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THESIS

Name, Image, and Likeness Rights as a Means to Student-Athlete Self-Authorship

Wesley Sheridan Hamilton

May 2020

Name, Image, and Likeness Rights as a Means to Student-Athlete Self-Authorship

A Thesis

Presented to the Faculty of the

Department of Educational Foundations and Policy Studies

West Chester University

West Chester, Pennsylvania

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

the Degree of

Master of Science

By

Wesley Sheridan Hamilton

May 2020

Dedication

For the most inspirational Golden Ram I know - my Mom

Sláinte!

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Abstract

This thesis will address the concerns regarding the regulation of student-athletes' incomes, endorsements, names, and likenesses, by the NCAA. The current debate over student-athlete finances has been constrained into two unsustainable prevailing hypotheses. The first dominant argument is that the current system is adequate as-is, and scholarships are a privilege for athletes. The second leading belief is rooted in the professionalization and salarying of college athletes. I believe that this debate has created a false binary dependent on authoritarian structures, and there is a multitude of avenues toward a simplified, liberating, and just system of college athletics. This thesis proposes an initiative of decolonization through deregulation of student-athlete revenues and images. It draws from student development theory in order to advocate for self-authorship by college athletes, offering a self-authorship seminar to maximize student-athletes' potential.

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Chapter 1

Introduction and Positionality

"Can I say I know it all, when rules just guide me to blindly follow?" – This song lyric

from Less Than Jake's (1996) "Automatic," encapsulates my views and analyses expressed

within this thesis. Can we know ourselves or others if we never advance as authors of our own

lives? I posit no, as I find blind followership to be antithetical to critical thought, creative

problem-solving, and personal engagement. In this chapter, I will chronicle my journey through

college and beyond, explaining how I developed my philosophy rooted in self-authorship.

I am a 28-year-old male, white with a myriad of ethnic identities. I grew up outside of

Wilmington, DE, in a predominantly white neighborhood, though my closest friend and his

family (my "secondary family" as we called it) were Puerto Rican. That friendship sparked my

love of music, which began a twenty-year journey into song appreciation and analysis. I attended

a Catholic school for K-8, and similarly to my neighborhood, the school was predominantly

white with a sizable Latinx population. It was fairly progressive for a Catholic school, so we

were encouraged to pursue scientific inquiry and hold debates on morality. I had several teachers

that would structure debate into the learning experience, so I was fortunate to have some

analytical skills before high school.

I attended Charter School of Wilmington for high school, and that experience furthered

my love for analysis and critique. I even took a class called Critical and Creative Thinking in my

sophomore year. We were encouraged to reinterpret texts and works of art, so even without

knowing the name, I was learning introductory hermeneutics. In my US History and AP Gov

classes, Mr. Thompson would press us to analyze pieces of the Constitution and Bill of Rights to

foster a spirit of critique. We engaged in many political debates, which helped to hone our hermeneutical skills. This was helpful when I got to UD, and I had to transfer out of the college of engineering.

I bounced from major to major for the majority of college, but I eventually double-majored in history and political science. Through those fields of study, I became familiar with authors like Nietzsche, Marx, Mill, and Rousseau. By learning how to critique power structures and break down the origins of institutions, I found a passion for philosophy. These beliefs, along with my childhood experiences, helped to shape my love for analytical and critical music. In two graduate classes, I have led a song analysis discussion. We broke down songs by Kendrick Lamar, NOFX, Bad Religion, and Jasiri X. My classmates were far less enthused than I was, but I find great joy in trying to decipher the meanings and motives behind certain lyrics. I have whole playlists dedicated to critical analysis. Without these activist and often scholarly artists, I may never have developed a mind for critique. Having an ear for the critical and a passion for wordplay leads me to view most literary works and legislation through a radical hermeneutical lens.

I've never really seen growth as constant or perfectly explainable. I have learned to embrace growth mindsets and development-oriented grading scales although I cannot say for certain that I even view those as catch-alls when analyzing personal improvement. I would like to say I grew as a student and as a person while in college, but that is such a broad statement. As I developed my sense of self, I found that my intelligence was important, but it was not going to be enough to find purpose and direction. My desire to matter and contribute dictated my choices and reactions to events throughout college. I sort of had three distinct undergraduate experiences, neatly separated into three semesters each: the engineering period (Fall 2010-Fall 2011), the

education period (Spring 2012-Spring 2013), and the history period (Fall 2013-Fall 2014). I experienced radically different types of growth, and I grew to varying degrees in each block of time. However, the theme of mattering and finding my purpose consistently arise throughout my narrative.

My first period of growth spanned my sojourn into, and then out of, engineering. I learned a lot about my role within my major, my residence hall, and in my various social circles. After I graduated from high school, I stayed close to home and went to the University of Delaware with most of my friends, many of whom were to become engineers. I highly valued my intellect, and I wanted to prove my value through sheer intelligence. I got to campus, made new connections quickly, and soon indulged in the "classic" college experience. While I recognize that there is no single normal college experience, I feel that my first semester echoed many stereotypical portrayals of college, hence the term classic, and its surrounding quotation marks. I lived in a hall-oriented dormitory (no suites), and that made it easy to feel noticed. My floor had a general open-door policy, and we were free to jump from room to room to catch up with hallmates, make plans for the weekend, or just share music and tv shows with each other. Early on in college, I had a clear sense of my role in class and in the residence hall. I felt that I was doing the right thing, and this "classic" experience made me feel like I mattered to the people around me. I was the one with the beer contacts, thanks to my jobs prior to college. I was also a good coordinator and host, so I operated as the leader of the group. However, these roles were fairly fleeting, and my influence waned as my residence hall friends from out-of-state developed their own networks of social groups. During this time, I felt as if I lacked dependence, as my social group widened and became less dense and interconnected.

As I reflect on my social regression of Spring 2011, I acknowledge my lack of campus involvement as a potentially limiting. Essentially, if I had participated more in the college community, rather than focusing on my small-group dynamic, I would have been more likely to succeed and feel good about my first-year experience. At that time, I was not an active student. I had a brief stint in Concrete Canoe before changing majors, and I went to a handful of Intervarsity/Young Life meetings. Intramurals were fairly fun, but they never lasted past my first year. I barely even went to UD's football games, which is rather ironic, given my recent work experience in Student Services for Athletes. The most consistent extracurricular activity I was involved in each year was fantasy football. I was probably too limited in my outlook to really branch out and take full advantage of all that the Student Life division had to offer. At UD, students have hundreds, if not thousands, of clubs and activities to choose from. I may have visited under ten in my time on campus. When I struggled through some of my social development in my second semester, my lack of involvement became a larger factor in my enjoyment. I am sure that if I had reached out and got a bit more involved on-campus, my transition from engineering to education could have gone much more smoothly.

As my second year began, my engineering friends found a renewed energy in the source material, but I was drifting away, allowing my grades to plummet. That December, I had a series of heart-to-hearts with my close friends and parents. I expressed my frustration with my simultaneous collapses of passion and aptitude for the material, stating that I was out of my element. I no longer felt that I was on the right path. After five summers as a camp counselor, I realized that teaching and engaging with others were my strongest traits. Following three semesters in engineering, I concluded that lab work and building equations were my weakest. I realized that I didn't really have a clear idea of who I was, or who I wanted to become. In

resisting my career path change, I frequently over-identified with my friends because I had known them for years, and I was scared to branch out into a new major, which essentially meant starting over. I felt a ton of pressure to redefine myself, and much of my second phase of college focused on building my new "me."

After transferring out of engineering, I had a GPA low enough to put me on academic probation. I worked extremely hard to get off probation, and I made Dean's list while taking 18 credits the following semester. A great thanks for that shift must be attributed to Professor Darryl Flaherty of Delaware's history department. Arguably, the most pivotal moment of my undergraduate experience was my first conversation with him. In that moment, I completed my transition from engineering to education, and I began working toward my role as a historian and writer. I still had a long way to go as an educator, but I was finally in a field that I was passionate about. Looking back, I didn't really feel that my accomplishments or struggles meant much until I had an invested mentor, like Dr. Flaherty. His guidance helped me open up and accept that someone could truly understand what I was passionate about, and that they could celebrate my accomplishments with me. With Dr. Flaherty providing a bit of necessary ego-extension, I felt that I mattered again. I then believed that I was on the way to making a difference as a teacher.

However, when I inquired about student teaching, I was turned away due to low GPA, even though none of my engineering classes would count towards my major. By setting the bar above a B-minus average, the College of Education set a clear precedent that they believe "good students" make for good teachers. There is certainly a logic to assigning a cutoff score for admission to student teaching, but, like most barriers to entry, this requirement tends to ignore individual strengths and instead focuses on the student's overall body of work. If we judge students by a GPA that has been dragged down by difficult classes or extenuating circumstances,

we may be depriving K-12 schools of passionate, focused, and talented teachers. A rigid set of rules for admission places students into a less-than-ideal situation of delaying their application or giving up on their teaching dreams entirely. The messy nature of the high school to college transition is in line with most growth and student identity development theories, and it is vital that student affairs professionals recognize this messiness as they implement policies that can discourage students after a single setback.

My third growth period, which began in the fall of 2013, laid out several hurdles for me to clear. I experienced a difficult expected event, a devastating non-event, and a heartbreaking unexpected crisis. In the span of about five weeks, I had to run the full gauntlet of Schlossberg's Transition Theory (1995). My grandmother and I were extremely close, and she was the one I spoke to the most about what I learned in school. She was the one that sparked my love of reading and learning. So when she passed away in October 2013, it hit me hard, and I ended up bailing on a midterm the week of her funeral. That decision - and its subsequent F - effectively closed the door on any possibility of student teaching or a degree in education. This event, while somewhat expected, was still a difficult moment to adjust to. The subsequent non-event, my final strike against student teaching, left me in academic purgatory. I still had a high enough GPA to continue my studies, but I would have to once again find my purpose and resolve my vocational crisis.

Less than one month later, a friend from high school was killed in a car accident. I kind of spiraled. My attendance dropped, and I spent a lot of time inside the rest of the semester. It was during this really rough stretch that I began writing. It started up as a way to cope with the loss of Grandmom and Kyle, and then it blossomed into a way for me to get out any of my frustrations. I wrote an entire 13-lyric composition in the span of a month. I was able to write

about my experiences and find closure in poetry. I had found my way to confront my crises, and I was able to then embark on my final period of collegiate growth. After my crisis and adjustments, I found it easier to connect with strangers and make new connections. I could speak to my professors with more grace and confidence, and I could discuss larger personal and social issues with friends. I had finally given myself the freedom to challenge who I was.

My final three semesters flew by, perhaps because I was finally at peace with my vocational choice of history and political science. As I explored my new fields of study, I found myself in the library more often than not. As such, I developed a great fondness for historical writings: fiction, alt history, and biography. I stumbled upon Vladimir Alexandrov's (2013) *The Black Russian*, and, four years before learning the term, I discovered the meaning of self-authorship. *The Black Russian* depicts the true story of Frederick Bruce Thomas, the son of former slaves turned successful sharecroppers in the Mississippi Delta who rose to fame and fortune as the premier entertainment mogul of Tsarist Moscow. Though Frederick and I had little in common – separated by our ethnicities, vocations, and several generations – I found a sort of kinship with his restless and inventive mindset. Through the eyes of Frederick, I experienced the splendor of pre-WWI Europe, the thrill of the Muscovite entertainment scene, and the fall of the Russian Empire. Frederick's biography towers over that of many American legends and serves as an exemplary manifestation of the power of self-authorship. His story is second only to Carl Sagan's (1980) *Cosmos* in its impact on my personal philosophy, inspiring much of my writings, both creative and academic.

In the fall semester of my senior year, one of my close friends recommended that I apply for a tutoring position with Student Services for Athletes. If I hadn't had such extensive math and science experience early in my collegiate career, I may never have become a tutor. I'm not

much for the fate-dependent "everything happens for a reason" mentality, but I know that I couldn't be the person I am today without my attempt at engineering and the subsequent lessons I learned in that journey.

I began working study halls as a tutor, and I caught the attention of the assistant director of SSA, James Coleman. He recently told me his perspective of our meeting, and it was humbling to hear how intrigued he was about my ability. He was initially suspicious of me, since it was almost exclusively his "knuckleheads" that were coming to work with me. Why would a bunch of academically at-risk students all gravitate towards a single tutor? His first assumption was cheating, so it took a minute for us to really sit down and get to know each other. He looked at my transcript and saw a mediocre GPA; he interrogated his advisees and they told him how they were comfortable working with me. It was fascinating - from my perspective, I was just grateful that I had a small population of students that valued my time and knowledge - through tutoring, I really felt that I had people that counted on me, and it gave me the drive to finish strong with my degree. James made me a meaningful member of the SSA team. I finally felt appreciated, that I truly mattered. I am so grateful to James for his outreach and support over the past four and a half years. He is the reason that I am at WCU today and the reason why I will be a student affairs professional in the future. He helped me develop my purpose and integrity. He, much like Dr. Flaherty, served as an ego-extension to help validate my goals and accomplishments. James Coleman has been my "best company" for both my college and post-baccalaureate experience. He taught me that developing my mind was important, but the way in which I used it was what really made me matter to others.

