

# The sports taboo

[Business](#)



“ Black athletes have always been in the news, but their path to fame and fortune has never been easy”(Gladwell).

Gladwell’s books and articles often deal with the unexpected implications of research in the social sciences and make frequent and extended use of academic work, particularly in the areas of psychology, and social psychology. This short story talks about the comparison between white and black athletes. Statistics from major sporting events are shown. The author explains that it is because of genetics. This story uses racial criticism because it talks about black athletes and how they are so successful in athletic competitions. Using racial criticism, a reader can analyze Malcolm Gladwell’s *The Sports Taboo* by using the aspects of racial roles, dialogue, and setting.

Firstly, Gladwell clearly uses the aspect of racial roles within the short story. Malcolm Gladwell starts out his essay by writing what whites are supposed to be good at and what blacks are supposed to be good at. An example of this is how black people are referred to in the text even amongst each other. Gladwell explains that black athletes are superior to most races. “ Researchers studied track results, Africans recorded fifteen out of the twenty fastest times”(Gladwell). Researchers studied the statistics from Olympic track races.

Black athletes recorded seventy-five percent of the top results. Another example is when Gladwell talks about genetics “ According to the medical evidence, African-Americans seem to have, on the average, greater bone mass than do white Americans” (Gladwell). Gladwell tries to examine that

African Americans are born out differently than white Americans. African Americans are born with an extra tendon so it makes them run faster. On average, they have greater bone mass which makes them stronger. Gladwell viewed African Americans as more superior when it came to athletic competitions.

To continue, the aspect of dialogue is also clear in the story. Gladwell believes that black athletes are superior and he gives a lot to information to defend himself. For example “ Gladwell explained how racial differences have an effect when competing in sports through medical and body evidence along with athletic and personal experience” (Sailer). Another example, “ Another factor that contributes to athletic ability is effort. Gladwell writes how athletic success depends on the individual and their desire to be the best”(Sailer). Athletic ability does not always come down to physical ability.

Some black athletes are very successful because they strive to be the best. Gladwell demonstrates how stereotypes work and how much they influence your thinking. Finally, the aspect of setting is also very important to The Sports Taboo. An athlete of African origin holds every major world running record. For example, Gladwell states “ The likelihood is that these results reflect Africa’s status as the homeland of Homo sapiens”(Gladwell). African Americans from Africa go through a lot of hard ships.

They need to work hard and become strong in order to live. Another example, “ Please, Black America has paid a high and largely unacknowledged price for a long list of things and having great athletes is far from the top of the list”(Sailer). Gladwell says that African Americans have

endured hundreds of years of slavery. African American have suffered a lot of hardships, the labor they went through has helped them become physically stronger. In conclusion, using racial criticism, using racial criticism, a reader can analyze Malcolm Gladwell's The Sports Taboo by using the aspects of racial roles, dialogue, and setting.

This short story is significant because it discusses the aspects of race throughout the world of sports and athletics. I feel like this story is a great example of racial criticism because there are a lot of examples of white and black comparisons.