

GENDER IDENTITY & EXPRESSION IN “WOMEN’S SPORTS” AT THE
UNIVERSITY LEVEL

by

LuLu Géza
A Thesis
Submitted to the
Graduate Faculty
of
George Mason University
in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts
Sociology

Committee:

_____ Director

_____ Department Chairperson

_____ Dean, College of Humanities and Social
Sciences

Date: _____ Fall Semester 2015
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA

Gender Identity & Expression in “Women’s Sports” at the University Level

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts at George Mason University

by

LuLu Géza
Bachelor of Arts
George Mason University, 2011

Director: Shannon N. Davis, Professor
Department of Sociology & Anthropology

Fall Semester 2015
George Mason University
Fairfax, VA



This work is licensed under a [creative commons attribution-noncommercial 3.0 unported license](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/3.0/).

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to me and living my life exactly how I want to live it after this thesis is over.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to the believers in me—Shannon Davis, Angie Hattery, and Amy Best, as well as my friends and family, and anyone who has let me sleep on their couch over the past four or so years that I have been struggling to finish this thesis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
List of Tables	vi
Abstract	vii
Chapter One	1
Chapter Two.....	4
Chapter Three.....	33
Chapter Four	37
Chapter Five.....	52
Appendix A.....	57
Appendix B	60
References.....	62

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
Table 1 Class Status.....	37
Table 2 Semester Began at Mason.....	38
Table 3 Racial Diversity.....	39
Table 4 Sexual Orientation and Identity.....	39

ABSTRACT

GENDER IDENTITY & EXPRESSION IN “WOMEN’S SPORTS” AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL

LuLu Géza, M.A.

George Mason University, 2015

Thesis Director: Dr. Shannon N. Davis

The goal of the thesis is to examine the gendered experiences of participants in women’s sports at the university level. This thesis explores the gendered relationships between women’s sports participants and themselves, their peers, and the broader academic institution. I apply the dual lenses of feminist and queer theory to data collected via an online survey and semi-structured interviews. Sixty-six individuals completed the survey and fourteen individuals were interviewed. These samples primarily consisted of white, heterosexual, and female-identified club athletes. The most respondents reported playing a club sport (43) or an intramural sport (31), with only a few (3) NCAA athletes, and most of the surveyed women’s sports participants identified strongly as athletes. A primary theme in this study has been the idea that interactions between individuals about bodies, clothing, and sexuality are indicative of enduring cultural ideas about what it means to be a woman. Many interviewees demonstrated this point when they talked about intentionally thinking about and making decisions about what to wear or how to act, the effect their sport participation would have on their relationships, and how sports were something they grew up being encouraged to do. While the participants in my study did

not openly eschew lesbianism, they found it necessary to differentiate themselves from masculinity or lesbianism in many cases. At the same time, the interviewees also devalued qualities they deemed to be feminine, like discussing (anything but especially) feelings and any sort of drama between players/coaches as part of being an athlete. Women's sports participants must, in this particular social context, walk a fine line between the demands of femininity and the demands of being an athlete, an identity claim that has been gendered as masculine, in the different moments and spaces of their lives.

CHAPTER ONE

There is a contradiction in women's sports at the university level. Whereas the intention of Title IX legislation was to provide equality between men and women's sports, today we still see that there is less opportunity, access, and support for women's sports. In a culture where mainstream news and media push the idea that women and men are generally equal and that we have entered a time of "post-feminism" or that feminism is not about equality but instead about hating men, the disparities between men and women's sports are indicative of the obstacles that players on women's sports teams still face. These cultural ideas about and structure of women's sports does not start at the university level though, it is something we grow up learning. Having been raised a girl, I was lucky to be encouraged by my parents and coaches to compete in sports—not only because I continue to love and structure my life around sport participation and competition—but particularly because of the health benefits I gained as well as the self-confidence and determination I developed. This self-confidence and determination have helped me pursue academic goals, and live authentically as a queer-identified gender nonconforming person. Not all people who are raised as girls get the kind of support I received from my family and upbringing, and it is interesting to think about who gets to be athletic, to be considered an athlete, or to participate in sports.

Having played for a women's club rugby team at the university level, I had often wondered how different access to support and opportunity affects the experiences of athletes playing women's sports on campus. I also want to note that my language is intentional here, I say "women's sports" and "women's sport teams" because I acknowledge that there may be athletes on these teams and in these sports who do not identify as women, but identify as transgender or one of the identities under the trans* umbrella. The asterisk (*) here is used to indicate that while many identities are under the trans*/transgender umbrella, they vary across a broad spectrum of genders and lived experiences. Recently, the emergence of the word "cisgender" has been utilized for folks whose gender identities and expressions match the sex (and thusly assumed gender) they were assigned at birth. It is important for us to use the word cisgender to interrogate the hegemonic binary that assumes trans* people either do not exist or are exceptions to the rule, instead of simply belonging in the human spectrum. Cisgender and transgender are more equitable terms to broadly describe how people might identify, for instance a cisgender man or woman, and a transgender man, woman, or gender non-conforming person.

Research Questions

In this thesis project I used the respondents' experiences to explore social experience at the intersection of gender, femininity, masculinity, sexuality, and sports in the context of gendered institutions, and detail my theoretical framework, and methods to answer the following research questions:

1. How do athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams make sense of and present their gendered selves?
2. How do athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams perceive being received on their campus?
3. How do the experiences of athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams provide insight into the university as a social institution?

CHAPTER TWO

Theoretical Frame

I began this project with a specific point of view, and a particular lens to analyze the data I collected—feminist and queer theory. Grounded in the idea that our society is built upon gender marginalization and the subjugation of non-male people (women, trans*-identified people), feminist theory assisted in developing my conceptualization of the university as a gendered institution. Queer and trans* theories and politics also inform my work, as Judith Butler (1990) first theorizes the constant constituting of gender, questioning and criticizing the idea of essential gender qualities while Dean Spade (2008) articulates a politics that addresses material realities in systems that still rely on a gender binary.

In doing this research, I am adding to the literature at the intersection of gender and sport in sociology while incorporating queer theory and trans* politics. As a feminist researcher, I keep thinking of the words of Chafetz (2004), who very strongly said that as feminists we ultimately have the goal of ending gender inequity, but as sociologists we must also produce empirical theory. She identifies much of feminist research as epistemology because instead of developing theory that is testable, often produces social theory. Spade (2008) underlines the necessity of feminist, queer, and trans* politics to align in the pursuit of not only ending gender inequity, but also simultaneously addressing the intersectional concerns of those affected by poverty, racism, and other forms of oppression;

We all interact with gender-segregated facilities and institutions, like bathrooms and locker rooms, but many of us haven't thought about what it means that almost every institution designed to house, exploit the labor of, and control low-income people and people of color is gender-segregated. In all of these locations gender binaries are enforced by means of humiliation, assault, and rape. (34)

In this research project, I center the voices of athletes playing women's sports/on women's sports teams at the university level, but I also use the greater understandings of institutional structure and the perpetuation of gender inequity in our culture that I have gained as a sociologist to inform how I have interpreted their testimonies.

I use two frameworks for thinking about gender informing my research; the first is gender as structure. Risman (2004) discourages scholars/readers from placing the different individual, interactional, and institutional levels into a hierarchy because, "How social change occurs is an empirical question, not an a priori theoretical assumption" (434). Though this question does address the interplay across the levels of individual, interactional, and institutional, the (at this point, somewhat unpredictable) change that could result from this interplay is precisely why Risman says we should not focus on one but all levels simultaneously. Risman identifies gender as a social structure because she wants to bring it into discussions on the same plane as economic and political structures. She says that "shared but routine cultural expectations re-create inequality even without the conscious intent of the actors" (438). Like Risman, I would not argue that these processes are unidirectional, but I also think there is a lack of understanding around how these cultural expectations and ideology occur. The institutional reality and the interactions between and within individuals are all shaped and reinforced by each other simultaneously. This is not to say that individuals are powerless against the hegemonic

forces of the institution, but that individuals are not always as responsible for their subjugation, but are constrained by a set of institutional processes and procedures. The idea that these three levels of individual, interactional, and institutional all matter and interact to help create our experiences is one that framed my research as I learned from the experiences of athletes in women's sports and on women's teams at the university level.

The second framework I used to think about gender in my research is gender as shaped by intersectional processes, because the experience of athletes in women's sports is not uniform. Collins (1990) rethinks the additive conception of oppression based on race, gender, and class, and identifies instead a matrix of domination in which all interlock and rely on each other to function (222, 226). Her critiques of white feminism/the academy and its devaluation of black women, tokenization of their presence, and white-washing of their voices are important for all feminists to keep in mind. She also names that, "Depending on the context, an individual may be an oppressor, a member of an oppressed group, or simultaneously oppressor and oppressed" (225), a reminder against essentialist binary thinking that would demonize without considering broader context. As I planned my project, it was also important for me to think about power dynamics between myself as interviewer and my participants as interviewees.

Building on the work of Chafetz, Risman, and Collins, I have focused on the gendered experiences of athletes in women's sports at the university level, contextualized by the gendered institution of which they are a part. I have analyzed my findings on

Risman's multiple levels and work to go beyond a binary understanding of how norms are (or are not) enforced within teams and/or the university. My study incorporates the reported experiences of student-athletes in terms of inside and outside of their sport spaces, but also situates these experiences in the broader cultural expectations of gender to which we are all held accountable in order to develop theory beyond epistemology.

Gender

As stated in the theoretical framework, making sense of gender at each of Risman's three levels—institutional, interactional, and individual—informs my work with athletes at the university. Butler's (1990) theory that troubles the notion of gender's essential nature and thus the structure of all of our sex-segregated institutions also colors the following discussion.

