

Every Picture Tells a Story: Racial Representation on *Sports Illustrated* Covers

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It could be stated without hyperbole that America is a society of “sports fanatics.” Each spring hundreds of thousands of people across the country become caught up in the phenomenon known as “March Madness,” which is a tournament to decide the best college basketball team of the year. People who possess little interest and even less knowledge of collegiate basketball rush to fill out their “brackets” for office pools and question the wisdom (and parentage) of the tournament selection committee for including No-where State while Big Time U. gets snubbed. The Super Bowl is consistently the highest-rated television program of the year and has nearly been elevated to the status of a national holiday. Each year now as the summer wanes, fans eagerly await, and debate, the release of the NCAA college football rankings: and what would the holiday season be without the latest BCS (Bowl Championship Series) controversy? Spring training is the signal to fans from coast to coast that the “boys of summer” are coming back to town: “Do you think the Cubbies will finally win it this year?”

Sport is an important social institution in American society. Bloom and Willard write it is a “complex cultural form that operates on many levels simultaneously, gaining new meanings as they are experienced and read within different historical, political, and social contexts” (4). Describing participation levels, Al Neuharth notes that when excluding professional, collegiate, and high school and elementary school athletes, there are still thousands of Americans who participate in various community and workplace-based sports leagues, tens of millions attending professional sporting events each year, and many more watching sports on television (A15). Furthermore, sport has played a major role in both maintaining and deconstructing various systems of stratification in the United States. For example, Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972 requires educational programs receiving federal money to grant equal access to women. While this access goes well beyond athletics, this component has perhaps received the most attention, and many argue this piece of legislation has led to an entire generation of girls and women being able to envision and achieve their “sports dreams.”

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Another example, and the primary focus of this paper, concerns the American system of racial stratification. According to Bloom and Willard, sports in the twenty-first century have become a critically important cultural terrain on which most racialized groups have contested, defined, and represented their racial, national, and ethnic identities (1). Professional sports have historically been segregated. Though official policies were not always in place, it was “understood”: sports were usually reserved for “whites only.” Moreover, sports were used to maintain and reinforce the racial status quo. Even as racial barriers began to crumble, *de facto* segregation restricted minority participation and reinforced notions of white racial superiority. An example of this process can be found in professional baseball. Major league teams, around 1953, operated with what has been referred to as “the fifty percent color line.” The essence of this unwritten policy was that teams could field up to four blacks out of the nine total players, but no more than that. Roger Kahn wrote that this *de facto* color line was to ensure the continued majority presence, and dominance, of whites in “America’s pastime”: to have “five blacks playing with four whites supposedly threatened the old order” (172).

In spite of this sordid history of discrimination and segregation, sport was among one of the first social institutions to integrate, accept, and eventually embrace minority participants. Some examples include Jack Johnson (boxing) in 1897, Kenny Washington (football) in 1946, Jackie Robinson (baseball) in 1947, Althea Gibson (tennis) and Earl Lloyd (basketball) in 1950, and Lee Elder (golf) in 1975. Patrick Miller reports that these pioneers were so significant because “Black athletic success offered a measure of hope to those who sought to soften racial prejudice and advance the cause of social justice” (147). For the first time in the popular culture, white Americans were exposed to, recognized, applauded, and rewarded minorities for their achievements. According to Gary Sailes, “The accomplishments of the African American athlete have become an accepted facet of American culture,” and some feel this acceptance indicates a decline in deeply entrenched

racist beliefs (“The African American” 183). Ever since the initial integration of sports, the number of minority athletes has increase dramatically. White Americans have not only accepted minority athletes, but they are celebrated as heroes in a way that few could imagine just fifty years ago (see Price “Whatever Happened”).

Gabriel, Johnson and Stanton report that evidence of both racial progress *and* continued inequality is evident in media that is exclusively dedicated to sports news coverage (1334). For example, some minority athletes can be heralded as icons and heroes to be admired and emulated, such as Roberto Clemente in baseball, Walter Payton in football, and LeBron James in basketball while others may be chastised for behavior very similar to that of their white colleagues (see the sports press coverage of on and off the field antics of football players Randy Moss or Terrell Owens verses Jeremy Shockey or Bill Romanowsky, for instance).

