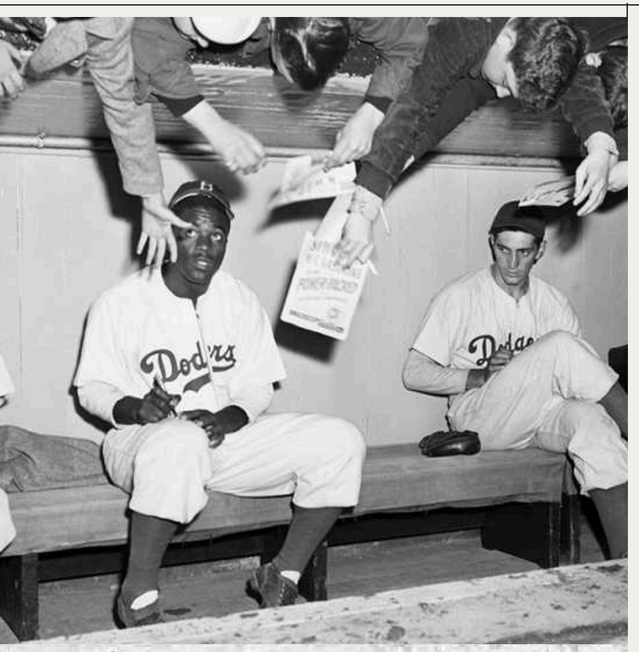




Racism and Black Prejudice in American Sport History





NOVEMBER 2025

Iceberg Model

Visible Events

- Racist chants & abuse
- Unequal pay & sponsorship
- Fans racially abusing players

Pattens / Trends

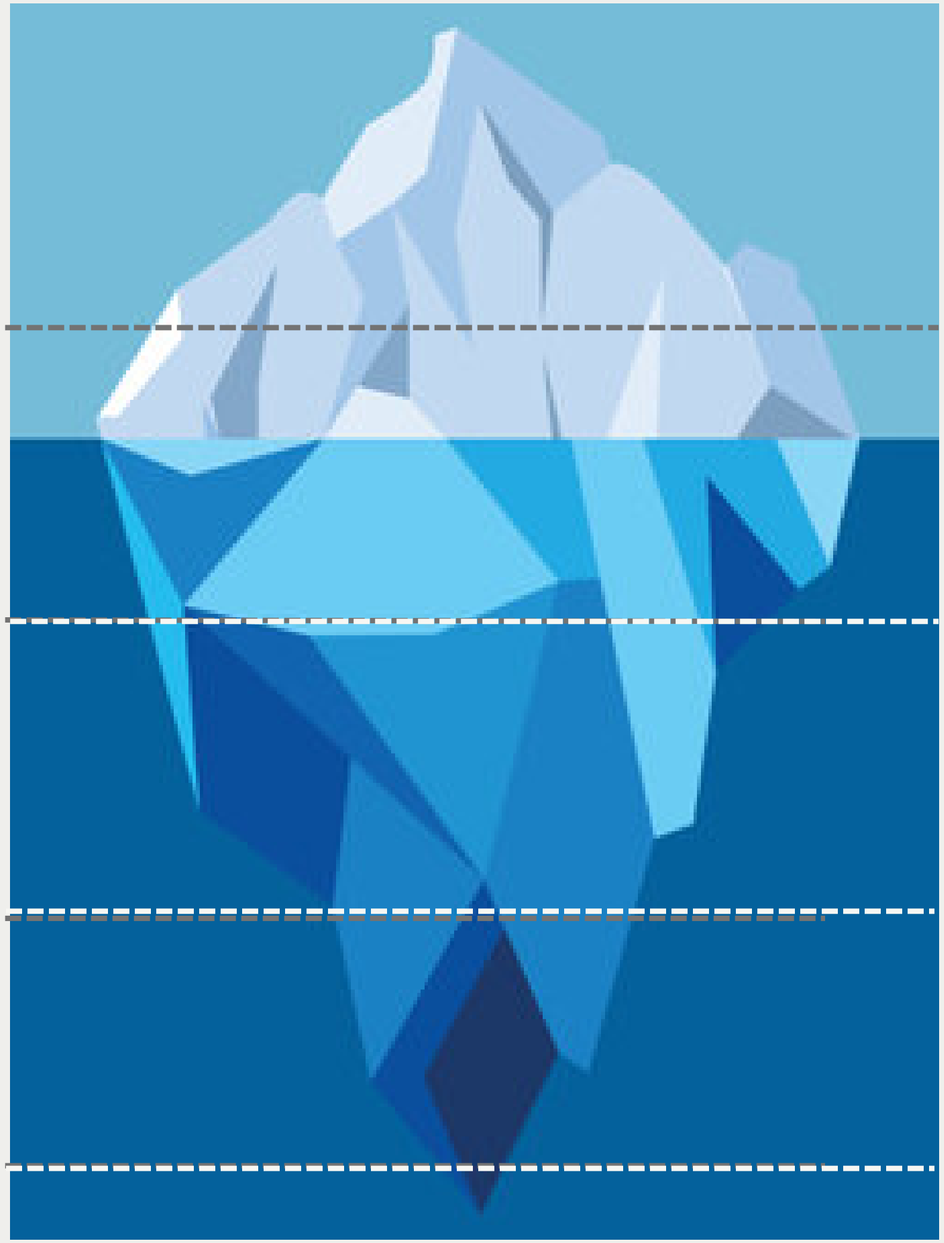
- Repeated discrimination
- Repetition of “shut up and play” narrative

