

Blacks in Sport: Sociological Issues

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This paper reviewed the history of the sociology of sport focusing on the major questions that have been investigated in the field. It attempts to assess why these questions and not other questions were addressed. In so doing, it demonstrates that the field of the sociology of sport has not been value free.

With this assessment in mind the paper turns to a review of the research questions surrounding Blacks in sport, and especially the issue of Black dominance in sport. The paper demonstrates that most of the explanation of this phenomenon either characterizes Black dominance in sport as a genetic-physical phenomenon similar to idiot-savante or noble savage, or environmentally induced and therefore physical. The paper calls for an investigation of Black dominance in sport as a mental phenomenon. It makes a preliminary theoretical examination of the performance of Blacks in basketball as a reflective and not just a reflexive activity. The paper concluded by suggesting new questions for the field based on this example and sketched the outline of an appropriate methodology for certain sports as a reflexive activity.