

#Morethanathlete, Kaepernick, and Sports as (activist) Community

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Activism and Community

Activism

- Engagement in intentional actions that disrupt oppressive systems
- Challenge a clearly defined opposition
- Empower individuals and groups disadvantaged by inequitable arrangements
- ***Express specific demands for social change***
- ***Operate in tandem with broader social justice movements***
(Cooper, Macalaulay, Rodriguez, 2017)

Activism & Sport

- Activism in sport allows us to see larger political alliances, affinities, and solidarities in a particularly useful way (Trimbur, 2019)

Community

- A feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals

Athletes & Activism

FINAL DAILY NEWS NEW YORK'S PICTURE NEWSPAPER 10¢
Vol. 86, No. 76 New York, N.Y., 1917, Friday, September 21, 1973 WEATHER: sunny and cool

BILLIE JEAN KING OUTLIBS THE LIP *Wallops Riggs in Straight Sets*



6-4, 6-3, 6-3,
And No Love
For Bobby . . .

Billie Jean King gives former opponent Bobby Riggs a convincing and easy win after their first fight, 6-4, 6-3, 6-3. The 34-year-old American, who is ranked 100, took more than two hours and five minutes to defeat the 35-year-old, former world champion, who is ranked 100. King won an estimated crowd of 20,000 fans.
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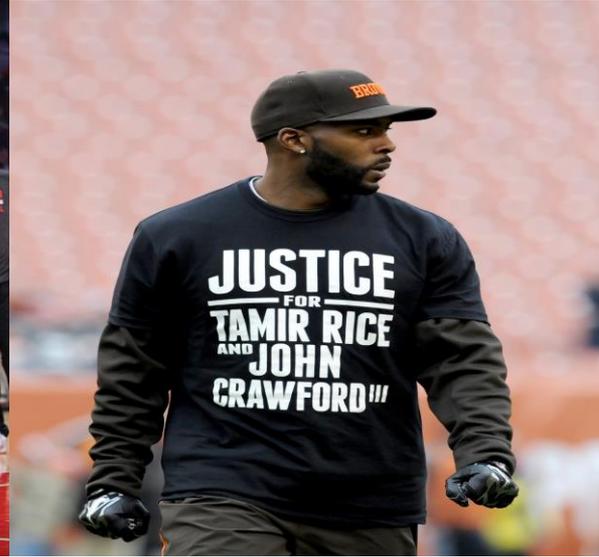


Shut up and Dribble!



- When systems of privilege are questioned by Black athletes, they are often met with public discourse of ingratitude, including notions that speaking out should be accompanied with a loss of athletic playing opportunity (Frederick, Sanderson, and Schlereth 2017).
- By characterizing protest actions as individual actions, the overarching goal of the movement is undermined and dismissed (Coombs, Lambert, Cassillo, Humphries (2019)

#BlackLivesMatter



Kaepernick Takes a Knee



- August 26, 2016, San Francisco 49ers back-up quarterback Colin Kaepernick was seen sitting for the national anthem
- Kaepernick explained he sat “because of the oppression of people of color and ongoing issues with police brutality” (Coombs, Lambert, Cassilo, Humphries, 2019)

Sense of Community

Sporting environment is frequently considered a context that draws people together and contributes to the creation of community

Sport can foster a *sense of community* enhancing the life quality of sport participants (Warner, Dixon, Chalip 2012)

Benefits of Sense of Community (SOC) include:

- Increased well-being (Davidson & Cotter, 1991),
- Increased civic participation (Chavis & Wandersman, 1990).

Chargers tackle **Russell Okung** recently stated:

- “I am convinced that we will never make progress if we do not find a way to come together and take action that represents the will of the players...As Kap’s message has now been distorted, co-opted and used to further divide us along the very racial lines he was highlighting, we as players have a responsibility to come together and respond collectively.”

Social Media & Community

Social media provides:

- ***Enable user-generated content to be shared, edited and commented on in real time by multiple participants*** (Toffoletti & Thorpe, 2018)
- Means of organization and mobilization
- Mobilize constituencies
- ***Symbolic construction of a sense of togetherness***
- ***Overcomes isolation and seclusion (Gerbaudo, 2012)***
- Individuals find community around issues of interest (Bruns, 2012; Willnat, Wong, Tamam, & Aw, 2013)
- Debate topics to a point where critical mass can be reached (Maxwell & Oliver, 1993)
- Fosters the formation of individual and collective identities that kindle protest behavior (Dalton, Sickle, & Weldon, 2009)
- Prompt mobilization and collective action (Earl, Hurwitz, Mesinas, Tolan, & Ariotti, 2013; Valenzuela, Arriagada, & Scherman, 2012).

Specifically, ***social media allows athletes*** to generate and share content directly with global audiences and provides a personalized, direct means for athletes to communicate with fans, other athletes and their community (Hambrick, Simmons, Greenhalgh, & Greenwell, 2010).

Kaepernick & Community

Taking a knee spread to every level of American football and to all the major sporting leagues (Trimbur, 2019)

- Eric Reid became Kaepernick's first teammate to kneel
- Jeremy Lane of the Seattle Seahawks was the first nonteammate to join
- National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) Meghan Rapinoe took a knee
- Players from the WNBA took a knee
- Athletes and coaches of the NBA, MLB, and NHL made gestures of unity
- 250 players who joined him in protesting during the playing of the national anthem in various ways during the third week of the 2017 NFL season (Intraviaa et. al, 2018)

The actions generated and encouraged conversations about systematic racism and supported anti-racist projects, such as Black Lives Matter (Trimbur, 2019)

#morethananathlete



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https://www.dropbox.com/s/nu0uz3apomrc6q6/Uninterrupted_CaseStudy_GRFX-03.mp4?dl=0

Sense of (activist) Community

Marginality can be “the site of radical possibility” (Hooks, 1990).

A upcoming special issue on ***Sport Communication and Social Justice*** argues that:

- Athletes from traditionally marginalized groups have been able to highlight issues of inequality and discrimination through innovative, mediated and highly symbolic forms of protest and created movements around hashtags and viral posts.