In the mid-1990s, sport sociology Professor and Tucker Center Director, Mary Jo Kane, introduced the sport continuum theory—the idea that there "exists a sport continuum in which many women routinely outperform men and, in some cases, women outperform most, if not all, men, in a variety of sports and physical skills/activities." Professor Kane was far ahead of the times when she challenged sociologists, psychologists, coaches, administrators, parents, athletes and fans to revisit sport as a gendered binary anchored in ability and performance rather than in notions and practices of "female" and "male".

To illustrate the sport continuum theory, consider the female winners in the last three (2014-2016) Twin Cities Marathons. The application of this model demonstrates that while Jane Kibi came in 15th out of 8,561 runners in 2016 (i.e., 14 men bested her time), she was faster than the remaining 4,702 men that ran the same race over the same course on the same day. Similar comparisons can be made for the female marathon winners in 2015 (17th overall—faster than 4,739 males) and 2014 (39th overall—faster than 4,817 males).

While the sport continuum theory challenges traditional notions of performance and ability, Kane’s comparison is based on the rigid and socially constructed categories of sex and gender: Male vs. Female; Masculine vs. Feminine. Sport has a long and uncomfortable history with such categorical comparisons—and segregation. Whether it be about race, class, age, (dis)ability, or/and sex, segregations in sport mirror segregations in society. Baseball’s Negro Leagues in the 1920s provide one clear example of how social prejudices based on phenotypes can (and do) divide sport, not to mention society writ large.

A more recent example of how societal expectations, social norms and stereotypes have divided sport involves transgender, gender non-conforming and intersex athletes. As the Genderbread Person graphic on the next page illustrates, the binary of sex-segregated sport is inherently problematic for those whose biological sex conflicts with their assigned gender identity (i.e., transgender), for those whose gender expression conflicts with societal expectations (i.e., gender non-conforming), and for those whose sex characteristics are neither...
strically male nor strictly female (i.e., intersex). The graphic also showcases how many continue there is when it comes to sex and identity—
that there are not two lone (and only) anchor points to consider. Like any continua, they are not only realities in between, but complex and intersecting layers of identity expression.

There is very little specific data regarding the number of transgender, gender non-
conforming, or intersex athletes in the United States, and much less internationally. However, the Williams Institute issued a report in 2016 (z.umn.edu/williams2016) suggesting that 0.6% of adults in the U.S. (~1.4 million individuals) identify as transgender; the numbers may even be higher among youth. In a recent Human Rights Campaign survey (www.hrc.org/youth-report) of over 10,000 LGBTQ youth, 10% of respondents identified as “transgender” or as “other gender,” and wrote in identities like “gender-
identified as “transgender” or as “other

"Continuum" cont’d from page 1

gender,” and wrote in identities like “gender-
"gender-identified as “transgender” or as “other gender,” and wrote in identities like “gender-
meaningless as to be male and a female athlete. Well beyond their sports participation, they have had their very personhood questioned and undermined. Semenya underwent extensive and invasive sex testing by the International Association of Athletics Federations. Chand has hyperandrogenism (a condition marked by high testosterone) and had to fight to compete internationally as a female athlete. It was speculated that Griner didn’t compete in the 2012 Olympics in order to avoid the infamous practice of sex/
gender verification. (Griner did compete in the 2016 Rio Games and won the gold medal.)

Though dismissed as a long-discarded historical practice, today female athletes are often forced to “prove” their biological sex by way of birth certificates, hormone testing or other invasive and shaming mechanisms. These gatekeeping policies reinforce binary interpretations of biological sex and are, in any case, inaccurate measures of it. For example, a study by Dr. McClintock stated that standard testosterone levels do not accurately determine someone to be female or male. Likewise, a woman can be a woman with high levels of testosterone. Similarly, a doctor’s checkmark by the word “female” or “male” on a birth certificate should not create a categorical imperative for the team on which an athlete can compete.

Most scholars and advocates believe that allowing transgender athletes to participate on the team that corresponds with their chosen identity is the best interest of the athlete, especially at the youth level. Unfortunately, that belief has been slow to accepted by policy-makers and administrators. The advocacy site, Transathlete.com, illustrates how high-

Sport policies vary from state to state (www.hcr.org/states). A 2016 report by the NCAA (z.umn.edu/ncaainclusion) has taken strides toward more inclusive policies by not requiring gender-confirming surgery or legal recognition for transgender players to participate on a team which matches their identity, though additional restrictions and timelines do apply when the athlete begins hormone treatment.

