

CASE STUDY: RACISM IN AUSTRALIAN SPORT AND THE IMPACT ON PUBLIC AWARENESS AND VIEWS OF AUSTRALIAN INDIGENOUS CULTURE

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“Just as there is racism in Australian society so too is there racism within Australian sport. Just as there is racial discrimination within Australian society, so too there remains discrimination because of race within Australian sport. Just as there are stereotypes that reinforce racist conceptions of peoples in Australian society, so too there exist stereotypes that reinforce racist conceptions in sport.”

-Godwell, 2000

Figure 1.1: Exert from “Racism in sport: An old adversary that never goes away.” (Godwell in Paul, 2012)

NATURE OF THE ISSUE:

A long history of vilification and discrimination of First Nations peoples since colonisation has resulted in racism being “woven into the fabric” (Parry, 2015) of Australian society and sport, despite modern views decrying and denying this. Racism in Australian sport can involve acts of racial discrimination such as stereotyping players based on race, race-based violence or threats and booing or using offensive racial slurs. This racial discrimination has presented itself in different ways, for decades. In 1927, Aboriginal football player Sir Doug Nicholls was rejected from the Carlton Football Club for his “colour” and “smell” (HREOC, 2006). Decades later, after the cessation of government policies of the suppression of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, Cathy Freeman, a First Nations athlete was booed by some spectators as she lit the torch at the 2000 Olympics in Sydney (Murray, 2020). AFL footballer Adam Goodes was booed by crowds and sparked a furore of backlash when he called out racist taunts during and after a game in 2013. These racist actions are not isolated and are a product of public views of Australian Indigenous culture that are influenced by past ideologies of supremacy and the historical suppression of Indigenous peoples. Further, they contribute to the chronic vilification of First Nations peoples and culture in all facets of society, not just in sport.

Racism in Australian sport is made controversial by the polarisation and variety of opinions, understandings and experiences of racism and what racism looks like. Some suggest the booing and racial vilification of Indigenous players is “not racially motivated” (The Today Show in “The Final Quarter, 2015) and others sharing the “visceral experience of racism” (Grant in ‘The Final Quarter’, 2019) felt from the booing. In reality, racism can be extremely subtle or incredibly explicit, but regardless it is still racism, intentional or not (O’Brien in “The Final Quarter,” 2019). The ethnocentrism engrained in our society leads the general public to maintain a degree of blindness and defensiveness around racist behaviours in sport which demonstrate the ongoing nature of destructive and supremacist ideologies which continue to contribute to the wider issue of racism that affects Australian Indigenous Culture.

The racial abuse experienced by First Nations peoples further strengthens the barrier to Indigenous participation in sport as well as creating a hostile environment where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are subjected to anger and bullying behaviour



Image 1: Indigenous journalist Stan Grant

Figure 1.2: Exert from Stan Grant in The Final Quarter, (Shark Island Productions, 2019)

“We don’t hear just a boo, we hear the howls of humiliation that we often grew up with as Indigenous people... The howls of humiliation that echo across two centuries of dispossession and injustice and suffering and the visceral experience of racism not just as an abstract concept but the mark it leaves on your body and the mark it leaves on your soul.”


that echoes the injustices of historical suppression and segregation. Stan Grant, a First Nations journalist responded to the constant booing of Adam Goodes with the following quote that verbalises the impact of such vilification in Australian sport.

HISTORICAL, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL CONTEXT:

Racism in Australian sport stems from racism in the wider context of society, through political, social and historical landscapes which are fundamentally rooted in the belief in white supremacy that has echoed through our systems for centuries. These foundational beliefs have their origins in the mindsets which justified British invasion in 1788 and subsequent colonisation of a land that was considered to no one's land (*Terra Nullius*). Past government policies of Protection and Segregation (1860s-1940s) and Assimilation policies (1940s-1960s) segregated and suppressed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on the ethnocentric and superionic assumption that they were inferior. As these policies persisted, First Nations peoples were prohibited from competing in sports against white people and were refused access to public facilities such as pools and athletics centres. Figure 2.1 outlines the development of racism in the historical and contemporary context of sport with a focus on the AFL.

