Within the last two decades, the field of sport sociology has witnessed an explosion of work focusing on gender and sport. This work has evolved from an initial stage of analysis that produced numerous descriptive studies of women’s participation patterns and their lack of access to various resources—what Ann Hall has referred to as the “add women and stir” phase—to an increasingly sophisticated feminist analysis in which relational issues of power and domination between women and men have become the primary focus (Andrews, 1993; Birrell, 1988; Hall, 1987; Whitson, 1990). This latter body of knowledge has produced an impressive critique on the fundamental role sport plays in producing and maintaining patriarchal ideologies and arrangements with respect to gender. At the heart of this critique is the notion of biological determinism whereby all human beings are assumed to fit, by nature, into unambiguous and oppositional bipolar categories of “female” and “male” (Frye, 1983; Kessler & McKenna, 1978). Within this biology-is-destiny paradigm, the apparent given-by-nature dichotomous category of gender forces a polarization between the sexes that ignores overlap; differences are systematically emphasized whereas similarities are ignored (Davis & Delano, 1992).

Many feminist scholars have challenged the notion of biological reductionism and the dualism it produces by showing how there are no natural categories of male and female; our conceptions of “woman” and “man” are never separate from larger social relations (Bartky, 1988; Haraway, 1978). And, as we have recently learned, there is a “constant, complex and often unrecognizable interaction between biology and culture” (Hall, 1990, p. 224) in which human bodies are manipulated and socially constituted (Davis & Delano, 1992; Epstein, 1990). The net result of this analysis is that gender is seen not as the natural outcome of a biological imperative but as the product of a patriarchal social construction.

Relying heavily on this analysis, sport sociologists have delineated how sport becomes an ideal setting for reinforcing fundamental assumptions underlying biological reductionism. For example, they have analyzed in great detail how sport establishes and articulates the “assumption that there are two, and only two, obviously universal, bipolar, mutually exclusive sexes
that necessarily correspond to stable gender identity and gendered behavior" (Birrell & Cole, 1990, p. 3). They have also demonstrated not only how sport produces a logic of differentiation between the sexes, but how it constructs and vigilantly maintains gender difference as (a) hierarchically ordered and (b) grounded in the physical body and thus perceived as biologically, inherently based (Birrell & Cole, 1990; Hargreaves, 1994; Kane & Greendorfer, 1994; Messner, 1990; Theberge, 1991).

Finally, embedded in the larger social debate surrounding biological reductionism versus social constructionism, sport sociologists have illustrated why the connection between sport and gender is a particularly powerful tool for hegemonic masculinity. Messner (1988) and others have argued that, during a time period when other symbols and institutions of male supremacy are faltering, sport can provide incontrovertible evidence of male superiority. This is because sport is preoccupied with measurable physical differences between the sexes in which heights, scores, and distances are obsessively recorded and compared (Bryson, 1990). These differences provide daily, commonsense, apparent empirical proof that men are naturally superior to women (Kane & Snyder, 1989; Kidd, 1990). Willis (1982) makes this point most cogently when he states, 

"Sport and biological beliefs about gender difference combine into one of the few privileged areas where we seem to be dealing with unmediated "reality," where we know "what's what" without having to listen to the involved, self-serving analyses of theorists, analysts, political groups, etc. Running faster, jumping higher, throwing further [sic] can be seen—not interpreted." (p. 117)

As numerous authors have pointed out, constructions of male superiority in sport are particularly effective because any set of beliefs that can claim a biological basis is more readily seen as immutable and therefore impervious to challenge (Birrell & Cole, 1990; Bryson, 1990; Kane & Disch, 1993).

Despite systematic efforts to create sport as an (if not the) exemplar of inherent male supremacy, Whitson (1990) cautions us to remember how much effort, time, and institutional support get invested in men's athletics and also how much urgency is attached to sport as a masculinizing practice: "What such effort and concern immediately belie is any notion of biological destiny. If boys simply grew into men and that was that, the efforts described to teach boys how to be men would be redundant" (p. 22). Because sport is an ideological construct rather than an inherent given, it must be reinforced continually and systematically. It also undergoes constant challenge because dominant ideologies are
never uncontested, never “one simple, seamless sheet of ideology” (Clarke & Clarke, 1982, p. 68). Hargreaves (1986, 1994) supports this notion and further argues that sport is a site of cultural struggle in which male hegemony is dependent on the continual reproduction of unequal power relations between women and men. This struggle is never complete; it is in a constant state of flux and negotiation between dominant and subordinate groups.

**POINT OF DEPARTURE**

It is this sense of negotiation, challenge, and struggle that has led a number of authors to analyze sport as a site of resistance to and transformation of ideologies and practices of domination and oppression (Birrell & Richter, 1987; Bryson, 1990; Lenskyj, 1994; Theberge, 1991). Many of these authors have explicitly outlined the previously mentioned effects of sport as a socially constructed, mutually exclusive binary and have eloquently analyzed why patriarchal ideologies and institutional structures embedded in sport are so concerned with emphasizing sexual difference. Bryson (1990) has pointed out that women who are defined as being incapable of equaling men in sport are, by logical extension, seen as less capable within wider social arrangements. Although I do not take issue with the feminist analysis outlined previously, the point of departure for this essay is to argue that scholars have not adequately addressed a significant aspect of sport that, if acknowledged and analyzed, could pose a serious threat to patriarchal conceptions of sport. In spite of all efforts to the contrary, there exists today a sport continuum in which many women routinely outperform many men and, in some cases, women outperform most—if not all—men in a variety of sports and physical skills/activities. The acknowledgment of such a continuum could provide a direct assault on traditional beliefs about sport—and gender itself—as an inherent, oppositional binary that is grounded in biological difference. In short, an awareness of sport as a continuum of physical, athletic competence could serve as an important vehicle for resistance and transformation.

In the remainder of this article, I examine major strategies in the resistance/transformation literature that call for social change both within and outside mainstream sport. I suggest that, particularly in those strategies located within current sport structures, there is a subtle (although unintended) tendency to reinforce stereotypic notions of binary gender logic. As part of this discussion, I argue that the sport continuum can offer an additional strategy of resistance and transformation. One significant aspect of this argument is that an
analysis of sport as a continuum moves us away from reinforcing commonly held assumptions about “women’s sports” and “men’s sports.” I then discuss a related body of knowledge that also perpetuates dualistic thinking: the “muscle-gap” literature in which women’s apparent inferior athletic performances are explained and defended as an outcome of patriarchal ideologies and practices. In the subsequent section of the essay, I shift my focus away from a critique of sport scholarship to a larger cultural analysis and attempt to categorize what others, including myself, have only hinted at—specific mechanisms of counterresistance that create beliefs in and practices about the binary while simultaneously suppressing evidence of a sport continuum. I conclude the article by examining some conceptual problems related to the implementation of a sport continuum and by outlining specific benefits that may occur if such a continuum were exposed in any significant way.