When I was working at a Division-I institution, I mostly served as a tutor or mentor for student-athletes. At my institution, every student, regardless of major, had to take an introductory

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writing course. This course is designed to prepare students for the various types of writing styles that they may need to utilize over the course of their time at the university. It has not changed much in the past decade - each section of this class must write expository, narrative, and argumentative essays, as well as a final research paper. My tutoring responsibilities were called on most when students needed to write the argumentative and research papers. Due to working predominantly with student-athletes, I came across the debate over "Should Student-Athletes Get Paid?" more times than I can recall. Unsurprisingly, the student-athletes I worked with were in favor of being salaried, more often than not.

What really piqued my interest in this issue was the responses I received from my students when I prompted them to provide their arguments for a salary. Through those discussions, I began to develop a sense of what issues students faced. As a general non-athlete undergrad, I didn't really care much about my institution's athletics programs. I was usually too busy watching higher levels of competition to consider the difficulties faced by student-athletes at my college. It wasn't until I was able to share a space with these students that I could see some of those challenges. As I engaged with students in their critiques and experiences, I began to revise my views on collegiate athletics.

One conversation, in particular, stands out to me; I was working on an argumentative essay with a football player on this topic. While he was stating his case for paying student-athletes, he mentioned something that I found fascinating. He was grateful for his scholarship, but he could make almost the same stipend at an easy, minimum-wage job. He lamented the idea of limited income when he was working more hours per week than almost any non-athlete student. That issue was the basis of his argument for salaried student-athlete, but it served as the catalyst for my alternative hypothesis. Our discussion then grew into an overall critique of the

scholarship system and how it is often insufficient for a student living off-campus. Through this and many other similar debates, I began to hone my views on self-advocacy, image ownership, and amateurism.

Many people first experience a university through the lens of athletics. Some students, like myself, find ways of associating with a college that we never actually end up attending. I root for Penn State because that was a college that was close to some of my extended family when I was growing up. I would visit Tyrone and Altoona, PA, and by extension, I would be welcomed into the PSU supporter "family." The funny thing is, I'm hardly in central Pennsylvania much anymore, but I still cheer on the Nittany Lions every autumn weekend. I wear the colors of a school I never went to for a single degree. Many other people share a similar experience: we experience the value and legacy of a university through its on-field product. We perceive the school through the lens of athletics. This puts immense pressure on student-athletes and coaches to present the university as successful and desirable for new students. Under all this pressure, students at these various institutions still find a way to attend class, take exams, and work in the community as representatives of their schools. Many of them receive scholarships for their efforts, and there is a wealth of resources available to student-athletes to bolster their academic and athletic prowess. This is, of course, an expense for the university, but for most institutions, the fiscal value and intangible goodwill the athletes bring to the institution far outweigh the costs of academic and athletic support. The dilemma surrounding this mindset is that the labor done by the athletes ends up expanding the value of the university's brand, and this increase in value is not proportionally reflected in student compensation. While very few schools have a robust athletics budget that can stand independent of the rest of the institution, it is safe to

say that all colleges with athletics programs are grateful for the goodwill and revenue generated by sporting events.

By setting up inflexible paths towards graduation and future income, the NCAA restricts the critical thinking skills of many student-athletes. To rectify this disparity, I believe that student-athletes deserve the freedom to pursue commercial endorsements and promote their own personal brand. While I believe that there are many ways in which the NCAA could improve, I chose this issue because I am tired of seeing students not have books and calculators for class, or witnessing high-profile players choose between their careers and their eligibility. I have worked with student-athletes since the spring of 2014, and I have been a college sports fan for much longer. I sometimes feel guilty watching March Madness or the BCS Playoffs, as I know there are some players on the team that might be struggling to get by while their school, conference, and the NCAA all generate massive amounts of revenue from those players' efforts.

I am not opposed to the schools making money, as a university's athletics revenue often benefits the rest of the institution. However, the rank hypocrisy of forbidding students from capitalizing upon their own achievements and pursuing endorsements while the NCAA makes billions of dollars off of those same likenesses and achievements is unnerving. I believe that students need not be salaried by the university in order to receive proper compensation for their efforts. Much of my reasoning is rooted in the practicality of an end to amateurism, but it is vital that we analyze the role that power and privilege underlying the current regulatory structure, as well as any changes to privilege dynamics in potential changes to NCAA policy. By scaling back an aggressive, and sometimes oppressive, regulatory apparatus, the NCAA can allow student-athletes to pursue other streams of income without sacrificing their eligibility.

Deregulation could come with distractions for some athletes. While individual income expansion is typically a good thing, the scale of the values of various endorsements and perks could easily cause tension within a locker room and between various sports. However, the "money" sports, football and men's basketball, are already perceptively overvalued in comparison to other teams. And a salary policy would likely further these disparities. With individualized freedom to pursue endorsements and capitalize on one's own likeness, athletes across sports will be able to improve their financial stability.

Salaried athletic departments are infeasible for several reasons: financing, fair pay, favoritism. However, a decrease in financial regulation by the NCAA allows the organization to focus on violations that should really matter, like academics, and scale back their overinvolvement with the issues that can be handled by the individual. This policy should also give student-athletes a career development outlook. With what would amount to a four-year entrepreneurial experience, student-athletes may seek more meaning in their studies in order to seize the momentum of their community reach and brand value. With a more relaxed policy, the universities will not need to worry about losing scholarship benefits or paying taxes on salaried athletes, while the student-athletes will gain more freedom to pursue their own interests and means of supplemental income.

Chapter 2

Thematic Concern, Conceptual Framework, and Definitions

THEMATIC CONCERN:

Today, the common discourse surrounding student-athletes' Name, Image, and Likeness (NIL) Rights is evolving from an archaic sense of paternalism and conservative protectionism to various forms of redistribution such as salaries and endorsement rights. Although I have found the NCAA's protectionist stance on amateurism to be outdated, I do not find the salarying of student-athletes to be tenable for the majority of higher education institutions. The NCAA should roll back their codes (2.9, 2.13, 12.4.4, 15.1, in particular) restricting student-athlete NIL rights in order to maximize these students' potential for self-authorship. To support student-athletes bfore, during, and after this legislative change, I am proposing a Self-Authorship Seminar, which could take the form of a voluntary meeting or even a 3-credit course, depending on the preferred style of implementation at a given institution. This seminar/course is designed to address the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal dimensions of Marcia Baxter-Magolda's (2001) Theory of Self-Authorship through group discussions on academic growth and engagement, personal ethics and values, and relationship-building, as well as writing labs to hone students' communication and advocacy skills.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK:

1. How does the NCAA's definition of amateurism serve as a negating factor in student-athlete development?
2. How might student-athletes benefit from a retention of rights to their own names, images, and likenesses?
3. In what ways will self-authorship maximize student-athlete potential and serve to ground students as they progress through college, and perhaps beyond?
4. What is the best way for student affairs professionals to support student-athletes and maximize their sense of self-authorship? What form(s) could that take?

DEFINITIONS:

Constitutive:

Amateurism   Under code 2.9, the NCAA classifies all student-athletes as amateurs, stating that their motivation should be fueled "primarily by education and by the physical, mental and social benefits to be derived" (NCAA, 2018).

Metacognition   The act of thinking about your thinking. This practice fosters critical thinking, problem solving, and reflective processes.

Self-Authorship   Baxter Magolda (2001) defined self authorship as "the internal capacity to define one's beliefs, identity & social relations" (p.269).This requires people to collect, interpret, analyze, and reflect to form their own values and perspectives.

Self-Ownership   Locke (1689) stated: "From all which it is evident, that though the things of Nature are given in common, yet Man (by being Master of himself, and Proprietor of his own Person, and the actions or Labour of it) had still in himself the great Foundation of Property."

*Operative***:**
For the purpose of this paper,
the following definitions will apply

Ideological State Apparatus   A certain number of realities which present themselves to the immediate observer in the form of distinct and specialized institutions. A mode of intervention allowing for the continuity of the social structure. "institutional spaces whose purpose is to make interventions on behalf of a ruling class by reproducing ruling ideologies, thereby achieving or maintaining their ruling status. More than just certain groups maintaining power over one another, these practices secure the continuity of relations of production over time: they hold in place a certain way of making economic life" (Backer p. 2).

Privilege   A right or immunity granted as a peculiar benefit, advantage, or favor

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Productive Force	Economic forces that hold in place a certain way of economic life.
Reproductive Force	Modes of production, such as the school system, that holds in place a certain way of economic life.
Repressive Force	Juridical forces such as government, courts, police and military that holds in place a status quo.

<u>Biographical</u>

Jacob Bronowski

Polish-born British mathematician and man of letters who eloquently presented the case for the humanistic aspects of science. During World War II, Bronowski, on a scientific mission to Japan to study the effects of the atomic bombings, saw firsthand the ruins of Nagasaki, he gave up military research. From that time on, he concentrated on the ethical as well as the technological aspects of science, and he shifted his attention from mathematics to the life sciences, the study of human nature, and the evolution of culture. His last major project was the authorship and narration of the BBC television series The Ascent of Man (1973), a luminous account of science, art, and philosophy in human history. https://www.britannica.com/biography/Jacob-Bronowski

Carl Sagan

Carl Sagan played a leading role in the American space program since its inception. Serving as a consultant and adviser to NASA beginning in the 1950s. He helped solve the mysteries of the high temperature of Venus (a massive greenhouse effect), the seasonal changes on Mars (windblown dust) and the reddish haze of Titan (complex organic molecules). A Pulitzer Prize winner, Dr. Sagan was the author of many bestsellers, including Cosmos, which became the best-selling science book ever published in the English language. www.planetary.org/about/our-founders/carl-sagan

Michel Serres

"Serres, who taught in Stanford's School of Humanities and Sciences for nearly 30 years, worked on the philosophy of science, where he explored subjects like death, ecology and time. A member of the prestigious French Academy (Académie Française), Serres was charismatic, intellectually brilliant and a philosopher who connected with a broad audience, according to his friends and colleagues." https://news.stanford.edu

ACPA/NASPA Competencies

Personal and Ethical Foundations (PEF)
    This competency encourages student-affairs professionals to hone their knowledge, skills, and dispositions to develop and maintain integrity in one's life and work; this includes thoughtful development, critique, and adherence to a holistic and comprehensive standard of ethics and commitment to one's own wellness and growth. Our personal and ethical foundations grow through a process of curiosity, reflection, and self-authorship. (NASPA, 2018). Within my intervention, both seminar leaders and class participants (predominantly student-athletes) will take care to develop their senses of personal values as part of the intrapersonal dimension of self-authorship.

Social Justice and Inclusion (SJI)
    The purpose of this competency is to create learning environments that foster equitable participation of all groups while seeking to address and acknowledge issues of oppression, privilege, and power. This competency involves student affairs educators who have a sense of their own agency and social responsibility that includes others, their community, and the larger global context. (NASPA, 2018). My intervention emphasizes this competency because athletics is a highly diverse segment of the campus population, and any changes to policies affecting student-athletes must be analyzed from both a feminist and a critical race perspective.

Student Learning and Development (SLD)
    The purpose of the SLD competency is to address the concepts and principles of student development and learning theory. This includes the ability to apply theory to improve and inform student affairs and teaching practice (NASPA, 2018). My intervention heavily utilizes Marcia Baxter-Magolda's theory of self-authorship, and it is through that lens that we will promote student-athlete learning and self-actualization.

Chapter 3

The Narrative

Philosophical Positionality

Due to our inability to see everything at once, we will never fully understand the world around us. In *Origins of Knowledge and Imagination,* Jacob Bronowski (1979) shares a similar worldview. He laments that many people claim to understand the universe when they are only capable of observing small slivers of it over an exceedingly short period of time. We live for but a moment, yet we have the boldness to imagine eternity. Our limited perspective not only blinds us to the unknown, but it blinds us to the scope of our ignorance. Bronowski advocated for building a worldview from individual experiences and using the experiences of others to help to contextualize our own experiences. This neatly mimics the hermeneutic circle, which, according to Heidegger (1927), will never be finished. Though Heidegger, like many European philosophers before him, had several political views that make my stomach churn, he was integral in the formation of modern critical analysis. Much like when I refer to Karl Marx or John Locke later in this essay, I am endorsing the premise, not the application of the premise or that philosopher's character. Heidegger's *Being and Time* is quite relevant when analyzing policy construction as it relates to the legislators and the legislated. When analyzing the premises of legislation or association bylaws, a grasp of hermeneutics is essential. In this thesis and the proposed intervention, I will analyze the NCAA bylaws on student-athlete Name, Image, and Likeness Rights to advocate for a full abolition of these labor restrictions, and I will propose a self-authorship seminar series that will serve to maximize the efficacy of these legislative rollbacks.