Figure 2.1: Timeline of racism in the AFL

YEAR	EVENT:
1927	Sir Doug Nicholls was refused from the Carlton Football club because of their racist view that his colour was “dirty” and that he “smelt.” (<i>Gorman, 2009</i>)
1960	Indigenous players including Jim and Phil Karkouer from North Melbourne reported that they were targeted with racial slurs by opposition players, teammates, and spectators. The brothers were later suspended for retaliating against the abuse. (<i>Alchetron 2018</i>)
1993	<div data-bbox="316 1115 603 1310" data-label="Image"> </div> <p>April 17- St Kilda player Nicky Winmar lifted his guernsey in response to constant racial slurs coming from spectators. Winmar pointed at his skin and stated, “I am black, and I am proud to be black”.</p> <p>Image 2: Nicky Winmar raises his shirt, 1993 (<i>National Museum Australia, 2021</i>)</p> <p>April 20 - Collingwood President Alan McAllister “inflamed the situation (<i>“The Final Quarter”, 2019</i>) by stating in an interview that he did not have an issue with Indigenous Australians and “as long as they conduct themselves like white people, well, off the field, everyone will admire and respect them.”</p> <p>After receiving backlash for his racist comment, McAllister blamed the overt racism on “a slip of the tongue” (<i>McAllister in “The Final Quarter”</i>).</p> <p>(<i>Excerpt from “The Final Quarter,” 2019</i>)</p>
1995	<p>April 25- Essendon player Michael Long accused Collingwood's Damian Monkhorst of racial abuse at the ANZAC day match.</p> <p>The “furore” (<i>ABC News, 2015</i>) led to the introduction of the AFL's Rule 30.</p> <p>June 30- AFL rule 30 (Vilification Framework) To combat racial and religious vilification in the AFL.</p>

	<p>The rule stated that “no player ... shall act towards or speak to any other person in a manner, or engage in any other conduct which threatens, disparages, vilifies or insults another person ... on the basis of that person’s race, religion, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin.”</p> <p><i>(AFL, n/a)</i></p>
1997	<p>Collingwood’s Robbie Ahmat and Western Bulldogs’ David Cockatoo-Collins both alleged being called slurs by respective oppositions however both accused racial abusers were cleared and found not guilty of the vilifying acts.</p> <p><i>(Financial Review, 1997)</i></p>
1999	<p>St Kilda player Peter Everitt racially abused Melbourne’s Scott Chisholm after kicking a goal. Everitt donated \$20,000 to a charity of Chisholm’s choice, accepted a self-imposed four-match suspension including the loss of match payments and undertook a racial awareness training program. Everitt publicly apologised to Chisholm and his family and to the Aboriginal community.</p> <p><i>(Gardiner, 2021)</i></p>
2011	<p>Western Bulldogs player Justin Sherman racially abused a First Nations Gold Coast Suns opponent. Sherman was suspended for four games and was made to attend an education program and pay \$5000 to a charity chosen by the Suns.</p> <p><i>(Cooper, 2011)</i></p>
2012	<p>In a conversation with the AFL’s national community engagement manager, Jason Mifsud, Adelaide’s recruitment manager Matthew Rendell suggested that if players did not stop “slagging off” <i>(Rendell, 2012)</i> the club may need “to adopt a policy of only recruiting Aboriginal players with at least one white parent.” <i>(ABC News, 2012)</i>.</p> <p>Rendell later “apologises” and resigns from his positions claiming that the comment was merely a “throwaway line.” <i>(ABC News, 2012)</i></p>
2013	<p>Sydney Swans player Adam Goodes was racially abused by a 13-year-old from the sidelines calling him an “ape.”</p> <p>Goodes calls her out during the game and in a press conference the next day told the media to be understanding of the racist society that she had been raised in and that her racial abuse was a product of the environment around her.</p> <p><i>(Crawford, 2013)</i></p> <p>During games spectators began booing Goodes as he played, and he copped racial abuse and a flurry of media vilification from Reporters such as Andrew Bolt and Miranda Devine saying that he was “victimising” <i>(Devine in “The Final Quarter”)</i> the young girl, and that his behaviour was polarising the nation. Commentators such as Sam Newman and Alan Jones continued this backlash on talk shows and radio and the booing from spectators progressed.</p> <p><i>(The Final Quarter, 2019)</i></p>
2014	<p>Adam Goodes Awarded Australian of the Year for his activism against racism.</p> <p><i>(The final Quarter, 2019)</i></p>
2015	<p>Adam Goodes was continually booed and vilified at games and by the media for speaking up against racism.</p> <div style="display: flex; align-items: flex-start;">  <div style="margin-left: 20px;"> <p>Indigenous round, Goodes did war cry to the crowd in a show of pride for his Aboriginal culture and received huge backlash and continued booing.</p> <p><i>(The Final Quarter, 2019)</i></p> </div> </div>

