

## 21. Gender Issues in Sport, Exercise, and Physical Education

### **New Hybrid Masculinities in Mountain Sports**

Harri Salovaara, University of Jyväskylä

This presentation discusses representations of changing masculinities within the mountain sports media. The primary focus will be on how the multinational outdoor gear company Salomon enhances its brand's environmental credentials by employing some of its male athletes as embodiments of new hybrid masculinities that dispose of the hegemonic discourse of conquest of mountains and who instead embody a seemingly gentler and more ecological relationship to mountains and the natural environment in general. The material for the presentation consists of recent (2015–2017) commercial YouTube videos that show professional athletes sponsored by Salomon engaging in mountain sports such as mountain running, skiing, and climbing. In these videos, the male athletes profess a feeling of unity and connection with the earth, and how that feeling of unity is enhanced by using the lightweight equipment provided by their sponsor. The presentation utilizes the methods and theories of recent work on hybrid masculinities (e.g. Bridges and Pascoe 2014) and ecomasculinities (e.g. Pulé 2013; Gaard 2014) as well as engaging with new materialist theory (e.g. Bennett 2010; Cohen 2015). The most pertinent questions discussed in the presentation include whether Salomon's commercial videos may represent a more general trend in man–nature relationships or whether they merely reflect the company's clever and inclusive branding, and how does the new type of masculinity portrayed in the videos relate to distributions of power between men and women.

**KEY WORDS:** Ecomasculinity, Embodiment, Hybrid Masculinities, Mountain Sports, Nature, New Materialisms

### **Organized leisure and sense of entitlement in “raising decent citizens”**

**Päivi Berg** (presenting) and Marja Peltola, Nuorisotutkimusverkosto/Finnish Youth Research Society

The importance of intersecting hierarchies of social class, gender and ethnicity has often been neglected in the Finnish public debate on “raising decent citizens”: parenting practices and their moral aspects. Starting point in this presentation is to see parenting as a morally loaded, embodied set of practices that is shaped and conditioned by these hierarchies. The idea of concerted cultivation (Lareau 2003) nowadays shapes the parenting norms of all parents regardless of background. Yet the differences of class, gender and ethnicity/“race” still shape strongly the ways parents have access to the vocabulary, practices and bodily habits it entails. The presentation concentrates on the ways parents representing both ethnic majority and minority backgrounds in Finland speak about the leisure time of their children, claiming that organized sports is considered as a central tool for accumulating the resources the children need in order to become “decent citizens” in their adulthood.

The discourses on children's leisure time are utilized in constructing the self-image of “a decent parent” – a process that relies not only defining what good parenthood is, but also defining who are the Other parents (“single mothers”, “immigrant families” and “lower-class families”) who allegedly fail to meet these standards. It is our claim that while parents across class and ethnic boundaries largely share the ideals of parenthood, their identity work as

parents many times involves constructing and consolidating the classed, gendered and ethnicized/racialized boundaries.

### **Discourses of sexual minorities in male football: an outline of three tropes**

Samu Kytölä, University of Jyväskylä & Kone Foundation

Sexual minorities are weakly and unjustly represented, often almost invisible, in male-dominated football cultures. The understanding of gays in team sports, at large, has recently emerged strongly in masculinities and sexuality studies and the sociology of sports (Anderson 2015; Magrath et al. 2013). However, we can further gain from strengths and insights that new sociolinguistics and multisemiotic discourse analysis can bring to fine-grained analyses of the fabric of everyday social activity.

