"Work Hard and Be Kind":
How a Sports Team's Shared Values Promote Social Movement Engagement

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By

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Abstract: Coinciding with the upsurgence of the Black Lives Matter Movement in the Summer of 2020, collegiate and professional sports teams have exhibited increased involvement in social issues. Existing research primarily analyzes the platform and visibility that athletes have to promote social agendas, but there is a gap in knowledge regarding how a sports team forms a collective identity around a social movement. This study seeks to fill this gap in research by utilizing qualitative surveying and interviewing to examine how Boston College athletes engage in the Black Lives Matter Movement. Processes of grounded theory and inductive analysis are used to understand how the Boston College Women's Rowing Team values contribute to the team's shared mental model to fulfil the conditions of social movement emergence and further promote team value adoption and team success. Evaluation of student-athletes across different Boston College teams through this study also offers insights to the controversy over sports teams engaging in social issues.

Introduction:

The Black Lives Matter Movement upsurged in the Spring and Summer of 2020 as a result of the death of George Floyd due to police brutality deriving from broader issues of systemic and institutional racism (Isaacs, Tarnow-Mordi, and Sherwood 2020). The movement was established in 2013 in response to the death of Trayvon Martin and advocates against White supremacy and violence toward Black communities (Black Lives Matter n.d.). Since 2013, Black people, the group members excluded from institutional power in this case, have more actively engaged in the movement via #BlackLivesMatter on twitter than other demographics (Oltaneau, Weber, and Gatica-Perez 2015). However, in 2020, the movement within the United States greatly broadened with heightened levels of diversity amongst participants. Research found that over half the participants across four different days of protests within Los Angeles, New York City, and Washington D.C. were White (Fisher 2020). The new involvement of people who have not typically participated in the movement may be due to the publicized support for the

movement from notable sporting organizations such as NASCAR and the N.F.L. (Buchanan, Bui, and Patel 2020). Taking a stance in the Black Lives Matter Movement became common amongst teams across other sports organizations, such as the MLB and the NBA, in their 2020 seasons as well (Casey 2020). This increase in participation of sports teams in the Black Lives Matter Movement is important because the popularity of sports can increase the visibility of the social cause and professional athletes have the ability to potentially influence the beliefs and opinions of their fans (Coombs and Cassilo 2017).

This study seeks to further investigate how sports teams come together around social movements. I utilize theory on how social movements emerge and how teams develop shared mental models to understand how a team comes together to form a collective identity around a social movement. Research regarding the participation of sports teams in social movements has primarily focused on how the athletes leverage their resources, rather than on how the teams form collective identities (Harvey et. al 2014c). Meanwhile, research surrounding shared mental models has mainly investigated how shared mental models influence the team's abilities to successfully complete tasks that are immediately relevant to team goals (Chou et. al 2018; Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001; Mattieu, Heffner, and Goodwin 2001). My study seeks to fill these gaps in literature by understanding how a sports team composed of a diverse range of individuals forms a collective identity through the development of a shared mental model around a social movement, which is a task outside of the immediate team goals. I utilize qualitative surveying and interviewing to learn how college sports teams have come together to take a stance in light of the Black Lives Matter Movement. Studying this age group of athletes is influential as young people are key actors in bringing about social change (Costanza-Chock 2012).

Theory

Social movements, such as the Black Lives Matter Movement, are forms of collective action that involve groups excluded from institutional power, seeking change in a manner that can be mobilized and sustained over time (Almeida 2019a). This collective action tends to arise out of perceived social, economic, environmental, and/or political threats to the interests of the individuals involved (Almeida 2019a). In the case of the Black Lives Matter Movement, the people experiencing threats to their interests and sociopolitical harms are Black individuals.

A primary theory for explaining the dynamics of social movements is the political process theory (Almeida 2019b). Political process theory incorporates framing processes, movement structures and attributes, and the environmental and political context of the time (Almeida 2019b; Ritzer 2007). Within this theory there are two frames that shape the ability for potential collective action. These include the "Good News Opportunity Model" and the "Bad News Threat Model." In the "Bad News Threat Model," there are negative signals in the political environment that require a call for collective action. These threats may include economic instability, environmental problems, a loss of rights among a group of citizens, or repression from governments (Almeida 2019b). In each of these conditions, the politically excluded group experiences a sense of heightened threat that can stir action in the form of a movement. Davis-Delano and Crosset (2008) find that political process theory is useful for understanding the outcomes of social movements related to sports teams. In the case of the Black Lives Matter Movement, the "Bad News Threat Model" is applicable as the movement arose out of the perceived threat to Black individuals due to police brutality (Isaacs, Tarnow-Mordi, and Sherwood 2020).

There is additional theory that explains how social movements emerge. The core elements that explain the emergence of social movements include common interests, organizational/resource infrastructure, and group identities. With regard to the common interests, individuals need to come together around a common grievance or experience to create collective action. Even if it is through negative incentives (bad news model), there needs to be a sense of interest in the issue by a collective and not just on the individual level (Almeida 2019c). In the Black Lives Matter Movement, the oppression of Black people is the common interest in which individuals feel a sense of solidarity that leads to a collective identity.

As for the second element, organizational infrastructure leverages the ability for a social movement to mobilize and is thus a very common source that movements emerge out of. Organizations also provide a common ground for communication, which can help build the collective conscientiousness. Organizations that typically help the emergence of social movements include not only activist organizations, but also everyday organizations that were not necessarily created for the purpose of movement campaigns. Organizations also have connections to other organizations opening the door for an "interorganizational solidarity" to emerge and further bolster the movement (Almeida 2019c). Sports teams and the leagues in which they compete are organizations that possess immediate resource infrastructure. In the case of college sports teams, these include the NCAA and the specific academic institution that the team is a part of.

Lastly, a key factor for the ability of a social movement to emerge is a sense of collective identity. Not only is common interest a necessity, but also a feeling of togetherness (Almeida 2019c). Verta Taylor and Nancy Whittier define collective identity as "the shared definition of a group that derives from members' common interests, experiences, and solidarity" (Taylor and

Whittier 1992: 104). This feeling of solidarity heightens the collective's ability to work together around a cause and is typically created through individuals spending time together, sharing experiences, and finding commonalities (Almeida 2019c). However, teams are composed of diverse ranges of individuals who may not all have an immediate common interest in the BLM movement. Theory on shared mental models can aid in understanding how sports teams develop group identities.

Chou et. al (2008) refer to shared mental models as "an organized mental representation of knowledge of team tasks, equipment, roles, goals and attitudes that is shared by team members" (Chou et. al 2008: 1714). These models can indicate the preparedness of a team to take on tasks (Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001). Developing these types of shared mental models has been found to positively relate to team effectiveness and team performance (Chou et. al 2018; Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001; Mattieu, Heffner, and Goodwin 2001). This is the case because shared mental models provide team members with knowledge that helps them adapt to their environment and subsequently act consistently with their teammates without necessarily needing to communicate their actions (Chou et. al 2008; Matthieu et. al 2000).

The knowledge that comes from shared mental models can be separated into four different categories: task-specific knowledge, task-related knowledge, knowledge of teammates, and shared attitudes and beliefs (Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001). Task-specific knowledge is the shared knowledge around tasks that enables team members to take coordinated actions without communication. Task-related knowledge refers to the general knowledge around processes that helps teams effectively get tasks done, such as teamwork. Knowledge of teammates refers to the team's knowledge of characteristics of one another such as tendencies, strengths, and weaknesses (Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001).

The shared attitudes and beliefs aspect of shared mental models is most pertinent towards understanding how teams create common interests and group identities in relation to social causes. Shared attitudes and beliefs refer to attitudes/beliefs that exist independently of tasks, but when shared can enable teammates to interpret their environments in consistent ways (Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001). Studies have shown that just developing shared team cultural values impacts the effectiveness of a team (Adair, Hideg, and Spence 2013). Shared cultural values typically develop in the early formation stages of the team. Interaction and communication within the group is key for this development so that individual values can intermix and adjust to form a set of shared motivational values. These shared values then become part of the individual identities of team members, while also existing independently from the non-shifting, ingrained core values of each of the individuals (Adair et. al 2013).

Literature Review

There has been an ongoing debate regarding whether the sports world should be involved in political issues that exist within broader society. Historically there has been a prevalent belief that sports and politics exist independently of one another and that there is no place for politics and social movements within the sports setting (Davis-Delano and Crosset 2008; Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020). Under this belief, athletes are expected to exclusively focus on tasks relevant to their sports performance, such as benefiting their physical fitness, building character, social entertainment, and teamwork (Cooper, Macaulay, and Rodriguez 2019). Even prominent figures within the sports realm contribute to the belief that sports and politics should not intermix. For example, after NBA player, Lebron James, publicly criticized Donald Trump in 2016, Fox News Commentator, Laura Ingraham, is reported to have told James to "shut up and dribble." (Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020: 953). Additionally, the ESPN President, Jimmy

Pitaro, reported in an interview in 2019 that fans are uninterested in ESPN reporting on politics (Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020: 953). This statement alludes to how many sports fans believe that athletes and athletic organizations should "stick to sport." (Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020: 953).

Despite the belief in the division between sports and politics, there is growing research and evidence that sports do not exist in confinement from broader society and that there is a place for politics and social movements within the sports realm (Cooper, Macaulay, and Rodriguez 2019; Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020; Davis Delano and Crosset 2008). This growing belief in the integration of political and social causes into the sports world is based upon the understanding that injustices exist within the realm of sports (Cooper, Macaulay, and Rodriguez 2019) and that sports offer a platform for athletes to publicly advocate for and advance human rights (Harvey et. al 2014b). High-profile athletes may even be seen as essential actors in setting a model of political engagement for individuals across the nation (Marston 2017). In light of the developing belief that politics should not be restricted from sports, there has been a plethora of research examining how athletes and sports teams engage in social causes.

Research concerning athletic participation within social movements, specifically with regard to antiracism movements, primarily focuses on the period of the Civil Rights Movement and recognizes that social activism and political protest within sports is not a new concept (Harvey et. al 2014a; Harvey et. al 2014b; Harvey et. al 2014c; Henderson 2013). These studies tend to point back to a notable gesture in the 1968 Mexico City Olympic Games when two U.S. sprinters, Tommie Smith and John Carlos, raised their hands in salute of Black power during the playing of the "Star Spangled Banner" at the medal ceremony (Harvey et. al 2014b; Henderson 2013). Through this gesture, Tommie Smith and John Carlos were not only representing their

country at one of the most central, international sporting events, but they were also representing

a political ideology that revealed crucial issues regarding racism that existed in the very country

they were competing for (Harvey et. al 2014b).

