

# Race, Sport and the American Dream



# Race, Sport and the American Dream

Third Edition

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*I dedicate this book to Professor Angela J. Hattery, Ph.D.*



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# INTRODUCTION TO THE 3RD EDITION—2014

As long as I'm alive, all the golfers will be white and all the caddies will be black.

—Clifford Roberts<sup>1</sup>

Examining SportsWorld though the lens of the human condition is a challenge for which I am ready and indeed enthusiastic.



WordItOut Illustration of SportsWorld.

There are a number of issues facing SportsWorld as I write the 3rd edition, and I will not be able to discuss all of them in-depth here. Part of what I will lay out in the introduction is a rationale for the issues I will be addressing. Two

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1. <http://nyti.ms/122VJsL>.

issues that *Race, Sport and the American Dream* have not explicitly addressed in the 3rd edition and only for reason of organization are: (1) Sexuality and (2) Disability. In truth, an entire volume could be, and should be, dedicated to these issues. Both are part of the larger discussion of the American Dream and for that reason it is important that I provide at least a mention of them here.

Sexuality has long been an issue on the periphery of SportsWorld. In terms of sexual orientation, there has been a double standard with regards to gender. Though female athletes who came out as lesbians in the early 1980s, for example, Martina Navratilova, faced open bigotry, it has long been the case that lesbians were much more able to be “out” in SportsWorld than in so many other areas of American life. In contrast, the homophobia that clouds men’s sports is thick and oppressive. Until March of 2013, there were no “out” gay men who were *active* players (e.g. not retired) in any of the major sports—basketball, football, hockey, baseball or NASCAR. That all changed when Jason Collins, an active player in the NBA, revealed in *Sports Illustrated*<sup>2</sup> that he is gay. SportsWorld will survive as every other institution has and ultimately I believe that a player (or coach’s) sexuality, be he male or female, will no longer be an issue.

A more complicated challenge facing SportsWorld is the issue of gender identity—both transgender athletes and athletes who have some sort of intersex condition. The huge, and I would argue somewhat ridiculous, fear that male athletes would masquerade as women so as to increase their likelihood of winning—which of course can be very lucrative if one wins an Olympic gold medal for example—has meant that women athletes for decades have been subjected to gender testing. Once DNA was able to be examined, gender testing, which had previously been a “sight” test to see if women athletes had the “appropriate” body parts, became far more sophisticated and athletes with certain intersex conditions—for example women whose bodies produce levels of testosterone typically associated with men’s bodies—are now able to be identified and prohibited from competition. The case of Caster Semenya, the South African middle distance runner, brought this issue to the forefront. Though Semenya’s actual condition was never revealed, what was revealed was that she was banned for a year and required to undergo some procedures to bring her level of testosterone into the “normal” range for women.

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2. In the cover story of the May 6, 2013 issue of *Sports Illustrated*, and previously posted on the magazine’s website on April 29, 2013 Collins came out as gay and it is important to note that he was the first active male athlete from one of the four major American professional team sports to make such an announcement. <http://bit.ly/YgWF1E>.

Similarly, as more and more individuals who identify as trans seek to align their internal and external gender identities SportsWorld is faced with the challenge of mitigating competition for trans athletes. I note that Renee Richards forced the issue nearly four decades ago in the tennis world.<sup>3</sup> Again, based on the fear of men masquerading as women, most major sports governing bodies from the NCAA to the LPGA to the IOC (International Olympic Committee) have developed policies for allowing trans athletes to compete in their preferred gender. In sum, a male to female trans athlete who has taken testosterone blockers and estrogen replacement for a period of 24 months may participate as a woman. The science behind this policy demonstrates that after 24 months of hormonal therapy the athletic advantages associated with testosterone are removed. Interestingly, as with many other areas of social life in the United States, SportsWorld has led the way in developing policies and procedures around trans issues and like many other forms of integration the process will not be without tension but I'm optimistic that in the future it will eventually cease to be an issue of concern.

The issue of disabled athletes has always been treated with a segregated approach. For example, we have the Special Olympics and the Paralympics, which offer athletes with disabilities to compete against each other. As with the issues of sexuality, as the technologies associated with orthopedics—much of which has been driven in the U.S. by the return of soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan, many of whom suffered multiple amputations—disabled athletes have begun to agitate to participate in mainstream competitions. The South African sprinter Oscar Pistorius made history this year by becoming the first double amputee to compete in the non-Paralympics in London 2012. His success, coupled with the improvements in prosthetics, will likely result in more and more challenges to the sports' governing bodies to come up with policies to integrate disabled athletes into mainstream competitions.

Finally, I want to preview a major challenge to SportsWorld that will be addressed in the book: the use of performance enhancing drugs. PED scandals have plagued Major League Baseball for the entire decade of the 2000 and in 2013 a very long investigation of Lance Armstrong's use of PED finally led to his being given a lifetime ban from competition as well as the loss of his sponsorships including the U.S. Postal Service. We thought the highly publicized "Mitchell Report"<sup>4</sup> was the end of PEDS in Major League Baseball as several high profile players, including Roger Clemens, Andy Pettitte and others, were

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3. At Home with Renee' Richards. <http://nyti.ms/19meKPV>.

4. <http://mlb.mlb.com/mlb/news/mitchell/>.

forced to testify in front of Congress. Names of MLB players were included in the report and everyone involved seemed to think the “steroid era” in baseball was over.

In the summer of 2013 Anthony Bosch the founder of the Biogenesis Anti-Aging Clinic in Miami, Florida, agreed to name MLB players who he supplied PEDS to and baseball commissioner Bud Selig has agreed to accept Bosch’s proposal. If finalized scores of players, including Alex Rodriguez (New York Yankees) and Ryan Braun (Milwaukee Brewers), are looking at 100-game suspensions. This case, unlike the case against Roger Clemens and Barry Bonds, has the cooperation of Bosch, someone who is directly involved in providing the PEDS.

