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The Influence of Race on Attitudes about College Athletics

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Abstract

The questions of whether college student-athletes should be paid and/or allowed to unionize have generated a wide-ranging national debate. Public opinion on these issues is starkly divided along racial lines with African Americans being dramatically more supportive than non-African Americans. Druckman and Rodheim posit that the race gap stems from fundamentally distinct mindsets. African Americans view pay for play and unionization as mechanisms to enhance educational experiences and hence as a form of affirmative action. Non-African Americans, in contrast, focus on the extent to which they enjoy the consumption value of college athletics. The researchers present results from a nationally representative survey experiment that supports their expectations. They also find that non-African Americans can be swayed to employ a more race based lens on these issues, although this re-framing does not diminish the attitudinal race gap. They conclude with a discussion about race, sports, and public opinion.

The Influence of Race on Attitudes about College Athletics

Should college athletes be paid, i.e., “pay for play”? Should they be allowed to unionize, ensuring universities treat them as employees rather than students? These questions have generated a vigorous national debate about the role and rights of student-athletes.¹ While the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) recently expanded financial benefits for student-athletes, it continues to staunchly oppose extensive pay for play and unionization (Auerbach 2014: 3; also see Armour 2013, Tarm 2014, Trahan 2014). This coheres with the fan base: public opinion polls show that only about 33 percent support paying college athletes and only 47 percent favor of unionization (Prewitt 2014).² Underlying these numbers, however, is a perplexing racial divide such that non-whites exhibit substantially more support (with 51 percent supporting pay for play and 66 percent supporting unionization) (Prewitt 2014; also see Mondello et al. 2014).

What explains this racial divide? What role do racial considerations play in opinion formation processes? In what follows, we argue that African Americans view pay for play and unionization as a mechanism for affirmative action. In contrast, non-African Americans do not view the issues through the lens of race but rather focus on the extent to which they enjoy the consumption value of college athletics. While a re-framing of the issues can sway non-African Americans to alter the basis of their opinions, it does not reduce racial divisions. We offer supportive data from a nationally representative survey experiment, and conclude with a discussion of race, education, and public opinion.

College Sports and Race

Debates concerning the criteria used for college admissions are wide-ranging; among the most heated points of disagreement concerns the consideration of an applicant’s race. For most schools, race can play a role only if substantiated as a method to ensure diversity.³ This leads

supporters of affirmative action in education to focus on other admission criteria that correlate with minority status (e.g., income and athletics). For example, in her dissent of the Supreme Court's decision to uphold a Michigan ban on affirmative action for public universities, Justice Sonia Sotomayor cited athletics, *inter alia*, as a criterion that can be used in admission decisions (see <http://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/pdf/12-682.pdf>).

The idea that athletic scholarships serve as a form of affirmative action tracks “the generally held view [that] the beneficiaries of affirmative action athletic scholarships are mainly African Americans” (Fobanjong 2001: 128; also see Dolinsky 2001). Relative to their proportion in colleges, African Americans receive a disproportionate number of athletic scholarships. For example, in 2007-8, African Americans received nearly 23% of athletic scholarships but they made up about 12% of the student population (Kantrowitz 2011). No other racial/ethnic group had its percentage of athletic scholarships exceed its percentage among the student bodies.⁴

Athletic scholarships include such supports as tutoring; yet, to many, scholarships provide insufficient resources to ensure a good education. One NCAA student-athlete explains, “[t]he average full scholarship, which pays for tuition, housing, and food... isn't enough to cover inevitable, out-of-pocket expenses that a normal college student has... the average Division 1 athlete actually dedicates about 40 hours a week to athletic endeavors [which makes it] impossible for a student-athlete to [have a job]... Providing monetary compensation sufficient to cover expenses... would allow student athletes to continue to compete at the college level while also completing a meaningful, not token education” (Anonymous 2014: 9-10). Approximately 85% of scholarship student-athletes live below the federal poverty line, leading to decreased graduation rates (Nance-Nash 2011; also see Huma and Staurowsky 2011). While African-Americans would not constitute the majority of the beneficiaries, they may well be perceived as

the most important potential recipients: “college sports persistently disadvantage Black male student-athletes... conferences should commit a portion of proceeds earned from championships and other revenue sources back to member institutions for programing and other interventions that aim to improve racial equity within and beyond sports” (Harper et al. 2013: 1, 16; also see Funk 1991). In short, an argument for pay for play and unionization is that the additional finances and benefits (e.g., medical) would promote educational success, particularly for African-Americans. It thus can be viewed as part of an affirmative action initiative “designed to help blacks and other minorities get better jobs and education (e.g., a college education)” (Pew Research Center 2009). *Consequently, if an individual views pay for play and unionization as part of extended affirmative action programs, then the more he/she supports affirmative action, the more he/she will support pay for play and unionization.*