2016	A Port Adelaide supporter threw a banana at Adelaide's Eddie Betts during a game. The woman's membership was suspended indefinitely. <i>(Earle, 2016)</i>
2021	Collingwood president, Eddie McGuire responded to reported findings of racial aggression and systemic racism within the club by labelling the day as "a historic and proud day for the Collingwood Football Club" <i>(McGuire in ABC News, 2021)</i> . <i>(ABC News, 2021)</i>

Racism in Australian sport has been a consistent issue faced by First Nations peoples for decades as historically oppressive ideologies continue to be revealed in many facets of modern society and culture, including sport. As awareness of racism in sport has increased in political and social contexts, there seems to be larger scrutiny of racism that may indicate a positive shift towards culturally relative views. Despite the cessation of overtly racist government policies and increased public awareness of the issue as demonstrated in figure 2.1 with the development of social attitudes and actions to prevent racism, the systemic discrimination and the marginalisation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders persists. Figure 2.2 further explains how racism and the vilification of First Nations peoples continues to permeate sporting culture.

Figure 2.2: Excerpt from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission 2006 on racism in Australian Sport

"It would seem that sport and sporting events are the ultimate cross-cultural mixing pot in Australia; a place where respect for ability and the camaraderie of teamwork overcomes intolerance and exclusion, and where we cheer on our champions no matter what the colour of their skin or the sound of their surname. Or do we? Research suggests that while racist attitudes have remained strong in Australia over the last 10 years, there has been a considerable reduction in overt racist behaviour, due in part to the development of strong social norms against openly expressing racist views. Such a shift in attitudes is backed up by comprehensive racial discrimination laws administered by the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) at a federal level, as well as state and territory anti-discrimination commissions. However, the research also indicates that these social norms are not well developed in all areas of Australian life – one such public forum where racism still rears its ugly head is the sporting arena."

Figure 2.3 below is an excerpt from Dr Keith Parry's findings that explains the contemporary face of racism and the marginalisation of Indigenous players in the AFL. Parry's findings are a contemporary demonstration of the concept of the Noble Savage, which has its origins in the first perception of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples by Captain James Cook which idealizes Indigenous peoples and binds them to an unrealistic unhuman standard *(Gardner, 2016)*.

Figure 2.3: Excerpt from Dr Keith Parry on the contemporary marginalisation of Indigenous players *(Parry, 2015)*.

"Australian rules football is feted as Australia's only Indigenous sporting code. In terms of Indigenous players, there is actually an over-representation in the AFL (10% of players are Indigenous, compared to 2% of the population). That's partly because Indigenous Australian footballers have been portrayed as possessing "innate" ability or being "born to play" sport. In reality, such ability and skills are the result of overcoming unfavourable political and socioeconomic conditions, rather than some biological or mystical ability.

In addition, Indigenous players can often be marginalised and excluded from positions of influence on the pitch. Indigenous athletes are assigned positions that require speed and agility rather than leadership and intelligence. In this way, control over the game is retained by white athletes. Such marginalisation also indicates deeper racial ideologies that are based on social and historical events."

