Remediating Discrimination Against African American Females at the Intersection of Title IX and Title VI

Alfred Dennis Mathewson

University of New Mexico

Follow this and additional works at: http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/law_facultyscholarship

Part of the Law Commons

Recommended Citation
Alfred D. Mathewson, Remediating Discrimination Against African American Females at the Intersection of Title IX and Title VI, 2 Wake Forest Journal of Law & Policy 295 (2012).

Available at: http://digitalrepository.unm.edu/law_facultyscholarship/379

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the School of Law at UNM Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in Faculty Scholarship by an authorized administrator of UNM Digital Repository. For more information, please contact disc@unm.edu.
REMEDIATING DISCRIMINATION AGAINST AFRICAN AMERICAN FEMALE ATHLETES AT THE INTERSECTION OF TITLE IX AND TITLE VI

ALFRED DENNIS MATHEWSON†

INTRODUCTION

In Black Women, Gender Equity and the Function at the Junction ("Function at the Junction"),1 I visited the intersection of race and gender in examining the impact of Title IX on black female athletes. I applied Professor Kimberle Crenshaw’s single-axis critique of anti-discrimination laws2 and Professor Angela Harris’s critique of essentialism3 to African American females in college athletics. Using the works of both to explore the intersection of the forces of race and gender discrimination against black female athletes, I asked whether this intersection concerned the existence of a unique type of discrimination that specifically targeted African American females or the combination of race and gender discrimination acting simultaneously on African American female

† © 2012. Henry Weihofen Professor of Law and Acting Director, Africana Studies Program, University of New Mexico.


2. Kimberle Crenshaw, Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics, 1989 U. CHI. LEGAL F. 139, 139 (1989). Professor Crenshaw advances the concept of “intersectionality” in that article and is largely acknowledged as the first, or one of the first, to use the term. See Karla Mari McKanders, The Unspoken Voices of Indigenous Women in Immigration Raids, 14 J. GENDER RACE & JUST. 1, 3 n.8 (2010). “Intersectionality” maintains “that gender and race are not independent analytic categories that can simply be added together. Instead, . . . [r]ace is ‘gendered’ and gender is ‘racialized,’ so that race and gender fuse to create unique experiences and opportunities for all groups—not just women of color.” Irene Browne & Joya Misra, The Intersection of Gender and Race in the Labor Market, 29 ANN. REV. SOC. 487, 487–88 (2003) (citations omitted).

athletes. I argued that Title IX benefitted white female athletes more than it did African American females. ¹ The problem was that Title IX was designed to target discrimination and promote equality along the single-axis of gender. ⁵ Equal access remedies were premised on the notion that interest and athletic ability were equally distributed between genders. ⁶ There was no corresponding premise about even distribution across genders within racial groups. ⁷ As a consequence, educational institutions could comply under Title IX simply by providing more opportunities for white women. ⁸ I described the problem but only proposed some theoretical fixes. ⁹

Professor Tonya Evans pointed out this shortcoming in her article, *In the Title IX Race Toward Gender Equity, the Black Female Athlete Is Left to Finish Last: The Lack of Access for the "Invisible Woman,"* ¹⁰ and she called for the development of specific policy or regulatory solutions. ¹¹ In this paper, I hope to return to the arguments I made in *Function at the Junction* and respond to Professor Evans. ¹²

---

5. *Id.* at 248.
6. *Id.* at 260.
7. *Id.* at 260–61.
8. *Id.* at 260.
9. *Id.* at 258–65 (proposing the use of sports policy rather than legal rules, tort principles rather than equality principles, a mass tort approach, and customized sport-specific rules).
11. *Id.* at 128.
12. Professor Evans suggests that a fix was more likely to be developed by African American female scholars who were in a better position to explain the experiences of African American female athletes. *Id.* at 108; see also Deborah L. Brake & Verna L. Williams, *The Heart of the Game: Putting Race and Gender Equity at the Center of Title IX,* ⁷ VA. SPORTS & ENT. L.J. 199, 202–06 (2008) (describing the narrative of Darnellia Russell to demonstrate athletic inequity viewed from the perspective of the African American female). After all, I acknowledged that I did not claim to “get it.” I have returned to the subject because of my continuing interest in equality for African Americans. I am actually interested in equality for all, and I do believe that one’s experiences can limit one’s ability to fathom inequality experienced by others. I can trace my interest in equality for African American females to an incident in ninth grade at the white high school that I attended under a Freedom of Choice Plan. When no black girl made the cheerleading squad, the black players on the football team staged a boycott of football and classes, until the school added a black girl. It was understood that we were in this together.
In Part I, I present a brief treatment of intersectionality in anti-discrimination law focusing on the distinction between cause of action and remedy. Harm caused by gender or racial discrimination may give rise to causes of action based on equal protection principles. In the case of a claim based on race or gender, there is no question of the existence of a cause of action under existing anti-discrimination laws; the difficulty, however, may primarily be one of proof. In the case of a claim based on a combination of race and gender discrimination or a unique form of discrimination specifically against African American females, there is a question as to whether a cause of action exists under current single-axis-based anti-discrimination laws. Both the combined forms and a unique form of discrimination against African American females lack a similarly situated class with which to show inequality under existing anti-discrimination norms. The combination or unique form of discrimination may be actionable, just on other grounds. The harm resulting therefrom still presents equality considerations even if existing law would not recognize a basis for liability. Nevertheless, the harm suffered or incurred by African American women resulting from the simultaneous effect or a unique form may be identical and worthy of redress. Although I have embraced the existence of a unique force of discrimination directed toward African American females, this conclusion is irrelevant to the basic premise of this Article. In this paper, I focus primarily on the issue of remedy rather than cause of action.

