

Syracuse University

## SURFACE

---

Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects    Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects

---

Summer 8-9-2017

# Politics of Exclusion: An Analysis of the Intersections of Marginalized Identities and the Olympic Industry

Emily Bonzagni

Follow this and additional works at: [https://surface.syr.edu/honors\\_capstone](https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone)



Part of the [International Relations Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Bonzagni, Emily, "Politics of Exclusion: An Analysis of the Intersections of Marginalized Identities and the Olympic Industry" (2017). *Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects*. 996.

[https://surface.syr.edu/honors\\_capstone/996](https://surface.syr.edu/honors_capstone/996)

This Honors Capstone Project is brought to you for free and open access by the Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects at SURFACE. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syracuse University Honors Program Capstone Projects by an authorized administrator of SURFACE. For more information, please contact [surface@syr.edu](mailto:surface@syr.edu).

Politics of Exclusion:

An Analysis of the Intersections of Marginalized Identities and the Olympic Industry

© Emily Bonzagni, April 27, 2017

## **Abstract**

“Politics of Exclusion: An Analysis of the Intersections of Marginalized Identities and the Olympic Industry” analyzes the policing power of the Olympic governing bodies and the media on marginalized athletes in the Olympic Games and the ways in which this system constructs norms of gender, race, class, and sexuality. By employing intersectional, Black feminist, research methods in four case studies over the span of Modern Olympic history, this research centers the stories and experiences of Babe Didrikson, Tidy Pickett, Caster Semenya and Chris Mosier to expose the discriminatory and exclusive practices of the Olympic Industry. The case studies reveal the ways in which the Olympic Industry systematically limits the participation of marginalized athletes and highlight progress toward a truly inclusive Olympic Games.

## **Executive Summary**

“Politics of Exclusion: An Analysis of the Intersections of Marginalized Identities and the Olympic Industry” challenges the policing power of the Olympic Industry that disproportionately disadvantages gender, sexual, and racial minorities. This has created a culture of exclusion in the Olympic Games. This project centers the histories and stories of marginalized athletes who have broken barriers to pressure the Olympic Movement to be more inclusive. The experiences of Babe Didrikson, Tidy Pickett, Caster Semenya and Chris Mosier deal with a variety of social forces and organizational restrictions that limited their participation in high-level sport. The intersections of each individual’s race, class, gender, and sexuality affect their experiences within the Olympic Industry and high-performance sport. I analyze each of their experiences to reveal how the Olympic governing bodies limit participation based on heterosexist, misogynistic, classist, and racist logics as well as to highlight progress toward inclusion for marginalized athletes.

Identity categories discussed in this research include race, class, and gender. Race is defined in terms of this paper as a socially constructed category which is often reduced to and misunderstood as the pigment of an athlete’s skin tone. Whiteness is constructed as superior and valued above other pigments, while blackness is deeply devalued in a hierarchical social system. White athletes historically have been afforded more opportunities because of race’s intertwining to class. Because of this racial hierarchy, white athletes have been given greater access to social, economic, and cultural capital, which further stratifies the races based on their class. In short, historically, white athletes have had greater opportunities to reach the Olympic Games. Gender is traditionally defined as a binary of two socially constructed categories – man and woman – where each gender is assigned specific roles in society and are not expected to

stray outside of those roles based on their sex assignment at birth. The two categories of gender and sex are defined in opposition with one another. Men, historically, dominate the public sphere of athletics, while women are not expected to participate in sports, but rather remain in the domestic sphere and raise children. Gender is often conflated with sex, which is a biological term used to categorize males and females based on their anatomy, chromosomes, and hormones. However, in reality, neither gender nor sex exist within a binary system, as there are many overlaps between categories that destabilize them, proving that sex and gender exist within a spectrum. Intersex athletes are athletes whose reproductive anatomy and chromosomal make-up do not fit in the conventional binary system of male and female. Similarly, trans athletes do not fit within the gender binary because they cross the boundaries of gender and challenge its stability. Trans athletes are athletes whose sexual anatomy does not match their own gender identity. Cis athletes are athletes whose sexual anatomy matches their gender identity in the conventional terms of male/man and female/woman. These socially constructed categories produce material consequences for marginalized athletes that take the form of structural and institutional oppressions at the intersections of race, gender, sex, and class in the context of the Olympic Games.

The case studies of Didrikson, Pickett, Semenya, and Mosier were chosen based on each athlete's self-identity, time period, and sport in which the athlete participated. All four are track and field athletes. Their identities vary greatly in order to dissect the ways in which Olympic policies affect many different athletes in various ways in their journeys to the Olympic Games. I analyzed cases from 1932-2016 to illustrate the changes in Olympic policies and the governing bodies' growth towards inclusivity over time. Didrikson and Pickett were contemporaries and teammates: both were track and field athletes on Team USA for the 1932 Games in Los Angeles.

Both came from working class backgrounds but differed in their racial identity – Didrikson identifies as white woman and Pickett a Black woman. Their experiences at the 1932 Games were very different because of their racial identities. Caster Semenya is a Black South African sprinter, who was forced to undergo demeaning gender verification tests by the Olympic Industry because she does not conform to traditional ideals of femininity and womanhood. She identifies as an intersex athlete from a working-class background in a historically racialized nation, like the United States. Chris Mosier identifies as a white, trans masculine duathlete. He resisted the Olympic Industry’s classist and transphobic policies which discouraged the participation of trans athletes. His participation on Team USA challenged the Olympic Industry’s policies and created substantial change for future trans athletes in high-performance sport.

This project challenges the Olympic Industry’s construction of gender and sex, which are deeply rooted in racist, classist, and misogynist understandings of the terms man and woman. The Olympic Industry is made up of Olympic governing bodies and the media that all police athletes’ performances both on and off the field. By centering the histories and life experiences of marginalized athletes, this research encourages the Olympic governing bodies to create a more inclusive Olympic Games that abide by the purported values of Olympism: equality and non-discrimination. By highlighting instances in which the Olympics have discriminated and promoted inequality, this research challenges the Olympic Industry to improve its policies surrounding race, class, sexual and gender identity.

## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Executive Summary.....</b>	<b>iv</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>viii</b>
<b>Advice to Future Honors Students .....</b>	<b>ix</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Organization of the Olympic Industry.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Theoretical Framework .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Methodology.....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Literature Review.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Analysis.....</b>	<b>14</b>
Babe Didrikson .....	14
Tidye Pickett .....	20
Caster Semenya.....	27
Chris Mosier .....	38
<b>Conclusion .....</b>	<b>43</b>
<b>Works Cited.....</b>	<b>45</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>51</b>

## **Acknowledgements**

I wanted to thank my parents who have loved and supported me throughout my entire educational career, constantly pushing me to be the best version of myself.

I also want to thank Dr. D – my capstone advisor – who has navigated the crazy world of the Olympics with me and guided me through this oftentimes arduous journey.

I also wanted to thank Himika Bhattacharya for constantly pushing me to make my research more feminist and intersectional.

This capstone would never have been finished if it wasn't for Meg Mistry – thank you for proof reading it, oh so many times, and checking-up on me for the past two years to remind me that my capstone wouldn't write itself.



## **Advice to Future Honors Students**

Don't be scared, but don't wait to get started. It's not as daunting as it seems.

“How soon ‘not now’ becomes never.” – Martin Luther



## Introduction

Gender, sexual, and racial minority groups have faced intense scrutiny and resistance from the Olympic Industry since the inception of the Modern Olympic Games in 1896. Because of restrictive ideals of femininity, members of Olympic governing bodies saw women, sexual minorities, and people of color competing in the Olympic Games as a threat to gender norms and the future of society. However, by the Second Olympiad in 1900, these oppressed athletes broke through the barriers of sexism, misogyny, heterosexism, and racism into the Olympic arena, some captivating the imaginations of many people. The strictures of femininity enforced by then all-white International Olympic Committee (IOC) and varying National Olympic Committees, still held many women back and limited the participation of women of color, members of the LGBTQ community, and gender nonconforming athletes. Despite some changes, these patterns of exclusion persist throughout Modern Olympic history. This research intends to bring these hidden histories of the women and minority groups who fought for justice in the sporting world to the forefront, noting both successes and continued barriers in the Olympic Industry.

At its inception, the Modern Olympic Games sought to be exclusive to white, upper class men. Pierre de Coubertin, who was a wealthy, white, French national, revived the Olympic Games in 1896 and believed that there was no place for women or minority groups in the Games, based on the Ancient Games, where those groups were also excluded. Coubertin's Olympic idea focused on beauty and grace as well as "a strong muscular culture based on chivalrous spirit" (de Coubertin 1908, 109). In 1894, he formed the International Olympic Committee, made up of 15 men – all white – who collectively decided to bar women from the First Olympiad in 1896 (Wamsley 2005, 103). He wrote: "I feel that the Olympic Games must be reserved for men... women cannot claim to outdo men in running, fencing, equestrian events, etc" (de Coubertin

2000, 711). However, women resisted his exclusion and established the Women's Olympics to create a space of inclusion which gained significant popularity (Lenskyj 2012, 68). de Coubertin, who reigned over the International Olympic Committee in an authoritarian fashion rather than having the body function democratically, felt pressure from the popularity of the Women's Olympics and allowed women to partake in tennis and golf in the Second Olympiad in 1900 (IOC Factsheet: Women 2016, 1) – two sports which de Coubertin believed upheld the ideals of appropriate femininity by focusing on beauty and grace. The International Olympic Committee “encourag[ed] the celebration of specific brands of masculinity and femininity” (Wamsley 2005, 104). de Coubertin and the International Olympic Committee perpetuated Victorian ideals of femininity and masculinity, where women should be confined to the home and the domestic sphere to raise male athletes, while men should be physically robust and able to provide for their women and future sons. The choice in program to include tennis and golf had an economic and therefore class implication – these were expensive sports that required equipment and court time, thus gearing the Olympics to white, upper-class women.

The IOC's choice to only involve upper-class and white bodies in the 1896 Olympics has had lasting effects on the integration of other minority groups in the 120-year history of the Games. The IOC implemented strict regulations of dress and behavior of women athletes by Western standards of hegemonic femininity. The Olympics perpetuated “emergent gender ideologies [that are] celebrated through the Olympics by its sport leaders, organizers, the media, spectators, and participants” (Wamsley 2005, 106). The IOC members reflected contemporary ideologies surrounding gender through their policies and the operation of the Olympics, having lasting effects on what the rest of the sporting world deems acceptable for athletes of all genders,

racism, sexualities and classes. The early choices of the first International Olympic Committee created a culture of exclusion in the Olympic Industry.

### **Organization of the Olympic Industry**

To comprehend the role the Olympic Industry plays in policing athletes' bodies, I begin with a review of the composition of the main Olympic governing bodies. The Olympic Games are organized by four main groups – the International Olympic Committee (IOC), individual countries' National Olympic Committees (NOC), individual sports' International Federations (IFs), and the Olympic Games Organizing Committee (OGOC). This research will focus on the actions of the IOC, NOCs, and IFs, as those bodies have the most influence over athletes' participation.

The International Olympic Committee is responsible for the perpetuation of the Olympic Movement throughout the world. The Olympic Movement “encompasses organizations, athletes and other persons who agree to be guided by the Olympic Charter. The goal of the Olympic Movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating youth through sport practiced in accordance with Olympism and its values” (*Olympic Charter 2015*, 17). In other words, it is the responsibility of the IOC to ensure a fair environment for present and future athletes in which they can compete, as well as promoting “good governance in sport” (*Olympic Charter 2015*, 18). The IOC promotes the values of Olympism, which include equality, solidarity, non-discrimination, and “preserv[ing] human dignity” (*Olympic Charter 2015*, 13). The IOC is the supreme authority of the Olympic Games, giving it and its executive board tremendous power in the governance of the sporting world, its athletes, and the most legendary Games that the body organizes and preserves. However, throughout Olympic history, the IOC has a tarnished record when it comes to the ideals of non-discrimination and preserving human

dignity. This research highlights varying events throughout the history of the Modern Games where the IOC and its subsidiaries have instituted rules and policies that were disadvantageous to athletes of marginalized identities.

