

Glory road essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Racism](#)



The movie Glory Road is based upon the 1966 Texas Western Basketball team. A team that is best known for helping to break the color barrier in college basketball. Led by Head Coach Don Haskins, the Miners were able to overcome tremendous discrimination shown to their players as well as Coach Haskins and his family. During this time African Americans experienced an incredibly large amount of racism and discrimination not only on the basketball court, but in everyday life. Glory Road portrays this racism and discrimination shown to the both the black players and Coach Haskins family. Determined to make a statement to not only the college basketball community but society as well, Haskins found a way to integrate his team and become a success. By overcoming the immense amount of discrimination shown to both its players and Coach the 1966 Texas Miners basketball team was able to make a statement to society throughout an era of American history filled with racism and hate. The most common form of discrimination shown throughout the movie was the racism received by the players at Texas Western. During 1966 racism was not only commonly seen throughout college basketball, but throughout society as well. It stood a huge barrier in college basketball which neglected many talented African American basketball players from even receiving a chance to play.

Though being talented many people felt blacks were incapable of staying mentally composed during the course of a game. They were inferior to white basketball players and therefore not given an opportunity. With the intention winning Coach Haskins recruited a number of very young and talented African Americans. He integrated them with the whites that were already on the team to make a very good basketball team. Throughout the course of the

season the black Miners received an immense amount of discrimination. This included trash being dumped upon them when trying to enter the court on away games, and their hotel rooms being trashed and offensive words being written on the walls. However the most abusive display of discrimination shown throughout the movie was Nevil Shed being jumped in the bathroom of a restaurant by a group of white men.

Due to the success Texas Western had been having many whites would do whatever possible to disturb them even if this meant beating up a young man in the bathroom of a restaurant. This brutal display of racism was amazingly not considered outside the social norm at the time. White society did not wish to see a team led by African Americans be successful and were willing to do whatever type of means necessary to prevent it no matter how wrong and hateful they were. Along with the racism shown to his players Coach Haskins received a considerable amount of hatred and racism shown to both him and his family. The moment Coach Haskins decided to bring his black recruits to Texas Western he was immediately shown opposition by school boosters. The fact he was willing to play more than one African American player at a time caused conflict between him and the boosters. It was not until his team began winning on a national stage that the boosters began to come around.

This was not because they now supported the Miners for who they were and what they were accomplishing, but because by winning on a national stage they began to gain more recognition for themselves. The more success he began to have with his team the more animosity he began to receive. His

wife began to receive hateful and threatening letters that described Coach Haskins as a “ Nigger lover.” This not only took a toll on Haskins himself but also his family. When Texas Western finally reached the championship game he and his team were given no chance to knock off the famous Coach Rupp and Kentucky. In an attempt to converse with Coach Rupp he was quickly given a rude cold shoulder and told he should be thrilled to be on a stage with Rupp. This is what caused Coach Haskins to take a stand and play the championship game with only his black players. By doing this he decided to make a statement to the country that what was happening to his players, his family, and himself was wrong. By winning the National Championship with seven African Americans against an all-white power house in Kentucky he would prove to the country that discrimination would not affect how his team played and that his black players could show out on the biggest stage in college basketball.

To recap, Glory Road is an unbelievably inspirational story about a team who though faced with an immense amount of discrimination found a way to not only have a successful season, but also found themselves playing a major role in the breaking of the color barrier that was previously seen throughout college basketball. When people look at basketball as a whole today and see the enormous amount of African Americans playing the 1966 Texas Western basketball team had a tremendous impact in that. As for Coach Haskins the impact he made on college basketball will forever be remembered. He took the chance of recruiting incredibly talented African American players and transitioned them into a dominate team through arguably the most discrimination, and distractions ever shown to a college basketball team. He

and his team will always be remembered for redefining American basketball and making a huge influence in changing American society as a whole.