One of the biggest changes taking place in SportsWorld since 2009 has been the 24/7 media coverage of sports. This includes all levels of sports from Little League sports, high school sports, intercollegiate sports and up through the level of professional sports. Easily the leader in this new trend is the Walt Disney owned Entertainment and Sports Programming Network (ESPN) consisting of TV, radio, web and magazine entities. ESPN was founded in 1979 (Miller and Shales 2011) and one can only speculate about the vision its founders had. I wonder if even they had any idea about the way in which ESPN would both generate and benefit from the explosion of media to 24/7 coverage, social media, the internet, Facebook, Twitter and so forth?

Moving into the 21st century, even ESPN, which brought us the first 24/7 sports broadcast, dramatically expanded their brand—and moved into niche markets—to include “Page 2” (now closed); ESPN.com; ESPN New York; ESPN Dallas; ESPN Chicago, etc. The venerable *New York Times* (all the news that is fit to print) now has a sports blog page most famously used in 2013 by departing Baylor All-American Britney Griner to announce to the world that she is gay. *Yahoo Sports*, *The Atlantic*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Huffington Post*, *The Nation*, and *Bleacher Report*, as well as unattached blogs like the “blackathlete.net” and “sbnation.com,” have become players in SportsWorld, bringing traditional as well as non-traditional (gossip, funny stories, podcasts) news to sport fans. Then again, what do you say about Twitter and Facebook also contributing to the larger “voice” of sports coverage especially as an outlet for those fans (and occasionally players) “tweeting” from the actual games they are either playing in and / or attending? A highly controversial illustration of this overall expansion comes from the world of golf. In the spring of 2013, during the Masters—the most prestigious of all golf tournaments—a fan, viewing the game through the technology provided by the DVR, which allows for replaying in slow-motion in one’s living room, believed he saw an illegal drop by Tiger Woods. The fan reported the incident to Masters’ officials and Woods was sanctioned, overnight and between rounds. The one-stroke penalty had a measurable impact on his

final score. This kind of fan “participation” is only possible because of the many changes in the ways in which sports is delivered to the consumer.

In fact, once upon a time THE sports page to consult for the best sports coverage nationally was *USA Today*. Now *USA Today* (print & on-line editions) looks and reads more like one of those ridiculous “reality TV” shows (e.g., *Basketball Wives*) than a serious sports page. Yet, considering the availability of up-to-date statistics, they do, still, offer the best statistics on player and coach salaries for professional sports and coaching salaries for intercollegiate coaches.

These new voices and new platforms bring readers into the discussion that was once controlled by the print media sportswriters. Hence, because of this expansion we now know more about our athletes, institutions, teams, player and coach salaries, and their misbehavior than we have in any moment in history, including the womanizing of Babe Ruth or the alcohol consumption and negligence of Mickey Mantle as these new voices and platforms are not owned and controlled by the teams they cover (Lipsyte 2011).<sup>5</sup>

Despite gains—and these will be debated in much more depth—for African Americans on the field and even in coaching, there is little attention paid to the newsroom. Lapchick’s 2010-2011 third bi-annual report card entitled the *Associated Press Sports Editors Racial and Gender Report Card* which covers more than 320 websites and newspapers noted the following:

This report shows that in 2010, 97 percent of the sports editors, 85 percent of the assistant sports editors, 86 percent of our columnists, 86 percent of our reporters and 90 percent of our copy editors/designers were white. In the 2008 report, those numbers for the same positions were 94, 89, 88, 87, and 89 respectively. The percentage of males in those positions this year are 94, 90, 90, 89, and 84. In 2008, the percentages were 94, 90, 93, 91 and 84, respectively. The 2008 report showed a terrible lack of opportunity for people of color and women. In spite of that, there was actually a decline in 2010 for opportunities for people of color as sports editors (from 6 percent to 3 percent) and

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5. At the collegiate level we see this new voice with the vocal and highly visible Wake Forest University fan base exhibiting displeasure of Athletic Director Ron Wellman and his men’s basketball coach Jeff Bzdelik. The 3-year record for Bzdelik’s teams is dismal (something like 11-42 record in conference play) and no post-season play at all. Under the old system of sport reporting we would have hardly heard the rumbling! And indeed the “official” reporter, Dan Collins of the *Winston-Salem Journal*, spends more time defending Wellman and Bzdelik and critiquing the fans who are vocal in their displeasure, than investigating the data. <http://sports.yahoo.com/blogs/ncaab-the-dagger/wake-forest-fans-erect-billboard-demanding-firing-coach-042842808.html>.

copy editors (from 11 percent to 10 percent). The percentages of people of color increased for assistant sports editors (11 percent to 15 percent), columnists (12 percent to 14 percent) and reporters (13 percent to 14 percent). The worst news was perhaps that the percentage of sports editors who were women or people of color fell 2.3 percentage points from 11.7 percent in 2008 to 9.42 percent in 2010. White males in particular increased by 3.0 percentage points for sports editors.<sup>6</sup>

Also important to the 3rd edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* is the analysis showing the relationship between the celebrating of sport celebrity and the increasing inequalities in the U.S. and especially among the African American population. Some of this analysis focuses in on the assumed beliefs that with the first African American President Barack Obama—44th President of the United States—critical indices of well-being and success in accessing the American Dream would show improvement for Black citizens.<sup>7</sup> We show here through a critical analysis that these assumptions need to be, at best, tempered as so many of the measures that we as sociologists and other social scientists rely on to assess upward mobility do not show progress. There is a sense that a once thought to be stalled movement in upward social mobility in America has, in fact, become permanent.<sup>8</sup>

Each and every chapter of *Race, Sports and the American Dream* has been updated not only improving the clarity of the text but also bringing the arguments already therein up to date. This required addressing both the arguments and the data used to cement the arguments. For example, in chapter 8, Sports Leadership: Where Are the Managers, we have seen a seesaw effect at both the intercollegiate and professional levels and in even the short period of time since the 2nd edition (four years) the number of African American coaches and managers has gone up and right back down. A two-steps forward and one-step back phenomenon. This chapter, like the others, has been updated to reflect the latest data available for making the argument that while African American athletes play the game they are a rarity in positions of sport leadership when their playing days are over.