The IOC is comprised of, at most, 115 members, who are from a variety of countries and backgrounds (*Olympic Charter 2015*, 34). Some are active and former athletes, while others hold senior leadership positions in IFs, NOCs, and other sport organizations (*Olympic Charter 2015*, 34). The members are “recruit[ed] and elect[ed]” by existing members that they “consider[s] qualified” (*Olympic Charter 2015*, 34). Because of this clause, the IOC is riddled with nepotism and its composition has been historically white and masculine, as those who are already a part of the organization recruit and elect new members. For example, between 1896 and 2016, the IOC has had nine Presidents – all of whom were white men from Western Europe, with the exception of Avery Brundage, who was a white man from the United States (“Olympic Museum: Members of the International Olympic Committee,” 2017). The first women, Pirjo Haeggman and Flor Isava-Fonseca, were not elected to the IOC until 1981 (IOC Factsheet: Women 2016, 2). Even today, the IOC is made up of 95 members, only 26 are women, as they are identified as Ms., Mrs. or Her Royal Highness Princess (HRH Princess) on the IOC webpage. A majority of these women are white, coupled with an overwhelmingly white population of men on the committee, and a majority of these women were elected within the last 11 years in the years after 2006 (“IOC Member List” 2017). Women’s presence on the IOC is still very new, and the lack of diversity on the IOC has resulted in decisions that systematically limited the participation of marginalized athletes.

Each participating country in the Olympic Games has its own National Olympic Committee. A NOC is responsible for “develop[ing], promot[ing], and protect[ing] the Olympic

Movement” in its respective country (*Olympic Charter* 2015, 61). These committees are responsible for the administration of their country’s Olympic teams, ensuring the safety of their athletes by taking action “against any form of discrimination and violence in sport” (*Olympic Charter* 2015, 62). The NOC must protect the rights of athletes to further Olympism. The practical function of individual NOCs is to organize their teams and send them to the Olympic Games. Their greatest power lies in their “exclusive authority for the representation of their respective countries at the Olympic Games and at the regional, continental or world multi-sports competitions patronized by the IOC” (*Olympic Charter* 2015, 62). This means that NOCs have executive power over who can and cannot participate on their teams, regardless of athletic performance. The NOC can disallow an athlete’s participation if the committee believes the athlete is not able “to serve as an example to the sporting youth of their country” (IOC Factsheet: Responsibilities 2013, 3). This standard is an arbitrary one, which gives NOCs a wide-ranging authority over athletes and their daily lives outside of sport.

I contacted five NOCs in this research; The Canadian, Australian, Irish, British, and American national committees. Two committees responded: The British Olympic Association (BOA), the National Olympic Committee of the United Kingdom, and the United States Olympic Committee (USOC), the National Committee of the United States. Each committee was emailed a series of 10 questions regarding gender and the role of NOCs in decision making processes in the spring of 2016. The email addresses were found on each respective NOC website in the Contact page. The Canadian, Australian, and Irish national committees did not respond to multiple email attempts over a period of three months. After multiple email exchanges, the USOC and BOA returned their answers in approximately three months. Both committees were asked, “Because the NOC is in control of the admittance of athletes to the Olympic team based

not only on their performance, but also his or her ability to be an example or role model to the sporting world, what criteria does the NOC use to determine who is a proper role model?" The BOA replied that "attitude, behavior, and conduct" affect an athlete's participation on Team Great Britain. "In addition to this, athletes who compete at a Games are required to sign a Team Member's Agreement with the BOA which contains – among other things – various commitments and obligations around conduct and behavior. A breach of these obligations could result in various sanctions including – if appropriate – exclusion from the Team" (British Olympic Association, 2016). The USOC provided a similarly vague answer to the same question, but did not specify what those commitments and obligations are. "Olympians and Paralympians are encouraged to be involved in Team Tomorrow. Team for Tomorrow is a community outreach program that provides a vehicle through which U.S. athletes can offer their assistance and support to those in need around the world, as well as a means to continue spreading Olympic Values of excellence, friendship, and respect" (United States Olympic Committee, 2016). Both NOC's reluctance to answer the question points to the arbitrary nature of this power, where a mostly homogeneous body decides what is appropriate conduct for athletes with no set guidelines. Because of this, NOCs throughout history have had immense power to discriminate based on their own definitions of acceptable.

Much like the IOC, many NOCs are comprised of a rather homogeneous group of members. For example, the United States Olympic Committee is comprised of an overwhelmingly white 16-member Board of Directors – six women and ten men – and an Executive Team, which is an entirely white team with only three women and ten men (Team USA 2017). The composition of the United States Olympic Committee does not reflect the diversity that exists on the United States' Olympic Team. The disparity between the



homogeneity of the United States Olympic Committee and the diversity of the country's team suggests that the experiences of the decision-makers on the board and executive team do not reflect the varying experiences of a diverse group of athletes.

Furthermore, NOCs are responsible for determining the apparel of their athletes. This includes apparel for the Opening Ceremonies, Medal Ceremonies, and uniforms for each event. This function gives NOCs tremendous power over how an athlete's body is displayed. These decisions regarding what athletes wear, on and off the field, throughout history enforce certain ideals of gender. Women were required to wear skirts by many NOCs, including the United States, well into the 1970s and in Atlanta in 1996 (The Today Show, 2016), forcing a certain type of femininity upon athletes.

I asked during my research, "How does the NOC approve or determine what is appropriate clothing for both male and female athletes, in regard to uniforms as well as outfits worn at the Opening Ceremonies?" The USOC responded "athletes must wear the USOC issued gear for such ceremony in full, including shoes, hats, ball caps, sunglasses, or other apparel that are provided and required" (United States Olympic Committee, 2016). The USOC's response did not describe the standards and process the Committee uses to decide what is appropriate for men and women to wear during the Games. The response stated only that athletes are required to wear what the USOC deems appropriate, even if the athlete is not comfortable in that standard clothing. The BOA, however, provided slightly more insight into the decision-making process. The BOA answered: "The BOA works closely with its official sportswear provider (Adidas) and formal wear provider to agree [on an] appropriate kit for its athletes at a Games. This process takes place over a period of many months/years ahead of a Games" (British Olympic Association, 2016). Neither answer details the standards used to determine the appropriateness of

apparel for men and women Olympians, again pointing to the arbitrary nature of the decision-making processes that directly affect athletes and their gender performances.

International Federations are responsible for regulating individual sports. IFs “establish and enforce, in accordance with the Olympic spirit, the rules concerning the practice of their respective sports and to ensure their application” (*Olympic Charter* 2015, 58). There are a variety of IFs that govern the array of sports that are a part of the Olympic Program. For example, the International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) is the governing body for track and field events. They organize qualifying events leading up to the Olympics, establish eligibility requirements for their sports, and determine rules by which the athletes must abide. However, the most important role of the IFs is their power to “encourage and support measures relating to the medical care and health of athletes” (*Olympic Charter* 2015, 58). Because of this power, IFs have played an important role in the IOC’s regulation of gender and doping scandals, as the two are often aligned. IFs have played a major role in medicalizing gender and perpetuating gender tests, as they claim it relates to the health of their athletes.

### **Theoretical Framework**

This research rests on the definition of hegemonic femininity presented by Patricia Hill Collins in *Black Sexual Politics* (2004). The ideals of hegemonic femininity govern the behaviors of women in society. This is particularly relevant to women in the Olympics because hegemonic femininity was used as a standard to which all female athletes must abide in order to participate in the Games. The Olympic Industry creates an environment of compulsory heterosexuality based on the separation of the sexes in men’s and women’s events. Hegemonic femininity deems “middle-class, heterosexual, White femininity as normative” (Hill Collins 2004, 193). All women who live outside of these restrictive definitions are viewed by society, the media, and

Olympic governing bodies as abnormal and therefore a threat. In order to obtain this type of femininity, women must not be like men (Hill Collins 2004, 193). This aspect of femininity is difficult for many women athletes to obtain because sports are considered to be a masculine arena. Thus, by participating in sports, these athletes align themselves with masculinity and reject femininity. To be “women,” female athletes must not look or act like men in order to be accepted (Hill Collins 2004, 193). They must not be visibly muscular, have facial hair, or engage in normatively masculine tasks like sports. Femininity is based in large part on the physical aesthetic of women, so when female athletes do not conform to the traditional standards of beauty – white, long hair, and slim figures – their femininity is challenged, especially when they are deemed unattractive by men. This is seen often with female Olympic athletes, particularly Black athletes.

Women must also maintain a “feminine demeanor” (Hill Collins 2004, 196), meaning that women must be passive and submissive. By engaging in the active, competitive, domineering practices of sport, Olympic athletes struggle to abide by the accepted ideals of femininity because of their passionate and competitive acts. These traits are valued in men, but masculinity is seen as unnatural when a female possesses them. Judith Butler writes in “Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay on Phenomenology and Feminist Theory” (1988), that the repeated performance of socially accepted gender norms reproduces these norms as innate and natural, when in fact these norms are constructed to separate the sexes (Butler 1988, 526). Individuals engage in acts that make their performances of gender either acceptable or unacceptable based on these presumed natural tendencies. If a woman athlete does not perform her gender identity to the subjective standards of the Olympic Industry, then her femininity is deemed inadequate and her gender is called into question. The athlete is then

subjected to gender verification tests to ensure that she is “truly” a woman, regardless of her performance of her womanhood.

Susan Kessler’s work in “Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersexed Infants” (1990) and Susan Stryker’s in “Transgender Feminism: Queering the Woman Question” (2007) inform this research’s discussion of the categories of sex and gender. Kessler discusses the construction of the gender/sex binary and the discourse around it as natural. Kessler notes that sex is based on medical terms – hormonal and chromosomal – while gender has a social basis revolving around the duties and attributes ascribed to each sex (Kessler 1990, 49). The medical community constructs the sex binary in scientific terms, which are valued because of their perceived objectivity due to the scientific methods they employ. However, this negates the many variations of hormones and chromosomes that are present within the human race that complicate the binary. Intersex people are an example of this. The International Olympic Committee has sided with the medical community’s construction of the gender binary by instating a variety of policies that limit the participation of those who do not fit neatly into the binary, such as trans and intersex athletes.

Stryker challenges the relationship between sex and gender, demonstrating that the two are not inherently connected. She questions why when women partake in traditionally unfeminine tasks that their “feminine respectability is called into question” (Stryker 2007, 65). Women’s and marginalized athletes’ gender performance is often questioned by the media as they enter a socially understood masculine sphere. In order to regulate this, the International Olympic Committee instituted a variety of gender tests beginning in the 1930s to police women’s performances of gender and restrict their participation in the Games. Stryker further questions the conflation of “natural” and true (Stryker 2007, 66), as is the case with the medical

community's discourse with the word natural. Medical professionals describe the gender/sex binary as natural, and because of society's preoccupation with objective science as truth, society believes the binary to be true and stable. Thus, Olympics policies are based on this construction of the gender binary as the IOC attempts to fit all athletes into the gender binary with little to no regard for the well-being of the athlete in question. Punitive gender tests, which have evolved under a variety of different names, discipline and embarrass athletes who do not conform to normative definitions of gender and hegemonic femininity, which are based on white ideals. This paper analyzes the damaging repercussions of these gender tests in the example of South African runner, Caster Semenya. The experiences of Chris Mosier, the first openly trans athlete to compete for Team USA in a world championship, "calls attention to contradictions in how we tend to think about gender, sex, and sexuality" (Stryker 2007, 68) because his presence destabilizes the gender/sex binary upon which the Olympics were built.

### **Methodology**

This research takes an intersectional approach to analyze the inclusion/exclusion of women and minority groups in the Olympic Games by utilizing Black Feminist frameworks. This paper critically examines the intersections of race, class, gender, and sexuality and its effects on women and minorities' involvement in the Games. "Social power works to exclude or marginalize those who are different" (Crenshaw 1991, 1242) based on their varying identities if they do not fit the normative standards of femininity and beauty, like many women athletes. Athletes who are not white, heterosexual, cisgender, or do not possess normative standards of beauty face specific forms of oppression from the Olympic Industry and the media, attempting to limit their participation in the Games. By using an intersectional lens, this research reflects the ways in which women are oppressed differently based on their race, class, gender, sexuality and

social context of the time in which they competed. By employing a comparative case-study analysis of athletes with a variety of identities over time, this paper demonstrates how IOC policies and the media map gender performativity differently on different bodies. I examine their unique matrix of identities and lived experiences as marginalized, high-performance athletes.

This research uses four case studies to evaluate IOC policies and media treatment of each track and field athlete. The case studies range from 1932-2016 in order to demonstrate how policies and treatment have changed over time. Babe Didrikson and Tidy Pickett both qualified for the 1932 Games for track and field and came from working-class backgrounds. The two athletes differ in their racial identity, Didrikson being a racist, white woman and Pickett being a Black woman, both existing within the Jim Crow Era of the United States. At this time in Olympic history, there were no women or people of color on the IOC ("Olympic Museum: Members of the International Olympic Committee," 2017) to represent the women and minority athletes and their interests.

