

"I don't fit in the box that y'all want me to be in." - Angel Reese

The *SPORTY* News

**Angel Reese
Caitlin Clark
Ja Morant
& many more!**

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A RACE WAR?

By Jalissa Breeland

In the ever-evolving landscape of sports media, a stark discrepancy persists in the portrayal of black athletes to their white counterparts. From the headlines to word of mouth, questions are starting to disperse about the stereotypes and biases embedded within sports media and journalism. When white athletes get frustrated, it's because they "care about the game." When black athletes get frustrated, it's because they "need to play better."

As conversations surrounding this controversy begin to gain more momentum, the role of media in sustaining these narratives comes under heightened scrutiny. Sports are forever changing in front of our eyes. Addressing these disparities is crucial to fostering a more inclusive and diverse community.



Iowa Hawkeye's Caitlin Clark (left) playing against LSU Tiger's Angel Reese (right) in last year's NCAA women's championship game.

Celebratory Dance or Violent Act?



Texas Longhorn's Quinn Ewers (left) doing a "gun shots" celebratory dance after a touchdown. Memphis Grizzlies' Ja Morant (right) doing the same celebration after a dunk.

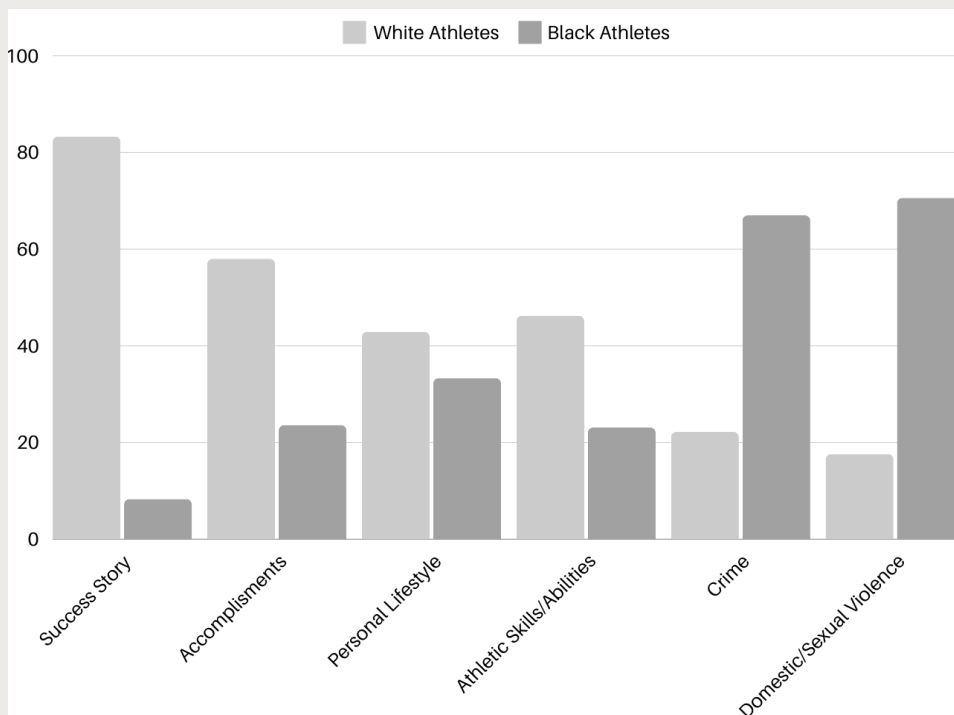
Barstool Sports, a sports media company that fosters sports and pop culture by putting out the latest news and catching viral highlights, got put on blast after their inconsistency of reporting both Quinn Ewers and Ja Morant.

In an X (formerly Twitter) post, Barstool tweeted out the video of Morant's dunk and celebration captioning it "Ja spraying imaginary bullets into section 113 after the slam." Just six days later, Barstool tweeted out the video of Quinn Ewers doing the same exact celebration and captioned it "Quinn Ewers is having fun."

A journalist and an associate professor at the University of Missouri's School of Journalism took matters into her own hands when researching media coverage on whether male black and white athletes receive different treatment. She looked over 155 online news articles ranging from ESPN to Yahoo Sports and quickly identified a common theme. She said "when it came to training, work ethic, and dedication, 42.9 percent were focused on white athletes, while 35.7 were on black."

Some of her other findings were compiled into the bar chart below. She adds that, "Not only does negative media coverage serve to legalize social power inequalities, but also it is likely to undermine black athletes' achievements and contribute to stereotype threat."

To see more research and studies that Cynthia Frisby conducted and found, you can get her book *How You See Me, How You Don't*. This book is centralized around the racial stereotypes in the way the news media portrays athletes.



Snubbed of Comeback Player of the Year



As you may know, Damar Hamlin, an NFL player for the Buffalo Bills, took a scary hit early in February of last year that caused him to have cardiac arrest. He stood up after the tackle, took two steps and fell down. Essentially, his heart had stopped. He then was able to recover pretty quickly after being revived and spending days at the hospital.

This past February, the “comeback of the year” award was awarded to Joe Flacco. A voting panel that was made up of 50 media members across online digital, television, radio and print decided that Flacco was the true comeback player. A washed up football player more deserving of an award than someone who nearly lost their life?

Behind The Media



Despite the NFL being a black dominant sport, The Sport Journal found that there was a disparity between sports reporters. 79% of radio and television announcers were white while only 7% were black. Ron Thomas, a sports journalist and head of the sports journalism department at Morehouse University, states that the increase of black people working in the media could lead to more positive depictions.

In a black athlete panel hosted by Morehouse, Washington Wizards’ former player Etan Thomas said “the media too often focuses on the negative.”

In 2007, a white radio host, Don Imus, referred to the Rutgers’ women’s basketball team as “nappy-headed hos” and insulted them for having tattoos and for their appearance after losing the championship the day prior. In efforts to defend himself, he claims he was a good man who just did a bad thing. Both Imus and his supporters claimed that the root of the problem came from the use of “ho” in rap music. He got fired and his show got canceled for roughly only 9 months. Then he went to sign a five year deal worth \$40 million with New York Station WABC.

The Cultivation Theory

The Cultivation Theory, coined by George Gerbner in the 1960s, suggests that exposure to media content shapes the way viewers perceive themselves, others, and the world. They may not tell them exactly what to think but can easily persuade them into how to think.

If people are constantly seeing the media portray black athletes as arrogant, selfish and ghetto, it's going to influence their perception and attitudes towards every black athlete. This theory helps in understanding how the media representing black athletes so poorly can contribute to harmful stereotypes and biases.



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