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6. [http://tidesport.org/RGRC/2011/2011\\_APSE\\_RGRC\\_FINAL.pdf?page=lapchick/110517](http://tidesport.org/RGRC/2011/2011_APSE_RGRC_FINAL.pdf?page=lapchick/110517).

7. The terms “African-American” and “Black” are used interchangeably in this edition of the book.

8. See, especially, Professor Steven Haider at Michigan State University discussing upward mobility: [http://pd.npr.org/anon.npr-mp3/665/ingest/2011/11/20111118\\_ingest\\_065301620.mp3?orgId=665&ft=3&f=142496797](http://pd.npr.org/anon.npr-mp3/665/ingest/2011/11/20111118_ingest_065301620.mp3?orgId=665&ft=3&f=142496797).

Furthermore, the new 3rd edition will include a new chapter entitled “Male Athlete Violence Against Women” examining the escalating physical, psychological and sexual assault on wives, girlfriends and significant others. The decision to add this chapter and delete the chapter “Athletes Misbehaving: Why the Lack of Civility” did not come easily but flows from seeing the type of athlete misbehavior escalate from abusing alcohol and drugs, breaking curfew, etc., to the types of very serious incidents mentioned above. The sub-section in “Athletes Misbehaving: Why the Lack of Civility” entitled “violence against women” has been incorporated and expanded in the new chapter to reflect both this more serious “misbehavior” and its amazing commonness.

With widespread conference realignment –mainly for reasons associated with football—that took on a life of its own during the summer of 2012, especially in the Big Six intercollegiate conferences (Big 10, Big East, ACC, SEC, Pac-12 and Big 12), there came an uptick in the criticism of the leadership within the NCAA. Whereas there has always been criticism of the heavy hand that the NCAA employs in its rule of college sports this new critique comes from the college presidents themselves.<sup>9</sup>

Further complicating NCAA President Mark Emmert’s leadership are the many scandals that have erupted on his watch. These scandals include, but are not limited to, the Jerry Sandusky child sex abuse scandal inside the Penn State football program, the massive scandal at the University of Miami in which a major donor gave unauthorized gifts to athletes, coaches and the institution itself, the academic scandal at the University of North Carolina in which a single department, African American Studies, held “no show” classes for athletes, and Rutgers University which was faced with an athlete abuse case involving the men’s basketball coach that resulted in his firing as well as the resignation of the athletic director on the eve of Rutgers plan to move to the Big 10. Both Sandusky, of Penn State, and Nevin Shapiro, the University of Miami booster, are serving long prison sentences for their crimes. The rising disgruntledness with the NCAA comes charged with accusations over high-handed top down leadership and the inability to be reflective. The 3rd edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* pays special attention to these rumblings as college sports goes through complex challenges, many of which involve money.

In the original research for the 1st edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* I conducted keyword searches to identify the threads of importance for sport scientists. In every major discipline category including psychology, eco-

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9. <http://chronicle.com/blogs/players/ohio-states-president-has-advice-for-embattled-ncaa-leader/32691>.

nomics, history, kinesiology and sociology, books and articles with the terms “race,” “racism,” “Black” and “African American” in their titles had by far the largest number of citations.

While I have not replicated the search and therefore cannot be 100% sure that the same is still true as I write the 3rd edition, I surmise that it would be. Race plays a big part of SportsWorld here and abroad. In May 2013, for example, after Tiger Woods won the Players Championship (May 9-12, 2013) Sergio Garcia, a Spanish golfer, who has a history of making negative comments about Tiger, went on to “joke,” in a public venue, about having Tiger over for dinner at the U.S. Open. Garcia put it this way: “We will have him round every night. We will serve fried chicken.”<sup>10</sup>

It is important to note that these types of remarks are not isolated incidents nor are they just jokes, especially in our current climate. In a column in *USA Today Sports* (Brady 2013), Richard Lapchick, director of the DeVos Sport Business Management program at the University of Central Florida, offers this analysis:

[T]here were 600 hate groups in the U.S. the year that Obama ran for president and 800 when he was inaugurated for the first time and more than 1,000 now. That’s the most in American history, We’re not talking about the European stage anymore. We still have a lot of work to do right here.<sup>11</sup>

There have been a whole series of negative reactions from many Whites to the election of an African American President; and surprisingly (or not), this negativity is not limited to Whites involved in “fringe groups.”<sup>12</sup> For example, at the 2009 State of the Union Address Georgia Congressman Joe Wilson blurted out the now infamous “You Lie” as President Obama was speaking. In January 2012 in Phoenix, Republican Arizona Governor Jan Brewer was waiting at the bottom of the steps when Obama alighted from Air Force One. She can be seen in the photographs of their meeting at the bottom of the ramp waving her finger in Obama’s face thus disrespecting the President of the United States. And regardless of your own political views, it is fair to

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10. <http://bleacherreport.com/articles/1647761-sergio-garcia-makes-insensitive-remark-about-tiger-woods>

11. <http://www.usatoday.com/story/sports/golf/2013/05/22/tiger-woods-sergio-garcia-race-in-golf/2352783/>

12. See the Southern Poverty Law center Report; “White Hot.” <http://www.splcenter.org/home/2012/spring/white-hot#.UaMwtGS4Ey8>

say that neither of these elected officials would be widely regarded as being on the “fringe.”<sup>13</sup>

There are also numerous negative slights coming from African Americans. One example is the very public one-sided feud waged by academic Cornell West; West’s negative comments began after he did not receive a coveted—or “expected”—invitation to the 2009 Inauguration, something many African Americans of note felt entitled to. Various iterations of West’s annoyance with the President are available but the essence of his concerns is that Obama has become a right-leaning centrist and a puppet of big business. West accuses Obama of running away from poverty stricken African Americans and of having a certain fear of free black men.<sup>14</sup>

Hence, Sergio Garcia’s recent remarks show that inside the rarified small world of professional golf there has been a similar reaction to Tiger Woods as I note above the same types of reactions to Obama. The reader will recall the first “fried chicken” remark was made by a veteran White male golfer, Fuzzy Zoeller, on the occasion of Woods winning his first Masters title in 1997. The tradition at the Masters is that the winner hosts a dinner of his choosing for the other golfers in the field.