SPORT AS A SITE OF RESISTANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

Theberge was one of the first sport sociologists to argue that sport can serve as a site for transformation and liberation for women as well as simply (or only) being an area of oppression. Relying on feminist theorists such as Catherine MacKinnon, Theberge (1986) outlined the connections among sport, gender, physicality, and sexuality and stated that sport, as a potential site of liberation, “stems mainly from the opportunity that women’s sporting activity affords them to experience their bodies as strong and powerful and free from male domination” (pp. 201-202). Many authors, including Theberge, have also shown how this potential is subverted through a variety of practices that trivialize and marginalize women’s sport experience. These practices can range from stereotypic media portrayals (Duncan, 1993; Duncan & Messner, 1994; Kane & Greendorfer, 1994; Lumpkin & Williams, 1991) to the sexualization and commodification of women’s bodies in the fitness industry (Birrell & Cole, 1990; MacNeill, 1988; Theberge, 1991), to the loss of leadership and governance positions in women’s athletics (Acosta & Carpenter, 1988; Lovett & Lowry, 1994; Stangl & Kane, 1991).

Perhaps because we have seen how women’s counterhegemonic sporting practices are co-opted and contained, much of the discussion regarding sport as a site of resistance and transformation has focused on two major strategies for change: (a) a more liberal approach that suggests strategies of resistance/transformation within current sport structures and (b) a more radical approach outside mainstream sports that attempts to alter the values, practices, and
structures embedded in patriarchal sport forms. Within the liberal approach, there have been two dominant themes. First is the suggestion that we expand the definition of sport to include a wider range of sporting activities. A second suggestion is that we elevate in status those sports, physical skills, and attributes traditionally associated with females. Bryson (1990) argued that to be effective when challenging hegemonic sporting practices, we need to change current patriarchal definitions of what it means to be an athlete. This could happen by expanding physical qualities and attributes currently admired as skillful to include, for example, rhythm and grace. Similarly, Whitson has called for sports outside the traditional male pantheon (e.g., running, swimming, wilderness activities, and skateboarding) to be elevated in status and thus create wider opportunities for the development of skill, strength, and a sense of empowerment.

Within the more radical approach, there have also been two major themes or areas of analysis. The first involves pockets of resistance outside the sport mainstream in activities such as bodybuilding, whereas the second focuses on activities occurring beyond the boundaries of patriarchal sport models—the creation of alternative sport forms. In the former instance, Schulze (1990) has shown how women bodybuilders offer the potential for radically altering, or at least displacing, conventional arrangements of sexuality and gender. At the same time, however, her analysis of popular press media accounts of female bodybuilders makes it clear how this potential is co-opted: Women bodybuilders are routinely characterized as heterosexual females whose highly developed musculature is marked as [hetero]sexually appealing and feminine. Similarly, Miller and Penz (1991) analyze ways in which women bodybuilders contest patriarchal and phallocentric readings of their bodies. But the authors also acknowledge that when women do so, they encounter great hostility and resistance because “all such efforts to poach upon gendered terrain involve a challenge to the prevailing distribution of power” (p. 149).

A number of scholars have discussed the creation of alternative sport forms as a means of resistance and transformation. Theberge (1991) has suggested developing alternative models of women’s sports that are closely linked with a “feminist vision of power” (p. 129)—one that includes a sense of community and empowerment rather than current patriarchal models that subjugate women. Two examples of this strategy involve women’s softball. Drawing on feminist theory, interactionist principles, and a cultural studies
approach, Birrell and Richter (1987) interviewed feminist athletes participating in a summer recreational league. Reflecting on the relationship these women saw between their feminist consciousness and the practice of sport, they rejected the values embedded in men's sports—an overemphasis on winning, hierarchy, elitism, exclusivity (e.g., heterosexism), disparagement of opponents, and an ethic of endangerment. They opted instead for a "form of softball which is process oriented, collective, inclusive, supportive, and infused with an ethic of care" (p. 395). In a similar vein, Lenskyj (1994) pointed out that lesbian sporting leagues organized around feminist principles can serve as examples of alternative sport forms. The feminist principles adopted by these leagues can include issues of safety, cooperation, shared decision making, and collectivity. In this model, enjoyment and friendship become the priorities and, because it is a league organized by and for lesbians, "there is opportunity for open celebration of female physicality and sexuality" (p. 369).

The multiplicity of strategies outlined here has made an invaluable contribution to our understanding of and critical challenges to patriarchal constructions of sport and gender. However, the acknowledgment of a sport continuum could serve as an additional strategy of resistance and transformation in ways not previously addressed in the literature. First, a continuum of athletic performance refers to all types of sports (including many popular, prestigious sports), not just to those activities that are marginalized (e.g., bodybuilding) or outside the mainstream altogether (e.g., alternative sport forms). A major advantage of exposing and analyzing sport as a continuum is that it has direct relevance to the millions of women and men who participate in more mainstream sports and physical activities, not just to those individuals interested in creating alternative sport models or to those engaging in more marginalized activities.3

A second reason why the acknowledgment of such a continuum could be a powerful vehicle for resistance is that it, by definition, recognizes women's achievements in sports traditionally identified as male. One limitation of previous strategies, particularly those that can be placed in more liberal perspectives, is the unintended implication that there are two kinds of sport (women's and men's) and that women cannot compete adequately with men in those sports that "matter most"—those traditionally associated with men. I say this because when we call for strategies that would expand the definition of sport, or when we suggest elevating certain "women's" sports (e.g., gymnastics) to the same level of
male-identified sports such as basketball, we may actually reinforce conceptions of sport as a bipolar activity divided along gender lines. At the very least, this approach can give credence to the popularly held assumption that women are not able to excel in those sports traditionally associated with men. Recall that earlier in the article, I referred to a strategy outlined by Whitson (1990), who suggested elevating sports such as running and swimming to create new opportunities for the development of strength and skill. Even though I applaud such efforts, I am nevertheless concerned about how they might be interpreted. For example, Whitson (1990) himself states that promoting such sports/activities is important because “the demonstrable achievements of women in such sports... have helped to weaken the popular association between sport and masculinity” (p. 28; emphasis added). He takes this position because these “opportunities are open to people who do not typically shine in confrontational team games, to smaller men, and to women” (p. 28; emphasis added). It is interesting to note that he fails to include women’s achievements in traditionally male-identified, team-oriented, confrontational sports such as basketball. To do so would clearly pose a much greater threat to connections between sport and masculinity than would emphasizing women’s achievements as runners and swimmers.

