

# SPORT, LEISURE, AND THE BODY

*Society for the Study of Social Problems*

## Notes From the Chair

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Hello everyone in the Sport, Leisure, and the Body division!

I hope you are having a relatively stress-free end to your spring semesters. In this newsletter, you will find a few updates of interest to our division members, and a short essay from Dr. Kris Newhall about sex hormones in sport. Thanks for your contribution, Kris! I'd love to have more contributions from members about topics of interest to our membership. Please consider asking your graduate (or undergraduate) students, or consider writing a short piece for the newsletter. We are happy to have short essays, book reviews, opinion pieces, or other announcements. Please send any ideas for the newsletter to Rachel at [rallis2@uic.edu](mailto:rallis2@uic.edu).

Thank you to everyone who got involved and submitted papers to our sessions for the summer meetings in San Francisco. We have two exciting sessions sponsored by Sport, Leisure, and the Body and are co-sponsoring several other sessions. I'll send a detailed schedule with the summer newsletter (about two weeks before the San Francisco meetings).

Our division needs more participation to thrive. We are one of the smallest SSSP divisions, and need to show a continued growth in our membership. Please make sure to renew your section membership with Sport, Leisure, and the Body and encourage your colleagues to do so also. I'd love to hear feedback about how you can get more out of our division. There is plenty of room for all; we'd love to hear your voices.

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Congratulations to our student paper award winner, Rachel Allison from the University of Illinois, Chicago. Her paper, "Business or Cause? Gender and Contested Institutional Logics in Women's Professional Soccer" was an excellent theoretically-driven analysis of the organizational model of Women's Professional Soccer. I encourage you to see her present the paper at the Gender, Sexuality and Sport session at the SSSP Meetings in August. Thank you very much to the three anonymous reviewers (*you know who you are!*) who were willing to serve on the student paper award committee, and the other students who submitted papers. Rachel wins a \$100 honorarium, complimentary meeting registration, a complimentary student membership, and a ticket to the annual banquet.

Look for one more newsletter in the summer with details regarding our annual meeting participation. Enjoy the end of your semesters, and I look forward to seeing all of you in San Francisco!

## Member News

Cheryl Cooky has been elected President of the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport (NASSS).

Messner, Michael A. and Michela Musto. 2014. "For the Sociology of Sport: Where Are the Kids?" *Sociology of Sport Journal* 31(1): 102-22.

Michael Messner (USC) and Cheryl Cooky (Purdue University) were awarded a grant from the SHARP Center at the University of Michigan/ Women's Sport Foundation to conduct the 25th anniversary of the "Gender and Televised Sport Report." Michela Musto (USC) will be the research assistant and will assist with collecting and analyzing the data.

Paradis, Elise. Forthcoming. "Sociology is a Martial Arts." *Body & Society*.

Rachel Allison has accepted a position as Assistant Professor of sociology at Mississippi State University.

## Call For Papers

CFP: **Creating Social Change in and through Intercollegiate Sport**

*Journal of Intercollegiate Sport*

Guest Editor: Nicole Melton

A growing number of advocacy and nonprofit organizations recognize that sport can be a powerful vehicle for promoting social change. Sport's transformational effects are frequently realized because it attracts, unites, and inspires individuals from diverse backgrounds. The potential of sport—and those within it—to enact change does not develop automatically, but instead, requires individuals to first recognize a social injustice, and then consciously work toward creating meaningful change. Recognizing this potential, Myles Brand, the former president of the NCAA stated, "we should not underestimate the potential of athletics to contribute to social change, nor should we shy away from that responsibility." In support of Brand's sentiments, this special issue calls attention to the need to examine intercollegiate sport's impact on social change.

This special issue provides an opportunity for scholars and practitioners to examine social change within intercollegiate sport and to promote its study and practice within the field. We invite manuscripts that address how intercollegiate sport as an institution and the individuals associated with it promote social change. Empirical work engaging in these issues is strongly encouraged, but conceptual and theoretical work is also welcomed.