Further research in this field is particularly urgent as sexual minority rights are rapidly gaining ground in many other domains of life, yet men's team sports stand as one of the "last citadels" where the full diversity of masculinities and sexualities – often concretely conceived of as "coming out" – is not thriving (Anderson 2011, 2015; Kokkonen 2012; Bush et al. 2012; Skogvang & Fasting 2013; Magrath 2015). This has dire consequences to millions of men and boys doing the world's most popular sport, football, who hide and suppress an integral part of their personality when engaging in activities which otherwise bring joy and well-being to them. Moreover, the ethos of homophobia and suppression of sexuality affect not only sexual minorities but also the heterosexual majority in adverse ways (Juvonen 2015). The recent "coming out" of star players Robbie Rogers (USA, 2013), and Thomas Hitzlsperger (Germany, 2014), the first ones of that caliber and fame, have brought the difficult situation to an increasing media attention, hardly going unnoticed by any footballer or fan. Based on my earlier research experience in representations of minorities in digitally mediated interactive football discourse as well as my decades of personal experience as an 'actor-in-the-field', I outline and attempt to critically describe three 'tropes', or persistent myths of (the possibility of) gays in men's football, that occur in discourse in homosocial and male-only circles.

### **Naisten jumpat ja miesten valmennus – Sukupuolen mukainen segregatio yksityisellä liikuntapalvelualalla**

Tuija Koivunen, Tampereen yliopisto

Sukupuolen mukainen ammatillinen segregatio on Suomessa hyvin voimakasta. Segregatio eriyttää naisten ja miesten alat, ammatit ja työpaikat toisistaan. Lisäksi samalla alalla työskentelevien naisten ja miesten tehtävät eriytyvät siten, että he työskentelevät pääosin eri tehtävissä. Yksityisellä liikuntapalvelualalla työskentelevien liikunnanohjaajien työ on segregoitunut niin, että naiset toimivat ryhmäliikunnanohjaajina, kun taas miehet työskentelevät erilaisissa valmennustehtävissä.

Alustuksessa tarkastelen, millaisia sukupuolen mukaisia jakoja ja merkityksiä liikunnanohjaajien työssä esiintyy, ja mitä nämä jaot tarkoittavat erityisesti ruumiillisuuden kannalta. Lisäksi suhteutan näitä jakoja joogaohjaajina toimivien naisten ja miesten välisiin jakoihin, sillä liikunnanohjaajien ja joogaohjaajien kohdalla työn sukupuolen mukainen eriytyminen toimii eri tavoin. Pohdin myös, millaisia sukupuolen mukaisia jakoja yksityisen liikuntapalvelualan asiakaskunnassa esiintyy.

Puheenvuoro perustuu empiiriseen aineistoon, joka koostuu 11 yksityisen liikuntapalvelualan työntekijän ja yrittäjän teemahaastatte

### **Feminist Critical Pedagogy of Israeli PE**

Ornit Ramati Dvir, Bar-Ilan university, Ramat-Gan, Israel,

The prevailing mindset amongst educators as well as among scholars and researchers is that Physical Education (PE) positively affects students' relationships with their own bodies and increases their sense of self efficacy. Although formal PE policy in many western countries, as well as in Israel, favors Gender equality, research shows that these classes become a source of distress for many girls. Past research focused on the curriculum and teaching practices, on the different socialization processes girls and boys go through, on hegemonic gender views and gender roles occupying PE space, and more. However, applying feminist critical pedagogy I argue that past research ignored the unique feminine body characteristics. This leads to the questions: How do PE curriculum and practices take into account the growing breasts and menstruation of adolescent girls? And what are the explicit and implicit views related to them that girls and boys are exposed to? This study is the first to apply a Feminist Critical Pedagogy to PE in Israel, it is also the first to interpret such a pedagogy as body centered. The research included interviews with policy makers and with physical educators, observations and focus groups with girls. Data analysis revealed that these feminine bodily characteristics are silenced and hence girls are expected to ignore their unique bodies.

### **Women in Sport in the United States : The Struggle Against Sexual Discrimination, Title IX and the Role of Feminist Organizations since the 1970s**

Sandra Dufour, University of Burgundy, France

Signed into law in 1972, Title IX created major changes in the education system such that women and girls found new opportunities both in classrooms and on athletic fields. The law famously states:

“No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance...” — United States Code Section 20, sec. 1681

Interestingly, although Title IX is best known for its impact on high school and collegiate athletics, the original statute made no explicit mention of sports. Still, we know that in the days before Title IX, only one in 27 girls played varsity high school sports. Since its enactment, however, female high school athletic participation has increased by 904 percent, according to the Women's Sports Foundation.

