Proposition 48 and Proposition 42 in the NCAA: A Social Constructionist Case Study

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PROPOSITION 48 AND PROPOSITION 42 IN THE NCAA:
A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONIST CASE STUDY

by

Kevin R. Cole

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PROPOSITION 48 AND PROPOSITION 42 IN THE NCAA: A SOCIAL CONSTRUCTIONIST CASE STUDY

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The controversy surrounding the creation and implementation of two National Collegiate Athletic Association student-athlete eligibility rules, Proposition 48 and Proposition 42, was the focus of this study. The two rules required that a student's scholastic grade point average and SAT scores be factored into scholarship and athletic admissions decisions. By describing the unfolding social process respecting the creation of these two eligibility rules, this study addressed issues vital to rule creating processes in general.

The social constructionist perspective was utilized as a theoretical guide for this study, allowing for the examination of claim makers and their social claims regarding the state and needs of intercollegiate athletics. Two dissimilar theoretical models, critical theory and cartel theory, were used to interpret the creation and reaction to the eligibility rules.

A critical analysis indicated that the NCAA was concerned with maintaining its regulatory control over the association as well as increasing the overall integrity of the association. A cartel theory analysis indicated that by placing recruiting restrictions on member institutions, the NCAA was able to limit the competition between its members, thereby increasing revenue for the entire membership.
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Kevin R. Cole
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CHAPTER I

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM AND THE LITERATURE

The Problem

For over 125 years, collegiate athletics have engaged, employed, and entertained its participants, coaches, and fans, respectively, thereby establishing itself as a permanent fixture in American culture (Lawrence, 1987). The administration and governance of most intercollegiate athletics have been carried out by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) since the early part of this century. In recent years, considerable debate has beset the NCAA and educators alike concerning the creation of specific rules which define eligibility for athletic participation in intercollegiate sports.

This research will specifically focus on the creation, implementation, and controversy surrounding two rules designed by the NCAA to regulate athletic eligibility for freshmen: Propositions 48 and 42. The relevance of this study, sociologically, is that it addresses issues vital to understanding rule creating processes. Such issues include: the role of groups or associations involved in a rule’s creation, interests served by a rule’s creation, and consequences of a rule’s creation. Hence, this study seeks to not only describe and explain the creation process of two NCAA freshmen athletic eligibility rules, but additionally address questions concern-
ing why, and in whose interests, the rules were created.

Further significance for this research lies in the following. First, the research attempts to address organizational and operational concerns in relation to sport and education, issues which encompass questions of political structure and racial exploitation. Second, few sociologists have attempted to clarify the social processes that depict the creation of rules in sport, specifically in intercollegiate sport. In essence, this project seeks to provide sociologists with a critical understanding of the divergent perceptions relating to the creation of Propositions 48 and 42, for these views are an integral part of the continually unfolding social process which affects the creation of similar rules in intercollegiate athletics.

Proposition 48, the first of the two eligibility rules to be addressed, was adopted in 1983 by the NCAA and instituted in 1986. This rule mandated that individuals seeking athletic participation at any of the NCAA's Division I colleges and universities must achieve:

1. A combined minimum score of 700 on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or a score of 15 on the American College Test (ACT), while

2. Maintaining a 2.0 grade point average throughout high school.

Failure to meet one, but not both of these requirements, resulted in a partial qualifier status, and athletic eligibility could
not commence until the individual's second academic year of college, though an athletic scholarship could be granted for the first academic year. Commencement of athletic participation in the second academic year was, however, dependent on the successful completion of 24 units of study over the first year. Those athletes failing to meet both the standardized test and GPA requirements would not be offered any type of scholarship and would not be eligible for athletic participation. In addition, under the original rule partial qualifiers could choose not to accept an athletic scholarship and finance their first year of school themselves. This would preserve the athletes fourth year of athletic eligibility.

The second of the rules to be examined in this research is Proposition 42. Adopted in 1989 and instituted the following year, Proposition 42 eliminated the classification of partial qualifier. In other words, the rule stipulated that financial aid would only be provided to those students meeting both the grade point average and standardized test prerequisites.

Both Proposition 48 and Proposition 42 drew tremendous criticism primarily from black leaders, coaches, and others because athletic eligibility and scholarship distribution were contingent on the use of standardized tests which are known to be culturally biased. This issue, more or less, set the stage for seven years of upheaval concerning the NCAA's goals and educational mission.

To begin this study, several preliminary issues must be addressed. First, the historical background of the NCAA must be exam-
ined. To understand the rule creating process with respect to the NCAA, we must understand how the present agents of social control in intercollegiate athletics came into existence. Secondly, after examining the history of the NCAA, three issues encompassing the creation, implementation, and contention of rules 48 and 42 will be addressed. These issues are the role and integrity of athletics in higher education, racial discrimination and exploitation in sport, and the effectiveness of standardized tests as predictors of educational achievement.

Next, a social constructionist theoretical framework will be introduced as a guide for this study. Such a framework allows the social processes through which people construct the social world to be described (Thomas, 1982). After introducing the contextual constructionist approach that will be utilized, Herbert Blumer's (1971) five stage process of collective definition for a social problem will be previewed for use in Chapters II and III. This will be followed by a brief introduction of the two distinct theoretical models, critical theory and cartel theory, which will be used in the analysis chapter of this thesis. Finally, this chapter closes with a brief discussion of methodology and relevant issues.

The Evolution of the NCAA

Precursors

The first intercollegiate athletic contest, an eight-oared barge race between Harvard and Yale, took place in 1852 (Hart-
Nibbrig & Cottingham, 1986). Seventeen years later, on November 16, 1869, Rutgers and Princeton staged the first intercollegiate football game at Rutgers’s field in New Brunswick, New Jersey (Lawrence, 1987).

With the increasing popularity of football in the 1870s, Princeton, in 1876, invited representatives from three schools, Harvard, Columbia, and Yale, to Springfield, Massachusetts, to organize an association that would allow the rules of football to be standardized (Lawrence, 1987). The meeting produced the forerunner to the NCAA, the Intercollegiate Football Association (IFA). Representatives of the association, typically undergraduate students, met once a year to change and update the rules of football.

The game of football continued to evolve during the 1880s, as did strategies that increased injuries. In spite of the injuries, it was disputes over rule interpretation and player eligibility that led to Harvard’s departure from the IFA in 1889, and the disbandment of the association altogether in 1893 (Farrell, 1989; Lawrence, 1987).

After the departure of the IFA, several rules committees materialized, most notably the Western Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (WIAC), the forerunner of the Big Ten. Here, conference schools were encouraged to establish their own rules regarding eligibility, the number of years an athlete could participate in football, and contest rules. However, a great deal of confusion soon flourished due to the fact that teams often had to learn two or more
sets of rules. This confusion resulted in a game of football that was exceedingly more violent than it had been in the past. The 1905 season alone resulted in 18 deaths (Hart-Nibbrig & Cottingham, 1986; Lawrence, 1987).

On December 8, 1905, 13 institutions sent representatives to New York City to debate and vote on the abolishment of football. After a majority vote decided to retain football, a second meeting was scheduled for all institutions who participated in the sport. Later that month, representatives from 62 schools met to adopt a committee who would be charged with designing a standardized set of rules for football. The rules (Lawrence, 1987) were to:

1. open the game (making greater use of the entire playing field);
2. eliminate rough and brutal play;
3. achieve efficient enforcement, making the rules definite and precise in all respects such as definitions of brutal play; and
4. organize a permanent body of officials. (p. 10)

This group of schools formally titled itself the Intercollegiate Athletic Association of the United States (IAAUS). The IAAUS appointed a president, assigned a committee to draft a constitution, and agreed to meet the following year. Though the formation of the IAAUS required institutions to relinquish a certain amount of control, an association had emerged that would standardize the rules of football, as well as later assume the responsibility of regulation (Lawrence, 1987).
Early Structure

All colleges and universities in the United States were eligible for membership in the IAAUS. Members had to agree to adhere to the IAAUS's standards of athletic conduct as well as agree to confront abuses in college sports (Farrell, 1989). A $25 membership fee was instituted to defray the costs of officers, committees, and administration, and accordingly granted each active member one vote on all motions at the annual convention.

In 1910 the IAAUS became the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA). Given the NCAA's desire for expansion, membership categories changed intermittently. Two categories existed in 1908, three by 1922, and four by 1941 (Lawrence, 1987). Presently, five membership categories exist: active, provisional, conference, affiliated, and corresponding (NCAA Manual, 1995-96).

Active members are four or two year accredited institutions elected to membership who have the right to compete for championships, vote on legislation and enjoy other designated privileges. A provisional membership is a temporary or trial membership (limited to 3 years), granted to institutions who have applied for active membership. A member conference is a membership granted to a group of colleges and/or universities who conduct competition amongst its members and determines conference champions in one or more sports (NCAA Manual, 1995-96). Examples of member conferences include the Big Ten, Southeastern, and Mid-American conferences.

Affiliated memberships were established for associations and
groups relating to collegiate athletics but failing to meet other
criteria. Affiliated members are granted designated privileges as
determined by Association bylaws and are represented at the conven­
tion by a single delegate. Finally, duly elected corresponding mem­
ers are institutions or nonprofit organizations who receive NCAA
publications and mailings, but are otherwise not entitled to any
membership privileges (NCAA Manual, 1995-96). Today, there are over
800 universities, colleges, and organizations that have one of the
preceding types of NCAA memberships (Sperber, 1990).

The internal administrative structure of the NCAA was rather
uncomplicated at its inception. It simply consisted of a presi­
dent, vice-president, secretary-treasure, and an Executive Committee
with four representatives from four geographic districts of the cou­
try. By 1922, the number of districts had doubled as had the size
of the committee. The Executive Committee, from that point on, be­
came known as the Council of the NCAA. Moreover, in 1922 constitu­
tional revisions eliminated the one vice-president in favor of eight
vice-presidents, each of whom was charged with observing and super­
vising the conduct of intercollegiate sports (Lawrence, 1987). The
Council of the NCAA, now the governing body of the association, sub­
sequently formed a new Executive Committee. Presently, the Council
of the NCAA is comprised of forty-four individuals, typically ath­
letic directors, while the Executive Committee is comprised of
twelve members (Sperber, 1990).

Having established an operational Football Rules Committee as
well as having begun the tedious task of internal organization, the NCAA sought to augment its newfound support by standardizing the rules of other collegiate sports. From 1908 on, the NCAA established rules committees in sports such as basketball (1908), wrestling (1917), gymnastics (1927), golf (1935) and others (Lawrence, 1987). As years passed, the NCAA began considering player eligibility, scheduling, inducements schools could offer athletes, as well as questions pertaining to the regulation and enforcement of the rules it created.

Regulation and Enforcement

The NCAA did not become a regulatory body over night. During the early years it became evident many schools were ignoring NCAA rules. In 1929, the NCAA issued the Carnegie Foundation Report which documented: "rampant professionalism, commercialization, and exploitation that were corrupting virtually all aspects of intercollegiate athletics" (Farrell, 1989, p. 8). The NCAA called a Conference of Conferences on July 22, 1946, to discuss the effects the end of World War II would have on college athletics. However, debate at the meeting centered mainly on whether or not the NCAA had the authority to require members to obey its regulations. The meeting produced the first draft of a statement the NCAA entitled "Principles for the Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics" or the Sanity Code (Lawrence, 1987; Shea & Wieman, 1967). The Principles for the Conduct of Intercollegiate Athletics was informally referred to as
the "Sanity Code", because the Principles were designed to return
the "sanity" which many believed had left college sports.