13. Mathewson, supra note 1, at 239.
14. Id.
16. See id. at 817 (suggesting mass tort theories as grounds for action).
17. Id. at 828–29.
18. I concede that a unique force or form of discrimination directed at African American females is conceptually possible, particularly under the "taste for discrimination" approach in law and economics. See Gary S. Becker, The Economics of Discrimination 14–17 (2d ed. 1971) (outlining the analytical framework for the "taste of discrimination" and, within that framework, the social and physical distance in addition to socioeconomic status between individuals and groups that can cause fear to rise within the majority and prejudice to increase against the minority). A unique force is more difficult under the institutionalized racism of critical race theory.
19. See Paul E. McGreal, Equal Protection and Intersectionality—A Reply to Professor Yarbrough, 38 S. Tex. L. Rev. 1167, 1173 (1997) (arguing alternatively that "discussions on
In Part II, I accordingly go further and argue that the primary intersectionality problem presented by Title IX is one of remedy. I conclude that the differences in the remedial effects of Title IX result, in part, from unremedied racial discrimination, a conclusion that begins with Professor Jerome Dees's argument that Brown v. Board of Education and anti-discrimination laws based on the single-axis of race are more responsible for the gains of African American female athletes in intercollegiate athletics. However, I will show that the gains are due to the application of both gender- and race-based anti-discrimination laws. The problem is not one of a single-axis cause of action, but rather one of single-axis remedies. Anti-discrimination laws currently do not take into account the confluence of race and gender when fashioning a remedy for either type of discrimination. Consequently, I will argue that Title IX, in remediating gender discrimination, does not mitigate the effect of racial discrimination against African American females, creating an imbalance in gains between African American and white female athletes. I focus on the flaws in Title IX because Title VI, the race-based counterpart on which it was patterned, has not been used as extensively to target racial inequality in athletics.

Finally, in Part III, I offer a policy solution invoking both gender- and race-based anti-discrimination laws. Accordingly, I advocate for the promulgation of regulations or a policy statement pursuant to Title VI and Title IX to specifically address the unremedied racial discrimination against African American female athletes under Title IX and the unmitigated gender discrimination under Title VI. I draw upon the work of Professor

intersectional issues and the Equal Protection Clause are best focused on the threshold question of on which basis the government action discriminates).


23. It is conceptually possible to focus on Title IX alone using essentialist critiques in shaping a remedy. See Evans, supra note 10, at 117 ("Title IX will never achieve its ultimate goal of gender equality if it does not articulate policies specifically geared to address the unique form of discrimination experienced by black women."). However, race-based anti-discrimination laws have received too little attention in examining the inequities for African American female athletes. See id. at 107 ("[D]espite the importance of sport to the larger society and the existence of discrimination therein, 'sports has historically not been the subject of serious academic study.' "). The harm is caused by a combination of both race and gender discrimination. Mathewson, supra note 1, at 243.
Derek Black in *The Mysteriously Reappearing Cause of Action: The Court’s Expanded Concept of Intentional Gender and Race Discrimination in Federally Funded Programs* to argue that the Department of Education has the authority under the race- and gender-based anti-discrimination statutes, Title VI and Title IX, to make specific findings of racial discrimination against African American female athletes in educational institutions and to prescribe appropriate remedies. Moreover, the Department should specifically target middle school and high school athletics programs. The basis for this intervention is equity in the public funding of athletic programs.

I primarily focus on African American females in this paper, although I acknowledge that the analyses and principles presented here may be applicable to women of color in general or women in other specific racial or ethnic groups. It is not my intent to exclude others—it is my intent to assure that African Americans are explicitly included in discussions of diversity. As in *Function at the Junction*, I do not deal with intersectionality issues regarding the imposition of the burden of funding remedies for Title IX on African American males who participate in football and basketball.

I. THE INTERSECTIONALITY PROBLEM

Professor Crenshaw presented the classic intersectionality issues in her argument that conventional anti-discrimination law employs a single-axis model that prohibits discrimination on the basis of race or gender, separately, but does not prohibit

---


discrimination based on race and gender acting in concert. The conundrum does not lie in the language of the prescribed rules so much as it does in the acceptable forms of proof that the prohibited discrimination has in fact occurred. Anti-discrimination principles flow from notions of equality such that discrimination requires the existence of an inequality. A plaintiff must prove that she was treated unequally, with a similar comparison group. A black woman who has been discriminated against has difficulty proving the requisite inequality. It may be difficult to prove that she was discriminated against on the basis of race, because blacks have not suffered as a group since black men do not share the injury. Similarly, she may have faced obstacles proving that she was discriminated against on the basis of gender because women as a group have not suffered since white women do not share the injury.

It is problematic that analyses of the intersectionality of race and gender within the confines of anti-discrimination statutes tend to obscure the distinction between the cause of action and the remedy. While Professor Crenshaw critiques the limitations on causes of action, Professor Harris’s analysis of the theoretical limits of essentiality is perhaps more relevant to the question of remedy. The number of elements in Professor Harris’s linear equation goes beyond race and gender and may include characteristics such as socioeconomic class and sexuality, among others. Her essentialism critique presents a complex function, factoring together race, gender, and sexuality, to show how the experiences of African American women create identity. Her analysis opens the door to the exploration of remedies.