Institutional

Raewyn Connell (2009) and Joan Acker (1992) both write about the ways in which gender shapes every institution and organization. Acker says that “the term “gendered institutions” means that gender is present in the processes, practices, images, and ideologies, and distributions of power in the various sectors of social life” (567). Connell (2009) names a regular set of arrangements about gender that is built into organizational logic; who was recruited to do what work; what social divisions were recognized; how emotional relations were conducted; and how these institutions were related to others as a 'gender regime.' Her gender regimes are located within institutions, and patriarchy is the presiding system that pressures people to act out gender in certain ways that set men and their interests as the priority. Acker asks a pointed question that

still could use answering in 2015; "How are men's interests and masculinity of certain kinds intertwined in the creation and maintenance of particular institutions, and how have the subordination and exclusion of women been built into ordinary institutional functioning?" (568). Sandra L. Bem (1995) also addresses such a question, reflecting on her own research and concluding that her twenty five years in the field have led to little change, but only evermore revelations about how gender continues to structure our world/society. In the context of many examples of female inclusion and commonplace enforcement of Title IX, it is important that social researchers still see that gender and power are intertwined, particularly in the facilitation of institutions in which we all participate.

Interactional

Just as gender operates at the structural/organizational level, it also operates at the interactional level. And thus I build from West and Zimmerman (1987), who made a still relevant and compelling argument stating that gender is "a situated doing, carried out in the virtual or real presence of others who are presumed to be oriented to its production" (126). They establish that though gender had been constructed as a derivative of biological sex, feminist theory has separated the two, revealing the cultural construction of gender based on what are considered to be essential criteria. This concession is a necessary distinction as it leaves room for intersex people and others who find themselves 'biologically between' or outside of the categories male and female, as "the *presumption* that essential criteria exist and would or should be there if looked for provides the basis for sex categorization" (132). Because our society is organized by the

gender binary, even those of us who do not fit in either the male or female categories are forced into them if we want to participate in our society, especially any sex-segregated activities.

As our society is constrained and organized by the limits of binary logic, the interactions that occur within it can be coded as corresponding to cultural conceptions of being a man or being a woman, masculinity or femininity, respectively. R.W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt (2005) theorize, "The concept of hegemonic masculinity was originally formulated in tandem with a concept of hegemonic femininity—soon renamed "emphasized femininity" to acknowledge the asymmetrical position of masculinities and femininities in a patriarchal gender order" (848). With pressures to do gender in particular ways, Connell and Messerschmidt reiterate West and Zimmerman's idea of gender accountability, or being subject to the gender assessment of others. West and Zimmerman again leave room for radical transgression, but also acknowledge the danger that can affect a person's gender expression; "And note, to "do" gender is not always to live up to normative conceptions of femininity or masculinity; it is to engage in behavior at the risk of gender assessment" (136). Individuals who do not identify with the sex they were assigned at birth sometimes encounter violence when they express a gender with which they do identify, and studies about and theory that considers the experiences of such people, identified under the transgender (trans*) umbrella, have gained a foothold in gender studies, like Connell's 2010 research on work experiences of trans* people and Griffin's 2012 article on transgender and intersex participation and legislation in collegiate sports.

West and Zimmerman (1987) claim that though placement in a *sex category* is achieved through application of sex criteria, in everyday life, such categorization is established and sustained by the socially required identificatory displays that proclaim one's membership in one of the categories (127). Gender and acting in the ways one should according to that single categorization is the only way commonly accepted for identifying someone's position in the binary (because inspecting someone's genitals is inappropriate). Femininity and masculinity and their derivatives womanly/manly are socially and historically rooted constructions that reflect the gendered expectations for people based on their sex.

Catherine Connell (2010) researched the work experiences of trans* people, asking them to describe and interpret their own negotiation and management of daily gendered interactions and practices. While Connell explores the theoretical implications of language like 'redoing' or 'undoing' gender as alternatives to 'doing gender' that describe transgression and challenges to the gender binary system, she found that the experiences of trans*-identified people she interviewed can in part be described by West and Zimmerman's 'doing gender' and the gender accountability that comes with it. Connell also proposes new language of 'doing transgender' to describe the specific experiences of trans* people who held on to practices/characteristics that directly challenged binary conceptualizations of gender, whether it be for the sake of a challenge to a prevailing gender order, authenticity of self, or a mixture of the two. Both out and "stealth" transgender folks recalled being held accountable to normative gender presentations, whether that came in the form of questions of their gender identity, advice

or teaching from co-workers about how to be a man or woman properly, and/or reinterpretation of any transgressions or challenges to the gender binary so that the trans* person would still be held accountable to the binary. The possibility, which Connell doesn't mention, that cisgender people could "do transgender" is intriguing and radical.

West and Zimmerman add, "Actions are often designed with an eye to their accountability, that is, how they might look and how they might be characterized... virtually any activity can be assessed as to its womanly or manly nature" (136). At this interactional level, it is easy to see that women participating in masculine-coded activities like sports would have to pay special attention so they can still be identified as women. The trope of the unnatural and unseemly (masculine) lesbian athlete operates as a kind of informal control, both to discourage girls and women from becoming athletes and also to scare athletes in women's sports into performing compensatory femininity. If they are lacking in performance, the result can be ridicule or even violence.

Individual

Because nothing exists in a vacuum, it is important to note that even individuals and their thoughts/feelings/actions have a greater context of culture, institutions, and other people. Systems of oppression go beyond individual thoughts/feelings/actions and in the United States, these include but are not limited to racism, sexism, heterosexism, and able-ism. Heterosexism is the system of oppression that erases and denies equality to LGBTQ people, due to the prevalence of hate for and misunderstanding about LGBTQ people, also known as homophobia. Homophobia has also been conceptualized as a gendered phenomenon, that perhaps only men are really homophobic. Herek (1988) says

that, "Personal and institutional prejudice against lesbians and gay men is usually termed *homophobia*," in his study about the attitudes of heterosexual people toward homosexual people (453). Among other questions, he asks whether the intensity of heterosexual people's attitudes toward lesbian and gay people is consistently affected by the gender of the (heterosexual) respondent, the (lesbian or gay-identified) target, or both. He created a scale called Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men (ATLG), adapted from other models that either focused on lesbians or gay men which included varying forms entitled ATL (Attitudes Toward Lesbians) and ATG (Attitudes Toward Gay Men), to measure how women and men may differ in their homophobia toward gay men and lesbians. Herek used a sample of 110 respondents (73 females, 37 males) who took the ATLG and other forms (ATL and ATG), and found that the significant main effect for respondents' gender "indicates that males held generally more negative attitudes than did females" but both males and females mostly expressed more negative attitudes toward gay men or lesbian women if they were of their same sex.

Laura Hamilton (2007) also researched homophobia, using a qualitative and community approach— in/among groups of women, focusing on residential and sorority life—to see the different ways women participate in perpetuating heteronormativity. Hamilton's ethnography and individual and group interviews found that, not only could women indeed be homophobic, but also that there was a relationship between women's participation in the Greek party scene and their opinions of lesbianism for them and their friends. Active partiers preferred a general distance from lesbians, while partiers critical of the partying environment were more welcoming of lesbianism for their friends, and

nonpartiers found being a lesbian and having lesbian-identified friends the most acceptable. Thus, women's efforts navigating unequal gender contexts may fortify their efforts to meet heteronormative standards of femininity and eschew those who do not meet those standards. Hamilton also found that heterosexual women who were active partiers appropriated lesbian eroticism to gain attention from men, further denying and trivializing the sexual and romantic relationships that can happen between women. One can imagine that in a sport context, the need to denounce and distance lesbians may be even more crucial for heterosexual women who are already battling assumptions of their masculinity due to their participation in sport. A result of such denial and erasure affects the lived experiences of all players in women's sports, regardless of sexuality, in that all must adhere to strict conceptions of femininity or face the consequences of potential sanctions.

Herek noted that this second effect was more pronounced by males. Homophobia toward one's "same sex" or gender is an extension of gender accountability and essentialist expectations/stereotypes of men and women because gender transgressions incite fears about homosexuality. The ways in which this gendered phenomenon is experienced or expressed varies across genders and some men commit acts of violence so they can be easily-identified as homophobic, while other women (and men) commit symbolic violence that denies the existence and erases the experiences of LGBTQ folks. Hamilton found that the symbolic violence her subjects committed against LGBTQ people was by engaging in same-sex sexual behavior to attract the attention of men, thus denying the existence of authentic and meaningful relationships, be they romantic or

sexual, between two women. In fact, ignoring the continuing systemic and symbolic violence against many different groups of people is the basis of claims of the United States as "post-racial" and/or "post-feminist." The assumption that because there may not be (in the public eye) overt acts of violence or specific laws discriminating against certain marginalized groups that those groups do not experience oppression is superficial and antithetical to real struggles for social justice.

While Connell (2009), Acker (1992), and Bem (1995) argue more generally that gender shapes and pervades all institutions, West and Zimmerman (1987) point to the resulting gender assessment to which we, as individuals, are all held accountable. Connell (2010) demonstrates the way that "out" (known) trans* people are assessed and then corrected and assisted to become a true "man" or "woman," much like children. Whereas there appears to be allowance for a learning curve in some of these cases of transition or gender non-conforming in the workplace, many other trans* people have suffered violence due to lack of congruence with assumed gender and norms. Although there is a higher rate of violence against trans* people, it is this same kind of gender assessment that cisgender people navigate in terms of masculinity and femininity and the associated qualities, according to Connell (2010). Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) identify the power differential between masculinities and femininities, distinguishing them as hegemonic and emphasized, respectively. Acknowledging the difference between resulting power for compliance with masculine and feminine ideals is important, in that one should not forget that folks assigned female at birth have a litany of requirements to meet in order to have worth in a society where gendered compliance is accepted. There is

a link here between gender assessment and presumed heterosexuality, so that when one transgresses conventional gender roles or appearances, they are often thought to be lesbian or gay. How gender and sexual orientation are linked is complicated. Herek (1988) argues that the way one is homophobic is gendered; where men might be more outright, violent, and clearly identifiable as homophobic, women might be less overt in their homophobic declaration, use distancing strategies, and are less likely to be seen as homophobic. Hamilton (2007) studied a college residence hall and demonstrates that this latter way of being homophobic that has been attributed to women, while rarely resulting in actual violence, can be very harmful to lesbians and other gender non-conforming folks.

Gender shapes what we do, how we do it, when we do it and where, as shown by R. Connell (2009), Acker (1992), Bem (1995), and Connell & Messerschmidt (2005) above. When we do not adhere to these rules or standards of gender within gender regimes and gendered institutions as well as in gendered interactions, we can suffer systemically and interpersonally, as shown by West & Zimmerman (1987), C. Connell (2010), Herek (1988), and Hamilton (2007).