If the above discussion and analysis seems complicated, it is. But it’s important to remember that the complications—and complexities—exist because heterosexism and homophobia are systems of power that have been institutionalized over centuries and have created the gender binary that exists today. These issues are also linked to the challenging systems of power brings privilege into question. And it’s complicated because the people challenging the system do not have the same power and privilege as those who control it. Finally, it’s just complicated … but then again, it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life … it really isn’t. For athletes like Bailar, being able to swim on the men’s team “saved [my] life …
Staff Update: 2017 Summer Interns

Gender Equity Summer Interns

Mel Koop from Roseville, MN and is currently pursuing her master’s degree in Sports Law & Business at Arizona State University. Koop received her undergraduate degree from the College of Saint Benedict majoring in Mathematics and minorning in Exercise Science and Sports Studies. Koop was also a student-athlete playing on the women’s volleyball team. In addition, Koop has been a coach, referee, tournament coordinator, student and sports fan. Given such a varied background, Koop decided to apply for a Tucker Center Gender Equity Internship to be better prepared to enhance the experience of the next generation of athletes. As Koop states, “I am so fortunate to have interned at the Tucker Center this past summer as it was truly an inspiring, empowering and amazing opportunity. Working with Dr. LaVoi, Dr. Kane, [my fellow intern] Hannah and the rest of the Tucker Team has personally been a highly valued experience because I learned a lot in my short time from these insightful mentors and coworkers. By being able to make a contribution to such a renowned organization in a field I am deeply passionate about, I feel I am able to make a difference in the sports world.” We couldn’t agree more and are so grateful that Mel Koop joins the ranks of our summer interns.

Hannah Silva-Breen is currently a senior at Gustavus Adolphus College, where she is studying Psychology and Exercise Physiology. Silva-Breen will be applying to graduate schools this fall, hoping to enroll in a Clinical or Counseling Psychology doctoral program. Outside of her academic career, Silva-Breen has been an assistant coach for the Minnesota Suns AAU basketball program, and will be transitioning to the head coaching position for the 2018 season. Silva-Breen believes that her work through sport, academics and the Gender Equity Internship program has prepared her to make a positive impact in the world of youth athletics and sport psychology. During her time at the Tucker Center, she assisted in collecting and compiling data for a forthcoming research report on coach turnover patterns in Division I women’s sports programs. “Being a summer intern was an incredible opportunity and an enlightening experience to be a part of the research process at the Tucker Center. I learned a lot and hope to carry this experience with me, continuing the work in gender equity and sport.” We have every expectation and confidence that she will.

Pam Borton Fellow for Girls & Women in Sport Leadership

Matea Wasend is a second-year M.S. student in the School of Kinesiology with an emphasis in Sport Sociology, advised by Dr. LaVoi. These days Wasend coaches soccer for the St. Paul Blackhawk Soccer Club as well as Cretn-Derham Hall High School. Wasend graduated from Macaulester College in 2012, where she majored in English and Media Studies. Her master’s thesis will examine the impact of women college coaches on female athletes’ likelihood to enter the coaching profession. It is what Wasend had to say about her experience as a Borton Fellow: “It was amazing to continue my involvement with the Tucker Center this past summer. I was able to work on several important projects, including examining the hiring practices of Athletic Directors at schools with high percentages of female coaches. I also contributed to the Tucker Center’s upcoming research report on girls and physical activity. Dr. LaVoi is an incredible scholar and an even better mentor—it was an honor to represent the Tucker Center alongside her.” Let us return the favor by saying what an honor it was to have Matea Wasend as the newest Borton Fellow.

Kudos & Announcements

Research Presentations

- In June, a group of scholars dedicated to making a difference for women coaches presented their research at the annual North American Society for Sport Management (NASSM) conference held in Denver, CO. Pictured here (L-R): Drs. Janelle Wells (USF), Laura Burton (UC), Nicole M. LaVoi (TC Co-Director), Heidi Grappendorf (U of Cincinnati), and Sarah Leberman (Massey University, New Zealand).
- Last spring and summer, LaVoi gave multiple presentations to—and about—women sport coaches including the TC’s Women Coaches Symposium, the NCAA Inclusion Forum, and the NCAA Women Coaches Academy. LaVoi was also invited by the Japanese Center for Research on Women in Sport: This fall she is traveling to Tokyo to present at the Japanese Women Coaches Academy.
- In August, LaVoi presented to 100+ participants at the MIAC Student-Athlete Leadership Conference held at St. Mary’s University in Winona and to the St. Cloud State University Women’s Soccer Team regarding team culture and leadership development.
- Professor and TC Director Mary Jo Kane has been invited to deliver the annual Esther Larson McGinnis Distinguished Lecture at Illinois State University, Bloomington-Normal, IL, this October.