The African American female may not have a cause of action, not because an injury is nonexistent, but because the

---

28. Crenshaw, supra note 2, at 149.
29. See McGreal, supra note 19. This is true whether a plaintiff tries to show disparate impact or disparate treatment.
30. Crenshaw, supra note 2, at 150–51.
31. Id.
32. Id. at 151–52.
33. Id. at 149–51.
34. Id. at 140.
35. Harris, supra note 3.
36. Id. at 585.
37. Id. at 588.
action or force that caused the injury, perhaps, coupled with intent, is not prohibited by the anti-discrimination statute. If, however, she can show the force that caused her injury was race or gender discrimination, then she may prove a claim for race or gender discrimination, or both, but she has no claim for harm directed at her because of her race and gender. There is some support in the case law for the proposition that African American females may qualify as a protected class who encounter discrimination as members of two protected groups and who may thereby incur harm not incurred by or greater than that incurred by other members of either protected group. However, the remedy is limited to those flowing from specific acts of discrimination.

Take the case of Don Imus and the Rutgers University Women’s Basketball Team. In his morning radio show on CBS in April 2007, discussing the recently concluded NCAA Women’s Basketball Championship, Imus referred to the women on the Rutgers team as “nappy-headed ho’s.” While the team was comprised of eight black women and two white women, the comment referred only to the black team members. There was a huge public outcry, causing CBS to terminate Imus’s contract and subsequently settle his wrongful termination claim. However, what did Imus do that was wrong? Was he racist? Was he sexist? Was he racist and sexist? A case could have been made for both. The term “nappy-headed” has a history as a derogatory term referring to African Americans, male and female, and the term “ho’s” has a derogatory connotation against women.
incident presents a classic example of a unique force of discrimination against African American females. Imus almost certainly used the term not to refer to blacks or women in general, but specifically, a class of African American women. The term would not be understood to apply to the white players on the team. One African American player filed a lawsuit against Imus for defamation, but it was dropped shortly after it was filed.46 She faced substantial obstacles.47

The fact that his humor targeted the African American players on the team does not necessarily mean that a unique form of discrimination was brought against them as a class. Rather, it may show that African American females may be affected uniquely by two known forms of discrimination. In analyses of essentialism, scholars have argued that people are affected differently because of their different experiences and circumstances.48 Even the concept of African American female athletes presents essentialism issues. It is possible that the African American women on the team were affected differently. This conundrum is discussed in treatments of “sex-plus” analyses of intersectionality.49

In the sex-plus line of cases, a woman may establish a Title VII claim by showing discrimination against a subclass of women.50 In these cases, typically, the employer discriminated against women who shared some other particular characteristic.51

47. As reprehensible as Imus’s conduct was, it is questionable whether he violated any federal anti-discrimination statutes. The players were neither employees covered by Title VII, nor students of his in an educational program covered by Title IX, nor did he deny them contracts.
48. See Harris, supra note 3, at 585.
49. See Hofstein, supra note 41, at 389–403.
50. See id. at 391.
Jeffries v. Harris County Community Action Association, for example, the employer argued that the plus-characteristics necessarily were limited to those concerning some constitutionally protected right. The majority rejected that argument on the grounds that it was inconceivable that Congress crafted a statute that protected subgroups of women but not the subgroup of African American women. However, race was to be a plus factor rather than a separate cause of action. Congress has been content to allow the courts to grapple with intersectionality but has not changed the statutory language of anti-discrimination laws to explicitly address the issue.

For example, Harris v. Portland is a case in which the court was presented with several claims by an African American female, including one based on racial discrimination, one based on gender discrimination, and one based on combinations of discrimination on the basis of gender, race, and sexual orientation. In 2005, Renee Portland, then head coach of the Penn State women’s basketball program, declined to renew the scholarship of Jennifer Harris. Coach Portland had been controversial for her announced stance of not having lesbians play for her. The alleged basis for the non-renewal of the scholarship was that Coach Portland believed that Ms. Harris was a lesbian, in part based on her off-court appearance. Ms. Harris wore baggy jeans and cornrows. The claim for racial discrimination was based on a pattern of renewal for white players and non-renewal for African American players. In fact, Coach Portland did not renew the scholarships of the two other African American players on the team in 2005 either, but renewed the scholarships of all the

53. Id. at 1034.
54. Id.
55. See Hofstein, supra note 41, at 389–90.
56. See id. at 399–400 (stating that the absence of a clear expression by Congress has failed to provide the courts with guidance on Title VII).
58. Id. at 24.
60. Id. at 350.
61. First Amended Complaint, supra note 57, at 1–2.
white players.\textsuperscript{62} The terms of the settlement were not disclosed, but the media coverage of the case focused only on the sexual orientation claim.\textsuperscript{63} Although she asserted a claim for racial discrimination that existed independently of the sexual orientation claim, the crux of her lawsuit was based on the combined effect.\textsuperscript{64} She claimed to have incurred harm from discrimination on race and gender combined with discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation.\textsuperscript{65} The remediation of one did not make her whole. Her damages were measured only by the harm from discrimination based on sexual orientation.\textsuperscript{66} The damages were therefore insufficient to cover the injury she incurred from racial discrimination.

The case presents a classic example of the essentialism critique of anti-discrimination laws. In \textit{Harris}, racial and sexual orientation discrimination were invariably intertwined. It was not clear that she was a lesbian. It was her appearance as a black woman that gave rise to the inference. Coach Portland may have discriminated against her because she appeared to be a lesbian, an inference drawn from notions of how heterosexual black women should dress. This was also a factor in the Imus incident, as he distinguished the women on the Rutgers team from the women on the victorious Tennessee team.\textsuperscript{67} The law did not provide a cause of action for the type of discrimination directed at her because she was a black woman who was stereotyped as a lesbian.

