

# RADICAL TEACHER

A SOCIALIST, FEMINIST, AND ANTI-RACIST JOURNAL ON THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF TEACHING

## Putting Learning into Practice: Integrating Social Media, Crowd Learning, and #ColinKaepernick in an Introductory African American History Class

by Travis Boyce



THIS IMAGE IS A SCREEN SHOT FROM A POST ON U.S. PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S PAGE THAT SOUGHT TO VILIFY KAEPERNICK AND IMPLY TIM TEBOW AS A GREAT WHITE HOPE.

*Learning online with others is that, with every connection, direct and indirect, comes the opportunity to learn, and learning happens in many of these interactions.* - John Dron & Terry Anderson (in *Teaching Crowds: Learning and Social Media*, 2014, p. 4)

Note: African American History is a regular part of the University of Northern Colorado curriculum. The version discussed below concerns an adaptation that will be incorporated into its next offering.

## Introduction

In his 2006 article published in the *Journal of Negro Education*, historian Pero Gaglo Dagbovie (2006) notes that African American history “arguably represents one of the most dynamic sub-fields of U.S. historical inquiry and higher education” (p. 635). Used as framework to understanding the present lives of African Americans as well as the broader American society, African American history is primarily the study of centuries of challenges: momentous transformations in American society in which African Americans survived the institution of slavery and Jim Crow; endured the conservative repercussions of the Civil Rights Movement in the late twentieth century; and most recently the backlash aftermath of eight years of a Barack Obama presidency. In the wake of these challenges, Black intellectuals since the early twentieth century offered a Black Studies academic narrative to counter the Eurocentric paradigm. The new narrative led to the legitimization of African American history in the mainstream by the late twentieth century.

For the twenty-first century collegiate student, African American history presents knowledge to counter the Eurocentric paradigm. Furthermore, students (especially African Americans) can be empowered “to critically contemplate its status and compare its contributions with those of other generations of young Black people before the Civil Rights era and Black Power Movement” (p. 637). In this current political climate, where Black lives and everything associated with the Black Lives Matters Movement are being so blatantly delegitimized, it is paramount that not only African American history continues to be taught in higher education, but that there are also constant, improved pedagogical teaching practices to ensure the field’s long-term sustainability. In concert with Dagbovie’s (2006) central thesis, I am most interested as a university professor in making African American history relevant to the lives of my students. Because the modern college student is visually and technologically oriented, social media is a great teaching tool. This option can be used to put learning into practice. It can energize a traditional introductory African American history class and advance the discipline.

Social media is deeply ingrained in our personal and professional lives (O’Flaherty & Gee, 2012) and has transformed the way we communicate. We can be instantly connected with a global audience through a 140-character

tweet on the state of the affairs of the world, humorous memes shared on Facebook, cat videos posted on YouTube, or photos from a recent vacation posted on Instagram. Celebrities such as Rihanna, Kim Kardashian, and Snoop Dog have fully used social media to reinforce their brand, and they have amassed a large following. Most notably, U.S. President Donald J. Trump tweets as a means to bypass the mainstream media to disseminate his message to his followers. It’s not just celebrities who use social media. Everyday people and various institutions maintain an online presence. The social media platform Twitter, for example, played a significant role in mobilizing protests in the Arab Spring revolution in 2011 (McKenzie, 2014; Pollard, 2014). During the 2008 presidential election, the Barack Obama campaign effectively used social media to reach out to a broader, younger audience, thus making radio ads (and to a certain extent television ads) obsolete.

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As social media matured these past years, it has become an essential technological tool in traditional educational settings. For example, professor Brian McKenzie used Twitter in his class to reenact the history of the Paris Commune and the Battle of Stalingrad. His students assumed identities of historical figures for their respective Twitter handles and tweeted in real time using primary sources (McKenzie, 2014). Professor Elizabeth Pollard, a historian at San Diego State University, used Twitter in her World History survey course to allow students to create back channel during lectures and outside the class. The technique resulted in an interactive course in a class setting of 400 students (Pollard, 2014). Most notably, academic and educational institutions, professional academic associations, and educational policy institutes have created and maintained a social media presence to create learning communities, and to network and disseminate information.