Besides establishing guidelines for a number of issues in
intercollegiate sports, the code attempted to punish those guilty of
certain violations by declaring athletes ineligible for play and/or
discontinuing the membership of the violating institution (Shea &
Wieman, 1967). Officially adopted in 1948, and enforced by a three
member Compliance Committee, the Sanity Code was put to several
tests over the ensuing years. The NCAA’s initial charge of code vi­
lation against the University of Virginia in 1949, and the subse­
quent charges of seven institutions in 1950, centered primarily on
section four of the Sanity Code which prohibited the allocation of
excessive financial aid to athletes. Because delegates at the NCAA
convention failed to produce a two-thirds vote in favor of member­
ship termination, each school was simply classified a "member not in
good standing" (Lawrence, 1987).

These and other failed attempts at regulation led the NCAA to
address several questions regarding the Sanity Code, chiefly issues
concerning institutional compliance of the code, termination of in­
stitution memberships as the only sanction for non-compliance, and
the NCAA’s general inability to effectively deal with presumed vio­
violators. Because of these and other problems, the Sanity Code was
killed by the NCAA delegation in 1951, though, the Compliance Com­
mittee, with no rules to enforce, was left intact.

In spite of the failure of the Sanity Code, the NCAA’s goal of
securing a firm grasp on the business of regulating college athletics was not abandoned. In 1952, the NCAA delegation replaced the Compliance Committee with a Membership Committee empowered to receive complaints concerning member institutions as well as investigate and charge institutions with failure to meet academic and/or athletic standards (Lawrence, 1987).

A subcommittee was additionally formed to help strengthen regulations in regard to enforcement. This subcommittee, later to become the Committee on Infractions, implemented a twelve-point program designed to rid college sports of the abuses which had taken over. The plan limited the number of financial grants to student-athletes, directed recruiting activity, penalized athletes receiving gifts or excessive aid, and eliminated lavish entertainment of recruits (Lawrence, 1987).

By the end of 1952, the NCAA had imposed penalties on the University of Kentucky and Bradley University for recruiting violations in basketball, moves that caused Kentucky to cancel its 1952-1953 season. It was not until this period in time, the early 1950s, that the NCAA was seen as the "generally recognized enforcer of amateurism in intercollegiate sports" (Lawrence, 1987, p. 3). Indeed, between June 1, 1952, and December 22, 1965, the Infractions Committee of the NCAA influenced and/or dealt with the outcomes of 449 suspected infractions of member schools (Shea & Wieman, 1967).

During the 1960s and 1970s the popularity of NCAA athletics soared, notably due to exposure and money brought by television.
With the substantial increase in revenue, many colleges and universities turned to illegal means of securing players who might lead to championships. Changing high school transcripts and cash inducements were maneuvers that were not uncommon. This was particularly true for black athletes who tended to be less academically prepared and financially not as self sufficient as their white counterparts (Farrell, 1989).

During the 1980s college sports continued to grow, in particular men's football and basketball. Schools making either bowl game or final four appearances could typically expect revenues in excess of a million dollars. Although the popularity of the NCAA was at an all time high, attention often shifted to the continuing ills of its sports: altering transcripts, illegal payments, and credits for classes never attended (Farrell, 1989; Simon, 1985; Sperber, 1990).

With such activity commonplace, the NCAA set out to return the integrity that many believed had abandoned college sports. Though many of the advocates of Propositions 48 and 42 had hopes the rule changes would improve the integrity of college sports, much of the opposition believed the rules would lead only to the creation of further ills.

The preceding history of intercollegiate athletics, from its early days to the present, illustrates how today's primary agent of social control in intercollegiate athletics, the NCAA, came into existence. As well, the history has provided a context for the creation of additional rules by the NCAA. However, before describing
the framework from which this study will be guided, three key issues in the sociology of sport which encompass the NCAA's creation of rules 48 and 42 must be addressed.

Sociology of Sport Issues

In order to examine the social processes respecting the creation of the two proposals, the subject matter must be explored in concert with the sociology of sport. Although scholarly literature regarding Propositions 48 and 42 is somewhat meager, a wealth of literature relating to the two rules does exist in the sociology of sport. (Relatively little sociological research exists which specifically pertains to Propositions 48 and 42. For the most part, the rules are briefly mentioned in discussions of sport and education, racism in sport, and standardized testing. Furthermore, specific research that does exist on eligibility requirements has mainly been conducted by the NCAA. For example, Benson (1991) investigated the validity of NCAA eligibility standards for students-athletes admitted in the 1984-1985 class using as a measure the five year graduation rates of the freshmen admitted.) The significant issues which factor into the creation of Proposals 48 and 42 include: sport and educational attainment, racial discrimination in sport, and the reliability of predicting academic success.

Sport and Education

For the purpose of this study, relevant issues concerning
sport and education include: the aspirations, expectations, and academic performance of active student-athletes, as well as the secondary educational achievement of entering student-athletes. In their study of the Tulsa University basketball program, Adler and Adler (1985) revealed that "although most college athletes ultimately become disillusioned with and detached from academics, many begin their college careers idealistically, caring about academics and intending to graduate" (p. 241).

Adler and Adler refer to this as pragmatic detachment, meaning the weight of structural conditions athletes encounter often initiates the disillusionment of the academic ideal. These findings are consistent with studies of the collegiate athletic experience that have found negative relationships between athletic participation and academic ideals, taking into account a variety of factors such as lower standards, reduced expectations, allegiance to coaches, and length of season (Edwards, 1984; Messner & Groisser, 1982; Purdy, Eitzen, & Hufnagel, 1982).

Indicators that are often used in the appraisal of the actual academic performance of college athletes include grades, course selection, graduation rates, and interscholastic preparation. Eitzen (1987), in a review of data taken from the NCAA, several institutions, the media, and the work of social scientists, found male athletes to have lower GPAs than male non-athletes, black athletes to have lower GPAs than white athletes, and male athletes lower GPAs than female athletes. Significant relationships were also found be-
tween athletes involved in revenue sports as opposed to nonrevenue sports, where revenue sport participants had lower GPAs.

In addition to this research on the academic under-performance of college athletes, evidence exists that clustering takes place in easy majors, in remedial classes, and so called "Palm Trees 101" courses (Sperber, 1990). Eitzen (1987) reports:

Clustered is most likely to occur: (1) in Division I programs; (2) on male teams; (3) among blacks rather than whites; (4) in big-time programs (ranked in the top 20 teams in the past three years); and (5) in the academically elite schools (p. 20).

Given the implementation of Proposition 48 in 1986 and Proposition 42 in 1990, and the general tendency of athletic personnel to monitor those adrift in the athletic subculture, it can be seen how visions of eligibility could conceivably overshadow sensibility in educational decision making on the part of students and their mentors (Pitts, 1992). In essence, educational decisions made by the mentors of Proposition 48 students would, no doubt, assure second year eligibility.

Another indicator of student-athlete academic achievement is graduation rates. Research in this area is ample although divergent depending upon any one specific variable. For example, Shapiro (1984), in a study of Michigan State athletes from 1950-1970, found graduation rates for athletes exceeded those of the non-athlete population. The graduation rates for football players even exceeded those for non-athletes. However, based on the data from 1950-1970, Shapiro found that graduation rates for athletes were trending down,
while rates for non-athletes were trending up. Similarly, Eitzen (1987) indicated that the more big-time a sport at an institution, the lower the graduation rates of the student-athletes, for both men and women, tend to be.

Unlike Shapiro’s study, many schools presently have quite dismal student-athlete graduation rates. This is often indicated by measuring the graduation rates of professional athletes and individual school rates. For example, Eitzen (1987) reports that in 1984 only 20% of the National Basketball Association players had graduated, as opposed to 62% in 1974. Other distinguishing numbers include the graduation rates of big-time basketball programs such as Memphis State and Nevada-Las Vegas, where from 1972 to 1982 graduation rates were 10.7% and 21.3% respectively (Eitzen, 1987).

The final variable associated with academic success in college is interscholastic preparation. Purdy, Eitzen, and Hufnagel (1982) found that high-school athletes offered full scholarships for athletic participation tended to be less prepared for the academic rigors of college than the general student population. This was determined by comparing the college graduation rates and GPAs of athletes to the graduation rates and GPAs of the general student population at Colorado State University over a ten year period. Colorado State is classified by the NCAA as Division I-A school and it is recognized as having one of the nations big-time sports programs.

In addition to this research, Eitzen (1987) indicates that male athletes are less prepared for college than male non-athletes
and black athletes are less prepared for college than white athletes. The relationship between male athletes and non-athletes is significant, especially when taking into consideration research by Hauser and Lueptow (1978) that revealed high school athletes typically have higher GPAs than high school non-athletes.

The divergence in academic performance on the part of high school and college athletes is most notably due to the differing roles assumed at each level of sport participation. Eitzen and Sage (1986) point out that unlike interscholastic sport participation, which is associated with status among peers, "intercollegiate sports participation typifies a relationship between coach and athlete which is essentially that of employer and employee" (p. 123). In essence, academics suffer in college because of the allegiance, typically meaning time, student-athletes must accord to coaches.

**Sport and Racial Discrimination**

A common belief persists that the one social institution in the United States that has remained uninhibited by racism would be that of sport. However, we should recall that the exclusion of blacks from professional sports did not desist until the end of World War II with Jackie Robinson's dramatic shattering of the color barrier in professional baseball. Even at the intercollegiate level blacks had remained segregated (Eitzen & Sage, 1986). Misconceptions underlying the race issue in sport generally revolve around the fact that the numbers of black athletes presently participating
in the 'big three' U.S. team sports are disproportionate to the percentage of blacks in the population.

Though racial discrimination in sport is not a new phenomenon by any means, its study in concert with the sociology of sport has become increasingly prevalent in recent years. Several studies of racial discrimination on both the intercollegiate and professional levels of sport have focused on such topics as stacking of positions in team sports, position assignment based upon commonly held stereotypes, athletic rewards, as well as the dearth of black coaches, athletic directors, and executives for varying sports on all levels (Edwards, 1984; Eitzen & Yetman, 1977; Jones, Leonard II, Schmitt, Smith, & Tolone 1987; Williams & Youssef, 1975).

As mentioned previously, the relationship between Propositions 48 and 42 and racial discrimination lies in the use of standardized tests as a means for ascertaining academic aptitude, which ultimately determines athletic eligibility or ineligibility. Standardized testing has been labeled patently racist by several college presidents and civil rights leaders who argue the tests are culturally biased in favor of upper-class whites (Lederman, 1989; Swift, 1994; Zingg, 1983). Hence, protestations of racial discrimination by the opposition of Propositions 48 and 42 lie partly in their belief that minorities, particularly black athletes, are systematically excluded from an education and athletics by the use of culturally biased tests (Chaney, 1988).