I enjoy the deconstructive nature of radical hermeneutics, as it serves as an excellent tool in advocating for the reduction of NCAA restrictions on student-athlete incomes and likenesses. Using this theory of interpretation helps to break down preexisting assumptions about the world, and it serves to expand research from a single topic outward to its prior causes. If there is no absolute truth, we can accept the mantra of "perception is reality," and I think that can help people come together to express their perceptions, rather than giving prescriptions based on an assumed truth. This is especially important when considering policy-making. This philosophical lens were well-exemplified by Pontius Pilate in Tim Rice's (1973) *Jesus Christ Superstar,* when he said, "But what is truth? Is it not changing law? We both have truths, are mine the same as yours?" This stands out to me for two reasons: (1) Pilate's interpretation is similar to many people's in that he assumes that authority defines truth. (2) His second question is more hermeneutics-oriented in that he acknowledges the subjectivity of most truths. I think that as policymakers, we will need to take the second approach in order to account for student experiences and how they impact the students' interpretations of the policy. One student's lived experience may be alien to the experiences that shaped to the policies that we set before them.

As the NCAA increasingly regulates the definition of amateurism, it closes itself off to critique and change. Jacques Derrida, a radical hermeneutic thinker (though he likely would avoid that term), would have a field day with the suppositions lying behind this policy. In *Without Alibi*, Jacques Derrida (2002) professes, "the university should thus also be the place in which nothing is beyond question" (p. 207). Derrida's (2002) passion for deconstruction would lend itself to many critiques of this NCAA policy: what defines a vocation? What does this policy assume about the term "participation"? Who is a representative of the institution's athletics interest? By controlling the terminology surrounding the debates over student-athlete

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compensation, the Association can redefine words to its own agenda. According to Derrida (2002) "One may thus work a lot without being a worker recognized as such in a society" (p. 216). The NCAA expects a professional level of athleticism and off-field behavior from its student-athletes, yet it does not recognize them as "workers" in the sense of professionalism. This lack of recognition yet again pulls away at the student-athletes' rights to self-authorship. Also, this unrepentant domination of definitions creates a false dichotomy within the conversation amongst student-athlete advocates. Students must either be paid and salaried professionals, or they must be "sheltered" from the world of money and endorsements. Rationally, neither extreme seems feasible in the long-term. Both are highly reliant upon an expensively expansive oversight bureaucracy, and neither offers a meaningful path to self-authorship. Regardless of the intention, rampant regulation will always favor the privileged.

Adaptability is the core strength of learning. Having a creative set of problem-solving tools fuels adaptability and embraces the beauty of what we don't yet know. Curiosity has helped me to appreciate those unknowns and persistently question my surroundings and personal beliefs. I find that we can make good use of our ignorance to map out what we care to learn about next. That desire to learn comes with a love of integrated, interdisciplinary learning. My love for interdisciplinarity derives from my favorite book, *Cosmos*, by Carl Sagan (1979). His passion for weaving science, history, and philosophy together has left an indelible impact on my approach to relationship-building, as I believe that specialization erodes relatability. As a learner and student affairs professional, I am always seeking to diversify my (and my students') skill set to improve creativity and adaptability.

Some of my philosophy has been shaped by Michel Serres' *Thumbelina*: one of the most poignant essays that I have read regarding student development. I agree with his premises on the

democratization of knowledge. Much of his observations of society have appeared in my educational and social experiences. His reference to St. Denis starkly highlights the challenges facing educators today; according to Serres (2012), our cognitive faculties have been, to a great extent, removed from our internal minds; they now reside in our devices, which can conjure images and information on a whim. This new access to knowledge has made us restless and ever-more inquisitive. Knowledge is more objective than ever, and we rely less and less upon authority each passing year. This is a key alignment between Serres and me, as I feel that the institutions of the university and the NCAA are becoming less and less essential for the development of student knowledge. Serres also aligns my core value of interdisciplinarity, as I believe that specialization weakens relatability. Similarly, Serres (2012) suggests that diversification of interests promotes innovation in stating, "Those institutions resemble the light we see that was emanated by now-dead stars" (p. 63). Serres' poetic analysis of the old ways of belonging could come as a shock to those with high regard for religion, nation-states, and family names. I view it with glee, as I see these old ways dying out, laying the groundwork for further critiques of things like the university.

These old belongings demanded tribute: financial, corporeal, and emotional. The old belongings were what caused the world wars of the 20th century - kings and presidents expected their citizens to lay down their lives for the benefit of the nation, and rampant colonialism and imperialism heightened racial oppression. Belonging to one of these massive institutions provided a false comfort to our ancestors by instilling a false sense of superiority over "others". The othering process perpetuated rivalries that led millions to early graves. Serres referred to the destructive ideas of belonging as "false gods that consumed infinite victims." I share Serres' skepticism of collective action, as it easily creates a sense of "us" and "them." Collectivism can

have the propensity for alienation and dehumanization of the "others," or outsiders. Serres promoted a sense of connectivity, which respects the individual but celebrates collaboration, not unlike team culture in college athletics.

Myriad forces interact to shape the University: the government, corporations, local lobbies, social justice movements, economic cycles, technological innovation, sociological theorizing, religious groups & institutions, and the college-bound population. These forces can interact to stoke the winds of change, building upon one another to batter old assumptions and ways of knowing; they also may contradict each other, canceling out to form societal doldrums, never allowing latent social issues to awake from their state-sponsored slumber. In both convergence and divergence of these forces' interests, the University changes. Likewise, the University shapes how society responds to these new debates and ways of knowing. It is a symbiotic relationship, but a chaotic one.

In this symbiotic relationship, old values and expectations are difficult to expunge from the University. Those old gods of yesteryear that formed the first American universities had decades, even centuries, of power and influence. The fingerprints of religious institutions, the military, and Wall Street require no powder or tape to find. The influence of nationalism and misogyny is omnipresent. The legacy of slavery still permeates the college campus, much like the light of long-dead stars that still shine dimly in the midnight sky. In some ways, the University is a horcrux, a vestige of the soul of dying institutions that once ruled the nation. Old notions of patriarchal norms and white hegemony persist, mutated and mitigated, but never fully eradicated from university policy. It is through its role as a horcrux of stored prejudice that the University perpetuates systems of power and privilege. Every political faction - right, left, anarchist - believes that they alone possess the basilisk fang that will undo the past's wrongs and

the University's role in them. However, the power that is reproduced in the University cannot be isolated, as it is dispersed through policy and precedent. For student-athletes, that dispersed institutional power takes the form of likeness regulations and their applications across sport, state, and socioeconomic status.

In 2009, Ed O'Bannon filed a lawsuit against the National Collegiate Athletic Association, or NCAA, for using his likeness in the video game, NCAA March Madness, without his consent (Marcus. 2013). O'Bannon was a star basketball player for UCLA in the mid-nineties, and, in his lawsuit, O'Bannon claimed that the NCAA used his likeness to generate revenue that he was never meant to benefit from. The NCAA has a history of profiting off of student achievement without giving proportional compensation to their biggest money makers: the student-athletes. The hypocrisy of the NCAA in this lawsuit is quite palpable to those familiar with their punitive measures against students that use their own likeness for personal gain. The NCAA's use of athlete's achievements and likenesses to generate revenue is understandable, but their restrictions on athletes' self-promotion rights cause that use to be unfair and hypocritical.

Over the past few decades, there have been many advocates for salaried compensation to college athletes, arguing that the value athletes provide to a school vastly outstrips the value that the school provides for them. Some, as suggested by Sanderson (2015), have also cited the uptick in voter support for public funds when a school has a football program, even if the team is not particularly competitive. This increase in support for school funding is driven by the presence, if not the performance of the athletes. By simply existing as a known entity, the football team can shape the perceptions of the voting populace, diverting funding towards the university. This correlation between athletics and university funding offers a compelling case for some sort of

compensation for student-athletes. At the very least, these findings may at least unveil cracks in the facade of the existing income policy.

At its worst, this existing policy can limit cognitive complexity and push students to take a narrow, authority-based path through college and into their adult lives. By setting up inflexible paths towards graduation and future income, the NCAA restricts the critical thinking skills of many student-athletes. To rectify this disparity, I believe that student-athletes deserve the freedom to pursue commercial endorsements and promote their own personal brand. I am not opposed to the schools making money, as a university's athletics revenue often benefits the rest of the institution. However, the rank hypocrisy of forbidding students from capitalizing upon their own achievements and pursuing endorsements while the NCAA makes billions of dollars off of those same likenesses and achievements is unnerving. Much of my reasoning is rooted in the practicality of an end to amateurism, but it is vital that we analyze the role that power and privilege underlying the current regulatory structure, as well as any changes to privilege dynamics in potential changes to NCAA policy. By scaling back an aggressive, and sometimes oppressive, regulatory apparatus, the NCAA can allow student-athletes to pursue other streams of income without sacrificing their eligibility.

The NCAA's regulation of student income is not new. Each year, the NCAA publishes an updated and revised set of bylaws and regulations in order to standardize their practices across the college athletics landscape. Under code 2.9, the NCAA classifies all student-athletes as amateurs, stating that their motivation should be fueled "primarily by education and by the physical, mental and social benefits to be derived" (NCAA, 2018). While this is a lofty and noble ideal in principle, it is far from a realistic expectation, given the NCAA's historical and present revenues and financial motivations. Within that same code, the bylaws state that "Student

participation in intercollegiate athletics is an avocation, and student-athletes should be protected

from exploitation by professional and commercial enterprises" (NCAA. 2018). An avocation, as

used by the NCAA, is the expressed abdication of potential professional earnings. While the term

"vocation" is used to describe a position to which one is called, this use of its literal antonym

seems to undermine the spirit of competitive sports. As the influence of college sports spreads, it

is of vital importance that the rights of said student-athletes are not just preserved, but made

equal to that of their non-athlete peers.

Furthermore, this bylaw heavily implies that commercial and professional enterprises are

naturally exploitative, so sinister that the association must protect its students from the dangers

of marketing and endorsements. Amateur status is highly subjective, and it is, by rational

extension, subject to a diverse array of interpretations. Olympic athletes are considered amateurs,

as they are not paid for their participation in Olympic contests. However, Olympic athletes,

regardless of age, gender, race, or financial status, are not barred from seeking out or accepting

sponsorships. In order to make a stronger argument with more historical precedent, the NCAA

codes would benefit from a distinctive demarcation separating college athletes from their

Olympic counterparts.

The second bylaw that critically impedes student-athletes' rights to self-determination is

Code 2.13, the Principle Governing Financial Aid. This regulation states that "a student-athlete

may receive athletically related financial aid administered by the institution without violating the

principle of amateurism, provided the amount does not exceed the cost of education authorized

by the Association" (NCAA, 2018). This code may appear to be quite rational to the uncritical

eye. It is arguably one of the simplest codes in the updated bylaws. However, the final four

words unveil a problematic addendum to the code. This corollary explicitly grants the NCAA

full authority over cost determination and compensation. This issue is brought up yet again in Code 15.1, which lays out the NCAA's ruling on the maximum financial aid available to each student-athlete. It reads, "A student-athlete shall not be eligible to participate in intercollegiate athletics if he or she receives financial aid that exceeds the value of the cost of attendance as defined" (NCAA, 2018). This second code regarding financial aid minimizes the amount of aid a student can earn through academic scholarships or need-based aid (although there is a small exception for recipients of Pell Grants). By limiting financial aid, the NCAA continues to undermine the well-being of the very students that it is pledging to protect. Financial aid should not be limited by an arbitrary assessment of the cost of education.

Finally, we must look at the NCAA's historical rulings on self-employment. In Code 12.4.4, the NCAA explains the parameters through which a student-athlete can be self-employed. "A student-athlete may establish his or her own business, provided the student-athlete's name, photograph, appearance or athletics reputation are not used to promote the business" (NCAA. 2018). This seems like a particularly absurd policy, given that as a self-employed worker, one typically needs to rely on their name, image, and reputation in order to draw in business. As a person who has on occasion been self-employed, I highly value the right to free enterprise and self-promotion, and if these institutions care about their students, it is essential for the NCAA to give them the freedom to self-promote.

By offering a moderate amount of flexibility on employment and endorsement, universities can promote self-authorship and a sense of purpose for students. Through a new, less regulated collegiate athletics structure, students will be able to seize control of their own narrative, thereby giving them a greater sense of direction and the ability to author their own lives (Baxter-Magolda, 2004). By reopening avenues to financial success and public respect, the

NCAA would be able to focus more on student development. Student-athletes need to feel wanted, and these restrictions can be miseducative due to the limitations they place on an individual's potentiality. Limiting a student's access to labor or income can severely limit their ability to author their own narrative. The current labor-income-scholarship paradigm is a negating factor in student development. Student-athletes miss out on "real-world" work experience, and they are not educated on money management. For those that truly want to move forward in creating a liberating society, success is rooted in sweeping investigation and questioning. We must consistently critique current structures and contemplate suitable replacements. Although, I would argue that many of these structures would be better off unreplaced, as bureaucracy and authority undermine self-authorship.

Regulation of students' expression and labor serves to minimize their power within the University. Regulation, in many ways, hinders recognition through authoritative control based on the writers' lived experiences. Professors, advisors, and all other student support staff must work towards a world in which students can advocate for themselves and write their own narratives. Cultivating self-authorship requires trust, honesty, and well-timed pieces of advice, each of which requires a relationship with good rapport.

