

Policing Black Athletes | Racial Disconnect in Sports

Vernon L. Andrews

"Why isn't sport played the way it used to be played, when football was for men who loved America, who saluted the flag, and who respected our men in blue and our troops by standing—and not kneeling—for our National Anthem!" This sentiment permeates American football today, and represents the feelings of many fans who can appreciate their Black heroes, but find the issue of "Blackness" via the two extremes of celebratory expression and protest, regressive. "This should be about sport, not politics," many feel. The author concurs. As much as we may wish the sporting arena didn't have to be one of the last battlefields for Civil Rights, here we are. This book explores how conflicts over diversity, culture, inclusion, exclusion, protest and control have been played out over the years in various sports and institutions. Are there lessons to be learned from our overlapping—though at times, separate—cultural histories of Black and White? This book is about how we learn to act when in public and when playing sports. Infused in this conversation is the ever-present policing of Black bodies in sport and society, and the disconnect we have as citizens living in the same country perpetually divided by race. Interwoven throughout are solutions for moving forward.

Excerpt:

"Others around the world revolt. Frustrated citizens in some countries overthrow the King or kill the 'Strongman.' Still others bomb buildings and assassinate random government officials. Here in the USA, athletes from 2016–2020 kneel during the national anthem."



About Dr. Vernon L. Andrews:

Vernon L. Andrews, Ph.D., obtained his doctorate in sociology from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His expertise in race and ethnicity, sports, and social psychology -- combined with years of research and interviews -- informs the complex issues and analyses he puts forth in his first book, "Policing Black Athletes: Racial Disconnect in Sports." Released in

2020 by Peter Lang Publishing, the book explores how conflicts over diversity, culture, inclusion and exclusion, protest, and control have been played out in various sports and institutions.

Dr. Andrews teaches in the Kinesiology Department at San Jose State University and in the Sociology Department at California State University, Chico. He has recently taught courses in Sociocultural Sports, American Sport, the History of Sports, and Global Sports in the Kinesiology Department, and African American History and African American Sports History in the African American Studies Department at San Jose State University. He has also taught African

American Sport and African American History at California State University, Chico, his alma mater, where he earned degrees in English (BA) and Public Communication (MA). From 1996 to 2009, Dr. Andrews served as a faculty member and then chair of the American Studies Department at the University of Canterbury in Christchurch, New Zealand. After returning to the states for good in 2010, he continued to research and taught entrepreneurship, diversity, and marketing courses in the Management department at CSUC.

Dr. Andrews grew up in Oakland, California, adoring his hometown A's and Raiders and later, the Warriors. He has been an active Burning Man participant for the past 12 years.

Interview and talking points:

- ▶ Why are athletes of color at the forefront of the Civil Rights movement and protests?
- ▶ How does this book speak to where we are in this country today, post Colin Kaepernick and George Floyd?
- ▶ How has activism evolved among athletes of color through the years – or has it?
- ▶ Does politics have a place in sports?

Media Inquiries:

Dr. Andrews is available for an interview, to write a commentary, or to serve as a guest speaker. Digital or hard copies of "Policing Black Athletes" are available for review. Please contact:

Pati Navalta

707.315.8431

pati@navaltamedia.com

Cicero Estrella

707.567.4187

cicero@navaltamedia.com