Gestures such as these indicate that there is an element of social activism within sports

and that athletics do provide an arena for social movements (Harvey et. al 2014c; Davis-Delano

and Crosset 2008). Specifically, during the time of the Civil Rights Movement, sports provided

Black people with a platform of opportunity and representation that they did not have within

everyday life that could be used to publicize efforts for racial equality (Harvey et. al 2014b;

Henderson 2013). Athletes directed their attention towards gaining racial equality within the

sports arena, but also towards producing publicized awareness of the Black freedom struggle

within broader society (Henderson 2013). The popularity of sports and major events such as the

Olympics and the World Cup provide an opportune platform to publicly express and gain support

for ideals and values around social movements (Harvey et. al 2014c). Additionally, research

finds that athletic involvement in social movements not only aims to change the sports arena, but

is also primarily driven by issues and activists outside of sports and pertains to goals that

transcend just the realm of athletics (Davis-Delano and Crosset 2008). In this sense, athletic

activism often not only strives to tackle issues of inequality on the playing field, but also issues

in society as a whole.

There is less literature regarding athletic participation within the Black Lives Matter

movement most likely due to the recency of the upsurge of athletic anti-racism protests

coinciding with this movement. However, research has isolated some prominent figures and

mechanisms through which athletes have been able to promote social agendas. Harry Edwards

(2017) recognizes that prominent anti-racism efforts within the realm of sports tend to align with

anti-racism movements in society. Thus, Edwards (2017) isolates four waves of athletic activism. The third wave aligns with the Civil Rights Movement and the fourth wave aligns with the timeline of the Black Lives Matter Movement (Edwards 2017). Several scholars have isolated more recent efforts of professional and collegiate athletes taking social action in light of the BLM movement. These athletes are key actors in the BLM movement because their actions are highly visible to the public and because they have the ability to potentially sway the perspectives of their fans (Coombs and Cassilo 2017).

Some athletic figures who have made sizable contributions to the revival of anti-racism athlete activism in light of the Black Lives Matter Movement include Lebron James, Colin Kaepernick, Megan Rapinoe, Kyrie Irving, Dwayne Wade, and Derrick Rose (Martson 2017; Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020; Coombs and Cassilo 2017). Efforts that these athletes have taken tend to include visible signals presented during sporting events. Examples include Colin Kaepernick kneeling throughout the National Anthem in revolt against police brutality stemming from larger issues of racism and racial inequality, as well as Megan Rapinoe kneeling in a similar fashion (Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020). The NBA players, Lebron James, Kyrie Irving, Dwayne Wade, and Derrick Rose, have most commonly entered the courts wearing apparel bearing slogans pertinent to the Black Lives Matter Movement and have used their social media presence to leverage their social agendas surrounding this anti-racism movement (Cooper, Macaulay, and Rodriguez 2019; Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020; Coombs and Cassilo 2017).

Recent athletic motives surrounding the Black Lives Matter Movement have not only emerged on the individual level, but also the team level. Specifically, right after the death of Trayvon Martin, a photograph was posted of the Miami Heat NBA team wearing black hoodies

on Twitter captioned: #WeAreTrayvonMartin to express solidarity with the Martin family and discontent with racial stereotyping in the criminal justice system (Cooper, Macaulay, and Rodriguez 2019). In addition, there has been anti-racism activism on other teams throughout the WNBA and the NBA which is exhibited through wearing t-shirts containing statements such as, 'I can't breathe,' in protest of the wrongful deaths of Black individuals in America (Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020). NFL football teams have additionally contributed to BLM efforts via the 'hands up, do not shoot campaign' in which players, such as those from the St. Louis Rams, run onto the playing field with their hands up indicating a sign of surrender (Coombs and Cassilo 2017; Yan, Pegoraro, and Watanbe 2018). Team level activism has even been exhibited within the collegiate realm of sports as can be displayed through the efforts of the University of Missouri football team in 2015 (Yan, Pegoraro, and Watanbe 2018). In the Fall of 2015, this team made a public statement that they were in support of anti-racist activism and announced that they would refuse play unless particular administrators at the school who did not express care for marginalized students were removed (Coombs and Cassilo 2017).

Research surrounding all of these individual and team efforts to participate in anti-racism movements has centered around how high-profile athletes become central actors for social issues due to the resources that they have to gain publicity and support. Cooper, Macaulay, and Rodriguez (2019) explain that sports provide economic advantages to Black individuals which equips them for racial empowerment and impactful activism. Being affiliated with sports organizations additionally helps athletes disseminate their social beliefs in attempts to gain broader support from society (Agyemang, Singer, and Weems 2020). As an example, Lebron James is considered one of the most prominent athletic actors within the Black Lives Matter

Movement (Martson 2017) and has used his athletic status and fame to become a leader on issues of social justice particularly with regards to race (Coombs and Cassilo 2017).

While these studies reveal the importance of resources for sports teams to successfully make publicized social activist efforts, there is a gap in research regarding how teams as a whole come to develop a collective interest in the social issue at hand. Harvey and colleagues (2014c) state that "the ways in which sport becomes part of the formation of collective identity among social movement actors and organizations remains largely under-analyzed and undetermined. Given that a sense of united interests and actions is central to the theoretical and empirical understanding of what constitutes a social movement and how movements are formed, the ways in which collective identity may (or may not) form in and around sport is of central importance" (Harvey et. al 2014c: 145). Therefore, there has been minimal research with regards to the process of sports teams forming a collective identity around a social movement. However, studies that reveal how sports teams develop shared knowledge and values can be of use for understanding how teams come together in light of social issues.

Despite a lack of literature that unites theory on collective identities with sports team's mobilization of social movements, Cynthia Pelak (2002) explains how a women's ice hockey team formed a collective identity with the social agenda of contesting sexism within sports institutions. Collective identities are a critical characteristic of all social movements because they reveal how groups develop a common understanding of their experiences and translate their interests into social protest (Friedman and McAdam 1992; Taylor and Whittier 1992; Pelak 2002). Pelak (2002) found that a women's ice hockey club developed a collective identity around gender oppression and was thus better equipped to express their injustices and protest against gender hierarchies within sports. The critical element of this study is that it recognizes the

importance of resources, but also finds that collective identities are a critical element for mobilizing social action within a sports team (Pelak 2002). While there is a gap in research of studies that highlight the importance of collective identity formation in sports team's engagement in social issues, the formation of shared mental models in teams can contribute to the understanding of how teams come together in collective social action.

A key component of shared mental models is the development of shared attitudes and beliefs within a team (Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001). Thus, a relationship can be established between the development of shared mental models and the development of collective identities as collective identities are derived out of shared interests (Taylor and Whittier 1992). The majority of shared mental model research is centered around work teams, but there are useful synergies between organizations and sports teams that make mechanisms of work team studies applicable to sports team studies (Wolfe et. al 2005). Additionally, there have been several studies conducted that reveal the merit of examining shared mental model formation within sports teams. Shared mental models have been found to exist among elite ice hockey and elite handball teams (Giske, Rodahl, and Høigaard 2015). Upon studying soccer teams, Gershgoren and colleagues (2016) find that teams that develop shared mental models based in teamwork have stronger performances. Studies on shared mental models tend to focus on revealing how these models improve the performance and effectiveness of a team (Chou et. al 2018; Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001; Mattieu, Heffner, and Goodwin 2001). However, these studies tend to examine the effectiveness of teams in performing tasks that are immediate to team goals. Thus, there is a gap in literature examining how shared mental models could help the effectiveness of teams in performing tasks outside of immediate team goals, such as tasks pertaining to social movements. Therefore, this study seeks to fill voids in existing literature by examining how

sports teams form collective identities around social movements via their development of shared mental models.

Methods:

Data Collection

This study examines the participation of Boston College varsity athletes in social movements, specifically the Black Lives Matter Movement. The first phase of the study included a qualitative survey sent out to all varsity athletes at Boston College. The second phase of the study consisted of semi-structured qualitative interviews with athletes on the Boston College Women's Rowing Team. The qualitative survey was used to reach a plethora of athletes in order to obtain data from athletes coming from as many teams as possible. The survey was then used to identify which Boston College teams had the most involvement in social issues. I found that the Women's Rowing Team had the strongest orientation towards social issues and I used qualitative interviews to obtain more in-depth data regarding the processes of how this group comes together around social movements.

An online 14-question anonymous survey was sent over email by Student Athlete Development to all Boston College varsity athletes in December 2020. A revised online 14-question anonymous survey was sent over email by Student Athlete Development to all Boston College varsity athletes in January 2020. The survey was administered using Qualtrics with an estimated completion time of 15-20 minutes. The survey was anonymized using the "Anonymous Responses" function in Qualtrics. However, respondents were asked to indicate what team they were on and how long they had been on that team. The survey consisted of entirely open-ended questions and was split into three parts. The first part inquired about the respondent's team experiences, team culture, and team goals. The second part inquired about the

respondent's experience engaging in social issues and the Black Lives Matter Movement as an individual. The third part inquired about the extent to which the respondent's team had participated in social issues and the Black Lives Matter Movement. The third part additionally inquired about the respondent's opinions on their team's involvement in social issues as well as their opinion on social issues entering athletics in general. Respondents were not compensated for their completion of the survey.