Marcia Baxter-Magolda (2001) identified four stages of Self-Authorship within students' development. Within each phase, cognitive development, intrapersonal understanding, and interpersonal relationship-building is cultivated. According to Baxter-Magolda (2001), in "Phase 1: Following Formulas," students rely upon authorities to find a sense of purpose or direction (p. 40). Thus, they depend on external guidance and approval to determine what is "right." For student-athletes, these guides are often advisors, coaches, trainers, parents, and senior teammates. Much of the student-athlete curriculum is carefully crafted to maximize their chances

at remaining eligible to compete, and many students lack the knowledge of course planning that is required to self-advocate so that their work reflects their interests. While course selection processes may not change with the legislation on NIL Rights, it is imperative that advisors and coaches use their meetings on majors and course selection to promote reflective thought within their students. Student-athletes need that interpersonal rapport that is built in advisory meetings so that they may one day build rapport with endorsers and their communities.

Phase 2 is known as "the Crossroads." Throughout college and early adulthood, students begin to recognize the flaws of given formulas or the challenges in applying advice from authorities. They may tire of their ascribed identities and seek out new ones. Often, the student gravitates towards defining their personal values and vision, crafting a clearer sense of self. Some may seek out a multitude of advisees, struggling to craft a personal vision. In some instances, this reliance upon outside influences leads to crises of identity and a lack of fulfillment (Baxter-Magolda, 2001). Relationships with others, particularly advisors and mentors, are essential for helping students pass successfully through the crossroads. As student-athletes begin to address their cognitive development and sense of self, they rely upon affirming and reflective support to foster a better sense of direction.

Within Phase 3, "Becoming the Author of One's Life," students use their well-honed senses of self-worth and personal ethics to stand up for themselves when confronted by the views of others (Baxter-Magolda, 2001). When students can successfully defend their beliefs and live by a personal code, they are on a solid path towards self-authorship. While it is difficult for many students (and adults in general) to consistently live out these beliefs day-to-day, having this established sense of self is critical towards goal-setting and personal achievement. For student-athletes, this is a massive step towards interdependency and relationship-building. Team

dynamics are complex and occasionally volatile. With the burgeoning calls for the restoration of college athletes Name, Image, and Likeness Rights, this is one step that we cannot afford to skim over. When student-athletes (rightfully) regain the marketing and campaigning rights associated with NIL, there will be many opportunities for both team conflict and internal moral conflict. Students must be cognizant of the contextual nature of belief systems, as well as the value of self-reflection, if they wish to pursue their rights as public figures.

This thesis intervention is rooted in Phase 3: as the NCAA is pushed into rolling back NIL restrictions, athletics departments must consider the emotional and intellectual preparedness of their athletes for public endorsements, financial benefits, community needs, and challenges to team cohesion. In my intervention, found in chapter four, I detail a self-authorship seminar series that may also one day serve as a course for credit. By introducing student-athletes to a culture of critical thought, creative problem-solving, reflective writing, and personal management, services for athletes will be able to grow with the times and help to maximize their students' potential. With this self-authorship foundation, students will become more comfortable with debate and negotiation. They will have tools with which to balance their needs with the needs and wants of others. Ideally, they will also be more careful in making personal, professional, and financial commitments so as to maintain an integrity with the self that they have constructed (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 140). With this, they will have a greater chance of success as they build their internal foundations.

"Internal Foundations," or Phase 4 of Baxter-Magolda's Theory of Self-Authorship, is the stage in which young adults have compiled a solid, comprehensive system of values and worldview (Baxter Magolda, 2001, p. 155). The goal of all higher education institutions should be to graduate thoughtful, grounded, and tolerant scholars. Within athletics, it is vital that

students reach Phase 4 so that they may act rationally when faced with life after college. Student-athletes have a unique access to opportunity that few other members of the campus population have access to; the financial and social opportunities afforded to athletes are rare and should be treated responsibly. With a grounded sense of self, student-athletes can pursue their dreams without sacrificing their integrity.

At this point, I must concede that the flaw of many theories that have come out of higher education think-tanks is the lack of diversity in the subjects of the theoretical study. For this reason, some seek to challenge or even discredit the findings of social theorists like Baxter-Magolda or Chickering, who predominantly focused on the experiences of white students. It is a valid critique, and we should always seek out a multitude of voices so we do not perpetuate the marginalization of minoritized groups. However, these theoretical findings are not without merit. Just as we can critique Heidegger's general existence outside of his major publications, we can apply his useful analyses to better serve our students and challenge existing legislation. Shall we discard John Locke's values of life, liberty, and property because of his narrow definition of humanity? Or shall we amend the social contract as we expand the definitions of human, citizen, and student?

In Charles Mills' *The Racial Contract* (1997), he theorizes that the ideas of 18th-century social contract cannot be upheld in a modern, nonracist society, citing that the "founding fathers" of modern political thought were either ignorant, ambivalent, or simply accepting of the status quo of racial relations. He argues that these arguments for a civil society blatantly leave out the rights of the non-white population when calling for civil liberties and rights of the governed. How then, might we correct these damages to ensure that people of all ethnicities may be granted the same rights under the Social Contract? Mills presents a strong case that nonwhites are at a

distinct disadvantage under the presumptions of Hobbes, Locke, and Rousseau. In numerous ways, Mills is correct, as he discusses the impacts of racially shaped liberalism, which was nominally inclusive but conceptually exclusive. But there are specific tenets, most notably the consent of the governed, civil liberties, and the right to equality, which have been largely ignored or misused in the past centuries that can still be used to guarantee basic human rights for all, thereby validating much of the social contract.

John Locke, seen by many as a pioneer for civil rights in his time, was exceedingly prejudiced. While campaigning for the rights of the governed, he assisted in the drafting of the Carolinian Constitutions, which explicitly promoted slavery. Mills is certainly justified in labeling Locke as disconnected from contemporary society, but we must look beyond the prejudices that Locke himself was unable. If we are to replace every reference to whiteness with freedom, and each allusion to the civilized with all peoples, Locke and his ideas begin to look much more credible. The key distinction when interpreting these texts for relevance in today's society, we must look at the theory, not the atrocious application. The world as a whole is much more informed than it was in Locke's time, and I believe it is our role to appropriately utilize the concept of self-authorship to better those around us.

The University is essential to the homeostasis of the institutional ecosystem. But its entrenchment in that ecosystem lends a sense of moiety between the University and some of its more nefarious state ideological apparatuses. Althusser (1970) described ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) as extensions of the government, as replicators of the values of the ruling class. Even today, one can see how even with a dispersion of power, very few have a say in policy formation. Much of the learning that occurs at the University is subsidized by defense contractors, moneylenders that charge usurious rates, and state legislatures. Through military

ties, debt inflation, and legal repercussions for counter-conductive behavior, the University can become a Repressive State Apparatus (RSA). Through this web of relationships and power dynamics, the University shapes society as societal forces mold the University. Much like a dream that is constructed while it is experienced, there is no clear origin to the cycle of power, social norms, and privilege. Such is the influence of dispersed power - if there is no origin, there is no fix-all solution.

The greatest myth about power is that of a Hobbesian Leviathan. Power, as Foucault (1980) stated, is never localized. To study power, we must study it in an ascending fashion, beginning with those who hold the least power and are influenced the most by it. Within the University, students are certainly influenced the most by policy, but they hold power of their own. The rights of speech and assembly guarantee a modicum of power for anyone that sets foot on a college campus. Through these individual liberties, power is dispersed. Individuals are the conductors of power, not the points of its application (Foucault, 1980). The school's president must report to either a board of regents or the state legislature. Faculty is subservient to the whims of institutional policy changes. Removing a president from office does nothing to eliminate the powers of that office. Power, therefore, is not reproduced through authority figures, but through the value that society places upon those positions of authority. As cathartic as revolution can seem, nothing is truly transformed if the revolutionaries fall back into a belief in authoritative positions. Power lies in societal norms, and it is reproduced when the majority of society actively tries to maintain those normative beliefs. Subjugation, in turn, is reproduced by the many, not just those in positions of authority. This subjugation is multifaceted, but it is driven primarily by interpellation.

Interpellation is dependent upon hegemonic beliefs, which Backer (2017) and Althusser (1970) describe as ideology. Now, ideologies need not be dominant to influence power or interpellation; however, it is the hegemonic beliefs that are most readily interpellated and most conducive to the reproduction of power. Interpellation occurs when an individual is recruited to an ideological system of belief. Therefore, the process of interpellation serves as a tool for the reproduction of social forces (Backer, 2017). An interpellated citizen may automatically stand and remove any headwear upon hearing the national anthem. An interpellated child may instinctively kneel before their bedside and whisper their intentions before going to sleep. An interpellated Eagles fan will reflexively boo the slightest referee misstep or the presence of a Dallas Cowboys jersey. Each of these actions are learned behaviors, taught by parents and role models. Student-athletes have been interpellated into a sense of complacency by authority-driven regulations of their labors. Likewise, those that serve student-athletes often view that their hands are tied when it comes to likeness rights.

Interpellation is not necessarily indoctrination. These responses can be unlearned, and the degree to which someone subscribes to a belief or belonging will have a direct impact on their counter-interpellation process. These interpellations represent the influence of dispersed power. One needs not a position of authority to influence the thoughts and actions of those around them. The philosophical beauty of self-authorship lies in its rejection of indoctrination: one cannot fully author themselves while granting the power of writ to a higher authority. Submitting to authority is an act of abdicating the right to decide. As students reach "the Crossroads" in their self-authorship journey, they confront their interpellated ideologies. The university has the right and responsibility to introduce students to a variety of views and values that they've yet to experience. Within education, there exists a vital need for expression and response to foster

learning. In *Democracy and Education*, John Dewey (1916) states, "Society not only continues to exist by transmission, by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication" (p. 4). As educators, we must embrace open dialogue in as civil and inclusive a manner as possible. If we do not ensure freedom of expression, even for the "worst" of us, Dewey's society is at risk of crumbling as we erode this essential right. Our society changes and develops through communication, and we need minority voices to be a part of that discussion. Through dialogue, debate, and critique, students may come away aware of their own interpellations, passed down from their family and culture. By experiencing other beliefs, students can become more critical of their own. We cannot understand our own beliefs, identities, or true selves, without testing them against opposing ideas. This is such an important concept for student affairs professionals, as we have the obligation to push students to think critically and creatively so as to produce intelligent, yet empathetic, social contributors. This does, however, come with a very significant caveat.

Privilege has an undeniable impact on interpellation, just as it has an unshakeable influence on freedoms of choice, travel, and even speech. People with privilege have been interpellated to believe that their privileged status is natural, or unchangeable. On college campuses, these dialogues can get uncomfortable, especially for someone with a privileged background. It is tough for a white male to hear that he has benefitted from the subjugation and marginalization of others. That counter-narrative to how he might have been raised can be jarring, and it can have an impact on how he interacts with his classmates. This cognitive dissonance can spur conflict in which the privileged further entrench themselves in their ideological mythologies, serving to further ostracize those of lesser means and social capital. These conflicts can create teachable moments and encourage growth in the privileged student,

but they can also potentially cause him to embrace the power structures and ideologies that granted him his privileges from his birth. Why this journey into the mind of a hypothetical student? To better understand how the University cannot be counted on as a guaranteed path to counter-interpellation. As professionals within higher education, we must provide a balance of challenge and support to our students. We must encourage students to confront opposing beliefs in order to expand their repertoire of retorts and range of thought. By maintaining open communication and guaranteeing free speech for all, we can begin to foster a more andragogical society that relies less on structure-oriented pedagogies. An andragogical society is likely only achievable through the preservation of free speech and the development of effective critiques and sound reasoning. We can build confident, cognizant, dissonant members of society through limited, but persistent exposure to uncomfortable views or beliefs. Within a self-authorship seminar, student-athletes will have the opportunity to cultivate their analytical and communicative skills, thereby enriching the campus community.

I find that treating student-athletes as adults that offer valuable contributions to the institutions beyond their fields and courts is a necessary step towards building a more andragogical classroom. When students are treated with respect and asked to speak about their experiences and values, the classroom becomes a better learning environment; it becomes an incubator for self-authorship. Freire's (1970) *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* forms a rebuke to modern government structures, specifically, the structure of education. The current educational system is likened to a bank, a bank in which the students are seen as customers at best, commodities at worst. Teachers serve as tellers in this educational banking industry, doling out information as they see fit, rarely having meaningful conversations with their pupils. The key qualms of Freire's analysis stem from this one-way street of information. The student - the

individual - is a spectator, not a participant. In removing the student from the process of reasoning and conversation, this bank-style education system serves to dehumanize and marginalize those that wish to be educated. Only through creation and discussion can one be considered truly educated. Students can no longer be considered collectors of facts, they must become curators of ideas.

Freire (1970) makes an earnest call for a breakdown of this hierarchical system. It is essential that we view the students as capable contributors to the vital societal conversations so that they may one day eradicate the structural prejudices of society. Perhaps the most vital aspect of Freire's argument is the concept of *conscientizacao*, or critical consciousness. It pushes students of all ages to reevaluate their purpose in the educational system and take a more active role in their own cognitive and interpersonal development. This consciousness rejects the banking model, and in its place flourishes meaningful analysis and conversation. Freire claims that authentic liberation is done through humanization, and that humanization requires a relinquishment of control. Control and power hate the organic concept. Authority loves the inorganic, the rote, the mundane. Oppression finds no fertile ground in the minds of critical thinkers. Freire's hypothesis of humanized and horizontally structured learning should serve to spark optimism and revolutionary spirit within the hearts and minds of lovers of learning.