A title I used in a paper some years back is appropriate here, slightly modified (1999): “Race Matters in SportsWorld.” It matters at all levels of sport. It matters in the elite high schools and boarding schools around the country and in the college recruiting process. Race matters in the National Hockey League and in Major League Baseball. Race matters in the stands at all sporting events from Fenway Park as well as at the Meadowlands. It matters at college football games as the legal scholars Amy and Robert McCormick show in their paper on the “apartheid” nature of major college sports where they report on a comment heard just before kickoff at a football game: “Well, it’s our niggers against their niggers ...” (McCormick and McCormick 2010).

The 3rd edition also looks at new data on African Americans in leadership positions in SportsWorld. That is to say, how are African Americans fairing as managers, coaches, and owners in the sports they played and/or are simply interested in being involved with post-participation?

While it is important to show and understand the low numbers of African Americans in SportsWorld leadership positions—for which these numbers

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13. I can’t detail it here but the First Lady Michelle Obama has also been the target of racial hatred. Denise Oliver Velez, 2013. “White privilege, black blaming, and dissing the first lady.” June 9th, <http://bit.ly/15MCMip>.

14. <http://madamenoire.com/109803/dr-cornel-west-tell-em-why-you-mad-son/#sthash.xhbjaNhh.dpuf>.

have not fluctuated much since the 2nd edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream*—we argue here, as we did in the 2nd edition, that the causes of this stagnation are more complex than simply racism.

Examining leadership in so many institutions including sports, higher education (schooling) and the non-sport workplace is a complex task and finding a model that adequately explains the low rates of diversity is difficult. For example, how can we explain a phenomenon that took place in the winter of 2013; with eight NFL coaches fired and thus eight opportunities to hire an African American coach, not one was hired despite that fact that two men, Lovie Smith and Jim Caldwell, both had more experience and better records than some of the eight (8) new White male coaches hired at the end of the 2013 NFL season. Of the 8 new NFL head coaches hired at the end of the 2012-2013 season only Andy Reid at the Kansas City Chiefs (formerly with the Eagles) had any NFL head coaching experience. Several of the new head coaches, including Chip Kelly (formerly head coach of the University of Oregon Ducks), have no NFL experience of any kind, let alone coaching experience, whereas both Caldwell and Smith are veteran coaches and Smith ended the 2012-2013 season with a 10-6 record, one of the best in the league.

Overall, what the theory says about positive and negative Black leadership evaluations is that Black leaders are evaluated positively immediately after success. Carton and Rosette (2011:1141) go on to say “because of stereotyping, Black leaders are evaluated negatively regardless of their performance.” The outcome of these types of goal-based stereotyping evaluations is devastating in that it leads to the “underrepresentation of Blacks in organizational leadership positions” (Carton and Rosette 2011:1152). The Carton and Rosette study is highly relevant to the discussion in this 3rd edition of the book because their research relies on data on Black college quarterbacks at the Division 1 level (now redefined and called the Football Championship Subdivision) for the 2007 football season.

We believe that the reasoning and decision making on who to hire, or not, is not found in the individual owner or manager looking to skirt the hire of a Black man. Rather, we believe that these decisions can only be understood adequately by considering the environment and context in which they are made and in consideration of the structural impediments that correlate with race (Patterson 1997).

Following the logic of this paradigm, let’s consider the following illustration. If Blacks are more likely to be dominant players (witness the All-Star stats) and Whites are more likely to be average players, reserve players or even benchwarmers—this is especially true when looking at rosters in both college and professional basketball and football—then good White players spend

more time sitting on the bench and paying attention to the game. This is true especially in high school and college, where rosters are bigger and often can expand to absorb “walk on” players, these mediocre White players may be doing other tasks as well, including keeping stats on pitch locations, defensive patterns, shot selection and so forth. All of these tasks assist the coach who is too busy watching the game. One consequence of this, perhaps unintended, is that these “bench” players have the opportunity to develop more knowledge about the *strategy* of the game. And it is this skill more so than athletic ability—the skill to *play* the game—that is critical to success in coaching. This may explain cases like that of Erik Spoelstra who, with no playing experience in the NBA, was named head coach of the Miami Heat by Pat Riley. Spoelstra was not only a mediocre player, but he helped his father coach in high school, another predictor of coaching success. This explanation is certainly shaped by race, but it is not overt racism that is at the heart of understanding the causes of hires like Erik Spoelstra. Rather it is more complex; patterns like this can be understood as being the result of the way that race and opportunity interact in high school and college, thus producing the phenomenon we see: very few opportunities for African American men as head coaches.

Similarly, if one of the primary routes to becoming a head coach is through apprenticeship—namely by occupying certain assistant and support positions where certain leadership skills are learned (offensive coordinator or quarterback coach rather than recruiter or defensive line coach)—and if African American men are less likely to be given these opportunities, then it is not surprising that African American men will be overlooked for the higher leadership positions. Again, this illustration suggests that race matters, but the ways in which it matters is more complex than simply individual racism.

What is more difficult to explain is the case in which a White coach is hired who does not have the requisite experience. In fact, White male coaches are hired on a regular basis without experience of any kind and there is a lack of understanding why. One of the commonly given explanations is that, because a head coach has to have rapport with the donor at the college level and the management at the professional level, those doing the hiring are concerned about the ability of African American men to “fit in” at places like the country club. This “country club” explanation simply becomes the cover used by athletic directors in college sports and owners in professional sports to not hire the chief CEO of football teams in their respective arenas otherwise they may upset/disappoint the mostly anonymous big donors who they depend on for money. Yet, I argue that this, too, is much too simplistic an explanation.

According to the research findings from Nancy DiTomaso in her new book *The American Non-Dilemma: Racial Inequality Without Racism* (2012) it is

the networks of Whites who pass on tips and opportunities to other Whites—some of whom are family members—that accounts for the upward mobility of Whites. Her research, based on face-to-face interviews with Whites, revealed that many reported having little to no contact with African Americans once they left college. Thus, even the networks among African American and White players while in college do not survive the post-college experience. As integrated as the college playing field or court may be, the majority of college athletes leave college and return to lives—often in their home communities—that are as highly segregated as when they left to attend college.

