



Arthur, Racism and Sport

Slide 1: Title slide

Slide 2: Who was Arthur?

On the slide: Photo of Arthur Wharton and bullet points*

Commentary:

- ❖ Arthur Wharton came to Victorian Britain from the Gold Coast in West Africa to study as a teenager and achieved many great things. He was:
- ❖ The first man to run 100yards in 10 seconds.*
- ❖ The first black professional footballer.*
- ❖ A multi-talented sportsman and celebrity of his day.*
- ❖ And in later life he became a miner for many years and worked the tough conditions of the mines of South Yorkshire.
- ❖ Sadly Arthur died a pauper and was buried in an unmarked grave near Doncaster and forgotten for many years.

Slide 3: Arthur's experience of racism (3)

On the slide: Below quote

Commentary:

- ❖ As the first black professional footballer, Arthur endured racial discrimination in isolation.
- ❖ Prejudice towards Arthur was well documented through the newspapers and journals of the time with many patronising comments being made about the colour of his skin linked to sarcastic comments about his ability or attitude.
- ❖ The most well known racist slur about Arthur was written when he was playing for Preston North End. Football News and Athletic Journal wrote:
- ❖ *"Is the darkie's pate too thick for it to dawn upon him that between the posts is no place for a skylark? By some it's called coolness - bosh!"* (29 October 1887).



Slide 4: Arthur's experience of racism (4)

On the slide: Below quote

Commentary:

- ❖ It is also documented that Arthur got into disputes through sport and at least some of them were race related. In one incident, in an interview, Arthur told of a time he was resting between races, unseen, and overheard two rivals say:
- ❖ *"Who's he that we should be frightened of him beating us? We can beat a blooming nigger any time"*. He recalled jumping up and startling them with, *"Allow me to help you understand that I not only run, I do a little boxing when it is required"*, and that the rivals made a quick getaway.
- ❖ It's hard to be sure how Arthur's ethnicity might have held him back in the sporting world but he never got to play for a higher paying Southern team.
- ❖ And Arthur was never celebrated and documented enough in the history books, as other white-players were. Ultimately he was forgotten after he died.
- ❖ Unknowingly to Arthur, just by enduring racism, loving his work and being a talented athlete, he was an important pioneer for change (but more of that later).

Slide 5: What is scientific racism? (5)

On the slide: Harper's Weekly Illustration

Commentary:

- ❖ Racism is a form of discrimination based on ethnicity - when one ethnic group is treated unfairly compared to another.
- ❖ It can appear anywhere in society - school, the work place, in sport and leisure activities (we know Arthur experienced it publicly through sport).
- ❖ It is important to remember that racism can still occur even when appropriate laws are in place.
- ❖ A constructed way of justifying racism came about with the invention of 'scientific racism'.
- ❖ Here, scientists came up with a theory to explain why, biologically, other 'races' of people were 'inferior' to certain white Europeans.



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- ❖ Robert Knox, author of the Races of Man is often cited as being the founder of modern, scientific racism.
- ❖ Knox claimed that a study of comparative anatomy showed that races constituted separate species with separate origins.
- ❖ The theory was widely believed during the Victorian era in which Arthur lived, and although completely discredited, laid the foundation for the discrimination we still see today.

Slide 6: What is scientific racism? (6)

On the slide: Below quote

Commentary:

- ❖ Many different ethnic groups have been targeted by the idea of scientific racism, especially Jewish, African and Irish people and the literature of the day reflected this pseudo-scientific nonsense (as the newspapers did with Arthur)
- ❖ This quote is an example of how the Irish and Africans were seen as closer to apes than humans:
- ❖ *"I am haunted by the human chimpanzees I saw [in Ireland] . . . I don't believe they are our fault. . . . But to see white chimpanzees is dreadful; if they were black, one would not feel it so much. . . ."* Charles Kingsley, English clergyman, writer, amateur naturalist and historian (1819-1875)

Slide 7: Racism as a political tool (7)

On the slide: Clip about Victorian racism and colonial rule (1minute) / photos of far-right groups (INTERNET ACCESS NEEDED)

Commentary:

- ❖ Throughout history many incidents of racism have occurred.
- ❖ A version of the theory has always been used to devastating effect as a political tool. In Arthur's homeland of African, it was used as a means to justify colonial rule, slavery and brutality during the era of British control. (show clip)
- ❖ History shows us that when a country is facing economic and social problems, racist thinking and action tends to increase. This is the same for Xenophobia - the fear of people who are different from one's self.