Analyzing sport as a continuum does not (inadvertently or otherwise) contribute to conceptions of sport as an oppositional binary. Nor does it imply that women can successfully compete with men in some sports but not in others. What a sport continuum does suggest is something far more threatening: It provides empirical evidence that many women can outperform many men in sports such as basketball and baseball and also that they can possess physical attributes such as strength and speed in greater capacities than do many men.

THE GAP IN THE “MUSCLE-GAP” LITERATURE

I have been arguing that within the resistance/transformation literature there are some strategies that may subtly reinforce beliefs about sport as an oppositional binary. In this section, I explore how discussions in a related literature—one that involves an analysis of the muscle gap—can also perpetuate conceptions of sport (and gender) as mutually exclusive, hierarchical binaries. Consistent with my argument regarding the resistance/transformation literature, I suggest that, by focusing on sport as a continuum, we can avoid such tendencies.

Given the previously outlined connections among sport, gender, and relational issues of power, it
seems safe to assert that if men are to keep their privileged positions, sport must be maintained as a taken-for-granted binary. One effective way this is accomplished is through repeated references to an age-old biology-is-destiny theme—the muscle gap. This ideological construct refers to the degree of difference that exists when comparing women’s and men’s performances in the same sport or physical activity. Sport sociologists have examined ways in which popular assumptions about the muscle gap have been used to disadvantage female athletes. For example, Hall (1990) and Bryson (1990) have shown how superior athleticism is defined in ways that privilege physical skills and social attributes traditionally associated with men. This in turn lays the foundation for the relentless onslaught of gender (i.e., muscle-gap) comparisons in which females are systematically shown to be inherently inferior athletes (Birrell & Cole, 1990; Messner, 1988; Nelson, 1994).

Although it is true that sport sociologists have demonstrated, quite correctly, the oppressive impact of the so-called muscle gap, they have at the same time reinforced this same ideology. Throughout much of our literature, discussions of the muscle gap have frequently focused on explaining and defending performance differences between women and men as predictable outcomes of hegemonic masculinity. Although I think it is perfectly logical to use such an approach given patriarchal constructions of sport and gender, I nevertheless suggest that the discourse we have used to explain these differences can perpetuate (albeit unwittingly) the very notions we argue so forcefully against. This is because when we explain muscle-gap comparisons, we typically focus our analysis on performance differences between men and women, as in the average female versus the average male or the best female versus the best male. This has the effect of reconfirming gender as two distinct, separate categories and, at the same time, tends to obscure any discussion of sport as a continuum in which there is a range of performance differences among individual females and males. In short, the problem with making these kinds of comparisons—the archetypal male versus the archetypal female—is that we start from the assumption that there is only one comparison to make, only one muscle gap versus many muscle gaps.

A classic illustration of how this process works comes from Willis’s 1982 article on sport, gender, and ideology. Willis was one of the first scholars to analyze how physical differences between women and men—muscle-gap comparisons—are used to buttress the notion of male supremacy as an inherent, taken-for-granted fact rather than a socially constructed
ideology. As he argued so insightfully, men running faster, jumping higher, and throwing farther can be seen as real, as empirical fact, not as something that is interpreted for a particular (i.e., men's) agenda. Willis further argued that researchers have contributed to a misuse of muscle-gap ideology because we have (a) tried to explain where gender differences come from (i.e., show how culturally constructed definitions of athleticism advantage males); (b) encouraged women to close the gap, thus justifying and giving credence to it; and (c) pointed out how the so-called gap may be much less than is popularly suggested. Willis states that when we engage in such practices, we needlessly accept and dignify the terms of the ideological constructions of male superiority. Although I do not disagree with his position here, ironically, Willis's own analysis of the muscle gap falls into the very trap he so persuasively argues against. Willis begins his argument by acknowledging that he accepts that there are performance differences between women and men and that "cultural factors may well enlarge the gap" (p. 120). However, he is most interested in how this gap is interpreted, "taken up into the popular consciousness of our society" (p. 120). Reinforcing this line of thought throughout the article, he states that even though "biological difference is incontroversible," the key to a sociocultural analysis of sport is to "ask why some differences, and not others, are taken as so important, become so exaggerated, are used to buttress social attitudes or prejudice" (p. 120). What Willis is essentially arguing is that women are inherently different from men—the biological evidence is incontroversible. And even though he says quite clearly that he is most interested in how this evidence is used against women (i.e., why there is such colossal social interest in it), he nevertheless continues to stress the point that females are biologically different from men: “The fact that no one can deny female difference becomes the fact of female sports inferiority, becomes the fact that females are innately different from men” (p. 130; emphasis added).

I would like to make two points regarding this analysis. First, although well intentioned, Willis reinforces conceptions of gender as a binary that is hierarchically ordered by “othering” the female; he implies that males are the biological norm against which women are compared and subsequently seen as different. Second, he contributes to notions of gender as an oppositional binary when he limits his analysis to only one kind of gender comparison, only one muscle gap. This is revealed when he talks about how the muscle gap is enlarged by cultural variables. How ironic that Willis directs us to pay attention to which difference is being emphasized over others when
he himself emphasizes gender differences in which men outperform women. Imagine instead recasting Willis’s analysis of the muscle gap to focus on sport as a continuum. If this were the case, the muscle gap would not only refer to comparisons between elite men and women or to the average male versus the average female; it would also refer to a range of performance differences among numerous women and men—to many muscle gaps. And if this were the case, gender comparisons would include those muscle gaps in which women outperform men, even in sports and physical skills that have been appropriated by males.

As we can see, acknowledging sport as a continuum offers enormous potential for radically displacing the binary. Let us return to Willis’s often-quoted phrase regarding sport and gender difference and how that difference becomes part of a commonsense reality that is used to oppress women: “[Men] running faster, jumping higher, throwing farther can be seen—not interpreted” (p. 117). I would argue that if Willis had viewed sport as a continuum, he would also have pointed out that it is only men who are seen jumping higher, running faster, and throwing farther. Sport, exposed as a continuum, would allow us to see many women running faster, jumping higher, and throwing farther than many men. This is precisely why we are never allowed to witness women performing in this manner.