These important findings reinforce what we found in terms of “social capital networks” available, or not, for those returning from prison and reentering society. Without this social capital the necessary adjustments needed for entering viable employment and decent housing is tough, almost impossible (Hattery and Smith 2010; Day and McDonald 2011).

Relying on networks and social capital within confined circles allows for perceptions of no malice, and definitely no racism, in the hiring process. DiTomaso’s work just reconfirms that not only race but social class still matters in the labor market and the argument being made here is that it does matter still in attempting to land employment in leadership positions in SportsWorld.

## The American Dream

Early in Chapter 1 of the 2nd edition I address the issue of the American Dream uncritically. For all the literature that exists on the American Dream, little of it, in fact, is a critical assessment of Americans’ life chances (Wilson 1991), mostly reflecting a celebration of the “idea” of the American Dream. Maybe that is how it should be but when addressing issues of race, class and gender a sociologist interested in issues of social stratification must analyze American society critically.

The American Dream is about hope. Three mainstays of the American Dream are (1) a single family home, (2) a good decent job with benefits and (3) an education at least up through completion of the baccalaureate degree. All three areas have become highly problematic since the publication of the 2nd edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* or, put differently, since Barack Obama became the first African American President of the United States (Hattery and Smith 2012).

The American Dream after all is about hope. It is about achieving upward mobility and how American society moved out of the era of World War II into

becoming the first country on earth to develop a mass middle class characterized by homeownership, TVs, automobiles, good health care, quality education and good jobs.

Inserted into this quest, about midway into the 1950's, was the belief that through sports, especially baseball, you could earn a decent living—if you were male and White.

Being mindful of how African American Civil Society really works, e.g., race-color consciousness (Hochschild and Weaver 2007; Robinson 2011) and social class divisions, we open up the discussion of the American Dream in chapter 1 to account for class differences among African Americans and especially among athletes.

Even if White males saw opportunities for upward mobility through sports beginning in the 1950s we must remember that large scale social segregation was still intact across all major American institutions including, but not limited to, the Armed Forces, institutions of higher education, Congress, and in SportsWorld. Once you get past the “exception to the rule” whereby one African American athlete, here and there, was allowed to play sports at some college and/or on some professional baseball or football team, the terms of exclusion were still intact.

One of the most painful challenges that many of these African American men who crossed the color line faced total isolation off the field. One painful example comes to us from the biography of Syracuse University running back Ernie Davis who was newly minted as the first African American to win the Heisman Trophy in 1961 (Davis died of leukemia in May 18, 1963). While driving from Pennsylvania to Virginia for a pick-up basketball game with former Syracuse teammate John Brown and the basketball coach Roland Coleman, Davis and Brown and Coleman stopped for gas and food. They were denied service at the restaurant. Coleman put it this way:

I remember saying, this guy is an All-American. He had coffee with President Kennedy, and he can't get a hamburger?<sup>15</sup>

The other incident I will point to comes in 1966 when Texas Western College (now the University of Texas at El Paso) won the NCAA men's basketball championship beating the thought to be unbeatable University of Kentucky (72–65) led by coach Adolph Rupp. Texas Western, coached by the late Don Haskins (March 14, 1930—September 7, 2008), started an all-Black lineup

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15. Garcia, Marlen. 2007. “Elmira Express Ernie Davis runs again in movie.” *USA Today*, [http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/sports/college/football/2007-07-16-ernie-davis-feature\\_N.htm](http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/sports/college/football/2007-07-16-ernie-davis-feature_N.htm).

in the national championship game. This was totally unheard of at this time. Though some major teams had recruited a few Black players, the generally accepted rule was “no more than 3 on the road and 2 at home,” which referred to the strategy for how many Black players could be on the court at the same time (Russell 1971). No major-college team had ever started five Blacks in a sanctioned NCAA championship game prior to Haskins decision to do so. The racist heckling, the Confederate Flags being flown in the University of Maryland Cole field house, and the noise from the all-White crowd was all pointed at Haskins’ team but did not deter the young men from achieving their goal: beating Kentucky. While the loss devastated Rupp, Kentucky did not recruit a Black player until 1970 (Fitzpatrick 1999).

A relatively new value of the American Dream is diversity, both in terms of populations and in terms of equal access to the American Dream. College presidents seek to report that the campuses for which they are responsible are “diverse” and Americans hold on to a belief, no matter how false, that the American Dream is open to all. College sports plays an interesting role in this value of diversity.

As the reader is no doubt aware, college campuses are, for the most part, not as diverse as their mission statements and strategic plans would set as a goal. A common strategy that administrators espouse for diversifying a campus is via athletics, specifically football. With rosters of 85 players, at least 40% of whom are African American, this is often seen as a strategy for increasing the presence of Black men on campus. Indeed some campuses that have an uneven balance by gender often suggest this strategy as well to get men of any racial/ethnic identity on campus. Yet, experience shows that there is just as much segregation of these student athletes away from the general student body, and away from African American students who are not athletes, as there was when the studies commissioned by the NCAA in 1989 demonstrated widespread “alienation” among the top tier African American athletes on predominantly White college campuses (Center for the Study of Athletics 1989). Thus, employing this strategy is successful only if the goal is to increase the actual numbers of African American men on campus and not contribute to the wider goals of diversity that include both opportunities for interracial friendships but also a critical mass of minority students which often contributes to a more positive campus climate.

Another consequence of this strategy for achieving diversity that may be unintended but is nonetheless powerful is the fact that it can contribute to an inflated sense of how diverse a campus is. For fans who attend football and basketball games or even better watch them on TV the image they will see is much “darker” than reality. Seeing 9 of 10 players on a basketball court who

are African American or dozens of Black men running around on a football field can create a perspective that the campus itself has many more African Americans than it really does. Thus, when administrators push for increasing diversity—if this is indeed their goal—they may meet resistance that is a direct result of the images and perspective that are artificially created by the diversity in the two most high profile sports. The images can also give the impression that the overall playing field of higher education is much more level than the numbers tell us it is.