The use of social media, from an educational perspective, is part of a long human tradition of crowd learning. Scholars Jon Dron and Terry Anderson (2014) state in their book *Teaching Crowds: Learning and Social Media*, “Historically, learning was nearly always with and from a crowd: methods, tools, customs, dances, music and stories, whether prototypical or fully formed, all played a role in establishing a collective, learned culture” (p. 5). Social media is an excellent tool to reinforce these old traditions of crowd learning. Accompanied with an identified and widely used hashtag to our social media posts, our ideas can go viral and be used and cited in social or intellectual discourse on array of topics. It is important for students, scholars, and laypeople to form and maintain communities on the web. Through community interactions, learning evolves, new ideas are created, where knowledge does not merely move in a “one-way” direction.

For those who follow American sports, popular culture, and race relations and politics, #ColinKaepernick was by far one of the most recognized hash tags on social media during the second half of 2016 and early 2017. During a preseason game in 2016, Colin Kaepernick, the former starting quarterback for the San Francisco 49ers, sat (and later throughout the season, knelt) through the playing of the national anthem of the United States as a sign of protest to address structural racism; particularly, he meant, police brutality against communities of color. In our digital age, Kaepernick's form of protest is especially timely. With the presidential election in full swing and the polarization of race relations increasing, the United States has been feeling the weight of pressing issues: White anxiety, anger at President Obama, police shootings and brutality against communities of color, the rise of White nationalism (colloquially known as the Alt-Right or Alternative Right), and the start of the #BlackLivesMatter movement. People turned to social media to either show their support and/or solidarity for Kaepernick or to express their disgust in forms of dog whistles and overt racist and nationalistic rhetoric. Using the hashtag #ColinKaepernick or the like, there is a wealth of discourses (commentaries, videos, and memes, among others) for students in an introductory contemporary African American history course. Students will be able to see how both the plight of African American athletes in history and broader issues in contemporary African American history parallel the Colin Kaepernick saga. They will see that the discourse associated with #ColinKaepernick is not just limited to sport history, but also to an array of issues in African American history that will reinforce the comprehensive knowledge from their class.

***This article will demonstrate that although the discourse surrounding Kaepernick is polarizing, nasty, and at times extremely racist, it is an excellent pedagogical strategy to help students put their learning into practice and engage with a wider audience on topics discussed in an introductory African American history course.***

This article will deconstruct social media posts associated with the hashtag Colin Kaepernick as a teaching strategy to help students enrolled in an introductory African American course. The aim is to put their learning into practice by encouraging them to actively engage with a wider audience on topics relevant to the course content. Because one of the primary challenges of crowd learning via social media is "mining" the high volume of posts associated with hot topic hashtags, this article will focus on a prominent theme associated with the discourse of Kaepernick. I will specifically explore the "Bad Nigger" archetype to draw parallels with Kaepernick. I will compare the commentary against Kaepernick with the rhetoric used to denounce the famous yet notorious boxer Jack Johnson (as well others). Johnson was the first African American

boxing heavyweight champion of the world (from 1908–1915). This article will demonstrate that although the discourse surrounding Kaepernick is polarizing, nasty, and at times extremely racist, it is an excellent pedagogical strategy to help students put their learning into practice and engage with a wider audience on topics discussed in an introductory African American history course. The article will specifically compare the rhetoric around Colin Kaepernick within the historical context of the plight of African American activist athletes. In this way, students can use social media to likewise make historical comparisons. Before I dive into the discussion, I will first examine why #ColinKaepernick is significant.

## Why Colin Kaepernick Matters

On October 30, 2016, I attended a campaign rally for Donald Trump that was held on the campus where I teach. Trump began his address with a critique of the National Football League (NFL), saying it had poor ratings. He invoked dog-whistle rhetoric by blaming Kaepernick for the ratings' decline—a move resulting in boos from the audience at the rally. Dog-whistle racial rhetoric is not new, and such strategies have been effectively used as a strategy to implicitly invoke racial anxiety by politicians as was the case in George Wallace's 1963 gubernatorial inaugural address and George H.W. Bush's infamous Willie Horton ad. Hearing Trump use this technique, I was taken aback to see a candidate for president use this tactic at a time when we are told we are living in a post racial society. I could not help but connect Trump's dog-whistle characterization of Kaepernick to the "bad nigger" archetype that was placed on former heavyweight champion boxer Jack Johnson over a century ago.

