.6% of general managers (five out of 32) are Black, and .06% (two out of 32) of head coaches are Black in a league that is comprised of 58% Black players (Lapchick, 2021), then it is clear to see how persistent access discrimination for Blacks seeking leadership roles in the NFL is not fully captured in the methodology and reporting that calculates racial progress based on "people of color" (Cunningham et & Sagas, 2005; Cunningham, 2010).

By the end of the 2021-2022 regular season, there was only one Black head coach out of 32 NFL teams (Pittsburgh Steelers Head Coach Mike Tomlin). The irony of this reality is that Coach Tomlin is the only head coach in NFL history to begin his coaching career with 15 consecutive non-losing seasons (DeArdo, 2022). Coach Tomlin's feat surpasses the accomplishments of several White head coaches in the Hall of Fame. On the one hand, Coach Tomlin's success illustrates the promise of Black head coaches when and if granted the opportunity to demonstrate their prowess without racial barriers. On the other hand, the fact that Coach Tomlin is the only Black head coach in the NFL at the end of the 2021 regular season reflects the prevailing presence of Whiteness in professional sports whereby Blacks must be extraordinary to have comparable leadership opportunities while their White counterparts are held to a much lower standard (i.e., several White head coaches with losing records routinely are awarded subsequent head coaching opportunities including Adam Gase, Chip Kelly, Pat Shurmur, and Mike Mularkey to name a few) (Gallagher et al., 2021). Hence, advances in scholarship and industry practices that account for distinct forms of racism (i.e., anti-Black racism) reflect anti-racist approaches.

Although TIDES reports primarily provide information on surface-level diversity (i.e., biological or observable differences between groups) trends within sport organizations, this data should not be minimized or understated. Representation in leadership matters insofar as organizations of diversity are more likely to have improved decision-making capabilities, awareness of ever-changing marketplace trends in an increasingly global economy, and more favorable corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts than organizations of similarity (Cunningham & Melton, 2011; Cunningham, 2019). When racial diversity is present at the highest levels of leadership, it challenges the White superiority ideology on a symbolic level by showing how Blacks, Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans possess strong leadership skills and the trust of key sport stakeholders to elevate these organizations. It is important to note that representation, even in the highest levels of sport leadership, does not mean anything if not accompanied by authoritative power to enact transformative change. In other words, non-racist organizations typically use "diversity hires" to offset criticisms about their lack of commitment to diversity and inclusion. However, a major problem with representation without authoritative power is the perpetuation of the status quo, including racial inequities in organizational outcomes. Thus, anti-racist actions involve not only the hiring of high-level leaders who have influential power within an organization but also the infusion of a critical mass of diverse staff across all levels (particularly those above the entry level); hence, surface-level diversity does not inherently translate to true inclusion whereas deep-diversity increases in racial equity (Cooper, Newton, Klein, & Jolly, 2020).

Additionally, racial diversity in leadership can contribute to more racial equity and cultural inclusion by creating new policies and programming. For example, when the NCAA hired a former president of two historically Black colleges and universities (HBCUs; Virginia Union University and Livingstone College),

Dr. Bernard Franklin, as their Executive Vice President of Education and Community Engagement and Chief Inclusion Officer in 2003. He subsequently established several progressive initiatives, such as the Accelerating Academic Success Program (AASP) for limited resource institutions (LRIs), and organized the annual NCAA Inclusion Forum (NCAA, 2021). Prior to his appointment, HBCU athletic programs (now beneficiaries of the AASP) were not prioritized for financial support despite experiencing systemic economic deprivation since their inception (Cooper et al., 2014), and topics such as implicit bias workshops, ethnic heritage months, racial justice programming, and anti-racism were scarce to non-existent (NCAA, 2021). Dr. Franklin's impact on the NCAA's inclusion efforts typifies the benefit of pursuing anti-racist aims in sport leadership.

Notwithstanding, Smith and Hattery (2011) explained the need to examine the deeper ideologies and systems that produce racial disparities in sport leadership positions:

> ...little research exists on how social distance and symbolic racism processes may contribute to the continued racial segregation and lack of presence and power in leadership positions in sport management. While 'general' descriptive research may allow for an accurate depiction of the racial gap in the management of sport; research through the lens of race relations theories allows for a better understanding of what shaped and contributed to the racial gap. (p. 115)