The next case study is the case of Caster Semenya, a South African sprinter, who was forced by the International Association of Athletics Federation (IAAF) and the IOC to undergo a mortifying and dehumanizing gender verification test because in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Olympic Industry became obsessed with ensuring that men were not posing as women in order to win Olympic medals. Semenya has a sexual development disorder (DSD) (Wells 2010, 303), where her chromosomal make-up challenges the IOC's definitions of man and woman since they were based wholly on chromosomes and biology. The last case study is that of Chris Mosier, the first openly trans athlete to compete in a world championship for Team USA in a duathlon, an event that is not a part of the Olympic Program. However, Mosier forced the International Olympic Committee, National Olympic Committees, and International

Federations to reevaluate their stance on trans athletes' participation in the Games, which previously had classist biases.

### **Literature Review**

There is a wide range of literature published surrounding the Olympics' definition of the categories men and women and how the Olympic governing bodies have come to those definitions. Helen Lenskyj in *Gender Politics and the Olympic Industry* (2012) discusses how gender is created in the Olympic Industry. Historically masculinity is defined by doing, while femininity is defined as passively being (Lenskyj 2012, 12). When women partake in doing, like sports or other traditionally perceived masculine activities, their femininity is called into question. Gender in reality is multifaceted, fluid, unstable and cannot be properly defined in a binary system. Historically, white men have controlled women's bodies, particularly in sports. For years, only light exercise was appropriate for women because anything more threatened their reproductive capacity (Lenskyj 2012, 15), which reflects society's opinion that women's only role in society is to produce children. Once women were allowed to participate in a greater multitude of sports, sex testing became a commonly used practice by the IOC in order to police androgynous women's bodies because they did not fit the heteronormative standards of beauty. Their womanhood was called into question due to their physique. The National and International Olympic Committees, comprised mostly of white men, decided what constituted too much muscle on a woman (Lenskyj 2012, 16). Early women Olympians faced major resistance from the Olympic Industry based on their performances of femininity, which the IOC attempted to regulate by limiting the events in which women can participate based on what was acceptable for middle-class femininity. This precedent set by early IOC decisions affected the number of sports

women had available to them for many decades to come, leaving working-class sports, like track and field, out of the realm of possibilities for women athletes until later in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Kath Woodward discusses in *Sex Power and the Games* (2012) “how power operates in the Olympic Games: the systems and processes through which social relations are forged and generated in what is one of the biggest shows on earth...involving more nations, more spectators and more sports than any other competition and seemingly one of the most democratic and inclusive of sporting events.” Throughout her analyses, Woodward points to the many instances of systematic exclusion that the Olympic Industry perpetuates and its varying effects on athletes, sports, and spectators. Because the Olympics are the largest sporting event in the world, they have far reaching effects on many people’s daily lives, particularly the athletes that have been and are excluded because of their gender identity. The power structures that the Olympics exist within perpetuate a variety of injustices and inequalities that harm marginalized athletes because of their gender, sexual, racial, or class identity. By challenging these power structures, Woodward believes that Olympic Industry is forced to transform itself and build a truly inclusive Olympiad so that athletes of all kinds, particularly excluded people of color, women, working-class, and gender non-conforming people, have a space and place to participate at the highest level in sport – the Olympic Games.

### **Analysis**

#### **Babe Didrikson**

Mildred “Babe” Didrikson was a trailblazer of her time in the sporting world. She rejected the ideals of hegemonic femininity through her dress, actions, demeanor, and class location. She challenged the IOC’s and society’s reliance on the social construction of gender through her participation in the track and field events in the 1932 Olympic Games in Los



Angeles. Track and field was considered a sport for the working man, because there was no need for expensive equipment or club memberships in order to participate, like many Olympic events – tennis, golf, sailing, fencing, and cycling – that made the program of the first few Olympiads. The IOC and hosting National Olympic Committees ensured that the Olympic Games remained a class-oriented spectacle, by employing the amateurism rule. In the infancy of the Modern Games, the definition of an amateur was “drawn up by the respective International Federations of Sport” (*Olympic Charter* 1930, 24), meaning that the definition varied according to individual events. The definition of amateur typically excluded any athlete who received any compensation for his or her participation in sport or participated in manual labor for a living (Guttman 2002, 12). Thus, the amateurism rule made it difficult for working-class athletes to participate in the Games because they needed compensation for their sporting labor in order to survive. The IOC and International Federations used the amateurism rule as a way to exclude the working class and abide by de Coubertin’s attachment to Victorian values, believing that all athletes should be of the genteel class. Didrikson, as a working-class woman faced a lot of resistance from the governing bodies. However, she found solace in working for Employers’ Casualty, a company in Dallas, TX, for \$75 per month (Pieroth 1996, 27) and participated on their sporting teams for no compensation but rather a sponsorship, abiding by the amateurism rule. Therefore, Didrikson found a way to participate in the Games and challenge the Olympic Industry’s construction of middle-class femininity.

Acceptable sports for women were limited to those only accessible to middle-class women (Pieroth 1996, 27). As Hill Collins discussed, hegemonic femininity is middle-class, white femininity, meaning that if women were allowed to compete in sports, it had to be middle-class acceptable sports. However, with the inclusion of track and field, Babe had an outlet to

assert her athletic prowess as a working-class athlete. The media attempted to control Didrikson's antics by belittling her accomplishments via rhetorical tactics that undermined her femininity. Routinely, the media represented her as mannish, butch, boyish, and Amazonian. In "From the 'Muscle Moll' to the 'Butch' Ballplayer: Mannishness, Lesbianism, and Homophobia in U.S. Women's Sport," Susan Cahn (1993) discusses the historical context of women in sport and the stereotypes that have become ingrained in international culture of women in sport as lesbians. Cahn argues that the stereotyping of female athletes as lesbian created a collective culture in which women find support. "The 'maleness' of sport derived from a gender ideology which labeled aggression, physicality, competitive spirit, and athletic skill as masculine attributes necessary for achieving true manliness" (Cahn 1993, 344). By this definition, women and femininity had no place in the sporting world because of the dichotomous definition of gender, where masculinity and femininity did not overlap. By referring to Didrikson with these coded terms for lesbian and man, the media alluded to Didrikson's femininity as deviant and not preferred. Sport threatens femininity and the attachment of femininity and womanhood to reproduction, motherhood, and domesticity. Women who deviate from this are viewed as undesirable for the heterosexual male gaze and therefore not a "real" woman – just as Didrikson was.

For example, Didrikson was branded a "muscle moll" by *Vanity Fair* in 1932 (Cayleff 1992, 30) and "perpetually battled the image of a creature not-quite-female" (Cayleff 1992, 30) because of her sporting prowess and crass media persona. Because of these perceived masculine traits and "deficient femininity" (Cayleff 1992, 29), she incited fear in the press and all its readers of lesbianism and a "third sex" in women's sport (Cayleff 1992, 29). However, Didrikson thrived in her tomboyhood and enjoyed its alignment with the word unbeatable, but

hated the assumption of her abnormality. “In fact, ‘boyishness’ was tolerable and even engaging; ‘mannishness,’ on the other hand, insinuated a confirmed condition out of which she would not grow. The latter charge was the greater of the two insults and confirmed her abnormality” (Cayleff 1992, 29). However, Didrikson channeled her negative portrayals in the press in order to gain a greater spotlight in the sporting world.

The 1932 Olympic Games were pivotal for women athletes. Track and field was admitted into the Olympic program for women in the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam (Guttman 2002, 47). After the 800m race, women collapsed in exhaustion. The IOC, still comprised entirely of white, upper-class men, felt that women should not be allowed to compete in those events in the 1932 Games in order to protect their fragile bodies. Even Pope Pius XI denounced women’s participation in track and field events in the 1928 Games (Ruth 2000, 51). *The Chicago Tribune* wrote on August 3, 1928 in an article entitled “5 Women Track Stars Collapse in Olympic Race” by William Shirer that the first five women to finish the race collapsed in exhaustion. The author referred to the exhausted athletes as “slim,” “little,” and frequently mentioning that they fell unconscious after the race and needed to be “revived” (Shirer 1928, 21).

In the same article, Shirer also discussed at length the many male athletes who also collapsed in exhaustion after their events, but their names did not make the headlines as the women’s names did. Shirer even quoted Lawson Robertson, the head coach of the United States track and field team saying, “The event ought to be cut out. It’s too much for any woman” (Shirer 1998, 21). The media and the Olympic Industry resisted the integration of women in traditionally masculine sports because it disrupted the social order of women remaining entirely in the domestic sphere. The media emphasized the struggles of women athletes in order to

support the argument of protecting women's fragile health by disallowing women's participation in Olympic track and field. In the 1932 Games, Didrikson acted as the antithesis of fragile femininity by qualifying for five track and field events and winning by large margins.

Furthermore, Didrikson resisted the Olympics' definition of femininity by rejecting many ideals of hegemonic femininity in the 1930s. She wore her hair in a short bob style, mimicking a man's haircut, as well as rarely wore dresses, which demonstrated her physical deviations from hegemonic femininity and her alignment with masculinity. "That she was female, androgynous to the point of boyish-looking as a youth, coarsely spoken and physically brash made her fame and popularity all the more unique" (Cayleff 1992, 28). Because of these perceived masculine traits and her "deficient femininity," she incited fear in the press and all its readers of lesbianism and a "third sex" in women's sport (Cayleff 1992, 29). As Hill Collins argues, in order to be viewed by bystanders as feminine, women must not be like men. This is demonstrated when the press questioned her femininity because of Didrikson's perceived alignment with masculinity. The press simultaneously scrutinized and praised Didrikson, first for her deviance, then for her undeniable athletic ability. She was frequently referred to as a "muscle moll," "Amazon," and "creature not quite female" (Cayleff 1992, 30), making her appear unattractive to men around her. Because "female athleticism was contrary to heterosexual appeal" (Cahn 1993, 348), it is assumed that since men did not desire mannish women, women desired women. Heterosexuality is a major tenet of womanhood (Hill Collins 2004, 197) because womanhood is closely linked to motherhood. Didrikson's rejection of these ideals made her a controversial athlete in the Olympics, but it was her persistence and outstanding athletic performances that paved the way for women in perceived masculine sports, like track and field, for decades to come after her Olympic career ended.

By challenging the understanding of femininity, Didrikson faced extreme scrutiny by the press and sport governing bodies. She defied the norms of the time by being outspoken, competitive, and nearly unbeatable – even challenging Will Rogers, a famous comedian, to any sport. He conceded that he would rather face an easier opponent than Didrikson (Pieroth 1996, 95). Babe aligned herself with masculinity by challenging men to sporting events in order to psychologically challenge her women competitors but also to resist the ideals of femininity. However, these ideals were reinforced through uniforms as governed by the United States Olympic Committee. The USOC forced women to wear white skirts, white blouses and white boots, alluding to their purity as women, at the 1932 Opening Ceremony (Pieroth 1995, 95). This was an attempt to confine women athletes to the acceptable standards of heteronormative feminine beauty in order to combat their masculine characteristics and participation in masculine athletic events.

The press also labeled her Viking-like, in addition to an Amazon, to paint her as a threat to the civilized world, as Vikings were understood to be barbaric. By labeling her performance of femininity as unimportant and deviant, the press placed Didrikson in a category by itself – one that was not fully woman (Pieroth 1996, 32). “Babe Didrikson was a woman whose physical presence ‘scared’ male reporters” (Pieroth 1996, 32) and threatened the patriarchal hierarchy because a feminine body threatened masculine power. “She could hardly be allowed to become a role model to others” (Pieroth 1996, 32) or else more women could learn to perform this threatening femininity and overturn male supremacy. The USOC did not disallow her participation in the Games under the role model to the sporting world clause in the *Olympic Charter* because of her privilege as a white woman.

However, Didrikson settled down after her Olympic career to marry a wealthy man and carry out a normative life. She did this so that the press would stop their harassment of her by adhering to Hill Collins' (2004) marriage/wealth benchmark of hegemonic femininity as well as prove her heterosexuality. She continued to evolve into an acceptable woman by eventually taking up golf (Cayleff 1992, 31), which was an appropriately feminine sport because of its alignment to the middle and upper classes. Didrikson's existence and participation in the Games challenged the social construction of gender as she resisted the strict confines of femininity that the Olympic governing bodies and the media attempted to force upon her. But eventually, Didrikson succumbed to societal pressures to conform to appropriate femininity, which she had access to as a white woman.

