

Sports Must Change

Dr. Michael Laitman Interview Series

With Michelle LaFontaine, Sports Broadcaster and Anchor on
ESPN English News



Host: Hello, we're in conversation with Dr. Michael Laitman, Professor of Ontology, Doctor of Philosophy and Kabbalah, and the founder of the Bnei Baruch Kabbalah Institute. Joining us is Michelle LaFontaine.

Michelle is a multi-Emmy Award nominee for sports broadcasting. She knows this field and is excellent in it. She's been co-anchor for ESPN's Sports Center International where she started her career. She's worked with CBS Sports, has done the nightly news as an anchor for Telemundo, hosted Telemundo's National Sports Show *Headliners* in which she's spoken to top sports personalities in America and around the world; and she's now sports anchor on ESPN English News. Welcome.

Michele LaFontaine: Thank you very much.

Host: Thank you for joining us. Well, Michelle, you have some big heroes that were in baseball, the sport of pristine goodness. Baseball players are the perfect American men. They are family men; they are like the good guys; they are the heroes from the neighborhood, and they also take steroids. So this is like something that is just sort of floating to the surface, and these people, who are the big money guys, and everybody was kind of covering for all these people.

They are the greatest pitchers, the greatest hitters, the guys that when I was a kid were like super dads, the best men. But now, just somehow naturally they are being exposed as being “this is not so,” and the heads that stick out over the team are like, in a sense, getting chopped off.

As a broadcaster, part of your job is you profile what is going on. In a sense you are kind of reporting news, but the media also uses these values. They are dramatic values and they play up the negative side of the story like it is good news because we get better ratings. Is it possible to create a kind of culture inside of broadcasting because sport really is that kind of a thing where we are talking about our best values? Is there a feeling among the people that you work with that they would rather see it a better way and they would want to influence those kinds of values in the appreciation of sports?

Michele LaFontaine: I think so, especially the analysts. We have analysts in every sport, and the angle that they have is disappointment, I mean the same. I think they guide the fan, too, to not be happy with what is happening. But the leagues have become so strong, most of them, and they are all turning to strong measures or regulations. So in a way, that’s why some big names are falling right now and being exposed. But the goal of the leagues right now is to eradicate that and to get back to a level of old.

Host: This is interesting because we’re seeing the same thing happening in other areas of crises. We’re trying to apply regulation to things that we see that they really go against a person’s nature, and not really providing an environment where people can actually change. But they..., “Yes, I will not be bad,” but they must be bad. So how can we use sports to...?

Michael Laitman: In the end, sports are a projection of human society; it’s an integral part of society. It can’t be better or worse than society itself, and that is why we see that the use of steroids and other types of drugs, by deceits, by falsehood, all of that. It’s what’s happening all over society, so it’s happening in sports too. When we arrive at a situation where we will hate the lie itself, because in the end.... We need to come to a point where if a person in sports, well, it’s as if instead of jumping 2 meters 30, I wrote 2.35 meters and changed the numbers in the computer by myself. If I told the world about it, they would condemn me because that’s not an achievement, it’s a deceit; it’s cheating. And if we expose the deceit that stands behind the great achievements, behind the competitions, people will despise it; they will not be want to connected to it.

I think there will be a time when we discover that point of truth, that we want sports as a human phenomenon, not a phenomenon of some machine or all kinds of drugs and chemical compounds, not to have some horse working instead of a human being or some unnatural force behind it. And so sports must change and I think that the disillusionment with what is happening is something that must come.

Host: So it is really a good thing that we see these kinds of things. Your colleagues, when you speak off-camera, what do they say about these things? Do they wish for a change in that area? Do they feel like they would like a new picture of sports?

Michele LaFontaine: I don’t know if a new picture, but they would like, obviously, for this not to be happening. I mean it is a sense of anger, I think, at the athletes because competition

should be fair and to have an unfair advantage is cheating, basically. And so, yes, I think all of us would love it that this stops.

Michael Laitman: I think that there is a problem in general. Say, you are stronger than me, another person is taller than me, and another person is quicker than me, we are naturally different. So what are those achievements? Of course, if you were born strong and I was born weak, from the very beginning, you will be more successful in sports and I will not. There is no competition between people here. We have to understand that we cannot compete physically because we are not born the same.

The competition between us has to be in what makes us human, that in each of us there is an ability to be equal to each other, and only there can we compete. And this is only the way we bond above our egos. There is where we can be equal because this is not given to us naturally. Naturally, we are completely selfish and if we rise above our nature, then we can say, "Okay, show us how much of a hero you are. Yes, how much you can be more than others." But physically, of course, it is natural, I didn't choose it. "I want to be Schwarzenegger, I want to be this and that." It's unfair to begin with. There are 50,000 kids looking at one hero who was born big and strong.

Host: Thank you Dr. Laitman. I guess it will be a happy day when we learn to play together well, again. All of us in the big game and I want to thank you very much for being with us, helping us open this topic and showing the commonality here. And I want to thank you, Dr. Laitman again for opening it up for us. Thank you for being with us.