Individuals are more likely to view pay for play and unionization in this light when they take the perspective of the main beneficiaries, who, given relative proportions, are African Americans. The theory of linked fate argues that there is an “acute sense of awareness (or recognition) that what happens to the group will also affect the individual member” (Simien 2005: 529; also see, e.g., Gay and Tate 1998, Herring et al. 1999). The implication is that African Americans will focus on the beneficiaries since they are part of the same group, leading them to think in terms of the accrued affirmative action benefits.⁵ In addition to linked fate, African Americans are more likely to take the perspective of affirmative action, due to historical experiences. Blackstone (cited in Putterman 2014: 1) states, “Black folks much more easily identify with the majority of athletes... They have more emotional understanding, political understanding of the mechanisms of college athletics.” Similarly, sociologist Aldon Morris explains that whites will more likely sympathize with the managerial interests like the

University, while African-Americans will relate to the working-class perspective of the student-athletes. He continues that for whites, thinking of “athletes as workers, as employees goes against their view of the benign, embracing culture of their university...” (Putterman 2014: 1). Thus, we predict that *African Americans will be significantly more likely, than others, to view pay for play and unionization as a type of affirmative action and their opinions on the issues will reflect their affirmative action views.*

Instead of viewing the issues through the lens of affirmative action, non-African Americans will think more about the overall product: college sports. If they value that product – that is, they are fans – they will be more likely to support the NCAA perspective. As NCAA President Mark Emmert explains, “one of the biggest reasons fans like college sports is that they believe the athletes are really students who pay for a love of the sport... To convert college sports into professional sports would [lead to a product that is not] successful either for fan support or for the fan experience” (Dahlberg 2014: 1).⁶ He further states that “No, it will not happen – not while I’m president of the NCAA” (cited in Mondello et al. 2014: 109). In short, pay for play and unionization would have potentially deleterious effects on the product which most non-African Americans perceive. Thus, the more such individuals care about the product, the more they oppose the policies. We predict that *for non-African Americans, support for pay for play and unionization will decrease as being a fan increases.*

Framing

A large literature suggests that individuals’ opinions shift when presented with a re-framing of an issue. For example, the presentation of welfare provisions as promoting equality causes people to support increased welfare. When instead described in terms of increased taxes, support declines (Sniderman and Theriault 2004; for a review, see Klar et al. 2013). Lewis and

Weaver (2013: 1) explain that “Sports journalists can and do employ various frames that emphasize specific content in their stories; but the influence these frames have on subsequent audience evaluations pertaining to athletes features within them is unknown.” Aside from these authors, scant research has explored the impact of frames on sports attitudes. In recent times, common frames have evolved from those emphasizing game statistics and performance (e.g., Nixon 2014) to a greater focus on individual players and their stories/struggles (Lewis and Weaver 2013). We focus on the impact of an affirmative action frame that highlights how pay for play and unionization ensures educational success for student-athletes (particularly African Americans). We predict that *exposure to an affirmative action frame will increase the salience of affirmative action in the formation of pay for play and unionization attitudes*. This is relevant particularly for non-African American individuals given we expect affirmative action considerations to matter sans a frame for African American individuals.

We expect African Americans to exhibit substantially more overall support for pay for play and unionization – consistent with the aforementioned polls. This follows since African Americans base their opinions on affirmative action considerations, and nearly unanimously support programs when explicitly tied to jobs and education (Pew Research Center 2009, 2014). In contrast, non-African Americans will inevitably be more variable – with a lower overall mean – in the extent to which they are “fans of college sports,” and since this will drive overall support, such support will be lower. Even when re-framed to an affirmative action perspective, non-African Americans will still be less supportive since their support of affirmative action is relatively lower: between 55% and 70% are supportive (Pew Research Center 2009, 2014). Thus, the racial gap in overall support will not disappear with a re-framing.⁷

Survey Experiment

We tested our hypotheses with an experiment embedded in a nationally representative survey in the United States (implemented over the Internet) with a total of 1,555 participants.⁸ The data were collected from July 23rd to July 30th, 2014, which preceded reforms that enable five NCAA conferences to have increased autonomy in rule-making allowing for increased student-athlete subsidies and improved medical coverage.