The first survey received 27 responses across 13 different teams. These teams included Swimming and Diving, Lacrosse, Basketball, Football, Track and Field, Soccer, Baseball, Softball, Cross Country, Golf, Field Hockey, Fencing, and Alpine Skiing. The second survey received 11 responses across 8 different teams. These teams included Alpine Skiing, Soccer, Swimming and Diving, Rowing, Golf, Baseball, Ice Hockey, and Volleyball. Within a grand total of 38 respondents, 4 respondents were on the Women's Rowing Team and these responses indicated the most prominent team engagement in social issues and the Black Lives Matter Movement. These responses inspired a series of qualitative interviews conducted on members of the Women's Rowing Team to obtain more in-depth data regarding the team's social movement involvement. The survey questions that were most influential in making this decision included: "*Please describe the culture and core values of your team.*"; "*To what extent have you personally been involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?*"; "*To what extent has your team engaged in social issues?*"; "*To what extent is your team involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?*"; "*How do you personally feel about your team's involvement in social issues?*"

Qualitative interviews were conducted over zoom in March 2021 with members of the BC women's towing team. Participants were recruited at first via text message through personal connections to women's rowers. Additional participants were subsequently recruited through

snowball sampling. I conducted the interviews under the oversight of a faculty supervisor. Interviews were recorded using the recording function on zoom and were thereafter transcribed using an online transcription service called Otter. After transcription, the transcripts were de-identified by replacing all names with pseudonyms for the confidentiality of the participants. Interviews followed a semi-structured interview guide that did not address questions of a sensitive nature that would cause discomfort to the interviewees to the best of my knowledge. The questions were similar to those in the survey and inquired about the interviewees' experiences on their sports team, their experiences personally engaging in social issues and the BLM movement, and their team's experiences engaging in social issues and the BLM movement. Follow-up questions were used to inquire about specifics when points of theoretical interest were brought up in the interviews.

9 interviews were conducted in total, including 1 freshman participant, 3 sophomore participants, 2 junior participants, and 3 senior participants. Interviews ranged from 21 to 48 minutes with an average of 35 minutes. The questions that were most influential for data analysis include: "*How would you describe your relationships with your teammates?*"; "*What experiences have helped foster your relationships with your teammates?*"; "*How would you describe the culture and core values of your team?*"; "*What are your team goals?*"; "*Do you prefer to take social action on your own or within a group?*"; "*To what extent has your team engaged in social issues?*"; "*To what extent is your team involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?*"; "*How has engaging in social issues impacted your team?*"; "*How do you personally feel about your team's involvement or lack of involvement in social issues?*"; "*What if any role do you think sports teams in general should play in supporting social causes in comparison to focusing on the sport itself?*"

Data Analysis

This study uses the processes of grounded theory and inductive analysis. I began the study interested in how the process of a sports team forming a shared mental model could also facilitate success in engaging in social causes, specifically the Black Lives Matter Movement. I was immediately struck by how the women's rowers described their team as separated in to subgroups, while also expressing unity surrounding the core team values and a willingness of teammates to speak openly amongst each other. I ultimately became focused on the influence that embracing team values could have in promoting stronger team relationships and enabling engagement within a social movement. I also paid close attention to the opinions that athletes had with regard to the role that social issues should play within athletics.

 The first step to data analysis included identifying emergent themes. During initial readings of the survey responses and during the interview process, I wrote memos on a consistent basis to identify themes that were emerging. These observations permitted revisions to my interview guide, enabling me to gain deeper insights related to the emergent themes. The survey transcripts and de-identified interview transcripts were coded using NVivo. I used open-coding to reveal a set of initial first-order codes. I then looked for relationships among the codes to create higher-order categories. I additionally referred back to the literature to identify relationships and disassociations between the data and existing theory. I found interesting relationships between the rowing team's development of core values and the development of shared mental models. I additionally found similarities between the process of the team becoming involved in a social issue and the process of the emergence of a social movement.

The next step of data analysis included organizing the categories and relationships that I found into a coherent theoretical model. I consistently revisited my data during the formation of

the model and ultimately expanded on certain themes while abandoning others that no longer

became relevant to my theoretical understanding. After considering several frameworks, I

ultimately decided upon a causal theoretical model to represent my data findings.

Findings:

I: Core Values and Team Goals

The Boston College Women's Rowing Team has two shared cultural values as part of

their shared mental model. When asked what the core values of the team are, Rower 2 responded

that *"our team motto is work hard and be kind."* Whether it was described as a motto, mantra, or

values, all nine of the interviewed rowers expressed that *"work hard and be kind"* were central

to the values of the team. These values originated from the head coach of team, who was

promoted from assistant to head coach in 2019. The values promote positive growth within the

sport, but also outside of sport as well. Rower 3 described that, *"our team mantra, like what our*

coach always says, is work hard and be kind and I think that's really important to our team

because she wants us to be good people on top of doing well in our sport and being successful

college athletes." The rowers expressed that these values applied not only to rowing, but also life

outside of rowing. As an example, many rowers discussed the hardships occurring throughout

the 2020-2021 athletic season and school year as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. In the case

of this hardship, the value of being kind proved to be important for matters outside of immediate

team tasks. Rower 6 described:

> *"Our coach's two core values, she doesn't have rules for us, but her two rules are to*
> *work hard and be kind… we push each other at practice, but then… there's just an*
> *emphasis to be kind because this year it's a whole new set of challenges and we're just*
> *trying to get through that together and I know if I'm having an issue, I could go to*
> *literally anybody on the team, and they could help me, which I don't know if every other*
> *team has that sort of aspect."*

The ability to approach any team member with an issue as described by Rower 6 is a common

occurrence described by the rowers when explaining how the core value of being kind manifests

within the team. Rower 4 described her experiences of kindness on the team as:

> *"You see everyone being really supportive and always texting in the group chat being like if anyone needs anything let me know, so I think always just being there, being open, and just being supportive is really important. Our coach also emphasizes: you can text me at any time for anything so I think being there for each other is definitely really important."*

Therefore, the value of being kind is promoted in part through the coach leading by example.

The team then primarily enacts this value by reaching out to one another, being there for one

another, and offering support in times of need.

In addition to its importance outside of rowing, the value of being kind enacted in

congruence with the value of working hard holds significance within the sport of rowing as well.

A central aspect of the women's rowing team culture is *"an emphasis on doing quality training"*

(R-6). The rowers frequently described kindness between one another as an important factor to

promote successful training practices as well. Rower 1 explained:

> *"Something that I really appreciated is sort of this idea of having kindness and empathy towards one another and you know there's a lot more I think support across the team and understanding that especially in rowing it's one of those things where there's not one person who is going to pull the entire boat like you can't have everyone doing their own thing in an eight-man boat. In order for the boat to move forward everyone has to be working together and everyone has to trust one another so there's a big emphasis on trust and kindness and support."*

The value of kindness is again expressed through the concept of teammates supporting one

another. Yet, in this instance the value of kindness correlates with the value of working hard in

order to promote an optimal atmosphere for success in the sport of rowing. Rowing is a team

sport, which requires all the team members to work together and kindness is expressed as an

important aspect for the team's ability to work hard together. This idea was further described in

the words of Rower 9 who stated:

> *"One of the biggest things our coaches said is be really, really, really kind and work really, really, really hard…. And I think those two things are super important as a team. Like, if you're not kind to someone, how are you supposed to respect them as a teammate?"*

These core values of *"work hard and be kind"* directly correlate with the women's

rowing team goals. The primary goals that were isolated by the team are to improve team

relationships and cohesion as well as to improve overall athletic performance. In the midst of the

interview process the entire women's rowing team actually met to discuss their goals. Rower 7

recounted the goals that were decided upon in the meeting:

> *"We had a girls team zoom just with the girls on the team…just to talk about the kind of goals we're trying to set… mostly everyone said just wanting to get better with technique or get faster times on the ERG or on the water, and then, as a group we wanted to get even closer."*

These goals of improving team cohesion and improving athletic performance mutually work

together just as the core values of *"work hard and be kind"* do. The findings reveal that

embracing the values of *"work hard and be kind"* can ultimately facilitate the achievement of

the team goals. Rower 1, in her discussion of the team values, described how embracing the

value of kindness brings the team closer together. She stated:

> *"So, there's a big emphasis on trust and kindness and support and I think that's what brought our team closer together… We don't have to be best friends with one another, but you do have to trust and you know kind of assume the best in one another and if someone's struggling then that's going to ultimately affect the rest of the team so it's important to support and reach out to one another and I think that's something that has just been emphasized over the years… we're all teammates and we're all bringing each other up and trying to foster an environment, a healthy competitive environment, that we can all continue to grow and thrive in."*

Therefore, embracing the value of kindness through supporting one another displays success in

enabling the rowing team to become better bonded as teammates. Further, this bonding as

teammates is able to facilitate overall team success as each individual's wellbeing is integral to

the success of the entire team, and the emphasis on kindness and support ensures that the

wellbeing of each individual is being accounted for.

The women's rowers provided evidence for how bonding as a team can help improve the

athletic performance of the team. Rower 7 explained:

> *"as a group we wanted to get even closer because if we don't know someone that well I think getting to know them will help motivate us more, like if we know who is rowing with us…knowing you all have the same mindset will help us go faster."*

Therefore, Rower 7 finds that improving relationships amongst teammates will facilitate a better

knowledge of teammates as part of the team's shared mental model, and thus promote a faster

team. Rower 7 further explained how this process works:

> *"As I'm getting to know more people that have been in my lineups at practice, learning and understanding their goals is helping me with mine like it gives me new ideas for what I want to achieve and then it gives me ideas for how to help them achieve their goals… If I know someone else is really focusing on technique in the bow, I'll be like okay I can work on my technique so that overall, we can just flow better."*

The process of bonding with teammates and getting to know them better, in this instance,

involves the process of gaining knowledge of teammate's personal tendencies and goals. When

the team has a better understanding of each individual's goals, they can better work together and

ultimately achieve the goal of improving athletic performance.

There is evidence from the interviews that reveals how the team shared cultural values

have already worked together in harmony to bring the team closer together, and thus promote

athletic success. Rower 8 stated, *"So when someone's doing well, there's kind of like collective*

cheering, and there's a lot of camaraderie that comes from doing the really difficult workouts

together because you sort of get bonded from that." Here, the value of kindness is displayed

through cheering as a form of teammate support. This value combined with the act of teammates

working hard together at practice enables the team to become further bonded. This bonding, as

the findings and shared mental model theory reveal, can ultimately promote stronger team

performance. Rower 6 further stated that, *"at practice we just push each other a ton because*

ERGing sort of sucks, but when you're doing it together it makes it that much better." Here,

bonding through supporting teammates as part of the value of kindness enables the team to

successfully work even harder together for success.