### **Tidye Pickett**

Tidye Pickett was a Black woman, track and field athlete from the South Side of Chicago. Because of her status as a Black woman in the early 1900s, she was not granted the same rights as her contemporary, Babe Didrikson. Pickett struggled to find a structured outlet for her athleticism, so she began to utilize Washington Park – a public outdoor park located near her home in Englewood (Osgood 2016). Pickett's athleticism was so outstanding that city officials recruited her to join the Chicago Park District track team (Osgood 2016), where she trained for various track and field events. Because of Pickett's racial and class location, she did not have access to the same opportunities that Didrikson did. A company sponsored Didrikson, giving her a stipend and a platform to hone her craft, while Pickett was left to fend for herself in Washington Park until city officials noticed her. "For many Black female athletes in this period, the starting point of their journey to the Olympics was crushing poverty, the result of institutionalized racism in the rural South and urban North" (Gissendanner 1996, 172).

Many Black men, and particularly women, athletes, due to the gendered division of funding through colleges and universities before the passage of Title IX, relied heavily on these community programs to propel them to success. Pickett won countless foot races in parks across Chicago, winning many prizes. She told Northern Illinois University Alumni News that in her childhood, “Everything I entered, I won” (*Northern Illinois Alumni News* 1984), demonstrating her athletic prowess for the entire city of Chicago to see. Once she gained citywide recognition, Pickett was invited to compete in the Olympic trials because John Brooks, a fellow Black track and field athlete destined for the Olympics, found her talents unrivaled (Grossman 2016). Pickett’s future was dependent on a man’s investment in her talent because as a woman of color, she lacked the opportunities and financial capital to propel herself to the Olympics alone.

Pickett faced extensive systemic oppression because of her race, class, and gendered location in the 1920s and 30s. Because of her race, she was not allowed to participate in many appropriately feminine sports, like golf and tennis. There were segregation laws that were in many places, like “whites only” country clubs. Track and field was not seen as an appropriate sport for women because of the contemporary scientific belief of the potential damage to women’s reproductive system. In the 1928 Olympic Games in Amsterdam, women were finally allowed to compete in selected track and field events, which included the 100m, 800m, 4x100 relay, high jump, and the discus throw (IOC Factsheet: Women 2016, 1). The 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles were to be a litmus test for the future of women’s track and field, based on the performances of the 1932 women athletes. Their performances were used to determine the eligibility and longevity of women’s events in the Games, after controversy over women’s ability to participate in the 800m race, as discussed in the Didrikson case study. Pickett’s participation as a young girl in the public parks of Chicago challenged this assumption. She proved time and

time again with her wins that women were not only capable of participating in track and field events, but competitive.

After qualifying for the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles in the 100m race and relay, Pickett began training with the United States Olympic team with her contemporary Babe Didrikson. Pickett was one of two Black women to qualify for the American Olympic team in the 1932 Games with her teammate Louise Stokes. The two women faced extensive racism from their white teammates and coaches. While on the train to Los Angeles, the two women were segregated to a separate car from their white teammates and not allowed to eat with them (Gissendanner 1996, 173). “All the other girls had private rooms, went to the fund-raising banquet, were interviewed by reporters. Louise and I shared a room in the attic and ate our dinners upstairs on trays” (*Northern Illinois University Alumni News* 1984), Pickett recalls her stay in Denver, Colorado at the Brown Palace Hotel. The hotel was a luxurious one, meant for prestigious guests, including U.S. Presidents and some of the country’s richest citizens. “African Americans were almost never seen there. Nevertheless, it was chosen for the Denver stopover of the Olympic team” (Weisbord 2015, 6). The two Black women were not invited to the fund-raising banquet, which benefited the women’s Olympic track team. The two Black Olympians were treated as second-class athletes compared to their white counterparts due to the institutionalized racism that existed in the United States in the 1930s. Team officials did not challenge the segregation of the businesses in which they stayed, instead they embraced the discrimination and treated two of their athletes as lesser people due to their internal prejudices that were widely accepted in the United States in the 1930s.

Furthermore, their teammates did not treat Pickett and Stokes well. Babe Didrikson, who was from the deep south of Texas, did not hesitate to demonstrate her disdain for her Black



teammates. She pulled pranks on them frequently and even dumped ice water on them while they slept in their shared room and the white women athletes each had their own private accommodations. Didrikson's racism was not a secret – she is cited using racial slurs when referring to African Americans throughout her entire life in Texas (Gissendanner 1996, 173). One of her school teachers said, “She really did hate Blacks in those days. I think she went out of her way to antagonize them and, truly, to hurt them” (Johnson and Williamson 1977, 84-85). Pickett said, “That big girl from Texas, Babe Didrikson, who won so many medals, just plain didn't like me, didn't want me on the team... it was prejudice, pure and simple” (*Northern Illinois University Alumni News* 1984). The experiences of Stokes and Pickett with Didrikson are representative of the many forms of racism from the Olympic Industry and its athletes. These situations were unique to the athletes who differed from the Olympic Industry's preferred athlete profile. In other words, athletes who were not white, upper-class men, received unfair treatment in some form by the Olympic Industry and the media, who policed these normative standards.

The prejudices held by the USOC and Olympic coaches affected the make-up of the United States' track and field team. NOCs hold the right to determine which athletes are appropriate for competition, based on the arbitrary standard of being a role model for the sporting world (IOC Factsheet: Responsibilities 2013, 3). Tidye Pickett and Louise Stokes qualified based strictly on their athletic merit for the 1932 Olympic Games, but neither were allowed to participate in either of the events in which they qualified because coach George Vreeland replaced them. After facing weeks of poor treatment in hopes of participating in the 1932 Olympic Games, two days before their events, Tidye Pickett and Louise Stokes were replaced by two white athletes with slower times simply because of their race. The coaches conducted a secret decision-making process (Gissendanner 1996, 174) where their personal

biases affected the composition of the American Olympic team – ensuring that it consisted of only white women. Hill Collins (2004) asserts that Black women cannot obtain hegemonic femininity because it is so deeply rooted in whiteness. Pickett and Stokes were two Black women competing in a masculine sport. Because of their difference from hegemonic femininity coupled with the racism that was rampant in the United States Olympic staff, Pickett and Stokes were overlooked and disallowed to compete in the Games. They did not conform to the mold in which white men wished Olympic women to fit, so their participation was limited. Pickett and Stokes were expected to “adopt behaviors and appearances that would exude a ‘feminine respectability,’ sometimes at odds with urban and rural Black working-class women’s cultural traditions” (Gissendanner 1996, 175). The idea of feminine respectability is based wholly on whiteness and systematically excludes and subordinates women of color (Hill Collins 2004, 193).

Pickett and Stokes were marginally better than the white athletes who were chosen to compete in the relay over them. A sportswriter for the *Afro-American* stated after Pickett and Stokes were excluded from the relay, that “for us to be considered, we have to be ten times as good as those of the other race” (Pieroth 1996, 111). Black men athletes like Jesse Owens, Eddie Tolan, and Ralph Metcalfe were able to overcome exclusion based on race because of their significant superiority compared to white athletes. The USOC allowed them to compete because the coaching staff wanted medals and did not care about the color of the athlete who won the medal for the United States. Because Stokes and Pickett were only marginally better than their white counterparts, they were more susceptible to racialize exclusion (Gissendanner 1996, 174). But, Black men athletes had many more opportunities to hone their athleticism, unlike Pickett who was left to learn in the public parks of Chicago since track and field is an acceptable sport for all men. Because of the lack of infrastructure to develop Black women’s talent, like those that

existed in white communities and for Black men, Black women were the most susceptible group to racial exclusion. Their identities as Black women limited the opportunities they had to improve their athleticism and event times. Louise Stokes commented on her and Pickett's exclusion saying, "The only thing that would have helped us was to have a man stand up for us as well as going to all the meetings. This is what happened when we didn't have anyone to support us" (Davis 1992, 131). Again, the success of Black women athletes was tied directly to men – Pickett gained Olympic attention because of John Brooks and maybe would have participated in the 1932 Olympic Games with another man's voice in her corner during the secret coaching deliberation. This is proof of the rampant sexism, racism, and systematic silencing of women's voices in the first Olympiads.

There were wide-reaching effects of the exclusion of Pickett and Stokes in the 1932 Olympic Games. It was not because of their athletic abilities, but rather, their racial identity. "The exclusion of Tidye Pickett and Louise Stokes from the 1932 Olympics remains a pivotal point in Olympic history where politics and racial tensions threatened any future possibilities for Black female athletes to compete on a world stage in representing the United States in the Olympic Games" (Emerson 1999, 9). Their exclusion exposed the innate political power of the Olympics because it disregarded the Games' motto: *Citius, Altius, Fortius* (Higher, Faster, Stronger). Pickett and Stokes competed faster than her white counterparts but were not granted a spot on the Olympic team. Their exclusion contradicted the entirety of the Olympic Movement's mantra. However, it was after their exclusion that the Black community created the necessary infrastructure to cultivate successful, high-performance athletes. With the creation of the Tuskegee Institute and other community based athletic programs that trained young Black men

and women in various track and field events, Black men and women athletes began a steady integration in high-performance sport and increased participation in Olympic events.

The mainstream white media's coverage of Pickett differed greatly with Black media's coverage of her successes. In the *Chicago Tribune*, a mainstream newspaper, Betty Eckersall titles her article: "New Playground Star Ties National 60 Yard Record" (1932), referring to Pickett, but with a photograph of a white woman, Delores Glenn, above the headline. Pickett is referred to as a "colored sprinter from the Board of Education playground" (Eckersall 1932, 3), while the other women, who were all white, were differentiated from Pickett. Eckersall made clear that the white women trained at "sites in different sections of the city" of Chicago from Pickett and other Black competitors. However, in the *Chicago Defender*, a Black publication, writers exulted Pickett's successes. The headline reads: "Nation's Track Stars Bid for Olympics: Tidye Pickett, a Chicago Girl, Equals Record" (1932). The headline gives more humanity to Pickett in *The Defender* versus *The Tribune*. Pickett is named outright in the headline while in *The Tribune's* coverage, she is referred to ambiguously in the headline with a white woman emblazoned above the headline. *The Defender* even refers to Pickett as "the day's fastest human" (*The Chicago Defender* 1932), as a way to reinforce her equality to her white counterparts even though she was a Black athlete. The use of the word human demonstrates that Black Americans were human, even though they were not seen or represented as human in the mainstream press. The author's diction choices throughout the article revolve around equity – Pickett "equaled" the time of a white athlete (*The Chicago Defender* 1932), demonstrating that she is equal to a white woman. *The Defender's* coverage of Pickett humanizes her in direct contrast to *The Tribune's* coverage and brings light to her accomplishments in order to celebrate them. *The Tribune* highlights her differences to the white athletes that competed in the trials in order to isolate her.

Because she was only 17 years old in 1932, Pickett qualified for the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany four years after her deliberate removal from the 1932 American Olympic team. The Berlin Games created a particularly hostile environment to be a Black athlete because the Games were hosted in Nazi Germany, where Hitler and his government openly loathed all racial minorities and viewed them as a threat to the superiority of the Aryan race (*Portland Herald Press* 1998). The IOC approved the XI Olympiad to be held in a fascist dictatorship, where only white athletes were accepted. This decision to marginalize athletes around the world who did not fit within the confines set by Hitler's ideologies surrounding race, demonstrates that the IOC was motivated by their own prejudices through the disregard of the rights of Black and Jewish athletes. "IOC President Henri de Baillet-Latour asked the German government for a written guarantee that it would honor the values established in the Olympic Charter: that all Game participants are equal" (Kessler 2011, 126). However, USOC president, Avery Brundage, who's sexism and racism were no secret to his contemporaries, was convinced of the health and equality of the Third Reich after a visit with a Nazi representative. He said that reports of the mistreatment of racial minorities in Germany were "exaggerated" (Kessler 2011, 128). He supported the Berlin Games and the United States' participation in the Games, even though it was in direct contradiction with the Olympic ideals and the health and safety of American athletes.

In these two Olympiads, Pickett became the first Black American woman to compete in an Olympiad. She qualified and competed in the 80m hurdles making it to the semi-finals in Berlin, but she struck a hurdle, disqualifying and simultaneously injuring herself. Because Pickett did not qualify for the finals, she is often forgotten in history. She overcame various oppressive forces because of her race, class, and gender identities. She became the first Black

American woman to compete in the Olympic Games, specifically the 1936 Olympic Games in Nazi Germany which is a uniquely hostile environment for a woman of color. Her accomplishments are anything but forgettable in Modern Olympic history.