There are three key components to our survey experiment. First, our central dependent variables were questions about support for pay for play and unionization. The former asked, “Recently, a proposal has been made that would allow student-athletes to receive pay – akin to salaries – beyond their existing scholarships. To what extent do you oppose or support this proposal?” with answers on a 7-point fully labeled scale ranging from strongly oppose to strongly support. The latter asked, “To what extent do you oppose or support efforts to unionize college athletics, so that student-athletes can then negotiate (and collectively bargain) about their working conditions?” again with a 7-point fully labeled response scale from strongly oppose to strongly support. Both wordings resemble those used in prior surveys (e.g., Prewitt 2014; Mondello et al. 2014), although unlike some previous work we allowed a wider array of responses rather than simply “yes” or “no.”

Second, we measured affirmative action support and the extent to which respondents were sports fans. For affirmative action, we focused on educational opportunities: “To what extent do you oppose or support affirmative action programs designed to help blacks and other minorities get better jobs and education (e.g., such as a strong college education?)” with answers on a 7-point labeled scale from strongly oppose to strongly support. Our college sports fan question asked: “On a scale on which a five means you are ‘a very big college sports fan’ and a one means you have ‘absolutely no interest in college sports,’ in general, how big of a college

sports fan are you?” (We asked these two questions at the start of the survey and they were followed with a host of unrelated questions, prior to our experiment.)

We included various independent control variables including self-identified racial and ethnic group (which we used to identify African-American respondents of which there were 67), age (on a 6-point scale that included age ranges), gender, education (on a 5-point scale that gauged highest level of education), income (on a 5-point scale that included income ranges), ideology (on a 7-point scale with higher scores indicating increased conservativeness), and racial prejudice (which merged four questions from the Modern Racism Scale with higher scores indicating greater prejudice; see, e.g., McConahay 1983). Exact question wording can be found in the appendix.

Finally, to test our framing prediction, we randomly assigned respondents to one of three conditions. The control condition asked the aforementioned questions (N = 566). Our affirmative action frame condition (N = 496) began with this statement:

As you may know, there is an ongoing debate about whether college athletes should be paid salaries beyond their scholarships. This is related to a debate on whether student-athletes should be allowed to unionize so as to collectively bargain. We are interested in what you think.

A recent report by the National College Players Association found that 85% of student-athletes on full scholarships continue to live below the federal poverty line; in contrast, men’s college football and basketball generates \$6 billion in annual revenues. Unionization would help student-athletes have access to important benefits like medical care and guaranteed four-year scholarships. These provisions would ensure student-athletes, from all backgrounds, have the resources needed to have a successful and quality educational experience.

This is a frame because it emphasizes the considerations of needed additional educational supports as a primary criterion in thinking about pay for play and unionization; we refer to it as the “affirmative action frame” (e.g., Nance-Nash 2011). Additionally, the reference to poverty

likely will prime racial considerations as poverty has long been seen as a “race-coded” word (see Gilens 1999: 69, 2003, Clawson and Kegler 2000).⁹

We included a third condition that utilized a distinct frame, which focused on considerations of added benefits, (N = 493) that read:

As you may know, there is an ongoing debate about whether college athletes should be paid salaries beyond their scholarships. This is related to a debate on whether student-athletes should be allowed to unionize so as to collectively bargain. We are interested in what you think.

This would be pay beyond their current scholarship – which most estimates place as being worth roughly \$200,000 over four years. The pay would help student-athletes better defray costs of miscellaneous living expenses and support their families. Additionally, unionization would help student-athletes ensure access to more benefits that would make their lives a bit easier.

We do not expect this frame, which we refer to as “benefits frame,” to affect opinion formation.

We include it as another baseline of comparison, in part, because if differences between the affirmative action frame and control condition were found, we would not otherwise be able to assess whether the presence of any argument/frame would influence opinion (see Druckman 2001).

We pre-tested our frames and found that (student) respondents – who did not participate in the main survey experiment – rated the affirmative action frame as significantly more “effective.”¹⁰ In an open ended thought listing question where respondents listed what came to mind, 65% listed affirmative action or something similar versus 2% for the benefits frame.