Edwards (1984), Nibbrig & Cottingham (1986), and Zingg (1983)
all agree that the substantive issue at stake is fair access to achievement and that scoring 700 on the SAT does not necessarily guarantee degree attainment or post-enrollment college matriculation. Gladwell (1986) believes all the requirements "do is penalize athletes for their high school records while doing nothing to improve their athletes' education once they have entered college" (p. 48). Edwards (1984) additionally states a minimum score was arbitrarily incorporated into Proposition 48 with no reasoned or logical explanation given by the NCAA, and if anything, the standards set by the rule were too low. The American Council on Education states a score of 700 on the SAT projects less than a fifty-fifty chance of graduating from most division I schools.

Predicting Academic Success

Much of the controversy surrounding the vote on Proposal 48 in 1983 centered on the use of standardized tests as a predictor for academic success in a university type setting. Standardized testing has not been an issue completely ignored in the realm of higher education. However, it is no surprise to see the issue further kindled with the enactment of Propositions 48 and 42, especially when athletic revenue at many institutions is, at least partially, contingent on the eligibility and admission of potential blue chip athletes.

The research on the use of standardized tests as a means for predicting success in higher education is abundant. However, re-
search focusing on the nature of the relationship between standardized tests and potential NCAA athletes is sparse. The material presented here examines entire student populations, rather than simply athletes.

The positions and views concerning standardized tests are dissimilar. Charles V. Willie (1987), in his call for excellence and equity in higher education, states that the United States, in its continual uphill climb towards excellence, is fundamentally concerned with how to exclude rather than how to include individuals. Willie (1987) points out that

by educating the brightest and the best in the presence of those who are less able, no harm is done to students who are excellent if we develop pedagogical arrangements wherein excellent students can assist their less able classmates (p. 489).

Willie calls for an end to the silly business of excluding minorities by way of standardized aptitude tests and invites equity and fairness. He states: "we know an equitable system (rather than a system based on excellence) has a better chance of surviving" (p. 489). Willie does not, however, describe of what such a system might consist.

Goldman and Hewitt (1976), in their discussion of predictors of academic success, state that merely "eliminating educational selection tests is no solution at all. Even if no tests are used, admission standards must still be made, and the issue of unfair selection would continue to exist" (p. 116).

In addition, Goldman and Hewitt (1976) found that, in general,
the college GPAs of whites are more validly predicted by the combined use of high school GPAs and SAT scores than are the college GPAs of blacks. To alleviate this discrepancy Goldman and Hewitt suggested developing highly valid predictors for blacks, a solution easier said than done. And as then Supreme Court Justice Douglas suggested, such a solution may serve to create racial barriers rather than eliminate them (Goldman & Hewitt, 1976, p. 116).

To increase further the confusion surrounding the issue of standardized tests let me turn to an essay by White (1985) summarizing the significant finding presented in two separate books written by a Harvard Graduate, David Owen, and Harvard Professor Robert Klitgaard. To determine the success of the SAT in predicting the academic success of black students and gain a better understanding of testing bias, Owen questioned three Educational Testing Service officials regarding testing prejudice.

The first official noted black students tend to do better in college than SAT scores predict. The second indicated SAT tests are not biased either for or against blacks. The third indicated blacks tended to do worse than what SAT scores generally predict (Owen, as cited in White, 1986).

Owen, in his own assessment of the SAT, questioned how student ability can effectively be measured if the measure for ability cannot accurately account for the difference between knowing and not knowing the nature of a test question, based on economic backgrounds, and different educational, cultural, and social opportunities (Owen,
as cited in White, 1986). Disagreeing with Owen, Klitgaard believes the academic ability of the student body is diluted by admissions policies that admit minority students with lower standardized scores. However, both agree that minorities are admitted in spite of their scores, not because of them; and given a color-blind approach to admissions policies there would be fewer minorities in selective schools, including minority athletes.

Predicting individual academic success by means of standardized testing is a very controversial issue. While many argue that the culturally biased tests should be eliminated in order for achieved equity in higher education, many disagree, contending that the tests are necessary for predicting a student's potential for academic success. When put in the context of athletic eligibility for freshmen student-athletes, as this issue will be, the matter becomes all the more disputable.

The preceding issues; sport and education, sport and racial discrimination, and the use of standardized tests, all must be considered when examining the creation of rules 48 and 42. Much of the contention and controversy surrounding the creation and implementation of the rules revolves around these issues. However, in order to examine such a process, an appropriate framework for explaining such a process needs to be introduced.

Social Constructionism

A social constructionist framework, found in the definitional
paradigm was adopted for this study. The definitional paradigm from which social constructionism is derived "emphasizes people as acting upon their world, and the research goal is that of describing the processes through which the subject (people) constructs the social world" (Thomas, 1982, p. 294). Working within such a paradigm, the processes by which laws (rules) are created and enforced must be understood (Kramer, 1985).

The social constructionist perspective is appropriate for our study of rules 48 and 42 because it limits value inclinations and subjective notions that the sociologist may hold in regard to the creation of rules. Furthermore, by employing a contextual social constructionist framework, it will be revealed that the creation of the rules was not a result of a single determinant, but rather due to a number of issues which encompass questions of racism, power relationships, institutional values, and individual sensitivities (Zingg, 1983).

**Contextual Constructionism**

Contextual constructionists focus on the dialectic of society and argue for a contextually natured interpretation of claims making. Claims making refers to actions made by one party to another demanding something be done about some putative condition (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977). Miller and Holstein (1993) suggest that contextual constructionists "treat the evaluation of social problems claims as an important part of their analyses" (p. 8). In essence, social re-
searchers using a contextual constructionist framework examine the social organization of claims, procedures, resources, practices, and accomplishments of the claims makers.

This examination of social processes, as Berger and Luckmann (1966) suggest, is carried out in three movements. The first movement is externalization, "the process by which people construct a cultural product," the world in which we live. The second movement is objectivation, whereby cultural products take on an objective reality. The final movement is internalization, a means by which individuals, through socialization, internalize objective facts and make them "part of their own 'internal' consciousness" (Berger & Luckmann, 1966, p. 61). This process, while acknowledging human authorship of reality through claims making practices, also allows for the interpretation of the circumstances regarding a cultural product. Best (1993) believes, "we will understand the empirical world better if we pay attention to the manner in which social problems emerge" (p. 119).

Because this study will assess conditions that affect the claims making process and due to the fact that these claims, to an extent, will be (contextually) evaluated, the contextual constructionist approach will be employed. By utilizing this approach, we will be in a position to better understand the manner in which certain social problems (rules restricting freshmen eligibility) come to exist and others do not. As well, this approach will increase understanding of rule creating processes in general.
A Natural History Model

Within the definitional paradigm different techniques can be used to understand and interpret the emergence and development of social problems. Historical investigations are one means of accomplishing such a task. Historical investigations direct researchers to organize data over time and to use models that reflect the conception of society as an ongoing social process (Wohl, 1975). By utilizing such a model, social researchers are able to analyze unique sequences of events that link with each other to form natural histories. A natural history model will be employed to understand better the emergence and development of the problems that led to the implementation of Rules 48 and 42.

The model that will be utilized in this study was developed by Herbert Blumer (1971). Blumer insists that the emergence, the career, and the fate of social problems is dependent on the process of collective definition, a process which passes through five identifiable stages which Blumer (1971) labels:

1. The emergence of social problems.
2. The legitimation of the problem.
3. The mobilization of action.
4. The formation of an official plan.
5. The implementation of an official plan. (p. 301)

However, it should be noted that in order for social situations to gain respectability or attain the status of a social problem, they must be successfully navigated through each of the before-mentioned stages, stages which both Blumer (1971) and Spector and Kitsuse (1977) indicate are very contingent and problematic stages. That
is, social problems often terminate or cease to exist because of failure moving from one stage of the natural history to the succeeding stage (Spector & Kitsuse, 1977). Adapting Blumer's stages will reveal the social process respecting the emergence of problems which necessitated Propositions 48 and 42. It should be noted that Blumer's stages are merely a model for the natural history, and only one model that can be used. Dissimilar models have been developed by Bossard (1941) and Fuller & Myers (1941).

Theoretical Perspectives on Sport

Having reviewed the relevant sociology of sport literature as well as having introduced a theoretical framework which shall guide this study, we now turn to two theoretical perspectives that will be used to interpret the creation of the proposals: critical theory, and cartel theory. The critical theory discussed here pertains to sports in general and therefore must be applied to Propositions 48 and 42. Cartel theory, an economic theory, has previously been associated with the NCAA and its rules. These two theoretical perspectives, when applied in Chapter IV, will aid in the contextual analysis of the proposals.

A Critical Perspective on Sport

For the most part, critical sociologists have maintained a docile, perhaps opportunistic silence on the subject of sport. This is most notably due to the working class' fanatical enjoyment of
sport, a fact, which until recently, has effectively stifled critical voices (Brohm, 1978). However, with the increase in the commodification of sport, the necessity for a critical critique or assessment has become apparent (Chorbajian, 1985).

Critical theorists are interested in examining "the material and symbolic relationships between power, social control, and actions which resist control" (Pfohl, 1994, p. 404). They further encourage us to move away from hierarchical structures of power and strive for equality. Labeling theory and pluralistic conflict theory have been very influential in the development of critical thought. Labeling theory has had significant influence on critical perspectives primarily because those with power typically have the greatest ability to label.

Similarly, pluralistic conflict theory asserts that a large number of groups vie for the power to decide what is legally prohibited. To the winner goes the spoils, or the power to decide on what is legally prohibited (Pfohl, 1995). The major contribution pluralistic conflict theory has had to the critical perspectives is that historically, conflict theory played a significant role "in the demystification of what had been the more generally accepted view that law was consensually created and implemented with 'value neutrality'" (Pfohl, 1994, p. 430). Though pluralistic theory fails to take into account factors such as historically based structural contexts, it does recognize that human struggle for power inevitably results in triumph for the powerful and the perpetual degeneration
and deviantization of the powerless (Pfohl, 1994).

In that regard, Chorbajian (1985) believes the primary goal of critical sociologists interested in sport ought to be the vigorous examination of those individuals associated with sport as well as the empowerment and political enfranchisement of people for liberating causes. Chorbajian (1985) tells us that considerable work remains to be done documenting the organization and operation of sport. We need information of a power elite nature--who are the owners of sport; what are the interlocks among owners, the media, and the political structure. (p. 65)

Indeed, this study will attempt to address some of the issues brought up by Chorbajian so as to understand the power elite of the NCAA.

Cartel Theory

Economic theories are sometimes overlooked by sociologists because the theories frequently dismiss non-economic factors. However, the creation of Propositions 48 and 42 can be interpreted using the economic principle of a business cartel. Though cartel theory does not entirely dismiss all non-economic factors, the primary points of emphasis in its analysis of any particular phenomenon are of an economic nature.

Koch (1983) tells us that a cartel is "an organization of individuals who collude, conspire and agree upon matters of joint interest" (p. 361). Classic examples of cartels would be Major League Baseball and the National Football League (Stieber, 1991).
draft systems prevent bidding, which in turn restrict competition and suppress wages.