There is very little case law, however, dealing with intersectionality issues in athletics.\textsuperscript{68} Notwithstanding the dearth of case law, those issues have received significant attention in legal scholarship.\textsuperscript{69} Professor Deborah Brake has paid increasing

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{62} \textit{Id.} at 24.
\item \textsuperscript{63} The sexual orientation claim was alleged in connection with race and gender discrimination. Newhall \& Buzuvis, \textit{supra} note 59, at 346.
\item \textsuperscript{64} \textit{See} First Amended Complaint, \textit{supra} note 57, at 1–4.
\item \textsuperscript{65} \textit{Id.} at 2–3.
\item \textsuperscript{66} \textit{But cf. id.} at 35 (alleging that the differential treatment was motivated by sexual orientation).
\item \textsuperscript{67} \textit{See} Brake \& Williams, \textit{supra} note 12, at 209–10.
\item \textsuperscript{68} \textit{See} Evans, \textit{supra} note 10, at 127.
\end{itemize}
attention to intersectionality in her works on Title IX. Her scholarship has raised awareness of this issue among lawyers, athletes, sports policymakers, and the public. Existing policy and legal approaches to addressing discrimination against African American female athletes follow the race or gender single-axis approach. For example, the Women’s Sports Foundation, in advocating policies to increase opportunities for black women and other women of color, acknowledges that discrimination on the basis of race also affects opportunities for black men and other men of color. The Foundation’s report, however, does encompass multiple barriers adversely affecting opportunities for women of color. The scope of most analyses in the legal literature on African American female athletes is limited to Title IX. Many references to Title VI note that Title IX was patterned after it.

73. See LACPICH, supra note 72, at 3-5.
74. See, e.g., Brake & Williams, supra note 12, at 200-02; Evans, supra note 6; George, supra note 69, at 647-50; Mathewson, supra note 1, at 239-42; Olson, supra note 69; Yarbrough, supra note 69, at 232-34.
75. 42 U.S.C. § 2000d (2006) (“No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.”).
76. See Deborah Brake & Elizabeth Catlin, The Path of Most Resistance: The Long Road Toward Gender Equity in Intercollegiate Athletics, 3 DUKE J. GENDER L. & POL’Y 51, 53 (1996); Melody Harris, Hitting 'Em Where It Hurts: Using Title IX Litigation to Bring Gender Equity to Athletics, 72 DENV. U. L. REV. 57, 91-92 (1994); see also Mercer v. Duke Univ., 50 Fed. Appx 643 (4th Cir. 2002) (declining to award punitive damages under Title IX following a Supreme Court interpretation of Title VI).
II. THE REMEDY PROBLEM

*Harris v. Portland* leads ineluctably to the conclusion that the intersectionality problem in anti-discrimination laws is primarily one of remedy.\(^77\) Let us begin with Professor Jerome Dees's observation. He recognized that race- and gender-based anti-discrimination laws have played a role in bringing about gains for African American females in intercollegiate athletics.\(^78\) He examined the results and concluded that the remedies provided under one have been more instrumental in those gains than the other.\(^79\) According to Dees, *Brown v. Board of Education*\(^80\) and its progeny, such as Title VI,\(^81\) have been more beneficial to increasing opportunities for black women athletes than Title IX.\(^82\) The importance of his observation is the idea that the two forces of discrimination may have a differential impact. His observation that race is more important draws support from critical race theory\(^83\) and evaluates the magnitude of the two forces in the intersection.\(^84\)

The gains were more participation opportunities in intercollegiate athletics for African American females.\(^85\) How did *Brown* bring those gains about? It did so because it called for the integration of African Americans into historically white colleges and universities ("HWCU").\(^86\) Charlayne Hunter Gault entered the University of Georgia in 1961, eleven years before the enactment of Title IX, because *Brown* opened the door.\(^87\) The numbers of African American females entering HWCU increased thereafter.\(^88\) How did Title IX contribute to the gains in athletic participation

\(^77\) See Newhall & Buzuvis, *supra* note 59, at 361.

\(^78\) Dees, *supra* note 20, at 636–37.

\(^79\) Id.


\(^82\) Dees, *supra* note 20, at 640–41.


\(^84\) Dees, *supra* note 20, at 636–37.

\(^85\) Id.

\(^86\) Id.


\(^88\) Id.
opportunities? HWCUs not only increased the student slots available to women,\textsuperscript{89} but also they increased the number of athletic participation opportunities for women.\textsuperscript{90} That meant more basketball team slots and more track and field slots, sports in which African American women had historically participated.\textsuperscript{91} It also meant the addition of opportunities in the “emerging” or country club sports\textsuperscript{92} in which African American females have had substantially less access and therefore, interest. But for \textit{Brown}, African American women would not have been able to take advantage of those opportunities. But for Title IX, those additional participation opportunities in basketball and track would not have been available. Professor Dees, however, opines that without \textit{Brown} the additional Title IX opportunities would have gone almost exclusively to white women.\textsuperscript{93} Moreover, the increase in significant opportunities in the emerging sports was not equally available to African American women in any case.\textsuperscript{94} His analysis is appealing on some level, but it begs the question of whether the additional participation opportunities in basketball and track were produced by \textit{Brown} or Title IX, a proverbial which-came-first conundrum.

Yet, Professor Dees’s analysis is insightful not for his conclusion that race-based anti-discrimination laws have been more effective,\textsuperscript{95} but instead for the implicit suggestion that single-axis-based anti-discrimination remedies are inadequate to address the injuries incurred by African American female athletes. This is

\textsuperscript{89} B. Glenn George, \textit{Forfeit: Opportunity, Choice, and Discrimination Theory Under Title IX}, \textit{22 Yale J.L. \\ \\ & Feminism} 1, 2 (2010).

\textsuperscript{90} \textit{Id.}

\textsuperscript{91} See Brake, supra note 70, at 113–14; \textit{Race and Sport}, supra note 72, at 2–3.