Reflecting on this race-conscious approach, Singer, Harrison, and Bukstein (2010) utilized critical race theory (CRT) to analyze the data from the Black Coaches Association (BCA) Hiring Report Card (HRC) from 2004-2009. The authors concluded that process racism (Asante, 1988) adversely impacted Black coaching prospects, whereby they were not granted equitable opportunities for hiring in the recruitment (i.e., no consultation with the BCA to identify qualified Black candidates) or evaluation stages (e.g., underrepresentation of Black hiring search committee members, the unconscious and subconscious internalization of racist stereotypes about Black former athletes' coaching potential and abilities, short time frame between vacancy announcements and the hiring of the next coach begets a reliance of pre-established (read: White male) networks and general neglect of adherence to affirmative action policies) compared to their White counterparts (Singer et al., 2011). Along the same lines, Cunningham (2010) explained how the interplay of macro- (institutionalized practices, political climate, and stakeholder expectations), meso- (prejudice, discrimination, leadership stereotypes, and organizational culture of similarity), and micro-level (head coaching expectations and intentions, and turnover intentions) factors created a myriad of barriers for African American coaching prospects.

Both Singer et al.'s (2010) and Cunningham's (2010) research provide nuanced insight into the subtle ways institutionalized racism manifests in policies and practices, which precede observable outcomes such as coaching hires. When processes and norms are created by homologous in-groups, those deemed as out-group members are inherently disadvantaged. Furthermore, when sport organizations rely on tokenistic gestures to assuage critics of their de facto racist policies and practices, they deflect attention away from structural changes (deep-level diversity) that could lead to long-term racial equity towards cosmetic adaptations (surface-level diversity) that, at best, contribute to short-term gains and at worst exacerbate racial inequities (i.e., the long-term ineffectiveness of the NFL Rooney Rule). Singer et al. (2010) proposed two recommendations for redressing these pervasive issues. One recommendation involves using Title VII legislation or what Cooper, Mallery, and Macaulay (2020) refer to as legal activism to force sport organizations to engage in ethical and equitable practices. Another recommendation involves the strategic use of research grounded in CRT to inform improvements in procedural justice among these sport organizations (Singer et al., 2010). Relatedly, Cunningham (2010) surmised that sustained collection action across the macro-, meso-, and micro-levels, including various forms of activism (see Cooper (2021) for a detailed discussion on hybrid resistance and strategic responsiveness to interest convergence), would be necessary to transform sporting systems from their racist status quo to spaces where diversity and inclusion are truly embodied.

Multi-Facet Sport Organizational Challenges and Opportunities

The prevalence of racism within and around sport organizations extends beyond top-level leadership in professional or intercollegiate sport to include multiple stakeholders (e.g., parents, league organizers, media, communities, etc.). In a study of youth soccer culture, Manning (2020) found that despite the presence of surface-level diversity among league participants, explicit racist interactions and more covert racist actions still occurred. Assertions about biological differences between racial groups were routine in conversations about players' abilities even though volumes of scientific research have found that racial categories are a byproduct of social construction rather than biological facts (Smedley & Smedley, 2005). The uncritical acceptance of biological determinism and its connection to the myth of White European manifest destiny has been used to justify various human atrocities ranging from Native American geno- cide to Asian internment camps to transnational African enslavement to the criminalization of Latinos to international settler colonialism (Chen & Mason, 2019; Cooper, 2021; Sage & Eitzen 2009). Another problem with this reality is that these same fallacious biological deterministic views inform decisions related to youth sport funding opportunities, recruitment practices, medical resources, and positional assignments along racial lines (Coakley, 2017; Sage & Eitzen, 2009). These outcomes reflect the mate- rial consequences of structures grounded in racist ideologies. The fact that racial stereotypes are prev- alent as early as the youth sport level indicates the need for anti-racism efforts as soon as children can comprehend social messages.

In another study, Glover (2007) interviewed African American parents in Champaign, Illinois, who organized a separate youth baseball league due to policies of a White-controlled league that privileged White middle-class cultural norms and ignored implications for children from diverse racial and socio- economic backgrounds. For example, one salient finding from the study highlighted how the financial costs of participating in the White-controlled youth baseball league reduced access for Black families who did not possess the same economic resources (Glover, 2007). Coakley (2017) has noted how over the past three decades, the increased privatization of youth sports (i.e., pay to play model) as an exten- sion of neoliberalism and concurrent divestment in public recreation and interscholastic programs has resulted in reduced racial diversity in participation rates. Hence, without equitable representation and deep-level diversity considerations (e.g., differences in attitudes, values, cultures, beliefs, and practices), surface-level diversity and colorblind racism will continue to produce racial inequities, and true inclu- sion will remain elusive (Cooper et al., 2020).