The evidence thus far reveals that the team shared cultural values of *"work hard and be*

kind" can promote success in achieving the women's rowing team goals. The team goal of

further bonding as teammates is critical because improved team relationships can improve team

success. The rowing team still has some ways to go in achieving their goals as most of the

interviewed rowers expressed that the team is not unified as a collective whole. Rower 5

explained that the team is *"pretty rigidly split into subgroups"* and Rower 2 explained that *"we*

definitely have subgroups and a little bit of cliques among different friend groups." Rower 9

further stated that the team is *"is split up into subgroups"* and that *"that's a big thing we're*

trying to do is try to change the team dynamic and the team culture."

Most of the rowers described the impacts of sub-group division to be negative. When

describing her relationships with her teammates, Rower 3 stated, *"some of them I'm super close*

with like best friends, then others that I don't interact with at all. I think there's a lot of different

cliques and inside groups… which sometimes can be difficult." The sentiment from Rower 3 in

this statement is that the division of the team is a negative aspect of her rowing experience.

Rower 5 further explained that *"In reality, I think because there's so many subgroups, there are*

so many different things that people are trying to achieve by being on the team." Here, the lack

of team cohesion is indicated as impeding the ability to achieve collective team goals. Rower 3

also elaborated on the negative impacts of team sub-division:

> *"It's sometimes difficult because there's so many personalities and differences and groups that it's hard to make them all mash together… And I think that there are just a lot of different types of people on the team so sometimes it's hard to get everyone in agreement, but then certain people find their people, which is why there's spread groups… that can be hurtful to the overall team that not everyone gets along with everyone."*

Again, the lack of collective unification of the team and the division of sub-groups is indicated as

having a negative impact on the team as a whole.

However, as the other evidence indicates, the newly proscribed team values have the

ability to facilitate team cohesion. The head coach that created these values has only been the

head coach for two athletic seasons. There is encouraging evidence that the difficulties described

by Rower 3 can be mitigated by embracing shared team cultural values to achieve team goals,

and overcome the divisions. There is already indication that improvement of team culture has

coincided with the arrival of the new head coach and new team values. Rower 1 explained that

the kindness and support that she has noticed on the team is something that is new and has

corresponded with the coaching change:

> *"The culture has 100% changed I think that [the coach] … some big changes that I noticed when she came in…[is] this idea of having kindness and empathy towards one another and you know there's a lot more support I think across the team."*

Rower 6 also indicated that she has seen improvement in the team dynamic over time:

> *"I've seen a lot of growth in the culture of our team in my past two and a half years because I remember my freshman year everything was very separate and I think in terms of culture we definitely hit a high right before we got sent home a year ago… I think that was definitely our best point."*

Thus, Rower 6 explained that team culture was at its best within the 2019-2020 rowing season,

which is the same season that a new head coach joined the team. She further explained that

before the 2019-2020 season, the team was much more separated, indicating that the new coach

with new team values had an impact on improving team cohesion.

II: Social Issue Involvement as a By-Product of Embracing Team Shared Cultural Values

Despite the prominently described sub-division of the women's rowing team, the

interviewed rowers notably still described a willingness and openness to speak about

uncomfortable or sensitive issues with one another. Rower 7, an incoming freshman for the

2020-2021 season, stated that right from the beginning of her BC women's rowing team

experience she realized that the *"team was a team that's comfortable with having uncomfortable*

conversations." This commentary stemmed from a description of Rower 7's experiences of team

engagement in social issues -- more specifically, the Black Lives Matter Movement. The ability

to engage in social issues and have discussions about the movement stemmed from coach

initiation, embracement of the team shared cultural values, and heightened comfort levels within

group settings.

As part of the core value of *"be kind,"* the head coach stressed that it is important for

athletes to also focus on issues outside of rowing and develop as holistic, caring individuals.

Rower 1 explained:

> *"Something that [the coach] has made clear to me and something that I really do*
> *appreciate is like you know you spend four years here and many of you aren't going to be*
> *doing rowing outside of college, or after college, and in the end you guys are going out*
> *into the world and you are going to be people… I want to make sure that you guys are*
> *leaving the program good people. I want to make sure that you guys are all going out*
> *into the world with values of kindness and being just genuinely good people ready to, you*
> *know, set the world afloat… So, I think that's her motto: kindness. And for us, I think my*
> *goal is to be as fast as possible, but also throughout the program, learning different*
> *values… and also teaching one another different values that will only help us out in the*
> *real world after college."*

The women's rowing team coach evidently has concerns for her athletes outside of just the sport

of rowing and she outwardly cares that her athletes embrace the value of kindness throughout

their daily lives. There is additional evidence from the rowers that rowing was not necessarily

their primary concern and that they try to maintain a balanced life. Rower 8 stated:

> *"Our coaches do a really good job of reminding us to be whole people, not just athletes, because, like, I want to go to grad school and be a speech pathologist and things like that, so those are goals that are separate from rowing, but I think the team gives me a lot of support to pursue those goals… If my life was a pie chart, I try to keep rowing to be a significant piece, but it can't be the whole thing because then if you get hurt or something, your whole life is suddenly gone… I try to keep it to be a significant part, but there's still a lot of other parts about me."*

Evidently, the rowing team fosters the type of environment where individuals can grow and

focus on aspects of life outside of rowing. This environment, as Rower 8 explained, is in part due

to the feeling of being supported by the team, which coincides with the value of *"be kind."*

The team values further enable the type of environment that is comfortable for

addressing social issues as part of a non-athletic focus area. Rower 2 explained that, *"our*

coaches very much stress, inclusion, acceptance, dedication, commitment, those types of things,

and overall, I like to say that were just the most accepting of anyone and everyone who comes in

and help other people feel that way too." This is an example of the type of values that are

expressed within the team in conjunction with kindness. These values contribute to promoting

the type of setting that enables comfortable conversations surrounding social issues because there

is an emphasis on acceptance.

As described in earlier findings, the way in which the value of kindness is typically

enacted by the team is through both reaching out to one another and supporting one another.

These actions proved to continue in the midst of the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter

Movement and as well as in the midst of other politically-charged incidents within the country.

Similar to the way that the rowers would reach out to one another in general to enact kindness,

the coach and rowers also reached out to one another in the midst of the social uprising, rallying,

and rioting that has occurred since the Summer of 2020. Rower 1 explained:

> *"I remember when the riot happened at the Capitol, or invasion practically, back in December or in January… I had been at work all day so I wasn't looking at the news and I remember my coach that day texting being like we're here for you, do you guys need to talk about anything? If you guys are feeling distress… were here for you [if you] want to talk… reach out to your teammates, reach out to us, and I feel like that frequently happens."*

Further, when asked how team involvement in social issues typically comes about, Rower 2

responded, *"we have a lot of people on the team who are pretty involved in all of this and so*

sometimes it will start with a group message of like hey, if anyone needs to talk, I'm here for you,

if you want to talk about something that's going on or something big happened." Therefore,

social issue conversation and engagement comes about in a manner similar to how the value of

kindness is enacted on the team, and thus enables social movement involvement to become a by-

product of the shared team cultural values.

   Ultimately, the primary form of collective team engagement that the BC women's rowing

team has within the Black Lives Matter Movement involves team conversations. The rowers

expressed that they had planned on taking more action-oriented steps, but that the Covid-19

pandemic restrictions have inhibited their abilities to do so. Nonetheless, the team conversations

reveal critical aspects of team values and team bonding mechanisms. The conversations about

BLM primarily arose because the coach and team wanted to ensure that the rowing team was a

setting where social issues could be discussed and that the team was not only focused on

athletics. Rower 7 described that *"it was in the summer with all the Black Lives Matter*

Movements happening and everything and my coach and captains found it really important to

make sure that the team could be a place to talk about these things."

The team conversations at first primarily focused on BLM and the circumstances that lead to the resurgence of the movement. Rower 2 explained that *"we definitely have had multiple meetings over the summer about the Black Lives Matter Movement, and about the different tragedies that were taking place."* Rower 3 also stated that *"over the summer we had a few different meetings on the racial tensions in the U.S. and Black Lives Matter."* Rower 6 further elaborated that these conversations were some of the most meaningful actions that the team has taken with regard to social issues. She stated:

> *"We had a zoom in June and I feel like that was a really productive conversation… we were talking about the events of George Floyd's death and everything that was happening in those months… I think that was probably the most meaningful event we've done."*

Rower 9 also added that she feels as though the women's rowing team has engaged in these issues more than other teams at BC: *"over the summer we would have team meetings every month and we would be discussing what was going on regarding racial justice issues and I honestly do think that we talk about it probably more than other teams."*

This form of meaningful engagement in the BLM movement amongst the rowers began by primarily discussing the movement and *"everything going on in the news."* However, the rowers ultimately connected these conversations back to racial justice issues within athletics and within the sport of rowing. Rower 1 stated:

> *"We had a few different zoom meetings where we specifically talked about everything going on in the news, and the Black Lives Matter Movement, and then also just sort of the privilege we have as being White individuals… I'm pretty sure at this point in time almost everyone on the team is White and sort of talking about the whiteness in our sport."*

These conversations regarding the role of race in the sport of rowing provided the benefit of further educating individuals on the team and inspiring ideas for ways in which the team could enact change. Rower 7 explained that *"we would have zooms and we talked about how we could*

bring more diversity to the sport of rowing since it's a very White sport, and so just seeing how

we could enact change within the sport to bring it out to the community." A primary mechanism

through which the women's rowers were educated and inspired was through a podcast called

"Rowing in Color" that the team would listen to and discuss. Similar to how social issue

involvement came from coaches and teammates reaching out to the entire team through group

messaging, the podcast came to the team's awareness through a teammate sharing it within the

team group chat. With regard to the podcast, Rower 8 stated, *"someone on the team actually told*

me about it… they sent it in the team group chat and then that got to the coaches and the coaches

told us to listen to it." The podcast ultimately became a main point of conversation within the

Summer 2020 team discussions. Rower 9 reflected on her experience listening to, discussing, and

learning from the podcast:

> *"There was a podcast released… and it was basically about how rowing is a privileged*
> *sport and only for basically White people and how there's hardly any people of color in*
> *the rowing community, and how we need to sort of change this. So, a couple of the*
> *meetings we would listen to a podcast episode before, and then we would come into it*
> *and like discuss it as a larger group, and then go into these breakout rooms… There*
> *aren't any people of color on our team so just trying to learn and hear from other*
> *people's experiences, and try to be more open to the situation and realize that rowing is a*
> *privileged sport, but we can work to change this if we really try."*

What is notable here is that the collective conversations within the team have inspired team

members to desire to enact change and racial justice within the sport of rowing. Further, Rower 9

described these conversations as enabling the team to become more open with one another about

racial issues. Rower 9 elaborated on the openness that was expressed amongst the team during

these conversations: *"a lot of people opened up and were very emotional about the situation… as*

a team everyone kind of really opened up and we tried to understand the situation as best as we

could. So, I think they were meaningful and really did help." This openness is notable because

most teammates, including Rower 9 herself, described that the team is not necessarily very close

as a whole. The ability to be open appears to stem from the promotion of values of kindness, inclusion, and acceptance, as well as a preference amongst the rowers to take social action within group settings.