Results

Given that we measured our primary dependent variables on 7-point symmetric scales, any score greater than a “4” indicated some level of support. Consistent with other surveys, we find that 37.41% support pay for play and 34.92% support unionization (e.g., Prewitt 2014, Mondello et al. 2014).¹¹ When we divide support by race, we replicate the aforementioned large

racial divide with African American respective support being 81.25% and 76.19%.¹² We also see a large racial divide on support for affirmative action with 82.09% of African Americans being supportive compared to 41.04% of non-African Americans (see Pew Research Center 2009, 2014).¹³

[Insert Table 1 About Here]

To test our hypotheses, we regress (using ordered probits) our dependent variables on our main explanatory variables. The dependent variables remain on 1-7 scales; we re-scaled all the independent variables so they ranged from 0 to 1. In Table 1, we present the results for support for pay for play.¹⁴ The first regression, which merges data from all conditions, reveals a strong race effect with a large and significant coefficient for African Americans. We also find that support significantly increases as individuals become more in favor of affirmative action programs, and decreases as racial prejudice, being a college sports fan, and conservative ideology increase.¹⁵ These findings suggest a strong racial component to pay for play – opinions are substantially influenced not just by the race of the respondent but also policy and affective dimensions of race. The decreased support among college sports fan coheres with our expectation (although see <http://www.cbssports.com/collegefootball/writer/jon-solomon/24597455/ncaa-expert-69-of-public-opposes-paying-college-players>). The ideology finding likely reflects conservatives being less supportive of “labor” which characterizes college student-athletes (see Putterman 2014). The next model adds an interaction variable between race and affirmative action attitudes; its significance, along with the now insignificance of the African American variable, shows that it is affirmative action attitudes that drive African American opinion.

We directly test our hypotheses with the distinct regressions for each experimental condition. The models for the control and benefit frame condition mirror one another. As predicted, the more one is a college sport fan, the less he/she supports pay for play. Conservative ideology continues to have a negative relationship with pay for play attitudes. As we hypothesized, affirmative action attitudes are not significant, *except for African Americans*, even if only marginally significant in the case of the benefits frame condition (and, in both conditions, the race main effect is not significant). This affirms that there differential criteria employed in opinions formation with whites thinking about the entire product of sport (e.g., the fan result) and African Americans employing an affirmative action policy frame of reference.¹⁶

To assess the substantive impact of these findings, we generated predicted probabilities of supporting pay for play (i.e., a score above a “4”) for various scenarios.¹⁷ First, we merged the control and benefits frame model (since the two models replicated one another), and set all values to their means other than African American and the African American X affirmative action interaction, both of which we set to 0. This then represented a predicted probability for an “average” non-African American respondent and came to a .35 probability of supporting pay for play. In contrast, if we look at African American respondents, setting their mean support for affirmative action (in the interaction and main effect variables), we find a .64 probability of supporting pay for play.¹⁸ As we posited, this explains the race gap in opinion: non-African American support for pay for play stems from views about the product of college sports (being a fan) rather than attention to affirmative action. This results in fairly low levels of overall support. In contrast, African Americans take an affirmative action perspective, and since average support for affirmative action is so high among African Americans, they consequently exhibit high levels of support for pay for play.

When we turn to the affirmative action frame condition we find a dramatic shift in attitudes. We find strong support for our hypothesis that the frame primes individuals to base their opinions on their views of affirmative action: the coefficient is large and significant. Also, the interaction between African American and affirmative action views falls to insignificance because all respondents (and not just African Americans) are thinking through the lens of affirmative action. The significance of the prejudice variable accentuates the racialization of the issue – in short, the frame racialized pay for play leading individuals to think about both their policy beliefs (affirmative action) and affect towards African Americans (prejudice).¹⁹ The frame also vitiates the impact of being a fan and ideology, as both variables are no longer significant. The final regression – which merges all data and adds interactions between the affirmative action frame condition and the key explanatory variables of fan and affirmative action view – confirm that the differences between the control and benefits frame conditions against the affirmative action frame condition (regarding the impact of fan and affirmative action views) are in fact significant.

Interestingly, this re-framing, however, does *not* attenuate the racial gap in opinion. If we set each value at its mean and again looking at an “average” non-African American, the predicted probability of support remain .35 – because the prejudice effect counteracts the affirmative action effect, which even itself does not lead to tremendous support given non-African American opinion is mixed on affirmative action. Moreover, even if we set the affirmative action variable to its maximum, non-African American support rises to only .45 (nowhere near the levels of support found among African Americans). In sum, the results reveal that African Americans and non-African Americans use different frames of reference – with non-African Americans taking a fan and ideology perspective and African Americans employing a

race frame. However, even when non-African Americans are re-framed to take a racial perspective, the race gap does not disappear because support for affirmative action (and opposition to prejudice) are much higher among African Americans. Race dramatically shapes individuals' mindsets but the racial disparity in opinion persists even when mindsets are changed due to varying affirmative action and prejudice attitudes.