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Examination of the ways individuals or organizations within intercollegiate sport serve as advocates to address social issues within and outside of sport;
- Motivations to advocate for social change within or outside of sport;
- Organizational initiatives to promote social change within or outside of the sport context;
- Exploration of how certain factors within sport encourage or inhibit individuals from acting as change agents;
- The organizational structure of effective intercollegiate athletic departments that promote social change;
- How the use of social media can affect social change;
- Multilevel analyses of factors related to social change and its effectiveness, including analyses at the individual, organizational, team, and societal levels;
- Multilevel analysis of outcomes associated with social change initiatives
- Investigation the effectiveness of social change initiatives (fundraising efforts, awareness campaigns)
- The uniqueness of sport in creating social change
- Approaches to monitoring and evaluating social change initiatives

Manuscripts should follow the standard author guidelines for the Journal of Intercollegiate Sport, should not exceed 35 pages, and should be submitted through Manuscript Central:[http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/hk\\_jis](http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/hk_jis).

Submissions will be accepted until November 1, 2014. Direct any questions to Nicole Melton ([nicole.melton@ttu.edu](mailto:nicole.melton@ttu.edu)). Anticipated publication is June 2015 (Volume 8, Issue 1).

## Call For Papers

CFP: Special edition of *Sport in Society*: 'Sex Integration in Sport and Physical Culture'

Guest editors: Dr Alex Channon, Dr Thomas Fletcher, Dr Katherine Dashper and Dr Robert J. Lake

Over the past decade, scholars of sport and gender have begun to pay attention

to the phenomenon of sex integration in sports and related physical cultural activities, exploring mixed-sex/co-ed classes, teams and competitions across a variety of contexts. This research has identified a number of moments in which normative conceptions of sex difference might be challenged and/or reaffirmed in such environments. While these works have been diverse in their empirical foci and theoretical frameworks, a key question nevertheless emerges from within them: how might mixed-sex/co-ed sports activities uniquely contribute toward either the amelioration, or perpetuation, of sexual hierarchies and the inequality these involve?

While a handful of papers have directly explored this key issue via in-depth contemporary or historical case studies of specific, mixed-sex sport and physical cultural settings, as well as some which have examined the legal and political implications of sex integration, this phenomenon remains significantly under-researched in comparison to the vast body of published literature dealing with sex, gender and sport more generally. This special edition of *Sport in Society* therefore aims to highlight contemporary research into sex integration in sport and physical culture, with a view to better establishing this phenomenon as a focal point of future efforts in the study of sport and gender.

While we are looking for papers which make an explicit contribution towards the central theoretical issue outlined above (i.e., mixed-sex activities' relation to sexual hierarchy/inequity), we are open to papers featuring empirical research on a range of topics, such as:

- The lived experience of participants in a variety of mixed-sex/co-ed sports, including among traditionally segregated (e.g., team games) or integrated (e.g., dance) activities;
- Problems facing coaches, teachers, and other professionals (e.g., sport psychologists, medics, etc.) in mixed-sex settings;
- Legal issues, ethical debates and policy implications surrounding mixed-sex/co-ed sport;
- Media representation and discussion, and audience reception, of mixed-sex activities;
- The influence of religion in mixed-sex/co-ed settings;

- Gender issues with respect to mixed–sex/co–ed sports in schools, colleges, universities and other educational settings;
- Issues related to talent development in mixed–sex/co–ed sport settings;
- Economic issues related to the funding of mixed–sex/co–ed sports practices;
- The politics of exclusion in mixed–sex/co–ed sport settings.

We are keen to receive contributions based on original empirical research from colleagues working within fields including sociology, pedagogy, policy studies, history, sports development, media studies, and related disciplines. For further details, please contact any of the editorial team: Alex Channon ([a.g.channon@gre.ac.uk](mailto:a.g.channon@gre.ac.uk)); Thomas Fletcher ([t.e.fletcher@leedsmet.ac.uk](mailto:t.e.fletcher@leedsmet.ac.uk)); Katherine Dashper ([k.dashper@leedsmet.ac.uk](mailto:k.dashper@leedsmet.ac.uk)); or Robert J. Lake ([rlake@wlu.ca](mailto:rlake@wlu.ca)).