While most institutions or organizations might claim a gender-neutrality or bias-free stance, the researchers above give examples that point to the contrary. Understanding how gender permeates our every moment and interaction helps to explore deeper cultural meanings in the normalized experiences of athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams there. My project begins by presuming that the university is a gendered institution, despite its claims of prioritizing diversity and equity. In my questionnaire and interviews,

I gain an understanding of the everyday ways athletes in women's sports experience gender on and off campus, inside and outside of their sport lives. I am particularly interested in both what is perceived by the athletes to be the status quo, and the concessions, negotiations, and deviations athletes make with their gender expressions. The perception athletes have about how deviating from the established (perceived) norm for gender will affect them systemically and interpersonally can directly affect the way athletes choose how to express their gender where (and when).

Literature Review: Gender and Sport

According to Messner (2002), and Hattery and Smith (2007), feminist scholars have argued that sport as an institution has been created, understood, and studied as a male-dominated space. Many researchers have used a comparative frame to analyze women or women's sport opportunities in relation to men's. Hattery and Smith compare resource allocation between men and women in Division I NCAA sports teams in twenty-seven colleges and universities through a gender difference variable, always calculated by subtracting the women's resources from the men's. They found that there is more gender equity for gender-neutral sports like soccer than basketball, and also suggest that the more access women have to sports participation and coaching, the more exposure women athletes have, the more important it becomes for men to remind women that they are still just women. Athletes in women's sports face barriers that include and go beyond resource allocation and space: complex challenges that are either dismissed as girls' longstanding disinterest in athletics or misunderstood like the tricky identity work of being athletic, feminine, and heterosexual (and proving it), and the denial or embrace of masculinity.

My research contributes to this literature by highlighting athletes in women's sports as subjects worthy of study before re-contextualizing their stories and experiences within the male-dominated institution of sport and the gendered institution of the university.

Sport Participation and Community/Belonging

Interviewing athletes at the university level is one way to explore the way sport participation and belonging overlaps and refutes athletes' choices about how to express their gender(s). As LGBTQ and female-identified people participate in institutions, they have to weigh how their sexual and gender identities will be perceived inside as well as outside their sport groups. Explicit acceptance of these identities within sports could lead to more LGBTQ and female-identified folks participating in and receiving the health benefits from sports. People who have similar experiences to us on our teams and in our sport organizations can be a gateway to feeling a sense of belonging, but the point remains that sexual and gender identities cannot be the only way we identify similar experiences.

Sport participation research is interesting in terms of identity and belonging. Elling and Janssens (2009) researched the extent to which sport participation patterns are structured by sexuality and to what extent non-heterosexually-identified people experience homophobia in sports by comparing 1105 self-identified homosexual or bisexual women and men to 1200 self-identified heterosexual women and men from a variety of sports. They found that sport participation patterns were at least partially structured by sexuality, even if only for a small percentage of people, due to high rates of

homosexual/bisexual identified participants in mainstream sports. 88% of their non-heterosexual respondents had not experienced homophobia while participating in mainstream sports. Elling et al (2003) broach the subject of climate in sports for gay and lesbian athletes by examining two volleyball clubs, one mainstream and one lesbian and gay-specific, to focus on the reasons why athletes participate in either of the teams and the meanings associated with their sport participation. Elling et al were intentional in analyzing dominant and marginal spaces, and in seeking the complicated results of integrating and separating that would hold different meanings for different people. With the context of continued systemic discrimination against LGBTQ folks, researchers were surprised that only one person reported a negative, homophobic, or discriminatory incident in sports. Instead respondents generally participated in the club that was either their preferred level of competition or where they felt like they belonged the most.

While the idea of more people participating in sports is appropriate and worthwhile to discuss, it is also the case that not all these athletes are white and talking about LGBTQ and female-identified folks without mentioning race is not acknowledging our entire reality. With her discussion of race of coaches in NCAA women's basketball, Hattery (2012) points to another layer that Elling and Janssens (2009) and Elling et al (2003) missed about participation—sexual and gender identities are important pieces and having coaches and teammates across those spectrums is always helpful—but this can mean nothing to an athlete of color who is LGBTQ, with nobody around to help them navigate the specific ways racism, sexism, and homophobia affect their sport experiences.

Hattery's discussion of race and Title IX in coaching at the NCAA level helps us

to think about the impact coaches have on athletes and future coaches, with particular focus on the realms of gender and race. Her work argues that the small number of African American coaches sends a problematic message—to everyone, but especially these players—that African American and other nonwhite players are not coach material. While there are certainly other factors that contributed to belonging and community, the barrier resulting from a lack of representation as leaders in sport perpetuates the continued lack of leaders of color in sport.

Another aspect of participation in sport, particularly in an academic institution, is the administration, and how it addresses issues of diversity and inclusion. While Acosta and Carpenter (1991) found that there was an increase in sports participation by girls and women over time between 1972 and 1991, there was also a decrease in women in leadership positions in the same timeframe. Combined with drops from over 99% and 90% female coaches and administrators in 1972 to 47.3% and 15.9%, respectively, in 1991, the Acosta and Carpenter (2012) finding that only 20.3% of athletic directors are female is yet another example of *how* those who play women's sports participate, most often not as part of the administration. These statistics are specific to the NCAA women's sports teams, and I would expect that lower profile club sports have a higher rate of women's coaches.

Walseth (2006) studied community for women in sport, asking does sport participation create feelings of belonging, and if it does, what are the reasons belonging develops? In interviews with 21 American Muslim women across a range of athletic involvement, she found that the three most common reasons for belonging to a team were

for social support, as a place of refuge, and a place for identity confirmation and image building. Race, sexuality, class, gender expression, religion, like-mindedness, and other points of connection are often ways that people feel belonging in any sort of situation. Thus, it will be important to discuss how sports in general and community specifically allow for athletes to find these points of connection with peers on their teams or in the coaching staff. The discussion of community in sport, especially women's sports, is an important look into the particular climate that exists for women in an institution that has been historically dominated by men.

Athletic Identity

Athletic identity, especially in student-athletes, is a little studied phenomenon according to Sue Rankin (2011). My study will focus on athletes' current ways of negotiating identity, balancing the constraints of both femininity and the masculine-coded world of sports. This tension is reflective of the kind of socialization our culture requires for girls and has long-term consequences that shape *how* those of us raised as girls *will experience and participate in sport*.

Zieff (2009) examines some factors contributing to the adoption or rejection of athletic identity as expressed by adolescent females. Zieff found that these girls made sense of their sport participation primarily in terms of physical competence, self-confidence, and skill level. She was troubled by these results because some of the generally acknowledged benefits of sport are about health and wellness, or expressing oneself in the moment, were lacking for these girls. If they do not think health and wellness are current benefits from their sport participation, then they probably will not

benefit from sports in these ways. Girls developing as athletes with this one-dimensional experience of sport will be less likely to continue participating in or trying new sports as they get older, and they will undoubtedly miss out on such health benefits.

Sue Rankin would argue that these administrations and coaches help to make up the climate in sport for student athletes, and continually shape the experiences those athletes have in sport at the university level. Rankin's 2011 Student Athlete Climate Study (SACS) found that four aspects of climate had an impact on student-athletes' athletic identity:

- how they perceived the athletic department addressed discrimination
- interactions with athletic personnel had a positive influence on their sense of athletic identity
- how comfortable they were with teammate diversity
- how the athletes interacted with faculty, (more with faculty, less strong athletic identity)

Athletes outside of NCAA sports, in community or intercollegiate sport clubs were not part of Rankin's sample, and it bears pointing out that many athletes interact with their administration less than NCAA athletes do.

Additionally, athletes in women's sports must, if they want to maintain an athletic identity in the context of a gendered institution that will not ignore their "female-ness", *participate in sport in a particular way to address this tension*. Cynthia Fabrizio Pelak (2002) studied a women's ice hockey club over time and found that "The process by which club members adopted an identity as hockey players took place through ongoing

interactions, such as when the players changed into and out of their elaborate hockey equipment, and during practices, games, fund-raisers, and club social events" (103).

While these players once again faced stigma and mockery as female hockey players, Pelak says that the players mostly focused on informal interactions amongst themselves, demonstrate high levels of in-group cohesion.

While there are many challenges facing a female athlete, there are some benefits. Roth and Basow (2004) examine women and sport as a site of empowerment for women, as long as it is not co-opted and controlled by the idea of "female fitness." This phenomenon of "female fitness" uses much of the rhetoric of health and strength but is actually body-shaming and isolating for women who do not meet hegemonic standards of body size and shape. They note overlap of men and women in ability/strength and highlight the many examples of females in sports 'outperforming' men. Roth and Basow (2004) are trying to change the way women think of themselves as athletes, advocating self-confidence in leading, learning, motivating, sharing, and competing better. In addition, they highlight how gender differences are increasingly being inscribed on the body and sex tests have been used to control women/girls and deny their competence as athletes.

Femininity

In the previous section, much of the researchers dealt with a tension between how women are supposed to be and the idea of being an athlete, and that will be a theme in the following constructions of femininity. Athletes in women's sports do complicated identity work to deconstruct the notion of athlete always equals man, but their work is always

constrained by the limits of sports culture and its pervasive gendered process and erasure of trans* people, particularly in the United States but also in commercialized sports arena world-wide. Femininity and athleticism are often at odds. A femininity that includes only heterosexual, white, "fit" cisgender women is not inclusive, and will not encourage more athletes or coaches to participate in women's sports. The idea and conceptualization of femininity limits all who are not seen as male in some way or another, but particularly collides with the idea and conceptualization of athlete/athletic, as the following studies will demonstrate.