[Insert Table 2 About Here]

In Table 2, we present the support for unionization results; they virtually replicate the pay for play results, which is not surprising given the high correlation between the two variables (see note 12). The only notable exception is the lack of significance for the African-American and affirmative action view interaction in the benefits model, although it trends in the correct direction and approaches significance. Other exceptions are that age is significant and negative in the full sample model and the ideology is significant in the affirmative action frame model. The latter result likely reflects the long-standing connection between ideology and unions in general. Otherwise, the coefficients themselves are even very similar in size (with perhaps the most noted difference being the prejudice coefficient is a bit larger and the African-American X affirmative action interaction being smaller). The substantive shifts closely resemble those found in the pay for play models (albeit with the support percentages being a bit lower).

Our results clearly show that African Americans view these widely debated policy issues in a distinct light compared to non-African Americans. The affirmative action perspective that they employ explains the high level of support, since African Americans strongly support affirmative action policies. Even when non-African Americans are exposed to a frame that alters their perspective, they continue to exhibit less support due to their differential racial attitude.

Future work is needed to expand on our findings in a number ways. This includes investigating attitudes on a sport specific basis (e.g., revenue versus non-revenue sports), among distinct populations (e.g., coaches, athletic administrators, boosters; see Schneider 2000), and tracking the evolution of opinions over time, as the NCAA and universities institute new policies.²⁰ Finally, there is the obvious question of whether pay for play and/or unionization would in fact enhance educational opportunities.

Conclusion

We began by posing a question about the documented race gap in public support for pay for play and unionization of athletes. We demonstrated a fundamental difference in how African Americans and non-African Americans view college athletes and education. Non-African Americans seem to view college sports as a consumption product to enjoy and the more they value that product (i.e., the more they are fans), the less they support reforms that could alter it. In contrast, African Americans view college athletes as a form of affirmative action that, with enhanced benefits, can ensure greater educational opportunities. These differing perspectives lead to a race gap since African Americans strongly support affirmative action while non-African Americans are more variable when it comes to “being a fan.” The race gap also remains when non-African Americans are primed to consider a race perspective since their support for affirmative action is relatively lower and racial prejudice also comes into play. In sum, the race gap reflects differing perspectives, but even when re-framed to a single perspective that focuses on race, attitudes still dramatically differ.

Our results are a manifestation of a complex historical narrative about race, affirmative action, and sports. It also speaks to a regularly discussed concern about the over-representation of African Americans among athletes relative to their underrepresentation among management

(e.g., coaches, University administrators). In this sense, the findings reflect the tip of the iceberg in terms of understanding the experiences and perspectives that come into play. More directly, it also shows a divide on the widely debated issues of pay for play and unionization that is unlikely to soon evaporate.

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Appendix: Question Wording

Recently, a proposal has been made that would allow student-athletes to receive pay – akin to salaries – beyond their existing scholarships. To what extent do you oppose or support this proposal?

_____ *strongly oppose* _____ *moderately oppose* _____ *slightly oppose* _____ *neither oppose nor support nor important* _____ *slightly support* _____ *moderately support* _____ *strongly support*

To what extent do you oppose or support efforts to unionize college athletics, so that student-athletes can then negotiate (and collectively bargain) about their working conditions?

_____ *strongly oppose* _____ *moderately oppose* _____ *slightly oppose* _____ *neither oppose nor support* _____ *slightly support* _____ *moderately support* _____ *strongly support*

To what extent do you oppose or support affirmative action programs designed to help blacks and other minorities get better jobs and education (e.g., such as a strong college education)?

_____ *strongly oppose* _____ *moderately oppose* _____ *slightly oppose* _____ *neither oppose nor support* _____ *slightly support* _____ *moderately support* _____ *strongly support*

On a scale on which a five means you are “a very big college sports fan” and a one means you have “absolutely no interest in college sports,” in general, how big a college sports fan are you?

_____ *1* _____ *2* _____ *3* _____ *4* _____ *5*
absolutely no interest *somewhat of a fan* *very big fan*

Are you male or female?

_____ *male* _____ *female*

Which of the following do you consider to be your primary racial or ethnic group (*you may check more than one*)?

_____ *white* _____ *african american* _____ *asian american* _____ *hispanic* _____ *native american* _____ *other*

What is your age?

_____ *under 18* _____ *18-24* _____ *25-34* _____ *35-50* _____ *51-65* _____ *over 65*

What is your estimate of your family’s annual household income (before taxes)?

< \$30,000 \$30,000 - \$69,999 \$70,000-\$99,999 \$100,000-\$200,000 >\$200,000

Which point on this scale best describes your political views?