Deadline for 250–word abstracts: 1st June 2014 (decision on acceptance by 1st July 2014)

Proposed deadline for full submissions: 2nd March 2015

# When Hormones are About More than Sex: Consequences of the IAAF's New Testing Policy

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If we thought the international sports community had learned something about gender and sex, biology, identity and athleticism after the debacle caused by the International Association of Athletics Federations in its process of “gender verification” in the case of South African runner Caster Semenya, an April *New York Times* op-ed about these issues has shocked the naiveté right out of us. I would have liked to believe that the humiliation Semenya underwent when members of the international track and field community questioned her sex thus triggering physical, medical, and psychological examinations would become an anomaly. Based on the information presented by co-authors Katrina Karkazis and Rebecca Jordan-Young, it was not. The difference: the process of accusing and testing Semenya was very public; the process of testing and “fixing” the bodies of athletes who do not conform to the IAAF's new hormone level policies (also adopted by the IOC and FIFA) have been quite hidden. While the Semenya case was a clear violation of her privacy, the implementation of the new eligibility rules based on the level of testosterone individual women produce seems less about privacy and more about keeping secrets.

Karkazis and Jordan-Young, drawing on a 2013 *Journal of Clinical Endocrinology and Metabolism* article about the case of four athletes who did not meet the new eligibility rules, are exposing some of the little known facts about their application. Some sport governing bodies, we don't know which ones, are testing “suspect” female athletes to determine their testosterone levels. If it is too high, in other words it exceeds the acceptable level for

females according to the organization's rules, they are referred to doctors for more tests and "therapies."

There are three issues I want to raise here that stem from those last two sentences. First, quick background: the article in the medical journal is based on four cases of young (18–21) female athletes, all from developing countries, who were sent to doctors in France when their testosterone serum levels were deemed outside the normal female range.

I will start with the most shocking piece of the article. The therapies that, once completed, allowed these women back into competition included removing internal testes and reducing their clitorises; procedures that are both medically invasive and, according to the doctors who performed them, unnecessary. Here is the text from the June 1, 2013 volume of *Clinical Endocrinology*.

Although leaving male gonads in [these] patients carries no health risk, each athlete was informed that gonadectomy would most likely decrease their performance level but allow them to continue elite sport in the female category. We thus proposed a partial clitoridectomy with a bilateral gonadectomy, followed by a deferred feminizing vaginoplasty and estrogen replacement therapy, to which the 4 athletes agreed after informed consent on surgical and medical procedures. Sports authorities then allowed them to continue competing in the female category 1 year after gonadectomy.

The authors do not delve into the moral or ethical implications of this treatment. Rather their premise is it is medically interesting that these women made it to adulthood without diagnosis, had family genetic histories which include other sexual differentiation disorders, and that these and other factors point to the need for screening of all young athletes "with primary amenorrhea



and hyperandrogenism to protect their health and privacy and ensure fairness in female competition.”

When African and Middle Eastern people engage in genital surgeries on women, westerners call it mutilation. When French doctors do it, it gets called therapy completed in the name of competitive fairness.

Second, the idea that there is a “normal” is highly problematic. A study from the same journal, published just a year before this one, found that testosterone levels in elite athletes do not always predict success. The study of nearly 700 male and female elite athletes found overlap in the ranges of testosterone, including 16.5% of men who had levels in the “female range.” This finding reinforces previous arguments in the debate over sex testing, fairness, and advantages. Why is advantage only being measured by hormones? Swimmer Michael Phelps’s size 14 feet and hyperflexibility fall outside the range of normal. Should doctors shave down his toes and shorten his ankle tendons? Sport governance bodies are not considering the many biological and cultural conditions that confer or decrease in individual athletes. They have zeroed in on hormones.

Finally, the concept of a suspect female athlete is, well, highly suspect. Though some sporting bodies are starting screening on every competitor in female categories, the possibility of discrimination based on race, performed femininity, nationalism, and class remains too high. Who is being brought in for testing and “therapy” is about more than countries with poor health care systems, as the French doctors suggest.

How does it come to pass that sport governing organizations, whose very existence is predicated on moving, achieving, striving bodies, know so little about bodies? I would suggest that it is ironic, but I fear that word might misrepresent the gravity of the present situation. What it appears to be is that these organizations are considering and assessing the politics and the policies

more intently than the interests of the athletes whom they allegedly serve. And they are using the medical industry to help them do so.