An analysis of the muscle gap that is framed primarily around gender comparisons that privilege males is not confined to Willis. A more recent example is offered by Messner in his 1988 groundbreaking article on the female athlete as contested terrain. Although Messner clearly acknowledges ways in which the muscle gap has been used against women, he nevertheless tends to rely on a biology-is-destiny analysis in explaining why female athletes are severely disadvantaged when competing against men, particularly at elite levels: “Despite considerable overlap, the average male is about five inches taller than the average woman. Can women really hope to compete at the highest levels with men in basketball and volleyball?” (p. 206; emphasis added).

There are a number of problems with this analysis. First, Messner begins his discussion of performance differentials between women and men by focusing on difference as an average. This in and of itself reinforces conceptions of gender as an oppositional dichotomy because it once again frames the argument around archetypal males and females. By emphasizing comparisons based on an average difference, Messner limits any discussion of a range of performance differences among males and females. This obscures a
highly salient point: Although it may be the case that males, as a class, tend to have an advantage in strength and size over women, as a class, it is equally true that the "range of difference among individuals in both sexes is greater than the average difference between the sexes" (Rathe, 1994, p. 10).

A second problem with Messner's muscle-gap analysis is that even if we were to confine our comparisons to elite athletes and to elite sports in which men have historically been privileged, are we to believe that it is biology that should be framing the discussion? What about centuries of neglect, stigmatization, and hostility that have prevented women from reaching their full potential in all sports but particularly in those sports that have been most appropriated by men? Third, if performance were simply, or even primarily, about physical difference in, for example, size and strength, then smaller, weaker men would never (or rarely) outperform bigger, stronger men. This is obviously not the case. As we are well aware, athletic performance is not primarily a result of physical difference; factors such as coaching, training, discipline, strategy, and mental toughness come into play.² Fourth, even if performance were primarily about biology, and even if, as Messner pointed out, the major sports are organized around the most extreme possibilities of the male body, it is nevertheless the case that many women are bigger, faster, and stronger than many men. Are we really to believe, for example, that no female basketball player anywhere on earth, if given the opportunity, training, and support, could not outperform any NBA player? Although, given current conditions, it is certainly the case that most elite male athletes can beat most elite female athletes in sports that privilege men, it does not automatically follow that every elite male can outperform every elite female in these same sports. Yet this is precisely what we are trained to believe because it is one of the cornerstones of the oppositional binary. And it is because of this socially constructed and rigidly maintained sport structure that females are truly at a disadvantage in sports, not because of biology.

One final way the binary has been reinforced using muscle-gap ideology is when authors challenge the notion of a biological imperative yet support their argument by relying on examples that do not threaten men's privileged position. Bryson (1990) points out that women often collude with patriarchal notions of sport by accepting the biological explanation offered for their so-called inferior performances "even when there is no face validity for such explanations, as with darts and billiards" (p. 175; emphasis added). The problem with using these
examples is that they do not offer a direct challenge to a fundamental assumption underlying the muscle gap: that men are, by definition, inherently superior in the sports that matter most—those that require physical size and power, those that require intimidating and overpowering one's opponent through the use of physical force. It is not terribly threatening to think about women competing equally in activities such as darts and billiards. They are, after all, not even considered sports. Similarly, emphasizing women's accomplishments in sports such as running and swimming does not seriously disrupt notions of the binary because these achievements do not take place in "real" sports. By focusing our examples on sports and physical activities that are considered lesser to begin with, we keep alive the belief that women can only hope to compete against men in a very limited, narrow capacity. I would suggest that until we begin to see sport (and the physical skills/attributes that make up such activity) as a continuum in which women outperform men in baseball, basketball, and, yes, even football, the binary will remain firmly entrenched.

THE BINARY AND THE CONTINUUM: WHAT WE ARE ALLOWED TO SEE AND ARE PREVENTED FROM SEEING

It is important to remember that the binary starts with the fundamental assumption that sexual difference is not only oppositional but, by nature, mutually exclusive. This assumption lies at the heart of any muscle-gap comparison. Under this assumption, even marginal males are seen as capable of outperforming the best females because the binary presupposes that there can be no overlap, no hint of a continuum. This assumption was highlighted in Birrell and Cole's (1990) analysis of transsexual Renee Richards's desire to play women's professional tennis during the 1970s. Delineating the cultural assumptions about and connections among sex, gender, the body, and power and how those assumptions and connections were linked to sport, the authors examined why there was so much resistance to Richards's attempt to join the professional circuit and compete against women. In addition to the initial fear that Richards's formerly male body would provide an unfair and insurmountable advantage over all other women players was the fear that Richards would set a precedent for other males who might want to become transsexuals to compete against women. Richards addressed this issue by stating, "If I was allowed to play, then the floodgates would be opened. . . . Some player who was not quite good enough in men's tennis might decide to change only in order to overpower the women players" (quoted in Birrell & Cole, 1990, p. 15). Clearly, Richards was expressing the popularly held assumption that men are, by
definition, better athletes than women.

It is also important to note that these assumptions are protected most ferociously when talking about those sports, skills, and physical attributes that really count—those that belong to (have been appropriated by) men. The assumption that there is no overlap can only be maintained, however, if we are never allowed to see women outperform men in the real sports or are never allowed to witness women possessing physical attributes and skills that have been traditionally associated with men. Given current constructions of sport, it does not particularly matter that a woman can be more graceful or flexible than a man, nor does it matter that she can outperform him on the balance beam. She should be able to do this; it is perceived as her natural domain. Because the binary is threatened only when we see women exhibit skills or possess physical attributes that are considered malelike or outperform men in a sport traditionally identified with males, this is something we rarely, if ever, get to experience. As Willis (1982) points out, the ideological content that creates certain assumptions about gender difference must not be seen to be false: “these ‘contents’ are beliefs about the nature of reality and can only be upheld if reality seems to comply with them” (p. 124).