Figure 2.4 Campaigns to raise awareness of racism within Australia.

Racism. It Stops With Me:

“The Racism. It Stops With Me campaign has developed resources to support organisations, schools, students and advocates in opposing racism and contributing towards a more inclusive society.” (AHRC, 2020).

The campaign is an ongoing effort to end discrimination within Australia and has been broadcasted nationally. Adam Goodes became an ambassador for the campaign in 2013 and since then has used it to support positive awareness of racism in Australian sport.



Recognise Campaign:

Established in 2012 by Reconciliation Australia, the recognise campaign maintained the core focus to raise awareness for the need of constitutional recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The campaign was ended after 5 years after the Federal Government ceased funding in 2017.

However, “the campaign raised the profile of the issue with millions of Australians becoming aware and supportive of the need for change. Independent polling showed that, in the five years of the Recognise campaign, awareness levels rose from 30% to over 75% of the population. These levels were higher amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents from 60% to 84%.”

(Reconciliation Australia, 2018)

Whilst tolerance policies such as the AFL’s rule 30 exist and efforts to combat racism are in place such as the “Racism. It Stops with me” campaign (figure 2.4), there are still significant gaps between the experiences of non-Indigenous and Indigenous Australians (Closing the gap, 2022). Trauma, suppression, segregation, and vilification are the foundation stones upon which today’s ongoing racism and discrimination are based, and the lens through which such vilification is re-experienced in a contemporary context. Those who do not live this experience have the privilege to choose to care or not to care and a cyclical pattern of a lack of public awareness continues.

At the core of public awareness and views surrounding the issue of racism in Australian sport, is the media and national conversation surrounding the vilification of Indigenous peoples in the sporting sphere. The media coverage of racial discourse as analysed in Darling’s “The Final Quarter” (2019) demonstrates the plethora of opportunities for raising public awareness of Australian Indigenous Culture. A shift in public views of racism in sport was indicated by increased media support for Adam Goodes which likely influenced the influx of support from fans who came to games with #Istandwithadam signs. Ultimately, Figure 2.1 demonstrates the interplay between the media and contemporary understandings and levels of public awareness of the vilification of First Nations peoples in sport. In this way, the media both leads public discourse and reflects social attitudes

STAKEHOLDERS AND RESPONSES:



Image 4: Adam Goodes' calling out a spectator for racial abuse (SBS, 2013)

In 2013 Australian Rules Footballer and now former Australian of the Year, Adam Goodes called out the booing and racial slurs directed at him by fans, spectators, commentators and the media, earning him severe backlash. Goode's calling out a 13-year-old for calling him an "ape" highlighted the controversy and division of opinions on racism in Australian sport (*see figure 3.1 for more detail*), with commentators such as Alan Jones suggesting he "had no idea it [the ape comment] was a form of racial abuse" (*Marriner, 2019*) or a Today Show Journalist suggesting the booing directed at Goodes was "not racially motivated" (*The Today Show from "The Final Quarter, 2015*). These responses from the media are indicative of the ethnocentric lack of understanding that constitutes the belief that Australia is not a racist country. This belief is based on the lived experience and world view of non-Aboriginal people. Stan Grant's words as seen in figure 1.2 demonstrate how these acts that some deem as not racist, are experienced by those on the receiving end. He makes it clear that the perceived lack of racism seen by white stakeholders is a result of a privileged position that allows non-Indigenous peoples to remove themselves and blind themselves to the pervasive racism in Australian society and sport.

This privilege can be seen from non-Indigenous stakeholder, Eddie McGuire. McGuire is a former Collingwood president and Footy Show host who weighed in heavily with often contradictory responses to Adam Goode's words and actions. Figure 3.1 provides a detailed summary of a range of Eddie McGuire and Adam Goodes' responses and interactions during 2013 to 2015 when the racial vilification of Adam Goodes was in full fire, as well as the contributions of the AFL and the media.