The Colin Kaepernick saga is, in effect, part of a long tradition of the American mainstream condemning African American athletes who challenge the racial social order. If one examines the sociopolitical order of Jack Johnson's time, one would find some striking similarities to the atmosphere of Kaepernick's world. Johnson's reign (1908–1915) coincidentally fell within the nadir of race relations in the United States. At the time, racial segregation was constitutional, therefore sanctioning Jim Crow laws (*Plessey v. Ferguson*, 1896). Approximately 3,200 African American men were lynched in the American South between 1880–1940 and approximately 1,500 during the Progressive era of 1900–1917 (Wood, 2009; Wigginton, 2006). Confederate monuments were erected in hundreds of communities to tell history through a "white southern perspective" (Mills, 2003, xvii). Jack Johnson's capturing of the heavyweight boxing championship was indeed timely, as he was viewed as threat to the social order. He had success and was living conspicuously well, affronting many Whites who did not believe Blacks could be equal.

Boxing, during the early twentieth century, was viewed as the essence of White masculinity (Romero, 2004). Johnson's lengthy reign vexed White America. The American press and boxing promoters recruited a series of "White Hopes" to defeat Johnson (Hutchinson, 2016). Additionally, Johnson's personal life was fair game for comment. He wore expensive, tailored clothes, drove fast

cars, did not defer to Whites in terms of racial etiquette, and married and/or had sexual relationships with White women (Wigginton, 2006; Burns et al., 2005). Jack Johnson was framed as a bad nigger. As noted in Al-Tony Gilmore's *Bad Nigger! The National Impact of Johnson*, a bad nigger was someone who "adamantly refuses to accept the place given to blacks in American society, and who frequently challenges the outer perimeters of expected behavior" (Gilmore, 1975, p. 12). The rhetoric in media as well as by everyday lay people sought to defame Johnson and framed him both overtly and covertly as a bad nigger.

Juxtaposing the sociopolitical order of Johnson's era to that of Kaepernick's, one can find similar characteristics. Within the last twenty-five years, 43% of right-wing terror incidents in the United States were at the hands of White supremacists (Anti-Defamation League, 2017). The number does not include the series of police brutality and killings of members of communities of color in recent years. It is as if today's U.S. atmosphere is open to and indeed endorses the mainstream right's unchecked violence against communities of color. That's troubling, but it is also in sync with anti-Black sentiment of the early twentieth century. The common narrative places the blame squarely on the victim. For example, Eric Garner and Michael Brown (of Ferguson, Missouri), both unarmed African American men, were killed by police officers and retroactively framed as responsible for their own deaths because, people said, they did not respect the authority of law enforcement.

Like Johnson, Kaepernick, an African American, played football quarterback, a position historically reserved for White men. When he became outspoken about Black inequality, he found that the media, politicians, and lay people condemned him for his actions—in effect, labeling him a *bad nigger*. He was framed as being unpatriotic, ungrateful, arrogant, and an opportunist. Donald Trump (among other political, media and sports pundits; particularly legendary NFL coach Mike Ditka) noted that Kaepernick should leave the country. He received death threats, and people burned his jersey in effigy. Kaepernick was delayed in signing to a team and is, in effect, blackballed from the NFL. At a March 2017 rally, Trump credited his rhetoric for NFL owners not signing Kaepernick to their respective teams. The teams, for their part, want to avoid further protests and Trump tweets as many of the fans feel Kaepernick was speaking against the United States.

At the same time, Colin Kaepernick has risen to popular-culture icon status because he used his platform as a professional athlete to spark a conversation on race. For many, he is the young generation's Muhammad Ali. Ali saw his boxing career come to a temporary halt because of his affiliation with the Nation of Islam and refusal in 1966 to be inducted into the military during the Vietnam War era. Ali, like Johnson and Kaepernick, did not conform to the status quo and was considered a threat to the American social order.

Both the social and intellectual discourse and the crowd learning surrounding #ColinKaepernick on social media provides an excellent opportunity for students to explore African American history collaboratively. For the

discussion portion of this article, I will provide pedagogical strategies surrounding #ColinKaepernick using subthemes that I plan to incorporate in future introductory African American history classes.