Freire's constructivist and oftentimes critical theories of education are taken to more radical positions by bell hooks (1994), in her chapter, "A Revolution of Values" from *Teaching to Transgress*. In this passage, hooks offers a retrospective on her experience with desegregation in high school. It is a moving analysis on the challenges of being a black woman in America, and she makes great efforts to tie her challenges to the hardships faced by many other marginalized groups in our society. Freire seems to have been highly influential to hooks, and it comes

through ins hooks' keen observation about the education of these groups: students are taught that domination is natural.

And hooks is right. Our histories gloss over the horrors of slavery, expansion, genocide, and imperialism. Our classrooms don't treat tragedies as relevant to our current national status and identity. Many school districts and politicians insist on celebrating Columbus, Jefferson, Lee, and a multitude of other proponents and enablers of white supremacy. It would be beneficial to the development of students as critical thinkers if we gave them the tools and leeway to critique institutional biases and reject long-standing assumptions. Such tools are whetted in a self-authoring environment.

Domination is not natural, and hooks repeatedly uses this argument to bolster her criticisms of the American education system. She uses this critical lens to expose how our education system relies on racism, sexism, and traditional prejudices to limit the abilities of its students. In a segment I found particularly interesting, hooks recounts an interaction with a scholar of Hemingway, pointing out his absurd disgust and disregard for Toni Morrison's work. This brief recollection highlights the major issue of placing white men at the center of traditional curricula - many scholars become prejudiced through primacy bias and thereby disregard the contributions of women or nonwhite scholars. It's a prime example of how our education system predisposes us to elevate specific views and experiences, all the while undermining the vital contributions of others.

Interestingly, hooks also lumps capitalism in with white supremacy and the patriarchy as a sort of three "horsemen" of oppression. I find this categorization to be insufficient, as capitalism is not a form of government, but an economic strategy. I agree with hooks wholeheartedly on the problem of dominance and the need to eradicate prejudiced institutions.

However, I fail to see the link between authoritarianism and the free exchange of goods, services, and ideas. To me, hooks' goal of non-authoritarianism and demolition of dominance begins and ends with the value of liberty. Typically, anti-capitalists propose a socialist or communist state to rectify past inequalities. This is understandable, but it ultimately undermines the original intent of the progressive learning ideals, in that the expanded government of centrally planned economies would undermine Freire's aspirations for reciprocal and horizontal learning. My stance on student-athlete Name, Image, and Likeness Rights mirrors this apprehension towards both traditional and salaried models of college athletics. In order to have a truly free society, we should embrace hooks' and Freire's views on conversation and humanization as means towards liberation. Any societal structures or contracts should be rooted in informed conversation, not in top-down authoritarian initiatives.

Though this analysis is not a socialist proposal, I would be remiss if I did not include Marxian analysis of this issue. The NCAA is easily critiqued through a Marxist lens, given the nature of the labor arrangement between student-athletes, schools, conferences, and the NCAA as a governing body. Marxists and I share common ground regarding student-athlete labor rights: what right does a governing body have to profit off the unpaid labors of others? Though I do not endorse nor advocate for a redistribution of wealth through a regulatory apparatus, I still find great value in Marx's original critiques of labor exploitation. The expansion of student-athlete Name, Image, and Likeness Rights serve as a middle ground between the archaic conservative definitions of student-athlete amateurism and progressive beliefs in an equal distribution of revenue.

Marx (1844) cultivated an early argument against capitalism's exploitative methods in "Alienated Labor." This essay delves into the issue of private property, citing the correlation

between private ownership, greed, division of labor, and the devaluation of man. Each of these factors, as Marx (1844) argued, can lead to a retarding, or even standstill, of progress. As a man is alienated from his labor, he is inherently pushed away from his personal value. If the value of a product comes from the labor required to form it, then the devaluation of the labor force will inevitably lead to the loss of market value for all products. The NCAA may face steep losses if states and local governments find more suitable means of compensation for college athletes. The lack of progression within capitalist industries is demonstrated by the detachment of the laborer from his labor. If a laborer cannot find joy in their work, cannot find meaning in their efforts, are they not exploited? Marx adeptly demonstrated the value of labor in the progression of society by revealing the consequences of alienated labor. From this argument, Marx (1844) discussed the paradoxical relationship between a worker and his produced goods. The worker becomes less valuable as they produce more goods, and the value of the world of things increases in direct proportion to the decrease in the value of labor. Through this contradiction, Marx highlighted one of the most egregious violations of human progress, and his analysis serves as a valuable initial premise for change.

Capitalism, the economic bastion for opportunity (and conversely, exploitation), was Marx's clear enemy in the fight for social progress. The strength of Marx's argument resides in his evidence for the dangers of labor alienation. A society that cannot offer an individual the rights of labor is not a progressive society. The lack of progression in the capitalist world is what most gravely concerned Marx (1844), and his arguments centered around the importance of labor consolidation. Marx's ideas were not entirely inaccurate – he understood that the value of labor was essential to understanding the value of the market. He successfully conveyed the

significance of labor alienation in the development of bourgeoisie society, a lesson that can be learned and re-learned in college athletics today.

The application of the alienation of labor in modern society is certainly a cause for concern, but it is a multifaceted issue that Marxism alone is insufficient in addressing. He claimed that the destruction of the market economy will lead to the liberation of the world's workers, assuring that true individualism will arise when the proletariat shakes off all that remains of the old society. Perhaps we need not wait until the market is abolished to celebrate individualism; it is possible that we can address the dangers of labor exploitation without abolishing the market that serves as the catalyst for sport and entertainment.

One of Locke's (1689) primary concerns was the right of self-ownership, or the freedom of one's own person. This belief, the belief of autonomy, or personal sovereignty, is an inalienable right in any modern society. No person, be they white, black, or brown, should ever feel that they do not have control of their own body and name. This is the core value of self-authorship, and in order to apply Baxter-Magolda's theory to the entire student-athlete population, we must address the lack of diversity in her earliest studies. Recognition is essential for self-authorship, and the redistributive benefits of expanding their rights to name, image, and likeness, will serve as a means towards student-athlete autonomy and development. This deregulation could serve to further disperse power to more members of the University community, and it could grant a greater share of power to each of those students. Society relies less and less upon authority-sourced information with each passing year meaning that the University no longer has a monopoly as the source of student knowledge. There are ways of knowing that exist outside of the sanctioned curriculum, and students have the right to self-ownership and self-authorship.

In the powerful outro to their song, "Self-Ownership," BackWordz' lead singer, Eric July (2017), exclaims, "They have no desire to save you!" This is in reference to the politicians and administrators that only preserve rights when it is in their own self-interest. There are truly no political saviors. Perhaps the most important lesson to be learned from an analysis of institutional power is that a greater dispersion of power will yield the most positive results. Corruption and privilege cannot be eradicated through simple replacement. We cannot fix the issues of the presidency by removing the sitting president, no more than we can defeat the law of gravity by going into space - it would just be a matter of denial. All too often, those that wish to eradicate male privilege focus on the "patri" element of the patriarchy, when in reality, it is the "archy" that is far more dangerous. Social change is rooted not only in the rulers but in the means of rule. Identity politics are useful when identifying injustices, but identity-centric beliefs have the proclivity to fixate on the superficial. One cannot despise institutional racism while giving the institutions that perpetuate said racism a pass. Institutions concentrate power and shape policy; they are the batteries that fuel prejudice and privilege. Therefore, it is essential that the University seeks out ways to disperse its powers in egalitarian ways to maximize student development and minimize student marginalization. As power is dispersed, the mythology of a single-fix savior will dissipate. There is no one coming to save us, so let's eschew the eschatology.

It is easy to concede freedoms to external authorities, but it is difficult to win those freedoms back. As it stands today, student-athletes lack the apparatus for meaningful protest. They cannot "bite the hand that feeds," as much of their ascribed identities are tied up in the financial success of their schools. In the current setup of college athletics, student-athletes have minimal power of critique. This runs counter to the NCAA's professed value of shielding

students from exploitation. If one party lacks the ability to influence the ruling elite, there is a high danger of exploitative behavior by those in charge. Critical thought and action should be encouraged on university campuses, but limits on employment and income end up restricting self-expression.

Today, there seems to be a lot of momentum pushing the NCAA to offer salaried positions to athletes. However, the reality of a salaried player would be a logistical nightmare. There are several complicated, interacting factors that would mix to form a slew of headaches for the institutions responsible for paying these semi-professional players. The first issue is rooted in the importance of equality, namely the conflict of equal outcomes versus proportional contributions. If student-athletes are paid, then all schools would be bound by Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 to find a way to provide egalitarian paychecks for teams across gendered lines. Running conversely to the idea of equality is fair pay for generated value. If football players are risking severe injury to bring millions of dollars of revenue into the school's coffers, they will likely loathe forsaking even a fraction of their salary in order to reimburse women's golf in the name of equality of results. Tension and discomfort of certain parties do not and should not dictate policy, especially when our sports fanaticism is so one-sided. These seemingly irreconcilable differences in perceived value should push us to seek alternatives that may elevate the earning potential of all students without infringing upon earned individual value.

Female athletes possess very limited options for going pro in the US. Given the low availability of professional women's leagues, they may not see a chance to promote their brand or interests after college. In Delaware, Elena Delle Donne was a star. She was a highly sought-after basketball recruit, and she made many regional, if not national, headlines when she decommitted from UConn to play close to home at the University of Delaware. During her time

at UD, her brand was at an all-time high, yet she could not sign a single endorsement for fear of losing her playing eligibility. Likewise, Katelyn Ohashi gained no financial recognition for her viral gymnastics routine while she was an athlete at UCLA. For many young women, college stardom is the end, not the means, in regard to athletic excellence. Women's sports are not valued nearly as highly as those of their male counterparts. This imbalance of school funding and interest serves to reinforce patriarchal beliefs, both within athletics and across the university as a whole. Because it will take generations to erase male bias from sports funding and engagement, it is vital that women athletes take control of their own future and not rely upon the current paradigm for success. Something as simple as a monetized YouTube account would no longer jeopardize eligibility, and it would allow student-athletes to gain compensation for their achievements

Racial privilege is another necessary lens through which we must analyze college athlete income and self-promotion. Because athletics departments are so rarely reflective of the demographics of the larger student body, these restrictions disproportionately affect students of color. Nonwhite students, particularly black students, are underrepresented in the overall collegiate population but are disproportionately represented on team rosters. They are especially overrepresented, relative to their representation on campus, on the key "money" sports of football and men's basketball. In *Towards an interest-convergence in the education of African-American football student-athletes in major college sports*, Jamel Donnor (2005) states, "Black males dominate football, which in some instances generates enough revenue to financially underwrite non-revenue-producing athletic sports such as crew, swimming, tennis, and golf that are overwhelmingly populated by white middle and upper-class students." (p. 49). This disparity in production and restitution serves as one of the core catalysts for my concern, especially as it

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relates to unsustainable social practices. Students of color who may not feel valued in much of campus life should be free to use their names and likenesses to pursue their own commercial endorsements in order to raise money for causes or communities that matter most to them.

The second major issue of salaried athletes is the actual funding. Currently, athletic scholarships are tax-exempt by virtue of their charitable status. However, salaries have little precedent for being regarded as charity and would lose several tax-exempts qualities from the university payroll. Through the magic of federal taxation, Thelin (2018) contends, schools would then be required to pay for social security and Medicare for their athletes. This may be a moral victory for many, but it limits the number of funds available for each student. Under the current structure, schools do not need to pay the state for the right to compensate their athletes. Under a salaried structure, only the top twenty or fewer teams in the country could offer competitive salaries, a classic case of the rich getting richer through talent diversion. One might argue that schools are willing to shell out millions of dollars to coaches and bite the bullet on the taxes, but the cost of paying athletes, even with significantly smaller salaries, would be much higher than paying coaches. Under a salaried structure, higher education institutions would see more money go into taxes than before, thereby diverting precious scholarship resources away from the student body and into the hands of the government.

Perhaps the best support for this policy erasure could be found in Thorstein Veblen's (1957) critique of the role of businessmen, academic executives, and governing boards, in the function of the university. Veblen's (1957) critique reaches its peak in a declaration that, "all that is required is the abolition of the academic executive and of the governing board" (p. 189). Oversight committees largely exist for the purposes of continuing their own existence, and the NCAA board is particularly invested in maintaining a monopoly over collegiate athletics.

According to Veblen (1957), "They may be conceivably both be useful for some other purpose, foreign or alien to the quest of learning; but within the lines of the university's legitimate interest both are wholly detrimental, and very wastefully so." (p.190). If we extrapolate Veblen's argument into the modern infrastructure of college athletics, he would likely concur with this further abolition. The NCAA is following in the footsteps of the school governing boards of yesteryear, in which they and their policies predominantly serve to reinforce power structures that unavoidably limit the potentiality of student-athletes. These endorsement restrictions do not contribute in a major way to students' academic growth. If anything, minimizing student income could actually adversely affect athletes' study habits. A hungry or tired student is not a high-performing student. Limiting potential revenue streams for students providing the university with a valuable service is both hypocritical and miseducative. By abolishing the current constraints on personal income, the NCAA would save much more revenue than they do today, as much of that oversight is done by non-athlete bureaucrats who are not actually necessary in the production of the on-field or in-class value provided by the various universities and student-athletes.