Magazines, such as *Sports Illustrated* (*SI*), are a rich resource for examining these issues because, as Billy Hawkins notes, “we live in a society where visual images are paramount and where the mass media is a powerful medium for perceiving reality, as well as perpetuating ideological hegemony, [therefore] we must be cognizant of the ways these forces continue to reproduce images” (48). The focus of this paper is the representation of athletes who were featured on the covers of *SI*. Any casual observer could see the number of minority athletes on the covers has increased over the past fifty years, but we are curious as to the *kinds* of representations on the covers of *SI*. In the early years of publication it is hypothesized that *SI* included minority athletes on their covers more often as a member of a *group* rather than pictured singularly, as being alone on the cover is a more prestigious representation.¹ This paper will examine whether this was the case, as well as determining if this practice has changed during the past half-century. If minority athletes were, or still are, more likely to be featured in group photographs, this suggests racial bias, though perhaps in a more subtle and veiled form than that which we have become accustomed to seeing, recognizing, and condemning.

The study of sport represents a variety of important sociological issues. Richard Majors writes that as sport does not operate in a vacuum it reflects the racist, economic, and social systems that support it (19). This analysis will help to illuminate changes in the acceptance of minority athletes by the larger society, as well as lend insight to the construction of the contemporary American racial system. Sport and sport media are influential and pervasive components of American society both reflecting and informing broader societal ideals. If they operate within a system of “new,” subtle, but no less systemic form of racism, one that is hidden behind the notions of color blindness, it seems likely that American society as a whole adheres to a similar racial arrangement (see Bonilla-Silva; Feagin).

The “New” Racism

Since the Civil Rights Movement (CRM), blatant racism has become legally and socially condemned and sanctioned. When sports analyst, Jimmy “the Greek” Snyder, for example, commented that blacks made good football running backs because during slavery they were bred to have big, strong thighs, he was quickly (and publicly) chastised and fired by CBS. There was a similar public outcry when former Dallas Cowboys quarterback, Roger Staubach, wrote that white football players *always* had higher IQs than black players. Reactions to incidents such as these, however, do not necessarily mean racism has been eliminated from American society.

Critical race theorists argue racism remains prevalent today in the United States; however, it exists in more subtle and symbolic forms than in the past. As Eduardo Bonilla-Silva wrote, “The beauty of this new ideology is that it aids in the maintenance of white privilege without fanfare, without naming those who it subjects and those who it rewards” (3). In other words, modern racism remains hidden behind the rhetoric of color blindness and the ideological emphasis on merit and individualism. The new racism is much more

covert and therefore difficult to identify. It is based on the avoidance of race altogether, rather than confronting problems and issues surrounding race. Critical race theorists maintain that racist ideologies continue to be a strong social force in American society, but they are articulated in a more discreet, less aggressive manner than in the past. If this is indeed the case, we would expect racism to be evident in the social institution of sport.

Racial Bias in Sport

Racial inequalities in sport persist in several important ways. During the past ten years there has actually been a decline in the number of minorities involved in particular facets of professional sports. For example, as Richard Lapchick noted, “There were significant losses for African American men playing college and professional sports . . . other than basketball” (1). In the National Football League (NFL), for instance, the participation of black players dropped two percent, matching a four-year low of sixty-five percent, while Major League Baseball (MLB) has seen a three percent decrease in the number of black players over the last decade (Lapchick 15).

In addition, there continues to be a noticeable underrepresentation of minorities, particularly in managerial, coaching, and front office positions—key functionaries (see Evans; Majors; Sailes “The African American”). Lapchick reported that in the NBA’s league office, twenty-eight percent of all professional positions were held by people of color with comparable numbers observed in professional football and baseball: twenty-six percent of management level positions in the NFL and thirty-two percent of Central Office employees in MLB were filled by minorities (17–19). While it is important to note minority participation rates in these areas has increased by two to three percent since the 2000–01 season, the rates in each league remain far below the minority athlete participation rates.

When examining minority participation rates in coaching, there are similar results: overall, the involvement of minorities as coaches or managers

has improved over the past eleven years, however, as with minorities occupying front office positions, their numbers are far below what would be anticipated considering the racial makeup of players in these three professional sports leagues (Lapchick 24). Clearly, minority coaches and managers remain underrepresented, not only in terms of the minority athlete population, but in terms of the general American population as well.