## Navigating #ColinKaepernick

To start the process of using crowd learning via social media, the first challenge is to "mine" through a high volume of posts. Look at hot topic hashtags like #ColinKaepernick—there is a huge volume of content surrounding that tag. What I am looking for is useful commentary where my students can interrogate social media posts, apply content skills learned in class, and engage with members of the online community on issues surrounding Kaepernick. For example, I looked for specific themes to illustrate how #ColinKaepernick can be used to draw parallels with the plight and public condemnation of African American activists in U.S. history. I will use subthemes that I can derive from the legacy of Jack Johnson as well as other activist African American athletes, such as "Reclaiming the Great White Hope" and "When Black Equality Is Viewed as Militant." Such subthemes directly connect Kaepernick to his predecessors.

### "Reclaiming the Great White Hope"

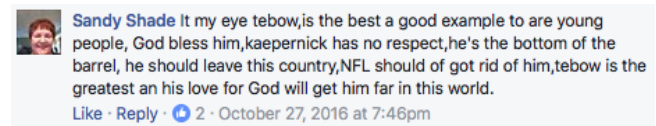
Perhaps one of the most interesting subthemes in African American history that is applicable to the present-day narrative is the White Hope archetype. When Jack Johnson defeated Tommy Burns in 1908 to capture the heavyweight championship of the world, a range of people, from reporters to fight promoters, sought out to find a Great White Hope to defeat Johnson. I will strongly emphasize in lecture supported by primary data that these reporters and fight promoters wished to reaffirm White supremacy at a time when race relations in the United States were already at a low point. I will specifically present to the class two primary documents in which members of the press vilified Johnson by promoting the Great White Hope mythology. For example, Jack London, a novelist and sportswriter for the *New York Herald* wrote, "But one thing now remains, Jeffries [the former, retired heavyweight boxing champion of the world] must emerge from his alfalfa farm and remove that golden smile from Johnson's face. Jeff, it's up to you!" (cited in Hutchinson, 2016, p. 25). Similar to sensationalized news posted on social media in the present day, London's piece was accompanied by commentary and caricatures designed to both dehumanize and delegitimize Johnson. The *Dallas Morning News*, for example, depicted Johnson in caricature—apelike, with thick lips and wide eyes—thus justifying White men's claim to biological superiority as the only ones worthy to be the heavyweight-boxing champions of the world (Gilmore, 1975). I will further emphasize in lecture that during Jack Johnson's reign, "promoters and the press exploited then-pervasive American mythology about frontier demigods and the purity of rural America. During this period, newspapers were replete with stories of Bunyonesque giants rising from America's western states to solve the Jack Johnson problem" (Hutchinson, 2016, p. 34).

I will then juxtapose some 100 years of the Great White Hope mythology to its present variant. In the twenty-first century, the quarterback is the most celebrated and highest paid member of the U.S. football team. The racial politics of who plays quarterback is grounded in the historical narrative that Whites are more intelligent and strategic than Blacks. The primarily White audience has attacked Kaepernick from the purview of the Great White Hope narrative. Using Heisman trophy winner and former NFL quarterback Tim Tebow, they have found their White Hope.

Commentary from social media shows students a modern use of this historical narrative. For their out-of-class assignment, I will direct students to interrogate select social media posts and provide a commentary of their thoughts and findings on the class private discussion board. I will specifically direct them to the Facebook handle "America's President Donald Trump," as posted on October 26, 2016: a photo (see Figure 1) juxtaposing the two footballers.

On my class's private discussion board, students will discuss similarities and differences between the two photos and accompanied commentary. The goal behind this assignment is for students to analyze such renditions of the Great White Hope mythology based on the images and

a gun-toting Black Panther member of the 1960s. Tebow wears an all-white uniform and is photographed taking a knee in profile with his head down. Few in the class may know that Tebow once starred in a Super Bowl commercial promoting the right-leaning Focus on the Family. I will provide some context to this by screening the controversial commercial to demonstrate Tebow's acceptance by the White mainstream as the embodiment of the Great White Hope. The social media commentary regarding the two athletes (see Figures 2 and 3) mirrors the anti-Johnson/Great White Hope narrative of over a century ago. While not explicitly racist, the commentary condemning Kaepernick is in step with the Great White Hope mythology and the anti-Black sentiments hurled at Johnson. Most notably these media commentators implicitly designate Tebow as a Great White Hope, while indicating that Kaepernick is not one of "us."