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- ❖ Fear and vulnerability caused by socio-economics in a cultural group is often manipulated for political gain. The ruling class point at target groups as the cause of problems in order to scapegoat, thus keeping a society weak by distracting from the real problems.
- ❖ The rise of Hitler and the Nazi party in Germany occurred at a time of hyper-inflation, when many families were struggling to feed their children.

Slide 8: Racism as a political tool (8)

On the slide: Nazi and Golden Dawn party symbols

Commentary:

- ❖ A current day example is the growth of the 'far right', (Xenophobic groups or politic parties) in many European countries due to the recession.
- ❖ In modern day Greece, which is suffering extreme poverty by European standards, the fascist Golden Dawn Party has increased rapidly in size and influence. In the UK the recession has seen the growth of parties that are anti-immigration and anti-Muslim ideology such as the BNP.

Slide 9: How Arthur defied racism (9)

On the slide: Below quote from Encyclopedia Britannica

Commentary:

- ❖ Arthur was a role model for multiculturalism and changing perceptions in the public eye in sport - which was just becoming a powerful social phenomenon in Victorian times and is very much more so today.
- ❖ Arthur did not fit the racial stereotype of a black man as being stupid, childish, incapable and subordinate.
- ❖ The 1903, when Arthur was 38 and had been a sportsman for many years, Encyclopedia Britannica, under the subject heading "negro," claimed: *"No full blooded Negro has ever been distinguished as a man of science, a poet, or an artist, the fundamental equality [claimed for the negro] by ignorant philanthropists is belied by the whole history of the race."*
- ❖ Changing the perception of everyday people in a society is the key to tolerance and, outside the national press (local newspapers tended to be more supportive and pleasant about him), he was very much liked and accepted as part of the communities in which he lived.



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- ❖ As well as racist slurs, Arthur had many positive remarks made about him. Particularly from people who had met and judged him in the flesh, rather than through a concept of what he would be like.
- ❖ The Ashton Herald, 15/2/1896 described him as: “... a modest and unassuming man, a genial companion, and a friend whom any person might feel proud to number amongst his acquaintances”. Later: “Arthur has a bit of temper when he’s crossed, but taken all round, he is a straightforward, good-natured chap”.
- ❖ The temper of which the reporter refers could also be interpreted as Arthur resisting unfair treatment both in sport and in relation to his ethnicity. He was known to be a proud man; unafraid to defend himself, and he was documented several times as publically having shown his disagreement of injustice.
- ❖ He was also intelligent and well-educated (probably better-educated than many of the white people whom he lived amongst).

Slide 10: Myths of an all white Britain (10)

On the slide: Spoken Word Poet, Hollie McNish puts immigration into perspective.

Commentary:

- ❖ Awareness of Arthur’s story in today’s society also quashes the myth of an ‘all white Britain’, the notion that ‘Black immigrants only came to Britain after World War II’ and that ‘Immigrants take from Britain and don’t give back’ (peddled by some far-right groups).
- ❖ On the contrary, Arthur’s success as a sports man shows us that there was a black presence at the very beginnings of professional football, (the oldest football club in the world being Sheffield FC).
- ❖ This longevity of black players’ involvement in football is crucial in helping us understand the wider contribution people of colour have made in Britain.
- ❖ Not only was he a black immigrant living in Victorian Britain, he also made an outstanding contribution to both Britain’s sporting heritage and its economy through his hard graft as a Yorkshire coalminer.
- ❖ Arthur is in fact part of a continuum of positive immigration to Britain that stretches back at least two millennia to Roman times.



