

The world of professional sports has always been a crazy one and in the modern world, the frenzy of digital media has only amplified the effect that these professional athletes have on our society. That being said the world of digital media can have an even greater impact on the lives of our professional athletes, and for the sake of this assignment I am going to look at one athlete in particular, Richard Sherman. Richard Sherman is a super bowl winning cornerback for the Seattle Seahawks and his entire public persona was changed after one short interview after a Conference Championship game against the San Francisco 49ers. However, as the year progressed through digital forums such as Twitter and Facebook we were able to see another side to Sherman and the story we would not have seen otherwise.

Before the dawn and rise in popularity of the internet, specifically social media, the only time we got to see or hear from athletes outside of the games were pre and post game interviews, and any interview they did with news sources in tv or print. Even then for the most part what they said was dictated by their teams or press agent, but now with forums such as Twitter we get to here these athletes' thoughts about anything at almost any time. Back to Sherman, after a very tough game was interviewed right after the game had finished. In this interview he referred to an opposing player as mediocre and called himself the best corner in the game (which I agree with but that's besides the point). He did this all while seeming very angry and in front of a national audience since Football is such a popular sport in the United States. After a short interview that lasted around a minute in a half people were very quick to judge Sherman calling him a thug, gang member, and a few other racial stereotypes in regards to his upbringing from Compton, California. In addition to these remarks many memes went on about the interview comparing to the famous Predator, an alien from a Hollywood film, and a various host of other things. Despite

all this, and a national audience, Sherman has slowly been able to recoup his image to the point where he has recently been named as one of Time Magazine's 100 most influential people, and has even been invited to a dinner at the White House.

One of the great things about digital media is that we get to see what happens behind the scenes or get the backstory to things we would normally just see on tv. In fact after the interview through internet videos we saw that Sherman actually tried to shake the other players hand, but the other player would not shake it. We also learned that this other player had in fact tried to fight Sherman at a charity event so it's clear that there has been some conflict between these two and it culminated in this moment.

That being said through digital media we saw an entire new side to Sherman. Through the internet we've seen Sherman speak too underprivileged children, speak out against racial issues, and battle a whole other host of issues. Clearly the internet has shown us an entire new side to Sherman that would not be viewed otherwise. As soon as the massive television audience gets a hold of these stories, that interview could be something everybody just laughs at. Digital media has created a world where a public persona can come in at an instant and then change after either rapidly or slowly.