Figure 3.1 (sourced from “The Final Quarter”, 2019) Summary of key stakeholder responses including actions and reactions of Adam Goodes and Eddie McGuire as well as the media and public opinion from 2013 to 2015.

2013: 13-year-old calls Adam Goodes an Ape in a Sydney Swans vs Collingwood game during the Indigenous round.

RESPONSES:

Adam Goodes:

- Calls the girl (in the stands) out from the ground.
- Goodes gives a press conference denouncing racism and expressing that the racial abuse was a product of the racist environment the girl was raised in and reflects our society, more so than the beliefs of the child.
- Creates the: ‘Racism. It Stops With Me’ Campaign in collaboration with the Human Rights Commission

Eddie McGuire:

- Collingwood president apologises to Goodes on behalf of the club.

The AFL:

- Collingwood coach, Nathan Buckley says that “the comments are unacceptable, the attitudes are unacceptable” (Buckley in “The Final Quarter”, 2019)

The Media and public: (Including newspaper headlines)

- “Adam Goodes’ Dignity in the face of racism is a lesson to all” (*Sunday Telegraph, 2013*)
- “Why this 13-Year-old child’s mistake is a wake-up call the AFL needed” (*Mark Robinson, The Daily Telegraph, 2013*)
- “How is Racism any different to any other form of verbal assault. I think Goodes is acting a bit soft here.” (*Unknown Twitter comment, 2013*)
- “Adam Goodes should harden ...up”, (*Unknown Twitter comment, 2013*)
- “I had no idea it was a form of racial abuse” (*Jones in “The Final Quarter”, 2019*)

2013: Just 4 days after apologising for racial abused directed at Adam Goodes, Eddie McGuire compares Adam Goodes to King Kong on national radio.

RESPONSES:

Adam Goodes:

- Goodes is so distraught by comments from Eddie McGuire, he considers opting out of playing the next game.

Eddie McGuire:

- Apologies by saying the comment was “a slip of the tongue.”

AFL:

- AFL CEO Andrew Demetriou announces that “He’s [McGuire] the last person who’s got a racist bone in his body” and then apologises in an official report stating that the comments were extremely “disappointing and unacceptable” (*Demetriou in “The Final Quarter”, 2019*).

2014: Adam Goodes awarded Australian of the year.

RESPONSES:

Adam Goodes:

- Goodes used his new platform and press coverage as Australian of the Year to raise awareness for Indigenous issues such as invasion day.
- Started the “Recognise” Campaign to gain constitutional recognition for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The Media and public: (Including newspaper headlines)

- “Why Adam Goodes is an inspiring choice as Australian of the year” (*Andrew Webster, The Sydney Morning Herald, 2014*)
- “What a terrific honour for a terrific bloke” (*Sunrise Morning Show, 2014*)
- “Adam Goodes is a bad choice for Australian of the Year.... rewarded for victimizing a powerless 13-year-old girl” (*Miranda Devine, The Daily Telegraph, 2014*)
- “Man honoured after yelling at a 13-year-old girl” (*Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, 2014*)
- “Our constitution is not racist, and Goodes and his supporters will only make it so” (*Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, 2014*)

2014: Adam Goodes receives severe booing from spectators during games as well as other racially motivated comments.

Adam Goodes:

- Spoke to the press about how “disappointing” the racism was (*Goodes in “The Final Quarter”, 2019*).

Eddie McGuire:

- McGuire expressed support for the actions of Goodes saying that he has done “a fantastic job with the reconciliation message, but also for the fight against racism” (*McGuire in “The final Quarter”, 2019*)
- Criticised Goodes for staging for free kicks.

The Media and public: (Including newspaper headlines)

- Spectators called out fellow supporters for racist behaviour and booing of Adam Goodes.
- “Grow up if you think what we saw in the AFL grand final is acceptable” (*Peter FitzSimons, The Sydney Morning Herald, 2014*)

2015: Grand Final, Adam Goodes does “war cry” in front of Carlton cheer squad

Adam Goodes:

- Goodes explained in an interview after the game that the war cry was “a tribute” (*Goodes in “The final Quarter”, 2019*) to the Flying Boomerangs under 16s side and was not directed offensively towards the Carlton cheer squad.