- ❖ There were black soldiers at the Battle of Trafalgar (1805), black sailors fighting alongside Nelson, and at the battle of Waterloo (1815).
- ❖ Millions of black soldiers fought on the British side in the First and Second World War, many of whom lost their life.

Slide 11: We are all one race (11)

On the slide: Clip from Thandie Newton at TED 1mintues (INTERNET ACCESS NEEDED)

Commentary:

- ❖ The reality is, different 'races' of humans do not exist. Here's black actress, Thandie Newton explaining the moment she learnt this fact (play clip).

"I applied to study anthropology at university. Dr. Phyllis Lee gave me my entrance interview, and she asked me, 'How would you define race?'"

Well, I thought I had the answer to that, and I said, 'Skin colour'.

'So biology, genetics? Because, Thandie, that's not accurate,' Dr. Lee said. 'There's actually more genetic difference between a black Kenyan and a black Ugandan than there is between a black Kenyan and, say, a white Norwegian. That's because we all stem from Africa. In Africa, there's been more time to create genetic diversity.'

In other words, race has no basis in biological or scientific fact".

- ❖ Arthur's decisions and actions suggest his intellect led him to live his life in the belief that he was part of the human race and not one particular race despite what society told him.
- ❖ The way he was accepted into white communities also shows that all people, will take others as they find them particularly when they don't feel threatened or vulnerable (see earlier on racism as a political tool), and when common ground is widened. Sport for Arthur provided a strong common ground.
- ❖ Arthur was a pioneer. He was a forefather of multiculturalism and an early role model for other people of colour.
- ❖ This is evident from everything he did in sport and the life he lived amongst white working-class Britons.



Slide 12: We are all one race (12)

On the slide: Jessica Ennis / Arthur Wharton

Commentary:

- ❖ These days because of pioneers like Arthur we see black people more widely represented in all aspects of western society and culture. We still have a long way to go but Arthur would be proud to know...
- ❖ Many non-white and whites are united against racism in Britain today and many like Football Unites, Racism Divides, actively campaign to eliminate racism.
- ❖ Many of the top football players in the world are of African descent.
- ❖ 16 players from Arthur's home country of Ghana have appeared in the premier league.
- ❖ The 'face' of the 2012 Olympics was Jessica Ennis, a girl from Sheffield with a white mother and a black British father of Jamaican origin.
- ❖ In the 2012 Olympics the triumphs of black and mixed race British athletes such as Mo Farah were widely celebrated.
- ❖ At the start of the 2013 football season all the top UK teams featured non-white players

Slide 13: Let's kick racism out (13)

On the slide: News clip about racism in football. 50 seconds (INTERNET ACCESS NEEDED)

Commentary:

- ❖ So, as you can see, there is much to celebrate but it would be wrong to assume that Racism has gone away.
- ❖ Although anti-racism legislation is in place under British and European laws, racism and discrimination still exist in all areas of society and there are still members of political parties in Britain and Europe that accept racial theory.
- ❖ In Arthur's profession, football, for example, racism remains a serious problem.
- ❖ Racism in football is a reflection of what's happening on a political, social and cultural level.



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- ❖ Footballers are still forced to endure crowds making monkey noises when they are in possession, particularly whilst playing in countries with a recent history of racism, such as Russia.

Slide 14: Empathic Civilisation (14)

On the slide: Clip of RSA 'Empathic Civilisation' talk, 3.5 minutes (INTERNET ACCESS NEEDED)

Commentary:

- ❖ The challenge for the younger generation is to ensure that we never return to the days of scientific racism and continue to fight all forms of discrimination – be it racism, Xenophobia, homophobia, sexism, or so on. We need more pioneers like Arthur and a world without 'fictions' about what divides and unites us.
- ❖ (Empathic civilisation video to end).