\textsuperscript{92} Dees, supra note 20, at 637, 637 nn.91–92 (defining “emerging” or “county club” sports as archery, badminton, equestrian, rugby, squash, synchronized swimming, team handball, rowing, and bowling); A. Jerome Dees, \textit{Do the Right Thing: A Search for an Equitable Application of Title IX in Historically Black Colleges and University Athletics}, \textit{33 Cap. U. L. Rev.} 219, 265–66 (2004) (explaining that the moniker “county club sports” comes from their availability in more affluent communities, where families have the economic resources to support these sports) [hereinafter \textit{Do the Right Thing}]; Evans, supra note 10, at 107; see Mathewson, supra note 1, at 257; John Cheslock, \textit{Who’s Playing College Sports? Money, Race and Gender} 51 (2008), http://www.womenssportsfoundation.org/home/research/articles-and-reports/school-and-colleges/money-race-and-gender (stating that after the initial expansion of opportunities in existing sports for women, colleges and universities added sports which were less diverse or predominantly white).

\textsuperscript{93} Dees, supra note 20, at 636, 638; see \textit{Do the Right Thing}, supra note 92, at 265.

\textsuperscript{94} Dees, supra note 20, at 640–41.

\textsuperscript{95} \textit{Id.} at 638.
the very problem demonstrated in *Harris v. Portland*. Both axes must be used together to render African American females whole. If he is correct that *Brown* has been more instrumental, his analysis suggests that a stronger dosage of remedial measures to address racial discrimination against African American females would result in greater gains.

The conclusion that anti-discrimination laws based on race and gender alone or applied in concert are inadequate to provide full redress to African American females can be demonstrated in the interplay of the history of the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Amendments. The former, ratified in 1870, prohibits the denial of voting rights based on race. At the time of ratification only men had the right to vote, so its impact on the freed slaves was that only the freed men obtained the right to vote. Neither Harriet Tubman, for all her valor, nor Sojourner Truth, for all her eloquent orations, acquired the right to vote pursuant to the Fifteenth Amendment. It is a clear example of a race-based anti-discrimination law with an apparently universal remedy that did not provide relief for African American females.

The latter amendment, ratified in 1920, prohibits the denial of voting rights based on sex. At the time of its ratification, however, America was in the midst of Jim Crow laws such as whites-only primaries and literacy test requirements that disenfranchised African Americans notwithstanding the Fifteenth Amendment. The vast majority of African American females, thus, did not acquire the right to vote as white women did in 1920. Again, a single-axis-based anti-discrimination law with an apparent universal remedy was inadequate to address the plight of

---

99. Id.
100. U.S. CONST. amend. XV, § 1.
102. See id.
African American females. In both instances, it was the remedy rather than the anti-discrimination principle that was inadequate. Professor Ian Ayres’s fair driving empirical study of racial discrimination in retail car sale transactions provides another example. He concluded that African Americans and women faced discrimination in such transactions. In his study, he found that white males paid the lowest prices for cars, white females paid more than white males, African American males paid more than both white males and females, and African American females paid the highest prices. While he examined selected civil rights laws as a tool to address such discrimination and primarily focused on amending race-based statutes to address gender, he largely used a single-axis-based approach. As with the Fifteenth and Nineteenth Amendments, a race-based remedy would not eliminate the differential between African American males and females. While African American males would be brought equal to white males, it is not clear that the same would happen for African American females, even with the combination of anti-discrimination laws. Likewise, adding gender discrimination would not necessarily eliminate the differential between white females and African American females. Again, prices for white females would be equalized with white males, but it would not happen for African American females without taking race into account.

Professor Ayres addressed the triggers for the cause of action rather than the remedy. Thus, his approach had two prongs. First, he examined two race-based civil rights statutes that provide a cause of action to challenge discriminatory retail car

---

107. Id. at 817.
108. Id. at 819.
111. See Ritter, supra note 101, at 347 (concluding that even though women were given greater political standing through the adoption of the Nineteenth Amendment, suffrage did not obtain its intended goal of equal citizenship status for women).
112. See Ayres, supra note 106, at 863-64 (advocating for the adoption of a disparate impact standard for claims under sections 1981-1982 that allows suits challenging facially neutral bargaining standards that have a discriminatory effect instead of the current standard, which requires proof of intentional discrimination).
sales that may not otherwise be available. Second, he added the axis of gender to those statutes. Theoretically, African American females have to use both axes to equalize prices, but the approach does not examine remedies. It is not enough to permit a cause of action on a single-axis basis, even separately. As in Harris v. Portland, a court may pick one as the basis for recovery with damages only for that axis. Both axes necessarily must be taken into account in the remedy phase.

Similar effects may be seen in intercollegiate and scholastic athletics. After the enactment of Title VI in 1964, African American enrollment increased substantially in HWCUs. In 1976, African Americans comprised about 9 percent of undergraduates, while in 2007 they comprised 13 percent. Participation opportunities in intercollegiate athletics also dramatically increased. From 1971 to 2000, the participation of white females rose by 320 percent and that of females of color by 955 percent. Hispanic females comprise slightly below 3 percent of athletes. Overall, women of

114. Id. at 863–66.
115. Id. at 864.
116. See Newhall & Buzuvis, supra note 59, at 360 (explaining that causes of action for discrimination laws must be applied in a categorical manner because of the differing levels of scrutiny that apply to various classes, including race, gender, and sexual orientation).
117. See id. at 354 (describing how in Harris v. Portland, the court reduced the damages portion of the claim to the single-axis of sexual orientation, to the exclusion of the race and gender axes).
120. Id. (indicating that African American females comprised 54 percent of African American undergraduates at that time).
121. Id. (indicating that by 2004, African American females comprised 64 percent of African American undergraduates).
122. 20 U.S.C. §§ 1681–1688 (2006) ("No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.").
123. Brake & Williams, supra note 12, at 206.
124. Id.
125. RACE AND SPORT, supra note 72, at 2.
126. CHESLOCK, supra note 92, at 29 (showing that the participation of Asian and Hispanic females in athletics is below their composition of the student body).
color comprised 26 percent of the student body but only 17.5 percent of athletes.\textsuperscript{127} African American women account for about 10 percent of female athletes.\textsuperscript{128} On the other hand, non-Hispanic white women comprise 77 percent of student athletes, 68.5 percent of the student body, and 75 percent of female athletes.\textsuperscript{129} Males of color comprise 22 percent of undergraduate males and 22 percent of athletes.\textsuperscript{130}