Another problem related to racial bias is that even though minority athletes have become prevalent, and in some cases the majority in professional sports, they have often been subjected to “stacking.” Historically, blacks have been underrepresented in key “skill” positions that are considered central or more critical in affecting the outcomes of the games while white athletes have been overrepresented in these same positions. For example, whites have traditionally dominated the positions of quarterback, center, and middle linebacker in football, pitcher and catcher in baseball, and (traditionally) the point guard in basketball; these are the positions believed to require greater intelligence, decisionmaking abilities, and leadership. At the same time, blacks have been found to disproportionately occupy the positions of running back, receiver, and defensive line in football, outfield positions in baseball, and (traditionally) the forward position in basketball; noncentral positions thought to require dominant physical skills, such as greater strength, speed, and agility (see Coakley; Jibou; Knee; Lomax; Spence). For example, Lapchick noted that in the 2002 NFL season, eighty-two percent of running backs, eighty-eight percent of wide receivers, ninety-eight percent of cornerbacks, and eighty-eight percent of safeties were black, whereas eighty-three percent of the offensive centers were white (57). Stacking remains an issue of contention in MLB as well, particularly in the “primary thinking positions” of pitcher, catcher and third baseman. During the 2002 MLB season, Lapchick observed that “only three percent of pitchers and one percent of catchers were African American. There were no African American third basemen . . . [and] Thirty-one percent of outfielders, who rely on speed and reactive ability, were African

American” (58). It is evident that particular positions remain dominated by players of a certain race, however, recent observers mostly agree that the issue of stacking, and the stereotypes associated with it, are declining somewhat. For instance, Lapchick noted that the “percentage of African American quarterbacks rose to 24 percent . . . an all-time high in the NFL” (57). Though the practice of stacking appears to be on the decline, it may yet have lasting effects: to the extent that minorities have been underrepresented in the central positions, judgments about them and their contributions to the outcomes of games are likely to have been affected. Together, this further reinforces the racial stereotypes that whites are intellectually superior while blacks maintain an athletic advantage.

Moreover, negative racial stereotypes (i.e., associating crime, violence, lower intelligence levels, and superior athletic ability with blacks) are commonly reproduced by the images and discourse surrounding minority athletes. Owing to the concentration of black athletes in track and field, boxing, basketball, and football, a common stereotype is often reproduced: according to Sailes it is that “the superior body build of the Black athlete gives him specific advantages in sports, making him more of a natural athlete” (“The Myth” 481). As noted above, some even argue that this superior athletic prowess is a result of the forced and selective breeding that took place during slavery (see Helmreich; Sailes “The African American,” “The Myth”; Price “Is it in the Genes?”). Others argue the dominance of black athletes is not a result of biology and selective breeding, but the result of *cultural* beliefs that emphasize success and social mobility through athletics (see Hoberman; Majors; Spence; St. Louis). While being called “athletic” is not necessarily derogatory, it has been used to imply that blacks are athletically superior to whites, intellectually *inferior*, and that *all* blacks are inherently good athletes. Moreover, this label has been used to devalue other attributes blacks may possess and contributions made to society—aside from athletic ones. Black athletes in many ways have become an accepted facet of American

culture, but as Sailes writes, “in an attempt to explain that athletic success, racial attitudes emerge which further polarizes” (racial) groups (“The African American” 183).

Another form of racial bias in sport and the sports media is that the depictions of the black athlete are often used to commercialize and reproduce stereotypical images—linking together economic and racial interests. George Sage writes that black athletes were only allowed to participate in professional sports when business owners realized “discrimination became incompatible with good capitalist financial policy” (58). In other words, black athletes became a commodity driven by the market and the demand to sell services and goods to audiences. This commodification was not only profitable for (white) business owners, it also served to maintain the racial status quo.

Black athletes are often objectified and stereotyped by the media and advertisers in order to attract the business of sport fans. They are often seen not as human beings, but as objects to be sold, traded, or otherwise exploited in order to bolster the bottom line. Hawkins writes that black athletes are seen as goods to be traded in the marketplace and that “competing claims are working to maintain control and profit from the black male by reproducing historical roles that have worked to keep black men in their place—confined to certain roles that support racial ideologies” (39). Not only does this treatment reproduce historical roles, it can also retard potential change. Christopher Spence notes that “The popularity and multimillion-dollar contracts that many Black athletes enjoy do not translate into the political and economic power required to produce the changes needed for sports and society to achieve equality for all” (10). Blacks have been steered into athletics and given the social capital to succeed in that particular arena, but by doing so they are often exploited. As David Rowe writes,

