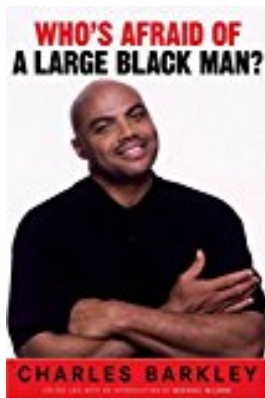


[PDF] Who's Afraid Of A Large Black Man?

Charles Barkley, Michael Wilbon - pdf download free book



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Description:

"Racism," Charles Barkley says, "is the biggest cancer of my lifetime. And I know I can't cure the cancer, but doesn't somebody have to attack it?" Barkley's means of attack in *Who's Afraid of a Large Black Man?*--not surprising from one of the most outspoken athletes of our time--is to break past the taboo of race by talking about it in the open. What might be surprising is that Barkley steps aside and lets other people talk, too. While in his previous bestseller, *I May Be Wrong but I Doubt It*, the former NBA MVP and current TNT commentator held forth on a wide variety of subjects, for his new book he sought out a baker's dozen of leading figures in entertainment, business, and government (and yes, one athlete) and sat down with each for a frank conversation about race.

Of course race is not a simple topic, and each discussion heads in its own direction. Tiger Woods speaks both of his biracial identity and of how moving it was to see the black staff at Augusta National lined up to see him put on the green jacket as Masters champion. George Lopez talks about the pressures of creating a breakthrough Latino sitcom in an almost all-white industry. Film producer Peter Guber surprises Barkley when he says that he made *The Color Purple* out of economic self-interest, not idealism. Many of the discussions turn, like Guber's, not to traditional civil rights but to economics, which Rabbi Steven Leder calls the real "last taboo subject in America." It's clear that the audience Barkley most hopes to reach with this book is the young black men and women that he and many of his interview subjects are concerned about. "We're losing," activist Marian Wright Edelman tells him, "and if we don't stop this trend, we're going to be headed back to slavery." Barkley's celebrity subjects can provide some models for success for those readers, but one also hopes Barkley can continue the conversation by turning the spotlight on those struggling with the problems of race outside the sometimes protective glare of fame. --Tom Nissley

Who's Afraid of Talking to a Large Black Man?

Throughout his career, Charles Barkley has always been willing--quite willing--to call it as he sees it, making him one of the most quotable athletes of his era and, many have suggested, a future political candidate. He's as happy talking issues as talking hoops, and for his new book, *Who's Afraid of a Large Black Man?* he sat down for conversations across the country about the troublesome topic of race in America. We had on the subject with Sir Charles: Read it to find why he wrote the book, what he tells his own biracial daughter about race, and why he thinks sports can be a model for race relations.

From Publishers Weekly Don't let the cheeky title, the byline or the picture on the cover fool you: this is a serious book that's not about Charles Barkley. Instead, this work, edited by the *Washington Post* and ESPN's Wilbon, is a candid collection of 13 interviews by Barkley with prominent Americans like Bill Clinton, Jesse Jackson, Tiger Woods, Morgan Freeman and comedian George Lopez on the oft-avoided subject of race. Barkley, well known for outspokenness as a player and an on-air commentator, challenges his interviewees to deal with this delicate issue head on. Barkley wisely keeps his opinions brief, letting his dynamic counterparts take center stage. In doing so he gets these stars to open up on how American society fares on such topics as racism, race relations, welfare reform, economic and social discrimination and creating opportunities for minorities. Mixed in with the bigger name celebs and politicians are lesser-known folk, such as Robert Johnson (the NBA's first black owner), the Children's Defense Fund's Miriam Wright Edelman (who laments that there are "580,000 black men in prison compared to about 45,000 who graduate from college each year") and Rabbi Steven Leder. For all the different backgrounds and opinions, all the participants believe the racial divide in America can only be bridged with a combination of reforms to our educational, medical and economic practices and a strong self-evaluation by the African-American community. Everyone also agrees that a core group of strong black leaders must emerge for these changes to be enacted. Surprisingly, this eye-opening book might point to Barkley as just such a leader. (Apr. 5)

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