Cartels do not simply appear, they evolve over time. The first step in the formation of a cartel is the establishment of an association in which producers can meet and exchange information. Using this mechanism, producers can communicate and institute collective action for alleviating common or recurring problems. Over time, competition is restricted and membership opportunities are tightened, thereby cutting costs and increasing profits. The result is increased profits propel producers to cartelize or continue to restrict competition in order to maintain and increase financial rewards (Fleisher, Goff, & Tollison, 1992; Koch, 1983; Lawrence, 1987). The five structural factors that are most important in the formation of a cartel include: "high concentration of production, high barriers to entry, a small fringe, nonsubstitutability, and nondifferentiation" (Spar, 1994, p. 4). Parenthetically, fringe refers to the number of significant outside producers, that is, producers who are not large enough to be considered members of the cartel but who nevertheless contribute a not insignificant portion of the total market production.

Maintenance of the cartel itself is the fundamental goal of any cartel. A leading reason why cartels disintegrate is dissimilarity of interests of cartel members, usually associated with a divergence in revenue (Koch, 1983). When needed, cartels will initiate a specific course of action to prevent the disintegration of the car-
tel. As will be seen in the following pages, the NCAA has in recent years enacted different courses of action, such as Propositions 48 and 42, to maintain the NCAA cartel. Rules like these are created not only for the equalization of member competition, but as well for the joint revenue maximization of the NCAA's members.

Both of these approaches, critical theory and cartel theory, will be employed when examining rules 48 and 42. The purpose of using two theories for analysis is not to specify one approach as superior to the other, but rather examine the dual explanations for the creation and implementation of Propositions 48 and 42. Before closing this introductory chapter, the methods utilized in this study will be briefly elaborate upon.

Methods

The research design selected is a case study, approached as a socio-historical text analysis. Yin states (1984) "A case study is an empirical inquiry that; investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly defined" (p. 23). Furthermore, Hamel, Dufour, and Fortin (1993) state the goal of a case study is "to reconstruct and analyze a case from a sociological perspective" (p. 1).

Case studies are used by sociologists to make detailed accounts of some phenomenon. Kramer (1978) indicates that case studies typically address specific questions. Such questions include,
but are not limited to, the following.

1. Out of what has the phenomenon come?
2. What are the major features of the phenomenon? and
3. What are the results, outcomes, or effects of the phenomenon?

To address these questions with regard to the present case study of NCAA rules, a socio-historical approach will be implemented. Data pertaining to Propositions 48 and 42 will be taken from the media and NCAA proceedings, be documented, and then contextually interpreted.

According to Skocpol (1984), socio-historical studies exhibit the following qualities: they inquire as to time and space contexts of social arrangements, "take temporal sequences seriously in accounting for outcomes," they recognize the relationship between action and structural contexts, and highlight "particular and varying features of specific kinds of social structures and patterns of change" (p. 1). Skocpol (1984) further indicates there are no recipes for correct methodology in historical studies; moreover, "it is a mistake to tie historical sociology down to any one epistemological, theoretical, or methodological orientation" (p. 361). The social constructionist perspective that I have adopted for this study is, in essence a historical study, because it examines rule creating social processes and the history of the social process.

Skocpol (1984) mentions three approaches to socio-historical methodology which may be utilized in case study research. In the
first approach, a researcher may apply a single theoretical model to historical events. However, a danger is often found in this approach in that specific historical cases may be selected out to fit a specific theory. The second approach involves a more inductive approach by which alternative hypotheses are analyzed in conjunction with regularities in historical cases. The utilization of this approach may also be dangerous, for the use of such investigative techniques often generates contradictory and atheoretical assumptions, thereby limiting the relevance of any given historical instance. In other words, the approach confines reasonable theoretical explanations or restricts the sociological vision of the researcher.

The final strategy represents the middle ground between the previous two approaches. This approach is significant for our purposes because it focuses on "the culturally embedded intentions of individual or group actors in the given historical settings," as well as on culturally and politically significant topics (Skocpol, 1984, p. 368). Indeed, this research is to be driven by the tenet that many conditions factored into or played a key part in the unfolding social process that spawned rules 48 and 42. Though some danger does lie in this approach, such as lack of sociological vision, it is the safest of the three strategies, because it utilizes a variety of concepts to develop interpretations regarding the given historical patterns.

Skocpol insists that secondary data analysis is the method of choice for interpretative sociological research. She contends that
in the circumstance of historical sociology "a dogmatic insistence on redoing primary research for every investigation would be disastrous; it would rule out most comparative-historical research" (p. 382).

By employing contemporary data taken from the mainstream media (e.g., *Time*, *Newsweek*, *Sports Illustrated*, *The Sporting News*, *The New Republic*, and *The New York Times*, etc.), in addition to supplementary sources taken directly from the NCAA (i.e., reports, internal studies, convention proceedings, and manuals), the creation and implementation of rules 48 and 42 will be further understood.
CHAPTER II

PREFACING PROPOSITION 48: THE EMERGENCE AND NATURE OF SOCIAL CLAIMS

To reiterate the assertion of Spector and Kitsuse (1977), the central problem of a social problems theory "is to account for the emergence, nature, and maintenance of claims-making and responding activities" (p. 76). The purpose of this chapter is to decipher and examine the circumstances which encompassed the inception and introduction of Proposition 48 into intercollegiate athletics. In essence, we seek to contextually examine the social problems claims which inferred NCAA member institutions as lacking academic integrity, claims which became in part responsible for the creation of and the controversy surrounding Proposition 48.

Proposition 48: A Prelude

As mentioned in the previous chapter, the popularity of intercollegiate sports soared in the 1980s. With such high regard for college sports and the greater numbers of dollars at stake for each athletic contest, it was no surprise that the competition for student-athletes became fierce. In order to stay with or ahead of the athletic competition, many colleges and universities known for their academic virtuosity felt they were left with no real choice but to sometimes recruit athletes who fell below the school's own admission standards. Even today, academically superior institutions
still recruit significant numbers of substandard student-athletes. This is often illustrated by comparing the academic performance of athletic populations with the academic performance of non-athletic populations at academically renown institutions where athletics are also very prominent. Hence, it has, in part, been the academic under-performance of athletes at many academically competitive schools that has perpetuated public perceptions of lacking academic integrity in college athletics. These perceptions represent social claims by the public in regard to the state of affairs of NCAA athletics.

The ideal means of restoring academic integrity, so to speak, would to simply have institutions enforce the admissions requirements they have on the books for all students, thus making athletes meet the same standards as any other student seeking entrance to the institution (Sack, 1986). However, this would pose significant problems for athletic programs at academically competitive schools, for they could no longer recruit blue-chip athletes who are merely marginal students. Sack (1986) succinctly describes the reality such requirements would pose:

Academically competitive schools like Notre Dame and Michigan would no longer be athletic powers, and less selective state universities would corner the market on blue-chip athletes, as well as on national championships. Overall, the quality of play would suffer and commercial college sport, as we know it, would probably not survive. (p. S10)

Given this scenario, the NCAA, during the 1970s and early 1980s, did not find it reasonable nor feasible to make academic integrity a foremost priority. However, many academically renown institutions such as Duke, Notre Dame, and Virginia did prescribe
their own academic standards which athletes were required to meet
(Adler, 1989; Cramer, 1986; Sansoff, 1985).

Ultimately, the NCAA decided reform of an academic nature was
indeed in order. Many NCAA members believed a reform was needed
that would improve the overall character of intercollegiate sports
as well as eliminate the cut-throat recruiting of marginal to infer-
or students. Hence, these decisions represent the initial social
claims by the NCAA respecting the state of affairs in intercolleg-
iate sports just prior to 1983 NCAA convention. The NCAA came to
the conclusion that without any type of reform to monitor athletic
recruitment, schools would be liable to succumb to their own worst
instincts in the realm of recruiting. One university president al-
luded to the enactment of Proposition 48 to Cramer (1986):

Without this reform, we are caught. If we take the high road
and don't admit the academically deficient seven-foot basket-
ball player, he'll sign with Clemson or some other school. And
so our team not only doesn't get a star player, but we have to
play against him for the next four years. (p. K5)

Hence, Proposition 48 emerged because of social claims re-
specting public perceptions surrounding the academic integrity of
NCAA athletes as well as claims made by the NCAA regarding recruit-
ing practices. Indeed, the NCAA had reached a crossroads. Either
face the downward spiral of recruiting academically unfit athletes
and turning colleges and universities into complete jock factories,
or introduce reform which would attempt to return the student to
student-athlete and even the recruiting playing field.

Alluding to Blumer's (1971) natural history model of social
problems, we have seen both the emergence and legitimation of a social problem, where collective definition has occurred on both the part of the public and the NCAA itself. The legitimation of the social problem, institutions lacking academic integrity, did not occur immediately after the problem's emergence, rather the contingency period between these two stages was fairly prolonged. However, once the problem was legitimated, the natural history proceeded to unfold rather rapidly. Meaning, once the problem of institutions lacking academic integrity was legitimated, the contingency periods between each of the subsequent stages became rather brief, much like the very stages themselves. In essence, problems of athletically renowned institutions lacking academic integrity and problems of cutthroat recruiting emerged over a great number of years. The problems were then legitimized by the public and the NCAA in the years prior to the creation of Proposition 48.

The following two stages, mobilization of action and formation of an official plan, came in direct succession with little or no contingency between the two stages (Blumer, 1971). In January of 1983, the NCAA held its annual convention in San Diego, California, to discuss, among other things, freshmen eligibility for participation in college sports at Division I institutions (Zingg, 1983). However, during the convention, which served as the primary mobilization of action period for the two problems, we see the originally defined problem of institutional integrity redefined so as to specifically confront freshmen eligibility.
Proposition 48, introduced by L. Donald Smith, president of Southern Methodist University and spokesman of an ad hoc committee representing 40 superpower universities, was one of seven proposals formed and submitted to tackle freshmen eligibility. Representatives of the 277 Division I institutions of the NCAA voted to approve rule 48 by an estimated 2:1 ratio, thereby establishing Proposition 48 as NCAA Bylaw 5-1-(j), with an effective date of August 1, 1986 (Wiley, 1991; Zingg, 1983).

At the 1983 convention it became clear on what lines proponents and opponents of the new rule differed: chiefly black and white. Dissension centered primarily on the use of standardized tests as an eligibility criteria for athletic participation; tests, which as mentioned previously, are questioned because of the economic, educational, and cultural differences of test takers (Swift, 1994). Protests of racism and pre-meditated discrimination from representatives of the black community soon followed (Cramer, 1986; Edwards, 1983; Gladwell, 1986).

Though approved at the 1983 convention, Proposition 48 was still three years away from official implementation. This period represents the final contingency point before reaching the final stage in the social problem's natural history, that stage being the official implementation of the plan of action. Ironically, much of the debate that occurred between the proponents and opponents of the rule occurred after the initial vote, though before official implementation of the plan. This is somewhat contradictory of Blumer's
(1977) model which indicates the debating and redefining of a social problem occurs during "the formation of an official plan" period (p. 305). It is during this increasingly vehement contingency period that coaches, athletic directors, college presidents, and black leaders gave both vigorous and impassioned arguments for and against the use of Rule 48.