When asked about their personal involvement with social issues, seven out of nine of the interviewed rowers correlated their individual involvement with their team involvement, even before they were asked how their team has engaged with social issues. When asked about personal involvement in the Black Lives Matter Movement, Rower 1 responded:

> *"I've really tried to educate myself and involve myself in conversations about race and sort of privilege in that sense. I think that definitely in the athletic department too I've tried to go to different talks about racial inequalities. We had a town hall type thing about a month ago… and on our team we've had different discussions about everything going on with Black Lives Matter and our privilege as a primarily White team and also being involved with a very, very White sport."*

Personal involvement relating to team involvement appears to be correlated with an orientation amongst the rowers to feel more comfortable taking social action within groups, and particularly within athletics settings. Almost every interviewed rower expressed that they feel more comfortable taking action within a group. When asked if she preferred taking social action on her own or within a group Rower 5 stated, *"I would like to be able to do it on my own more, but it's definitely more comfortable and easier to do it with a group. So, I'd say as of now… I definitely am more inclined to do it with a group."* Further, Rower 9 stated that *"I definitely feel more comfortable with the group,"* and Rower 2 stated that *"social action to a point where I feel like this is a little bit out of my comfort zone, would be a time that I would do it with more of a group setting."*

The types of groups that the rowers feel more comfortable taking social action with include groups of people who share similar values, the team, and the greater athletic community. Rower 7 explained how she feels most comfortable with groups that share her values. When

asked who she feels most comfortable engaging in social action with, she stated, *"firstly my family since they raised me like we all have the same values."* Rower 4 similarly explained, *"I think definitely within a group just because it's encouraging having people who have the same view and values as you… and [to] feel like you're being supported by other people… I think yeah definitely within a group."* Rowers 7 and 4 both prefer to take social action in a group that supports and shares their same values. Thus, further evidence is provided for how social issue engagement can become a by-product of shared values -- particularly the value of kindness through support.

Other rowers more explicitly stated how the rowing team is a comfortable group setting in which they can engage in social action. Rower 6 expressed that, *"I feel much more comfortable doing it in a group, just because I feel like I don't know a lot and I feel more comfortable having people to talk to and bounce ideas off of. So, I mean doing stuff with rowing has been helpful."* Two rowers provided explicit examples of when they felt comfortable speaking up in the team/athletic-based setting. Rower 2 recounted her experience of participating in a Student-Athlete Town Hall and seeking the opinions of a teammate for reassurance:

> *"I spoke a little bit at that Student-Athlete Town Hall, which was way out of my comfort zone. I can't even believe that I did that because I'm pretty reserved usually, but I texted a teammate like hey what do you think if I said something like this, do you think it would fit?… So, I look for support."*

Rower 2 expressed that she felt comfortable stepping out of her comfort zone and speaking up about a social issue within an athletic setting due to her ability to receive support from a teammate, offering further evidence that social issue engagement is a by-product of embracing the value of kindness through support and by creating settings that make individuals feel comfortable to speak up. Rower 7, an incoming freshman for the 2020-2021 rowing season, had

the Summer 2020 BLM conversations be her first experience with the women's rowing team as a

collective whole. When asked if she spoke up in these conversations, she responded:

> *"I was obviously a timid freshman like it was one of my first times introducing myself on the team, and it had to be in this zoom you know, so I was like okay I'm putting myself out there for the first time in this conversation, so this is how people are gonna know me… So, everyone had to talk, and it wasn't forced, but it was encouraged… So, I did, I do remember speaking. It was just nice to hear even the other freshmen recruits being comfortable speaking."*

Rower 7, and the other incoming freshmen, were thrown into what was described as a primarily

nerve-racking and uncomfortable setting. Yet, they were still comfortable speaking up during

these zoom conversations. Rower 7 further elaborated on how engaging in social issues as her

first team experience impacted how she perceived the team:

> *"Having that be one of the first things that we did kind of got me really excited to be on this team because it made me realize that our team was a team that's comfortable with having uncomfortable conversations and talking about important things, so knowing that I was on a team of strong women who know it's important to talk about these important topics and to just be open with one another, even when it can be uncomfortable, like that got me. It was a good way to start my time as a rower on this team because it showed me exactly what I was walking into."*

Right off the bat, in her first experiences with the team, Rower 7 could sense that the BC

women's rowing team had developed an environment where individuals felt comfortable

speaking about uncomfortable issues, and a culture where issues outside of rowing also mattered

to the team.

III: Social Issue Involvement Reinforces Team Values and Success in Team Goals

Thus far, the findings reveal that the shared team cultural values, particularly the value of

kindness manifested through acceptance and support, has helped promote a team environment

that encourages engagement in social issues and facilitates having uncomfortable conversations

despite team sub-divisions. This engagement in social issues is also able to reinforce the shared

cultural team values, and thus promote further success in achieving team goals. To expand on

experiences engaging in social issues with the team, Rower 7 stated:

> *"It just clicked right away, like, oh, this is what is going to be one of our main values like that's so cool… I really appreciated it right off the bat and it just initiated the team culture that I like already thought I was getting into by committing to the team… I think having the ability to have such fluid conversations and like open and honest enforces the values that they put out initially… it's just been all consistent, like what is really important… nothing has been fake like everything just seems so real and like what I wanted from the start."*

Rower 7 was able to immediately identify that the team valued social issue involvement and

matters existing outside of sport, and that focusing on these issues reinforces the team values of

kindness and caring for others. Rower 7 further explained that after a social-issue related incident

occurs, the team is specifically encouraged to exhibit their values of kindness and support. She

stated, *"we're always encouraged to like, especially after an incident happens, it's especially put

out to us that we're here for each other to be kind and hold each other accountable for actions,

so those two things are really enforced."* Therefore, social issue occurrences and engagement

inspire the team to enact their team values to an even higher degree.

Other rowers also indicated how social issue involvement reinforces the team values, but

in a less explicit way. Rower 2 explained her experience listening to the "Rowing in Color"

podcast and discussing BLM with her teammates:

> *"There's a podcast called 'Rowing in Color' and it's all about people of color and their experiences in the sport, which is a predominantly White sport… we had a podcast episode assigned that everyone was supposed to listen to and then we did zoom breakout rooms kind of discussing it and going back and forth about our experiences and things we had never thought about, and it really opened my eyes to what it would be like to be a person of color on our team… it just kind of opened my eyes to different experiences that are directly related to things that I was going through on the team and just, I feel like made us all become a greater ally."*

Rower 2 expressed that the team engaging in social issues has increased their abilities to become

allies. Although she did not directly express that this engagement has leveraged their values of

kindness, the ability to be an ally is related to the ability to offer kindness and support to other

individuals. Thus, Rower 2 provided another example of how engaging in social issues can

reinforce the team shared cultural values.

Further, Rower 8 described a circumstance in which one of her teammates felt like she

could be more open with the rowing team after the team had engaged in social issues because she

realized that she would gain support. Rower 8 stated:

> *"It's also comforting because if you know where people stand on something then you feel more comfortable bringing up something else and for one of my really close friends who's on the team… she is gay and when people were having these conversations, it made her feel more comfortable on the team because she knew she was supported because she could hear in the conversations that people were supporting her… hearing that people support someone, it shows a lot to make them feel more included."*

Therefore, the engagement in social issues reinforced the team's values of supporting one

another. As a result, one member of the team felt that she could be more open with her

teammates than she could beforehand, which in turn can promote stronger relationships.

The findings have already established that embracing core values can lead to success in

achieving team goals. Within the interviews, the rowers additionally established how the by-

product of social issue engagement can also facilitate achievement of team goals, particularly

through strengthening teammate relationships. Seven out of the nine interviewed rowers

indicated that social issue engagement has fostered camaraderie amongst teammates when they

were asked how BLM involvement has impacted the team. Rower 1 explained:

> *"I keep talking about awareness and all that but I think that it's ultimately brought us further together because we're able to have conversations that are hard conversations to have, but I feel as though I can talk about those issues with my teammates and bring those up to my teammates slash coach… and I think…feeling comfortable enough to have those conversations brings us closer together as a team."*

Rower 1 described how the open environment, which was made possible by team values, enables

comfort in having uncomfortable conversations, and further enables the team to better achieve

their goal of becoming more closely bonded together. Rower 7 described this same phenomenon

occurring amongst the freshmen after their first experience with the team of engaging in social

issues. Rower 7 stated, *"I do remember speaking and it was just nice to hear even the other*

freshmen recruits being comfortable speaking, and I think that made us closer just like right off

the bat, just knowing that everyone was comfortable with being honest."

Rower 2 also believes that engaging in social issues has brought the team closer together,

but for a bit of a different reason. She stated:

> *"for the majority of people, I feel like it bonds us kind of closer together because we're*
> *fighting or like we're advocating and we're pushing for something that's beyond*
> *athletics, and so it kind of pulls everyone together within the athletic component of it*
> *because we're closer as a team, but it also kind of motivates us to do something greater."*

Rower 2 explained that the team dynamic of caring about issues outside of athletics, which is a

process that is also related to the team values, is what has been able to foster stronger team

relationships. Rower 6 shares this view and stated, *"I think just having that space and being able*

to connect about those issues, it just adds a level to our relationships beyond rowing, which like

we do so much of that it's nice to have more layers."