Participants in Glover's (2007) study also explained how the de facto race neutral draft rules of the White-controlled league often resulted in Black children being one of the few of their race on a team, which contributed to feelings of isolation and experiences with stigmatization (i.e., the only Black player on the team must be faster than White players or less capable of playing pitcher because it is a "think- ing" position – racist stereotypes grounded in biological determinism; Sailes, 2010). The lack of aware- ness of and responsiveness to the experiences of Black youth baseball players who were the numerical minority in the White-controlled league resulted in policies and practices being established that adversely impacted them irrespective of intent (read: non-racist actions and colorblind racism). When Whites control and set the norms of a sport organization (which is the case for nearly all mainstream sports in the U.S. from youth to professional), forced assimilation, as opposed to true integration, is required for out-groups such as Blacks (Cooper et al., 2014). Glover (2007) poignantly explained the shortcomings of abstract liberal integrationist approaches:

> The real remedy for racial domination is not interracial contact to dispel stereotypes, but rather the transformation of power relations between Black and White people. Such a transformation necessarily requires the re-distribution of resources to address existing power imbalances between Blacks and Whites. (p. 205)

A historical example of the detrimental impact of assimilation (as opposed to true integration) on an

entire racial group is the dissolution of the Negro Leagues after MLB selectively recruited talented African Americans who were willing to embody White cultural norms (Lomax, 2014). This assimilationist approach reinforced the existing racial power imbalances. Rather an anti-racist transformational approach would have involved establishing a symbiotic partnership with Black baseball teams, businesses, and communities (Lomax, 2014). Another example of the ills of assimilation for Black people is the reduced economic viability and popularity of HBCU athletic programs after the 1970s when scores of historically White institutions (HWIs) began recruiting Black athletes (Cooper et al., 2014). Prior to assimilation, HBCU athletic programs were highly popular regionally and generated economic stimulation for local Black municipalities. However, post assimilation, many HBCUs have been forced to either disband their athletic programs or operate as LRIs, significantly reducing the quality of their sport offerings, recruitment, and overall competitiveness (Johnson, 2013). Racist and non-racist approaches champion colorblindness, assimilation, and abstract liberalism, whereas anti-racist organizations reflect true inclusion and enact policies that foster racial equity (Cooper, Newton, Klein, & Jolly, 2020).

Colorblind racist policies and practices are normalized at every level of mainstream sport in the U.S. Several researchers have noted racialized sport participation patterns where Whites are more likely to perceive feelings of welcomeness in a wider range of sports (e.g., basketball, football, baseball, soccer, lacrosse, golf, volleyball, swimming, etc.) than Blacks (basketball, football, and track and field) and Hispanics or Latinos (baseball and soccer) (Bopp et al., 2017; Harrison et al., 2002; Ogden, 2004; Ogden & Hilt, 2003). Harrison (2001) argued stereotypes, as social schemas, are largely responsible for racialized sport participation patterns in the U.S. In addition to stereotypes, structural factors such as socioeconomic status and access to resources have also been identified as key influences for racial differences in sport participation at the youth and interscholastic levels (Coakley, 2017; Eitle & Eitle, 2002; Sage & Eitzen, 2009). Therefore, youth and interscholastic sport organizations seeking to reflect anti-racist processes must be attuned to how current structures privilege certain racial groups and disadvantage others. In addition, anti-racist organizations must also be mindful of intersectionality, whereby the interplay of racism, sexism, and classism greatly influence sport participation experiences and outcomes (Carter-Francique, 2018).

At the intercollegiate level, Bimper and Harrison (2017) analyzed the organizational documents (e.g., websites, policies, etc.) of 62 Division I Football Bowl Subdivision (FBS) athletic programs. They found conspicuous omissions of explicit references to race or racial equity. Bimper and Harrison (2017) cogently expressed the danger of race omission or evasiveness in policies and practices when they said:

To this point, the adoption of colorblind directives suggests race and racism are marginally germane, at best, to the strategic leadership of intercollegiate athletics departments and their organization—stakeholder relationships…Likewise, the decontextualized and deracialized discourse ingrained and recycled by athletic departmental directives can preclude the critical adeptness necessary to combat racism and racist directive policies of athletic programs (p. 687).

If athletic departments are serious about fostering anti-racist and inclusive environments, then ignoring or downplaying the impact of systemic racism is not the answer. Hence, policies must be informed by the experiences and perspectives of those most disadvantaged by the status quo.

