

# [Hoop dreams themes](https://assignbuster.com/hoop-dreams-themes/)

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In Hoop Dreams, the lives of two students athletes, William Gates and Arthur Agee, are documented as they both pursue their dream of making it to the NBA one day. The documentary emphasizes many of the themes and concepts about the African American athlete that we have learned in class. One of the themes we talked in class was the exploitation of the student athlete for the benefit of the school. Student athletes are expected to live up to the expectations of the coaches and the school and devote a majority of their time to the sport they participate in. If an athlete does not live up to the expectations of the school, he or she can be cut from the team. This theme was definitely prevalent in the documentary. Both William Gates and Arthur Agee were recruited by St. Joseph High School to help their basketball team win games. They basically served as an employee of the school because they were only brought in for this sole purpose and could be let go if they didn't perform up to par. Because William Gates performed at a high level, he was given a free education, medical treatment, and academic support. On the other hand, Arthur Agee was basically forced out of the school after he didn't perform as well as the school had hoped for. St. Joseph's really only cared about their own success and not the success of these athletes outside of the sport. Another theme we talked about in class was the challenges that African American athletes face in school and at home. In college sports, minority male athletes and revenue-producing sport athletes tend to achieve less academically. In fact, most athletes spend more time on sport-related activities than on school-related activities during the season. This was especially true in the documentary. Both William Gates and Arthur Agee struggled in school and had a hard time keeping their grades up. William Gates struggled to achieve the minimum score needed to attend Marquette University while Arthur Agee's scores were so low that he was close to not being able to graduate. The athletes' focus on basketball significantly affected their academic performance in school, which is a common problem for many athletes. In addition, family and money problems are common for many African American athletes. In class, we talked about how many African American athletes tend to come from less educated families, and as a result, these athletes' families are often limited in the amount of support they can provide for the athletes. These athletes also tend to come from less stable families. In Hoop Dreams, both William Gates and Arthur Agee came from families that did not have a lot a money and struggled to make ends meet. In addition, both players had fathers who were not around for some time. William Gate's father left home when William was very young while Arthur Agee's father left home for a short period of time when he became involved in drugs. This lack of stability played a role in the struggles that these athletes had to deal with outside of basketball. The lives of William Gates and Arthur Agee did not pan out as they had hoped, as both athletes were unable to make it into the NBA. After graduating from Marquette University, William Gates became a real estate agent. In 2001, he was offered a tryout with the Washington Wizards but ended up injuring his foot. He is currently a senior pastor at Living Faith Community Center in Cabrini Green. Arthur Agee attended Mineral Area Junior College before transferring to Arkansas State. He turned down the opportunity to play in the CBA and currently serves as a motivational speaker that encourages children to follow their dreams and get an education. In addition, he recently launched a clothing line. This documentary did an excellent job of showing the common themes that characterize the lives of African American athletes. It was truly eye-opening to see both the exploitation of the players by the school and the struggles that each athlete had to deal with outside of school. Bibliography York, Ben. (2010, March 01). Hoop dreams: 15 years later. Slam, Retrieved from http://www. slamonline. com/online/blogs/the-w/2010/03/hoop-dreams-15-years-later/ +