Although the findings from Rower 2 and Rower 5 emphasize the importance of focusing

on issues outside of rowing, there is also evidence that engaging in social issues reinforces the

team's core value of working hard. This can facilitate the team's ability to achieve the goal of

improving athletic performance. There is already evidence that developing shared cultural values

as part of a shared mental model of a team can improve performance and evidence that

improving team relationships improves performance. However, the evidence also indicates that

the social issue engagement by-product of the team values can also enable behaviors that

potentially contribute to further team success. Rower 7 explained:

> *"This behavior makes everyone… want to commit even more to what we're trying to do…just knowing that we have a team full of women who care so much about important events in the world makes you realize they must be equally invested in what we're here to do like rowing wise… you see people who have huge amounts of respect and enthusiasm about these issues, like you can assume that they feel the same way about working hard to have good results with rowing."*

Rower 7 believes that commitment to social issues also lends itself to commitment to the team and the sport of rowing itself. Working hard in social action as a team thus can reinforce working hard in rowing as a team as well. Rower 8 further believes that the ability to have uncomfortable conversations lends itself to the important skillset of advocating for oneself in sport. Rower 8 stated:

> *"I also think gaining the confidence to speak about those things because they are uncomfortable conversations… you don't always have the confidence to bring that up… not because you feel like you're going to be shut down, but just because it's going to be an uncomfortable discussion to have, so I feel like in gaining more confidence to talk about things that you also gain more confidence to talk about like, my back hurt the other day, I need to go see someone about this. So, I think having the confidence to speak up seeps into other areas of your life, which can only help you on the team because being an advocate for anything can help you do better…which shouldn't be overlooked when you think about how your performance should be."*

Therefore, there is evidence that learning how to have uncomfortable conversations enables athletes to feel more confident in speaking up for themselves when having an issue. Advocating for oneself, especially when it comes to an injury like Rower 8 described, is an important skillset in sport because an athlete needs to be able to look out for themself and their health in order to achieve success in athletics. Therefore, athletic performance is not only found to improve through embracing team values and improving team relationships, but also may improve through the by-product of engaging in social issues as well.

IV: Overall Discussion of Sports and Social Movements

The findings reveal that the BC women's rowing team has a strong orientation towards social issues, which is an endeavor outside of immediate team athletic goals. The interviewed

rowers expressed that they would like to see their team becoming even more involved with social

issues and the Black Lives Matter Movement. In addition, the rowers expressed that they believe

that sports teams should be playing a role in social issue engagement in general, and thereby

contribute opinions to the overall debate and controversy of whether the sports world should be

involved in issues outside of athletics. These sentiments were also shared by athletes from other

teams as was expressed through the survey responses.

      With regard to desiring more team involvement in social issues, some rowers expressed

that they would like to see the team having more consistent conversations. Rower 8 stated, *"I*

think that we should be having conversations about it more regularly… I think they need to be

more ongoing…if I could change one thing, I would make it so that we would talk about things

more often." Several rowers, however, also stated that they would like to see their team doing

more than the conversations. For example, Rower 1 expressed that, *"I think we can definitely do*

more… I'm glad that we've had these conversations, but I definitely think that there's more room

to involve ourselves." Rower 7 would more specifically like to see the team taking more action

steps: *"I feel good about the conversation aspect and the openness of that, but… with regard to*

physically acting and doing things, like the conversation aspect is there, but I guess we could do

more with, I don't know, involvement in campus things." Whether it be through further

conversation or taking action-oriented steps, there was a theme expressed across the rowers of

"wishing we could do more" (R-9).

      The sentiment of desiring more team involvement in social issues was also expressed

amongst athletes from other teams when they were asked how they personally felt about their

team's involvement in social issues in the survey. For example, a member of the golf team

stated, *"I think we are very aware of the issue and are internally understanding, but there may*

be more that we could do to spread the awareness." Additionally, a member of the women's

basketball team responded, *"I am proud of my teammates for sticking together while times have*

been hard. I do wish we could do more even if it's just talk about our experiences." A member of

the skiing team stated, *"I personally feel like my team could do better and get more people*

educated/involved with important social issues." Further, a member of the swim and dive team

stated, *"I think we are at a good starting place but there is so much more that we can and should*

do. We are just scratching the surface on what we should be doing to make a change." Another

athlete on the swim and dive team even expressed a deeper desire for the team to care about

more than just the sport itself. This athlete responded:

> *"I am disappointed that we are not making bigger statements and actively showing*
> *support. I feel like there should have been a fundraiser, more mandatory education or*
> *projects that we needed to do to make sure that we don't think everything is better*
> *because it is not, and I feel like now that we are in season the only thing that matters is*
> *swimming, when there are more important things happening than sport."*

Therefore, more athletes than just members of the women's rowing team at BC express an

inclination to be further involved in social issues and endeavors that are not solely related to

sport with their teams.

The rowers, as well as other athletes, also shared their opinions with regard to what role

they think sports teams in general should be playing in engaging in social issues. All nine of the

interviewed rowers expressed that they believe sports teams should be playing a role and

disagreed with the view that social issues should remain separate from the sports world. These

responses primarily were driven by the perceived platform that athletes have to expound their

views. To begin, Rower 7 stated, *"I think when sports teams take a stand for social causes, it's*

all the more powerful." Rower 6 further expressed, *"I think that sports have a platform to talk*

about social justice issues because, I mean in America people watch so many athletics that

athletes have a different platform and I think it's definitely beneficial for them to use it." The

rowers expressed that they felt that both college and professional athletes have this type of

unique platform:

> *"I think it's super important that we focus on social causes… as a student athlete, you*
> *know, that we have a voice and not even just like a student athlete, but professional*
> *athletes too have voices and people look up to athletes. So, I think you have to use your*
> *status and your platform to voice opinions. Yeah, so I think it's super important. I think a*
> *lot of change can come from people with those positions."* (R-2).

Here, Rower 2 began to touch upon the power that athletes have with their platform and status to

encourage and enact actual change. Other interviewed rowers also believed that athletes have the

power to enact change through influencing their fans, particularly younger fans. Rower 8 stated:

> *"I think anyone that has a big enough platform to, like, again my like head goes back to*
> *think about kids like, a lot of kids grow up watching sports and idolizing the athletes in*
> *them…I'm thinking about professional basketball, professional football, things like that,*
> *but even smaller sports, they're gonna have their fans and I think if you see your heroes*
> *when you're younger advocating for things, that's going to make you more likely to*
> *advocate for those things when you grow up and you're going to learn that it's cool to not*
> *want people to be treated differently, like if you grew up knowing that hey it's actually a*
> *good thing if you don't think that you should be better because you're this or that, I think*
> *it can only help."*

Thus, Rower 8 believes that athletes have the ability to influence the views of their fans, which

can enable young fans to grow up with a stronger orientation towards caring about social issues.

Rower 5 shares this view and stated, *"they're put on this pedestal by these little kids, like people*

look up to them as role models and I think that there's a lot of power in that… people can really

make a change if they actually wanted to."

Again, athletes from other teams also shared the same views as the rowers. When asked

to what extent sports teams should be engaging in social issues, an ice hockey team member

responded, *"extreme extent."* Further, a member of the baseball team responded, *"I feel like*

sports are very public and athletes can be very influential role models so they should be positive

contributors to the advancement of social issues.” An athlete on the volleyball team even went

as far to say that athletes should be central contributors to social activism. The volleyball player

stated:

> *“I think sports teams should be the main voice for these social issues. A lot of people look up to and listen to what student athletes have to say, especially the ones who are well known… kids and other people who look up to these athletes, actually seeing them out in the world being proactive in this movement is extremely important.”*

This individual expresses the importance of athletes becoming key actors in the advancement of

social issues and social movements. To further highlight this belief, some athletes further

discussed the necessity of athletes engaging in social causes. To begin, one of the interviewed

rowers said:

> *“I think, with sports comes a platform where you can make a lot of change… I really do think a lot of people are like leave social justice out of athletics and just play the sport, but I think you're doing a disservice to all the people who are watching these athletes and not talking about the hardships they went through to get there or advocating for the little kids that are watching them that want to be them that would have barriers to access to that, whether that be resources or opportunities or whatnot.”* (R-2)

Rower 2 actually expressed that not focusing on social issues would be a disservice to all the

fans who are watching and that athletes must verbalize their experiences and discuss hardships in

order to help younger generations surpass barriers and achieve their dreams as well. An athlete

on the swim and dive team even went as far to say that it is an obligation of athletes to lead in

social activism: *“I believe that sports teams, especially those with a greater following, have an*

obligation to be leaders of engagement in social issues.” Thus, some college athletes not only

believe that sports teams *should* play a role in social movements, but that sports teams *must* play

a role in social movements.

Discussion:

The aim of this study is to understand how a sports team can effectively come together around a social movement by developing a collective identity as part of a shared mental model. A critical component of a team's shared mental model is the shared attitudes and beliefs, which are also referred to as shared cultural values. The findings revealed that the Boston College Women's Rowing Team has developed two central team values as part of their shared mental model: *"work hard and be kind."* Developing these values ultimately enabled the team to better achieve the immediate team goals of improving team relationships and improving athletic performance. Relating the findings back to theory reveals how developing shared cultural values as part of the team's shared mental model enabled the women's rowing team to satisfy the conditions of social movement emergence, and thus effectively undertake a task outside of the immediate team goals: engagement in the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Satisfying the Conditions of Social Movement Emergence

The core conditions that enable a social movement to emerge include common interests, organizational/resource infrastructure, and group identities. Common interests tend to develop out of shared experiences or shared grievances (Almeida 2019c). The interviewed rowers identified that the BC women's rowing team is composed predominantly of White individuals and that there are no people of color on the team. Therefore, the rowing team itself is not necessarily part of the threatened group that is excluded from institutional power in the case of the Black Lives Matter Movement. However, the team still has an interest in engaging in the movement due to the injustices that they perceive. This orientation is best described through the words of Rower 8: *"The attitude of the team is wanting to promote equity and equality… As a team, I think we get very frustrated with the injustices we see and I think there's a collective*

anger that we all have about them.'' More specifically, I was able to identify through the findings that the rowers on the team share a common interest in combatting the racial injustices and inherent white-ness within the sport of rowing. Thus, a desire to dissolve the barriers of accessibility to the sport of rowing is a common interest that can be isolated amongst the BC women's rowing team with regard to the Black Lives Matter Movement. In relation to the political process theory, a lack of access to rowing for people of color constitutes a "Bad News Threat Model" that beckons collective action.