In addition to governance and management, this book will also examine the state of marketing and branding efforts, including CSR, within sport organizations to highlight the extent to which anti-racism is present or absent. For example, nearly two decades ago, Harrison (1998) cautioned sport marketing professionals from simply increasing the racial diversity of athletes in advertisements and promotions without a level of cultural sensitivity. Harrison (1998) argued that often sport advertisements and promotions not only reify "historical stereotypes, attitudes, feelings, and emotions" of racialized groups but also condition consumers to view these athletes and their communities in monolithic terms (p. 45). Along the same lines, Armstrong (1999) expressed the need for sport marketers and their organizations

to adapt their strategies to meet the needs of increasingly diverse consumer markets when she said:

Because of the increased cultural diversity America is undergoing, sport marketers and advertisers must be cognizant of the challenges presenting advertisements to consumers who do not want to give up their racial, cultural, and ethnic uniqueness in their consumptions and purchase behaviors, but instead want their identities validated and their uniqueness acknowledged and respected (Wilson & Gutierrez, 1985) (p. 284).

The balance between genuinely honoring and appealing to diverse racial and cultural groups and engaging in co-optation, pandering, and exploitative approaches is thin. Anderson and Martin (2019) posited that sport organizations tend to fall short of achieving their public relations aims through CSR when they fail to engage community stakeholders over time authentically. The "culturally appropriate manner" (Armstrong, 1999, p. 284) of deploying marketing and branding strategies is integral to fostering anti-racism in sport organizations in the 21st century.

The Need for a Paradigm Shift in Sport Organizations: From Racialized Structures to Anti-Racist Systems

Drawing from interdisciplinary research, Ray (2019) theorized that organizations are racial structures whereby meanings, positions, incentives, and penalties are emblematic ideological foundations. Within the racialized organizations model, Ray (2019) conceptualized the recursive relationship between the racial substructure (schemas), racial structure (rules and resources), and racial superstructure (racial ideology). The four tenets of racialized organizations include the diminishment of agency, legitimation of unequal resource distribution, racialization and credentialing, and racialized decoupling (Ray, 2019). Within the context of sport, Keaton and Cooper (2022) explained how racialized sport organizations function. In terms of diminished agency, Keaton and Cooper (2022) stated how Black athletic administrators, coaches, and college athletes experience a lack of self-efficacy to change the system in which they function. Formal rules and informal norms signal to them that any excessive critiques of the status quo can result in their disposability. Although Black stakeholders were the focus of her analysis this assertion can be applied to any racial group that has been subjected to historical oppression and contemporary marginalization in sport in the U.S., including Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans (Cooper et al., 2020). As such, these groups are expected to be grateful for the opportunity to participate or be employed in White-controlled spaces rather than seek to transform them (Keaton & Cooper, 2022).

Related to the legitimation of unequal resources, the principle of amateurism in big-time college sports and concurrent economic deprivation of HBCU athletic programs highlights how the NCAA justifies exploiting Black labor for White benefactors. Similar economic disparities are seen across sport participation levels (youth to professional) when economically elite Whites control them compared to racial groups facing oppressive conditions (Coakley, 2017; Sage & Eitzen, 2009). The Whiteness as a credential tenet is reflected in the perpetual over representation of Whites in leadership positions (e.g., governance, management, marketing and branding, athletic, medical support staff, etc.) compared to Blacks, Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans. Lastly, the decoupling of formalized rules is reflected in the differential treatment of White administrators, coaches, and athletes for certain violations compared to their Black counterparts (Keaton & Cooper, 2022). Several White college coaches such as Les Miles, Mike Leach, Steve Sarkisian, Lane Kiffin, and Urban Meyer, to name a few, have all violated NCAA and university policies, but subsequently, they were rehired for high profile positions (in some cases at the professional level). Whereas Black college coaches such as Kevin Ollie, Ty Willingham, Turner Gill, Charlie Strong, and Kevin Sumlin, to name a few, have been fired for far less severe violations (at times no violations at all) and subsequently denied access to similar positions. The theory of racialized organizations and its tenets (Ray, 2019) are useful analytic tools for understanding how and why sport organizations reproduce racial inequities (Keaton & Cooper, 2022). This book explores the nature of racialized organizations (governance, management, and marketing and branding) using various critical

theories and frameworks.