I will close this Introduction to the 3rd edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* pointing out that sports are now an important American institution. The late Harvard sociologist David Riesman, who wrote one of the most iconic books on Americans of the 20th Century (*The Lonely Crowd: A Study of the Changing American Character*, 1950), noted that: “The path to the boardroom leads through the locker room.”<sup>16</sup> This is so much truer today than when Riesman said it in 1950 and is a cogent reminder, as if we need one, of the growth of SportsWorld and especially how all other sectors of the American political economy have retreated against their ill will of sports to now openly embracing them. In mainstream advertising, especially in beer and automobile commercials, stadium naming, bringing in big-time, high-visibility coaches like Bobby Knight, Pat Summitt or Mike Krzyzewski to speak in the boardroom to the executives of Fortune Five Hundred Corporations, SportsWorld today is no longer the “toy department” of American life (Fabrizio 2012)!<sup>17</sup> Rather, it is an integral part of the economy and society that makes up America.

Aspirations play a big role in the American Dream. Yet, like the Dream itself, aspirations come from somewhere. Adler and Adler (1991) in their book *Backboards and Blackboards: College Athletics and Role Engulfment* discuss the issue of aspirations among African American student athletes at a Midwestern university. And, although this research makes important contributions, missing from this discussion and all other sports sociology discussions of these student athletes’ aspirations to play intercollegiate sports and / or professional sports is the problematic role of ideology (Beamon, and Bell. 2002).

That is to say the one missing piece to understanding the American Dream is this role that ideology plays in defining both the American Dream and the

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16. Sociologist David Riesman (in Underwood, 1981).

17. Interesting that Duke University even has the Fuqua/Coach K Center on Leadership & Ethics (COLE), a premier academic center, established in 2004 by Duke University’s Fuqua School of Business. The mission: “To respond to today’s need for ethical leaders and leadership development.” <http://cole.fuqua.duke.edu/about/>.

aspirations individuals hold in relation to the American Dream. The Swedish sociologist Goran Therborn's (1980) framework helps us to locate ideology as a central part of the American Dream. Therborn argued that hegemonic ideology—or the dominant set of beliefs that are commonly accepted and guide human behavior—have the power to define our values and aspirations as well as define our options. Specifically, hegemonic ideologies—of which the American Dream is a perfect illustration—has the power to define:

1. What exists or what “is,”
2. What is good, and
3. What is possible

What Therborn means by this is that hegemonic ideologies constrain our aspirations and behavior in ways that we seldom recognize because they are so dominant and so ingrained in our collective consciousness. For example, even in the beginning of the 21st century, most Americans believe in the pursuit of the American Dream, but they define access to the American Dream differently for different people. It is still commonly believed that a key part to the American Dream for women is childbearing and childrearing.

And, though many, many men also engage in parenting, doing so is not defined as central to their success in the same way that it is for women. As a result, if mothering is defined as “what exists” and is further defined as part of “what is good,” and what it means to be a “good woman,” then women who also have career aspirations or who need to work outside of the home in order to provide for themselves will have to find ways to juggle work and family obligations in ways that men will not. It is “possible” for men to achieve success in their occupations—and in life—without being a parent, not so for women, in ways that reduce the stress of balancing for men while increasing it for women. Or, in the case of women who choose not to engage in childbearing and parenting there will be a social penalty applied; these women will be judged as “less good” than both their male counterparts and their female counterparts who do have children.

When it comes to race and access to the American Dream, a powerful component of the hegemonic ideology is that African Americans, and African American men in particular, have “natural” athleticism and simultaneously do not have “natural” intellectual gifts and talents. This is simply “what exists.” The direct result from this ideological construction is that athletics is both “what is good”—this is a suitable occupation for African American men—and thus “what is possible” as an access route to the American Dream for African American men.

When we apply Therborn to the question of aspiration it becomes clear that some highly unrealistic scenarios shape the aspirations these African Ameri-

can student athletes have. Whether it is looking at ESPN Sports Center “highlight reels,” or some football or basketball (college or pro) “game of the week,” one can and probably will come away from these experiences thinking that (1) the playing field is where you belong; (2) the playing field is truly level; and (3) the playing field offers your best opportunity for success and thereby accessing the American Dream. It is also easy to conclude that one’s individual chances of playing basketball for the University of Connecticut or football for Ohio State or Michigan are within reach.

And, because this ideology and these aspirations are also held by parents, coaches, and the society writ large, it is easy to see why so many African American men “put all of their eggs” in the athletic “basket” and neglect the skills necessary to successfully navigate alternative routes—such as education or preparation for the trades or even military service—to the American Dream.

The long time sport sociologist Eitzen (1999) in his essay entitled “Upward Mobility Through Sport, The Myths and Realities” put it thus:

Although making it as professional athletes are more favorable than is the case for whites (about 1 in 3,500 African American male high school athletes, compared to 1 in 10,000 white male high school athletes) these odds remain slim. Of the 40,000 or so African Americans boys who play high school basketball, only 35 will make the NBA and only 7 will be starters.

Harry Edwards, an African American sport sociologist, has written extensively on this issue. Edwards argues that a myopic ideology has developed in the African American community that preferences sports as an avenue for success over all other routes. This ideology is problematic for many reasons, but similar to Eitzen, one of his primary concerns is that it renders invisible the very low probability for success via this route as compared to others. As quoted in Eitzen:

Statistically, you have a better chance of getting hit by a meteorite in the next ten years than getting work as an athlete.

As a result, African American parents encourage their children, and their boys in particular, to devote all of the energy to the development of their athletic skills at the exclusion of all other areas, including intellectual development. As a result, African American boys are excused, for example, from poor performance in school, especially if the time they would have spent studying is spent on the practice field or court instead. All of this is despite the fact that the odds of earning a bachelor’s degree are many times greater than the odds of earning an athletic scholarship and even more likely than making a living

playing professional sports. The film *Hoop Dreams* is an excellent illustration of this.

