

The Delray Democrat

The Skyhook Soars Again¹

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Kareem Abdul Jabbar, for those who are relatively new to the world, was a star basketball player in the NBA from 1969 to 1989. After leading his New York City high school team to 71 consecutive victories, he was recruited for John Wooden's UCLA team, where he won three consecutive national championships. Selected by the Milwaukee Bucks, he played for five seasons there, leading them to their first championship, before heading to the LA Lakers where he won five additional championships.

I wasn't a fan. First off, his Skyhook routinely sunk my NY Knicks, both at Milwaukee and then the hated LA Lakers. Secondly, I was a bit put off that he changed his name from Lew Alcindor Jr to Kareem Abdul Jabbar. I thought it was disrespectful to his parents and embraced a religion I wasn't familiar with. He was far from the only one of course, and as I grew to learn more about Islam I understood a bit more. Contrary to many people's views, Islam is mostly a peaceful religion and all religions have some nuttiness in their holy books that in retrospect might better have been left out.

A few years back I began seeing some articles by him. Either in Truthout, or Reader Supported News, or one of the other online lefty mags that I subscribe to. Finally, after 50 years, I began to become a fan of KAJ. He wrote about being with Big Bird on Sesame Street, having mixed feelings about MLK day, and just snippets of brilliance with a skyhook or two of elevated thought crashing down in the middle. As I'm doing research for this article (ok, checking stuff on Google), I've come across many more of his writings and thoughts. How he wanted to be a writer but basketball got in the way.

So go to www.kareemabduljabbar.com/category/writing for some snippets. Or just stop at the main site (www.kareemabduljabbar.com) for the grand tour of what he's up to. He has big hands, and they're in a lot of things. He scores!

This is the article that made me decide to write about him: <https://readersupportednews.org/opinion2/277-75/61997-focus-trumps-coronavirus-reaction-reminds-of-hunters-nazi-conspiracy>

¹ *The Delray Democrat*, April 2020, p. 7.