Matthew B. Ezzel (2009), in his participant-observer and interview study of women's rugby, noted the way women on the team negotiated a new type of feminine athlete identity for themselves by engaging in what he called "defensive othering—reinforcing the power of stigmatizing labels by arguing that the label is true for other members of their social category, but not for themselves" (114). The women with whom he spoke carved out a new "seemingly contradictory (collective) identity that was simultaneously tough, fit, feminine, and heterosexual. It is an identity I call *heterosexy-fit*" (112). This identity is decidedly separate from the slurs like 'dyke' that most athletes in women's sports hear. Finley (2010) did a participant-observation and interview study of roller derby that included similar identity-construction, but without Ezzel's "updated version of emphasized femininity" and instead an *alternative femininity* of "derby girl." Finley also theorizes about an inclusiveness that Ezzel's ruggers do not realize, "With its roots in the resistive subcultures built around a definition of alternative femininity, derby is a place for women who did not always fit in elsewhere" (377-8). Both of these

team/communities have carved out a space in sports by developing new femininities that either do little to resist hegemonic masculinity, or reinforce sexism and heterosexism.

Cox and Thompson (2000) conducted in-depth interviews with sixteen players on a premier women's soccer team in Auckland, New Zealand to study how women soccer players use and conceptualize their bodies. Most of the women came up with similar responses, across sexuality, that they did not want to be seen as lesbian (bisexual was better), and though 88% reported being called tomboys positively they also wanted/needed to be perceived as feminine so they often had long hair to compensate for their unisex gear. The climate on this women's football team closets lesbians, eschews different body types, encourages specific feminine presentation, and tests women for heterosexuality, all in order to pass as a successful sports team. Unlike Ezzel's rugby girls and Finley's derby girls, Cox and Thompson's footballers primarily adhere to cultural gender constraints. Ravel and Rail (2006) researched how women position themselves in discourse and constitute themselves as non-heterosexual subjects and which discourses (dominant, alternative) they use to construct gender and sexuality. They conducted in-depth interviews with 14 white francophone sportswomen ages 21-31 in Montreal and applied poststructuralism and queer theory to answer their questions. While many participants reported gaie-friendly or predominantly gaie sport environments, they also said that certain team sports were typically seen as more or less gaie. Ravel and Rail found that although their participants deconstructed problematic mainstream stereotypes that all lesbians are "butches", they rearticulated dominant and homophobic ideas and stereotypes about butches. These two team/communities also claimed territory in sports

by adhering strictly to old/accepted femininities and/or participating in the perpetuation of homophobia and body policing, even in the more "gaie-friendly" team.

Lesbian Stereotype and Gender Trouble

Building directly out of sexism, homophobia limits the possibilities for all people by not only thinking that men and women can each only act in certain ways, but also that romantic relationships between women (or between men) are disgusting and wrong. Homophobia and sexism also work together to erase trans* people, reinforcing the binary gender system that there are only men and women in the world. Due to the masculine conceptualization and construction of sport, women have to work hard to locate themselves within a masculine arena, negotiating a special space of femininity that allows for sports excellence, as argued in the previous section. The lesbian stereotype has been a special point of anxiety in women's sports and worked more often than not to separate potential friends, colleagues, and allies against sexism, regardless of their actual sexualities/sexual orientations.

Cahn (1993) chronicles the history of the lesbian stereotype and how it has affected women in sport from the 1930's to 1993. Cahn acknowledges differences in sport for women based on gender presentation and race and posits that sport has been the site of many different experiences for these women. For example, some of her respondents spoke about how sport was their point of entry into lesbian culture, especially when women's sports were more isolated and less accessible to men. While some lesbian-identified athletes may have found each other in these more remote spaces, in the more mainstream spaces, athletes, coaches, and administrators had an isolating experience.

Griffin's (1998) exploration of the climate for lesbians in sport had similar findings; silence and invisibility was the reality for lesbians, and the lack of lesbian roles models left younger lesbians with what seemed like the only choice, to perpetuate silence and invisibility instead of risking their careers by remaining closeted. Griffin also found that the word "lesbian" was used as a weapon, against lesbians and heterosexual women alike to control, discredit, and intimidate women in sport. The result was a lonely climate for all women where homophobia and heterosexism discouraged them from bonding as colleagues, friends, lovers, or political allies against the sexism they faced. Griffin (2012) updated her work, this time focusing on inclusivity in collegiate sports for intersex and transgender individuals.

Just as some people view lesbians as threats to women's sports because they fear association with the stereotypes of lesbians as unsavory, so, too, do many athletes and the general public view transgender and intersex women athletes with particular suspicion. Although lesbians may be viewed as women who look or act like men, some people view transgender and intersex women as actually being men, in most places making them ineligible to compete in women's sports. The most-often-cited concern about the participation of transgender or intersex women in women's sports is that they threaten a "level playing field." Many competitors, coaches, and parents assume that transgender and intersex women, because of their male bodies, have an unfair competitive advantage over women who are not perceived to be trans or intersex. (106)

Griffin also makes the point that the problem is not the intersex and transgender athletes themselves, but the strict maintenance of sex segregation in sports becomes exclusive once we recognize that the gender/sex binary is not an accurate way to describe everyone in our culture. Athletes in women's sports, whether they are subjected to gender testing or facing scrutiny for being lesbians, are affected by the reality that passing same-sex marriage legislation has not solved all the problems for LGBTQ people today. As Cahn

(1993), Griffin (1998), and Griffin (2012) demonstrate, all athletes in women's sports can be affected by the lesbian stereotype, the threat of masculinity, or assumptions about being a man instead of wanting a man (sexually).

Masculinity

As argued above, femininity has been culturally framed as the correct way to be a woman, and the tension between femininity and athleticism has been a struggle for athletes in women's sports, sometimes inside and usually outside their teams/communities. Connell and Messerschmidt (2005) have identified the similar constructions and applications of femininity and masculinity, to women and men, respectively and in binary fashion. When women's sports teams are not feminine, or are unable to reframe their athleticism into a type of femininity, like the rugby players from Ezzel's study or the roller derby players from Finley's study, there is only one other option in binary logic. Masculinity has been constructed in our culture as "only for/by/about men," which problematizes any individual participating in women's sports who could (would) be described as masculine (rather than feminine). This problem of "masculinity in women's sports" is noteworthy for both its potential to deconstruct the notion of a gender binary and for the way it could be used to police women's sports with practices like gender testing.

In their investigation of women in sport, Wright and Clarke (1999) wrote not only about rugby players, but the particular contradictory position of female athletes in sports that are male-dominated. "One way in which such obvious threats to male power are negotiated is to dismiss the women who display those characteristics as lesbians—that is,

as unnatural women whose behaviour can be explained as aberrations from 'normal' femininity against which 'normal' masculinity is constructed" (230). Using representations of femininity against women is not new in the way of upholding a gendered institution. Theberge (1993) interviewed and analyzed 43 women coaches in Canada from 13 sports by considering the significance of their token status, the ideology of masculine superiority, and gender marking and differentiation. Theberge found that few coaches indicated any wish to stand out from the dominant culture because most had a difficult time navigating the old boys' networks because they had to prove their ability, felt like they had to put being a coach before being a woman, and were keenly aware of their token status.

Heywood and Dworkin (2003) offer a new perspective on female athletes, acknowledging their masculinity in a positive way. They use personal experiences and references to contemporary sports information to highlight a continuum of overlapping bodies and performances by gender. Heywood and Dworkin respond to critiques of sport that it is the female athlete's responsibility to provide a counterpoint to the violence of male sports culture, arguing that the "requirement of self-effacement is routinely associated with female athletes who adhere to emphasized femininity" (64). They believe that rethinking masculinity is important because it means that women can be strong and competitive, but that is not all they are (or could be), which in turn means that men are also more than the historically and socially constructed ideals of masculinity. Heywood and Dworkin effectively suggest that the diversity of strength, ability, and competitiveness across all sorts of bodies should be the focus, instead of a dichotomous

split between men and women. This kind of argument is not only empowering of women (and men) but is trans* inclusive as well.

As men have been constructed as masculine, so have some sports been constructed as *more* masculine, like boxing. Mennesson (2002) interviews twelve female boxers and their coaches and conducted participant observation for two years, formulating a case study of French women boxers. She asks how the organizational culture of French boxing influences females to take up boxing and shapes the attendant identities and counter-identities. With a social-constructionist perspective of identity-formation process and application of the habitus and cultural capital, Mennesson finds that in almost all cases of her predominately working class sample of boxers, the girls created for themselves an essentially "masculine-type capital." Many described themselves as the sportiest in their family and/or that their first encounter with boxing was a revelation; all of this is part of the counter-identification process that helped these women navigate a male-dominated sport like boxing.

Most masculinity discussed in the literature focuses on the construct of the athlete as a masculine construct. The athletes must prove their femininity and heterosexuality, but also adhere to any other team/sport norms in terms of make-up, clothing, or body shape and size. Female-identified coaches have had a hard time breaking into the old boys' club of coaching men's and even women's sports, as we know that an increasing number of male coaches are taking women's sport coaching jobs Acosta & Carpenter (2009). Heywood and Dworkin (2003) and Mennesson (2002) both reconceptualize masculinity as empowering for the athletes in their studies, moving away from having to

choose one or the other all the time, moving instead to a more fluid conception that most people have both masculine and feminine traits that can dominate or be highlighted at any time. This point is important because this conceptualization of masculinity and its relationship with femininity would be inclusive of most trans* folks' identification of their own genders.

Sport participation and community/belonging as shown above in Hattery (2012), Walseth (2006), Elling & Janssens (2003), and Elling et al (2009) give particular insight into the way athletes in women's sports/teams may perceive their experiences. The spaces they enter as athletes are still gendered from the inside and the outside and the reasons they may choose to enter and remain on certain teams/sports vary. Many athletes in women's sports develop an athletic identity, be it strong, weak, always or sometimes, and the body of work studying the way that identity operates is lacking. My study specifically targets student-athletes in women's sports at the varying levels of university participation; intramural, club, and NCAA. This project explores the connections between their athletic identity and their gender identity and expressions, and how those identities intersect and mutually affect their race, class, size, and sexual orientations.