Points of Contention

Indeed between 1983 and the year of Rule 48's implementation, 1986, and even leading up to the adoption of Proposition 42 in 1989, an abundance of debate pertaining to the proposal unfolded. Rather than explain all the views of the proponents of Rule 48, then do the same for the opponents, the following discussion will be conducted issue by issue. The issues addressed in the following represent not only concerns over Rule 48, but the emergence and legitimation of problems that would ultimately lead to the creation of Proposition 42.

The Nature of the SAT Score

There are many elements to Rule 48 that have been contended, but the issue that has endured significant debate has to do with the use of SAT scores as admission standards for athletes. Surprisingly, the groups constituting the opposition to Rule 48 were those one would think would be the most supportive of the measure. The opponents of the rule, chiefly civil rights leaders and black athletic
directors and coaches, argued that a score of 700 on the SAT as a minimum standard was arbitrarily established and that the enactment of such a standard would unfairly exclude many black athletes from higher education (Chaney, 1988; Edwards; 1983). Neither the NCAA nor the American Council on Education committee charged with developing the rule gave any reasoned or logical explanation for the setting of the minimum score. According to Cramer (1986):

You'd think that forcing all college athletes to achieve a relatively modest minimum level of academic achievement would be an idea embraced by almost everyone—that few right-minded folks would argue with the notion that minimums could and should be met. Because black athletes are often said to be exploited by big-time college programs, you'd think that black educators would be leaders in the push for these reforms. (p. K5)

There were some black administrators and educators who were fully supportive of the measure and believed standardized tests measure certain skills that all students need to have in order to succeed at competitive schools (Vrcan, 1987). However, many black leaders pointed to the fact that the average SAT score for blacks entering college was only 722, and that 55% of blacks generally acquire a score lower than 700 on the test (Edwards, 1983). Interestingly enough, Sperber (1990) notes that a NCAA study published prior to the initial rule 48 debate stated

that if athletes entering college in 1977 had been subjected to the [Proposal 48] requirements, a large number of those who have now graduated, particularly black students, would not have been eligible to participate in college athletics as freshmen and possibly would not have gone to college at all. (p. 220)

Moreover, in an interview with Fiske (1983), Alan Kirschner,
director of research and government affairs for the United Negro College Fund, stated that "if the standards adopted by the NCAA for athletes were applied to our students, it would knock more than half of them out of college" (p. All). Additionally, he believed the policy overlooked motivational factors that students often develop once they reach a college.

Hence, the general consensus on the part of black leaders and opponents of the rule 48 was that, in the NCAA's haste to devise an official plan of action, they failed to take into consideration all the ramifications such a plan would incur. However true this may be, many proponents do not believe it is reason enough to totally discount using standardized tests. Though the tests are not valid predictors of innate intelligence, they are useful in that they do give a rough idea of the educational background from which an individual has come. In his support of admissions exams Sack (1986) states:

A combined score of below 700 on the S.A.T.'s, for instance, suggests that a student has either attended inferior schools or comes from a neighborhood or family that lacks the material and cultural resources to emphasize the development of skills needed for success in college. Such a student may also have spent more time and energy on sports than on school work while in primary or secondary school. (p. All)

In essence, Sack believes standardized tests serve a fundamental objective in athletic recruiting, in spite of their deficiencies. That objective is the assurance and granting of athletic scholarships to those student-athletes who are both student and athlete. Opponents retorted that barring marginal students from col-
legiate athletics through the use of admissions exams still requires that test minimums be established.

**Eligibility and Stockpiling**

Another issue which had opponents up in arms had to do with the loss of one year of eligibility for partial qualifying athletes. As mentioned before, partial qualifiers are those individuals meeting one, but not both, of the two athletic eligibility requirements. Partial qualifiers are required to sit out their freshmen year of athletics so as to acclimate to college and concentrate on academics. Many opponents of this measure, particularly coaches and athletic directors, believe athletes or potential sports stars are being punished prematurely. They assert that because certain youngsters may fail to meet arbitrary test requirements they are being denied a full college sports career, especially when athletes are prohibited from even practicing with their teammates (Chaney, 1988).

Punishment or not, many educators criticized the new rule for conveying no concern over post-enrollment matriculation. In other words, once the athlete is on a college campus, the rule has relatively little to do with the athlete's academic progress (Wieder, 1988). Presently the NCAA has no rules preventing athletic competition with a below C average, rather, "a student-athlete shall be in good academic standing as determined by the academic authorities who determine the meaning of such phrases for all students of the institution" (1994-1995 NCAA Manual, p. 129).
More radical reforms had been suggested as means of assuaging this dispute, essentially the elimination of freshmen eligibility altogether, or the extension of financial support from four years to five (Sack, 1986; Zingg, 1983). This would allow athletes a one year adjustment period, if needed, at the same time protect a four year athletic career. However, during this point in time, 1983-1986, many difficulties surrounded such reforms, mainly financial. Likely or unlikely, such reforms would still be linked to standardized tests in that decisions would have to be made regarding an athlete's eligibility for his or her first year of school (Zingg, 1983).

Yet another matter that divided proponents and opponents of the rule, an issue which was influential in the creation of Proposition 42, was that schools with substantial athletic budgets could afford to grant scholarships to partial qualifiers, thereby stockpiling their rosters and preventing schools with meager athletic budgets from procuring such talent (Sperber, 1990). Additionally, the rule allowed schools accepting partial qualifiers, as Gladwell (1986) states, "to posture about academic excellence without actually having to take any meaningful action" (p. 14).

Edwards (1983) indicates, Rule 48 was not so much a racist attempt to raise academic standards or so much an attempt by whites to resegregate collegiate sports, but rather a means to achieve parity between black and white institutions in the recruiting war. Edwards (1983) continues:
The overwhelming majority of athletes recruited by traditionally black Division I schools are black, score below Rule 48 minimum-test-score requirements, and tend to need financial support in order to attend college. However, because they have far more modest athletic budgets than traditionally white schools, traditionally black schools are not nearly so able to provide financial support for both a roster of active athletes and a long roster of newly recruited athletes ineligible for athletic participation under Rule 48. (p. 35)

Conceived in this context, Proposition 48 represented not only the NCAA's desire to regulate the recruitment process (control cutthroat recruiting), but, as well, represented a fundamental reassertion of the NCAA's complete authority. In essence, the initial social claims of the NCAA regarding recruiting practices were seemingly rooted in NCAA ambitions of member school parity.

**Privilege or Right?**

One final issue which must be brought forth in this chapter exemplifies, perhaps, the essence of the entire controversy. Is a college education a right or a privilege? Chaney (1988) believes if higher education is indeed a right, then universities should not deny, via achievement tests, athletes the chance for education and success, especially when universities are ready to exchange educational opportunity for athletic skill.

If higher education is privilege, the real issue becomes fair access to achievement for all parties involved (Zingg, 1983). Zingg stresses that when fair access to achievement cannot be met, and when students are admitted to institutions where academic success is ill achieved, that is the period when exploitation of student-
athletes is most likely to occur. Zingg (1983) continues:

A student, no matter how talented cannot assume that an admissions offer--like education itself--is something done to him, something accomplished on his behalf. By the same token, institutions must recognize that the admissions process is intimately linked to the educational one and that a special responsibility is in order to reinforce this relationship with the student-athlete. (p. 9)

Though not the focal point of this study, it should be understood that individual attitudes respecting rule 48 are most likely to conform to attitudes on educational opportunities in general.

Summary

This chapter has provided an examination of the emergence and nature of claims making activities which propagated the creation of Proposition 48. Claims of academic integrity and unethical recruiting practices were made by the public and the NCAA regarding the state of affairs in college athletics. Using Blumer's natural history model I have described the unfolding social processes whereby the differing claims were legitimized, acted upon, formulated into a plan of action, and then implemented as rule 48. Using the model has also demonstrated how the emergence and legitimation of the social claims was rather lengthy, and how the three ensuing stages were rather precipitated.

Furthermore, this chapter has demonstrated how this particular social problem is somewhat contradictory to Blumer's natural history model. In Blumer's (1971) model, debate over a plan of action, including concessions, tradeoffs, and deference to influence, occurs
in the "formation of an official plan of action" stage (p. 306). As was the case with Proposition 48, the rule had already been passed and was awaiting official implementation before any heated debate ever began. The major points of contention addressed prior to implementation were also examined in this chapter.

Before the official implementation of rule 48 further social claims were being made with respect to the new rule and to potential consequences of the rule. The task in the following chapter will be similar to this one, is that it will examine the inception of Proposition 42, the social claims, and the controversy surrounding it.
CHAPTER III

THE CONTINUING SOCIAL PROCESS: REVISING THE PLAN OF ACTION

The purpose of this chapter is to explain how the social processes which led to the formulation of Proposition 48 continued to evolve. The social process progressed in such a way that modifications to the original official plan of action were eventually induced. Proposition 42, the ultimate result of this unfolding social process, eliminated the partial qualifier loophole, thereby preventing universities and colleges from offering athletic scholarships to individuals meeting only one of the two freshmen eligibility conditions. Much like the previous chapter, this chapter seeks to examine the introduction and inception of Proposition 42, as well as examine social claims which necessitated the induction of the modified rule. As with Proposition 48, a great amount of controversy shadowed Proposition 42.

The Domino Effect

At the 1989 NCAA Convention, preliminary indications respecting Proposition 48 were that of the students falling under the restrictions, of which there were approximately 600 annually, most were adapting comfortably to college (Sanoff & Witkin, 1989). However, these findings were only preliminary and gave no clear picture as to whether Proposition 48 was a success or failure. Nonetheless,
a new rule or modification of bylaw 5-1-(j), entitled Proposition 42, appeared on the convention ballot. As before mentioned, Proposition 42 called for the refusal of athletic funding and the elimination of athletic eligibility for partial qualifiers.

The sequence of events leading up to the vote and approval of Proposition 42 began long before the 1989 convention. The emergence of problems that eventually necessitated the creation of Proposition 42 can actually be traced to the University of Georgia the year Proposition 48 went into effect, 1986 (Sanoff & Witkin, 1989).

At the University of Georgia it was found that academically unqualified athletes were kept eligible by placement in remedial programs which did not lead to degree attainment. Soon after the exposure of its eligibility protocol, Georgia's president ordered the athletic department to stop admitting partial qualifiers. Worried that it would soon be at a disadvantage in the quest for top athletes, the University of Georgia began to urge its fellow conference schools to adopt its own rules. By 1988, all Southeastern Conference (SEC) schools had approved conference legislation which, upon activation, would prohibit the distribution of athletic funding to partial qualifiers (Reed, 1989; Sanoff & Witkin, 1989).

Once the SEC had adopted eligibility standards which were higher than the NCAA's, a domino effect ensued. SEC schools feared schools in other conferences would have broader labor pools to recruit from, so the SEC sought to impose uniform restraints on all NCAA Division I schools. Atlantic Coast Conference commissioner
Gene Corrigan, speaking to the SEC’s insistence of uniform restraints in recruiting, stated, "If a school or conference doesn’t take partial qualifiers, it doesn’t want others to" (Sansoff & Witkin, 1989). As the 1989 NCAA Convention drew near, it became clear that the Southeastern Conference would be the primary sponsor for Proposition 42.