Diverse as the recollections are, they suggest that inequality is still widespread in high school athletics. Though progress is evident, a very focused and determined effort by the U.S. Department of Education, state governments and local school districts still needs to be made to assure equal access. It will soon be 40 years since Title IX was enacted, and even now we see case after case being filed for blatant sex discrimination in high school athletics.

This paper aims at analyzing the background of Title IX enactment, its challenges and how feminist organizations, such as the National Organization for Women, struggled throughout the 1970s not only to make it enforced but also to replay to bodies and organizations which

challenge its legality. It will also be interesting to study more closely, 45 years after its enactment, what the consequences had been so far for girls and women in various sports, through statistical studies and testimonies.

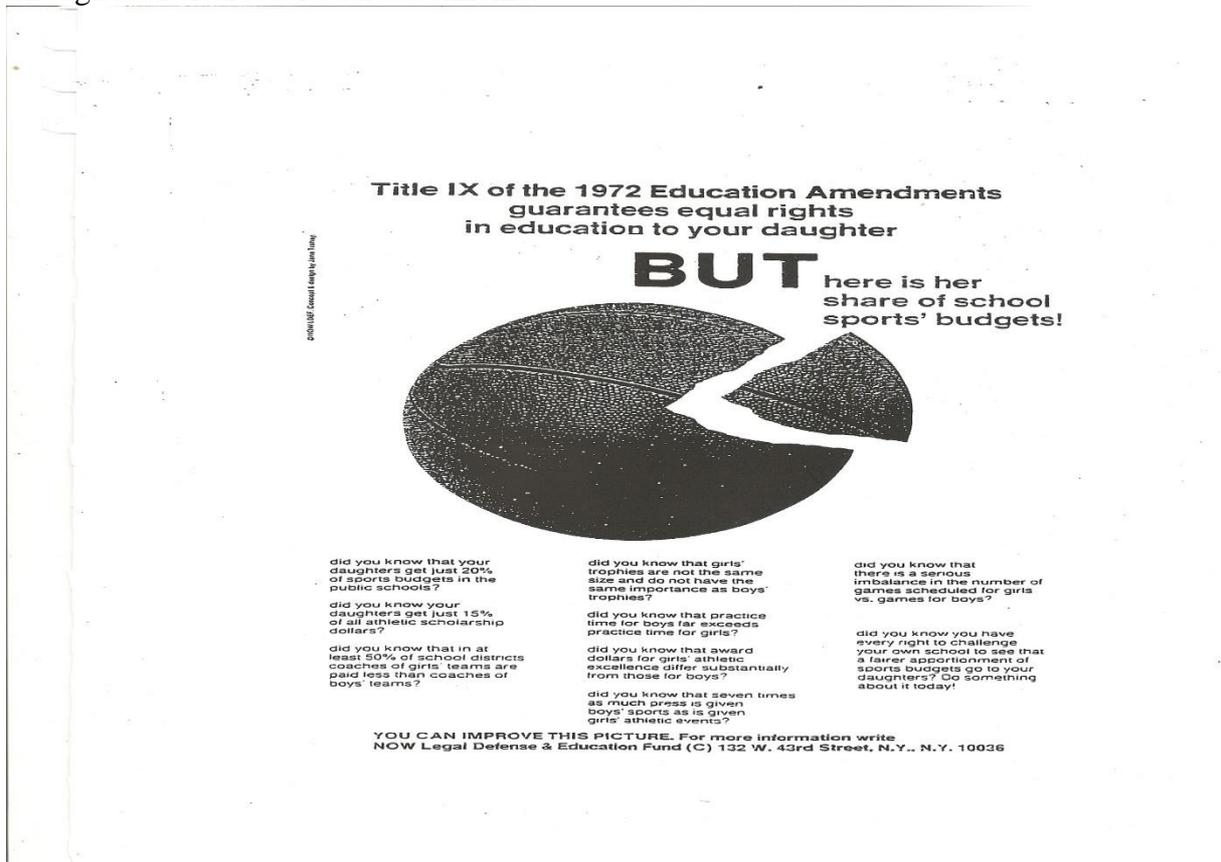


Figure 1: example of an advertisement by the National Organization for Women.