Publications

- TC Affiliated Scholar Daheia J. Barr-Anderson (UMN) published a paper with her colleagues titled, “The modifying effects of race/ethnicity and socioeconomic status on the change in physical activity from elementary to middle school” in the Journal of Adolescent Health.
- LaVoi published a paper with Maya Hamilton (Ph.D. graduate and TC Research Assistant) titled, “Coaches who care: The ethical professional identity development of moral exemplar colleagues” in the Journal of Moral Education.
- Due to popular demand, in late 2017, the TC will publish the third installment of the Tucker Center Research Report featuring the latest multidisciplinary research, best practices, and leading experts pertaining to girls’ sport and physical activity participation. The inaugural 1997 report and the 2007 10-year update are available on our website at www.tuckercenter.org.
- The Tucker Center produced the research report, “Gender, Race & LGBT Inclusion of Head Coaches of Women’s Teams: A Report on Select NCAA Division-I Conferences” for the 45th Anniversary of Title IX, in partnership with LGBT SportSafe and The Institute for Diversity and Ethics in Sport.
TRANSGENDER ATHLETES: CHALLENGING & TRANSFORMING SPORTS

Wednesday, October 18, 2017 • 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm
Cowles Auditorium, Hubert H. Humphrey Center
West Bank Campus

About the Lecture

In 2015, former Olympic Decathlon gold-medal winner Bruce Jenner famously announced her gender transition to Caitlyn Jenner. This unprecedented cultural moment created a public dialogue around what it means to be transgender, and in particular, how such definitions and transitions challenge our notions of space, gender and athletic participation. More than any other institution, sport is seen as a highly gendered activity: We have “women’s sports” and “men’s sports” and never shall that gendered binary be crossed. So what does it mean when someone who has been identified at birth as “female” transitions to being and living as male (and vice versa)? And how do such realities challenge and disrupt the sporting enterprise?

Because sport is built on the notion of an “equal playing field” there has been a particular resistance to male-to-female transgender athletes, beginning with Rene Richards’ deeply resisted attempt to compete on the Women’s Tennis Association tour in the 1970s. More recent examples of transgender athletes have included Kye Allums, the first openly transgender student-athlete to play Division I basketball [x.umn.edu/teporterz]. On a national scale, those who oversee amateur and professional sports are adopting groundbreaking policies that determine who can play on which team and under what circumstances. As a result, a significant cultural shift is occurring: Transgender athletes challenge traditional beliefs and practices about sports as a “natural” extension of binary-based and biologically driven sex differences. These pioneering individuals are also challenging something more fundamental—the very essence of what it means to be, and to compete as, “female” and “male” in modern U.S. society.

The 2017 Distinguished Lecture features a panel of experts who will examine these complexities from a variety of perspectives: A scholarly critique that will highlight research on transgender athletes and their attempts to gain equality in the sportsworld; an overview of policies that are being developed and implemented in college athletic programs; and the lived experiences and insights offered by a transgender former athlete.

Minnesota native and transgender high-school student-athlete Zeam Porter, who testified before a Minnesota State High School League’s hearing as they shaped policy for transgender athletes [x.umn.edu/teporterz]. On a national scale, those who oversee amateur and professional sports are adopting groundbreaking policies that determine who can play on which team and under what circumstances. As a result, a significant cultural shift is occurring: Transgender athletes challenge traditional beliefs and practices about sports as a “natural” extension of binary-based and biologically driven sex differences. These pioneering individuals are also challenging something more fundamental—the very essence of what it means to be, and to compete as, “female” and “male” in modern U.S. society.

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About the Panelists

Vikki Krane is Professor and Graduate Coordinator in the School of Human Movement, Sport, and Leisure Studies at Bowling Green State University, Bowling Green, OH. She is also an affiliated faculty member with the Women’s, Gender, & Sexuality Studies, as well as an Affiliated Scholar with the Tucker Center. A sport psychologist by training, Krane’s scholarship examines sex, gender, and sexuality within a sport context. Her current research focuses on intersex, transgender, and lesbian athletes. She has authored numerous journal articles and book chapters in this emerging field, as well as given a number of keynote and invited lectures on LGBT sportspersons. Professor Krane’s work was recently recognized when she received the Excellence in Diversity Award from the College of Education and Human Development at BGSU.

Heidi Jaynes is in her 19th year as Head Volleyball Coach and Professor of Physical Education, Athletics and Recreation (PEAR) at Carleton College. Since 2010, Jaynes has served as the Associate Athletic Director and Senior Women Administrator. Her past accomplishments as a head coach have included being named Minnesota Intercollegiate Athletic Conference (MIAC) Coach of the Year and American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) Regional Coach of the Year. She has coached eight All-Americans and 12 AVCA All-Region student-athletes. As an athletic administrator, Jaynes is involved in managing compliance, gender equity and inclusion, program evaluation, game management, publications, and faculty and staff development. In 2014, Jaynes was instrumental in creating and chairing Carleton’s Equity Committee which authored the school’s Transgender Policy.

Brent Darah graduated from Bowling Green State University with a Sport Management major while competing for three years as a student-athlete and is currently pursuing a Master’s degree in Sport Administration. For two of the three years Darah competed, he was a member of the women’s cross country and track team. During this time, he came out as transgender and began medically transitioning while competing as a member of the men’s cross country and track teams. Darah broke many barriers as he became the first transgender athlete in collegiate cross/country and track at BGSU, as well as in the Mid-American Conference. Darah chose to come forward publicly with his story in 2016 after he discontinued his athletic career. He has garnered national attention sharing his personal history and sport experiences.

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