### **Caster Semenya**

Caster Semenya's participation in the Olympic Games challenged the IOC's biological construction of sex and gender by proving the variations within human chromosomal and hormonal make-up in her well-publicized gender verification testing. The 2<sup>nd</sup> World Conference on the Hormonal and Genetic Basis of Sex Differentiation and Hot Topics in Endocrinology (WCHGSD) was held in Miami and the IOC conducted a closed door two-day IOC Gender Symposium with selected specialists on the subject of sex differentiation disorders to establish new and refined guidelines to handle ambiguous gender cases more aptly. Leading up to the meeting, the IOC Medical Commission said the athletes in question should be treated medically in "compliance with up-to-date procedures" (Wells 2010, 303), implying that athletes should undergo cosmetic surgeries to fit within the gender binary, which is based almost entirely on the aesthetic of genitalia. In this conference, the IOC had the opportunity to reflect on its dependence on biological terms in regard to gender verification tests. However, they continued to base their ideas of fairness on biological assumptions that men are inherently superior to women in athletic ability. The IOC relies on bioscience to resolve major controversies that it is faced with because bioscience is perceived as legitimate and truthful.

Semenya presents herself as a muscular Black woman with broad shoulders, narrow hips, and an athletic build. The Olympics has a long history of questioning a woman's womanhood – whether due to their sexual orientation, their gender nonconformity, their physicality or their race. Black women historically have been perceived as outside the scope of femininity (Hill

Collins 2004, 193). Because of the IOC's fear of gender nonconforming women and men parading as women in the Games, they instituted sex testing in 1966 and it continued to the Sydney Olympic Games in 2000. These sex tests were a way to police women's gender performativity and "discipline sex" (Lenskyj 2012, 111). Only women have been gender tested or undergone "femininity control" (*Sarajevo Olympic Report* 1984, 146). "The tests were not targeted at deception by more capable individuals but by a more capable sex" (Rupert 2011, 358). These tests were inherently sexist because sport ideologies understand that traits like strength and aggression guarantee men athletic superiority in sport. These sex tests were scientifically flawed because of the technology of the time and humiliated athletes as their genitals and their naked bodies were inspected to ensure that they "fit" the IOC's standards of feminine and masculine (Lenskyj 2012, 111). These examinations soon became internal pelvic exams to search for hidden testes and a cell test that checks for chromosomal make-up of an athlete even though "it had not been proven that an extra Y chromosome gave women any sporting advantage" (Lenskyj 2012, 111).

There is no proof that a sexual development disorder (DSD) or atypical chromosomal and hormonal make-up create an athletic advantage (Rupert 2011, 345), yet the IOC still creates policies that favor masculinity over femininity and penalizes women for not adhering to normative standards of beauty by questioning their femininity. The link between testosterone and athleticism is another unfounded assumption. There is a 10% overlap in levels of testosterone in elite female athletes and male athletes (Wells 2010, 206). The amount of testosterone did not have a direct correlation to athletic performance (Wells 2010, 306). Athletes, regardless of gender, with the highest levels of testosterone were not the most dominant (Wells 2010, 306). Because of these variations within the human genetic make-up and the uncertainty that intersex

and DSDs provide an inherent and unfair advantage, it leaves the opportunity to create a space in sport for intersex people and other gender non-conformers. At the WCHGSD, many medical scientists, doctors, and social scientists agreed that the gender spectrum is more of a social issue than a medical one. However, the IOC decided to focus on a medical approach to gender and sex after the closed-door IOC Gender Symposium (Wells 2010, 307).

Historically, women have only been gender tested, never men. This begs the question, what makes an Olympian a woman? Clearly the subjective heteronormative standards set by the International Olympic Committee govern appropriate womanhood and femininity. The gender testing of only women sets the precedent that men's performances will always be superior to women's, so the IOC must ensure that no men participate in women's events. This fear is not reciprocated of a woman participating in a men's sport (Lenskyj 2012, 111) – for example diving or floor in gymnastics, where the traditionally smaller build of women give them an advantage, but male divers and gymnasts never undergo these rigorous and demeaning tests. “Feminist scholars have shown how female athletes who display superior athleticism frequently face accusations that they are not ‘real women’ or not ‘real biological females.’ They are masculinized, accused of lesbianism, or even recast as men” (Dworkin 2013, 43).

Because of Semenya's track and field successes, coupled with her appearance and race, her competitors and the media recast her as a man, deeming her unfit to compete in women's events. Because of this sexist and racist bias, Semenya was forced to undergo unfair and invasive tests to prove her womanhood. These tests revealed that she has Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome (AIS) (Wells 2010, 309), which means that her body was unable to process androgens, like testosterone, even though she possesses XY chromosomes but no male sex organs (US National Institute of Health, 2017). Thus, Semenya was raised as and identifies as a



woman because she was socialized as one, but because of these gender tests, it was revealed that she is intersex.

Semenya's identity as a Black woman further ostracized her. The IOC is still made up mostly of white, upper class men. By white men setting the standards of womanhood and femininity, the IOC is participating in imperial logics to control Black women's bodies and portray them as deviant from appropriate femininity. Throughout history, Black women's sexuality and femininity has consistently been cast as deviant (Hill Collins 2004, 198). After the Berlin championship where she won gold, Semenya was greeted with welcome and celebratory arms by her fellow South Africans because she now was a symbol of national pride due to the close link between nationhood and sport. The scrutiny of Semenya's gender and accusations of hermaphroditism seemed to offend the South African people since it was an attack on Semenya's normalcy and therefore South African normalcy (Dworkin 2013, 48) in a post-Apartheid South Africa. The head of the South African athletes, Leonard Cheune said, "Who are white people to question the make-up of an African girl?... It is outrageous for people from other countries to tell us 'We want to take her to a laboratory because we don't like her nose or her figure.' I say this is racism, pure and simple" (Lenskyj 2012, 112).

The results of Semenya's gender test were not kept private as they should be, as is the standard in the medical community under doctor-patient confidentiality. Her results were plastered all over the media, with one Australian newspaper, *The Sydney Daily Telegraph*, calling her a "hermaphrodite" which is an outdated and offensive term, and saying she possesses three times the testosterone of a "normal female" and that she "has no womb or ovaries" (Tucker 2009). *The Sydney Daily Telegraph* has since removed the article from their site due to the intense scrutiny they received from the global community because of their insensitivity (*The*

*Sydney Daily Telegraph* 2009). This begs the question, what is normal? Women possess a range of testosterone levels in their bodies depending on diet, age, activity, and diagnoses.

Furthermore, men possessing higher levels of testosterone can theoretically give them an advantage also, but this goes untested. Men who possess genetic oddities that give them an advantage in the sporting arena are referred to as superstars and their mutations are a gift, where women who possess mutations are seen as freaks, not really women, and their gifts are a “liability” (Lenskyj 2012, 112).

Furthermore, the media has been just as scrutinizing as Olympic Governing bodies regarding Semenya’s gender performance. The media released premature results of Semenya’s gender test that took place after a competitor accused her of being a man in the 2009 IAAF Track and Field World Championships. The International Olympic Committee began a long, arduous parade of gender tests to certify that Semenya was categorized as a woman. The British newspaper *The Telegraph*, a conservative right-wing news source, leaked a report entitled “Caster Semenya ‘is a hermaphrodite,’ tests show” citing that she has a “chromosomal abnormality that gives her both male and female characteristics” (Hart, 2009). *The Telegraph’s* reports were released before the IAAF and the IOC released official results of the examination of Semenya’s gender, along with many reports from the Australian media disseminating similar information. Through the news media’s coverage of Semenya, they framed her as the Other by using rhetoric deeming her outside of the norm. By using the term hermaphrodite, the author of the piece sought to illustrate Semenya as not wholly a woman and therefore, an illegitimate competitor.

The Western mainstream media has launched multiple attacks on Semenya’s gender identity. In the *Wall Street Journal*, author Sara Germano (2016) discusses the question that

plagued the 2016 Olympics – “How do you feel about Caster Semenya competing here?” This question was asked at a variety of press conferences during the Rio Olympic Games to many athletes that were not even Semenya’s competitors. The press has been scrutinizing Semenya since the first challenge to her gender was posed in 2009 after the IAAF Track and Field World Championships. The media emphasized challenges to her gender by other athletes who felt it was unfair for Semenya to compete. By constantly questioning if it is fair for Semenya to compete in women’s events, the media was systematically discrediting her impressive track and field resume, much like the media did to Babe Didrikson. Her athletic accolades include Olympic gold and silver medals, as well as a gold and silver medal in the IAAF Track and Field World Championships. Pierre Weiss, the secretary general of the IAAF, did not quell the media storm, but instead commented that Semenya is a woman, “but maybe not 100 per cent” (Hart 2009). Not only did the media police Semenya’s gender performance into the binary system, but IAAF officials did as well. The Olympic Industry did not support or protect its athlete, but rather compounded her alienation.

Caster Semenya gave the IOC the perfect opportunity to create policies to more aptly deal with intersex athletes. Athletes with DSDs are treated in medical terms, even if it poses no threat to the athlete’s health, with hormone treatments and surgery before admittance into the Olympic Games. The IOC forces young women to undergo hormone therapy even if it is not necessary for their health in order to satisfy their arbitrary standards of femininity (Lenskyj 2012, 114) that are based on an unstable sex binary. Hormones are accepted when they are controlled and dictated by the IOC, but are unacceptable in any other circumstance, like naturally occurring in an athlete’s body. By requiring hormone treatments and cosmetic surgery, if necessary, the IOC is limiting the participation of intersex athletes and athletes with DSDs because these treatments

are incredibly expensive. This refers to the IOC encouraging a type of middle-class femininity, where only women of a certain class and race are considered women because they can afford these treatments or are not tested in the first place. “Existing policies have dealt with cases of ambiguous gender as a matter of competitive fairness, claiming that gender verification ensures that men and women with ‘unfair male-like physical characteristics’ are prevented from exercising their inherent athletic advantages against ‘normal’ women athletes” (Wells 2010, 303). This idea of normal is also a highly contested one since there is many varying hormone levels and chromosomal make-up among individuals. The IOC decided to approach the question of gender from a medical standpoint and refer athletes to experts for testing, diagnosis, and treatment. These are mandatory and if refused, the athlete was not allowed to participate (Wells 2010, 303). Thus, the IOC essentially coerces athletes into varying treatments under the threat of disqualification from the thing the athlete has worked their entire life to obtain – an Olympic medal.

Semenya has been unjustly treated by a variety of sporting governing bodies and the media because of their reliance on physical appearance to determine gender, as Hill Collins (2004) asserts that aesthetics are pivotal in the definition of femininity and womanhood. Since Semenya is a Black woman, she does not have access to the physical aesthetics associated with womanhood because the ideals of femininity are constructed around whiteness. Because of this prejudice based on appearance, the IOC Medical Commission explored her body in a way to exploit her femininity as deviant from the norms that are accepted by society. These invasive tests that were then leaked to the public humiliating her and exposing her genetic make-up to millions of people, without her consent, a direct violation of medical ethical codes (Wiesemann 2011, 217). The IAAF attempted to discredit the newspaper by releasing an official statement,

which read, “The IAAF can state that statements in the Australian press should be treated with caution as they are not official statements by the IAAF” (Smith 2009). However, cautioning readers does not rebuke the claim of hermaphroditism, especially when an IAAF official comments on Semenya’s perceived abnormality. Therefore, the IAAF and the Olympic Industry empowered the media to continue their abuse of Semenya.

Certain medical scholars even question the ethical nature of the way the media and sport governing bodies handled the sensitive issue of gender in Caster Semenya’s case. The news claiming that Semenya is not wholly a female, is conflating the categories of sex and gender. Because Semenya’s chromosomal composition and hormone levels do not fit within the socially constructed category of female, this does not definitively determine that Semenya cannot compete in the women’s events. The terms woman and female are socially constructed categories based on gender and sex, respectively. The term woman is based on socially accepted roles within the domestic sphere and it is assumed that these women have female genitalia. However, female is a biological term which is based on the aesthetic of genitalia, chromosomal make-up, and hormone levels. Both categories are constructed within a binary system which negates the many variations in human hormone levels, chromosomal make-up, and gender performance. It is problematic to rely on the biological, Claudia Wiesemann offers a unique perspective into the legal privacy protections offered to individuals undergoing genetic testing in “Is There a Right Not to Know One’s Sex? The Ethics of ‘Gender Verification’ in Women’s Sports Competition” (2011) and questions why gender determination tests are not granted the same privileges. Gender verifications have become normalized in recent sporting history, like in the case of Caster Semenya, whose sex has been questioned because of her appearance. In the workplace, there are a variety of laws and policies to protect the privacy of the individual undergoing genetic

tests. The results of the test are not to be used in any way that infringes on “human dignity an individual or for purposes that lead to the stigmatization of an individual” as outlined in Article 7a of the Unesco Declaration on Human Genetic Data (Wiesemann 2011, 216).