As far as the NCAA was concerned, there were many different reactions to the proposed rule change. Many believed that the SEC’s proposed modification of athletic eligibility requirements was a premature and mean spirited move on the part of the conference. However, SEC athletic directors maintained the proposed modifications of rule 48 were conceived with scholarship and educational achievement foremost in mind (Reed, 1989). Rhetoric or not, the SEC’s submission of Proposition 42 rekindled many issues which had characterized the controversy regarding Proposition 48.

Before elaborating on these issues, for there was significant debate concerning the single rule change, the creation and implementation of Proposition 42 will be placed in the context of Blumer’s natural history of a social problem model. This is important because the social claims which led to the creation of Proposition 42 were much different than the claims respecting rule 48.

**Proposition 42 in a Natural History Context**

The foregoing explanation of the University of Georgia’s role in the creation of Proposition 42 is essential in understanding the
implementation of Proposition 42. Georgia, by discontinuing its acceptance of partial qualifiers, was, perhaps, the first institution to perceive, address, and define specific social conditions resulting from its original action. The resulting harmful conditions, mainly recruiting disadvantages, were felt by Georgia (and later all SEC schools), but not by all NCAA institutions. These incidents are consistent with the ideas of Blumer (1971) who stated, "A social problem does not exist for a society unless it is recognized by that society to exist" (p. 301). Eventually, many institutions began to perceive the potential recruiting disadvantages associated with the refusal of partial qualifiers. Imposing uniform restraints was the easiest way of preventing and/or limiting these disadvantages for conference schools.

These events set into motion social processes which eventually resulted in the establishment of Proposition 42 as NCAA regulation. In essence, these events represented the emergence and legitimation of a social problem for the NCAA, a social problem characterized by the unequal recruiting and stockpiling of athletes. Over this short period of time awareness of the problem increased and individuals in the SEC became interested in mobilizing the NCAA for action against the problem. This was consistent with Blumer's third stage of the natural history model. Therefore, the introduction of rule changes at the 1989 convention by the SEC represented Blumer's fourth stage of a social problem's natural history, that being the formation and approval of an official plan. Proposition 42, the official plan of
action, was implemented one year later.

The Debate Over Proposition 42

At this point let me detail the major issues which comprised the debate between proponents and opponents of Proposition 42. These issues were not only contended during the 1989 convention, they were debated at the 1990 convention and in the months preceding the date of official implementation, August 1, 1990 (NCAA Convention Proceedings, 1989).

With respect to Blumer's natural history of a social problem model, the following events can be placed in Blumer's fourth and fifth stages, for there was considerable debate over the formulation and implementation of the official plan. This disagreement, which will also be discussed in Chapter IV, leads one to believe that individual perceptions respecting the nature of the problem were also conflicting.

The 1989 Convention

At the 1989 NCAA convention, the Southeastern Conference called for the approval of Proposition 42 and for the reaffirmation of all minimum academic standards previously set forth by the NCAA. Supporters of Proposition 42 argued that the original intent of Proposition 48 had been to aid students who failed to achieve a 2.0 GPA in the core curriculum requirements and aid those who had failed to meet the standardized tests requisites. However, the loophole
was primarily utilized by those not meeting the standardized tests standards.

William H. Powell of the University of Georgia argued at the convention, "the partial qualifier simply became the old 2.00-grade qualifier, which in the minds of many was not the true goal of Proposition 48" (NCAA Convention Proceedings, 1989). Supporters of Proposition 42 stated that eliminating the partial qualifier loophole and enforcing both the GPA and standardized tests requirements would represent a move towards sound academic policy.

Additional backers of Proposition 42, such as Joseph Boland III from Auburn University and L. Douglas Johnson from the University of Miami (Florida), stated that the adoption of the proposal would send a clear message to junior high and high school students regarding the importance of educational scholarship. Johnson, as well as Marshall M. Criser from the University of Florida, believed that, given the implementation of Proposition 42, athletic performance would no longer be a substitute for academic performance and ambiguous standards would cease to exist for high school students seeking athletic scholarships at any Division I institution (NCAA Convention Proceedings, 1989).

Furthermore, in discussing the Southeastern Conference's decision to no longer accept partial qualifiers, Boland stated "Proposition 42, if passed, will remove the pressure on all of our institutions to grant financial aid to partial qualifiers and in the long run should increase our retention rate and graduation rate" (NCAA
Convention Proceedings, 1989, p. 246). However, Boland, in his vehement recommendation for the approval of Proposition 42, made no mention of the potential recruiting problems schools refusing partial qualifiers would undoubtedly incur if the proposal was rejected.

Very little formal objection to Proposition 42 is evidenced in the 1989 Convention Proceedings. This is surprising considering the proposal was defeated on the first ballot 151-159 (NCAA Convention Proceedings, 1989). What objection is made mention of in the proceedings came from Douglas S. Hobbs of the University of California, Los Angeles. In the 1989 NCAA Convention Proceedings Hobbs states to the convention:

Noting that only three classes have been admitted under Proposition 48, the [Academic Requirements] committee believes that it is too early to tinker with 48 and would strongly urge that the Convention keep hands off at least until we have experienced four, preferably five years, of admitting classes. (p. 247)

Indeed, rule 48 had been in effect for less than three years when the vote for Proposition 42 came up. A leading argument of the opposition to Proposition 42 was: Why continue to change the entrance requirements when graduation figures for the first class admitted under the Rule 48 would not be available until 1991 at the earliest?

A second vote held later in the four day convention approved Proposition 42 163-154 (Sanoff & Witkin, 1989). What had seemed on the surface to be a mere tightening of academic standards for college athletes soon led to a firestorm of controversy and debate for
many in the NCAA.

Post-Convention

Shortly after the conclusion of the 1989 Convention critics of the newly adopted proposal began to openly voice their objections. Critics, such as Al Avant, athletic director of Chicago State University, and Jean Chandler-Williams, faculty representative of Clark College in Atlanta, viewed the rule change as biased toward minorities and low income persons. Chandler-Williams (1989), who viewed the NCAA's action rather harshly, told the Sporting News, "It's typical of the exploitation of minorities by the NCAA; I see that all the way down the line" (p. 23).

The vote of approval for Proposition 42 also drew extended criticism from a select group of Division I coaches. Georgetown basketball coach John Thompson, perhaps the most outspoken opponent, protested the adoption of Proposition 42 by walking off the court prior to the start of two of his team's conference games January 14, 1989, and January 18, 1989. Thompson and his supporters, who viewed Proposition 42 primarily as a civil rights issue, argued that the rules (the use of standardized test score minimums) set forth by Proposition 42, while ostensibly setting academic standards for all students, were really designed to keep poor black individuals and low income individuals from achieving a higher education (Kroll, 1989; Reed, 1989). Indeed this explanation for the creation of Proposition 42 is somewhat contrary to the explanation given above
involving the University of Georgia. This, too, will be addressed in the following chapter.

The week after his protest, Thompson and Georgetown administrators met with NCAA officials in Kansas City, Mo. to discuss Thompson’s concerns. At the meeting the officials assured Thompson they would recommend that the implementation of Proposition 42 be postponed until an ongoing study of Proposition 48 was completed in 1991 or 1992. Though the NCAA later played down the significance of the meeting, it was, at the time, clearly viewed as a victory for Proposition 42 opponents (Kroll, 1989).

Other coaches critical of Proposition 42 included Notre Dame basketball coach Digger Phelps and Temple University basketball coach John Chaney. Phelps believed Proposition 42 would unfairly penalize students who had not been properly prepared for college by their high schools. Phelps (1989) told Mike Douchant of The Sporting News, "I think it’s unfair for these kids, economically speaking; I know we wouldn’t have Keith Robinson (a partial qualifier under Proposition 48) today if this rule held true three years ago, because Keith Robinson couldn’t afford the University of Notre Dame" (p. 28). Chaney argued that the rule was an insane, inhumane piece of legislation that would only fill the streets with more of the disadvantaged (Sanoff & Witkin, 1989).

Although a number of coaches such as Phelps and Chaney were openly critical of Proposition 42, it was Thompson’s walkout that spurred national attention and turned NCAA rule making into an un-
paralleled public policy issue. Of course Thompson’s walkout intro-
duced additional questions which were secondary to the implementa-
tion of Rule 42. Included among these questions were: Should a
coach’s job description include governing their school’s admissions
offices and how much should any school’s athletic teams be repre-
sentative of the student body? (Douchant, 1989). These questions
are still pondered today.

However, Thompson’s actions did not pass without criticism.
Many in the press questioned whether Thompson and other opponents of
Proposition 42 were solely concerned with the welfare of underprivi-
leged players or whether their support owed more to the prospect of
losing star players (Roth, 1989). Many opponents of Proposition 42
indignantly echoed Thompson’s observation that 90% of the 600 or so
students who would be affected by Prop. 42 would be black and poor.
What Thompson and critics of Proposition 42 failed to note was that
the vast majority of students who would be filling the 600 vacated
slots would be black, and many of them poor as well (The New Repub-
lic, February 20, 1989).

Proposition 42 was debated, more or less, the entire year of
1989. Supporters of the rule were eager for its official implemen-
tation while opponents invariably wanted to eliminate or at least
postpone the enactment of the rule. This stage, once again, is
consistent with Blumer’s model whereby the implementation of an of-
ficial plan of action leads to new processes of collective defini-
tion. Blumer (1971) states that "the people who are in danger of
losing advantages strive to restrict the plan or bend its operation to new directions. Those who stand to benefit from the plan may seek to exploit new opportunities" (p. 30).

As the 1990 annual convention of the NCAA grew nearer, it became clear that Proposition 42 and its effective date of August 1, 1990, would be the major issues. The convention would have to decide whether to let Proposition 42 kick in for the 1990-1991 school year, modify the rule, or scrap it altogether and return to the less strict regime known as Proposition 48 (Kaplan & Springen, 1990).

What the 1990 convention in Dallas, Texas, did yield was a compromise. On the one hand, athletes not making the grade and achieving the ACT or SAT minimum scores would be eligible for financial aid based on need. However, those marginal students not making the grade would still be barred from athletic programs as freshmen and still would lose one year of playing eligibility (1990-1991 NCAA Manual; Time, 1990, January 22).

Though some issues would still be dealt with in the future, such as the use of standardized tests in determining athletic eligibility, the official implementation of Proposition 42 in August of 1990 represented, more or less, the collective definition of a social problem. As well, the implementation of Proposition 42 would most likely affect the creation, recognition, and definition of other social problem natural histories in the realm of college athletics.
Summary

This chapter has described the unfolding social processes which led to the creation of Proposition 42. Blumer's natural history model was again used to conceptualize the collective definition of problems which necessitated Proposition 42. The initial social claims, meaning those made prior to the collective definition of problems by the NCAA, were made by the University of Georgia.

The University of Georgia was the first institution to refuse the acceptance of partial qualifiers. By taking such action, Georgia became the first university to perceive, define, and address the recruiting disadvantages and educational inefficiency associated with stockpiling athletes. After mandating that conference schools refuse partial qualifiers, the SEC submitted Proposition 42 to the NCAA at the 1989 convention.