While the chances for African American males to make the leap from high school sports to college sports are L O N G, these chances become even stiffer as we move deeper into the 21st century. Playing high school sports for your local high school team (this discussion is focused on the two sports of football and basketball) becomes less important than it was 10 years ago; participation on high school sports teams, especially in basketball, has largely been replaced in importance by playing for AAU or other exclusive travel teams. Today's teenage athletes often focus early on only one sport—gone are the days of the football player who played soccer or lacrosse in the “off season” just to stay in shape. They engage in far more strength training and skill development which focuses their skills even more. Many of these high school athletes now compete for AAU travel teams and privately funded athletic teams and a growing number spend thousands of dollars attending elite sports camps and even year-round sports academies like International Management Group (IMG).

What this translates into in the context of SportsWorld is that the average high school athlete sees his (or her) chances of landing a tier 1 full scholarship shrinking very close to non-existent. And, even when they are offered a scholarship to a division 1 college or university, unless the athlete is playing football or basketball, and as the recent literature shows, many of these scholarships are only partially funding the student's education and even “full” scholarships have a variety of meanings depending on the institution.<sup>18</sup>

At the collegiate level the probability that an individual African American student-athlete will even make it to the professional level is slim. As Beamon, and Bell. (2002) demonstrate, aspirations are high for African American student athletes but the reality of their moving forward with these dreams is low.

At the level of paid sports, the pro level, Miracle and Rees showed in their 1994 study entitled *Lessons of the Locker Room* that only 2 of every 100,000 aspiring young Black athletes ever make it to professional sports that pay a salary, a living wage. And, with their “eggs” invested exclusively in the athletic basket their odds of achieving the American Dream through other avenues shrink even further.

To close this new introduction I will repeat in full what is said briefly later in the book by Harvard scholar Henry Gates (2004) paraphrasing then Senator Obama:

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18. Ramogi Huma, Ramogi. 2012. “Let's Compensate College Athletes By Making Sure They Graduate.”

Americans suffer from anti-intellectualism, starting in the White House, . . . . Our people can least afford to be anti-intellectual. Too many of our children have come to believe that it's easier to become a black professional athlete than a doctor or lawyer. Reality check: according to the 2000 census, there were more than 31,000 black physicians and surgeons, 33,000 black lawyers and 5,000 black dentists. Guess how many black athletes are playing professional basketball, football and baseball combined. About 1,400. In fact, there are more board-certified black cardiologists than there are black professional basketball players.

**Table 1.1 Number of Men and Women Who Make a Living in Professional Sports**

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NBA:	450
WNBA:	160
NFL:	1696
MLB:	1280
NHL:	690
NASCAR:	125
(Nationwide and Sprint Series Combined)	
Total: 4,385	

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Source: Author generated data from web sources.

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Without saying it directly Professor Gates is noting that not only has American society changed but so has SportsWorld.

The 3rd edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* has been updated to capture some of these changes including, but not limited to, detailing that while large percentages of American society has changed—the 44th President of the United States is a Black man—little has changed in SportsWorld or at least not as cataclysmic as having for President of the United States the descendant of former slaves.

Likewise, in watching the 100 plus year history of the U.S. Open golf tournament (June 2013) that began in 1895 it was noticeable that in all the weather delays across several days and the huge pre-game commentary on both ESPN and NBC leading up to actual play, the TV footage showed the legends e.g., Jack Nicklaus, Lee Trevino, Arnold Palmer, Gary Player, Ben Hogan and other greats you could also see that a good number of the caddies were African American. This has changed.

In today's game you have brothers, sons, and wives of players doing the caddying. Why? With the movement of golf out from the "back porch" of SportsWorld to the front porch and with big TV advertising, NIKE commer-

cial featuring the top golfers like Tiger Woods, Rory McIlroy, etc., so has the approach to the wider game of golf.

It all begins with TV. Next, you can see the players are much more physically fit than when Jack Nicholas and Arnold Palmer ruled the game. Then there are the caddies. No longer simply the man who carried the golf bag, caddies have become a part of the golfer's game. They read tees, check the wind, read greens and they are experts on which club should be used on which hole. In a word, caddies.

# PREFACE TO THE 3RD EDITION—2014

*Race, Sport and the American Dream*, second edition (2009), focused on the exponential growth of SportsWorld. From exploding coaches' salaries to ever-expanding playing fields—especially football stadiums in high schools, colleges and in the National Football League (NFL)—to hypercommercialism and the expansive growth in Little League sports, SportsWorld looks very different today than it did just five years ago.

The focus and analysis in the 2nd edition was deliberate. Simultaneous with the growth of the institution of sport concomitant with it, American Society was mired in a recession (or a recession-like) economy—hundreds of thousands of Americans lost their homes through foreclosures, unemployment reached double digits even among groups of Americans with historically low unemployment rates, and the average household income dropped for the first time in decades. All the while big banks were reducing the interest rates that ordinary people received on their savings while at the same time receiving government handouts themselves (The Troubled Asset Relief Program—TARP).<sup>1</sup> And, salaries in SportsWorld continued to spiral upwards and out of control.

Of equal importance since the last edition is the election of Barack Obama, the first African American president of the United States. And, as debate rages in so many areas of American life about the impact of this historic event—has the U.S. entered the proverbial post-racial era<sup>2</sup>—the same can be asked about SportsWorld. Thus, this 3rd edition comes at a time in the overall context of the re-election of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the U.S. These historic events (both the first and second elections) raise the question does race still matter in the U.S., in the pursuit of the American Dream and in SportsWorld?

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1. <http://www.treasury.gov/initiatives/financial-stability/TARP-Programs/Pages/default.aspx>

2. See, especially Hattery and Smith (2012) where we do a long examination of this issue in our book *African American Families: Myths and Realities*.

The 3rd edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* follows this same mode of analysis. The volume has been thoroughly revised, chapter by chapter, with updates to all of the data with the purpose of establishing the empirical standard that differentiates this book from so many others that simply assert, offering opinions about the happenings in SportsWorld, rather than taking a deep analysis of the data surrounding these day-to-day events.

Early in the research program for the 1st edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* the decision was made not to disaggregate the discussion about SportsWorld into the various levels of sport in American society, for example, not focusing on the distinctions between intercollegiate sports and professional sports unless differences were significant to the discussion. This decision was made to ensure a more holistic approach and analysis was done for all levels of athletic competition, rather than superficially separating them from each other. This remains true for the 3rd edition as well.