However, in sports, athletes are not protected under these types of laws and policies based on the tenet of fairness – it is unjust for a person to compete in the incorrect dichotomous category because the “division by sex is a fundamental prerequisite of fairness” (Wiesemann 2011, 216). The current policy regarding athletes and genetic testing does not comply with the “prevailing ethical and legal provisions on the protection of genetics” (Wiesemann 2011, 216). Ethically, gender testing should be barred from high-performance sport because “individual harm and discrimination outweigh whatever could be achieved for a fair competition by genetic testing” (Wiesemann 2011, 219). The sporting governing bodies must find a new way to detect the unfounded instance of a man trying to pass as woman in a sport competition. Because of the greater potential harm to an athlete, “genetic sex determination in sports should be abolished as soon as possible” (Wiesemann 2011, 219) in order to continue to respect and aid the health of high-performance athletes, both physically, emotionally, and psychologically.

Until 2012, when a competitor questioned another’s sex-gender, the competitor in question must undergo a gender verification test (IOC 2012, 2), which makes the confidentiality of the results impossible and not private (Wiesemann 2011, 218), as is what happened to Caster Semenya. She underwent a year’s worth of testing and waited for the IAAF to decide if she could compete in women’s sports. But within that year, she endured scrutiny from the media around the world, was fetishized, and treated as deviant. Although she was allowed to compete, the harm done by the media and Olympic officials is not easily forgotten. Historically, intersex athletes have been unjustly disqualified from international sports because of the presence of a Y

chromosome and its alignment with cheating (Wiesemann 2011, 218) based on the unfair advantage that anything masculine brings an athlete. These chromosomal conditions typically offer no unfair advantage to the athlete. When athletes exercise their right to not know and refuse to undergo these invasive and potentially psychologically harmful tests, they are deemed frauds (Wiesemann 2011, 218) as if they admitted guilt.

“IOC Regulations on Female Hyperandrogenism” (2012) describes the ways in which to “regulate” intersex women. These guidelines are based on the assumption that testosterone correlates directly to athletic performance and athletic advantage. When in fact, there is no scientific connection between the two. “However, as explained below, intersex female athletes with elevated androgen [testosterone] production give rise to a particular concern in the context of competitive sports, which is referred to as ‘female hyperandrogenism.’” (IOC 2012, 1). The IOC Medical Commission comprises an Expert Panel, which is required to include one genetic expert, one endocrinologist, and one gynecologist, to “evaluate” a case of female hyperandrogenism. A psychologist is not required to be on the panel, but rather suggested. However, a psychologist should also be required as gender identities are a socially constructed phenomenon and one’s identity has many psychological components. This proves the IOC’s refusal to acknowledge the social implications that sex and gender have on an athlete, since a psychologist is not a mandated member of the Expert Panel.

A gender test can be performed when an athlete accuses another athlete of not being a woman, the Chief NOC Medical officer, IOC Medical Commission chairman, or any member of the medical commission think that the athlete is not wholly female – both positions typically held by white men who are in charge of determining a woman’s womanhood (IOC 2012, 2). This is harmful to athletes because bystanders dictate who is woman enough. This was the case with

Caster Semenya: an Italian competitor told the press that she is a man, and immediately afterwards the IOC Medical Commission launched an investigation on Semenya. It is not only unethical, but unkind, to subject athletes to invasive testing based on the opinions of people who have no background in this complex issue. Furthermore, it is problematic that only medical officials are consulted. The document states that the results of the tests shall remain confidential and private in order to respect the athlete (IOC, 2012, 3) but in the case of Semenya, the results were made public by a newspaper in Australia. The IOC Medical Commission holds the responsibility of the “determination of the gender of the competitor” (IOC 2003, 1), this negates the athlete’s agency in his or her identities, as the IOC’s handling of the case of Caster Semenya proves.

In the document, “IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism” (2015) the IOC updated its stance on female hyperandrogenism. It declares that in the case of female hyperandrogenism that rules that limit the participation of women who do not fit the constructed ideals of femininity “should be in place for the protection of women in sport and a promotion of the principles of fair competition.” This document proves the IOC’s attachment to restrictive and oppressive definitions of gender and sex that have no scientific basis, as there is not a direct relationship between hormone levels and athletic success. It continues that “to avoid discrimination, if not eligible for female competition the athlete should be eligible to compete in male competition” (IOC 2015, 3). Not only does this document rely on reductive definitions of male and female, but also ignores the social aspect of sex and gender where women are socialized to play with dolls from a young age, while men are typically exposed to sports at an earlier age. There are many more factors than hormones, genitalia, and



chromosomes that determine gender, but the IOC ignores these social factors that define socially constructed terms – gender and sex.

### **Chris Mosier**

Chris Mosier is the first openly trans athlete qualify for Team USA. Mosier is a trans masculine, white, duathlete. He challenges the biological and social constructions of gender because he underwent biological changes as well as socially transitioned to his masculine identity. Previously, it was required by transgender athletes receive sex reassignment surgery in order to be able to participate. This IOC declaration in 2003 called the “Statement of the Stockholm Consensus on Sex Reassignment in Sports,” stated that athletes who underwent a transition before puberty were to be considered by their preferred identity and could participate. However, if an athlete identified as trans post-puberty, it was required that they undergo hormonal therapy and surgery to adjust the appearance of their genitalia for cosmetic reasons (IOC 2003, 1). Through these expensive requirements for athletes, working-class trans athletes were systematically excluded from participating in the Games. In the Stockholm Consensus, the IOC favored the medical construction of gender and sex and forced athletes to undergo expensive treatments in order to fit within the socially constructed binary and meet the physical aesthetic expectations that are associated with either gender.

However, now the IOC no longer requires surgical intervention, lessening the cost of their eligibility, as of November 2015 in the “IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism.” The IOC still requires strict hormone treatment for some athletes is a particularly gendered ruling, since the hormones of women athletes are more strictly policed than men athletes. “To require surgical anatomical changes as a pre-condition to participation is not necessary to preserve fair competition and may be inconsistent with developing legislation and

notions of human rights” (IOC 2015, 2). The IOC recognizes in this document that the aesthetic of genitalia matching an athletes’ gender identity has no bearing on the athletes’ physical health and well-being, and therefore, it’s outside of their jurisdiction.

Women’s testosterone levels are monitored very closely by Olympic bodies in order to regulate the fear of doping women to improve athletic performance or men imposing as women. Testosterone is closely linked in the eyes of the IOC to athletic prowess, even though there is no scientifically proven link between athleticism and testosterone. Athletes transitioning masculine to feminine (MTF) are required to undergo hormone therapy to regulate the levels of testosterone in the athlete for at least a year. But based on individual evaluations, the athlete could be required to undergo longer treatments and regular IOC sanctioned tests (IOC 2015, 2). Athletes transitioning feminine to masculine (FTM) are allowed to compete “without restriction” (IOC 2015, 2). This demonstrates the IOC’s tendency to police femininity much more strictly than masculinity and it is based on the assumption of the superiority of masculinity. Chris Mosier was allowed to compete “without restriction” because of the assumption that he is not threatening “fair play” as he is now competing in the more competitive men’s events. This rests on the idea of male superiority in sports, which is a sexist logic that is deeply ingrained in Western patriarchal society.

It is also important to note that Mosier is white and privileged because of that identity. He received very little resistance from the IOC and the International Triathlon Union (ITU), the International Federation that governs international duathlons, regarding his gender identification and his right to participate under the “fair play” notion. This is because he is an FTM athlete competing in a men’s event. But Semenya, who is Black, was scrutinized mercilessly in both the London and Rio Olympic Games. Her gender was a topic of debate amongst the IAAF and

media, and was seen as unfair to other women competitors because her physique and hormones did not fit within traditional standards of femininity, which are informed by ideals of whiteness. Black women and their bodies have historically been policed and objectified in Western societies as hypersexual, primitive, and generally lesser than their lighter-skinned counterparts (Bonzagni 2016, 21). “Problems arise when the division of men’s and women’s sport rests not on logical and pragmatic consideration for each sport, but instead relies on outdated and binary modes of thinking that call for the complete and absolute separation of women and men in the majority of athletic pursuits” (Teetzel 2006, 331). The discourse surrounding fairness in the context of the Olympics dictates that women are inherently less athletically capable than men. This makes the inclusion of Chris Mosier a uniquely progressive one that still upholds the patriarchal construction of male superiority and acceptance and women’s subjugation and alienation in sports.

Mosier’s participation on Team USA was groundbreaking, as he directly challenged the stability of the gender binary and its supremacy in the sporting world. However, Mosier received relatively little media attention for his participation in the Duathlon World Championships in 2016, but Semenya’s participation in Rio Olympics in 2016 and IAAF Track and Field World Championships were directly questioned by the media – “How do you feel about Caster Semenya competing here?” (Germano, 2016). However, when Mosier was acknowledged by the media, it was typically positive. He was called a “history maker” by ESPN (Kahrl 2016b), but the coverage of his sporting accomplishments mostly revolves not around his athleticism, but rather his journey to acceptance. The media points out Mosier’s difference to a typical male athlete by referring to him as “slight and spry” (Shapiro, 2015), even though his visible muscular definition demonstrates he is anything but slight. The mainstream media’s coverage and lack of

coverage of Mosier separates him as different from his competitors and teammates because his interviews focus little on his athletic achievements and mostly on his identity. Mosier benefited from his privileged social location as a white man. In the case of Caster Semenya, the media scrutinized her identity and questioned her achievements because of her social location which holds less privilege.

Furthermore, Mosier increased his visibility during the 2016 Rio Games through a Nike Commercial that aired in primetime during the XXXI Olympiad to remind audiences of the IOC's new ruling regarding the participation of trans athletes. In the commercial that is a part of Nike's "Unlimited Courage" series, Mosier is asked a series of questions to which he responds, "I didn't." Nike introduces him as "the first transgender athlete to make the men's national team." The narrator asks, "Hey Chris, how did you know you'd be fast enough to compete against men?" then "Or strong enough?" Mosier replies to both questions, "I didn't" (Nike 2016). Throughout the entire commercial, Mosier is running or biking, which are components of his event, portraying him first and foremost as a high-performance athlete. However, the commercial's pointed questions still reinforce the patriarchal construction of gender roles and performances by men and women athletes. Nike questions how Mosier believed he could be fast enough and strong enough to compete against men. This commercial points to Mosier's difference as a trans athlete from his cis male competitors. A cisgender man would never be asked how he knew if he is strong enough or fast enough to compete against men because it is assumed that he is fast enough and strong enough. The Nike commercial brought visibility and recognition to Mosier in a positive light but rests on problematic assumptions regarding the athletic superiority of one gender over another.

Although Mosier did not compete during the 2016 Rio Olympic Games because his event, the duathlon, is not in the Olympic Program, he initiated change within the Olympic Industry and subsidiary governing bodies, like the ITU. His presence and visibility as a trans high-performance athlete, brought about the recent change that no longer requires athletes to undergo surgical transitions, because Mosier did not fit those criteria (Kahrl, 2016a). Because the IOC is the ultimate authority regarding any question of the Olympic Games and athletes' participation in the Olympic Games, when it makes a decree regarding eligibility, as it did in the case of trans athletes' gender reassignment surgeries, International Federations are very likely to adopt their rules in order to increase participation of trans athletes. In the "IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism" (2015), it states, "It is necessary to ensure insofar as possible that trans athletes are not excluded from the opportunity to participate in sporting competition" (IOC 2015, 2). The regulations on trans athletes is a step in the right direction as it values their humanity and identity over their biological make-up and genitalia.