Eddie McGuire:

- “I don’t think we ever want to see it again to be perfectly honest” (*McGuire in “The Final Quarter, 2019*)
- Believed that Adam was making the game “violent” and “aggressive” (*Channel 9 News, 2015*)
- “Had we known before the game that Adam or the Indigenous players were planning to do some sort of war cry, we could have been able to educate and understand the situation.” (*McGuire in “The Final Quarter, 2019*)

The Media and public: (Including newspaper headlines and radio clippings)

- “What are we dealing with?” (*Triple M Radio, 2015*)
- “That was lovely to watch” (*Channel 3AW, 2015*)
- “Probably best not to do it though” (*Channel 7, 2015*)
- “Is it a great thing to have in this day and age? I don’t think so” (*Fox Footy, 2015*)
- “Goodes shook his spear, now he should offer his hand” (*Andrew Bolt, The Advertiser, 2015*)
- “It was clearly a display of pride” (*The Footy Show, 2015*)
- “I don’t think this helps the reconciliation movement” (*Bolt in “The Final Quarter”, 2019*)
- “‘Victim’ Adam Goodes just crying wolf over war cry” (*Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, 2015*)

2015: Booing continues to worsen

Adam Goodes:

- Goodes takes time off after crowd abuse from West Coast supporters.
- “Adam Goodes considers retirement over booing” (*Sydney Morning Herald, 2015*)
- Goodes announces retirement after the 2015 Grand Final and declines participation in the retiring player’s parade.

Media and public: (Including newspaper headlines)

- “Hawks missed a chance to stop the boos against Goodes” (*Caroline Wilson, The Age, 2015*)
- “No sportsman, not even Adam Goodes, should be above racism” (*Unknown, Herald Sun, 2015*)
- “If Goodes was booed by racists why was Rioli cheered?” (*Andrew Bolt, Herald Sun, 2015*)
- “Adam Goodes isn’t booed for the colour of his skin, he is booed for being a pillock” (*Miranda Devine, The Daily Telegraph, 2015*)
- “Only Adam Goodes can stop the booing” (*Miranda Devine, The Daily Telegraph, 2015*)
- “Stop this racist bullying of Adam Goodes now” (*Unknow, The Sydney Morning Herald, 2015*)

AFL:

In 2015 “The AFL community... united to take a stand against racism” (*Channel 7, 2015*) and throughout the year following Goodes’ retirement took the following actions to express their support:

- Hawthorn released a video in condemnation of racism
- Richmond ran through a reconciliation banner
- Sydney Swans ran through a Respect banner
- Spectators showed up to the games with “#IStandWithAdam signs and number 37 to demonstrate their support for Adam Goodes
- AFL CEO Gillon McLachlan apologises to Adam Goodes and Indigenous players for not acting sooner

These varying actions and responses to racism in the AFL from key stakeholders, represent different tones and undercurrents of ideology within the sport and carry significant impacts. The responses to Goodes' actions as represented in figure 3.1 reflect the ethnocentrism that is embedded in Australian society, the idea that when we don't understand something or where we see difference, we assert judgement. As articulated by Waleed Aly, an Australian writer and broadcaster, "Australia is generally a very tolerant society until it's minorities demonstrate that they do not know their place, and at that moment, the minute someone in a minority acts as though they are not a mere supplicant, then we lose our minds." (Aly in 'The Final Quarter', 2019)

IMPACT ON PUBLIC AWARENESS AND PUBLIC VIEWS:

Although backlash to Indigenous voices such as Adam Goodes endures, non-Indigenous stakeholders are demonstrating a greater shift towards cultural relativism and a move away from ethnocentrism. This is seen in the increased levels of support for Goodes and the surge in backlash towards racist comments. Sport consistently remains the most highly broadcasted and viewed facet of Australian media, reaching huge national audiences daily (Connery, 2021). As a result, the stakeholders within the AFL community and other sporting sectors have a significant opportunity to support or limit public awareness of racism in Australian sport. After being called an "ape" during the Indigenous round of 2013, Adam Goodes took the opportunity to speak to the press and educate the wider Australian public on the impact and context of Australian racism. Goodes stated that "it's not the first time on the footy field [he's] been referred to as a monkey or an ape," (Goodes in "The Final Quarter", 2019) giving the public an opportunity to understand the wider context of the comment and knowledge that it is not an isolated event but a part of a bigger problem.