Supporters of Proposition 42 felt the proposal would strengthen the academic scholarship of potential college athletes. Opponents felt the proposal was biased against minorities and low-income individuals. As with Proposition 48, much of the debate also centered on the use of standardized tests as means of ascertaining academic aptitude.

The official implementation of Proposition 42 in August of 1990 did not so much represent the end of the social problem's natural history, as it did the beginning. In essence, by establishing Proposition 42 as official NCAA policy, the NCAA officially and collectively defined the need for recruiting controls and continued
educational integrity.

The next step in this case study is to address the maintenance of the two rules. Chapter IV seeks to explain the varying theoretical explanations for the use of the two proposals. In addition, Chapter IV will seek to decipher the dissimilar perceptions individuals held regarding what it was that Propositions 48 and 42 were attempting to achieve.
CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS

In the previous two chapters the organization of the social claims which prompted the creation of Proposition 48 and Proposition 42 was described. This required that the procedures, resources, practices, and accomplishments of a number of claims making groups be identified. Blumer's (1971) historical model served as an appropriate model for the examination of these social problems claims.

Having already described these various social claims, we seek, in this chapter, to discern the particulars regarding the creation and implementation of the two propositions using previously developed sociological and economic theory. For working out of a social constructionist framework, a sociologist must not only describe the processes whereby cultural products come to exist, but as well, understand the processes. As mentioned in Chapter I, two distinct theoretical perspectives will be used to analyze the two propositions: critical theory and cartel theory. The first half of this chapter will consist of an analysis of Propositions 48 and 42 using critical theory while the second half will deal specifically with an analysis using cartel theory.

Critical Perspectives

Critical theorists are concerned with the everyday situation
of people variously distributed in society and in relationships between power, social control and those who resist social control (Larson, 1986; Pfohl, 1994). Critical perspectives are useful to sociologists because historical standpoints are factored into individual relations to power (Pfohl, 1994). Hence, critical theorists interpret human action based upon individual relations to power and the historical and social contexts out of which actions occur (Wohl, 1975).

According to Calvin J. Larson, the analytical roots of critical theory are two-fold. Larson (1986) states that critical theory stems from "Hegelian idealism (e.g., the idea that the capacity to reason and theorize is a unique and creative human attribute)" and "the Marxian method of dissecting the contradictory elements and problems of capitalist society" (p. 172). The problems of a capitalist society of which Larson speaks are primarily the social consequences of a repetitive economic system: concentrated wealth and an increase in class consciousness as well as an increase in the misery of the majority.

However, critical perspectives are not utilized merely to expose the ills of a particular phenomenon, such as cut-throat recruiting or dumb jocks in collegiate athletics; rather, critical perspectives are used to develop theories which situate a phenomenon's origin within capitalism and reveal the phenomenon's impact on individual struggles and individual consciousness (Chorbajian, 1985). And, a critical analysis of sports should not, to borrow
from the work of Jeffrey Reiman (1995), be discerned as a conspiracy theory; meaning, proponents of rules 48 and 42 should not be regarded as conspirators devoted to creating racially biased eligibility standards. Reiman (1995), in his analysis of a systematically biased criminal justice system states:

It is the task of social analysis to find patterns in social behavior and then explain them. Naturally, when we find patterns, particularly patterns that serve some people's interests, we are inclined to think of these patterns as intended by those whose interest are served, as somehow brought into being because they serve those interests. (p. 5)

The reason conspiracy theory is brought up is that opponents of Proposition 48 and 42 believed the academic standards established by the rules were designed specifically to keep poor black and low income individuals from achieving a higher education. A conspiracy theory is not a viable explanation for Rules 48 and 42 for the same reasons it fails to explain a systematically biased criminal justice system. First, a conspiracy theory is practically impossible to prove. Second, the degree of secrecy required for such a theory is impossible in a society as candid as ours. Finally, conspiracy theories are not feasible because they do not correspond with individual action; meaning most people sincerely believe what they are doing is right (Reiman, 1995).

Historical Context

The factor that will be considered first, in this, the critical analysis of Propositions 48 and 42, is the social or historical context of intercollegiate sport in the 1980s. The social context is
merely one of several factors which led to the creation of the two proposals and should not be considered alone.

As stated in Chapter I, it took the NCAA a number of years to become the "generally recognized enforcer of amateurism" in college athletics and how once the NCAA secured this recognition in the mid-1950s it took a strong hold of the business of governing intercollegiate athletics. What is important to note is that from the 1970s onward, the revenue the NCAA brought to member schools and its bureaucracy increased considerably. This was notably due to the media's coverage of collegiate athletics. The intensified coverage of college sports not only precipitated television contracts and corporate sponsorship, it significantly increased the public's interest in NCAA sports (Pawde, 1989).

But even with the popularity of college athletics at an all-time high in the mid-1980s, there began to emerge significant criticism regarding the academic integrity of many NCAA institutions. As pointed out in Chapter II, academic requirements were typically left to individual institutions in the 1970s and early 1980s because the NCAA did not recognize a definite need for reform in the areas of academics or recruiting (Cramer, 1986). By the mid-1980s, however, social claims regarding the academic integrity of NCAA institutions were beginning to emerge from the public and certain interest groups within the NCAA.

To characterize, then, the historical and social context of the NCAA in the 1980s, it can be said that the association was ripe
for change. Mounting sentiment from the public and those inside the NCAA was that reforms were needed. No one could have predicted the degree to which the reforms would polarize NCAA members, athletic officials, and the public alike.

The Power of the NCAA

As the NCAA evolved, it gradually and continually commercialized. A Marxist organizational analysis of progressive sports suggests that over time athletic departments and the NCAA began to mirror corporate bureaucracies and other institutions of the like (Chorbajian, 1985). In essence, the social, psychological, physical, and cultural uses of intercollegiate sports were commercialized for capital gain (Young, 1986). Controlling the forces of production, such as players, scheduling, and media contracts, not only allowed the NCAA the power to set the conditions of labor, it further provided the NCAA the power to distribute profits (Chorbajian, 1985).

In order to share commercial and championship revenue (or profits), member schools were, and still are, obliged to follow the rules set forth by the NCAA. Failure to do so can result in the loss of membership privileges, the opportunity to play for championships, and significant revenue (NCAA Manual, 1995-1996). In view of the following, it is very easy to see that NCAA bureaucracy has a great deal of power when it comes to fashioning, implementing, enforcing, and reforming athletic policy.

One underlying question remains. Is recent policy development
by the NCAA in the area of freshmen recruiting because of (1) the NCAA's genuine concern for academic integrity, (2) the NCAA's need for revenue gain, or (3) a conspiracy designed to reduce black numbers in college sports? Revenue gain is one likely explanation and will be discussed more in depth when I define the NCAA as a cartel. And though a conspiracy to reduce black numbers in athletics may seem plausible by many of the propositions harshest critics, Reiman's (1995) comments would indicate such a conspiracy would be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to carry out. In fact, a genuine concern for academic integrity seems to be a likely explanation.

Proposition 48 was a step taken by the NCAA at addressing, (a) the maintenance of the regulatory structure, and (b) the importance of academic values as a standard for all students, including athletes (Hart-Nibbrig & Cottingham, 1986). However, Proposition 48 was a clumsy step towards character reform, for in the NCAA's haste to devise a solution, it failed to take into account that the rule would disproportionately affect minorities, particularly blacks. In this context, Proposition 48 should not be viewed as a conspiracy, but rather as an overtone of an inadequate and improperly researched solution to academic performance and character reform (Zingg, 1983). This overtone was one reason for the great deal of resistance to Proposition 48 and 42.
Resistance of Social Control

As indicated in Chapter I, for a social problem to be officially recognized, it must successfully be navigated through each stage of Blumer’s natural history model. Progressing from one stage to the next is problematic for the natural unfolding of the social problem, for in each stage there typically is resistance to the implementation of social control mechanisms associated with the putative condition (Blumer, 1971).

This leads to a point made earlier regarding the dissimilar perceptions the general public holds regarding the two rules. As discussed in Chapter II and Chapter III, there was much resistance to the two propositions. The resistance, however, was not against a move to mend the academic integrity of collegiate athletics. Rather, the resistance was against the manner in which this action was to be carried out. In essence, resistors of the two proposals were opposed to the overtone of the social control mechanisms, that overtone being a significant reduction of the number of black athletes in the NCAA.

It is difficult to say where the NCAA would be today had there not been any resistance to the two proposals. It is likely that reforms which have been instituted since Propositions 48 and 42, such as a recent ruling which permits a sliding scale for SAT scores based upon GPA, would have never been implemented. So though the opposition did not eliminate the rules completely, it did affect the formation of future freshmen eligibility requirements. In the end,
the rules sent a clear message to potential college athletes regarding the importance of academics.

Of course, character reform is merely one explanation or theory as to why the NCAA instituted Propositions 48 and 42. In the following section, an explanation which is more economic in nature will be given. Though in some ways this explanation parallels the political economy aspect of a structural Marxist approach, it is dissimilar in that this approach views the NCAA as a somewhat unstable cartel.

**Cartel Theory**

As defined in Chapter I, a cartel is: "an organization of individuals who collude, conspire and agree upon matters of joint interest" (Koch, 1983). Though there is the notion of collusion in this theory, it is collusion for the sake of economic, rather than racial, interests. According to Koch (1983), the NCAA is typically viewed as a cartel because it:

1. Sets the maximum price that can be paid for intercollegiate athletes;
2. Regulates the quantity of athletes that can be purchased (offered scholarships) in any given time period;
3. Regulates the duration and intensity of usage of those athletes;
4. On occasion fixes the price at which sports outputs can be sold;
5. Purports to control the property rights to activities such as the televising of intercollegiate football;
6. Periodically informs cartel members about transactions,
costs, market conditions, and sales techniques;

7. Occasionally pools and distributes portions of the cartel's profits; and

8. Polices the behavior of its members and levies penalties against those who are deemed to be in violation of cartel rules and regulations. (p. 361)

The NCAA's motivation for this operating mechanism is joint revenue maximization for its members. By suppressing and equalizing (rather than promoting) many kinds of competition among its members, such as competition for athletes, the NCAA can reduce costs and increase financial rewards (Koch, 1983; Lawrence, 1987; Stieber, 1991).

Maintenance of the cartel, then, becomes the fundamental goal for any cartel. Its structure will ultimately be the determining factor in the cartel's success or failure (Spar, 1994). The following facets of cartel structure should aid in understanding the implementation of Propositions 48 and 42.

**Number of Points of Initiative**

According to Koch (1983), "A point of initiative is (in cartel theory) a place where one can buy, sell, exchange, or otherwise utilize the property rights to a resource" (p. 363). However, if these purchases and/or sales of a good can be restricted, by either discipline or a monitoring device, then cartel success becomes more likely.

Historically, the NCAA has been rather lax in the disciplining efforts of its membership, that is if one focuses attention on input
restraints: rules respecting recruitment, payment (scholarships), and utilization of athletes. Given monetary and publicity incentives to win, institutions have tremendous pressure placed upon athletic departments to disobey NCAA policy respecting recruiting practices (Koch, 1983; Sperber, 1990; Stieber, 1991). This is particularly the case for recruiters and athletic heads in high revenue sports such as mens' football and basketball. Taking into account the size of the NCAA's membership and the infinite number of possibilities where rule violations might occur, it is no surprise that the NCAA has had a difficult time monitoring members.