Our beliefs and assumptions about gender difference in sport comply with “reality” only because of what we are allowed to see (the binary) and are prevented from seeing (the continuum). For example, we are allowed to see female athletes (e.g., gymnasts and figure skaters) who produce a recognizable feminine body, one that is of a certain size and general configuration. What we are not allowed to see are female bodies (e.g., ice hockey and rugby players) that exhibit physical “massiveness, power, or abundance” (Bartky, as cited in Theberge, 1991, p. 126). Because of this practice, it is easy to believe yet another ideology presented as reality about the binary: The reason we don’t see women playing ice hockey and rugby is because women don’t play these kinds of sports—these are men’s sports. Yet, as we know, there are thousands of women who play ice hockey and rugby throughout North America. To acknowledge this fact, to be allowed to see this reality, would be tantamount to acknowledging a sport continuum.

In the following section, I delineate how much cultural effort goes into maintaining the binary while simultaneously suppressing evidence of the continuum. This alone belies the argument that women do not possess (and could never possess) the abilities to compete with men, even in those sports that privilege males. Increasing numbers of women are
challenging men's control over sport. In ever-expanding spheres of physical activity, they are demonstrating that they can do more than move through space in aesthetically pleasing ways. By doing so, they represent a fundamental threat to one of the most seemingly real aspects of sport: the mutually exclusive oppositional binary.

GENDER SEGREGATION AND THE SPORT/BINARY CONTINUUM

One key to suppressing any evidence of a sport continuum is to prevent women and men from competing with and against each other. This, by definition, creates the notion that sport is a naturally occurring binary divided along gender lines. We know of endless examples in which women have resisted such efforts and have been told that segregation is in their best interests because they need to be protected from getting injured. Such examples range from Little League baseball, where attempts at integration during the early 1970s were met by medical claims that girls' bones were more susceptible to fractures (Goodman, 1989) to assertions that women's presence on men's teams (even if they had equal ability) would weaken the character of sport because males would have to play softer against females (Kidd, 1990). A corollary of this latter point is that if women were allowed to compete against men, the very integrity of sport would be put at risk: women's presence would

“lower the curve” because they would forever be hopelessly overmatched. This argument was behind much of the public debate surrounding the Silver Bullets all-women's professional baseball team in the summer of 1994. Even though these women had never played together as a team, and even though many of them were forced to play softball rather than baseball in college, the assumption was that their biggest disadvantage was their biological makeup. After their opening 19-0 loss to a men's professional team, Bullets' management announced they were canceling all future games against male professionals. With a one-try, one-loss, you're-out mentality, manager Phil Niekro said, "At this time, I feel we cannot compete at their level" (quoted in Bailey, 1994, p. 18). Rather than challenging Niekro's throw-in-the-towel approach or at least acknowledging that he appeared to be holding out for some future promise, Sports Illustrated weighed in with this assessment of women competing against men:

At this time? At what time have women been expected to compete even up with men? Send Gail Devers and Carl Lewis out of the starting blocks at the same moment, and Lewis will win the 100 meters every time. Ann Meyers fails her tryout with the NBA Pacers from here to eternity, . . . So what? Gender equity isn't an arm wrestling contest or an advertising gimmick. (Bailey, 1994, p. 18)
What is gender equity about? According to this same writer, it appears to be about protecting the time-honored tradition of gender segregation: “Don’t put these women on the same field with [male professional athletes]. Put them on the field against their peers—if 24 Bullets can be found, so can 48. Indeed, there is talk of an all-woman’s hardball league” (p. 18; emphasis added).

A closer inspection of these arguments reveals that it is men who are protected by segregating sports. If females are such naturally inferior athletes, then given the opportunity to compete against men, they would surely fail. This would provide men with the very evidence they need to buttress their claims. Attempts such as the Silver Bullets appear to provide fodder for such a stance. But if this were the case, why is there such overwhelming resistance and hostility when women attempt to integrate sport? Even though the Silver Bullets competed against men, there are many more instances where men have refused to participate when asked or forced to compete against (or even with) women. Does not such a reaction undermine any arguments about women as naturally inferior athletes? Kidd (1990) addressed this issue by using the example of the Ontario (Canada) Hockey Association’s (OHA) efforts to prevent a 13-year-old girl from playing on one of its teams. As Kidd reports, even though they eventually lost, the OHA went to court several times to resist integration. Kidd raises a highly salient question when he asks, “Was one 13-year-old female . . . going to topple the male hockey leadership and disrupt a 500,000 male strong, century-old organization? Hardly. There must be something deeper” (p. 38).

Sport sociologists have examined the deeper meaning of male exclusivity in sport. Whitson (1990) outlined how gender segregation allows men to maximize and celebrate their difference from women. He also emphasized the importance of exclusivity to male bonding rituals and stated that “all such efforts . . . would be scrambled by the presence of girls on boys’ teams” (p. 26) because sport as a “proving ground for masculinity can only be preserved as such by the exclusion of women from the activity” (p. 25). Kidd (1990) makes similar arguments and frames his analysis of male resistance to integrate sports around men’s fears. These fears range from concerns that they will no longer be able to differentiate themselves from women (what Kidd calls disorientation of the male psyche) to anxieties about women losing their traditional nurturing qualities because they (women) might become as hard and unyielding as males if allowed to compete in combative sports. Although this
latter analysis is problematic—Kidd supports his position with examples that reinforce highly stereotypic notions of gender such as nurturing females and combative males—he nevertheless acknowledges that men are enormously threatened by women’s presence in sports.

Although we should never underestimate the importance of male bonding as an exclusionary practice or of men’s extreme desire to differentiate themselves from women, we have tended to ignore another reason why men resist integration so fiercely: They are deeply afraid that many women can outperform them, even in those sports and physical skills/attributes that they have claimed as their own. What better way to deflect such fears than to create segregationist ideologies and practices that will ensure that these possibilities rarely (if ever) come to pass? What better way to protect the binary while simultaneously subverting the continuum?

SPECIFIC MECHANISMS OF CONTINUUM CONTAINMENT

There are a number of interrelated mechanisms that are used to contain any evidence of a sport continuum. Although they are presented here as discrete, static categories, they operate interchangeably in a highly dynamic process. These mechanisms are powerful tools of control that act as surveillance systems designed “to contain ‘danger’ and restore ‘security’” (Terry, as cited in Birrell & Cole, 1990, p. 12).