This deregulation could serve to further disperse power to more members of the University community, and it could grant a greater share of power to each of those students. Knowledge is more objective than ever, and society relies less and less upon authority-sourced information with each passing year. The University no longer has a monopoly as the source of student knowledge. There are ways of knowing that exist outside of the sanctioned curriculum, and students have the right to self-ownership and self-authorship. Regulation of students' expression and labor serves to minimize their power within the University.

In order to properly recognize the diversity of voices and lived experiences that arrive to college campuses each year, we need to set aside our assumptions about belonging, institutional

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control, and collegiate expectations. For us to effectively redistribute power, we must push for a recession of authority and regulatory policies. We cannot sit idly by and allow schools and bureaucracies to profit off the labor of others while they routinely deny rights of self-image and advocacy to students. Salaried athletic departments are infeasible for several reasons, such as financing, fair pay, and favoritism. Scholarships may be financially sufficient, but they come with the baggage of authoritarian measures that limit the students' future income and socialization while in school. Student-athletes must be given the opportunity to generate their own revenue streams, regardless of on-field performance. A decrease in financial regulation by the NCAA allows the organization to focus on violations that should really matter, like academics, and scale back their over-involvement with the issues that can be handled by the individual. This policy will also give student-athletes a career development outlook. With what would amount to a four-year entrepreneurial experience, student-athletes may seek more meaning in their studies in order to seize the momentum of their community reach and brand value. With a more relaxed policy, the universities will not need to worry about losing scholarship benefits or paying taxes on salaried athletes, while the student-athletes will gain more freedom to pursue their own interests, write their own narratives, and control their means of income.

The top-down mindset required to enact a salaried structure for student-athletes is just as antiquated as the current paradigm of "amateurism," and it is almost as detrimental to student self-authorship, as it relies heavily upon institutional structures. The two extremes are insufficient for student self-authorship a sustainable movement for self-authorship must incorporate the student rights' efforts of the progressive movement with the individualized and decentralized market nature of sports endorsements. With a sound base of self-authorship,

student-athletes will be better-prepared in the realms of personal management, community consciousness, and critical thought. My goal for my intervention is to serve as a *Hybrid Theory* of sorts; it is time that we take Mike Shinoda's (2000) Serresian advice and "let icons be bygones." The old belongings that Serres (2012) railed against in his publication of *Thumbelina* are changing form or burning out into obscurity; the old ways of understanding societal structure, faith, authority, and power are not the monoliths they once were. Students, and student-athletes in particular, need a changing of the collegiate praxis – one that offers an inclusive community and values the unique individuality of its population. In Chapter Four, I will outline my syllabus and implementation strategy for self-authorship seminars that will serve to prepare athletes and non-athletes alike for life after graduation.

Chapter 4

Design

Introduction

This course is meant to offer a framework for helping students build their outlook through a reflection on their mentors, friendships, and families, as well as those authors, historical figures, philosophers, and musicians that have shaped who they've become and what elements of those influences they wish to retain. It channels the values of Marcia Baxter-Magolda's (2001) work in order to advocate for self-authorship by college athletes. Though there is some momentum for this proposal in California, New York, and North Carolina, it is critical that we develop our argument through the lenses of liberation and student development theories in order to seize that momentum for meaningful and sustainable change.

As a student affairs professional, I have found that students require a diverse range of support from their advisors. No two students are alike, so no two students will require the exact same support from their advisors. The most effective advisors can adopt a variety of styles for each student that walks into their office. Some students require a hardline approach that sets frequent deadlines and offers many forms of academic or personal management support. Other students may excel academically while requiring time to vent about the stresses of their athletic schedule. I find that a good starting point is to serve as a supportive coach - someone who offers advice, directs students to resources, pushes the student for success, and ultimately trusts that student to make the right call on their own.

My Perspective

      In my time as an academic coach for student-athletes, I found myself shifting my position, depending on which student was in my office. Some of the students that we consider "at-risk," or in danger of failing, required a close eye and many reminders to attend meetings and finish classwork. Others were much more independent and could be trusted to complete work on their own time, so I took more of a delegative approach to my work with them. For me, adaptability is the core strength of advising. Advisors must be ready to work with students from any academic ability, socioeconomic background, athletic team, or personality type. While I believe it is absolutely essential that advisors be authentic with their advisees, I feel that we can present ourselves through a diverse array of prisms in order to bend our "guiding light" to fit our students' individual paths. With this in mind, I crafted several activities for this seminar series on self-authorship that encouraged students to think metacognitively about how they interact with others and how they adapt to different situations.

      In addition to adaptability, I have found that creativity and a persistent desire to learn are critical to properly serving students. Due to the diversity of students that I have worked with and will work with, as well as the variety of their needs and concerns, no two challenges will ever require the exact same solutions. Having a creative set of problem-solving tools fuels adaptability and embraces the beauty of what we don't yet know. This is a major point of emphasis in my intervention – fear vs appreciation for the unknown. Curiosity has helped me to appreciate those unknowns and persistently question my surroundings and personal beliefs. That desire to learn comes with a love of integrated, interdisciplinary learning. My love for interdisciplinarity derives from my favorite book, *Cosmos*, by Carl Sagan (1980). His passion for weaving science, history, and philosophy together has left an indelible impact on my approach to

syllabus crafting and relationship-building. I emphatically value courses that can integrate a variety of discussion topics, and I believe that specialization erodes relatability. As an educator, I am always seeking to diversify my skill set to improve my creativity and adaptability.

My greatest Gallup © strengths are "Context," "Input," and "Ideation," so I thrive when I am learning about someone's experiences and helping them problem-solve. Within this syllabus is a trove of activities that, I hope, will serve to spark generative dialogues and interactive learning experience that foster the development of self-authorship. The leader of this intervention must be an active listener who is receptive to their students' needs, and I believe that having a background of diverse interests will facilitate their ability to create a welcoming, positive environment. I firmly believe in the value of "Good Company" for students' self-authorship (Baxter-Magolda, 2004). I love to find ways to relate to others, as well as helping those students relate to their coursework. I work best when I can help students contextualize their experiences and develop solutions around that context. When students step into these seminars, I hope they come in with a reflective and analytical mindset. With the advent of Name, Image, and Likeness Rights' expansion, I feel that it is essential for student-athletes to embrace self-reflection and challenges to their ways of thinking.

The Importance of Self-Authorship

Tammy Gocial and Julianna Fussell (2012) highlighted the value of self-authorship seminars for college students, stating, "as individuals work toward Self-Authorship, they begin to listen to and cultivate their own thinking and voices" (2). They cultivate their abilities to to analyze themselves and integrate values, personal relationships, and senses of identity. Self-authored students have a greater sense of interdisciplinary study and interpersonal understanding.

They no longer derive their sense of direction from authority, though they may still require guidance in decision-making and other forms of advisement.

Teachers, advisors, and all student support staff must work towards a world in which students can advocate for themselves and write their own narratives. Cultivating self-authorship requires trust, honesty, and well-timed pieces of advice, each of which requires a relationship with good rapport. If I cannot relate to a student, I have already failed that individual. My first task as an advisor, with any new student, is to find some common ground and build our relationship upon that. As our relationship develops, I can introduce them to new means of thinking and ways to advocate for themselves, thus fulfilling my role as a coach.

Challenges to NCAA Amateurism Bylaws

To be a successful coach, I must push for the abolition of the current NCAA bylaws restricting student-athlete self-ownership of names, likenesses, and labors. At the national level, it is imperative that the NCAA abolishes restrictions on student-athletes' names, labor, and likenesses. This abolition will serve to expand student-athletes' freedoms and rights to self-advocacy. Authoritarian structures are antithetical to self-authorship, and the results of the NCAA's current policies have vastly undermined student-athlete's sense of self, and self-ownership, relative to the rest of the university student body. Thankfully, the cause of NIL Rights has gained momentum in the past year, but there is still much work to be done. If the NCAA does not embrace this liberating model, I will focus my efforts on advocating for a redefining of the NCAA's interpretation of amateurism. If the association is able to see the value in student-athlete self-ownership, it is essential that we have advocacy, business, and ethics training available for our students.

At the institutional level, student-athletes must be educated in the values of self-ownership and authorship: creative expression, personal ethics, financial literacy, community engagement, and critical thought. These courses, or trainings, will rely upon a carefully crafted syllabus that promotes self-authorship, advocacy, and scholarship, among student-athletes. Items that I believe will be most beneficial to include in the discussion (and hopefully this self-advocacy "course") would be personal financial management/budgeting, ethics of entrepreneurship, sociology & community issues, critical thought, creative & technical writing, career development strategies, and digital presence and networking. As the world of college athletics grows more advocacy-oriented and deregulated, it is critical that we supply "real-world" skills to our students, so they might strike a balance between their passions, abilities, and community engagement.

UNIV 201-010: Self-Authorship I
Professor: Wes Hamilton
Room: TBD

Discussion: MW 11:15-12:05
Writing Labs:
100L M 6:00-7:00
101L T 9:30-10:30
102L T 11:00-12:00
103L T 12:30-1:30

Class Purpose: College students, particularly student-athletes, face a barrage of new experiences, interactions, and sources of information when they arrive on campus. It can be difficult to situate oneself in the campus community while maintaining a sense of personal management and self-awareness. This three-credit course is designed to spark meaningful conversations regarding decision-making, self-reflection, health and wellness, budgeting and money management, critical thought, and goal-setting. In addition to these discussion sections, class participants will also attend a writing lab once per week to hone their writing skills; good writing is integral to personal expression and critical advocacy.

Class Expectations: Participating students will be held to a high writing standard so as to encourage engagement and reflection. Writing labs are designed to cover conventions of both creative writing forms and critical reflection. This course satisfies the university writing emphasis/ "Second Writing" requirement. There will be brief written projects due each Thursday night throughout the semester, with a final essay that will outline each student's personal mission for their college (and post-college) experience: how do experiences, beliefs, strengths, goals, and fields of study interact to form "you"? And how do you relate to the world; how do you want to use your college experience to make positive changes?

Student Learning Objectives:
1. Students will engage with their classmates in respectful dialogues regarding their personal identities and philosophies
2. We will cultivate a welcoming and thoughtful discussion group to make it easier to engage with challenging topics and theories
3. Students will develop long-lasting writing tools and techniques that will serve them throughout their college careers
4. Students will reflect upon their choices of majors & minors, and they will be able to articulate their skill-based objectives for their field of study
5. Students will read and reflect upon critical philosophies, and they will offer up their own worldviews with reflection on how those views were shaped by experience
6. Students will develop plans for the future, informed by their experiences, goals, values, passions, and communities.

Grading: In this class, grades are open for appeal, but you must have your reasoning presented clearly in writing (via email) and in-person (during office hours). All assignments are due on Thursdays at 11:59pm, and grades will be posted by Sunday afternoon. I will accept appeals beginning on Monday morning. Grades are finalized on Wednesday evenings the week after the due date. No late work will be eligible for appeals or re-grades. Work will be submitted through Canvas, and five percent will be deducted for every 12 hours past deadline a paper is submitted.

Assignments: There are three components to this course - participation, weekly assignments, and the final essay. There are no exams, as I do not believe that material this subjective should be relegated to multiple-choice or short-answer forms of response.

1. Participation & Attendance: Consistent attendance and engagement is necessary for both your personal growth as a student and for success in this class. Failure to engage with the material will be reflected in your grades. On days we are unable to meet in-class, I will utilize Zoom to hold our discussions remotely. Participation will be a full 20 percent of your final grade, so be sure to come to class with questions, reflections, and drafts of your weekly projects to facilitate your engagement.