_____ very liberal _____ moderately liberal _____ somewhat liberal _____ moderate _____ somewhat conservative _____ moderately conservative _____ very conservative

What is your highest level of education?

_____ less than high school _____ high school _____ some college _____ 4 year college degree _____ advanced degree

Prejudice Measures. Now we'll present you with a few more statements. After each one, we would like you to tell us how strongly you agree or disagree. The first statement is:

“Irish, Italians, Jewish and many other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors.”

Do you...

_____ agree strongly _____ agree somewhat _____ neither agree nor disagree _____ disagree somewhat _____ disagree strongly

“Generations of slavery and discrimination have created conditions that make it difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class.”

Do you...

_____ agree strongly _____ agree somewhat _____ neither agree nor disagree _____ disagree somewhat _____ disagree strongly

“Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve.”

Do you...

_____ agree strongly _____ agree somewhat _____ neither agree nor disagree _____ disagree somewhat _____ disagree strongly

“It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder they could be just as well off as whites.”

Do you...

_____ agree strongly _____ agree somewhat _____ neither agree nor disagree _____ disagree somewhat _____ disagree strongly

Table 1: Support for Pay for Play

	Full Sample (Model 1)	Full Sample (Model 2)	Control (Model 3)	Benefits Frame (Model 4)	Affirmative Action Frame (Model 5)	Full Sample (Model 6)
African American	.75*** (.15)	-.64 (.51)	-1.18 (.87)	-.54 (.97)	-.11 (.88)	-.62 (.51)
Affirmative Action View	.27** (.12)	.22* (.12)	.08 (.21)	.20 (.20)	.54*** (.22)	.11 (.13)
Prejudice	-.53*** (.18)	-.53*** (.18)	-.28 (.31)	-.45 (.32)	-1.11*** (.35)	-.52*** (.19)
Fan	-.33*** (.09)	-.33*** (.09)	-.27* (.16)	-.61*** (.17)	-.13 (.16)	-.44*** (.11)
Age	-.16 (.13)	-.17 (.13)	-.25 (.22)	-.33 (.25)	.06 (.23)	-.17 (.13)
Female	-.04 (.06)	-.04 (.06)	-.06 (.10)	-.02 (.11)	-.07 (.11)	-.04 (.06)
Education	-.06 (.13)	-.06 (.13)	-.03 (.22)	-.12 (.23)	-.18 (.24)	-.09 (.13)
Income	.02 (.11)	.03 (.11)	-.04 (.18)	.06 (.19)	.08 (.19)	.04 (.11)
Ideology	-.54*** (.13)	-.55*** (.13)	-.51** (.21)	-.78*** (.23)	-.19 (.24)	-.53*** (.13)
African American X Affirmative Action View	--	1.79*** (.62)	2.19** (1.01)	2.03* (1.24)	1.43 (1.12)	1.78*** (.63)
Affirmative Action Frame	--	--	--	--	--	-.41*** (.15)
Affirmative Action Frame X Fan	--	--	--	--	--	.34* (.19)
Affirmative Action Frame X Affirmative Action View	--	--	--	--	--	.36* (.20)
Cut-Points:	See Below	See Below	See Below	See Below	See Below	See Below
Log-likelihood	-2574.69	-2570.39	-929.42	-786.72	-822.00	-2566.52
Number of observations	1404	1404	508	442	454	1404

Note: Entries are ordered probit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

*** $p \leq .01$; ** $p \leq .05$; * $p \leq .10$; + $p \leq .11$ (two-tailed tests). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 1 are: -1.42 (.22), -1.07 (.22), -.81 (.22), -.41 (.22), -.09 (.22), .33 (.22). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 2 are: -1.45 (.23), -1.10 (.22), -.85 (.22), -.45 (.22), -.12 (.22), .30 (.22). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 3 are: -1.31 (.39), -.96 (.39), -.71 (.39), -.33 (.39), -.05 (.39), .29 (.39). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 4 are: -1.80 (.39), -1.48 (.39), -1.22 (.39), -.81 (.39), -.56 (.39), -.20 (.39). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 5 are: -1.39 (.40), -.99 (.40), -.74 (.40), -.31 (.40), .18 (.40), .83 (.40). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 6 are: -1.60 (.23), -1.24 (.23), -.99 (.23), -.59 (.23), -.26 (.23), .16 (.23).