SPORT TYPING

One of the most effective mechanisms of continuum containment is sport typing whereby females and males are channeled into sports and physical activities that are consistent with gender role stereotypes (Metheny, 1965). There are various processes within sport typing that accomplish this task, ranging from defining some sports as exclusively male or female to taking sports in which both women and men participate and recasting them into dichotomous categories of women’s sports and men’s sports. In the former instance, sport typing teaches us to equate athletic activity with stereotypic notions of oppositional sexual difference. Thus we are taught to read certain sports as exclusively male (e.g., football) and others as exclusively female (e.g., synchronized swimming). Under such circumstances, it is easy to maintain the illusion of an oppositional binary; it is, for example, so rare to see a woman play football that her presence would be treated as an extreme aberration. In most instances, however, large numbers of women participate in the same sports that men do; tennis, golf, and basketball are just a few examples. This pattern of involvement could reveal the existence of a continuum because it provides the possibility of seeing
sport as a gender-neutral activity in which numerous individuals, some of whom are male and some of whom are female, participate and have varying degrees of ability. But sport typing subverts any possibility of seeing sport in this light because it imposes the binary on the same physical activity and, in the process, reproduces highly stereotypic notions of femininity and masculinity. Gymnastics and tennis are obvious and subtle illustrations of this reconstruction process.

In the case of gymnastics, even though women and men participate in the same sport, they engage in an entirely different set of events (i.e., specific activities within gymnastic competition). These events reproduce traditional stereotypes about sexual difference in that they require a very different set of physical skills and characteristics for female and male athletes. For example, women gymnasts must present a waiflike body and demonstrate extreme flexibility (e.g., balance beam) as well as graceful motion (e.g., floor exercise). By sharp contrast, male gymnasts must develop great upper body strength and the ability to move through space in a forceful, explosive manner (e.g., rings, pommel horse).

Tennis offers a more subtle example of the imposition of the oppositional binary. In this sport, even though women and men use the same equipment and engage in the same set of tasks (e.g., hitting a ball over a net), the rules require strict adherence to stereotypic notions of sexual difference. To win a tennis match, an athlete needs to win the majority of sets within the contest. In men’s tennis this consists of winning three out of five sets, whereas in women’s tennis it consists of winning two out of three sets. The rationale for this latter requirement is that women lack the endurance capacities of men. This points once again to the ideological foundation of sport: Not only is there no biological justification for a differential set of requirements, if there is any physical attribute that women possess that enables them to compete successfully against men, it is endurance.

Clearly, sport typing reinforces the binary because of its extreme emphasis on stereotypic notions of oppositional sexual difference. Additionally, because it starts from the assumption that sport should be divided (segregated) in ways that reflect such oppositional categories, it works to ensure that we will be provided with little evidence of a continuum of sport performance. If we are not allowed to witness females performing with and against males, overlap and diversity of performance among women and men will remain invisible.

ERASURE

A second mechanism of binary enforcement—and one that is linked closely with sport typing—is a process I refer to as erasure.
because it involves the symbolic annihilation of female athletes who participate in sports that have been identified exclusively with males. Two such examples are rugby and ice hockey. Thousands of women play rugby throughout North America in highly organized sport structures such as club sports and rugby leagues. An even greater number of women play ice hockey and, during the past few years, several intercollegiate conferences and programs have been developed in the United States. Although most sportswomen receive token recognition at best, it is not a random occurrence that these female athletes in particular have been rendered most invisible. This is because combative sports such as ice hockey and rugby require physical attributes such as strength, speed, and aggressiveness. Evidence that thousands of women eagerly pursue this kind of physical activity and possess these kinds of physical characteristics needs to be suppressed; such information provides a direct challenge to beliefs that these types of sports and physical attributes are the natural (and exclusive) domain of men.

REGENDERING

This mechanism is a particularly insidious form of continuum containment. Regendering frequently occurs when a female displays superior athleticism in a skill or activity traditionally identified with males. Under such circumstances, the female athlete is regendered because when she displays such prowess, her own gender becomes temporarily erased while she is being simultaneously recast as a man. For example, if we witness a female crushing a baseball, a familiar retort is “she hits just like a man.” This particular mechanism accomplishes two important goals of the binary: It serves to reinforce the equation of superior athleticism with maleness while subverting any notion that females can possess such skills in such capacities. What is so insidious about regendering is that, on the surface, it gives the impression that female athleticism is not only accepted but enthusiastically supported; such retorts are, after all, meant (in most cases) as a compliment. But the young girl or woman who exhibits such athletic competence is not being supported as a female. In fact, what regendering reveals is that to receive this kind of praise, she must be (temporarily at least) considered anything but female.

SELECTIVE GENDER COMPARISONS

We have seen how various structural mechanisms suppress evidence of a sport continuum through the imposition of an oppositional binary. In most instances, the notion of such a continuum is relatively easy to contain because women and men rarely compete against each other. However, there is one popular sport in which women and men not only
compete at the same event but are on the same course at the same time—the marathon. This sport offers us a particularly graphic example of how evidence of a continuum is artificially suppressed. While observing a marathon, one can literally see a continuum of performance stretched out for miles along the road with women and men running simultaneously, interspersed randomly along the same course. Even though one race is appearing before our eyes, it is constructed as two separate races based on oppositional sexual difference: There is a women's race and a men's race. Because two separate races have been artificially created, performance differences between women and men become a primary focus of the sport. Media coverage and racing statistics reflect this oppositional categorization. During television coverage, the cameras focus on the first runners to cross the finish line and talk about the winner of the men's race. At this point, the television commentators typically shift their focus to the front-running female(s) and discuss who will win the women's race.

It should be noted that because women and men are running together on the same course at the same time, suppressing evidence of the continuum requires more than simply constructing two separate races. It also requires that certain gender comparisons are highlighted while others are ignored altogether. For example, once the first female crosses the finish line, gender comparisons regarding the rest of the race vanish from the television landscape; she is compared only to the men who have finished ahead of her. We are not told that this same woman has just outperformed all of the other men who have yet to cross the finish line. The arbitrary decision to focus exclusively on who finished ahead of the women's winner instead of (or even in addition to) who finished behind her ensures that we will never think of women competing against and beating men. This is true even though we literally see women crossing the finish line ahead of men. But because only one type of gender comparison is emphasized while all other possibilities are completely dismissed, we are taught to read these performance differences only in ways that privilege men.

Highly selective gender comparisons also subvert the very powerful fact that the first woman to cross the finish line did not just outperform a few men who were stragglers at the end of the race; she outperformed the overwhelming majority of all men who were in the contest. A recent marathon in the upper Midwest, and one that is considered one of the top five races in the country, illustrates this performance pattern. In 1994, there were 4,076 men and 1,423 women who finished the race. The women's winner finished 66th overall (i.e.,
women and men combined). This means that although 65 men finished ahead of her, 4,011 men finished behind her. Given this statistic, it is not surprising to discover why some gender comparisons are emphasized over others.