2. Weekly Assignments: Each week offers a new topic for discussion. The piece of writing due at the end of each week will be closely related to the material we discuss in class. In fact, the written assignment will help you to participate more readily in class. There are a total of twelve assignments, each one counting as five percent of your final grade.

   a. *"I Am" Poetry Project*: you will begin the semester with a creative writing exercise. How do you want others to see you? What makes you happy? What makes you think? This project is designed to get you to start thinking critically about how you view yourself and how that impacts where you are today. Be as creative as you'd like to be - a collection of haiku, a classical poem in iambic pentameter, a 32-bar rap - anything that you feel truly reflects who you are is an option.

   b. *Academic Autobiography*: This 2-3 page paper is meant to serve as a reflection on your interests, favorite learning moments, stand-out teachers, proudest achievements, and greatest challenges throughout your academic career. Feel free to start as far back as Kindergarten or as recently as last semester; whatever events you deem to be relevant, you should include.

   c. *Social Support and Mentoring Family Tree:* We will do an activity in-class to serve as a springboard for your Relating to Others Reflection. As part of that paper, I will ask you to reach out to three people that have served as mentors for you and ask them about their mentors. It is always beneficial to learn about those that came before you and laid the groundwork for who you might become. It is also a fascinating experiment in how connected we all are.

   d. *Myers-Briggs:* We will take the Myers-Briggs © test to help you reflect on your strengths, weaknesses, and interests. This assessment is helpful when reflecting upon how and why you chose your current field of study.

e. *Major/Minor Objectives*: This assignment will ask you to think critically about what it is that drew you to your current major(s) and minor(s). What skills do you want to develop while you are studying in that department? How do your strengths and previous experiences inform what you want to do for a career?

f. *Critical Thought Reflections:* You will read excerpts from several philosophers during the next four weeks, and you will be asked to provide 150-200 word reflections on each of them. What do you agree with? What surprised you? Who of these writers have you heard of before? What struck you as "incorrect" or opposed to your worldview? How might that author have reached a different conclusion from you? How can you use critical thought to advocate for yourself and your community?

    i. Jacob Bronowski – Excerpts from *The Origins of Knowledge and Imagine (1979)*

    ii. Carl Sagan and Neil DeGrasse Tyson – excerpts from *Cosmos (1980)* and *The Sky is not the Limit (2000)*

    iii. Karl Marx and bell hooks – excerpts from *Estranged Labor (1884)* and *Teaching to Transgress (1994)*

    iv. Michel Serres – *Thumbelina (2012)*

g. *My Values/My Worldview*: After we read from several philosophers, I will ask you to construct and explain your own systems of values and core beliefs. Consider how your personal experience shaped your current points (the first three assignments may be particularly helpful in forming your response). Which philosopher(s), if any, do you align with and why? Why is it important to outline your beliefs? How might this exercise help you find your passion and career niche?

h. *Music as Critical Thought:* Consider your favorite artists: what is their message? What tone do they convey? How might understanding their perspectives and experiences contribute to your understanding of their music? In what ways can art double as critique or philosophy? We will analyze selected songs from punk, hip-hop, metal, and folk to demonstrate the versatility of critique and music's role in progressing society.

i. *Making an Impact*: What matters to you? What issues are currently facing your home community? How can you use your knowledge, philosophy, experience, and resources to make a positive impact in your community?

3. Final Essay: This essay will synthesize the semester's twelve topics into a personal mission statement: "Why am I important?" Students will be expected to draw from various discussions and projects to make connections between experience and philosophy, personal management and passions. By articulating these beliefs and goals, students will have constructed a self-authored path for success through college and beyond.

Intervention Structure and Purpose

College students, particularly student-athletes, face a barrage of new experiences, interactions, and sources of information when they arrive on campus. It can be difficult to situate oneself in the campus community while maintaining a sense of personal management and self-awareness. This self-authorship seminar series is designed to spark meaningful conversations regarding decision-making, self-reflection, health and wellness, budgeting and money management, critical thought, and goal setting. In addition to these discussion sections, class participants will also have the option to attend a writing lab once per week to hone their writing skills, as good writing is integral to personal expression and critical advocacy.

Participating students will be held to a high writing standard so as to encourage engagement and reflection. Writing labs are designed to cover conventions of both creative writing forms and critical reflection. There will be brief written projects due each week throughout the semester, with a final essay that will outline each student's personal mission for their college (and post-college) experience. Full details of the course syllabus are provided in Appendix A, and it is written in its idealized format, as a full course for credit. Participants will be given myriad assignments to maximize the breadth of their writing talents, the first of which is a creative writing exercise that lays the groundwork for the seminar's core foci: self-authorship, personal reflection, and communicative skills.

The first project is designed to be quite flexible in its structure; students are given the following prompt:

> How do you want others to see you? What makes you happy? What makes you think? This project is designed to get you to start thinking critically about how you view yourself and how that impacts where you are today. Be as creative as you'd like to be - a collection of haiku, a classical poem in iambic pentameter, a 32-bar rap - anything that you feel truly reflects who you are is an option.

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As the prompt suggests, students will have a great variety of styles to choose from, a course parameter that I find to be essential to the nature of self-authorship. This project is derived from my EDUC413-Diversity in Education course when I was at the University of Delaware. Professor Meacham introduced our class to the value of the "I Am" reflection, and it had a profound impact on my class experience and vision for this thesis' intervention. I feel that the "I Am" activity integrates the cognitive, interpersonal, and intrapersonal elements of self-authorship quite seamlessly, and it lays a strong foundation for our group discussion.

The second activity, the Academic Autobiography, is inspired by the Technology Autobiography I had to complete in EDT525 with Professor Matthew Kruger-Ross. This three-page (approx.) paper is meant to serve as a reflection on students' interests, favorite learning moments, stand-out teachers, proudest achievements, and greatest challenges throughout their academic careers. These autobiographies will help participants to reflect on the cognitive dimension of their self-authorship – how have they grown (or regressed) in their study habits, love of learning, and/or class participation, across their academic careers? I found this reflective style of writing is particularly valuable in cultivating a sense of direction.

This activity is closely tied to the third project, The Mentoring Tree, a reflection upon social support and personal historiography. For this paper, I will ask students to reach out to three people that have served as mentors and ask them about their own mentors. It is always beneficial to learn about those that came before you and laid the groundwork for who you might become. It is also a fascinating experiment in how connected we all are. I conducted a very informal model of this "tree" during my experiences at my UDSSA internship – it was inspiring to learn about my mentors' journeys into higher education and the coaches, mentors, and

philosophers that shaped those journeys. I feel that this activity highlights the complicated nature of self-authorship: even as we build our own path, we are intertwined with the paths of others.

As the semester progresses, students will begin to analyze their strengths and identities in relation to their majors, analyzing how their experiences, beliefs, strengths, goals, and fields of study interact to form a sense of self. They will use these reflections to consider how they relate to the world and how they want to use their college experiences to make positive changes. We will use CliftonStrengths © and Myers-Briggs © assessments to spark dialogues on personal interests and professional goals. Given that most, if not all, students in this course/seminar will be student-athletes, it is vital to have these honest, reflective conversations regarding post-athletics life. Given the low probability of students going "pro", these discussions about their passions and non-athletics interests are essential to their development. For the same reason, it is imperative for students to have their rights to their own names, images, and likenesses reinstated by the NCAA. This course is designed to provide benefits to student-athletes before, during, and after the legislative corrections to the NCAA bylaws. Prior to the changes, the post-college plan will be a larger focal point, but as the bylaws are adjusted to fit the times and needs of student-athletes, the focus will shift towards helping them to build a base of values and goals, progressing into their advocacy skills. I have also included a contingency set of assignments if I or another teacher decide to shift the emphasis towards financial management.

Perhaps the most exciting element of this seminar series, which could easily be converted into a two or three-credit course with institutional support, is the critical thought and philosophy element that takes precedent in the second half of the curriculum. I would include authors and artists featured throughout this thesis on my first installation of the course, but the beauty of this intervention lies in its flexibility, and any staff or faculty that oversaw this seminar could adjust

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the readings to their own experiences and studies. As the curriculum is currently written, authors such as Jacob Bronowski, Carl Sagan, Karl Marx, bell hooks, Michel Serres, and Neil DeGrasse Tyson, as well as artists like BackWordz, Bad Religion, Jasiri X, and Frank Turner, will be featured in these philosophical analyses. I include musical artists because I have found that many genres contribute to the sociopolitical and philosophical discourse, and this media may be more relatable than century-old critiques.

Finally, students will have the opportunity to construct and explain their own systems of values. They will consider how their personal experience, philosophic influences, and mentors affected their beliefs. They will use this personal reflection on their knowledge, philosophy, experience, and resources to make a positive impact in their communities. Their final essay will synthesize the semester's twelve topics into a personal mission statement: "Why am I important?" Students will be expected to draw from various discussions and projects to make connections between experience and philosophy, personal management and passions. By articulating these beliefs and goals, students will have constructed at least a template for their self-authored path for success through college and beyond.

Resources Required

A student-teacher ratio of approximately 12:1 is ideal for effective engagement and reflection within this self-authorship seminar. This could be accomplished by capping the enrollment to twenty-five students and adding a teacher's assistant (TA). This TA position could be rolled into a graduate assistant's responsibilities, and with the writing emphasis, it could cover at least five hours of an assistantship. This ratio is due to the writing emphasis element. Student-athletes struggle mightily with writing mechanics and confidence. While this course emphasizes self-authorship, it is important to support literal authoring skills as well. While there is no

explicit cost in this initiative, there are implied costs in its implementation. Funding will be straightforward, but it will require allocating funding for either an additional TA or an expanded assistantship role for the existing position. In addition, the teaching position will need to be filled by a staff member or adjunct faculty.

Self-Authorship Seminar Goals, Objectives, and Inquiries

Within this seminar (or class, if we can advance the curriculum to approved course status), my goals are to:

- promote student-athletes' understanding of critical thought;
- create a well-informed student body that can successfully articulate their beliefs and values; and
- develop students as authors across various writing styles.

The program is designed to highlight these skills that I find most essential to developing self-authorship.

In order to reach these goals, we will cultivate a welcoming and thoughtful discussion group to make it easier to engage with challenging topics and theories. Students will engage with their classmates in respectful dialogues regarding their personal identities and philosophies, and they will offer up their own worldviews with reflection on how those views were shaped by experience and critical philosophies, answering inquiries such as: How do experiences, beliefs, strengths, goals, and fields of study interact to form "you"? How do you relate to others? Your community? The world? How do you want to use your college experience to make positive changes? These discussion groups are essential to the cultivation of the interpersonal element of self-authorship. With an emphasis on the cognitive dimension on self-authorship, this course will encourage students to articulate their skill-based objectives for their field of study. Additionally,

course participants will develop long-lasting writing tools and techniques that will serve them throughout their college careers. With these objectives met, students will be able to develop plans for the future, informed by their experiences, goals, values, passions, and communities.

Limitations

There could be some challenges in implementing this program, most notably in its path towards a course for credit. Launching a new course requires significant institutional support, and though this curriculum is far from controversial, it still requires accreditation. It will likely need to take root initially as a voluntary seminar. It may be difficult to get buy-in from the athletes early in the implementation process, but if this is properly marketed to coaches and support staff as a means to improve student engagement and writing skills, we will see a greater rate of participation. The next hurdle is balancing the discussions and writing labs. I wrote this curriculum with an emphatic focus on writing development, as that is often the largest hurdle for student-athletes in their academic adjustment to college life. However, a writing lab for no credit is a tough sell, to both athletes and coaches. One potential workaround is using the hour of writing as a credit towards student-athletes' study hall hours. This would provide a creative and constructive outlet for students that I have found to be necessary in study hall. While six hours of study hall per week is reasonable, student-athletes often complain of the time commitment it requires. This solution would blend the mandatory element of study hall with the creative and critical thinking elements of the seminar, ensuring that students do not have to tack on an additional responsibility to their already-packed schedules while they still benefit from an essential academic skills development program.

Implementation – Frame Factors to Consider

Temporal
Student-athletes have a lot of work; varsity athletics is very much a full-time occupation. Adding this seminar to their schedule may require replacing an existing seminar series, integrating the seminar into study hall/skill mod activities, or promoting it to a course for credit. A course for credit, of course, comes with other restrictions such as institutional accreditation of the course and degree completion percentage.

Financial
While there are few to zero explicit costs involved in the implementation of this program, resources must be allocated towards its development and integration with the student-athlete development plan. If these resources must be taken from existing programs, there may be budgeting complications.

Political/Structural
It is unlikely that program will be opposed for political reasons, but the challenge of resource allocation may lead to a prioritization of on-field performance or core curriculum success. For my program to succeed, I will need to convince my superiors and peers that this is the most effective use of our resources and this program will improve our program area's status within the institution

Cultural
The hardest part of implementing a new program is student buy-in. I may be able to convince my managers and campus administrators of the value of the program, but it is all for naught if students do not buy into the mission of the self-authorship seminar. To truly succeed, I will need to make self-authorship a part of the campus culture, changing the narrative around student-athlete academic engagement.

Chapter 5

Assessment and Evaluation

Role of Leadership

While this thesis intervention is fairly straightforward, it requires careful implementation and effective leadership. Within higher education, leadership is essential for crafting impactful structural changes and meaningful curriculum. Student affairs professionals must take careful notes on the unique stressors facing their student population in order to identify the key pressure points of potential conflict or miseducative experiences. Within college athletics, administrators must be consistently vigilant in their assessment of student-athlete academic engagement and development. Leadership is an essential quality for athletes and those they look up to. Without effective leadership, a team often struggles to craft a shared identity or mission, ultimately performing as something less than the sum of its components. If a football team lacks internal leadership, players may not be motivated to take a step back on certain plays for the good of the team. With the Philadelphia Eagles' 2011 "Dream Team," a lack of direction led to a disappointing 8-8 record. In jettisoning traditional development practices and relying on a star-studded free agency haul, the organization showed a shift in philosophy. It was apparent to many fans that the talent was there, but the team leadership was nebulous at best. Leaders must have a sense of ethics and direction, galvanizing a sense of camaraderie and trust within their teams. Just as leadership is vital for athletes, it is essential in higher education services.