African American males and females faced similar discrimination in pursuit of athletic opportunities in intercollegiate athletics in 1972.\textsuperscript{131} Both were clustered into a few sports.\textsuperscript{132} Males were clustered in basketball, football, and track,\textsuperscript{133} while females were clustered in basketball and track.\textsuperscript{134} While the clustering remains for both,\textsuperscript{135} their participation relative to population took different paths after 1972. Even though Title VI and Title IX were in effect, the opportunities for African American females disproportionately decreased relative to white females.\textsuperscript{136} Yet, opportunities for African American males increased disproportionately.\textsuperscript{137} The explanation for the difference is football.\textsuperscript{138} The different trajectories are explained by the absence of multiple-axes remedies.

\begin{thebibliography}{99}
\item 127. See \textit{Race and Sport}, supra note 72, at 2.
\item 129. See \textit{Race and Sport}, supra note 72, at 2.
\item 130. \textit{Id}. at 3.
\item 132. Deborah L. Brake, \textit{Getting in the Game} 113–14 (2010) (explaining that “clustering” refers to the practice of placing African Americans into a few sports like football, basketball, and track for males and basketball and track for females, while “stacking” refers to the practice of steering African American athletes into specific positions on teams).
\item 133. \textit{Id}. at 114.
\item 134. \textit{Id}.
\item 135. \textit{Id}.
\item 136. \textit{Id}.
\item 137. Cheslock, supra note 92, at 10 (noting that African American males and white females participate in intercollegiate athletics at rates disproportionate to their make-up in the student body).
\item 138. The implications of Title IX for football have generated considerable controversy. Football policymakers has sought not to be taken into account. See Earl C. Dudley, Jr. & George Rutherglen, \textit{Ironies, Inconsistencies, and Intercollegiate Athletics: Title IX, Title VII, and Statistical Evidence of Discrimination}, 1 \textsc{Va. J. Sports & L.} 177, 183 (1999);
Single-axis-based anti-discrimination laws simply have not provided the remedies for African American females in athletics. One researcher seeking to examine the disparity in athletic opportunities for African American females conducted statistical analyses of four sets of data: the National Longitudinal Study, the High School and Beyond Survey, the National Educational Longitudinal Survey, and the Educational Longitudinal Survey. She made some interesting findings. The data sets revealed that in 1972, African American girls disproportionately participated in high school athletics and that white girls were disproportionately underrepresented. By 1992, the situation had flipped. This reversal occurred at the high school level, not the collegiate level. Her findings were consistent with Professor Dees's observation that race-based anti-discrimination laws were more responsible for gains for African American women than Title IX. The data revealed the ripple effect of an increase in athletic opportunities for white women in intercollegiate athletics and the addition of the less diverse emerging or country club sports.

There is a class aspect as well. Moneque Pickett's analyses show that African American girls were more likely to attend a school district in which fewer athletic opportunities were available for girls. She also found a connection to socioeconomic class.

---

Diane Heckman, *Women & Athletics: A Twenty Year Retrospective on Title IX*, 9 U. MIAMI ENT. & SPORTS L. REV. 1, 11–12, 50 (1992). There has been virtually no examination of the role of football on racial equity in athletic programs. For football, however, the experience of African American males would mirror that of African American females.


140. *Id.* at 53–54. Notwithstanding the disproportionate overrepresentation of African American females in high schools, at the collegiate level, the total number of white females participating in sports exceeded those of females of color in 1971. *RACE AND SPORT*, supra note 72, at 2 (noting that there were 2,137 women of color participating in intercollegiate athletics in 1971 compared to 27,840 white women).

141. Pickett, supra note 139, at 53 (noting that Asian and Hispanic females were disproportionately underrepresented in high school athletics in the 1970s and continue to be underrepresented).


143. Dees, supra note 20, at 640.

144. Pickett, supra note 139, at 58.

145. *Id.* at 59 (noting that African American females were more likely to attend a school that offered no sports for females, or specifically did not offer softball, basketball, soccer, ice hockey, volleyball, tennis, cross country, track, golf, or gymnastics).
School districts in low-income areas offered more athletic opportunities for girls. Other scholars have also recognized the effect of race, gender, and socioeconomic class.

Title VI and Title IX as applied to sports have not operated in the same way. In fact, far more attention has been given to the single-axis of gender under Title IX in opening access to opportunities in intercollegiate and scholastic athletics when examining the status of African American females. While Title IX applies to far more than athletic programs, it has been most visible to the public in its application to athletics. On the other hand, Title VI has been more visible to the public in its application to the nonathletic aspects of educational institutions and programs. There is considerable litigation under Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause over equal access, programming, and benefits in the case of gender equity. However, there has been scant case law under Title VI dealing with equal access, programming or benefits in athletic background in the case of racial equality. There are virtually no reported cases of African American females seeking equity in athletics as such under Title VI, Title IX, the Equal Protection Clause or any other law.

The imbalance in access largely results from the absence of remedies under race-based anti-discrimination laws that take gender into account and from the lack of remedies under Title IX that take into account the race of females.