DEVIANT-MUTANTS

The mechanisms already highlighted are extremely effective tools of counterresistance. This is not to suggest, however, that there is no slippage in the system. On the contrary, many women actively resist efforts of containment and, despite the systematic harassment and stigmatization that comes from such resistance, passionately pursue those sports and accentuate those physical skills and characteristics that most threaten the binary. When this occurs, a particularly oppressive mechanism of counterresistance kicks in, one that labels certain sportswomen as deviant-mutants. This label refers to a female athlete who so deviates from traditional expectations of femininity that her biological standing as a "real" female is called into question. The deviant-mutant's crime is that she exhibits such a high degree of athletic competence, or possesses such physical characteristics as muscle mass, size, and strength, that she becomes a dangerous, suspicious outlier (Birrell & Cole, 1990; Messner, 1988). Deviant-mutants are typically contained in one of two interrelated ways. First, they are required to take a chromosomal sex test to prove that they are real females. Second, they are branded as lesbians. In both instances, their mutant status derives from concerns about their true biological nature.

The most well-known and controversial instance of equating women's superior athletic performance with the label of biological deviant/freak takes place in the Olympic Games. The sex test was instituted by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) during the late 1960s because of the suspicion that superior female athletic performances were actually accomplished by women who were not truly women or by craftily disguised men. The implication is that superior athletic prowess is the natural domain of males. (Birrell & Cole, 1990, p. 18)

At this most elite level of competition, all female athletes are subjected to a gender verification—buccal smear—test in which the sex chromosome pattern found in cells scraped from inside the athlete's mouth is analyzed to ensure that she is a "normal" woman (Carlson, 1991). Jane Fredrick, former U.S. Olympic heptathlete, has stated that the IOC insists on such procedures because when female athletes reach such levels of excellence, they must prove that they are real biological females (Carlson, 1991, p. 26). Not only do these women have to prove (with
laboratory test results) that they are not biological mutants because they so deviate from patriarchal conceptions of female capacity, they are also required to carry their “certificate of femininity” at all times during international competition. Even though organizations such as the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists have called for a ban of the test, the IOC remains steadfast in its belief that a woman who excels at the most elite levels of sport is, by definition, a contradiction in terms.

Displays of superior athleticism that result in being labeled a biological freak or a craftily disguised male are not confined to Olympic athletes. During a girls’ soccer match in Lewisville, Texas, in 1991, a 9-year-old goalie named Natasha Dennis played such a flawless game that a frustrated father of an opposing player demanded that Natasha be subjected to a “panty check” (Staff, 1991, p. 89). Although the father was suspended from attending future games, Natasha apparently got the message. According to this same report, she got a perm to look more like a girl.

A second means of containing and punishing highly competent sportswomen is to brand them as lesbians. Labeling competent sportswomen as lesbians is a highly effective form of containment precisely because we live in a homophobic culture that views lesbians and gay men negatively. Several authors have discussed links between female sport participation and homophobia and have shown how lesbians, like female athletes, are considered highly suspicious women (Cahn, 1994; Griffin & Genasci, 1990; Lenskyj, 1992). One reason lesbians are suspicious is that they do not fit neatly into bipolar conceptions of gender and sexuality. As such, they can offer contradictory evidence that gender does not consist of two mutually exclusive oppositional categories. To subvert such a possibility, female athletes branded as lesbians are cast as deviant outliers who belong to some netherland outside the so-called normal biological categories of male and female.

A recent illustration of this branding process comes from intercollegiate baseball. One of the first females to play on a men’s team—and the first female to be a starting pitcher—is Ila Borders. Pitching for Southern California College (NAIA Division) in 1994, Borders won her first two games 12-1 and 10-1, so dominating opposing teams that she allowed only one earned run in almost 16 innings of work. Such outstanding competence has not earned her much praise. Instead, she has received “taunts [that are] vicious and vulgar, laced with profanity and sexual innuendo. . . . ‘Are you a lesbian?’ one New York radio interviewer asked her” (Smith, 1994, p. 66).
It is the deviant-mutant who most threatens the binary, and therefore needs the greatest amount of surveillance and punishment, because the binary rests on the assumption that sexual difference is inherent, not part of some larger male conspiracy. If female athletes provide empirical evidence that they can, for example, develop great upper body strength or outperform men in a "man's sport," they must be discredited in ways that keep the notion of natural male supremacy intact. The deviant-mutant label accomplishes this task most effectively because, in this system, a woman's naturalness, her very biology, must be called into question.

THE CONTINUUM AS RESISTANCE AND TRANSFORMATION

I begin this final section with the assumption that scholarly inquiry, like sport and gender, is a social construction and therefore amenable to challenge, redefinition, and transformation. It was in this spirit that I pointed out limitations of resistance/transformation strategies. It was also in this spirit that I critiqued various analyses in the muscle-gap literature. Needless to say, there are also conceptual and practical limitations with what one anonymous reviewer called my "continuum strategy." There are two major concerns that immediately come to mind. The first is that, as I have framed it, the sport continuum lies in the center of mainstream sports; it does not directly address dominant values and practices deeply entrenched in patriarchal sport models such as homophobia, racism, sexism, and violence. As this same reviewer pointed out, "if resistance was just pursued through highlighting the continuum of ability, values/practices such as violence, homophobia and cutthroat competition would not be addressed and may even be affirmed." I heartily agree with this criticism. I would only add that resistance to such powerful forces of oppression must come from a multiplicity of strategies in various locations inside and outside mainstream sport. In effect, different types of strategies can confront different aspects of hegemonic masculinity and femininity in sport.

A second concern involves the debate surrounding segregation versus integration, which is without question a very complicated issue. In my analysis of the role of segregation in sport, I argue that it is men, not women, who are the ones being protected by segregationist policies and practices. I realize that I am in danger of oversimplifying the debate here because, as the second reviewer suggested, many of the most vociferous defenders of segregation have been women who "reject the assertion that the developmental and competitive needs of girls cannot be met within their own
programs, and they challenge the notion that boys' hockey is a better and more legitimate version of their own game.” In a related vein is the equally legitimate concern that segregation/separation is needed to protect what little is left of any autonomy and integrity in women's sports. Finally, I also realize that although many feminists support the opportunities now available in the wake of Title IX, they lament the fact that “the liberal remedy to women's exclusion from sport has merely resulted in incorporation and has failed to accomplish the far-reaching changes many feminists had advocated” (Birrell & Richter, 1987, p. 396) and that mainstream women's sports continues to be “co-opted, controlled, and exploited in the interests of patriarchal hegemony” (Lenskyj, 1994, p. 361).

