Gender Relations in Sport

TEACHING GENDER

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Gender Relations in Sport

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PREFACE

Gender Relations in Sport is intended to serve as an introductory text for students, particularly those less familiar with the scholarly body of work devoted to gender and sport. The conception of this book emerged from conversations with colleagues teaching courses such as *Gender, Sport and Culture* to undergraduate and early graduate-level kinesiology students, as well as colleagues across campus in sociology, psychology, education, and history, who were also interested in integrating discussion of sport into their gender-related courses. A common theme from these conversations was the desire for an entry-level textbook that would provide a foundational understanding of the gender dynamics at play in sport.

Gender Relations in Sport is divided into nine chapters, with contributions from leading scholars in various sub-areas of “sport studies” – sport sociology, sport and exercise psychology, cultural sport studies, sport history and sport management. While each chapter focuses on a specific area of interest (e.g., race and ethnicity, Title IX, sexual harassment and abuse, sexual identity, etc.), it is important that the reader understand the overlapping and intersectional nature of the content. As one will learn, much of the content in one chapter is critical to that in another chapter. Organizing the book in this way - individual chapters - was done for educational/teaching purposes. It is hoped that students and educators will engage in discussion of the intersecting themes and concepts.

It is important to note that the majority of the contributors are situated in U.S. academic institutions and in their chapters, share findings from studies focused primarily on North American sport participants and sport settings. While global perspectives are highlighted at various places throughout the text, Chapter Nine by Gertrud Pfister is exclusively focused on Europe. As Pfister notes in her chapter, “when writing about sport, one has to address the challenge of meanings and translations as the term sport is defined differently depending on country and culture” (p. 163). It is because of these differences that Pfister’s chapter is so important – it provides the reader with exposure to cultural differences in sport and how gender is understood within different sport settings.

- In chapter one, **Gender and Sport Participation**, Karen M. Appleby and Elaine Foster provide a brief history of women’s and girls’ sport experiences and opportunities from the early 20th century to the present. Appleby and Foster also integrate discussion of the barriers that have kept, and continue to keep, women and men from participating in different physical activities. They conclude their chapter with examination of the recent increase in female-centered sport and exercise spaces and events.
- In chapter two, **Theories of Gender and Sport**, Leslee A. Fisher, Susannah K. Knust, and Alicia J. Johnson lay out essential definitions (e.g., gender, sex, feminism, gender identity, gender representation, etc.), as well as theories

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(feminist theory, queer theory and intersectionality theory) used to examine and understand gender within the sporting context. Fisher, Knust, and Johnson close with discussion of the history and development of feminist sport studies, queer sport studies and men and masculinity studies.

- In chapter three, **Gender and Sport Media**, Nicole M. LaVoi summarizes 30 years of sport media and gender research. LaVoi begins with an overview of “first wave sport media research” which focused on the amount and quality of coverage in print and broadcast media. LaVoi then introduces “second wave sport media research” which encompasses analyses concentrated on digital media (sport blogs, Twitter, Facebook), inclusion of intersectional variables (i.e., race/ethnicity, social class, sexual identity), and understanding how various audiences (e.g., parents, athletes, fans) interpret gendered media coverage and portrayals of female athletes.
- In chapter four, **Sexual Identity and Sport**, Kerrie J. Kauer and Vikki Krane employ a queer feminist perspective and social identity foundation to examine the intersections of gender and sexuality in sport. Kauer and Krane begin by introducing the socio-historical links between sport, gender and sexuality, with specific attention devoted to the ways in which hegemonic femininity and hegemonic masculinity have created an overtly hostile and homonegative environment for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals in sport. Kauer and Krane conclude their chapter with discussion of some of the positive changes in today’s sport world, including the recent ally movement and other programs and initiatives aimed at creating safe and inclusive spaces in sport.
- In chapter five, **Intersections of Race, Ethnicity and Gender in Sport**, Akilah R. Carter-Francique and Courtney L. Flowers begin by explaining the role culture plays in understanding sport and its meaning for racial and ethnic groups. Using intersectionality theory, Carter-Francique and Flowers examine the ways in which the intersecting categories of race, ethnicity, and gender impact women of color in sport. Specific attention is devoted to sport participation patterns of women and girls of color at the youth/high school, college, and professional levels and their representation as sport leaders (i.e., coaches, administrators). Going beyond the statistics, Carter-Francique and Flowers review literature devoted to the *experiences* of women of color in the sporting context and the ways in which dominant ideologies influence and marginalize their experiences.
- In chapter six, **Framing Title IX: Conceptual Metaphors at Work**, Theresa A. Walton begins with a summary of Title IX policy. Using George Lakoff’s concept of conceptual metaphors, Walton provides a decade-by-decade overview of the ways in which Title IX has been framed in public discourse and uses Lakoff’s work on morality in political metaphors to explain how people make sense of Title IX.
- In chapter seven, **Studying the Athletic Body**, Christy Greenleaf and Trent A. Petrie summarize the extensive work devoted to the gendered nature of athletic bodies, body image(s), and eating attitudes and behaviors. Greenleaf and Petrie conclude with discussion of healthy body environments for athletes.

- In chapter eight, **Sexual Harassment and Abuse in Sport**, Sandra Kirby and Guylaine Demers begin with an overview of important definitions/language surrounding sexual abuse/exploitation. Kirby and Demers address the prevalence of the problem in sport, as well as risk factors associated with the sport culture and its participants (e.g., athletes, coaches, administrators). The cycle of abuse and grooming process and the consequences of sexual exploitation for sport, athletes, and coaches are also addressed. Kirby and Demers close with a discussion of child protection and child safeguarding, and stress the need for sport organizations to establish comprehensive prevention measures.
- In chapter nine, **Developments and Current Issues in Gender and Sport from a European Perspective**, Gertrud Pfister introduces the reader to gender and sport developments in Europe beginning in the Middle Ages to the present. Pfister documents the dramatic changes in societal attitudes, gender norms and sport opportunities for women and girls, but acknowledges that the gender gap has not yet closed. Pfister closes with discussion of the status of women and girls in today's European sport system, the gender hierarchy in key executive positions of sport organizations, and highlights new questions and issues of discussion.

I would like to close by expressing my gratitude to the many people who saw me through this book; to all those who provided support, talked things over, read, wrote, offered comments, and assisted in the editing, proofreading and design. I would specifically like to thank The Teaching Gender Series Editor, Patricia Leavy, for providing me the opportunity to publish this book. Your guidance, support and feedback throughout this process was invaluable. Thank you to the staff at Sense Publishers, specifically Production Coordinator, Jolanda Karada, for her time and prompt feedback throughout the final stages of the book. I also greatly appreciate the copy editing assistance provided by Ronda Harris at the Sam Houston State University Writing Center. I would also like to acknowledge and thank Kolbi Ashorn's parents for allowing me to use a photograph of their daughter on the book cover. When asked to select cover art, I immediately remembered seeing this photograph. I feel it is an excellent example of a young girl participating in sport that is clearly "in the game".

This book would not have been accomplished if it were not for the contributors – thank you to each of you for your exceptional contributions, timely responses, and professionalism. Most of you I know, some very well, others I have "met" throughout this project. It was a pleasure working with each of you. Above all I want to acknowledge my family – my parents, sister, and niece – who have always supported me throughout my career. And lastly, to my husband, Kevin, who continues to support my professional and personal pursuits and constantly encourages me to challenge myself and those around me.

Emily A. Roper, Ph.D.