Table 2: Support for Unionization

	Full Sample (Model 1)	Full Sample (Model 2)	Control (Model 3)	Benefits Frame (Model 4)	Affirmative Action Frame (Model 5)	Full Sample (Model 6)
African American	.72*** (.15)	-.17 (.51)	-1.04 (.86)	-.05 (.99)	.82 (.90)	-.10 (.52)
Affirmative Action View	.31*** (.12)	.28** (.12)	.20 (.21)	.19 (.20)	.66*** (.23)	.11 (.14)
Prejudice	-.69*** (.19)	-.69*** (.19)	-.35 (.31)	-.46 (.31)	-1.50*** (.36)	-.68*** (.19)
Fan	-.28*** (.09)	-.27*** (.09)	-.33** (.16)	-.59*** (.17)	.10 (.17)	-.50*** (.11)
Age	-.30** (.13)	-.30** (.13)	-.25 (.22)	-.40 (.25)	-.36 (.23)	-.32** (.13)
Female	.04 (.06)	.05 (.06)	.07 (.10)	-.04 (.11)	.11 (.11)	.05 (.06)
Education	-.12 (.13)	-.12 (.13)	-.21 (.22)	-.13 (.23)	-.28 (.24)	-.19 (.13)
Income	.06 (.11)	.06 (.11)	.22 (.18)	.05 (.19)	-.04 (.19)	.07 (.11)
Ideology	-.57*** (.13)	-.58*** (.13)	-.39* (.21)	-.80*** (.23)	-.41* (.25)	-.54*** (.13)
African American X Affirmative Action View	--	1.12* (.62)	1.86* (1.00)	1.66 (1.30)	.18 (1.10)	1.05* (.62)
Affirmative Action Frame	--	--	--	--	--	-.91*** (.16)
Affirmative Action Frame X Fan	--	--	--	--	--	.64*** (.19)
Affirmative Action Frame X Affirmative Action View	--	--	--	--	--	.66*** (.21)
Cut-Points:	See Below	See Below	See Below	See Below	See Below	See Below
Log-likelihood	-2511.53	-2509.86	-922.77	-784.48	-753.91	-2490.54
Number of observations	1399	1399	508	442	449	1399

Note: Entries are ordered probit coefficients with standard errors in parentheses.

*** $p \leq .01$; ** $p \leq .05$; * $p \leq .10$ (two-tailed tests). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 1 are: -1.51 (.23), -1.17 (.22), -.93 (.22), -.48 (.22), -.15 (.22), .20 (.23). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 2 are: -1.53 (.23), -1.19 (.23), -.95 (.22), -.50 (.22), -.16 (.22), .19 (.23). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 3 are: -1.26 (.39), -.89 (.39), -.68 (.39), -.24 (.39), .06 (.39), .35 (.39). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 4 are: -1.87 (.39), -1.56 (.39), -1.30 (.39), -.88 (.39), -.64 (.39), -.26 (.39). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 5 are: -1.71 (.41), -1.35 (.41), -1.08 (.41), -.57 (.41), -.02 (.41), .50 (.41). The coefficients and standard errors for cut points 1 through 6 for Model 6 are: -1.84 (.23), -1.50 (.23), -1.26 (.23), -.81 (.23), -.46 (.23), -.10 (.23).

¹ The issues of pay to student athletes and unionization have far from trivial stakes. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), for instance, currently accrues over \$770 million each year from television contracts (Hayes 2013). Tickets to Division 1 men’s basketball games alone bring in an estimated \$82.3 million (Alesia 2014). In addition, many universities directly receive a substantial amount of revenue from their athletic programs, as illustrated by the \$77.9 million garnered by the University of Texas from its football program (Gregory 2013).

² As Mondello et al. (2014: 107) explain, “Understanding public perceptions on this issue [of pay for play] is important since the general public are a salient part of the consumers, boosters and financiers (including as taxpayers) of many athletic sports programs across the country. Further, the public does have some influence on what colleges and universities do and do not do as evinced by the large-scale pressures underlying coaching searches and firings.” They also (110) point out that “Researchers have devoted minimal attention to perceptions regarding the financial compensation of student athletes.”

³ See, e.g.,

<http://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=3&ved=0CCoQFjAC&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.usatoday.com%2Fstory%2Fnews%2Fnation%2F2013%2F06%2F24%2Faffirmative-action-universities-admissions-supreme-court%2F2452703%2F&ei=0INqVM6uI5anyASn8YDIDg&usg=AFQjCNGUgWNeEfiGFwFNHioW79sjUJ0KRg&sig2=BHw3Uj6CK6rNjk8CKkAmfQ&bvm=bv.79142246,d.aWw>;

<http://www.dallasnews.com/news/local-news/20140715-breaking-news-appeals-court-rules-university-of-texas-can-use-race-as-factor-in-admissions.ece>. Also see

<http://www.ncsl.org/research/education/affirmative-action-state-action.aspx> for various state level laws.