In terms of evidence and data, what stands out in the 3rd edition is that unlike the 1st and even 2nd editions of the book we now have inserted into the discussion of sports in the U.S. what I am calling the “Third Sports Page”—that is, the blogs that all of the print and online news outlets employ to give further voices to sport broadcasting. This expands our access to information and also to opinion and theorizing, in every conceivable meaning of the term.

## Overview of Revisions and the Chapters

In response to students and other readers I have added throughout the 3rd edition numerous revisions, updates and two entirely new chapters. Throughout the book I have made clarifications to the arguments and updated my analysis of SportsWorld.

Chapter 1—A New Sociology of Sport has been updated to include some of the more relevant scientific literature that examines issues in SportsWorld. Several new analyses come from legal scholars who have a different take than sociologists on issues of compensation, contracts, and the NCAA’s ability to continue to define itself as a non-profit organization, all of this in light of data showing that in the NCAA has a new 14-year, \$10.8 billion contract with Turner Broadcasting and CBS Sports for broadcast rights to the Division I Men’s Basketball Championship. The NCAA also has a projected \$800 million income for 2012-2013. These new data are helpful for re-examining how sport scholars look at the larger institution of sports, far different than the work that was being produced just a decade ago.

Chapter 2—African Americans and Sport addresses the overrepresentation and underrepresentation of African Americans in some sports (basketball, football) and lack of participation in others (NASCAR, tennis, etc.). What are the cultural explanations for this divide when there does not seem to be a physiological explanation to account for this phenomenon? To illustrate: in two of the “whitest” country club sports in America—tennis and golf—African American women are ranked in #1 spots in tennis and an African American male is ranked #1 in golf. The extraordinary success of the Williams sisters, Serena in particular, as well as Tiger Woods, should be inspiring a social movement, or at least a scholarly interest, in the proposition that tennis and golf would or should have become the new basketball of Black America. Yet, there are no “tails” lurking young African American women and men to these sports. Why?

Chapter 3—Race and Sports: The Genetic Arguments revisits the age-old debates about athletic prowess. New research out of South Africa by the scholars running the on-line journal *The Science of Sport* has proved to be invaluable in terms of understanding the “nature versus nurture” arguments about the role of genetics in athletic abilities. This debate is still raging in the U.S., especially when it comes to characterizing African American athletes’ athletic abilities, the quote unquote “natural black athlete.” We even have new language in sports broadcasting when discussing Black athletes: IQ. The most prominent being “basketball IQ.”<sup>3</sup>

Chapter 4—Young African American Athletes is updated to account for the rise in youth sports in general and the all-eggs-in-one-basket approach in particular when it comes to Black boys and sport participation. Traveling teams, AAU agents, and money passing hands, alternative educational institutions—sports factories—will be used to illustrate this exponential growth. This chapter also addressed the dark topic of child sexual abuse in youth sports, pointing to the scandal at Pennsylvania State University and Jerry Sandusky.

Chapter 5—The Promise of an Education is a discussion of just how important a tag African Americans put on their education and simultaneously just how important a commitment the educational establishment places on doing the job of educating Black students who also happen to be athletes. The updated argument is placed in the context of a research hypothesis that *Race, Sport and the American Dream* must have changed since the last printing in that the 44th President of the United States Barack Obama is Black and therefore pushing for, as he has said on many occasions, access to education for all Americans. Is this the case for any student athlete, and especially for African

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3. <http://www.sportsscientists.com/2008/01/about-us-who-are-we.html>.

American student athletes, who play the high profile sports of basketball and football where the allure of making millions as a professional athlete looms large despite its “lottery-like” quality? Even the NCAA acknowledges in their ad campaigns that most student athletes will go “pro” in something other than sports.

Chapter 6—Athletes Misbehaving: Why the Lack of Civility (originally chapter 7) has been deleted. Parts of the theoretical argument remain, addressing aberrant social behavior, but the new chapter is entitled Male Athletes and Violence Against Women. This approach brings the book up to date with the violence we see taking place inside SportsWorld directed at spouses, girlfriends, significant others and even mothers.

Chapter 7—Sports Leadership: Where are the Managers looks at the time lapse between the 2nd edition and 3rd and the voicing of acceptance of policies like the Rooney Rule (NFL) to place more African Americans into sport leadership positions. We are asking how impactful has this been and not just for the NFL. This chapter also includes a substantial revision to the theoretical framework, incorporating the contributions of scholars focused on sports management as well as scholars working at the intersection of race, gender and power.

Chapter 8—The Athletic Industrial Complex has undergone extensive revising, updating and adding to it. Chapter 8 is the chapter that is all about money. To extend this chapter I have added a large section on “conference realignment” since these actions were not taking place when the 2nd edition was published—specifically the dramatic summer of “conference realignment” that took place in 2012. Of concern, of course, is the impact of this movement on institutions, coaches, and especially Olympic student athletes, women student athletes and Black athletes.

Chapter 9—The Future of Sports focuses on the eight (8) “things to watch” in SportsWorld. Some of the topics include (a) Violence in Youth Sports, (b) Money, (c) the expansion of sports media and (d) conference realignment in intercollegiate sports.

I invite the reader—be it the reader new to the topic or a well-read veteran—to read the 3rd edition with the interest, enthusiasm, and critical eye that was used to write it. Thank you.

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

No author of a single authored book can complete the task without assistance.

Thus, this 3rd edition of *Race, Sport and the American Dream* is no exception.

First and foremost I want to thank Beth Hall at Carolina Academic Press (CAP). Throughout the process of book making—for the 3rd edition and 1st and 2nd as well—Ms. Hall provided excellent editorial advice. Thanks, Beth.

I am grateful to the research and writing partnership I have with Professor Angela J. Hattery, Ph.D. Across 10 books, a score of book chapters, articles and public presentations we have been able to make a contribution to many of the burning social/behavioral dialogues we have found to be of interest. Thank you.

Finally, I am happy to be able to keep *Race, Sport and the American Dream* alive and relevant in terms of the growing debates in SportsWorld.