Most of the literature, besides Griffin (2012), Connell (2010), and Spade (2008), I have reviewed makes no mention of cisgender or transgender, but it is worth pointing out that most of the time the words "men" or "women" are used in these studies or in everyday language, the meaning is not inclusive of trans* folks—the intended meaning is cisgender men or women. However, it is also worth pointing out that these researchers, without their knowledge, may have included trans* folks in their studies—so it would be

problematic for us to assume that they only studied cisgender people. This previous scholarship made presumptions that cannot be disentangled from their presentation of findings, and my work is intended to address this problem

My Project

The scholarship discussed above has helped me to think about gender and sport in terms of in-group/out-group and the role of sexual and gender expectations. Additional themes are participation and community/belonging, athletic identity, femininity, the lesbian stereotype, and masculinity. Locating individual and interactional indicators within an institutional level that is not immune to change by individuals can lead to a strong structural critique that hopefully will foster change as I hope to do.

The acceptance of an athletic identity is related to feeling like one belongs, and the ways in which new and veteran athletes see people like them participating and excelling (or not) in women's sports can affect their decisions to participate, as shown in Zieff (2009), Acosta & Carpenter (1991 & 2009), Pelak (2002), and Roth & Basow (2004). The way that identities, athletic and otherwise, are enacted and reacted to within and outside of women's sports/teams are deeply affected by assumptions and expectations of femininity and masculinity, as well as the "threat" of the lesbian stereotype. How femininity and masculinity both play parts in the spaces these athletes enter is often negative and limiting, but athletes are sometimes able to retool these concepts or develop new discourses for their own benefit, in the sport space, outside of it, and/or a combination of the two, as seen in Ezzel (2009), Finley (2010), Cox & Thompson (2000),

Ravel & Rail (2006), Wright & Clarke (1999), Theberge (1993), Heywood & Dworkin (2003), and Mennesson (2002). Cahn (1993), Griffin (1998), and Griffin (2012) each speak to the notion of heteronormativity in women's sports/teams and the deadly silence about lesbianism which only serves to further oppress and silence non-heterosexual athletes. Since a certain gender representation is stereotypically supposed to coincide with lesbianism—which includes an assumed mannishness and athletic ability— all athletes in women's sports/teams are at risk of being stigmatized as lesbians. While there is nothing wrong with being a lesbian, the suspicion of being LGBTQ has historically (and currently) been used to discredit individuals, especially in the United States.

My research adds to the literature at the intersection of gender and sport in two significant ways. Of the studies I have reviewed, one or fewer have mentioned trans* people. My research, focused on a range of gender expressions and inclusive of many gender identities, fills the gap previous studies have left about trans* people and sports. In addition, my study seeks an understanding of athletes in women's sports at the university level in terms of their choices about gender expression across groupings of NCAA, club, intramural sports, whereas previous studies have been limited within a team, sport, or division.

CHAPTER THREE

When I was thinking about how I might answer the research question, a mixed-methods approach offered the best possibility for understanding the identity work that athletes in women's sports and on women's sport teams do to negotiate all the spaces they occupy. By negotiate, I mean the way these athletes may change, hide, or highlight particular aspects of themselves in different contexts. These different contexts, or spaces they occupy, could be with their teammates, communicating with the institution (coaches, administrators), with their families, with their friends, in the classroom, or any other places in which they spend time. I am particularly interested in the identity work the athletes do to feel more comfortable, fit in or stand out, and succeed or not in the very gendered sport context. However, if I did not ask the athletes about their lives outside of sport, I would not be able to learn about the differences in gender presentation or how their athletic identities show up in the various contexts.

The research questions that guided this project were:

1. How do athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams make sense of and present their gendered selves?
2. How do athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams perceive being received in their campus?
3. How do the experiences of athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams provide insight into the university as a social institution?

I began data collection in the fall of 2010 with members of the Mason Women's Rugby Club, of which I was a part at the time, in the form of semi-structured interviews and focus groups. I expanded beyond the (limited) scope of only one club team to include a brief survey, interviews, and focus groups with athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams across the levels of intramural, club, and NCAA. Looking back, my literature review includes the diverse experiences of athletes across competitive level, sport, race, age, and location. This variable of level may affect the degree to which and how an athlete feels compelled to perform (or not perform) femininity.

I recruited athletes to interview from a range of women's sports at Mason through pushing my survey (see Appendix A for Questionnaire) via flyers, and emailing a link out to coaches and contacts in the administrations of both Athletics and University Life (Student Affairs) to get as large a sample as possible. My survey was designed to help me draw as many of the different kinds of people who participate across the levels of women's sports on our campus into my study. In interviews (see Appendix B for Interview Guide) I asked more in-depth questions and follow-up probes around the themes I found in my literature review; sport participation and community/belonging, athletic identity, femininity, the lesbian stereotype, and masculinity. I combined interview/focus group data from a mixture of participants in women's sports across levels of institutional and financial support with my survey data and learned about the ways athletes in women's sports negotiate their gender identities and expressions. I planned for a sample that included athletes with diverse experiences of feeling like they belong (or not), race, sexuality, gender identity and fluidity, gender expressions, age, and interaction

with the university. In reality, my survey yielded only sixty-six respondents with little diversity. The questionnaire included an option for the athletes to identify a willingness to be interviewed, and from there I recruited interviewees to include a range of different experiences. Nineteen respondents gave their email addresses and fourteen responded to the follow-up emails I sent out trying to set a date for an interview, I had to work with the willing fourteen.

In terms of the interview process, I found a convenient time and location to meet face to face with each of the participants, individually. The interview began with an overview of the IRB consent form and a brief introduction to my research project/interests, with time for questions if the athletes had any. I proceeded through the semi-structured interviews, which I recorded, in a conversation style, using the questions in my interview guide (Appendix B) to cover the themes I found in the literature. The interviews ranged from fifteen minutes to one hundred minutes, lasting an average of fifty minutes.

I wanted to construct a sample that demonstrates experiences of athletes in women's sports and the dissonance/accord for the athlete's identities inside and outside of their "sport lives." The athletes whose questionnaire responses indicated discontinuity between their identities inside and outside of sport were of particular interest for the interviews, regardless of their gender or sexual identities. The data from the questionnaire were helpful to contextualize the interviewees' responses, to demonstrate that there can be athletes in women's sports and on women's sports teams who may feel comfortable with or may choose not to question any of the otherwise articulated identity boundaries.

After transcribing the interview recordings, I used a thematic coding approach to organize interview data. Knowledge of the literature helped to guide my thinking, but the themes emerged from the transcribed data I collected. As I am interested in how these athletes construct meaning, it only makes sense that their feelings and thoughts became the basis for my organization and interpretation of the data. After transcribing my interviews, I worked through the data several times in efforts to answer my research questions. I worked through the data line by line to look for broad concepts and meanings that emerged instead of applying existing ideas or issues. After identifying emergent themes, I went back through the data to reconnect and explore these themes further in an additional line by line reading. Here, Chafetz's ideas about hearing the voices of respondents but also still analyzing them were important to my process. I also performed a descriptive analysis on my questionnaire data to contextualize my interview data.

CHAPTER FOUR

The goal of this thesis project was to examine the gendered experiences of participants in women's sports at the university level. Both a questionnaire and qualitative interviews were used to answer questions about how these athletes make sense of and present their gendered selves, how they perceive being received on campus, and how their experiences provide insight into the university as a social institution. The sample lacked diversity in terms of athletic participation on campus but it may have been more representative of participation in club sports.

Descriptive Analysis

First I describe the demographic information given by all sixty-six survey respondents, as well as the variety of sports played and the amount of importance with which they regard their athletic identity.

Table 1-Class Status

First Year Students	Sophomores	Juniors	Seniors	Graduate Students
22.5%	21%	17%	28%	1.5%

Table 2-Semester Began at Mason

Fall 2010	Fall 2011	Fall 2012	Spring 2013	Fall 2013	Fall 2014
3%	21%	17%	3%	30%	26%

The most respondents reported playing a club sport (43) or an intramural sport (31), with only a few (3) NCAA athletes, though this question was check all that apply, so some athletes checked multiple sport levels. There was a total of seventeen different sports reported; Field Hockey, Softball, Women’s Rugby, Flag Football, Women’s Basketball, Trap & Skeet, Women’s Ultimate Frisbee, Quidditch, Coed Soccer, Coed Volleyball, Women’s Soccer, Coed Football, Coed Basketball, Women’s Volleyball, Taekwondo, Swimming, Tennis, Cycling, Equestrian, Futsol, and Women’s Track, with some of the sports being across the levels of NCAA/club/ intramural. Fifteen of the surveyed athletes played on more than one team, though the most played sport in the sample was Coed Soccer, with twelve respondents reporting participation.

In terms of Athletic Identity, respondents rated the importance of their athletic identity on a scale of 1-5; the mode and median answers were both 4 while the mean was a little lower at 3.62, meaning that most of the surveyed women’s sports participants identify moderately as athletes. Most of the respondents (78%) also reported being involved in an extracurricular activity outside of sport, with forty-eight respondents reporting forty-four different non-sport extra-curricular activities and eighteen (27%) answering that they did not participate in non-sport extra-curricular activities.

Table 3-Racial Diversity

White or European identified	67%
Black or African Heritage identified	10%
Latina/Latino/Latin@ identified	7%
Asian identified	6%
Multi- or Bi-racial identified	6%
Middle Eastern/ North African identified	1%
American Indian or Alaskan Native identified	1%
Italian American identified	1%
Callipygian identified	1%

All of the respondents identified as female, so with 67% of my sample as white females, it bears pointing out that I was unable to gather a representative sample in terms of the Mason community. Of the sixty-six respondents (82.6%) also identified as Straight or Heterosexual, making my sample particularly uniform.

Table 4- Sexual Orientation and Identity

Straight or Heterosexual	Gay or Lesbian	Queer or Fluid	Questioning	Bisexual or Pansexual	Asexual
82.6%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	3%	1.5%

While this sample turns out to be rather homogeneous and non-representative, it provides the opportunity to explore something very interesting—the degree of applicability of trans/gender/non-normative and non-binary theory to the lives of cisgender, white, and heterosexual women.

Gender Presentation

The participants of women's sports I interviewed made sense of and presented their gendered selves in many different ways but the majority of them spoke about their bodies, clothing choices, sexuality/sexual orientation, and everyday interactions with teammates, university peers, and family.