### **Conclusion**

Pierre de Coubertin intended for the Modern Olympic Games to be exclusive – a sporting competition for upper-class, white men who embody the ideals of the Victorian era. He ensured that the International Olympic Committee was filled with men who agreed with his culture of exclusion. However, over time, as social tensions shifted globally, the Olympic Games did as well. The Olympics grew steadily in popularity, importance, and inclusion. But it was the experiences of Babe Didrikson, Tidy Pickett, Caster Semenya, and Chris Mosier that molded the Games to be a more inclusive space through policy changes and consistent resistance from athletes, coaches, and Olympic leaders in order to truly uphold the principles of Olympism.

The International Olympic Committee has immense power in the social and political realms. Throughout history, its stances on gender, sexuality, race and class have had a great impact on not only the athletes vying for a spot on their respective Olympic teams, but also for any individual participating in organized sport, at any level. The Olympic Games occur in “the context of wider social processes, including the growing social significance of sport, the medicalization of life and sport, the growing commercialization and politicization of sport and the de-amateurization of sport” (Bloyce 2015, 1). Because of this, the Games reflect the social climate of the time of each Olympiad and simultaneously perpetuate its injustices because of the semi autonomy of NOCs, IFs, and the supremacy of the homogeneous IOC.

The Olympic Industry possesses the power to enact social change through sport but all-too-often reverts back to traditional modes of thought and action. By constantly pressuring the Olympic Industry to progressively act in regard to gender and identity from the grassroots upward in local and collegiate sports, to International Federations and National Olympic Committees, and eventually to the International Olympic Committee, the true power lies in the hands of every athlete that decides to participate in a sporting event at any level. Although the Olympic Industry controls many things, it cannot control the persistence and resistance of athletes which, proven throughout time, will overcome the inequalities that affect them.

### Works Cited

- Bloyce, Daniel, and Andy Smith. "The 'Olympic and Paralympic Effect' on Public Policy: Use and Misuse." Introduction to *The 'Olympic and Paralympic' Effect on Public Policy*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge, 2015: 1-4.
- Bonzagni, Emily. "The Game Is Up: On Your Mark, Get Set, Prove Your Gender!!" *The OutCrowd*, Fall 2016, 18-21.
- Burr, Christina, and Carol A. Reader. "Fanny 'Bobbie' Rosenfeld: A 'Modern Woman' of Sport and Journalism in Twentieth-Century Canada." *Sport History Review* 44 (2013): 120-43. [http://www.naspspa.org/AcuCustom/SiteName/Documents/DocumentItem/02\\_SHR%2044-2%20Burr-0016\\_120-143-ej.pdf](http://www.naspspa.org/AcuCustom/SiteName/Documents/DocumentItem/02_SHR%2044-2%20Burr-0016_120-143-ej.pdf).
- Butler, Judith. 1988. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution an Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theatre Journal* 40 (4): 519. doi: 10.2307/3207893
- Cahn, Susan K. "From the 'Muscle Moll' to the 'Butch' Ballplayer: Mannishness, Lesbianism, and Homophobia in U.S. Women's Sport." *Feminist Studies* 19, no. 2 (Summer 1993): 343-68. doi: 10.2307/3178373
- Cayleff, Susan E. "The 'Texas Tomboy' the Life and Legend of Babe Didrikson Zaharias." *OAH Magazine of History* 7, no. 1 (Summer 1992): 28-33. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/25162853>.
- Crenshaw, Kimberle. "Mapping the Margins: Intersectionality, Identity Politics, and Violence against Women of Color." *Stanford Law Review* 43, no. 6 (1991): 1241-299. doi:10.2307/1229039.
- Davis, Michael D. *Black American Women in Olympic Track and Field*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, 1992.
- de Coubertin, Pierre. 1908. "We Want to Go Ever Forward: The Trustees of the Olympic Idea." *Olympic Review*, July 1908. 108-110. Accessed February 17, 2017. <http://library.la84.org/OlympicInformationCenter/OlympicReview/1987/ore231/ore231zc.pdf>.
- de Coubertin, Pierre. "The Women at the Olympic Games." In *Pierre de Coubertin (1863-1937) Olympism: Selected Writings*, edited by Norbert Müller. Lausanne, Switzerland: International Olympic Committee, 2000: 710-15.
- Dworkin, Shari L., Amanda Lock Swarr, and Cheryl Cooky. "(In) Justice in Sport: The Treatment of South African Track Star Caster Semenya." *Feminist Studies* 31, no. 1 (2013): 40-69. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/23719289>.

Eckersall, Betty. "New Playground Star Ties National 60 Yard Record." *The Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, IL), January 31, 1932, sec. 2, 3.

<http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1932/01/31/page/25/article/new-playground-star-ties-national-60-yard-record>.

Emerson, A.D. *Olympians Against The Wind: The Black American Female Difference*. New York, NY: Welcome Rain Publishers, 1999.

Grossman, Ron. "Tidye Pickett: Chicago Track Star Was First African-American Female Olympian." *The Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, IL), August 19, 2016. Accessed April 5, 2017. <http://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/commentary/ct-olympics-tidye-pickett-first-black-woman-flash-perspec-0821-jm-20160818-story.html>.

Germano, Sara. "Top Olympian Can't Outrun Gender Questions." *Wall Street Journal* (New York, NY), August 19, 2016. Accessed April 22, 2017. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/top-olympian-cant-outrun-gender-questions-1471640712>.

Gissendanner, Cindy Himes. "African American Women Olympians: The Impact of Race, Gender, and Class Ideologies, 1932-1968." In *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*. Excerpt from *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport* 67, no. 2 (June 1996): 172-82. doi: 10.1080/02701367

Guttman, Allen. *The Olympics: A History of the Modern Games*. 2nd ed. Chicago, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2002.

Hart, Simon. "Caster Semenya 'Is a hermaphrodite', Tests Show." *The Telegraph* (London, UK), September 11, 2009. Accessed April 8, 2017. <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/sport/othersports/athletics/6170229/Caster-Semenya-is-a-hermaphrodite-tests-show.html>.

Hill Collins, Patricia. *Black Sexual Politics: African Americans, Gender, and the New Racism*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2004. PDF. <https://barzakhlentini.noblogs.org/files/2013/09/black-sexual-politics.pdf>

International Olympic Committee. 2003. "Statement of the Stockholm Consensus on Sex Reassignment in Sports." Lausanne, Switzerland, October 28, 2003. [https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Reports/EN/en\\_report\\_905.pdf](https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Reports/EN/en_report_905.pdf)

International Olympic Committee. 2012. "IOC Regulations on Female Hyperandrogenism." Lausanne, Switzerland, June 22, 2012. [https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Commissions\\_PDFfiles/Medical\\_commission/2012-06-22-IOC-Regulations-on-Female-Hyperandrogenism-eng.pdf](https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Commissions_PDFfiles/Medical_commission/2012-06-22-IOC-Regulations-on-Female-Hyperandrogenism-eng.pdf).

International Olympic Committee. "Factsheet: Roles and Responsibilities during the Olympic Games." Factsheet. December 2013. PDF.



[https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Reference\\_documents\\_Factsheets/Roles\\_and\\_responsibilities.pdf](https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Reference_documents_Factsheets/Roles_and_responsibilities.pdf)

International Olympic Committee. 2015. "IOC Consensus Meeting on Sex Reassignment and Hyperandrogenism." Lausanne, Switzerland, November 2015.  
[https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Commissions\\_PDFfiles/Medical\\_commission/2015-11\\_ioc\\_consensus\\_meeting\\_on\\_sex\\_reassignment\\_and\\_hyperandrogenism-en.pdf](https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Commissions_PDFfiles/Medical_commission/2015-11_ioc_consensus_meeting_on_sex_reassignment_and_hyperandrogenism-en.pdf).

International Olympic Committee. "Factsheet: Women in the Olympic Movement." Factsheet. January 2016. PDF.  
[https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Reference\\_documents\\_Factsheets/Women\\_in\\_Olympic\\_Movement.pdf](https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/Reference_documents_Factsheets/Women_in_Olympic_Movement.pdf).

International Olympic Committee. "IOC Member List." Olympics.org. Last modified 2017. Accessed March 28, 2017. <https://www.olympic.org/ioc-members-list>.

"Joe Louis Won for Freedom in Defeating Max Schmeling Hitler's Aryan "Superiority" was Put to the Test, and Lost." 1998. *Portland Press Herald*, Jun 24, 8A. <https://search-proquest-com.libeproxy2.syr.edu/docview/276850849?accountid=14214>.

Johnson, William Oscar, and Nancy P. Williamson. *"Whatta Gal" : The Babe Didrikson Story*. New York, NY: Little, Brown, 1977.

Kahrl, Christina. "Chris Mosier becomes first known transgender athlete in world duathlon championship." ESPN. Last modified June 23, 2016a. Accessed February 28, 2017. [http://www.espn.com/sports/endurance/story/\\_/id/15976460/chris-mosier-becomes-first-known-transgender-athlete-compete-world-duathlon-championship](http://www.espn.com/sports/endurance/story/_/id/15976460/chris-mosier-becomes-first-known-transgender-athlete-compete-world-duathlon-championship).

Kahrl, Christina. "Chris Mosier: 'I finally feel very comfortable with my body.'" ESPN. Last modified June 28, 2016b. Accessed February 28, 2017. [http://www.espn.com/olympics/story/\\_/page/bodychrismosier/duathlete-chris-mosier-breaking-barriers-repping-team-usa-body-issue-2016](http://www.espn.com/olympics/story/_/page/bodychrismosier/duathlete-chris-mosier-breaking-barriers-repping-team-usa-body-issue-2016).

Kessler, Suzanne J. "The Medical Construction of Gender: Case Management of Intersexed Infants." *Signs* 16, no. 1 (1990): 3-26. doi: 10.1086/494643.

Kessler, Mario. "Only Nazi Games? Berlin 1936: The Olympic Games between Sports and Politics." *Socialism and Democracy* 25, no. 2 (2011): 125-43. doi: 10.1080/08854300.

Lenskyj, Helen. *Gender Politics and the Olympic Industry*. Palgrave Studies in Olympic and Paralympic Games. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012. PDF e-book. doi: 10.1057/9781137291158

Markula, Pirkko, ed. *Olympic Women and the Media: International Perspectives*. Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009.

"Olympic Museum: Members of the International Olympic Committee." Olympic Games Museum. Last modified April 19, 2017. Accessed March 30, 2017. <http://olympic-museum.de/iocmembers/iocmembers1923.html>.

Nation's Track Stars Bid for Olympics: Tidye Pickett, a Chicago Girl, Equals Record. (1932, Feb 06). *The Chicago Defender (National Edition) (1921-1967)* Retrieved from <https://search-proquest-com.libezproxy2.syr.edu/docview/492367760?accountid=14214>

"Nike: Unlimited Courage." Video file, 00:40. YouTube. Posted by Nike, August 8, 2016. Accessed April 7, 2017. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_gq8PO9XK2Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_gq8PO9XK2Y).

*Northern Illinois Alumni News* (DeKalb, IL). "Berlin Olympics, 1936: Golden Memories." 1984, 1. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/niuarchives/7637194308/in/photolist-cCSBMW-cCSCz3>.

Olivia Truby (United States Olympic Committee), Interviewed by Emily Bonzagni, Email, April 6, 2016-July 1, 2016, Transcript, Appendix.

*Olympic Charter*. Lausanne, Switzerland: International Olympic Committee, 1930. Digital file. <https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/Olympic-Studies-Centre/List-of-Resources/Official-Publications/Olympic-Charters/EN-1930-Olympic-Charter.pdf>.

*Olympic Charter*. Lausanne, Switzerland: International Olympic Committee, 2015. PDF. [https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/olympic\\_charter\\_en.pdf](https://stillmed.olympic.org/Documents/olympic_charter_en.pdf).

Osgood, Matt. "Sports History Forgot About Tidye Pickett and Louise Stokes, Two Black Olympians Who Never Got Their Shot." *Smithsonian*. Last modified August 15, 2016. Accessed April 2, 2017. <http://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/sports-history-forgot-about-tidye-pickett-and-louise-stokes-two-black-olympians-who-never-got-their-shot-glory-180960138/>.

Pieroth, Doris Hinson. *Their Day in the Sun: Women of the 1932 Olympics*. Seattle, USA: University of Washington Press, 1996.

Rupert, James L. "Genitals to Genes: The History and Biology of Gender Verification in the Olympics." *Canadian Bulletin Of Medical History* 28, no. 2: 2011. 339-365. *America: History and Life with Full Text*, EBSCOhost (accessed October 17, 2016). doi: 10.3138/cbmh.28.2.339

Ruth, Amy. *Wilma Rudolph*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications, 2000. Google Books. [https://books.google.com/books/about/Wilma\\_Rudolph.html?id=rBq3xO9far0C](https://books.google.com/books/about/Wilma_Rudolph.html?id=rBq3xO9far0C).