Following this incident and through his further actions such as the "war-cry", Goodes engaged in several press interviews where he became a focal point for the bigger social issue of racism. Goodes spoke out about the context of racism within an ethnocentric society where if "we don't understand something we get angry" (Goodes in "The Final Quarter", 2019). In 2014, becoming the Australian of the year, Goodes was granted a huge platform to support awareness of Australian Indigenous Culture. Goodes' involvement in campaigns such as the "Racism. It Stops With Me" campaign or the Recognise campaign which were both nationally advertised, further supported opportunities of awareness by communicating to a large audience the importance of ending racism and achieving constitutional recognition of First Nations peoples (refer to figure 2.4 for more detail). Throughout his career, Goodes held up a mirror to the racism within Australian society and became paramount to influencing public awareness of racism. His story, as represented by "The Final Quarter" is a common resource used in Australian schools, supported by the National Curriculum which mandates the teaching of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories and perspectives across all learning areas.

Goodes' actions likely shifted public views of the vilification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders in Australian sport. In 2019, Shark Island Productions released "The Final Quarter" a documentary aimed at sharing Goodes' story and the national conversation of racism in the AFL and to raise awareness of the issue. On the 9th of June 2019, the day the documentary was released, "the AFL and its 18 clubs made a formal apology to Goodes for the game's failure to stand up for him and 'call out' the treatment he was receiving." (National Museum Australia, 2019). The apology provided unambiguous evidence that the actions of Goodes had been heard and understood by the public and by the AFL and had ultimately shifted the views of the organisation. In 2021, the Collingwood Football Club published an independent inquiry into racism within the club. The report was titled "Do better..."

and reflected how Goodes' actions encouraged deeper understandings of systemic racism and a change in practice from the club (*Holmes, 2021*). In particular, the report provided the recognition that he had been racially vilified, and that the club had not taken enough responsibility to act, as either employers or a cultural institution. Eddie McGuire responded to the findings of racial vilification by saying it was a "historic and proud day for the club" and after receiving a furore of media backlash was forced to retire from his 22-year tenure with the club. This incident echoes the dramatic changes in public views, as only 8 years prior McGuire was let off gently for his explicitly racist King-Kong comment (*ABC News, 2011*).

In contrast to the actions of Adam Goodes, Eddie McGuire's actions largely limited public awareness and negatively impacted public views of the vilification of First Nations players. However, with a shift in the contemporary context of racism and increased public awareness, it could be posited that McGuire's actions indirectly supported a shift in public views. As the undertones of racism within the AFL were gradually unearthed, McGuire's racist actions began to spark nationwide discussion that condemned both his and others' racism. As reported by Yahoo Sport "Eddie McGuire...[faced]...calls to stand down as Collingwood president over his controversial response to a bombshell racism report." (*Reid, 2021*). Fundamentally this furore against Eddie McGuire provided opportunities for public awareness of the impact of casual racism in the AFL and offered avenues for other Indigenous players to speak up against racism. This increased public awareness likely contributed to a shift in public views that is reflected in the backlash that caused the retirement of other racist commentators such as Andrew Bolt, Alan Jones and Sam Newman (*Buckmaster, 2019*). Despite changes in public views, racism and the vilification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander players has remained an undercurrent in Australian sport (*Oliver, 2020*). Whilst cultural shifts and views change slowly "one ... public forum where racism still rears its ugly head is the sporting arena." (*HREOC, 2006*).

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