Another condition of social movement emergence is organizational/resource infrastructure. Organizational infrastructure greatly strengthens the mobilization abilities of a social movement (Almeida 2019c). The BC women's rowers have immediate organizational infrastructure through their sports team. As evidence, BC athletes commonly identified the "platform" that athletes have to engage in social issues and to disseminate their views. One of the main ways that this type of infrastructure can contribute to the potential for collective social action is through providing a common ground for communication (Almeida 2019c). Before engaging in the Black Lives Matter Movement, the rowing team already had a team group chat that made it convenient for each member to connect with one another. As expressed through the findings, this group chat not only made it easy for the teammates to support one another, but also to provide resources for social issue engagement. Additionally, the entire team and coach were able to efficiently coordinate zoom conversations of sixty people in the Summer of 2020, right when the BLM movement upsurged, to discuss injustices and engage in the movement. The infrastructure of a sports team simplifies the process of coordinating large groups of people for discussion.

I could also identify that the infrastructure of BC Athletics as a whole was able to facilitate student-athlete conversations. Several of the interviewed rowers brought up "Student Athlete Town Halls" that included athletes from across different teams at BC. Another key factor of organizational/resource infrastructure is developing interorganizational solidarity (Almeida 2019c). The interviewed rowers also explained that there is a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) board that consists of representatives from every Atlantic Coast Conference (ACC) rowing team. Rower 5 is on the ACC DEI board and explained:

> *"it's basically just a committee of the ACC women's rowing teams and there are two or three representative per school...basically our goal is to figure out ways that we can help in the rowing community, some sort of actions that we can take, whether it has to do with rowing or not."*

Therefore, athletic infrastructure is also able to connect individuals from across different organizations. In this case, the infrastructure of the ACC is able to connect rowers from across different educational institutions to mobilize even greater change.

Developing a Shared Mental Model

The final condition for social movement emergence is a collective identity. For the case of this study, the collective identity takes the form of a team shared mental model. The main elements that emerge from a shared mental model include task-specific knowledge, task-related knowledge, knowledge of teammates, and shared attitudes and beliefs (Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001). The elements of the shared mental model that are most critical for this study are knowledge of teammates and shared attitudes and beliefs. The evidence revealed that gaining knowledge of teammates helped the women's rowers achieve their goals of further bonding as a team as well as improving team performance. This is consistent with existing shared mental model theory as the theories reveal that developing these models has a positive correlation with team effectiveness and performance (Chou et. Al 2018; Canon-Bowers and Salas 2001; Mattieu,

Heffner, and Goodwin 2001). Thus, shared mental models are conducive to a sports team's

ability to complete team-related tasks and goals.

By contrast, the team's development of shared values and beliefs, or shared cultural

values, proved to be conducive to the team's ability to complete tasks outside of immediate team

goals. Developing the shared team values of *"work hard and be kind"* not only facilitated

success in achieving team goals, but also facilitated success in engaging in the Black Lives

Matter Movement as these values created a supportive, comfortable, and inclusive environment.

Evidence has already revealed that just developing this one aspect of the shared mental model

can improve team effectiveness (Adair et. al 2013) and the findings of this study reveal that this

effectiveness can extend outside of sport. Communication is key for the development of shared

values on a team (Adar et. al 2013) and within the BC women's rowing team, communication

proved to be critical for developing team values. Communication was also for important

reinforcing the team values through social issue conversations and using frequent outreach as a

tool to support one another amidst the racial injustice tragedies that have occurred during the

2020-2021 athletic season.

The Case for Sports Team Engagement in Social Issues

Although there is controversy surrounding whether athletes should engage in social

issues, the findings of this paper reveal that sports teams can meet all of the conditions for social

movement emergence and that this type of engagement can even correspond with and assist with

achieving team goals. Additionally, the surveyed and interviewed student-athletes in this study

almost unanimously agreed that sports teams should and need to be engaging in social issues.

Cooper, Macaulay, and Rodriguez (2019) argue that there is a space for sports teams in social

movements because social injustices are not separate from sport. The BC women's rowing team

members were able to identify that racial inequalities exist within rowing and this constituted a common interest and primary motivational factor for the inclination of the athletes to take social action. Additionally, sports teams have a platform for publicizing their sociopolitical views (Harvey et. al 2014b) and this platform can be critical for modeling and inspiring social issue engagement among other individuals (Marston 2017). The surveyed and interviewed student-athletes consistently acknowledged their platform as well as the influence that athletes can have on the views of their fans, particularly younger fans. The ability to influence fans of a younger age group is critical because young people are integral social movement actors (Costanza-Chock 2012).

Limitations

The generalizability of the conclusions that can be drawn from this study may be limited by several factors. To begin, I primarily analyzed one women's sports team from one institution. Results could potentially vary based upon the gender of the sports team, the type of sports team, as well as the institution that supports the sports team. Gender in general could potentially affect the sensitivity towards and desire to engage in certain issues. Additionally, I chose to interview the BC women's rowing team based off of survey responses that indicated the team already having an orientation towards social issue engagement. The data may have varied if I studied a team that had less prior engagement in the Black Lives Matter Movement. Additionally, as can be displayed through organized BC Athletics Town Halls for racial injustice discussion, Boston College as an institution clearly wants its student-athletes to engage in social action. Other educational institutions, however, may not push for social movement engagement among athletes and therefore college athletes at other universities also may foster different responses. Another potential limitation of this study is the sample size. I received survey responses from 38 student-

athletes and interviewed 9 athletes from the rowing team. Receiving survey responses from more student-athletes across more teams could have revealed greater disagreements and nuances across opinions. Further, the 9 interviewed rowers provided relatively consistent responses to the interview questions. Therefore, interviewing more members of the team could have provided a more comprehensive understanding of the team's opinions as a whole and revealed greater discrepancies in opinions.

Given the limitations, further research should compare different sports teams across different genders within one educational institution as well as examine sports teams from different universities. Future research should also consider evaluating sports teams and institutions that consist of individuals that have more conflicting views about sports team engagement in social movements. The participants in this study all primarily believed that sports should be involved in social issues, but there is controversy around this topic and other teams and student-athletes may not all share this view. Finally, future research could also examine how other types of teams, such as work teams, may form a shared mental model around social issue engagement.

Conclusion:

This study finds that generating shared team values as part of a sports team shared mental model can promote success in achieving immediate team goals. The Boston College Women's Rowing Team exhibits how social issue engagement can become a by-product of embracing the team shared values of *"work hard and be kind,"* demonstrating how shared mental model development can additionally facilitate success in tasks outside of immediate team goals. Team member engagement in the Black Lives Matter Movement reinforced the women's rowing team's core values, and thus promoted further success in achieving team goals. Engagement in

the movement alone was even able to promote stronger team relationships as well as behaviors that are potentially conducive to improvement in athletic performance.

In closing, I argue that sports teams provide optimal settings for social movement engagement despite controversy regarding whether politics should enter athletics. Sports teams are able to meet the conditions of social movement emergence by developing shared mental models and exhibit power in influencing the views of their fans, which could promote even greater societal involvement in movements such as BLM. This study demonstrates that a young cohort of athletes from Boston College agree that sports teams should be engaging more in social movements, and reveals how social issue involvement can even add benefits to the team itself.

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Appendix A

Survey 1 Guide

   I.   Informed Consent:

Introduction
You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by undergraduate Ellie Uhl and supervised by Professor Lyndon Garrett at Boston College. The goal of this study is to understand the participation of sports teams in social movements. We are inviting you to participate in this study because of your membership on a Boston College athletic team. **Your participation is completely voluntary.** If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to participate in a survey, which is expected to last 5-10 minutes.

Purpose
The purpose of the study is to understand how sports teams develop a commitment to social movements, specifically the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Survey Content
You will be asked questions that are designed to understand your personal relationship and your team's relationship with social causes. The questions will be open-ended; there are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions. Questions regarding your team and duration of time spent on your team may, in rare cases, suggest your identity. However, the survey will not prompt you to indicate your name, phone number, email address, student ID number, or any other direct identifier.

Participation
Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you have the right to decline to answer questions or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty for doing so. We will not inform your coaches or teammates whether or not you participate in the survey.

Risks
To the best of our knowledge, participating in the survey does not involve any more risk than you would encounter in a typical day. The study may involve risks that are unknown at this time.

Benefits
We realize that the process requires an investment of your time and energy. You are unlikely to derive direct, personal benefit from participating in the survey, but you may derive satisfaction from having contributed to scholarly research. We hope that participating in a survey will help you understand you and your team's relationships with social movements better. Upon request, we can deliver a report on the study following its completion. In this report, only aggregated results and de-identified quotes will be presented. This means that it will not be possible to identify individual participants.

Costs
There is no cost to you to participate in this research study.

Confidentiality
Responses to certain survey questions might, in rare cases, tend to suggest the subject's identity. However, the survey will not prompt the subject to indicate their name, phone number, email address, student ID number, or any other direct identifier. Any quotes used in the research article will be carefully de-identified, so nobody, including fellow teammates or coaches, will know who made the statement. All data relevant to this study will be secured in the office of the researcher. The Institutional Review Board at Boston College and internal Boston College auditors may review the research records. State or federal laws or court orders may also require that information from your research study records be released. Otherwise, the researchers will not release to others any information unless we are legally required to do so. The survey transcripts will be destroyed no more than 10 years after the completion of the study.

Questions
If you have questions about this project at any point, feel free to contact Ellie Uhl at uhle@bc.edu. If you have questions about your rights as participant in research please contact the Boston College Office for Research Protections, 617-552-4778.

Certification:
Certify your consent to participate in the survey below:
☐ I consent to participate
☐ I decline to participate

II.   Survey Questions:

Part 1: You and Your Team
1) What team are you on?
2) How long have you been on this team?
3) How much time do you spend with your teammates?
4) Please describe the culture and core values of your team.
5) What are your team goals?

Part 2: Your Relationship with Social Movements
1) What social issues do you care about most?
2) To what extent have you been personally involved in tackling these issues? Tell me about a time when you took social action.
3) To what extent have you personally been involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?
4) To what extent do you consider yourself a social activist?