In higher education, there are a multitude of program areas that each believe that they are essential to the development of college students, and one would have few reasons to say that any one of them is not. However, scarcity demands that resources be allocated appropriately based on

need and student feedback. Good leaders are able to prioritize initiatives in order to maximize their impact. Effective leaders understand both the strengths and the limitations of their constituents; in this way, they are able to identify sources of inspiration as well as origins of negation. For leaders in student affairs, this requires a comprehensive understanding of structural biases and cultural norms for their population. Sometimes, those negating factors are caused by the style of leadership or the bylaws of a governing body. Identifying negating factors is a critical first step in advancing the rights of students. Once those factors have been identified, leaders can then take the necessary steps towards negating the negation, i.e, finding ways to circumvent the negation or, hopefully, finding ways to dismantle the negating policy or factor.

Leadership in the Intervention

Within this self-authorship seminar, student-athletes will gain important leadership skills, such as written communication, self-reflection, critical analysis, and interpersonal relationship-building. The implementation of this seminar requires an impassioned leader who is well-versed in creative expression and classroom management. A high-quality seminar leader has the ability to keep students actively engaged in the group discussion. I will ideally be working as a student-athlete academic advisor next semester, so there is a strong likelihood that I can at least begin to implement these skills in a seminar format within the next eighteen months. While I may be able to teach a course from that position, it may be very difficult to propose a new class. It will likely take a few years to get my idealized version of this program running, but I should be able to make at least a few small strides in its implementation in my first year as an advisor. I have over five years of experience in student-athlete services, so I understand how grueling an in-season schedule can be. I know that this will be a tough sell to some coaches, but I also have the rapport-building skills to persuade them of its benefits. I will advocate for this intervention at

athletics advising conferences and speak on the value of self-authorship, citing Baxter-Magolda's (2001) research and Frederick Bruce Thomas' biography (Alexandrov, 2013).

To successfully install this intervention as part of the university's curriculum, I will need assistance from my director as well as the campus faculty. If the faculty is unionized, like at many state schools, I will have a very difficult time having my vision implemented as a member of the administrative staff. I do intend on pursuing a doctorate eventually, but I would like to work somewhere that I take on teaching responsibilities right away. I will likely begin my classroom work within the realm of first-year seminars. This curriculum could certainly be modified to fit the necessary benchmarks of one of those courses; I've included contingency activities in my syllabus proposal found in Appendix A. Alternatively, I could implement this seminar independent from university curriculum, as student-athletes often have team-building and career-outlook seminars scattered across their semester schedules. This voluntary (or at least non-curricular) program would be much easier to implement, but, much like I stated in Chapter 4, the writing elements of the seminar would be much more challenging to integrate, leaving a gap in the overall vision for the class. Perhaps I will be able to incentivize students to engage with the material by offering a certificate or a credit towards study hall hours. It is a shame that there can be not tangible incentive, even a lunch, due to NCAA provisions against student-athlete benefits beyond basic costs of study.

I am confident in the reading content and assignment structure of the class, but it is important to me that I offer many opportunities for feedback from my students. Student-athletes often ask questions like "why does this matter to me?" and I want to be able to give them honest and thoughtful responses. I can easily defend my six authors and four musicians that make up the critical thought segment of the seminar, but I want to see how students of different backgrounds,

majors, and experiences respond to these reading samples. Part of my evaluation will be soliciting feedback on authors and artists to feature the next semester. Students will have a say in how the course gets restructured in order to bolster their advocacy skills. By integrating this form of action research, this seminar will evolve with each cohort of students, serving as a flexible and collaborative learning environment.

Action Research Model

Activist scholarship, the manifestation of transformative critical research, is a difficult balance for most people in academia. To be an activist scholar, one must be cognizant of both their abilities and affinities; they must be willing to step out of their comfort zone to enact real change. To be a successful scholar-activist, one must forgo the typical individualized nature of research and embrace the interdependent nature of activism. The activist scholar keeps themselves accountable by garnering feedback and direction from the community leaders. I aspire to be a scholar-activist in my role as an advisor. I firmly stand for student-athletes' (and students of the genral population) rights. In my quest to install this program, I would be remiss if I simply led based on my own experiences and preferences. By incorporating feedback from my students, I cultivate a reciprocal relationship. Reciprocity is an extension of this accountability, as engagement does not lead directly to progress. Simply documenting the struggles of a community is not a reciprocal action. The core merit of reciprocity is that the community should benefit from the research as much as the researcher. Sometimes reciprocity takes the form of longer hours at community centers, helping to set up and clean up. In many ways, a reciprocally-minded researcher serves as a bridge between the community and the university, providing access to experts, literature, or even "legitimacy."

Action research offers a unique alternative to conventional social research by instilling a synthesis of theory and practice in its methods. In action research, theories and goals are constructed while the research is underway. The researcher is given the opportunity to experience and construct their theory simultaneously. In "Why action research?" Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, and Maguire (2003) offer the merits of this type of research over the traditionally linear, top-down methods that are so readily embraced in professionalized, specialized fields of study. Action research embraces the elusiveness of truth and strives to find the validity of theory in shared experiences. A traditional social scientist may take centuries of dominant eurocentric theories and attempt to apply them to peoples with starkly different values, histories, and experiences in the hope of righting past wrongs. The traditionalist is often perplexed when their hypotheses prove inapplicable or invalid in this unique scenario. This is where I must be careful in my intervention, as self-authorship has been more than once construed as Eurocentric, most notably in Ariel Ashlee, Kyle Ashlee, Wilson Okello, & Shamika Karikari's (2018) "Critical Race Reflections on Self-Authorship and the Learning Partnerships Model" in which they critiqued the (entirely white) test populations of Baxter-Magolda and other researchers, as the experience of marginalized students is not the same as white students at American universities. My hypothesis is that self-authorship may be easier for the privileged to manifest, but we can begin to undermine privilege by extending the tools of self-authorship to the marginalized. Within my intervention, I have made it a priority to include perspectives from a variety of cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds, and I have implemented feedback processes that encourage student suggestions to improve representation.

 A highly valuable trait of action research is its interdisciplinarity. One may also argue that its greatest strengths lie in critique, but a diverse array of knowledge and interests lends

itself to critical thinking and theory. Varied interests and competencies help researchers to shake off the shackles of positivism, objectivism, and traditionalism. This interdisciplinarity also bolsters collaboration skills, which can prove to be a great boon for research funding and findings. The world is constantly in a state of flux, and social scientists must learn to adapt their methods and worldviews to avoid extinction in the increasingly interconnected and antihegemonic world. Specialization has a very negative impact on relatability, and action researchers, like Brydon-Miller, Greenwood, and Maguire (2003), are fighting to make sure that we embrace the "mess" of interdisciplinary studies, especially as it relates to critiquing institutions that reinforce oppressive social structures.

Participatory action research, by design, is intended to highlight structural biases that pervade political, economic, religious, educational, and/or social institutions; it is meant to challenge institutional prejudice that is often perpetuated by traditional, top-down research methods. While PAR is, in many senses, revolutionary, it is insufficient when not analyzed through a critical lens. Critical research craves collective efforts, but those efforts alone are not often "enough" in the struggle against authoritarianism and oppression. Critical theories help to braid together testimonies and lived experiences to form more tangible courses of emancipatory action. Participatory Action Research can be used as a dynamic tool for civic engagement on college campuses to challenge hegemonic narratives and promote inclusive learning environments. One major critique of diversity-centered programming is that without a critical lens, these efforts have the tendency to reify stereotypes and do little to ameliorate the marginalization of minoritized groups. PAR has the potential to shift marginalized groups from the objects of research to the conductors of the research, thus enabling those groups to enact change. Institutions that implement action research must recognize and negate the disconnect

between aspirational mission statements and the reality of campus resources and commitment to change. For a campus to succeed in it PAR efforts, it first needs to promote the values of innovation, connection, and reflection. For this to happen, the institutions must embrace Freierian ideals of andragogy, social justice, and community-building.

As future leaders in higher education, it is vital that we can synthesize theory and real-world practice while supporting our students. If we want to make the world better for posterity, we cannot be perfectly objective in our research. We must work with purpose and passion: both of which require a degree of subjectivity. We must be continually cognizant of our preexisting biases and assumptions, avoiding the self-referential nature of traditionalist research methods. Passing down an interdisciplinary and community-oriented outlook to our student-athletes serves to provide a strong base for critique and expand their realization of self-authorship.

Assessment, Evaluation of the Self-Authorship Seminar

In order to properly evaluate the efficacy of this seminar, I will rely heavily upon student-athlete input. As they turn in each written piece, I will give them the option to evaluate its value in their path to self-authorship. Some students may opt out of these reflections, while others will utilize this assessment tool to benefit the learning experience of the following cohort. I find it important for feedback and assessment to be voluntary, as mandatory work does not always yield constructive feedback. This seminar will be a success if we can demonstrate improved writing skills in even just a few participants. Because of the lack of preparedness for written communication that is prevalent amongst the student-athlete population upon matriculation, we should be able to demonstrate improvement as the semester progresses. I believe that this seminar will be a success if we can create positive dialogues and produce earnest writing from our students. Other than student reflection forms, I believe that observation from my peers and

superiors will lend itself to the improvement of this program. A program like this will start small, but frequent observation and feedback will help to elevate it to a curriculum mainstay.

Potentially, we will construct a brief webform survey for students and observers to complete each week, in which they will assess their group discussion and writing experiences. It could take the form of a discussion board post, a Qualtrics© survey, or an open-ended email or in-class response. I envision a brief survey such as:

- How would you summarize this week's group discussion on _____?
- How beneficial was this conversation to your enjoyment of the class?
- How beneficial was this conversation to your student development?
- What did you write about this week?
- How did you enjoy the writing assignment?
- How helpful did you find the writing assignment to be?

Looking Ahead

This program has a lot of promise, but it requires a high level of buy-in from both the students and the administration. The program is highly adaptable, so it could be taught in some capacity across many institutional types. It would certainly be applicable to students who are not varsity athletes, so this should not be viewed as a solution exclusive to athletes. All students have the right to self-authorship, and they deserve the chance to bolster their critical and creative thinking skills while attending college. This intervention may be a challenge for students with learning challenges or disabilities, but the curriculum (especially as a seminar) is quite adaptable; I have made it a priority to make this course accessible and relatable to all students.

I intend to implement this program as early as possible at my eventual institution, though the timeline for implementation will vary based on institutional priorities and values. I would

like to present this at NACADA or N4A in the coming year or so, whenever conferences are permitted following the COVID-19 pandemic. If I am able to implement this program before starting on a doctoral program, student-athlete self-authorship will likely be a major factor in my dissertation. With doctoral research, I will be able to better solicit student testimony and program feedback.

Conclusion

Though student-athletes may have a long wait before they can utilize their full rights to their names, images, and likenesses, they should not have to wait for universities to sponsor their realization and development of self-authorship. As a student affairs professional, it is my responsibility to use my position to advocate for self-authorship-affirming policies and to integrate self-authorship into my advising discussions. Students deserve a learning environment that promotes critical thinking, diverse philosophies, and creative writing. When students come to college, they are often reliant upon adults in positions of authority; it is essential for them to cultivate a strong personal identity that is able to take feedback from others without relying on that input alone to make decisions. By offering a course on self-authorship, schools can better prepare their students for life beyond the university, and athletics programs can ground their student-athletes in a positive sense of self as they enter into a new era of college sports.

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APPENDIX

Appendix A – Syllabus Additions and Activity Sample

Alternate/supplemental activities:
 a. *One-Week Budget:* you will analyze your current funds and spending habits. Where is your income coming from? How frequently do you receive a paycheck/stipend/allowance? What do you need to spend money on? What has been your most frivolous expenditure this semester? How can you create a budget that allows for fun but keeps a positive balance in your bank account?
 b. *Post-College Cost Analysis*: Where do you want to live after college? Will you move to a graduate program? Will you try to get a job and apartment in the city? What do typical jobs in your field make, in terms of salary and benefits? How many student loans do you have, and how will you manage those payments? What would be a realistic course of action for your first post-baccalaureate year?
 c. *Health Reflection*: How has college life affected your eating habits? Workouts? Sleep? Drinking? Sexual activity? Study habits? How are you keeping healthy and finding time for yourself? What are you doing for your mental and emotional health? What habits do you want to change? Feel free to be as specific as you are comfortable. You do not need to answer all of these prompts, and you are certainly more than welcome to discuss other facets of your current well-being. This is an exercise in reflection and reevaluation.
 d. *Time Management:* How do you spend the first hour after class? When do you typically complete your homework? How do you find time for co-curriculars like sports, clubs, and service organizations? What are some things that you are proud of? What time management challenges do you want to address as the semester progresses?

Ex. Social Support

Write down a couple of communities or social groups that you consider yourself a part of:

Think about the first person or a couple of people that you would likely call/reach out to in the following situations:

You scored Eagles tickets and can take one person.
You want to get lunch and talk about a roommate issue.
You are doing poorly in a course and need someone to help you study.
You'd like to go for a day trip to the city.
You're feeling overwhelmed and need someone to help you sort things out.
You need advice on a family issue.
You're taking a trip and need a ride to the airport.
You just got some amazing news that you want to share.
You need someone to proofread an essay.

Were any of these answers the same person?

Did any answers surprise you?

Were there any situations where you were not sure of an answer?

We all need support systems, and these systems can change year to year. By being aware of who we rely on for various needs, we can cultivate a healthy and dynamic support system for ourselves.