Structures

- NCAA exploitation of Black athletes
- Biased hiring networks
- Media

Systems

- Sport should stay apolitical
- Black athletes are physically gifted, not intellect



organization

Values, morals beliefs that shape everything

Declining Racist Regime

Emerging Equality Practice

Landscape

- **WWII & post-war civil rights momentum**
- **Formal racial segregation in US society**

- **Civil Rights Act, Black Power Movement**
- **Television and sports broadcasting boom**

- **Globalization & commercialization of sport**
- **“Sport as entertainment” logic, cable TV**

- **Social media & smartphones**
- **BLM & global anti-racism protests**
- **Generational value shifts towards equity**

Optimasation

Destabilisation

Destabilisation

Breakdown/Phaseout

Leagues:
NBA,NFL,NFL,MLB

Player unions

Fan Culture

1940s — 1960s — 1980s -2000s — 2010s — 2020s

Regime

Media and Broadcasting

Government and Law

Corporate Sponsors and Owners



- Muhammad Ali and Vietnam War resistance
- Athlete advocacy groups
- Kaepernick kneeling
- Athlete-led foundations & activism
- BLM protests led by athletes
- Local community organizing in Black neighborhoods
- Lawsuits around discrimination
- Jackie Robinson & integration of black athletes
- 1968 Olympic Black Power salute
- Athlete media platforms & podcasts
- Early Black sports journalists
- Hip-hop & Black culture influencing sports marketing
- Negro Leagues & Black sports clubs
- Fans mobilizing online against racist incidents

Niche

Complex

- Shifting fan culture and attitudes
- Supporting athlete activism without polarizing audiences
- Changing long-term league culture

Complicated

- Auditing hiring pipelines for bias
- Investigating discrimination claims
- Designing equitable recruitment criteria

