

# Free coverage of mike tyson biting evander holyfields ear research paper sample

[Life](#), [Friendship](#)



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

In more recent years, Mike Tyson has become more of a pop culture reference than a figure of significance, as his turn in *The Hangover* showed. However, on June 28, 1997, Tyson was much more squarely in the public eye than he is today. He was a boxer near the top of his prime, but he also appeared in the news frequently for a number of imbroglios. None of them, though, was bigger than what happened in his bout with Evander Holyfield. During the third round of their rematch for the heavyweight title, Tyson bit Holyfield on the right ear and then the left, earning a lifetime ban from the Nevada Gaming Commission as well as a \$3 million fine. The news ricocheted around the world, as nothing like this had ever taken place before in such a high profile match within the “sweet science.” The news coverage at the time was both salacious and saturating, because in 1997 the news cycle did not have a turnover that was as swift as what one sees today. The fact that this was a high profile bout is clear from the beginning. The New York Times had sports reporter Tom Friend in Las Vegas for the fight; at the time, Friend was in the upper tier of the paper’s sports coverage team, so this was not a cub reporter attending his first fight. The headline “Tyson Disqualified for Biting Holyfield’s Ears” was not nearly as lyric as Friend’s opening line: “Mike Tyson could not beat him, so he bit him” (Friend, web). Friend points out a couple of other oddities in the fight as well – the referee was only appointed the day before – and the loud gospel music playing in Holyfield’s locker room before the fight might have been an agitator as well. All told, though, Friend gives a detailed account of the fight, including the head butt that Holyfield administered to Tyson in the second round, without any penalty from the referee.

Friend continued his coverage the next day, with the figurative headline “After Biting, Tyson Faces Trouble From All Corners.” His masterful use of parallelism summarizes the issues that Tyson faced only hours after biting Holyfield: “A boxing commission has suspended him, a district attorney may want to interview him, a doctor may want to do a blood test on him and a certain Evander Holyfield may want to sue him” (Friend, web). The fact that Tyson took a swing at a Las Vegas policeman who was simply trying to keep order in the ring might also spur parole violations from a conviction on rape in Indiana. Most of the piece is recap of the story from the day before, but the attention that Friend gives to his prose shows that the author knows that his work is being widely read, and so he wants to give his writing the most complete touches possible.

Evander Holyfield’s website has a “news article” up about this event as well, that was published the night of the fight. It begins as an underdog’s tale for Holyfield, talking about the immense odds that were on the board against Holyfield to prevail the first time they fought, ranging from 17: 1 to 42: 1 against (“Tyson II: ‘The Bite,’” web). In this rematch, the article discusses that Holyfield was again the underdog, and then it goes into the dramatic series of events that led to a fragment of Holyfield’s ear ending up on the floor in the boxing ring, and Tyson ending up disqualified from his fight. One detail that might be dubious is Holyfield’s desire to return to the fight, despite the fact that he was bleeding from both ears and was missing a part of one of them. This “coverage” is clearly designed to lionize Holyfield in the situation.

A couple of days after the bout, the London Daily Mail jumped into coverage

of the incident, showing how quickly the news of this fateful bite had spread around the globe. Reporter Jeff Powell refers to this incident as “ the most hideous act ever beamed around the sports television networks of the world” (Powell, web). To be fair, biting in competition is seen as a senseless, even sociopathic action. In the 2014 World Cup, Uruguay striker Luis Suarez was banned from international play for several months after biting Italian defender Giorgio Chiellini. Perhaps it is the cannibalistic associations with the act; perhaps it is the fact that, very early in life, children are told in no uncertain terms that biting is unacceptable; perhaps it is the worry about infection. No matter what the source of the concern, biting inspires a vitriolic reaction from the offended party, and it was no different with Evander Holyfield – and the sporting press. Powell describes the bite as “ grisly retaliation” for a head butt and the process of reattaching the ear fragment, “ which Tyson spat onto the canvas” (Powell, web) before moving into the legal implications of the bite for Tyson.

Even the local coverage of the event tended to focus on the outrageous nature of the bite. Steve Carp’s coverage of the bout in the Las Vegas Sun begins with the sentence: “ Saturday night, controversy took a back seat to the absurd” (Carp, web). The stunned nature of the crowd on hand at the MGM Grand Garden as well as people who had paid through the nose for the right to watch the fight on pay-per-view television is an important theme in the article as well. The sidebar of the article gives a round-by-round synopsis of the fight, beginning in the third round and then moving back to the beginning of the fight. The article quotes Holyfield and bout referee Mills Lane and gives a matter-of-fact description of the events. Friend’s and

Powell's descriptions of the fight are more incredulous than Carp's, although that may have something to do with the fact that Carp faced a shorter deadline and did not have as much time to expand into his own personal impressions of the fight.