One common thread among many of the respondents was the articulation of their being something other than a “girly-girl”, as well as the observation that they do not typically like or get along with “those kinds of girls” themselves. One field-hockey player said, “I’ve never been a stereotypical girly-girl, my roommates want me to be, oh wear a dress or you should put on this skirt and I’m like no, I’m okay. I’d much rather be in sweatpants and a t-shirt, and I feel like when I do dress up, it’s like a big shock to everybody. They’re like oh you look like a girl today... as opposed to what? Like yes, I am a girl...” Whether she was wearing sweatpants or a dress, this interviewee still felt like herself and a girl, but the “shock” she received from friends, roommates, other girly-girls, annoyed her. Another multi-sport interviewee had this to say about friends and athletic identity, “No, see most of my friends are guys, cause that’s just who I get along with, like everyone I’ve dated or hang out with, they’re all athletes too, and I kind of feel like once you’re an athlete, that’s kind of all you hang out with.” For her, athletic

community is where she feels most at home, and guys in particular can provide that in her experience. Overall, the athletes demonstrated a deep attachment to other athletes rather than an athletic identity. One reason for this may be that the identity options proliferate in college.

In speaking about their athletic participation, many of the participants described themselves as sporty, an adjective they justified by either clothing or the amount of time one participates in outside/sport activities. Many of the athletes I interviewed talked about balancing multiple identities and alluded to picking the best one for the particular moment in time. “Colleen,” a four-year rugby player, talks about the way she is sporty most of the time but that she also can wear “more traditional girl attire” i.e. a miniskirt; “So like I can definitely like butch up, and play rugby, and make people question my motives, but I also like to be like, wear a miniskirt and go out, so it just depends on the day. But I’m definitely a sporty girl, like normally Nike shorts, a sweatshirt.” Another rugby player, “Jane,” demonstrates the way one’s athletic participation and conception of oneself can change over time, “When I was growing up I was the pale kid at the back of the class with allergies to grass and everything so outside/intense sports weren’t something I was really engaged with and that’s what I associated athletes with, you know, intense, going to games on weekends and everything, so I never really thought of myself as an athlete, since I was the kid that did gymnastics so she didn’t get sunburnt and have hives.” While it took a long time for this interviewee to think of herself as an athlete, she had long thought of herself as a “nerd.” Both “Colleen” and “Jane” had to balance their athletic identities with their gendered “girly-girl” or “nerd” identities. These

participants demonstrate a sense of a self not fixed, and the place-bound aspect of being Dalton Conley's (2009) modern "intravidual" with multiple selves for various locations.

Even in the previous quotes from the interviewees, clothing is a constant and clear way that they demonstrate and make sense of their gendered selves. Sexuality and its link to gender expression, especially in terms of clothing, was an additional way that the athletes spoke about their gendered lives, "Like, I'm just me, I don't identify like anything I guess, like I'm straight, whatever, I fucking love my Cosby sweaters, my argyle socks, my oxfords rolled up, you know. I don't associate what I wear with my identity kind of thing, I just wear what I want." While acknowledging that her gender expression might be more androgynous, or connected to lesbians in most peoples' minds, this participant decides that her comfort and her right to be herself are more important than what anyone else might think or assume. This is her way to distance herself from girls who focus too much on appearance. Polina, an ultimate Frisbee player, when asked about her gender expression, said "Um, I mean, I guess, I mean I'm definitely, I mean I'm more outwardly masculine sometimes, but I'm more comfortable, most of the time, being female, like that's fine, but you know, I am gay, so I feel like I have that kind of thing on it where everyone's like you wear pants and you know that kind of stuff." In her case, most people assumed she was gay and that worked for her, in a similar way to the previous straight-identifying and argyle sock-wearing athlete.

In terms of doing gender, sexuality and clothing are avenues through which gender marginalization and the subjugation of non-male people becomes evident. Gender expressed through clothing can also indicate sexual desire or preference. Clothing is often

made with this phenomenon of attraction in mind and sometimes the body does not fit in the clothing that best communicates such interest. One athlete went into detail about her experiences with clothes and her muscles,

The thing I do worry about though, is I don't know how guys look at like girls, like athletic girls, like my one guy friend, he likes to be a dick, like oh yea you're just so, I mean we're cool and stuff and I know he's just joking but he's like, you're just so muscular, girls aren't supposed to be muscular, they're supposed to be cute, you know smaller, like he's just like being a dick and I'm just like whatever. He's like yea I can't wait until you're done with sports so you don't have to lift all the time, and I'm like well, and we just kid. At the same time, I don't know if all guys think like that, or, just like whatever, I mean I don't know what guys are looking for like that.

Deanna's worry about the male gaze may seem silly, especially to those of us who are not straight, but it perfectly characterizes the struggle that people have when negotiating the identities of athlete and woman. Athletes are supposed to be strong—in body and will—and women are supposed to be feminine and dainty and yearning for the love and attention of men. A strong woman—of body and/or will—defies the prevailing gender conventions by her very existence, like the above quote where the participant's friend is poking fun at her muscles. Deanna also mentioned a friend of hers with a similar experience, "Yea, or even like typical college girl, like you know whatever, like we're athletes. It goes for any sport, like my friend on the volleyball team, she thinks she's too muscular, I mean she's tall and skinny and she thinks she's too muscular! And I'm like you look great, and she's like oh my muscles cause her arms are really toned, you know when their arms are really toned they think they look bad." It is problematic that some strong athletic women worry they might be too strong and too big to find anyone, instead of seeing themselves in a beautiful, powerful way. Joan Jacob Brumberg (1998) found that girls in contemporary times increasingly conceptualized the shape and appearance of

their bodies as their primary expression of individualized identity. Focus on the body, even the muscular body, is a very feminine thing, whether one rejects or embraces it.

Athlete On-Campus

The athletes I interviewed perceived being received on their campus in several different ways. The majority thought they were perceived less as athletes and more as women doing something weird and unwomanly—playing sports. Most of the club and intramural level athletes reported that not being a NCAA athlete made them feel like less than real athletes around campus. Lastly, several participants mentioned being regarded not as athletes themselves, but instead as something other, always in relation to the “real athlete.”

It is a reality that women have been playing sports for a long time. Yet, in contemporary Western culture, sporty women are often assessed for sexuality (lesbian question/assumption) or attractiveness by sports media and the general public. If you play certain sports, people make assumptions about your sexuality and/or gender, as told by Stacey, “Yup, people are judgmental, especially of female athletes, so. Like you could be the straightest person in the world and play softball, and automatically you’re put into oh you’re a lesbian, oh you’re manly, no that’s not it at all!” If a woman isn’t playing a sport associated with lesbianism, she may be the object of physical scrutiny, as “Colleen” notes about the relationship between women’s bodies, their sport playing abilities, and what matters in our culture, “I think female athletes take on a different persona, like people are always surprised and it’s still talked about, but your looks matter, like people always talk

about Hope Solo's really hot and that's all they really care about, but they don't talk about, granted, she's good at what she does, but I feel like in women's sports it's more about what you look like than how you play, unless you're really really really good at what you do." Participants in women's athletics have to balance these different expectations, assumptions, and personas as they navigate the world of sports, as well as the world outside of sports. While sports in general have not, in the literature as well as in the interview data so far, seemed to be totally welcoming to women as athletes, there are some sports and sites where women are particularly unwelcome, and these borders can be policed by anyone as told by this interviewee; "I know a lot of people are like you play rugby, that's a guy sport, girls shouldn't play that." However, it is important to note that these ideas of welcoming and unwelcoming speak to the general cultural climate, but not necessarily the specific teams. The teams are populated by women who live in the same cultural context and build community upon their shared sport activity and report a high level of in-group solidarity.

In co-recreational sports, women and men participate together. It is possible that some co-recreational sports could be club, like field hockey for example, but most of the interviewees reported intramural co-recreational experiences, where different teams are assembled from Mason students and play each other throughout a semester. Most of the club teams, like the NCAA teams, are sex-segregated and they compete against teams from other universities or colleges. It is interesting to see how all of the things we have seen in culture and that participants in sex-segregated "women's only" sports have experienced come together and collide. Many interviewees participated in co-recreational

sports and reported an array of experiences. Not getting included in the offensive attack or really enjoying working together as a team across genders in mixed gender groups, is how they spoke about having a sense of belonging. One interviewee in particular, who only participates in intramural co-recreational sports, talked about several negative experiences during her time at Mason. The rules regarding gender were also limiting, with special rules about a woman's goal counting for two points when man's goal would only count for one point. She said, "It's mostly been an issue of the co-ed thing, like there's always some person on the other team, typically male-identified I would say, because they feel like they're better than the women on the other team and like to tell me what to do, like to say the fouls were only because it was a girl, or things like that." She also talked about the experience of feeling pressure to attend, beyond that of the men on her team, because they had to have a certain number of girls in order to play the game at all. The fact that people on the other team used sexist remarks to belittle her team, it makes for an inhospitable if not hostile setting for any woman athlete who participates in co-recreational sports. Another interviewee had a strikingly different experience, preferring the excitement and big plays her flag football team could make because of the men with whom she played.

Whether intramural, club, NCAA, or co-recreational, sport experiences can vary widely within a university. Many interviewees reported that the lack of recognition they received as club or intramural athletes affected the way they thought of themselves as Mason athletes. "Stacey" heard from different NCAA athletes, "it's like oh you play a club sport, you're not a real athlete, I've heard that, but I've also heard from athletes, oh

you play club, that's awesome." Overwhelmingly, Stacey and other interviewees could separate the lack of recognition at the university and/or the comments from other athletes from their own pride in being an athlete in general (versus at Mason); more on the university in the next section.

This idea of the real athlete shows up in another way: identity work through conversations about race. Overwhelmingly my questionnaire sample and my interviewees were white or European identified, and while the real athlete is not a concept I will be developing, it is worth thinking about in relation to race. Our cultural context continues to be organized by racism, sexism, and white supremacy, leaving athletes in women's sports experiencing the effects of "differentiated and uneven power" Chun et al (2013). Conversations about what "black people do and why" have become commonplace for Deanna as one of few people of color on her large team. She said, "That's why I hate it when people are like oh they're like, they'll say something negative about black people, oh but you're not like that, or something like that, but you're not actually black, you're an Oreo, and that's offensive to me cause it's like, you're talking negatively like my race, but you don't act like that and Oreo means white, so are you saying that I'm acting like I'm higher kind of thing?" She noted that with some coaches, she was regarded as very talented but also was sometimes called out for laziness and pushed harder, in a seemingly arbitrary way that perhaps could be explained by race.

