

BIGOTED ATTACK ON CAITLIN CLARK

[Bill Donohue](#)

Caitlin Clark has done more for women's basketball than any other person. One would think that the superstar, who excelled at the University of Iowa and was the number-one draft pick in the Women's National Basketball Association (she plays for the Indiana Fever) would be treated with applause by fellow players, the media and pundits. While many have lauded her, she has been savaged by others. The stench of bigotry is in the air.

Clark is a white heterosexual Irish Catholic with a boyfriend. That is hardly exceptional, but unfortunately for her, that matters to some of her critics. [Note: All of the persons cited are black, with the exception of Clay Travis.]

Clark's Catholic faith is important to her. In 2018, she gave an interview to the *Des Moines Register* about her time at Dowling Catholic High School. "We get to live our faith every day. Dowling starts every day with prayer and ends every day with prayer. This is a big reason why Dowling has such a special culture and is such a special place to go to school."

Sports columnist and podcaster Jason Whitlock notes that "Caitlin Clark's sanity cannot survive the racial, sexual, and political blender participation in the WNBA will cause. She's a 22-year-old white woman with a boyfriend raised in the Catholic faith. She plays on a bad basketball team that has started the season 0-5. She's playing in a league that is hostile to virtually everything about her – skin color, sexuality, and faith."

"The View" co-host Sunny Hostin argues that "There is a thing called white privilege. There is a thing called tall

privilege, and we have to acknowledge that... I do think that she is more relatable to more people because she's white, because she's attractive, and unfortunately, there still is that stigma against the LGBTQ+ community. Seventy percent of the WNBA is black. A third of the players are in the LGBTQ+ community and we have to do something about that stigma in this country."

WNBA player A'ja Wilson claims that racism is buoying Caitlin Clark's success. "I think a lot of people may say it's not about black and white, but to me, it is."

Atlantic sports writer and former ESPN commentator Jamele Hill claims, "We would all be very naive if we didn't say race and her sexuality played a role in her popularity..."

Mike Freeman, a columnist for *USA Today*, contends it was a moral outrage that Clark received a shoe deal while none of the black WNBA players had a similar sponsorship offer. He maintains that it "shows how black women are being ignored in a league that they dominate." He went on to say, "What so much of this comes down to is a lack of respect for the black women of the WNBA."

In an effort to dismiss Clark's potential, former WNBA player Sheryl Swoopes says that Clark is overrated because she played in college for five years, was a 25-year-old and could easily dominate the opposition, and took over 40 shots a game. When critics pointed out that Swoopes was factually wrong on all of these claims, she responded to the blowback by saying, "For people to come at me and say that I made those comments because I'm a 'racist', like, first of all, black people can't be racist."

Clay Travis, the host of "Outkick," notes that "Caitlin Clark is white and straight in a league that is primarily minority and lesbian. I told you this was going to be an issue, and now you got everybody acknowledging it all over the place. The

average WNBA player does not like Caitlin Clark because she is white, because she is straight, and because now she is rich and getting a lot of attention. There is a great deal of resentment about that....”

Stephen A. Smith, the host of “First Take,” defends Clark, saying, “There are girls – young ladies – in the WNBA who are jealous of Caitlin Clark. She is a white girl that has come into the league...Where the resentment comes in is the hard work, the commitment, the dedication, the pounding of the pavement, the being on the grind all of these years trying to uplift this brand that is the WNBA and is women’s professional basketball and all of their efforts were in vain until this girl comes along and takes the league by storm... and has accomplished in a short period of time what they haven’t been able to.”

NBA all-star LeBron James also came to the defense of Clark. He took aim at her critics. “If you don’t rock with Caitlin Clark game you’re just a FLAT OUT HATER!!!” He added, “I’m rooting for Caitlin because I’ve been in that seat before.”

Most fans don’t care whether a player is white, black, straight, gay, Catholic, Protestant or Jewish. They cheer on the basis of performance, not the player’s demographic status. But to some players, pundits and journalists, these personal characteristics matter greatly. They are hung up on race, religion and sexual orientation. Their bigotry is palpable.