"See Team USA's Olympic Opening Ceremony Outfits through the Years." Video file, 00:45. Today.com. Posted by The Today Show, July 29, 2016. Accessed January 8, 2016.

- <http://www.today.com/video/see-team-usa-s-olympic-opening-ceremony-outfits-through-the-years-734599235774>.
- Shapiro, Samantha M. "Chris Mosier: The Definition of an Athlete." ESPN. Last modified October 29, 2015. Accessed March 29, 2017. [http://www.espn.com/olympics/triathlon/story/\\_/id/13950017/definition-athlete](http://www.espn.com/olympics/triathlon/story/_/id/13950017/definition-athlete).
- Shirer, William. "5 Women Track Stars Collapse in Olympic Race." *Chicago Tribune* (Chicago, IL), August 3, 1928, 21. <http://archives.chicagotribune.com/1928/08/03/page/21/article/5-women-track-stars-collapse-in-olympic-race#text>.
- Smith, David. "Caster Semenya 'Hermaphrodite Claim' Should Be Treated with Caution - IAAF." *The Guardian*. Last modified September 11, 2009. Accessed April 1, 2017. <https://www.theguardian.com/sport/2009/sep/11/caster-semenya-hermaphrodite-reports-iaaf>.
- Stryker, Susan. "Transgender Feminism: Queering the Woman Question." In *Third Wave Feminism: A Critical Exploration*, edited by Stacy Gillis, Gillian Howie, and Rebecca Munford, 59-70. 2nd ed. Basingstoke, Hampshire, UK: Palgrave MacMillan, 2007.
- Team USA. "Executive Team." Team USA. Last modified 2017. Accessed April 10, 2017. <http://www.teamusa.org/About-the-USOC/Inside-the-USOC/Leadership/Executive-Team>.
- Teetzel, Sarah. "331 Equality, Equity, and Inclusion: Issues in Women and Transgendered Athletes' Participation at the Olympics." In *Cultural Imperialism in Action, Critiques in the Global Olympic Trust: Eighth International Symposium for Olympic Research*, by Nigel B. Crowther, Robert Knight Barney, Michael K. Heine, and International Centre for Olympic Studies, 331-38. Ontario: International Centre for Olympic Studies, University of Western Ontario, 2006. PDF. <http://library.la84.org/SportsLibrary/ISOR/ISOR2006ae.pdf>
- The Daily Telegraph* (Sydney, AUS). "Caster Semenya Has No Womb or Ovaries." 2009. Accessed November 10, 2016. <http://www.dailytelegraph.com.au/sport/semenya-has-no-womb-or-ovaries/story-e6frexni-1225771672245>.
- Tucker, Ross. "Caster Semenya Leaks Begin." *The Science of Sport*. Last modified September 10, 2009. Accessed October 26, 2016. <https://sportsscientists.com/2009/09/caster-semenya-leaks-begin/>.
- US National Institute of Health. "Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome." Genetics Home Reference: Your Guide to Understanding Genetic Conditions. Last modified April 18, 2017. Accessed April 21, 2017. <https://ghr.nlm.nih.gov/condition/androgen-insensitivity-syndrome>.

- Wamsley, Kevin B., and Gertrude Pfinster. "Olympic Men and Women: The Politics of Gender in the Modern Games." In *Research in the Sociology of Sport*, edited by Kevin Young and Kevin B. Wamsley, 103-26. Vol. 3 of *Global Olympics: Historical and Sociological Studies of the Modern Games*. Bingley, UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2005.
- Weisbord, Robert G. *Racism and the Olympics*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers, 2015.
- Welky, David B. "Viking Girls, Mermaids, and Little Brown Men: U.S. Journalism and the 1932 Olympics." *Journal of Sport History* 24, no. 1 (Spring 1997): 24-49.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/43609799>.
- Wells, Cassandra. "Diagnosing Sex-Gender and the IOC." In *Rethinking Matters Olympic: Investigations into the Socio-Cultural of the Modern Olympic Movement*, edited by Robert K. Barney, Janice Forsyth, and Michael K. Heine, 301-11. Tenth International Symposium for Olympic Research. London, Ontario: International Publisher for Olympic Studies, 2010. Accessed June 14, 2016.  
<http://library.la84.org/SportsLibrary/ISOR/isor2010zg.pdf>.
- Will Turner (British Olympic Association), Interviewed by Emily Bonzagni, Email, February 4, 2016-May 26, 2016, Transcript, Appendix.
- Wiesemann, Claudia. "Is There a Right Not to Know One's Sex? The Ethics of 'Gender Verification' in Women's Sports Competition." *Journal of Medical Ethics* 37, no. 4 (March 1, 2011): 216-20. doi: 10.1136/jme.2010.039081.
- Woodward, Kath. *Sex Power and the Games*. London, UK: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012.
- 1984 Sarajevo Olympic Report*. Sarajevo, Yugoslavia: Organising Committee of the XIVth Winter Olympic Games 1984 at Sarajevo, 1984. PDF.  
<http://library.la84.org/6oic/OfficialReports/1984/or1984w.pdf>

## Appendices

### I. United States Olympic Committee Email Interview Transcript, February 4-May 26, 2016

1. What is the NOC's protocol for dealing with sexual harassment/ violence of one of their athletes in the Olympic village?
2. How does the NOC handle one of their athletes being an assailant of gender violence, both during and after the games?
3. In regards to sexual violence of athletes, are these incidences handled more with a medical focus, as it is the NOC's responsibility to provide medical supervision for its athletes, or more in a criminal regard?

For information on Safe Sport, please reference the following links:

- <http://www.teamusa.org/athlete-resources/athletes-advisory-council/safe-sport>
- <http://safesport.org/>

4. Are there any policies within the national committee regarding gender equality in sports such as swimming or track and field? For example: ensuring there are the same number of events for both genders as well as a similar number of athletes in each event.

According to the IOC, fostering gender equality and strengthening women's participation in, and through, sport is one of the key missions. According to the IOC's website, over the years, we have observed that women's participation in the world of Olympic sport has grown steadily thanks to constant action, in cooperation with the International Federations and National Olympic Committees.

A few helpful links:

- <http://www.olympic.org/women-in-sport-commission?tab=advocacy>
- <http://www.olympic.org/news/ioc-steps-it-up-for-gender-equality-on-international-women-s-day/248816>
- [http://www.olympic.org/documents/olympism\\_in\\_action/ioc\\_women\\_and\\_sport\\_flyer-eng.pdf](http://www.olympic.org/documents/olympism_in_action/ioc_women_and_sport_flyer-eng.pdf)

5. Because the NOC is in control of the admittance of athletes to the Olympic team based not only on their performance, but also his or her ability to be an example or role model to the sporting world, what criteria does the NOC use to determine who is a proper role model?

Olympians and Paralympians are encouraged to be involved in Team for Tomorrow. Team for Tomorrow is a community outreach program that provides a vehicle through which U.S. athletes can offer their assistance and support to those in need around the world, as well as a means to continue spreading the Olympic Values of excellence, friendship and respect.

Helpful links:

- <http://www.teamusa.org/teamfortomorrow>

- <http://www.teamusa.org/Athlete-Resources/USOPA/Vision-and-Objectives>
- <http://www.teamusa.org/Athlete-Resources/USOPA>

6. How does the NOC approve or determine what is appropriate clothing for both male and female athletes, in regards to uniforms as well as outfits worn at the opening ceremonies?

During the Opening/Closing Ceremonies and Medal Ceremonies (except in those instances in which medals are awarded at the venue immediately following the competition and the USOC has granted a waiver for the athlete to wear his or her competition apparel on the podium), athletes must wear the USOC issued gear for such ceremony in full, including shoes, hats, ball caps, sunglasses, or other apparel and accessories that are provided and required.

Helpful link: <http://www.teamusa.org/Athlete-Resources/Athlete-Marketing/Athlete-Endorsement-Guidelines>

7. What measures does the NOC go to in order to encourage women's participation in high level sports?

Please see above links about women's participation.

8. What is the selection process to become a member of a national committee?

Please use these helpful links to learn more about NOCs:

- <https://stillmed.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/Olympic-Studies-Centre/List-of-Resources/Quick-references/Olympic-Movement/EN-Factsheet-Roles-and-responsibilities-during-the-Olympic-Games.pdf>
- <https://www.olympic.org/ioc-governance-national-olympic-committees>

9. What steps is the NOC taking in order to increase women's leadership positions in the national committees as well as the International Committee and International Federations?

## **II. British Olympic Association Email Interview Transcript, April 6-July 1, 2016**

1. What is the National Olympic Committee's protocol for dealing with sexual harassment/violence of one of their athletes in the Olympic village?

The BOA will, for Rio 2016, have a robust welfare plan in place which will set out the protocol for any athlete welfare-related issues which arise during the Games. While welfare of athletes is primarily the responsibility of the relevant National Governing Body (NGB) of the sport in which the athlete competes, the BOA will have in place reporting procedures which will enable athletes to report issues to BOA welfare officers which, if necessary, would then be escalated appropriately to the relevant individuals or authorities.

A number of BOA staff are currently undergoing welfare training in order that they are well placed to deal with any athlete welfare issues which may arise during the Games.

2. How does the NOC handle one of their athletes being an assailant of gender violence, both during and after the games?

As above, any such issue would be dealt with in accordance with the BOA's welfare policy and procedures and escalated to the appropriate authorities.

3. In regards to sexual violence of athletes, are these incidences handled more with a medical focus, as it is the NOC's responsibility to provide medical supervision for its athletes, or more in a criminal regard?

Cases of this nature would be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. It is difficult to comment on what steps the BOA would take in a certain scenario without knowing the full circumstances of the case. Each case would be dealt with in accordance with the BOA's Welfare Plan – albeit it goes without saying that any sexual violence type cases would be dealt with the utmost seriousness.

4. Are there any policies within the national committee regarding gender equality in sports such as swimming or track and field? For example: ensuring there are the same number of events for both genders as well as a similar number of athletes in each event.

Any such policies would fall within the remit of either the relevant International Sporting Federation (IF) or – in the case of the Olympic Programme specifically - the International Olympic Committee (IOC). The BOA does not influence or control the make-up of the Olympic Programme, albeit does advocate sporting gender equality generally.

5. Because the NOC is in control of the admittance of athletes to the Olympic team based not only on their performance, but also his or her ability to be an example or role model to the sporting world, what criteria does the NOC use to determine who is a proper role model?

Each NGB is responsible for the drafting and publication of its own selection policy in relation to eligibility and qualification for an Olympic Games. While the BOA informally reviews those policies to ensure that formal Olympic qualification and eligibility standards are consistent, the specific criteria applied by a sport to determine which athletes are eligible is the responsibility of the NGB concerned. These often include wording around attitude, behaviour and conduct etc.

In addition to this, athletes who compete at a Games are required to sign a Team Member's Agreement with the BOA which contains – among other things – various commitments and obligations around conduct and behaviour. A breach of these obligations could result in various sanctions including - if appropriate - expulsion from the Team.

6. How does the NOC approve or determine what is appropriate clothing for both male and female athletes, in regards to uniforms as well as outfits worn at the opening ceremonies?

The BOA works closely with its official sportswear provider (Adidas) and formal wear provider to agree appropriate kit for its athletes at a Games. This process takes place over a period of many months/ years ahead of a Games.

7. What measures does the NOC go to in order to encourage women's participation in high level sports?

The role of the BOA is, generally, to (i) manage and administer the British Olympic Team at a Games; (ii) protect and promote the Olympic movement in the UK. Participation in sport in the UK is generally dealt with by one or more of the Government and/or Sport England. In terms of high level, elite sport – this is generally overseen by UK Sport, who also deal with the funding of elite level sport in the UK.

8. What is the selection process to become a member of a national committee?

In the BOA's case, its members generally comprise of the NGBs which represent sports on the Olympic programme. While there are some legal formalities involved with becoming a member, this is the primary eligibility requirement.

9. What steps is the NOC taking in order to increase women's leadership positions in the national committees as well as the International Committee and International Federations?

The BOA is fully aligned with the IOC's position with regards to encouraging female representation in leadership positions in sport, including in respect of its recommendation that at least 20% of decision-making positions be reserved for women. The BOA itself has a number of female representatives in respect of both its board and its NOC.