Related to racialized organizations, in my previous work, I have used Schein's (2010) organizational culture theory to analyze the extent to which racism (read: colorblind) or anti-racism (read: race conscious) approaches have been instituted in sport organizations (Cooper, 2013). Shropshire (1996) explained the importance of addressing racism at multiple levels within sport organizations when he said: "A recognition of the persistent existence of racism at conscious and unconscious levels is essential to improving the situation in American sports" (p. 33). More specifically, examining a sport organization's basic assumptions (e.g., taken-for-granted expectations, (in)visible scripts, resource allocation, etc.), espoused beliefs and values (e.g., mission statement, core values, policies, etc.), and artifacts (e.g., symbols, rituals, climate, physical environments, etc.) will reveal its core purpose and priorities. For example, sport organizations that promote racist mascots, traditional songs, flags, statutes, colorblind mission statements and policies, ahistorical and mythical narratives of their histories, and racial inequities in resource allocation reinforce Whiteness rather than foster anti-racism and multiculturalism. More recently, there has been a noticeable shift in theoretical interventions in the examination of race, racism, anti-racism, and sport. Theories such as the internal colonization model (Hawkins, 2010), world-systems theory (Smith, 2009), critical race theory (Bimper & Harrison, 2017; Carrington, 2010; Glover, 2007; Hylton, 2007; Singer, 2005, 2020), anti-Blackness (Comeaux & Grummert, 2020), and race-centric ecological systems theories (Cooper, 2019) have shifted the paradigm in sport research. Prior to this shift, common theories in sport research were grounded in functionalism, conflict, and interactionist foundations (Coakley, 2017; Sage & Eitzen, 2009) with less substantive attention to the ways in which race and racism shape organizational processes and outcomes. Thus, the contribution of this book offers nuanced analyses of the racialized nature of sport organizations and promote innovative and timely recommendations for how these entities can enact anti-racism in ideology, structure, and schemas (Keaton & Cooper, 2022; Ray, 2019).

The structure of this book is organized into three sections: a) Governance (Chapters 2-3), b) Management (Chapters 4-5), and c) Marketing and Communications (Chapters 6-8). Sport organizations across the youth, interscholastic, intercollegiate, and professional levels are examined and discussed. In Chapter 2, Lori Martin explores racial issues in youth and interscholastic sports. Using data from the ASPEN Institute, Martin explains how the tenet of racial realism from critical race theory (CRT) (Bell, 1992), the excellence beyond athletics (EBA) framework (Cooper, 2016b), and the Advancement of Blacks in Sport (ABIS) organization provide valuable insights into how anti-racism can be optimized at the youth and interscholastic levels. In Chapter 3, Joy Gaston Gayles, Wayne Black, Ezinne Ofoegbu, and Dion Harry examine the intersection of race, athletic capitalism, and governance issues in intercollegiate athletics. Gaston-Gayles, Black, Ofoegbu, and Harry present recommendations for transforming intercollegiate athletic governance from a system of racism, anti-Blackness, and exploitation to a system grounded in common humanity, anti-racism, and equity.

In Chapter 4, Rhema Fuller examines the prevalence of racism and inequities in youth and interscholastic sports from a management perspective. Specifically, Fuller highlights how two sport organizations, The Ross Initiative in Sports for Equality (RISE) and King County Play Equity Coalition, exemplify anti-racism through their youth sport programming efforts. In Chapter 5, Eddie Comeaux, Dresden June Frazier, and Briana A. Savage discuss the importance of critical research that centralizes the interplay between intercollegiate athletics, racism, and anti-Blackness. The authors explain how it is important to explore the distinct ways in which racism impacts the experiences of Black, Latinx, Asian, Pacific Islander, and Native American athletes and athletic staff. The authors conclude the chapter with a presentation of practical strategies and tools for combating anti-Blackness and racism in intercollegiate athletic spaces.

In Chapter 6, C. K. Harrison, Whitney Griffin, Amanda Schweinbenz, and Kristina Szabo present an innovative approach to athlete branding with a focus on examining their development during and after their athletic careers. With the recent changes in laws and rules regarding athletes' rights to their name,

image, and likeness (NIL), the authors' presentation of multiple exemplar former athletes who have excelled in careers after their athletic careers concluded underscore the importance of adopting frameworks that account for the influence of cultural memory, race, and sport. In Chapter 7, Drew Brown utilizes critical race theory (CRT) to examine how mainstream sport commercials undermine anti-racism efforts by reinforcing the "rags to riches," and the humble beginnings stereotype associated with Black athletes. Brown asserts anti-racist marketing efforts must include Black creators and influencers during the idea generation and activation processes to ensure racist tropes are not reproduced consciously or subconsciously. Finally, in Chapter 8, Shaun Anderson explores the role of anti-racism in sport corporate social responsibility (CSR) efforts. Given the shift in focus and intensity of social justice initiatives from sport organizations during the summer of 2020, Anderson explains how there is a difference between performative public relations and authentic CSR initiatives that contribute to redressing racial and social injustices within and beyond sporting spaces. Collectively, the chapters in this book advance our collective understanding of how to pursue and achieve long-term substantive change as measured by racial equity through anti-racist ideologies, theories, leadership, strategies, structures, policies, and practices.

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