

LZ GRANDERSON

b. March 11, 1972

JOURNALIST & COMMENTATOR

“This is the gay agenda: equality. Not special rights, but the rights that are already written by [our Founding Fathers].”

He is a groundbreaking, openly gay American sportswriter and commentator who explores the intersection of athletics, race and LGBTQ identity.

Elzie Lee “LZ” Granderson is a groundbreaking, openly gay American sportswriter and commentator. His work for major news outlets such as CNN, ESPN and ABC News has increased the visibility of racial justice and LGBTQ equality in athletics.

Granderson’s passion for sports began early. Born in Detroit to a poor family, he suffered abuse from his stepfather and turned to drugs and gangs as an adolescent. Sports helped save him. “I’d be bleeding from being whipped and go to sleep reading the NBA Almanac,” he said in a 2012 interview. “It was my blanket that helped me heal. I read every line about every player.”

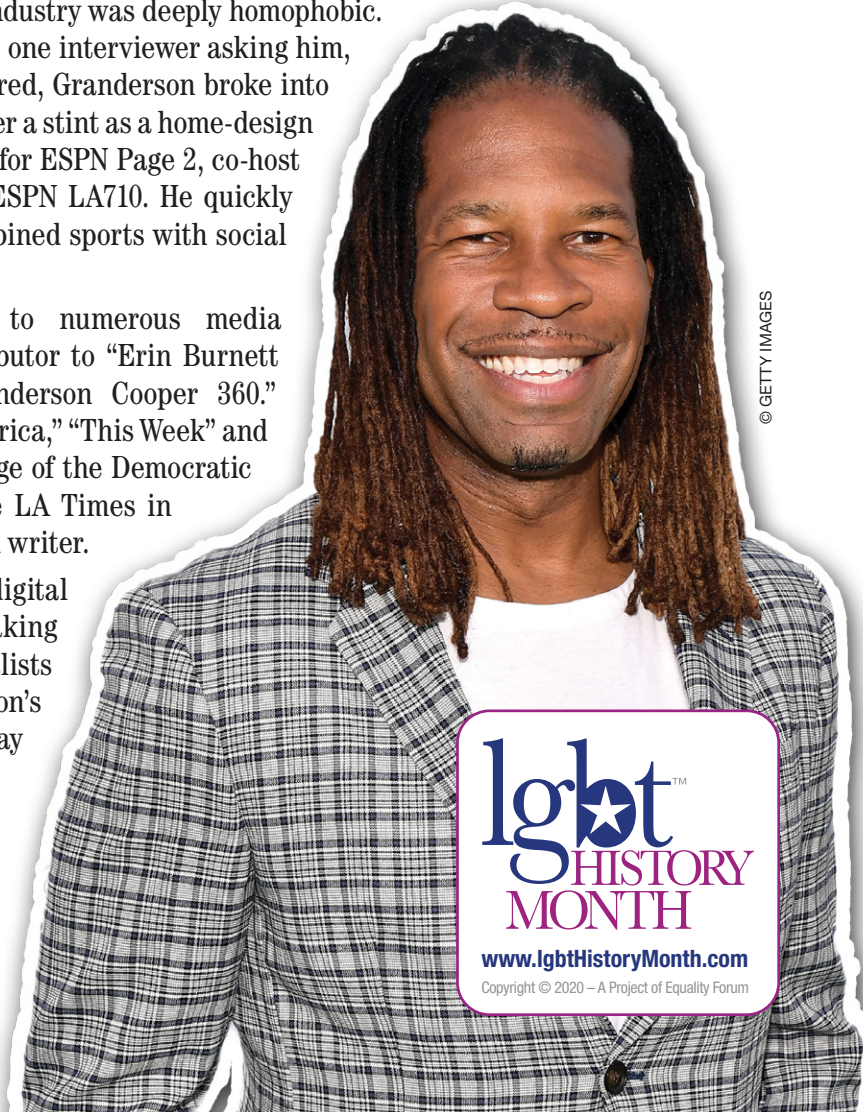
Granderson began his career as an actor. He attended Western Michigan University on a theater scholarship and landed his first film role in “Zebrahead” at the age of 20. A few years later, he appeared in “To Sir, With Love II” (1996), with Sidney Poitier reprising his original role.

Granderson got his start in journalism at the The Grand Rapids Press. During the 1990s, when he was trying to break into sportswriting, the industry was deeply homophobic. Granderson, who was open about his sexuality, recalls one interviewer asking him, “What does a gay guy know about the NBA?” Undeterred, Granderson broke into sportswriting at The Atlanta Journal-Constitution, after a stint as a home-design writer. He went on to serve as a writer and columnist for ESPN Page 2, co-host of ESPN’s “SportsNation” and afternoon co-host on ESPN LA710. He quickly developed a reputation for incisive columns that combined sports with social commentary on race, gender and sexual orientation.

Granderson has taken his unique perspective to numerous media outlets. He served as a CNN columnist and a contributor to “Erin Burnett OutFront,” “Newsroom with Don Lemon” and “Anderson Cooper 360.” He regularly contributed to ABC’s “Good Morning America,” “This Week” and “Nightline,” in addition to co-anchoring ABC’s coverage of the Democratic and Republican National Conventions. He joined the LA Times in 2019 as the sports and culture columnist and an op-ed writer.

In 2009 Granderson won the GLAAD Media Award for digital journalism for his ESPN article, “Gay Athletes Are Making Their Mark.” The National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association honored him in 2008 and 2010. Granderson’s Ted Talk on LGBTQ equality, “The Myth of the Gay Agenda,” has received more than 1.6 million views.

Granderson lives with his partner, Steve Huesing. He has one child from a previous marriage.



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