Part 3: Your Team and Social Movements
1) To what extent has your team engaged in social issues?
2) Tell me about how this involvement came about. Who initiated it?
3) To what extent was each member engaged in this social action? Was the entire team involved or a smaller group of team members?
4) To what extent is your team involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?
5) How do you personally feel about your team's involvement in social issues?

Appendix B

Survey 2 Guide

    I.   Informed Consent:

Introduction
You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by undergraduate Ellie Uhl and supervised by Professor Lyndon Garrett at Boston College. The goal of this study is to understand the participation of sports teams in social movements. We are inviting you to participate in this study because of your membership on a Boston College athletic team. **Your participation is completely voluntary.** If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to participate in a survey, which is expected to last 5-10 minutes.

Purpose
The purpose of the study is to understand how sports teams develop a commitment to social movements, specifically the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Survey Content
You will be asked questions that are designed to understand your personal relationship and your team's relationship with social causes. The questions will be open-ended; there are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions. Questions regarding your team and duration of time spent on your team may, in rare cases, suggest your identity. However, the survey will not prompt you to indicate your name, phone number, email address, student ID number, or any other direct identifier.

Participation
Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you have the right to decline to answer questions or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty for doing so. We will not inform your coaches or teammates whether or not you participate in the survey.

Risks
To the best of our knowledge, participating in the survey does not involve any more risk than you would encounter in a typical day. The study may involve risks that are unknown at this time.

Benefits
We realize that the process requires an investment of your time and energy. You are unlikely to derive direct, personal benefit from participating in the survey, but you may derive satisfaction from having contributed to scholarly research. We hope that participating in a survey will help you understand you and your team's relationships with social movements better. Upon request, we can deliver a report on the study following its completion. In this report, only aggregated results and de-identified quotes will be presented. This means that it will not be possible to identify individual participants.

Costs
There is no cost to you to participate in this research study.

Confidentiality
Responses to certain survey questions might, in rare cases, tend to suggest the subject's identity. However, the survey will not prompt the subject to indicate their name, phone number, email address, student ID number, or any other direct identifier. Any quotes used in the research article will be carefully de-identified, so nobody, including fellow teammates or coaches, will know who made the statement. All data relevant to this study will be secured in the office of the researcher. The Institutional Review Board at Boston College and internal Boston College auditors may review the research records. State or federal laws or court orders may also require that information from your research study records be released. Otherwise, the researchers will not release to others any information unless we are legally required to do so. The survey transcripts will be destroyed no more than 10 years after the completion of the study.

Questions
If you have questions about this project at any point, feel free to contact Ellie Uhl at uhle@bc.edu. If you have questions about your rights as participant in research please contact the Boston College Office for Research Protections, 617-552-4778.

Certification:
Certify your consent to participate in the survey below:
☐ I consent to participate
☐ I decline to participate

    II.   Survey Questions:

Part 1: You and Your Team
1) What team are you on?
2) How long have you been on this team?
3) How much time do you spend with your teammates?
4) Please describe the culture and core values of your team.
5) What are your team goals?

Part 2: Your Relationship with Social Movements
1) What social issues do you care about most?
2) To what extent have you been personally involved in tackling these issues? Tell me about a time when you took social action.
3) To what extent have you personally been involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?

Part 3: Your Team and Social Movements
1) To what extent has your team engaged in social issues?
2) Tell me about how this involvement came about. Who initiated it?
3) To what extent was each member engaged in this social action? Was the entire team involved or a smaller group of team members?
4) To what extent is your team involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?
5) How do you personally feel about your team's involvement in social issues?
6) To what extent do you believe that sports teams should be engaging in social issues?

Appendix C

Interview Guide

I.   Informed Consent

Introduction

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by undergraduate Ellie Uhl and supervised by Professor Lyndon Garrett at Boston College. The goal of this study is to understand the participation of sports teams in social movements. We are inviting you to participate in this study because of your membership on a Boston College athletic team. **Your participation is completely voluntary.** If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to participate in one interview on zoom, which is expected to last 60 minutes.

Purpose

The purpose of the study is to understand how sports teams develop a commitment to social movements, specifically the Black Lives Matter Movement.

Interview procedure

You will be asked questions that are designed to understand your personal relationship and your team's relationship with social causes. Most questions will be open-ended; there are no right or wrong answers to any of these questions. The interviewer will take notes on your answers, as well as record the zoom interview. At any time, you may request that certain portions of the interviews not be taped. Any quotes used from the interviews in a research publication will be de-identified, with all personal information removed, so that people reading the quotes have no way to determine who the information is from or about.

Participation:

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you have the right to refuse to answer questions or withdraw at any time. There will be no penalty for doing so. We will not inform your coaches or teammates whether or not you participate in the interview.

Risks

To the best of our knowledge, participating in the interview does not involve any more risk than you would encounter in a typical day. The study may involve risks that are unknown at this time.

Benefits

We realize that the process requires an investment of your time and energy. You are unlikely to derive direct, personal benefit from participating in the interview, but you may derive satisfaction from having contributed to scholarly research. We hope that participating in an interview will help you understand you and your team's relationships with social movements better. Upon request, we can deliver a report on the study following its completion. In this report,

only aggregated results and de-identified interview quotes will be presented. This means that it will not be possible to identify individual participants.

Costs

There is no cost to you to participate in this research study.

Confidentiality

We will make every effort to keep your interview data confidential. Interview recordings will be sent to a professional transcription service to be transcribed. Identifying information, such as names and video images will be removed from the recordings before they are sent to the transcription service. Any quotes used in the research article will be carefully de-identified, so nobody, including fellow teammates or coaches, will know who made the statement. The interview transcripts, recordings, and any notes taken during the interviews will not be saved under the participants' names. All data relevant to this study will be secured in the office of the researcher. The Institutional Review Board at Boston College and internal Boston College auditors may review the research records. State or federal laws or court orders may also require that information from your research study records be released. Otherwise, the researchers will not release to others any information that identifies you unless you give your permission, or unless we are legally required to do so. The interview transcripts and the consent forms will be destroyed no more than 10 years after the completion of the study.

Questions

If you have questions about this project at any point, feel free to contact Ellie Uhl at uhle@bc.edu. If you have questions about your rights as participant in research please contact the Boston College Office for Research Protections, 617-552-4778.

Certification:

Prior to conducting the interview, you will be asked to sign below to certify your consent and agreement to the statements below:

☐ I have read and I believe I understand this Informed Consent document.

☐ I believe I understand the purpose of the research project and what I will be asked to do.

☐ I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and they have been answered satisfactorily.

☐ I understand that I may stop my participation in this research study at any time and that I can refuse to answer any question(s).

☐ I understand that my name will not appear in the researcher's notes, on a copy of my interviews, or on any other study-related records.

☐ I have received a signed copy of this Informed Consent document if I asked for one. ☐ I hereby give my informed and free consent, and accept to participate in this study.

_____

Date

_____

Consent Signature of Participant

_____

Print Name of Participant

_____

Signature of Researcher

II. Interview Questions

Confidentiality Agreement: (summarize this for the interview subject) We will make every effort to keep your interview data confidential. Interview recordings will be sent to a professional transcription service to be transcribed. Identifying information, such as names and video images will be removed from the recordings before they are sent to the transcription service. Any quotes used in the research article will be carefully de-identified, so nobody, including fellow teammates or coaches, will know who made the statement. The interview transcripts, recordings, and any notes taken during the interviews will not be saved under the participants' names. All data relevant to this study will be secured in the office of the researcher. The Institutional Review Board at Boston College and internal Boston College auditors may review the research records. State or federal laws or court orders may also require that information from your research study records be released. Otherwise, the researchers will not release to others any information that identifies you unless you give your permission, or unless we are legally required to do so. The interview transcripts and the consent forms will be destroyed no more than 10 years after the completion of the study.

Questions About the Team:

1) What team are you on?
2) How long have you been on this team?
3) How would you describe your relationships with your teammates?
   A) How much time do you spend with your team?
   B) What experiences have helped foster your relationships with your teammates?
   C) Do you feel like your team is collectively close as a unified whole? Or is the team more so separated into subgroups? Why?

4) Please describe the culture and core values of your team
   A) How did this culture develop?
   B) What is most central to you team's core values?
   C) To what extent do your team values align or not align with your personal values?
5) What are your team goals?
   A) Who decided upon these goals?
   B) How did these goals develop?
   C) To what extent are your team goals also your personal goals? Do you have different goals from your team goals?

Questions About Individual Involvement in Social Issues:

1) What social causes do you care most about?
   A) What inspired you to care about this issue/these issues?
   B) How long have you cared about this issue/these issues?
2) To what extent have you been personally involved in tackling these issues?
   A) What motivated this involvement?
   B) Tell me about a time when you took specific social action.
   C) Do you tend to take action on your own or within a group? Why?
3) To what extent have you been personally involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?
   A) What motivated this involvement?
   B) Tell me about specific action steps you have taken with regards to this movement.
   C) How long have you been involved with the movement?
4) To what extent do you consider yourself a social activist?
   A) When did you begin caring about social causes?
   B) How often do you involve yourself in social issues?

Questions About Team Involvement in Social Issues:

1) To what extent has your team engaged in social issues?
   A) What issue (if any) does your team care about the most?
   B) How did this involvement come about?
   C) How long has your team been engaged in social causes?
   D) Who initiates the involvement?
   E) To what extent is each team member involved?
   F) How does your team involvement correspond with the personal involvement that you discussed before?
   G) What do you think the reasons are that your team hasn't engaged in social issues?
   H) To what extent do your teammates discuss social issues amongst each other despite a lack of collective team involvement?

      I)   Does your coach ever bring up social issues?
2) Tell me about a time when your team took social action?
    A) How did this action come about? Who initiated?
    B) Did team members remain involved in the social cause after the fact?
3) To what extent is your team involved in the Black Lives Matter Movement?
    A) Who initiated this involvement?
    B) What action steps has your team taken?
    C) How does this engagement correspond with the personal engagement you discussed earlier?
    D) When did your team begin engaging in the BLM Movement?
4) How do you personally feel about your team's involvement in social issues?
    A) What would you like to see your team doing more of? Why do you think the team isn't doing these things?
    B) How has engaging in social issues impacted your team? Has it helped or hurt your team?
    C) What (if any) role do you think sports teams should play in supporting social causes vs. focusing on the sport itself?