University as Social Institution

The experiences of athletes in women's sports/on women's sports teams provide insight into the university as a social institution in one major way: the idea of support/recognition, be it through finances, resources, or repute. Athletes at the club level had the most to say about this, but even an NCAA athlete mentioned her team not being on an equal level with the men's basketball team. Additionally, systems within the university, like the specific rules of intramural sports and the sex-classification required throughout the university's sports, serve to further characterize the university as a gendered institution.

The university, as an institution, operates no differently from other gendered institutions and when the club sport members mention the lack of recognition that goes along with their participation, it is symbolic. Fiona said,

But club is like, I play club because I wanted to get involved but it's also balancing time, I mean I'm here to get an education too, so club is just an added benefit, and intramural stuff too. But it's like, you don't get any recognition for being a club athlete, which I mean I'm fine with, but it's just a valid point.

This participant understands her position in the hierarchy and even rationalizes sport participation as a secondary priority for herself, but still finds it necessary to point out the lack of recognition. Another club participant said, "unfortunately, Mason doesn't seem to see the regular, you know student population, I mean athletes who play collegiately are recognized, but they don't really see club sports here as athletes, you don't get to wear the student-athlete shirt, you know stuff like that, basically it's just club sports and we're kind of a thing, so yea.... But I feel like an athlete, we put in hours and we come home with bruises, stuff like that, so I feel wonderful about it and I get to walk tall on campus,

knowing we're doing something wonderful for Mason." While these club athletes find and describe themselves as lower in status than the NCAA athletes, it is a reality that the reputations continue to vary within the category of NCAA sport.

While intramural athletes had similar experiences of enjoying their sport participation, even if everything was not always perfect, there are some things the university and its systems can control, the rules that reproduce double standards. Gertrude reminds us all of an important piece of our sexist and masculine-centered culture—that men are thought to be inherently superior to women—in one small sentence, “and then there's the rule that a girl goal counts as two.” In her experience in co-recreational intramural soccer, Gertrude experienced this double standard to which all universities are bound. Many intramural athletes who participated in the interviews still enjoyed their sport experiences even though they questioned the rules, which is not surprising because at the university there were few other avenues for them to play their sports.

A major point of distinction is between intramural and NCAA sport participation. One NCAA athlete spoke about high expectations even if the recognition and resources given are on the lower end of the spectrum; “If you want us to be so good, I mean if you want the basketball, I mean, everything's built around the basketball team, so it's how every athletics team basically feels. It's just like the basketball team gets treated like gods, I guess that's another thing, like we kind of want to be on the same level as them, I mean not on the same level, but their locker room's huge.” Furthermore, she noted that the university/contractors under the university's hire made mistakes in setting up her team's equipment and space that resulted in unsuitable training and competing areas. She

said, “So they messed up our throwing area, they had like, I don’t know who the people were but they messed up the circles and everything, it’s not legal, it’s crappy. People come to compete, it was so slippery, people were falling, it was horrible.” When equipment and field space are inadequate injuries occur, so whether the university intends it or not, there is the perception that prevention of injury may not be a priority, even for NCAA sport teams.

Lastly, another interviewee demonstrates the problematic nature of Mason’s policy of classifying people by sex, a practice not specific to Mason, but widely practiced at other universities. She worries for anyone coming out as transgender on their teams, “Yes, I would obviously be very supportive of them, I think I would worry about other people, like their reactions, how, I would also be worried about them having to redefine their identity within the team.” This institutional feature has never-ending ripple effects as students at the university are required to have a categorization of male or female in their student files that gets copied to their professors, the university recreation site, housing, etc. To change this categorization is hard work, even if purely within the banner system that the university uses to keep track of students, not to mention the pains of socially transitioning as the interviewee above mentions. If the systems we use at the university were not so reliant on the “M” or “F” to categorize all of us, it might be that socially transitioning would not matter as much as it does. It seems that using the categories to sex-segregate reifies the supposed differences between men and women.

In conclusion, my overwhelmingly white and female sample of respondents and interviewees had a variety of experiences in their sport participation. While they

moderately identified as athletes, they strongly identified as individuals who formed strong in-group ties to other athletes. The feminine-coded issue of the body and how it looks and is perceived continues to be present for all of my interviewees. While there is a distinction between the expectations of NCAA and club or intramural athletes, all of them were disappointed with the kind of institutional support they did receive.

CHAPTER FIVE

In this chapter, I will discuss the findings in relation to the literature review and recommendations and implications for theory, research, and practice.

Findings and Literature

A primary theme in this study has been the idea that interactions between individuals about bodies, clothing, and sexuality are indicative of culture. As Risman (2004) and West and Zimmerman (1987) note, there is great importance in the way gender is conducted and evaluated at the interactional level. Many interviewees demonstrated this point when they talked about intentional thinking and decisions about what to wear or how to act, the effect their sport participation would have on their relationships, and how sports were something they grew up being encouraged to do. Several athletes described themselves as “not girly” in their everyday lives, and said they choose to wear sweats and sneakers, but always added that they could be girly if they were going to go out and needed to wear a dress. While the participants in my study did not openly eschew lesbianism as the football players from Cox and Thompson’s (2000) study did, they found it necessary to differentiate themselves from the idea of being manly or a lesbian in many cases. The way the participants in my study did this differentiation was not as overtly hostile as the football players but the focus on femininity was still very clear.

A departure from the literature is, at least within women’s sports at this university and according to the athletes interviewed, is the consequence for defying previously

harder lines about what is okay to look like and do/be like for women. Cahn (1993) described in her history of the effect of the lesbian stereotype on sport, that the more mainstream the sport, the more isolating the experiences were for women. In the past twenty years, there is more acceptance for women to be lesbians, at least in groups of educated white women. Appearing more masculine overlaps with lesbianism but does not define it and vice-versa, and in more athletic contexts, appearing more masculine without talking about it has been more acceptable as well. Women have more freedom to depart from normative feminine behavior than at other periods in life. Ravel and Rail's (2006) interviewees had no problem with varying sexualities, but maintained a hierarchy of femininity where being butch was less than desired. All of my interviewees viewed lesbianism as something acceptable and many of them either identified as lesbian or said they would be not surprised if one of their teammates came out to them. Many reported feeling that if someone misread them as a lesbian, it was that person's problem and not theirs, which is very different from the witch hunts and culture of silence that Griffin (1998) remembers during her time as an athlete in the NCAA. This suggests less about the broader culture as more acceptable, but more that individuals and the interactions between individuals on teams have become more open and inclusive. The athletes I interviewed, like the participants in Ezzel (2009), Wright and Clarke (1999), and Finley (2010)'s studies, all redefined femininity for themselves, even if the athletes with whom I spoke did not refer to attributes traditionally thought of as feminine very positively. Femininity was another topic up for discussion in the interview data. Ezzel's (2009) rugby girls' updated version of emphasized femininity and Finley's (2010) derby girls'

alternate femininity are both similar to what I found there. Specifically, the interviewees used the words “not a girly-girl,” instead preferring a “sporty” athletic identity. They also, more than Ezzel and Finley’s subjects, spent time devaluing feminine traits or modes of communicating and/or deeming unappealing traits feminine, and separated themselves from those qualities and that kind of femininity.

My interviewees spoke about choosing comfort in most spaces, but also about the ease with which they could choose to dress up and be girly at the appropriate times in order to comply with gender constraints.

With perceived limits on their ability or how they should conduct themselves based on their sex, women often do not reach their full potential in sport/athletic ability. Sometimes, for this reason, women choose not to participate. Zieff (2009)’s research found that, from early on, girls perceive sports as being tied to excellence, often choosing not to participate if their ability is undeveloped or under-developed, and that perhaps, there was no room to develop skill. My interviewees spoke of ability and excellence in that, especially during high school and NCAA contexts, ability and excellence were expected in sport and in academics, and that, when they or peers were not excelling in a particular sport, that they might try a different one or even quit. Club and intramural athletes reported that these team environments were much less demanding and that there was room for everyone who wanted to play, though other issues were problematic.

Given this slippery slope, it is not surprising that many women, muscular or skinny, big or little, and fit or not, struggle with body image. Both Heywood and Dworkin (2003) and Roth and Basow (2004) expand on dominant ideas of how women

can be athletic in their work. Heywood and Dworkin theorized about the overlap in men and women's bodies and abilities. Roth and Basow focused on the idea of everyone unlearning the limits placed on women in terms of ability and what they should or should not do. It seems that concerns of body image are in direct conversation with these two texts. While no athlete should limit their muscular definition or ability in order to appease the male gaze, often female athletes feel like they have to do so because they would like to date men. Even if the idea that muscular women are undesirable to men becomes unlearned, the fear is still founded by years of practice. Wright and Clarke (1999) found that women who were manly or thought to be lesbians regardless of sexuality were dismissed and silenced.

Stratification and the continued insistence upon sex-segregation in sports is one of the symptoms of the university functioning as a gendered institution. Institutional support and recognition were major themes in the interviews, and Hattery and Smith (2007)'s research on resources speaks the most directly to that point. With differences across funding for club and NCAA sports, men and women's sports, the university clearly communicates value for those athletes who play fringe or women's sports.

Recommendations and Implications for Theory, Research, and Practice

Firstly, it is important to note that the sample, while I intended for the sample to be both diverse and representative of the university, it was not. The samples for both the questionnaire and the interviews were primarily female-identified, white-identified, and heterosexual-identified club athletes, though I had planned on a larger scope that would include people of color and people of diverse sexual and gender identities and

expressions. The homogenous samples limit my ability to generalize wider, but the methodology and findings could be used to construct a larger study that could be accessed by more potential respondents. With proper sponsors in Athletics and other academic departments and by offering incentives for participation beyond knowing that they are helping out a fellow student, a study like the one I have designed and executed could garner more generalizable findings.