**In its July 7, 1997, issue, Sports Illustrated published an aerial photograph that shows Tyson giving Holyfield's left ear a bite:**

You can see Tyson's head turned in toward Holyfield's ear, with his eyes apparently closed. The referee is looking in closely, and at the lower left you can see the entire legion of sports photographers with their cameras raised, trying to get a shot. This posture is fairly common in boxing matches, as events can happen so quickly, and the tide of a match can turn so quickly. The caption of the photo is telling as well: "Tyson drags sport to new depths with bite of Holyfield." This refers to the problems that had already started to plague boxing in the years before this debacle, such as the rumors of fixing fights and the controversies that erupted among such promoters as Don King. These trends were already bringing boxing down from the exalted position that it held during earlier decades, but Tyson's chomp didn't give the sport any help.

Many of the other articles that emerged at this time were merely wire service repetitions of the same event. However, with more opinions, some more perspective on Tyson began to emerge, particularly with regard to a high degree of pessimism about his career. Ron Borges, writing for the Boston Globe but whose piece was picked up and carried widely, interviewed Teddy Atlas, Mike Tyson's former trainer. More than a full day before the

bout, Atlas had called one of his friends to predict that Tyson would do something in the fight to earn disqualification if he wasn't able to knock him out quickly with a lucky blow. Atlas' belief was that Tyson was afraid of the fight, and he needed to go into the fight knowing that he could get out of it in some way (Borges, web).

In a way, Tyson-Holyfield II was one of the last great heavyweight tilts, at least in terms of national attention. The sport has become more of a niche interest to some and a farce for others, and there is no one in the sport currently with the stature of an Ali or a Foreman who appears ready to bring it back before the nation's full interest.

## **Works Cited**

Borges, Rob. "Tyson's Former Trainer Predicted Disqualification." *Deseret News* 30 June 1997.

<http://www.deseretnews.com/article/569339/Tyson-former-trainer-predicted-disqualification.html?pg=all>

Carp, Steve. "Fight Disintegrates After Tyson Bites Holyfield." *Las Vegas Sun* 28 June 1997.

<http://www.lasvegassun.com/news/1997/jun/28/fight-disintegrates-after-tyson-bites-holyfield/>

Cauvin, Henri E. "Mike Tyson Takes His Dive, May Face Penalties for Biting Holyfield." *New York*

*Daily News* 30 June 1997. <http://www.nydailynews.com/archives/news/mike-tyson-takes-dive-face-penalties-biting-holyfield-article-1.751912>

Friend, Tom. "After Biting, Tyson Faces Trouble From All Corners." *New York*

<https://assignbuster.com/free-coverage-of-mike-tyson-biting-evander-holyfields-ear-research-paper-sample/>

Times 30 June

1997. <http://www.nytimes.com/1997/06/30/sports/after-biting-tyson-faces-trouble-from-all-corners.html>

Friend, Tom. "Tyson Disqualified for Biting Holyfield's Ears." New York Times 29 June 1997.

<http://www.nytimes.com/1997/06/29/sports/tyson-disqualified-for-biting-holyfield-s-ears.html>

Martinez, Al. "With a Left to the Heart." <http://articles.latimes.com/1997/jul/01/local/me-8573>

Method Man, "Every Soldier in the Hood." <http://rap.genius.com/134388/Raekwon-every-soldier-in-the-hood/Bite-an-ear-mike-tyson>

Powell, Jeff. "Tyson Jail Bite." London Daily Mail 30 June 1997.

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/columnists/article-231547/Tyson-jail-bite.html>

Searcy, Jay. "Post-fight Melee Forces Shutdown at MGM Grand." Philadelphia Inquirer 30 June

1997. [http://articles.philly.com/1997-06-30/sports/25526538\\_1\\_tyson-entourage-hotel-lobby-tyson-camp](http://articles.philly.com/1997-06-30/sports/25526538_1_tyson-entourage-hotel-lobby-tyson-camp)

Schuyler, Jr., Ed. "Bite of the Century." Cincinnati Enquirer 29 June 1997.

[http://www.enquirer.com/editions/1997/06/29/spt\\_fight.html](http://www.enquirer.com/editions/1997/06/29/spt_fight.html)

"Tyson II: 'The Bite.'" <http://www.evanderholyfield.com/bio/tyson-ii-the-bite/>

"Tyson Drags Sport to New Depths With Bite of Holyfield."

<http://siphotos.tumblr.com/post/11281292335/an-aerial-view-of-mike-tyson-biting-the-ear-of>

<https://assignbuster.com/free-coverage-of-mike-tyson-biting-evander-holyfields-ear-research-paper-sample/>