The outcome of selecting and decontextualizing aspects of black male culture, linking it to the appealing aspects of sport, and then fashioning the combination into consumer iconography . . . is not the liberation and enhancement of an oppressed minority, but the

commodification and expropriation of their difference and resistance. (143)

Much of the recent academic writing on sport has focused on the continued reproduction and exacerbation of racial stereotypes and the perpetuation of inequalities. While there certainly continues to be racial problems, it is also important to reframe academic work to acknowledge that sport, as an institution, has been a model for social change and has the potential to continue to be a leader in that role. According to Scott Price, the fact that “a white majority calmly accepts minority status in one of its most cherished social institutions [sport] is itself a measure of progress” (“Whatever Happened” 33).

Because sport has the potential to influence the perceptions and beliefs of people, the communication of racial messages, both positive and negative, through blatant and subtle means, is important to understand. Price writes that in 1947 “[Jackie] Robinson ushered American sports into an era of significance beyond the playing field . . . [and] During the next two generations, the once monochromatic world of team sports became a paradigm of, and sometimes a spur to, racial equality” (“Whatever Happened” 33). Though some argue that Jackie Robinson’s racial breakthrough applied only to professional baseball, his legacy extended far beyond that: Ron Thomas asserts that Robinson “forced many white people to actually ‘see’ black people for the first time, and he presented a black person that Americans couldn’t help but admire” (18).

Sport and its media play a crucial role in developing racial perceptions and ideologies, particularly those that surround the participating athletes. As Richard Dyer states, “A [magazine] cover fixes an image of the world . . . even for those who don’t buy it” (264). In particular, the pictures and articles captured in sport magazines both reflect *and* communicate contemporary racial attitudes. *SI* is the longest running and most prominent sporting news magazine in the country. Whether *SI* simply reflects the larger society or is an active creator of societal racial ideologies is debatable and potentially a topic for another

day. However, its role as a leading voice in the world of sport and sports media is unquestionable. As Richard Hoffer recently asked, “what moral quandary, what political debate, what social disquiet hasn’t been articulated within the framework of the games we all share?” (16).

Methods

Data were derived from a content analysis of the covers of fifty-one years of *SI* magazine, 1954–2004, obtained from *Sports Illustrated 50 Years: The Anniversary Book* (see Fleder). To achieve a more coherent analysis, the sample was limited to the covers that featured professional baseball, basketball, and football players.² Once the data were sorted using these criteria, there were a total of 2,113 covers to examine. In order to have comparable subsamples, the analysis was further restricted to only black and white athletes.³ Application of this criterion reduced the sample of covers to 2,057.

The Variables

- (1) *Race*: The race of the athletes was coded into black ($n = 925$) and white ($n = 1,132$) subcategories utilizing a visual inspection of the physical characteristics of the players.⁴ If there was a question regarding a player’s race after the visual inspection, a more detailed investigation into the player’s personal biography was conducted, such as consulting sports experts and additional published resources for confirmation of race, such as birth place and country of origin.
- (2) *Time Period*: After the covers were coded, they were grouped into five-year periods, with the exception of the first time period, which contains six years. Because *SI* began publication in 1954, the first time period runs from 1954 to 1959 to allow the analysis to be easily

understood in terms of five-year increments. Utilizing this information, we then determined a critical “tipping point,” a time period when black athletes began appearing on *SI* covers in comparable numbers to white athletes. This time period was 1975–79. Next, a dichotomous variable reflecting this critical point in time was constructed. This variable was labeled “Pre-1975” with the two categories of years being 1954–74 ($n = 614$) and 1975–2004 ($n = 1,443$).⁵

- (3) *Group Photo*: This variable is whether the covers of *SI* featured athletes pictured singularly ($n = 1,136$) or in group photographs ($n = 921$).
- (4) *Group Race*: This variable is the interaction of Race and Group Photo. This interaction produced four subcategories: covers with black athletes appearing alone ($n = 491$), covers with whites appearing alone ($n = 645$), covers featuring blacks in a group photograph ($n = 434$), and covers featuring whites in a group photograph ($n = 487$).