Secondly, it is my hope that this study helps to open doorways for other researchers to be more trans*-inclusive in future studies, though I happened to have only cisgender women take my survey. Language remains important, and cisgender women or not, the participants in the interviews varied widely in gender expression and worked to care little about what other people thought they looked like, as long as they were comfortable or decided they looked good themselves. West and Zimmerman (1987)'s accountability system has been transformed to allow less fixity, as the consequences for defying gendered expectations become milder. Participants in my interviews talked about choosing to be, wear, and look however they wanted, but also stressed that others should do so as well. My participants may be confined to the college setting for now but as they grow older and go out into the world, this type of individualism will become more common. I predict that more people, whether they identify specifically as gender nonconforming or not, will reflect a wider range of gender expressions, because it just might be easier to do so now. My project has explored only the beginning of how gender expression, sexuality, and sport participation overlap, there is certainly more to learn in future research.

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

- I. My sport is _____
- II. Please check the appropriate classification for your team and write in the sport you play
 - a. I play an intramural sport
 - b. I play a club sport
 - c. I play a NCAA sport
- III. How important is your identity as an athlete to you? Likert scale (Least 1-5 Most)
 - a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
 - e. 5
- IV. Please check all that apply for your racial and/or ethnic identities
 - a. I identify as Black or African Heritage
 - b. I identify as White or White European
 - c. I identify as Latina/Latino/Latin@ or Hispanic
 - d. I identify as Asian
 - e. I identify as White or Middle Eastern/ North African
 - f. I identify as Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander

- g. I identify as American Indian or Alaskan Native
 - h. I identify as Multi or Bi-racial
 - i. I identify as _____
- V. What student status do you have at Mason?
- a. (Traditional) First Year Student
 - b. Sophomore
 - c. Junior
 - d. Senior
 - e. Graduate Student
- VI. What was the first semester you began at Mason?
- _____
- VII. Are you involved with any extracurricular activities or student groups at Mason?
- If so, which ones (below)?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
- VIII. Please list any extracurricular activities or student groups you are involved with at Mason
- IX. What sex were you assigned at birth?
- a. Female
 - b. Male
 - c. Intersex
- X. Please check all that apply for your gender identity

- a. I identify as female
- b. I identify as male
- c. I identify as trans* or gender non-conforming
- d. I identify as _____

XI. Please check all that apply for your sexual orientation/identity

- a. I identify as gay or lesbian
- b. I identify as bisexual or pansexual
- c. I identify as queer or fluid
- d. I identify as questioning
- e. I identify as asexual
- f. I identify as _____

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide

I. Gender & Sport

- a. How did you first get interested in sports?
- b. Why did you stick with it?
- c. What did you learn about being an athlete when you were growing up?
- d. What did you learn about female athletes from watching and playing sports?

II. Sport Participation and Community (Belonging)

- a. How long have you been playing which sports?
- b. Which one(s) do you still play and which ones have you left behind?
- c. Why?
- d. Has your gender ever made you stop or start playing a particular sport?
- e. How do you know what a good or bad team is?
- f. Why do you play? What are your positive and negative experiences of sports?
- g. What is your best or worst experience playing women's sports? What about at the university?
- h. Outside of sports, what are you passionate about?

III. Athletic Identity

- a. How do you feel about being an athlete at Mason?

- b. How do you feel about your teammates and competitors?
- c. What would happen if you weren't an athlete or on a team anymore?
- d. What do you think your friends and family think about you being on a team?

IV. Lesbian Stereotype/Femininity and Masculinity

- a. How do you describe your gender expression?
- b. What worries you about being an athlete/being on a women's team?
- c. Generally and at Mason?
- d. How do you feel when a teammate comes out as LGBTQ on your team?
- e. How do you/would you feel about having a male coach? What about a lesbian coach? A black coach?

REFERENCES

- Acker, Joan. 1992. "From Sex Roles to Gendered Institutions." *Contemporary Sociology* 21: 5.
- Acosta, R. Vivian, and Linda Jean Carpenter. 1991. "Women in Intercollegiate Sport: A Longitudinal Study—Thirteen Year Update 1977-1990." *Feminist Teacher*. 6(1). University of Illinois Press.
- Acosta, R. Vivian, and Linda Jean Carpenter. 2012. "Are We There Yet?" *Academe*. 95(4). American Association of University Professors.
- Bem, Sandra Lipsetz. 1995. "Dismantling Gender Polarization and Compulsory Heterosexuality: Should We Turn the Volume Down or Up?" *The Journal of Sex Research* 32: 329-334.
- Brumberg, Joan Jacob. 1998. The Body Project. Vintage.
- Butler, Judith. 1990. Gender Trouble. Routledge.
- Cahn, Susan K. 1993. "From the "Muscle Moll" to the "Butch" Ballplayer: Mannishness, Lesbianism, and Homophobia in U.S. Women's Sport." *Feminist Studies* 19:2.
- Chafetz, Janet Saltzman. 2004. "Bridging Feminist Theory and Research Methodology." *Journal of Family Issues* 25: 963-977.
- Chun, Jennifer Jihye et al. 2013. "Intersectionality as a Social Movement Strategy: Asian Immigrant Women Advocates." *Signs* 38: 4. 917-940.
- Collins, Patricia Hill. 1990. *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment*. London: Harper Collins. Chapter 11.
- Conley, Dalton. 2009. Elsewhere, U.S.A.: How We Got from the Company Man, Family Dinners, and the Affluent Society to the Home office, BlackBerry Moms, and Economic Anxiety. Pantheon Books. 156-171.
- Connell, Catherine. 2010. "Doing, Undoing, or Redoing Gender? Learning from the Workplace Experiences of Transpeople." *Gender & Society* 24: 31-55.
- Connell, Raewyn. 2009. *Gender: In World Perspective. Second Edition*. Malden, MA: Polity.

- Connell, R. W. and James W. Messerschmidt. 2005. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender & Society* 19: 6.
- Cox, Barbara and Shona Thompson. 2000. "Multiple Bodies: Sportswomen, Soccer and Sexuality." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 35:5.
- Elling, Agnes and Jan Janssens. 2009. "Sexuality as a Structural Principle in Sport Participation: Negotiating Sports Spaces" *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. 4(1).
- Elling, A. de Knop, P. and Knoppers, A. 2003 "Gay/Lesbian Sport Clubs and Events. Places of Homo-Social Bonding and Cultural Resistance?" *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*.
- Ezzel, Matthew B. 2009. "'Barbie Dolls' on the Pitch: Identity Work, Defensive Othering and Inequality in Women's Rugby." *Social Problems* 56(1).
- Finley, Nancy J. 2010. "Skating Femininity: Gender Maneuvering in Women's Roller Derby." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography* 39: 359.
- Griffin, Pat. 1998. Strong women, deep closets: lesbians and homophobia in sport. Human Kinetics.
- Griffin, Pat. 2012. "'Ain't I a Woman?': Transgender and Intersex Student Athletes in Women's Collegiate Sports." Transfeminist Perspectives in and beyond Transgender and Gender Studies.
- Hamilton, Laura. 2007. "Trading on Heterosexuality: College Women's Gender Strategies and Homophobia." *Gender & Society* 21:145.
- Hattery, Angela and Earl Smith. 2007. "They Play Like Girls: Gender Equity in NCAA Sports." *Journal for the Study of Sports and Athletes in Education* 1(3).
- Hattery, Angela. 2012. "They Play Like Girls: Gender and Race (In)Equity in NCAA Sports." 2(1). *Wake Forest Journal of Law & Policy*.
- Herek, Gregory. 1988. "Heterosexuals' Attitudes toward Lesbians and Gay Men Correlates and Gender Differences." *The Journal of Sex Research*. 25 (4).
- Heywood, Leslie, and Dworkin, Shari. 2003. Built to Win: The Female Athlete as Cultural Icon. University of Minnesota Press.

- McKay, J., & Martin, R. 2001. "Courting Lesbianism." In Miller, T. (Ed.), Sportsex. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.
- Mennesson, Christine. 2000. "'Hard' Women and 'Soft' Women: The Social Construction of Identities among Female Boxers." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 35: 21.
- Messner, Michael A. 2002. Taking the Field: Women, Men, and Sports. University of Minnesota Press.
- Pelak, Cynthia Fabrizio. 2002. "Women's Collective Identity Formation in Sports : A Case Study from Women's Ice Hockey." *Gender & Society* 16: 93.
- Rankin, Sue et al. 2011. *Student-Athlete Climate Study (SACS) Final Report*. The Pennsylvania State University. *NCAA Inclusion*.
- Ravel, Barbara and Geneviève Rail. 2006. "The Lightness Of Being `Gaie' : Discursive Constructions of Gender and Sexuality in Quebec Women's Sport." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 41: 395.
- Risman, Barbara. 2004. "Gender as Social Structure: Theory Wrestling with Activism." *Gender & Society* 18: 429-450.
- Roth, Amanda and Susan A. Basow. 2004. "Femininity, Sports, and Feminism : Developing a Theory of Physical Liberation." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues* 28: 245.
- Spade, Dean. 2008. "Fighting to Win." That's Revolting! queer strategies for resisting assimilation. Brooklyn : Soft Skull Press : Distributed by Publishers Group West.31-37.
- Theberge, Nancy. 1993. "The Construction of Gender in Sport: Women, Coaching, and the Naturalization of Difference." *Social Problems*. 40(3). University of California Press.
- Thorpe, Holly. 2008. "Technologies of Self, and the Media: Discourses of Femininity in Snowboarding Culture." *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*. 32(199). Sage Publications.
- Walseth, K. 2006. "Sport and Belonging." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*.
- West, Candace and Don H. Zimmerman. 1987. "Doing Gender." *Gender & Society* 1: 125-151.

- Wright, Jan and Gill Clarke. 1999. "Sport, The Media and The Construction of Compulsory Heterosexuality: A Case Study of Women's Rugby Union." *International Review for the Sociology of Sport* 34: 227.
- Zieff, Susan G. 2009. "GirlSpeak: Adolescent Females Talk about Their Athletic Identities." In Fuller, Linda (Ed.), Sport, Rhetoric, and Gender : Historical Perspectives and Media Representations.

BIOGRAPHY

LuLu Géza graduated from Mount Mansfield Union High School, Jericho, Vermont, in 2007. They received their Bachelor of Arts from George Mason University in 2011.