Unpredictable World

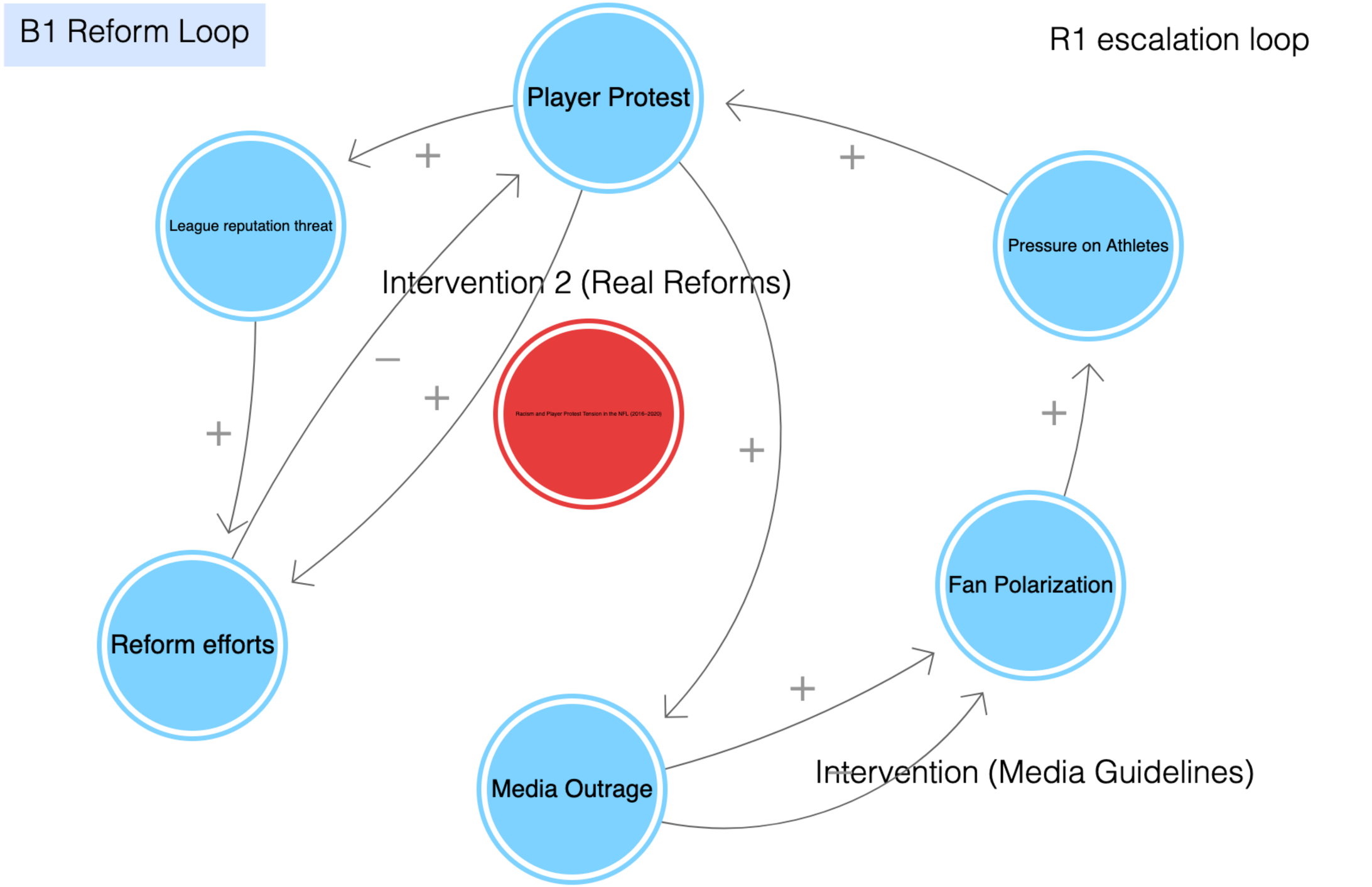
Predictable World

Chaotic

- Viral racist incident (stadium or online) requiring instant response
- Crisis when players receive violent threats
- On-air racist comments causing immediate backlash

Obvious

- Immediate penalties for racist slurs
- Removing racist fan banners
- Standard league response protocols after verified incidents


B1 Reform Loop
R1 escalation loop
Player Protest
League reputation threat
Pressure on Athletes
Intervention 2 (Real Reforms)
Racism and Player Protest Tension in the NFL (2016–2020)
Reform efforts
Fan Polarization
Media Outrage
Intervention (Media Guidelines)

INTERVENTION 1: ETHICAL MEDIA GUIDELINES

Goal:

Reduce sensationalism and polarization within the R1 loop.

How the Intervention Works:

1. Responsible reporting standards
   - Avoid framing activism as “disrespect.”
   - Use fact-based language.

2. Limit biased commentary
   - Reduce emotionally charged punditry.
   - Penalize inflammatory broadcast moments.

3. Provide context on racial justice issues
   - Educate the audience instead of provoking anger.

Impact on the Causal Loop:

- Media Outrage decreases (–)
- Fan Polarization decreases (–)
- Pressure on Athletes decreases (–)
- Player Protest escalation slows down

INTERVENTION 2: REAL STRUCTURAL REFORMS

Goal:

Strengthen long-term trust and reduce the need for player protest.

Key Reform Actions

- Transparent anti-discrimination policies
- Hiring Black executives and coaches
- Support for athlete activism programs
- Mandatory anti-racism training
- Funding for community initiatives

Impact on the Causal Loop:

- Increases Reform Efforts (+)
- Strengthens League Reputation (+)
- Leads to less Player Protest (–)

MENTAL MODES

Players

- “Silence equals complicity.”
- “We have a responsibility to speak up.”
- “Athletes are more than entertainers.”

League / Owners

- “Sport should remain apolitical.”
- “Protests threaten revenue and brand image.”
- “Control the narrative to maintain stability.”

Fans (Polarized Segment)

- “Athletes should ‘stick to sports’.”
- “Protests disrespect national symbols.”
- “Activism has no place in entertainment.”

Sponsors

- “Avoid controversy at all costs.”
- “Support social justice only if it aligns with brand safety.”

Media

- “Controversy increases engagement.”
- “Conflict sells better than nuance.”

VISION 2040

Vision

- Normalized athlete activism
→ Athletes speak without fear of backlash.
- Representation at all levels
- Inclusive fan culture
- Equitable hiring and pay structures
- Collaborative media ecosystem

How to get there?

- Implement reforms today
- Create media accountability
- Encourage athlete-led community change
- Build education around racism in sport
- Shift public values toward equity

MY BELIEFS, VALUES, AND HOW THEY INFLUENCE MY PERSPECTIVE

My Core Beliefs

- I believe athletes have the right to protest.
- I value racial equity and justice.
- I believe sport reflects society, not separate from it.
- I see racism as historical and systemic, not isolated.

How this shapes my analysis

- I interpret player protests as legitimate activism, not disruption.
- I am more critical of institutions prioritizing image over justice.
- I may initially assume fans who oppose protest are motivated by bias.
- I challenge myself to consider why some fans resist activism.

How I challenged myself

- Stepped back from my own values to see why conflict escalates.
- Tried to understand the league’s need for stability.
- Considered fan fears about “politics in sport.”
- Recognized my perspective is shaped by modern values of equality.