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Q&A Assignment
Advanced Reporting: Women in Journalism
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Q&A with Joy Taylor

The woman I chose to interview is Joy Taylor. Taylor is currently a sportscaster and radio co-host on FS1. She is the co-host of *The Herd with Colin and Cowherd* and has her own podcast, *Maybe I'm Crazy Podcast*. However, this interview focuses on her life before FS1 and how she came to be so successful in such a competitive industry. This interview is centered around Taylor's entrance into the world of broadcasting and the various challenges she has faced during her journey. During the interview, she covers a multitude of topics such as: what she would have told herself in college, how it is different for females as opposed to males in sports journalism and how she handled unexpected adversity. Taylor gives an extremely detailed explanation of how her journey made her the media member she is today.

Q: What were your aspirations in college?

A: My goal [has] pretty much always been the same. I always say I want to be the Howard Stern of sports. I've always wanted to be someone who gave their opinion. I think that's very important to know what it is you want to do.

Q: What would you tell your college self right now?

A: Be patient when you are done with school. Sometimes when you get out of school, the job that you want or the job you think you're ready for or the job that makes the most sense to you might not be available for you. Don't get discouraged. You can get derailed at different points of your career if you are too set on one particular thing, especially right out of school.

Q: When you were in college, what was it that you did specifically to make yourself stand apart?

A: The two internships before graduating and my work at the radio station really helped me learn the bones of the business. What it means to go and get coffee, book guests and do whatever it is the host needs you to do. But I learned how to be a producer, once you learn how to be a producer, I feel like it helps you be a better talent. For me, I just dove into the business right away and tried to get as much experience and contacts in the business as possible.

Q: How do you think it was different for you going into the industry, as opposed to a male journalist?

A: I think it's different for female journalists in the sports space because you always have to validate why you're there. Every day, you have to do a great job, you have to be better than everybody else, but you also have to validate why you're into sports. I always get asked "so how did you get into sports?" I always find it strange... Do you ask a man why or how he got into

sports? No. I probably got into sports the same way you got into sports. It's always like you have to prove how much you know or that you're really into sports and you're not there just to be on television or to be famous.

Q: Do you have any experience in particular where you feel like you were being treated unfairly?

A: So, when I first started, about a year in I had been working as the part-time producer. I'm there five days a week, and in local radio you have updates at the bottom or top of the hour. Our update anchor was out sick, so our program director asked me to fill in and do the updates. Then the next day he was out again, and I did the updates again assuming that's what they would want me to do. He was very upset and freaked out that I was doing the updates. He told me I wasn't ready to do updates yet. At this point I was freelancing at three different TV entities, I was writing [and producing] for another publication. I felt pretty confident I could write a minute script and do the updates for the show. He disagreed, and that was the point where I felt like I'm not going to get an opportunity here that I needed to get and that I'm ready for. I ended up getting a full-time job at the next station I went to which eventually led to my first full-time show I had in Miami before coming to FS1. It ended up being a great thing because it pushed me out of a space I probably felt too comfortable in.

Q: Talk about your support system going into the industry.

A: I'm very close to my family, my family was very supportive of me through all that. I would also say day-to-day I have a lot of [good friends] who are also women. We are very supportive of each other and very close. We all kind of go through similar things, we are all women of color, so we all deal with those added stresses as well. Since I've been in the business I have a really good support system within the business [of] really close friends [that is] invaluable. I can talk to them about things that most people don't understand because they're not in the business. Things they cannot relate to because they are not women, things they cannot relate to because they are not women of color. So I'm very lucky in that sense that I have a really good support system there.

Q: How do you feel about the current state of journalism? How do you feel about the way it is trending?

A: Our current state of journalism is a bit fragile [because] people do not know the difference between someone who is giving their opinion and someone who is giving facts. That is very poisonous to me.

Q: If you had to list off five things you need to be good at in the industry, what are they.

A: 1. Be able to write. You have to write scripts, a run-down, a blog... you have to be able to write, even if you aren't trying to be a writer it's an invaluable skill to have.
2. Research. Knowing how to research, it's a skill you develop. You need to know where you're getting information. Knowing what you need to know to do your show, write your article, etc.

3. Relationships and networking. You're going to need information or a job. You're going to be up for a position. It's a big business internationally, but it's kind of small. Everyone knows everybody.

4. Being flexible. So much has changed from when I started in school, and now with the pandemic Zoom has changed everything. Don't get stuck and only do things 'this' way.

5. Always improving. Especially when you're young in the business. I had an unlimited amount of confidence coming out of college. I was not at all ready to be on air, at all! Reps are super important, and the more reps you do the better you'll get.