Analysis and Findings

A cross tabulation was performed using the variables Group Race and Pre-1975 time period. The data did not confirm the first part of our hypothesis. We thought that in the earlier years of publication, when black athletes were featured on *SI* covers, they may be more likely to be pictured in a (less prestigious) group photograph. However, in the early *and* latter eras of *SI* publication, individual photographs are more common for both black and white athletes (see Table 1). In the time period from 1954 to 1974, blacks appeared alone on 12.5% of the *SI* covers and in group photographs on 11.6% of the covers.

The data do support, however, other components of the hypothesis. Table 1, before 1975, shows that blacks were underrepresented,

Table 1. Cross-Tabulation of “Group Race” and “Time Period” (in Percent)

	Pre-1975	1975 and later	Total
Whites alone	45.8% (281)	25.2% (364)	31.4% (645)
Whites group	30.1% (185)	20.9% (302)	23.7% (487)
Blacks alone	12.5% (77)	28.7% (414)	23.9% (491)
Blacks group	11.6% (71)	25.2% (363)	21.1% (434)
Total	100% (614)	100% (1443)	(2057)

appearing on only 24.1% of the covers. This arrangement, as anticipated, shifts dramatically when results for 1975 and later are examined. During this time period, nearly fifty-four percent of all *SI* covers featured black athletes. Perhaps the most interesting result is when the differences between individual and group photographs for each racial category for each time period are examined. In the 1975 and later time period, whites appear individually on 4.3% more *SI* covers than they do in group photographs while blacks appear on 3.5% more covers individually than in groups—comparable proportions. However, during the pre-1975 era, blacks are featured individually only .9% of the time more often than they are in groups while, whites appear individually 15.7% more frequently than they do in group photographs.

What do we learn from these differences? First, there was a *strong* preference to feature individual white athletes on *SI* covers from 1954 to 1974. Second, from 1975 to 2004 there is no clear pattern or preference between blacks and whites in terms of the *types* of photographs in which they are featured. As stated above, both blacks and whites appear individually more often than in group photographs with proportions of 3.5 and 4.3%, respectively. This leaves a negligible difference of only .8 percent between the two groups. Third, in the pre-1975 era, the proportional difference between blacks and whites and the types of photographs in which they appear, group versus individual, is nearly sixteen percent. Finally, it seems as though we may have been a bit hasty with our “failed confirmation” statement earlier in this section. While the data show blacks in the

pre-1975 era were more likely to appear individually than in groups, this difference is less than one percent which represents only six covers, seventy-seven as opposed to seventy-one covers. When comparing this difference to the other proportional differences, especially the nearly sixteen percent difference for whites in the pre-1975 era, it is quite small. It thus may be important to revisit and refine the hypothesis to include *proportional* differences rather than absolute numbers. Once this is done we can say, *yes*, in the early years of *SI*, blacks were proportionally more likely to appear on the covers in less prestigious group photographs.

Discussion

The United States was still sharply segregated in 1954, the year *SI* first appeared on newsstands and magazine racks across the country. This division was clearly evident in the faces of the athletes on the cover of the magazine. In the magazine’s first decade, 1954–64, over ninety percent of the featured athletes were white (DuBois and Regoli 13). While this may seem like a staggeringly high number, it is important to note, again largely because of the legal and social segregation, that during this same time period whites were the numerical majority in all three of the major sports; whites comprised eighty-one percent of all baseball players, seventy-four percent of all basketball players, and a full eighty-six percent of the football players. Nevertheless, the representation of minority athletes on the cover of *SI*, and in all three sports, became more equitable over time. As the CRM gained momentum and entered the 1960s and 1970s, and as civil rights legislation was passed allowing minorities access to arenas that had previously been denied, minority participation in sports at all levels increased.

By the 1980s, white athletes were no longer a majority of athletes featured on *SI* covers. DuBois and Regoli report that by 1985, black and white athletes were equally represented, and in 1987, the number of blacks on the cover of *SI* surpassed

whites for the first time (13). This trend in *SI* cover representation closely matches the trend of minority *participation* in professional sports. According to DuBois and Regoli, by the 1994–95 season, black players reached their highest percentage of involvement in all three sports—eighty-two percent in the NBA, sixty-eight percent in the NFL, and nineteen percent in MLB (13). In addition, from 2000 to 2004, white athletes in these three sports were only featured on the cover of *SI* forty percent of the time, while fifty-four percent of the covers featured black athletes (DuBois and Regoli 13).