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Main research on XXth century feminism, more especially on second wave feminism, its anti-discrimination crusade throughout the 1960s and 1970s and the image of women and feminists. Latest papers and articles are concerned with XIXth century feminism.

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## **“Some Women Are Born Fighters”: Discursive Constructions of a Fighter’s Identity by Female Finnish Judo Athletes**

Anna Kavoura (presenter),<sup>a</sup> Marja Kokkonen,<sup>a</sup> Stiliani Chroni,<sup>b</sup> and Tatiana V. Ryba<sup>c</sup>

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Martial arts and combat sports have been traditionally associated with masculinity, and a range of contradictory meanings have been attached to women's engagement and experiences. This presentation draws on cultural praxis and feminist poststructuralist frameworks to explore how female martial artists are subjectified to dominant cultural discourses surrounding fighting and competition. Interviews with nine female judoka (judo athletes) were gathered in Finland and analyzed using Foucauldian Discourse Analysis (FDA). The FDA revealed that in female judoka talk, judo was constructed as a sport for all, but also as a male domain and a manly sport with fighting and competition as innate masculine qualities that are not learned. Two sets of wider, competing discourses provided the dominant structure for participants' constructions of judo: (a) a mass sport discourse versus an elite sport discourse and (b) a gender equality discourse versus a female biological inferiority discourse. Drawing on this discursive context and in seeking to make sense of their experiences, participants constructed a "naturally born fighter" identity. Although this might be an empowering identity for female judoka, it does not advance the agenda of gender equity in martial arts because it constructs "ordinary" women as biologically incapable of competitive judo. Our findings reveal that even in the relatively egalitarian culture of Finland, gender hierarchies persist in judo and that it is only by disrupting prevalent constructions of fighting and competitiveness as masculine that progress toward gender equity can be made.

### **Discrimination and emotion regulation deficiency as contributors to psychological ill-being in female sexual minority sport participants**

Marja Kokkonen, University of Jyväskylä

This study examined the role of the frequency of various forms of sexual discrimination and emotion regulation deficiency in psychological ill-being among female sexual minority sport participants in Finland. The participants, 93 sexually discriminated females, aged between 15-61 years ( $M = 25.12$  years,  $SD = 7.97$ ), fell into the following subgroups of self-identified sexual orientation: (mainly) heterosexual ( $n=24$ ), lesbian/gay ( $n=40$ ), bisexual ( $n=21$ ) and other sexual minorities ( $n=8$ ). Self-reported data, for example, on alexithymia (Bagby, Parker, & Taylor, 1994), expressive suppression (Gross & John, 2003), psychological ill-being (psychosomatic symptoms, depression, stress), and the frequency of discrimination of various bases were collected anonymously through an online survey. Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and linear regression analysis were used for data analysis. All four forms of discrimination (questioning participants' sexuality, fear and avoidance of participants, sport skills and sport selection claimed to be based on sexual orientation, and questioning participants' character) and a maladaptive emotion regulation strategy of suppressing emotional expressions correlated positively with psychological ill-being. ANOVA revealed that subgroups of females differed from each other in psychological ill-being. Linear regression analysis showed that 47% of the variance of depression was explained by all four forms of sexual discrimination. Expressive suppression, discrimination based on questioning the character, and discrimination of taking the form of claiming sport skills and sport selection of females to be based on sexual orientation explained 48% of the variance of the stress. The variance of psychosomatic symptoms (49%) was explained by discrimination based on questioning females' character and sexuality. To conclude, the frequency of discrimination accounted for higher levels of

psychological ill-being in female sexual minority sport participants more typically than their emotion regulation deficits.