146. Id.
147. Id. at 59-60.
149. Pickett, supra note 139, at 5.
150. Id. at 6.
151. Id. at 92.
153. But see Cureton v. NCAA, 198 F.3d 107, 107 (3d Cir. 1999) (involving a case of an African American male and female challenging NCAA uniform minimum admissions standards as racially discriminatory).
154. But see id. at 111.
155. Brake, supra note 132, at 112.
III. THE NEW POLICY

In the absence of an anti-discrimination law explicitly prohibiting discrimination against African American females in athletic and educational programs, the solution is to work with the tandem of race- and gender-based anti-discrimination laws. In this case, the specific laws are Title VI\textsuperscript{156} and Title IX.\textsuperscript{157} The primary need is for remedies addressing the discrimination against African American females in athletic opportunities. I am proposing to use the two statutes to fashion remedies that take into account the other axis. I am not proposing additional legislation at this time, but rather a regulatory agency solution.

Professor Black has examined the interplay of Title VI and Title IX in a different context.\textsuperscript{158} In his review of several Supreme Court decisions over the past decade,\textsuperscript{159} he concluded that there is room for a regulatory agency to define the scope of activities that constitute intentional discrimination within the meaning of these statutes for the purpose of private rights of action.\textsuperscript{160} At the core of his argument, however, is that federal agencies have the Congressional authorization, subject to judicial deference, to promulgate regulations to enforce statutes under \textit{Chevron v. Natural Resources Council, Inc.}\textsuperscript{161} Both statutes authorize the relevant regulatory agencies to enforce the statutory prohibitions through rules-regulations or orders.\textsuperscript{162}

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{156} 42 U.S.C. \textsection 2000d-1 (2006).
\item \textsuperscript{157} 20 U.S.C. \textsection 1681 (2006).
\item \textsuperscript{158} Black, \textit{supra} note 24, at 365–66 ("[T]his Article will reveal the principle that: a violation of Title VI or Title IX occurs not only when the funding recipient directly engages in traditional forms of intentional discrimination, but also when a funding recipient makes a conscious choice to frustrate the congressional objective to eliminate discrimination and inequity in federally funded programs.").
\item \textsuperscript{160} Id. at 424 ("Congress... chose not to define what this specifically meant... because Congress recognized that agencies are better suited to this task.").
\item \textsuperscript{162} The authorizing language is virtually identical in both statutes. \textit{Compare} 42 U.S.C. \textsection 2000d (2006) ("No person in the United States shall, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance."), with 20 U.S.C. \textsection 1681(a) ("No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to...".}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
He goes on to make a powerful case for regulatory agency action to define intentional discrimination within the meaning of Title VI and Title IX. First, neither statute defines the term “discrimination,” but both explicitly authorize the agencies to enforce and interpret the term. Second, reasonable regulations adopted by the appropriate agencies defining the term “discrimination” or “intentional discrimination” should be afforded judicial deference under the *Chevron* standard. He further argues that the deference standard should be applied even in the case of the meaning of race and gender discrimination so long as those words are narrowly defined based on the context in which the disparate impact arises, and the agency articulates its reasoning for how the definition fulfills the statutory objectives.

Federal agencies have specifically used this regulatory authority under Title IX with respect to athletics. The regulations were originally adopted in 1975 by the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. It issued a policy interpretation in 1979, and its successor, the Department of Education, has issued clarifications at least twice. These regulatory pronouncements have provided guidelines for determining activities that constitute gender discrimination in athletics. The courts have consistently accorded deference to the regulations and policy interpretations under Title IX. The Department of Education has also issued regulations pursuant to Title VI.

Thus, the Department of Education is authorized under both Title VI and Title IX to determine what activities and conduct constitute discrimination against African American females and give rise to an obligation on the part of an educational institution to appropriate corrective action under discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financing assistance . . . .”).

163. Black, supra note 24, at 411-17.
164. Id. at 413.
165. Id. at 412.
166. Id. at 413-14.
167. Id. at 414-15.
168. George, supra note 89, at 6-8.
170. 34 C.F.R. § 100.3 (2011).
172. 34 C.F.R. § 100.3.
those statutes. I would amend both sets of regulations, modify the Policy Interpretation for Title IX, and perhaps issue a Policy Interpretation for Title VI, all of which would cross-reference each other.

For example, appropriate language could be added to 34 C.F.R. § 106.41, specifically cross-referencing Title VI and its regulations and authorizing an accounting of race and other plus factors, such as socioeconomic class, in taking affirmative measures to overcome the effects of prior discrimination or the effects of conditions which resulted in limiting participation. The Title VI regulations may need more tweaking because Title VI applies to all recipients of federal funding and is not limited to educational institutions or athletic programs. The simplest fix would be to add language to 34 C.F.R. § 100.3(b)(4) and (b)(6) authorizing the taking into account of gender and other plus factors, such as socioeconomic class, in taking affirmative action to overcome the effects of prior discrimination or the effects of conditions that resulted in limiting participation. To bring symmetry to both sets of regulations, a separate section on athletics, a true counterpart to 34 C.F.R. § 106.41, which pertains only to athletics in the case of Title IX, could be added.