The NCAA's inability to enforce input restraints does not however mean that it cannot control other points of initiative (Koch, 1983). In recent decades the NCAA has instituted rules which are easy to monitor. For example, the NCAA controls all rights to the televising of intercollegiate football games, controls all tournament and bowl revenue, and limits actual numbers of athletic contests. This is output containment (Lawrence, 1987). The NCAA's extreme concern over output containment in the 1970s and early 1980s demonstrated that it had: "relatively less concern for the ultimate effectiveness of its rules relating to the eligibility and use of athletes, and relatively more concern for its rules that relate to its own economic prosperity" (Koch, 1983, p. 364).

As the 1980s unfolded and social claims regarding the integrity of NCAA sports began to emerge, the NCAA once again turned its attention to input restraints. The NCAA was faced with the task of
devising eligibility rules which would limit or balance member competition, reduce costs, and at the same time bolster academic integrity. Proposition 48, a rule easily monitored, was the result. Though once the SEC conference adopted eligibility standards which were higher than the rest of the NCAA, competition between schools once again became unbalanced. While NCAA schools were permitted under Proposition 48 to admit partial qualifiers, schools from the Southeastern Conference could not. Therefore, Proposition 42's elimination of the partial qualifier loophole in 1990 was the NCAA's attempt to rebalance the recruiting playing field.

Similarity of Interest

Another facet of cartel behavior which helps to explain the implementation of the two propositions is similarity of interest of cartel members. A typical reason why cartels disintegrate is dissimilarity of interest (Koch, 1983). Limiting competition among members prevents the dissimilarity between members. For example, Northwestern University was the only Big Ten Conference school to vote in favor of Proposition 42 (NCAA Convention Proceedings, 1989). The nine other universities in the Big Ten voted against the measure. The reason for this was that Northwestern's entrance requirements for student-athletes were (and still are) well above the standards set by the NCAA and the other nine Big Ten schools (Sperber, 1990). In order for Northwestern to compete with the other NCAA schools for blue-chip athletes, it was essential for the school to
vote for the elimination of the partial qualifier rule. Likewise, additional schools typically losing athletes to big-time schools with mediocre admissions standards voted in favor of the proposal (Sperber, 1990).

The fact of the matter is, if a school is not able to recruit athletes who will win games (particularly football and basketball games), the school will not receive media exposure and the revenue associated with the exposure. Given the millions of dollars at stake in television revenue, there is little question why there was such disagreement over a single eligibility rule.

The divergence in self-interest between institutions classified as big-time and those that are not has in the past provoked the NCAA into subdividing its membership into separate divisions, thereby allowing each division autonomy to make its own rules without reference to the others. For example, freshmen academic requirements at a Division II institution are not as rigid as those at a Division I institution (NCAA Manual, 1995-96). Other recent moves by the NCAA to close the gap between institutions with dissimilar interests include: letting athletic directors negotiate guarantees (payments to visiting teams of fees and/or percentages of the gate), letting institutions with a number of athletic programs compete in multiple divisions, and letting conferences realign their memberships (Koch, 1983; Sperber, 1990).
Summary

This chapter has provided two distinct theoretical explanations as to the creation and implementation of Propositions 48 and 42. The theories have also helped to identify contexts in which similar types of rule creation might occur.

The critical analysis of the two rules indicated that several factors played a part in their creation. Social claims indicating the need for the toughening of academic requirements and the NCAA's desire to maintain the regulatory structure are just two examples.

In addition to the support for the two proposals, there was a great deal of resistance, which has since shaped a great deal of NCAA policy. Resistance, in a critical context, consisted of those groups who believed the academic requirements were too high and those who thought the standards were specifically designed to reduce black numbers in collegiate athletics.

Examining the NCAA as a reasonably effective, yet somewhat unstable, cartel was a second explanation for the creation of Propositions 48 and 42. As mentioned, a cartel seeks to increase profits by limiting competition among member institutions. Limiting competition (placing restrictions on recruiting practices) not only reduces costs, it increases revenue for its membership (Lawrence, 1987). Furthermore, cartel theory has shown that the NCAA seeks to maintain the similarity of interest between schools. This is accomplished by creating more input restraints, subdividing divisions, and realigning conferences.
These are merely two explanations for the creation of two social control mechanisms which the NCAA has had its members abide by. Though other explanations may take different approaches, these two theories have been appropriate, because they have factored into each analysis the evaluation of the initial social problems claims.

The final chapter will summarize what this thesis has accomplished and highlight its implications. Additional issues which will be addressed include recent developments in freshmen eligibility requirements and possible ideas for future research.
CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

General Summary

On page one of this thesis it was stated that "this study seeks to not only describe and explain the creation process of two NCAA freshmen athletic eligibility rules, but additionally address questions concerning why, and for whose interests, the rules were created. This aim has been accomplished.

Chapter I illustrated, as concisely as possible, the history of intercollegiate athletics and the National Collegiate Athletic Association. The history demonstrated how the NCAA established control over college athletics and became the predominant regulator and administrator of social control. The history also provided a context from which to understand the NCAA's authority to function as a rule creating body. Chapter I, as well, explored three issues in the sociology of sport which relate specifically to the creation of Proposition 48 and Proposition 42. These issues included sport and education, sport and racial discrimination, and the nature of standardized achievement tests.

Chapters II and III provided a contextually natured examination of the social claims which ushered in the two proposals. Blumer's (1971) natural history model was utilized to examine the emergence of the claims, their legitimation in social contexts, how they
were shaped in discussion, how they came to be addressed in official policy, and how they were reconstituted in the form of official planned action (social control). These two chapters also provided discussions concerning the key points of contention between the claims makers and the opposition and/or resistance.

Chapter IV utilized previously developed sociological and economic theory to interpret the NCAA's use of Propositions 48 and 42 as social control policy. The critical analysis took into account such factors as historical context, power, and resistance of social control in determining that the initial implementation of Proposition 48 was a result of the NCAA's concern for academic integrity and structural reform. It was further pointed out that the implementation of the two rules should not be distinguished as a conspiracy designed to eliminate blacks from collegiate athletics.

An analysis using cartel theory revealed that the NCAA's overall goal of generating revenue for its bureaucracy and its members was the predominant reason for the creation of rules 48 and 42. Increasing the standards that students must attain to participate in athletics not only evened the competition between contending schools, it increased the revenue all NCAA members brought in.

Implications

The NCAA traditionally has served a wide range of functions. As history unfolds and the divergence between its members continues to grow, it will be interesting to see which functions the NCAA
gives the greatest amount of attention. As was the case with this study, the NCAA did not address academic concerns until the integrity of the NCAA was at stake. Despite public statements regarding its concern for academics and its philosophy of amateurism, it has become clear that the NCAA places "its own economic security, and that of its membership, above any concern that it might have for the ideals which led to its founding" (Koch, 1983, p. 373).

It is improbable that the demise of the NCAA will be caused by any of the current issues it faces. Propositions 48 and 42 are only two of numerous rules the NCAA has implemented which have caused controversy. Furthermore, both Koch (1983) and Stieber (1991) indicate, there is a strong rationale for a national organization that handles intercollegiate athletics. Hence, it seems likely that the NCAA will continue to make structural changes when needed, though in making changes, the NCAA will consistently be aware of its own economic motives.

What implications did the implementation of two proposals, specifically rule 42, which required the use of the SAT or ACT score for athletic eligibility, pose to students? Though many of the opponents of the proposals argued that the rules would increase cheating, increase discrimination, and close the door on potential student-athletes, the simple fact of the matter was that athletes, black and white, had to concentrate more on academics and less on athletics (Johnson & Ashe, 1989). This included eliminating the "cynicism that specifically de-emphasizes education and views ath-
letic stardom as a worthy goal in and of itself" (Johnson & Ashe, 1989, p. 140).

Recent Developments

Today, academic requirements take up a rather large chunk of the NCAA manual. The 1994-95 NCAA manual dedicated ten pages alone to freshmen eligibility requirements. Rules are revised frequently. For example, in 1990 the NCAA raised the minimum ACT score that a potential student-athlete must attain from 15 to 18. Two years later the NCAA raised the number of core academic courses a student must complete in high school from 11 to 13 (NCAA Manual, 1994-95; NCAA Manual, 1990-91).

One rule that has received praise from many, especially those who had opposed Propositions 48 and 42, was the NCAA's creation of an Initial-Eligibility Index in 1992. A major concern of those who had opposed rule 42 was that many students having superior GPAs in high school were prohibited from participating in college athletics because they failed to attain the requisite score on one of the standardized tests. The Initial-Eligibility Index provided a sliding scale whereby the higher a student's GPA, the lower a score needed on the SAT or ACT test (NCAA Manual, 1994-95). And though the quandary of using standardized tests as predictors of academic success still remains, a rule has been created that does not weigh an entire admissions decision on a single SAT or ACT score.

Other recent developments include the Reports of the Knight
Foundation by the Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. In October of 1989 John S. and James L. Knight created the commission with the hopes of proposing a reform agenda for college sports. After nearly three years of research and over three million dollars spent, the commission issued three reports to the NCAA in March of 1991, 1992, and 1993. The reports proposed a new model for college athletics, concentrating specifically on academic and financial integrity. And though the commission had no formal authority, nearly two-thirds of its specific recommendations had been endorsed by the NCAA by 1993 (Knight Foundation, 1991-93).

Future Research

This research has been concerned with the social construction of social problems and the fashioning of social control mechanisms. Given that rule creating processes are almost always a result of bargaining on the part of claims makers and those who resist social control, and given the fact that rules and/or laws factor into the daily operations of many associations, governments, unions, clubs, etc., the opportunities for research on rule creation are innumerable.

With regard to the NCAA, very little theoretical research has been conducted concerning the creation of rules by the association. Indeed, if more studies of this nature were conducted, the academic community and the public would be more cognizant as to how and why the NCAA operates as it does.
In addition, I believe sports sociologists should be more open to the use of the constructionist perspective and the analysis of claims making activities. Indeed, few constructionist studies appear in the literature on the sociology of sport. Potential areas of study might include inquiries into the countless rules and regulations in the NCAA manual, studies of professional sports association policies (such as free agency and salary caps), or even an examination of the rules associated with community sports leagues.

Additional areas of study relating to the NCAA might possibly include the role of institutional racism and patriarchy in the association’s creation of rules. Though this thesis has ruled out the notion of a conspiracy with regard to the creation of rules 48 and 42, it has, however, created ample opportunity for study with respect to institutionalized action. The embarkment of such studies might help sociologists to better understand the systematic insensitivity the NCAA has typically shown to minorities and women when it comes to developing rules and policies.

To fully understand the impact sports has on our country and on our lives, it is important that we understand, as completely as possible, all aspects of sports issues, including rule creating processes in sports. Hopefully this thesis has contributed to the literature and breadth of the sociology of sport. In the future, the appropriate use of the constructionist perspective may aid sociologists in their evaluation of sports issues and the claims makers who perpetuate social change.
BIBLIOGRAPHY