Although these concerns are important ones, I want to avoid any response that would place the integration/segregation debate into mutually exclusive oppositional categories. Nevertheless, these concerns rightfully challenge my analysis of segregation because one logical extension of my argument is the total integration of sportswomen. First, I am not arguing for total integration. I could not agree more that, given patriarchal constructions of sport, women's participation is highly problematic and that the autonomy of women's sports needs to be protected. At the same time, we must continue to challenge the popularly held assumption, repeated in mantralike fashion, that women cannot compete with and against men because they need to be protected. We must add to the debate that it is men's, not women's, interests that are being protected when, for example, segregationist policies keep us from thinking about or seeing women outperform men. We must explicitly outline the role segregation plays when women are denied opportunities to participate or are denied access to various resources because they are said to possess innately inferior capacities. In the end, I support Birrell's (1984) contention that “the logical point of departure is to ask under what conditions and within what context is segregation good for women (in sport) and under what conditions is it bad” (p. 25). The key question to ask is whether segregation is a result of an exclusionary practice designed to protect the interests of the dominant group, what Birrell refers to as “imposed separatism” (p. 26). When segregation occurs because a marginalized group chooses to separate itself both ideologically and structurally from oppressive values and practices, segregation can be a powerful vehicle for resistance and transformation.

We need to pose similar questions regarding choice versus force when analyzing ways in which a continuum strategy may
contribute to resistance/transformation within the broader context of integration. Many women who are currently involved in and openly embrace the values and practices of mainstream sport would no doubt resist any efforts to more fully integrate sport. Women who play volleyball and basketball immediately come to mind. However, exposing sport as a continuum would not automatically force women to compete with and against men. What it would do is create an ideological and a tangible space (i.e., in terms of implementation) for supporting those women who do want to compete with or against men in all kinds of sports. I make this claim for several reasons, some of which I alluded to earlier in the article. First, a continuum ruptures notions of sport as an oppositional binary because it forces us to think, for example, of gender comparisons that refer to many muscle gaps. This alone could lay the foundation for directly challenging the all-pervasive assumption that women can outperform only lesser-skilled male athletes or can excel only in so-called women's sports. A second benefit is that when women do outperform male athletes in so-called men's sports, or when they possess so-called male attributes and skills, they need not be subjected to gender verification or panty checks or be accused of taking steroids or being lesbians. Third, if athleticism were actually conceptualized as a continuum, sport structures would be organized around ability, not gender. And if sports were integrated in this fashion, women would provide powerful empirical evidence that men do not have a natural claim on sport.

Finally, a continuum could resist and transform the notion that females who are (or want to be) strong and powerful really want to be (or are) men. A sport continuum, removed from oppressive binary gender logic, could make a major contribution toward redefining and transforming what it means to be a female and an athlete. As Lenskyj (1994) argues, "Attributes such as physical strength, muscular development, risk-taking behavior... are entirely compatible with new and liberating ways of presenting oneself, unapologetically and unequivocally, as female" (p. 361). I am certainly aware that all such efforts would be fiercely resisted. Whenever women have contested patriarchal conceptions of sport that threaten the gender order, strategies of counterresistance are employed (Davis & Delano, 1992; Lenskyj, 1986). Nevertheless, just to expose the idea of a continuum of athleticism is an important first step in offering an additional strategy of resistance and transformation. In short, it is hoped that this essay has contributed to what will become a broader dialogue about the theoretical and practical implications that would result from seeing sport as a continuum.
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NOTES

1. In using the term hegemonic masculinity, I borrow from Connell (1990), who defined it as the "culturally idealized form of masculine character" (p. 83) that links masculinity with aggression and competitiveness and the subordination of women.

2. I am not using the terms liberal and radical as they are typically contrasted in feminist literature (Birrell, 1984). Clearly, those individuals I cite under a liberal framework (Bryson, Kidd, Whitson) have provided us with important radical analyses of sport. Nor am I suggesting that liberal strategies do not also attempt to alter values, practices, and structures. Nevertheless, an important distinction between the two is that more radical (often separatist) strategies have concentrated on areas of resistance/transformation altogether removed from mainstream sports, whereas more liberal ones have focused on change within mainstream practices and structures.

3. This statement is not meant to dismiss or marginalize efforts to create alternative sport models or sporting activities. I am simply supporting what Bryson (1990) suggested regarding radical strategies for social change: "[They] cannot at present and by themselves be effective in bringing about significant change" (p. 183).

4. This observation is not a criticism of Willis. Indeed, his contributions to this area of study have been invaluable. I am only making the point that much of our scholarship, including most of my own work, has often contributed to the very conceptions of sport and gender we have rightfully challenged.

5. I am not suggesting that Messner is unaware of these arguments. Indeed, he has made these same points in numerous publications. I am simply suggesting that, in this article, part of his analysis of the muscle gap is problematic.

6. In fact, medical findings indicate that because of physical, bone, and hormonal development, young girls who play in Little League games are, if anything, less susceptible to sport-related injuries (Goodman, 1989, p. 69).

7. The Olympic Games offer one of the few events in which women and men compete directly against each other—skeet shooting. In 1992, a Chinese woman named Shan Zang did so well that she not only won the gold medal but tied the world record for men and women. The response of the International Olympic Committee? The sexes are now segregated in the event (Hilgers, 1994).

8. An exception to this is the event of vaulting. Even in this event, however, performance requirements are highly gendered. In the vault, a gymnast must run down a lane, jump off a springboard, and move through space over a stationary object called a vaulting horse. In the men's event, there is more physical distance between the springboard and the vaulting horse; this enables males to hurl themselves through space higher and farther than females. By contrast, females are expected to move through space (i.e.,
over the horse) in a contained, graceful fashion.


11. Sex testing is said to take place to ensure fair competition. A corollary of this is drug testing. Drug testing attempts to prohibit anyone from gaining an unfair advantage through the use of anabolic steroids. Not surprisingly, women who take these so-called male hormones are often characterized as outside the categories of male and female and thus are not seen as fully human (Davis & Delano, 1992).

12. Both reviewers' critiques have added immeasurably to conceptual and practical considerations of the sport continuum. With their permission, I have quoted directly from their reviews; they remain anonymous.

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