

Study tackles the divide over NFL players' protests

November 16 2017, by Kim Horner

Support for NFL players' protests during the national anthem divided sharply along racial lines in a new survey of college students by UT Dallas researchers.

Nearly all—90 percent—of black respondents supported kneeling during the national anthem. Only 38 percent of non-black respondents did.

In addition, 100 percent of black respondents believed that the NFL should not punish players who [protest](#) during the national anthem. Only 25 percent of non-black respondents believed that as well.

Researchers surveyed a sample of 299 undergraduate students in September for the study published online in the academic journal *Deviant Behavior*.

Dr. Alex Piquero, Ashbel Smith Professor of Criminology and associate dean for graduate programs in the School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences, and Dr. Nicole Leeper Piquero, Robert E. Holmes Jr. Professor of Criminology and associate provost, co-authored the study with Dr. Jonathan Intravia of Ball State University.

The survey is the first empirical study to analyze attitudes toward the recent NFL players' protests, which are aimed at drawing attention to racial inequality and police brutality against African-Americans.

"The results were striking," Alex Piquero said. "Our findings point to a

realistic yet potentially disturbing racial schism that exists in America today regarding anthem protests."

The survey asked respondents whether it was appropriate to kneel, stand up and raise a fist, or sit down during the anthem. It also asked whether the NFL or team owners should punish players who protest during the anthem. Answers ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

Participants also were asked to give their gender, age, political ideology, attitude toward police, the amount of time they watch NFL games and whether they agreed with President Donald Trump's views toward protests in professional sports.

Respondents who agreed with Trump's views and perceived greater fairness in the criminal justice system were less likely to support the protests and were more supportive of the NFL or team owners punishing protesters.

The study noted that while the anthem protests have led to discussions between the players and league owners about social justice issues, more time will be needed to determine the impact of the protests.

"While the on-the-field protests are getting people talking, the extent to which they lead to some sort of positive social change remains to be seen," Nicole Piquero said.

Highlights of the study

Researchers surveyed college undergraduate students' attitudes toward various types of protests during the national anthem and punishments. Results include:

- Is kneeling during the national anthem appropriate? 90 percent of

black respondents agree/strongly agree, 38 percent of non-black respondents agree/strongly agree.

- Is raising a fist in the air appropriate? 88 percent of black respondents agree/strongly agree, 32 percent of non-black respondents agree/strongly agree.
- Is sitting during the national anthem appropriate? 73 percent of black respondents agree/strongly agree, 22 percent of non-black respondents agree/strongly agree.
- Should the NFL punish players who protest? 100 percent of black respondents disagree/strongly disagree, 25 percent of non-black respondents disagree/strongly disagree.
- Should NFL owners punish players who protest? 100 percent of black respondents disagree/strongly disagree, 29 percent of non-black respondents disagree/strongly disagree.

More information: Jonathan Intravia et al. The Racial Divide Surrounding United States of America National Anthem Protests in the National Football League, *Deviant Behavior* (2017). [DOI: 10.1080/01639625.2017.1399745](https://doi.org/10.1080/01639625.2017.1399745)

Provided by University of Texas at Dallas

Citation: Study tackles the divide over NFL players' protests (2017, November 16) retrieved 11 May 2024 from <https://phys.org/news/2017-11-tackles-nfl-players-protests.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.