⁴ That said, it is still a minority; nonetheless, when scholarships are discussed, it is entirely possible that African Americans are thought of as the majority beneficiaries not only because of the relative proportions just reported but also because they tend to play more of the revenue-producing sports that receive national attention. Harper et al. (2013: 2) report that from the six major athletic conferences, between 2007 and 2010, African-American men made up 2.8% of the full time undergraduates but 57.1% of the football and 64.3% of the basketball teams.

⁵ Journalist J.A. Adande captures the essence of the argument in stating “other black people are going to be more sympathetic to the fact they see people who look like them...” (Putterman 2014: 2).

⁶ He also stated that, “We have long heard from fans there is little support for turning student-athletes into paid employees” (Prewitt 2014: 1). Consistent with the contrasting perspectives, a 2011 survey found that white sport fans are substantially more likely to believe African Americans have equal opportunities and do not face discrimination or prejudice (<http://sports.espn.go.com/espn/otl/news/story?id=5988173>). Also see Lewis and Weaver (2013) on how being a sports fan influences information processing about sports.

⁷ This is not to say that non-African Americans will experience the same psychological process as African Americans, as the dynamic at work would not be linked fate but rather favoring a specific policy.

⁸ We hired the firm *ResearchNow* to conduct the survey. They collected the data from a non-probability-based but representative (on all key census demographics) sample of the United States. When it comes to experimental research, such a sample is sufficient to ensure generalizable causal inferences (Druckman and Kam 2011).

⁹ Gilens (1999: 69) states “for the country as a whole, it remains overwhelmingly true that blacks are the minority group that the public most associates them with poverty.”

¹⁰ We followed pre-test designs employed in prior framing studies (e.g., Chong and Druckman 2007) that asked respondents to assess the ineffectiveness or effectiveness (on a 7-point scale) of the given frames, as well as to list thoughts came to mind when they read the frames.

¹¹ Our two dependent variables also correlate strongly with one another: $r = .795$.

¹² The respective percentages for non-African Americans are 35% and 30%.

¹³ The overall mean for pay for play is 3.66 (std. dev. 2.19) and for unionization is 3.56 (2.18). The overall means for affirmative action, being a fan, prejudice, and ideology are respectively: 3.74 (2.21), 2.24 (2.25), 4.62 (1.46), and 3.54 (1.87). Fifty-three percent of the sample is female and 4.25% is African-American. The distribution of age is: .19% under 18, 3.95% 18-24, 14.12% 25-34, 25.65% 35-50, 32.84% 51-65, and 23.25% over 65. The distribution for education is .78% less than high school, 7.15% high school, 29.17% some college, 36.13% 4 year college degree, and 26.77% advanced degree. The distribution for income is 13.56% <\$30,000, 30.98% \$30,000-\$69,999, 23.64% \$70,000-\$99,999, 25.74% \$100,000-\$200,000, and 6.09% over \$200,000.

¹⁴ For all of our analyses that involve racial differences, we follow Mondello et al. (2014) by distinguishing African Americans from non-African Americans (thus, the latter group includes other minorities). This is sensible given our theoretical framework focuses on dynamics connected with African American student-athletes. (Our results remain largely unchanged if we instead strictly compare African Americans to whites). Also, the Ns in the regressions shrink due to missing values on some of the control variables.

¹⁵ Prior work suggests that no other demographic, aside from race, affects attitudes about pay for play (e.g., Prewitt 2014, Mondello et al. 2014: 113). Our results may differ because we include novel variables including affirmative action views, prejudice, and being a college sports fan, and because we utilize a dependent variable with more variance (i.e., a 7-point scale as opposed to a dichotomous support or oppose measure).

¹⁶ When we add an interaction between race and being a fan, it is not significant, which suggests being a fan influences everyone's attitudes.

¹⁷ We simulated predicted probabilities using *Clarify* (Tomz et al. 1999).

¹⁸ This probability may be a bit below the overall percentage because our simulations employed overall averages for other values, rather than African American specific values.

¹⁹ This supports Mondello et al.'s (2014: 113) suspicion that the race gap on pay for play may be driven, in part, by stereotype/racism.

²⁰ Druckman et al. (n.d.) explore the opinions of student athletes and also report a notable race effect in support for pay for play and unionization.