**FIGURE 2:** THIS IMAGE IS A SCREEN SHOT FROM SANDY SHADE'S FACEBOOK POST ON AMERICA'S PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP PAGE. THIS IS HER COMMENTARY FROM THE COMMENTARY THREAD OF COLIN KAEPERNICK AND TIM TEBOW.



**FIGURE 1.** THIS IMAGE IS A SCREEN SHOT FROM A POST ON U.S. PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP'S PAGE THAT SOUGHT TO VILIFY KAEPERNICK AND IMPLY TIM TEBOW AS A GREAT WHITE HOPE.

commentary. But more importantly I want my students to see how the discipline of African American history can be used as framework to understanding the present lives of African Americans as well as American society as a whole.

In the next class meeting, we will interrogate the social media posts and their commentary. By now, students in class will be able to both deconstruct the image and commentary and to ground it in the racial politics of Jack Johnson, boxing, and the Great White Hope mythology of the early twentieth century. Postings praise Tebow for kneeling and publicly expressing his Christian beliefs. In comparison, Kaepernick is kneeling, facing the camera, with a scowl on his face, donning an afro; such a hairstyle is reminiscent of a supposedly villainous image of

This focus on the commentary highlights the use of social media in crowd teaching. Whether the people posting know it or not, they are part of a larger conversation in which we can learn the narrative of the Great White Hope as it is used today and throughout history. Considering Jack London's call, cited earlier, for Jim Jefferies to stand up for the White race, I will point out that one commentator (see Figure 2), under the same discussion thread, questions Kaepernick's patriotism and playing abilities and resoundingly praises Tebow because of his evangelical Christian principles. Moreover, I will estimate if students think it matters on

social media that Kaepernick has proven to be the better quarterback with a much longer and more productive career than Tebow. Race is not explicitly noted, but the commentator seems to feel that Kaepernick is not one of "us," while Tebow embodies the best of this country because of his Christian values (and implicitly, his Whiteness).

I will then show students that this commentary is seconded in the same thread when another commentator simply states that Tebow is essentially a reflection of us (see Figure 3).





**FIGURE 3:** THIS IMAGE IS A SCREEN SHOT FROM SONIA BAPTISTE'S FACEBOOK POST ON AMERICA'S PRESIDENT DONALD TRUMP PAGE. THIS IS HER COMMENTARY FROM THE COMMENTARY THREAD OF COLIN KAEPERNICK AND TIM TEBOW.

Students can also follow commentaries on the topic by high-profile members of the conservative media and sports world. For example, I will show them online at *Breitbart News* that former Boston Red Sox pitcher Kurt Schilling implicitly embraced the Great White Hope mythology under the guise of criticizing political correctness and the media (Hayward, 2016).

Finally, I will discuss with my class what the lessons the social media posts and the commentators are providing. At this point in the course, based on the image and the commentary's rhetoric, students can relate #ColinKaepernick (and by extension others) to the travails of Jack Johnson, African American life, and the overall American society in the early twentieth century. The images and the word choice from the select commentators mirror that of their predecessors over a century prior. Comparing contemporary rhetoric to that of the past, my students will be armed with historical content that enables them to be aware citizens as they dialogue online via social media platforms on these issues.

**"When Black Equality Is Viewed as Militant"**

Another subtheme we will investigate is "Black Equality Is Viewed as Militant" when examining the Black Power Movement during the late 1960s and early 1970s. I will specifically discuss in class the idea that race, sport, and social equality in U.S. history are directly connected. For example, the state of Mississippi had an unwritten law that forbade the intercollegiate competition of Mississippi's state-supported colleges against integrated schools. State officials feared that an integrated game would inevitably lead to integration in all aspects of life, thus debunking the myth of White supremacy (Henderson, 1997). Furthermore, it was more than just the integration of sports; it was the fear of social equality. As Russell Wigginton (2006) indicates, Jack Johnson "symbolized blackness," which Whites feared and vilified (p. 39). Because Johnson did not stay "in his place" as a Black man in the early twentieth century, his winning the heavyweight boxing championship of the world had the potential to inspire others to challenge the racial hierarchal structure.