While the analysis suggests that racial tolerance and integration appears to be increasing, it is too early to declare that all the goals of the CRM have been achieved. There are several remaining problems. Yes, the number of minority athletes has increased, both in terms of participation and representation, but this does not automatically translate to improved race relations in the rest of society. Certainly, there are a number of examples of successful minority athletes, but we must also remember their success and society's admiration of them is more often than not the exception when compared with others in the same racial groups. As noted above, Spence said that success for some does not mean that the economic and political power needed to transform society has been attained (10). The comedian, Chris Rock, alludes to this disparity in power in his 2004 standup routine, *Never Scared*. In this act Rock distinguishes between being "rich" and "wealthy," with wealth conferring power—Rock observes, "Shaq [Shaquille O'Neal] is rich . . . [but] the white man who signs his checks is wealthy." Majors argues that today, as racial inequality continues to be problematic, coupled with the commodification of minority athletes, "the contemporary dominance of certain sports by black males is more a sign of continued racism than a sign of progress" (15; see also Edwards; Tygiel).

Joe Feagin echoes the above sentiment when he wrote, "the United States (is) a 'total racist society' in which every major aspect of life is shaped to some degree by the core racist realities" (16). However, the majority of the racism in contem-

porary society is not what most Americans would recognize and identify as "racism." It appears rather, in another form—what Bonilla-Silva calls *color-blind racism* (13). Instead of the overt racism most people imagine like the rants of neo-Nazi groups or Jim Crow racism, color-blind racism is much more delicate, refined. It is disguised by the (mistaken) notion of a liberal meritocracy. Color-blind racists attribute racial disparity to nonracial reasons specifically ignoring the color of one's skin (Bonilla-Silva 13–15; see also Hunter). For example, it is doubtful the *SI* publishers would say race ever played a role in selecting athletes to appear on their covers. They would likely propose other, more "logical" explanations: black athletes were not as popular with their readers, or they were not among the most talented, exciting, nor gifted players. Statements and beliefs such as these, reflecting color-blind racism, only serve to reinforce the racial stratification system. Accordingly to Jay Coakley, this is significant because as an institution sport can give us insights into the larger society, as in sport, the more powerful groups use political, economic, and cultural resources to define social values and to maintain their effect (21–23; see also Sage). If systemic color-blind racism continues to permeate sports, it is likely it will continue to permeate American society as sport is one of the most important institutions within society.

Sport can, and has, given society an arena where bias can be challenged. Black athletes have made great strides in both their participation and visibility in a variety of sports and there is evidence that sport can provide an environment where the impenetrable racial barriers of an earlier era can be overcome. Sports stars are among our most celebrated heroes. They are our role models, and in this nation of "sports fanatics," they have the opportunity and the potential to influence larger societal changes. Few if any would argue there no obstacles left to overcome; however, we find the results of this work encouraging and perhaps indicative of emerging patterns and steps in the right direction to a more equitable society.

This work is among the first examining sport and sports media in terms of racial representation.

We hope others will build upon our study. One possible area of research would be to identify other ways athletes are portrayed in sports media and if these portrayals have changed over time. For example, have black athletes been pictured in such a way that emphasizes their athleticism, strength, or power verses portrayals of them as “whole human beings?” Are there differences or similar patterns in other sports magazines? What about televised sports programs? Research also must move beyond an examination of “black and white.” There is growing participation in sports by other racial and ethnic groups, and this should be examined in more detail.

Notes

1. Appearing alone versus in a group photograph is more prestigious; not only because it makes intuitive sense, but when examining similar representations with quantifiable values (such as card prices of sport cards) invariably the cards featuring a single player are more expensive than ones with multiple players pictured (see Beckett).

2. Covers that did not portray people (e.g., dogs, birds, horses, boats, or only text) were excluded from the sample.

3. Before the late 1960s into the mid-1970s, there were too few athletes belonging to racial categories *other than* black or white to make any meaningful comparisons, therefore the sample was limited to black and white athletes (see discussion below).

4. While this coding scheme is not a perfect, it does reflect the way the athletes are typically perceived by the general public (i.e., Tiger Woods and Derek Jeter were coded as African American), and is one of the most common methods of coding race in sport research (see Brown and Bear; Hewitt et al.; Primm et al.; Regoli et al.).

5. A second dichotomous variable was tested called “Pre-1980” with the time periods 1954–79 and 1980–2004. Analysis with this variable yielded nearly identical results, therefore we decided to use only one of these variables, “Pre-1975,” in the analysis.

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