The regulatory fix could amend the Policy Interpretation for Title IX. The fix would focus on the second and third prongs of the three-prong safe harbor provision. These provisions relate to access and opportunity. I would not hesitate to use the substantial proportionality standard because of the need to determine the appropriate comparison group. The second prong, a continuing history of providing opportunities for African American females is more directly tied to the approach of using

173. Heckman, supra note 152, at 560.
176. Brake & Williams, supra note 12, at 213 (“[U]nder the three-part test for measuring compliance[,] . . . recipients can show [(1)] that the percentage of email athletes is close to the percentage of female students at the institution; or [(2)] that they have a history and continuing practice of addressing the needs of the underrepresented sex; or [(3)] that they otherwise are fully accommodating the athletic interest and abilities of the school’s female students.”).
177. Id.
178. Id.
179. Id.
multiple axes to fashion remedies. Again, axes besides race or
gender, such as socioeconomic class, should be used as well. The
third prong would require educational institutions to fully and
effectively accommodate the interests and abilities of African
American females.\footnote{180}

The Department of Education would begin with an effort
to define the nature and scope of discrimination against female
athletes of color, expressly including African American female
athletes.\footnote{181} It may follow the approach used in the regulations and
the Policy Statement for Title IX on establishing the activities or
conditions that constitute or do not constitute such
discrimination.\footnote{182} It perhaps should use a predominant factor
test\footnote{183} for determining the appropriate axis on which a violation
occurs—whether it is a result of gender or racial discrimination
separately or a simultaneous effect of both types of discrimination.
My primary focus, however, is on remedies. I am proposing that
the Department of Education specifically focus on the appropriate
corrective actions required to fulfill the objectives of both statutes.
The regulations or Policy Interpretations should be premised on
the proposition that single-axis-based anti-discrimination laws
must take multiple axes into account in fashioning remedies.\footnote{184}
The Department of Education thus should prescribe remedies to
address surviving racial and gender discrimination against women
of color, including African American females in athletic programs.
If it were to determine that the principal violation of anti-
discrimination laws was based on race, it would shape a remedy
that took account of gender.\footnote{185} Likewise if it determined that the

\footnotesize{\begin{itemize}
\item 180. \textit{Id.}
\item 181. Although the focus of this paper is primarily on African American females, the
policy fix would be one of general applicability. The Department of Education should
acknowledge its intent to address intersectional issues for African American female
athletes.
\item 182. \textit{See, e.g.,} Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, 44 Fed. Reg. at 71,415
(Dec. 11, 1979) (to be codified at 45 C.F.R. pt. 88) (providing a means to assess an
institution’s compliance with Title IX).
factor test as applied to Article 2 of the Uniform Commercial Code).
\item 184. The Department of Education may adopt the essentialist critique and consider
factors in addition to race or gender such as class, sexual orientation, age, or disability.
\item 185. Historically, it has been controversial whether cheerleading qualifies as a sport
when dealing with remedies for gender discrimination in athletics. \textit{See generally} Noffske v.
Bakke, 748 N.W.2d 195 (Wis. App. 2008) (holding that cheerleading was not a “sport”}
principal violation was gender-based, it would take into account race. And if it determined that a violation was based on race and gender discrimination, it should prescribe corrective action to address the simultaneous occurrence of both.

In contemplating the presence of multiple axes, the regulatory approach should go beyond the axes of race and gender. Professor Harris's essentialism analysis is useful in examining the development of remedies for the discrimination faced by black women. Under this critique, the sex-plus doctrine would be used to fashion appropriate remedies, rather than for establishing a cause of action. It has precedent in the eggshell plaintiff rule from tort law. The essentialism critique provides a theoretical basis for measuring the injury suffered by black women from either race or gender discrimination apart from merely proving that the woman was a victim of either type of discrimination. Other scholars have also acknowledged the need for the application of other axes, particularly socioeconomic class. The agency may adopt disparate impact standards and courts should accord deference to those standards as long as the standards are narrowly drawn and supported by context and reasoning.

Finally, the regulations necessarily must target middle and high school athletic programs. The disparities in the development of African American and other female athletes grows covered by the statute at issue). Using both Title VI and Title IX would allow the Department of Education to address the issue of racial imbalance in cheerleading squads at colleges and universities. Both of these statutes deal with discrimination in federally funded programs. While Title VI applies to all federally funded programs, both statutes apply to educational institutions receiving federal funds. Further, Title VI can be used to establish a cause of action for African American females as well as establishing a remedy.

186. Mathewson, supra note 1, at 263.
187. Id.
188. Id.
190. Compare Harris, supra note 3, at 585 (explaining that gender essentialism compartmentalizes women into race or sex categories without intersecting race and sex), with Mathewson, supra note 1, at 263 (applying gender essentialism to theories of recovery).
192. See Mathewson, supra note 1, at 265 (discussing the lack of opportunities for female athletes at "lower levels"); see also Picket, supra note 139, at 11 (noting the limited range of high school level sports).
wider as the years pass, due in large part to the inequities in athletic programming and resources at the middle and high school levels.\textsuperscript{193} The regulatory approach must necessarily be explicit in addressing the inequities there.

\textbf{CONCLUSION}

Legal scholars have written about inequities for African American female athletes in intercollegiate sports for decades.\textsuperscript{194} The time has come to move beyond the acknowledgement of the existence of intersectionality issues confronting African American female athletes. It is at least time for regulatory agencies to act. I have proposed a modest fix in this paper. I propose to use Title VI, prohibiting racial discrimination, and Title IX, prohibiting gender discrimination, to tackle the issue. The fix consists of using multiple-axes-based remedies to address single-axis-based causes of action for discrimination. The fix recognizes that the law cannot remediate discrimination against African American female athletes under one axis without taking the other into account. I am also proposing to go a step further and use essentialism critiques to include other axes such as socioeconomic class. For too long, African American female athletes have been invisible;\textsuperscript{195} with these changes, they will become visible in positive law.

\textsuperscript{193} Picket, \textit{supra} note 139, at 11.
\textsuperscript{194} Cf. Mathewson, \textit{supra} note 1, at 252 (discussing one African American female scholar and athlete writing about inequities in sports in 1981).
\textsuperscript{195} Hall, \textit{supra} note 191, at 4.