In class, I will present my students with an 1910 editorial titled, "A Word to the Black Man," that was published the *Los Angeles Times* in the wake of Johnson's victory over Great White Hope and former heavyweight boxing champion Jim Jefferies. It was a reminder that the Johnson victory changed nothing about the racial social order. It reads:

Do not point your nose too high. Do not swell your chest too much. Do not boast too loudly. Do not be puffed up. Let not your ambition be in ordinate or take a wrong direction. ...Remember, you have done nothing at all. You are just the same member of society today you were last week...You are on no higher plane, deserve no new consideration, and will get none. ... No man will think a bit higher of you because your complexion is the same as that of the victor at Reno. (as cited in Gilmore, 1975, p. 44)

What did this editorial mean to Johnson's athletic successors during the Black Power movement, such as Arthur Ashe, Jim Brown, Muhammad Ali, and sprinters John Carlos and Tommie Smith? Over fifty years after Johnson's defeat, for African Americans, the U.S. Civil Rights Movement resulted in momentous transformations in U.S. society. However, resistance to change remained a constant. High-profile African Americans such as athletes (i.e. Arthur Ashe, O.J. Simpson) were put in situations where they could face reprisals if they challenged the racial status quo. Olympic sprinters and medalists John Carlos and Tommie Smith elected to challenge the racial status quo. In class, we will situate "When Black Equality is Viewed as Militant" through the experiences of Carlos and Smith to demonstrate how, through the parallel, my students could also understand the travails of #ColinKaepernick.



**FIGURE 4:** THIS IMAGED IS A SCREENSHOT FROM THE TWITTER ACCOUNT OF MRNEGROMILLIANT. HIS MAY 2, 2017 TWEET OF THE IMAGE IS OF A RE-CREATION OF THE ICONIC IMAGE OF THE 1968 SUMMER OLYMPICS IN WHICH AMERICAN SPRINTERS JOHN CAROLS AND TOMMIE SMITH RAISED THEIR FIST (BLACK POWER SALUTE) DURING THE PLAYING OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM DURING THE PODIUM CEREMONY.

In what appears to be an anonymous Twitter handle, "MrMilitantNegro," we find a re-creation of the iconic image of the 1968 Olympic medal ceremony (see Figure 4), in which American sprinters John Carlos (right) and Tommie Smith (center) are on the podium giving the Black power salute during the playing of the national anthem. However, in this rendition Colin Kaepernick replaces Australian sprinter and silver medalist Peter Norman, stressing a powerful connection among African American activist athletes from the past to present. Similar to the early twentieth century, this image in social media offers students a powerful history lesson in which socio-political issues of the 1960s connect to the present day.

The commentary that accompanies this image complements the aim of the image. Like Kaepernick, Carlos and Smith were deemed troublemakers. During the medal-presentation ceremony, as they raised their fists during the playing of the national anthem, they were summarily booed by U.S. citizens in attendance. During lecture, I will ask students how what Carlos and Smith did is similar to what Kaepernick did. Now students can see that the sprinters sought to use their literal platform to address structural racism in the United States. Students might also explain that this was a time when the U.S. Civil Rights Movement reached a pivotal point and I may relate Carlos and Smith's trials to other events of the era, such as the assassinations of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and presidential hopeful Robert F. Kennedy; race riots in Watts (Los Angeles) and Newark, New Jersey; and the escalation of the Vietnam Conflict.

Some students may want to explore specifically the media portrayal of Black militancy and equality. I will direct my students to AP sportswriter Will Grimsley, for example, who referred in 1968 to Carlos and Smith as *militants* (Peterson, 2016). Based on Grimsley's rhetoric, I will challenge my students to interrogate this topic on the class discussion board by providing evidence of similar examples of such rhetoric from the media today in relationship to Kaepernick. Additionally, I will encourage students to interrogate the Twitter meme by examining why there are fears about Black equality. By studying #ColinKaepernick in comparison to the history of other "outspoken" Black athletes, it is clear that such fear continues to haunt this country.

## Conclusion

The discourse surrounding #ColinKaepernick is an excellent example of a pedagogical strategy to help students put their learning into practice and engage with a wider audience on topics discussed in an introductory African American history course. In this article, I have demonstrated that studying #ColinKaepernick shows students how his experiences mirrored those of his predecessors (i.e., Jack Johnson among others). By examining social media, students can draw contemporary parallels to historical events and narratives. It is true that because #ColinKaepernick is such a hot topic, one of the disadvantages of using him is that one ends up sifting through a high volume of data posted on social media platforms. Nevertheless, this exercise is also an

opportunity for students to engage with such data in an introductory African American history course where they can put their learning into practice by looking critically at the present compared to the past.

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