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A THEME STUDY OF LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL,
TRANSGENDER, and QUEER HISTORY

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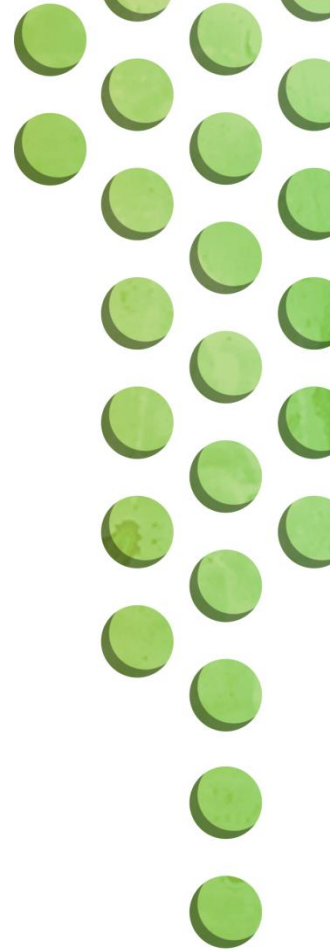
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THEMES

The chapters in this section take themes as their starting points. They explore different aspects of LGBTQ history and heritage, tying them to specific places across the country. They include examinations of LGBTQ community, civil rights, the law, health, art and artists, commerce, the military, sports and leisure, and sex, love, and relationships.

LGBTQ SPORT AND LEISURE

Katherine Schweighofer

The history and ongoing engagement of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ) Americans in sport and leisure cultures is varied and diverse, and often reflects the ebbs and flows of openness to gender and sexual diversity in mainstream culture.¹ Though interrelated and shaped by similar cultural forces, institutional sports (professional and semiprofessional leagues, school-based athletics, and community sports programs) and leisure have very different places in LGBTQ life. LGBTQ athletes and sport participants frequently sought a place in mainstream athletic cultures, and occasionally created their own. Particularly in professional and top-level sports, LGBTQ athletes have struggled with being publicly gay and/or transgender, and how that fit into mainstream sport culture. This has resulted in very minimal historical presence of out LGBTQ athletes, as the majority of examples happened since the late 1980s. Meanwhile in non-sport leisure cultures, LGBTQ individuals and communities often formed their own unique forms of leisure and entertainment outside the mainstream gaze. As such, these

¹ In this essay, “queer” is primarily used to describe those who embrace a nonnormative relationship to gender. Some queer people understand their gender as fluid (shifting between masculine and feminine points), while others reject binary (masculine or feminine) understandings of gender.

two histories will be addressed individually and through specific examples that highlight the ways in which LGBTQ identity shaped individual experiences and community cultures.

Sports

1975: David Kopay, a recently-retired National Football League (NFL) running back notices his hands trembling as he picks up the phone to call a *Washington Star* newspaper reporter. The *Star* had run a column about whether gay men played professional sports that relied upon rumors and unofficial reports. With that phone call, Kopay became the first professional American athlete to publicly come out as gay. His autobiography, *The David Kopay Story: An Extraordinary Self-Revelation*, shared the story of his relationships with other players who remained closeted and had a major impact in helping Americans rework their stereotypes of gay men as weak, effeminate “sissies.”² Though his story was compelling and was primarily well received by the American public, Kopay’s openness did not change the highly homophobic culture of the NFL and football in general.

2006: A Nike ad campaign capitalized on the popularity of several Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA) stars, including six-time WNBA All-Star Sheryl Swoopes, who had recently come out as a lesbian. In one ad, Swoopes pushes her toddler in a playground swing when she is approached by three young girls.³ Wearing boys’ basketball attire, this swaggering little pack starts heckling Swoopes, declaring that her jump shot “needs work.” Their aggression, trash talk, and masculine appearance invoke stereotypes of African American butch lesbian basketball players—ironic given that Swoopes, a publicly out lesbian, is portrayed as a rather feminine mother figure. The ad plays on stereotypes

² Perry Deane Young, *Lesbians and Gays and Sports* (New York: Chelsea House, 1995).

³ “Nike WNBA Little Rascals 3,” YouTube video, posted by tv commercials, September 7, 2006, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WAJfNO3aZGE>.

about lesbian athletes while softening Swoopes' image through her motherhood.⁴

2015: In a highly publicized interview with Diane Sawyer, 1976 Olympic gold medal decathlete formerly known as Bruce Jenner revealed her

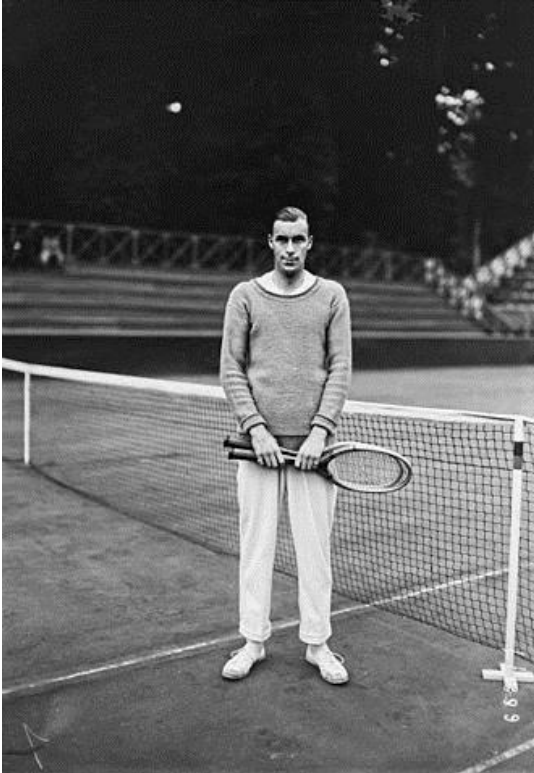


Figure 1: William "Bill" Tilden was a tennis phenomenon, holding the top world ranking from 1920-1925 before rumors of his homosexuality destroyed his career. Photo by Agence ROL, 1921; from the collections of the Bibliothèque nationale de France.⁵

transgender identity, and later, her new name, Caitlyn. In her interview, Jenner explained her athletic success as resulting from her "total obsession" to prove her masculinity to herself and the world.⁶ Sawyer and others in the media struggled to balance Jenner's years as the muscled warrior and the "world's greatest athlete" with her feminine appearance and identity. While there were detractors, Jenner's announcement was received by many as courageous and highlighted transgender issues in the United States. Sports talk shows, which often mock anything unusual, even

⁴ When Swoopes publicly came out in 2005 as a lesbian, she specifically stated she was not bisexual (she had previously been married), and after the ending of that 2005 relationship, has in recent years been engaged to a man. Publicly, Swoopes seems most content with a fluid understanding of her sexuality. See The Linster, "Sheryl Swoopes comes out as NSGAA (not so gay after all)," *AfterEllen*, July 5, 2011, <http://www.afterellen.com/people/89989-sheryl-swoopes-comes-out-as-nsgaa-not-so-gay-after-all>.

⁵ License: Public Domain. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bill_Tilden_1921.jpg

⁶ "Bruce Jenner – The Interview," *ABC News 20/20*, April 24, 2015.

brought on experts to explain concepts around being transgender and used Jenner's preferred name and pronouns.

These three snapshots from LGBTQ history reveal the complex and changing public response to gender, sex, and sexuality in sport cultures. Sports hold an important place in American culture, and are primarily shaped by our expectations of gender and ability. These dynamics are always altered by race, class, economics, and even the media and marketing of sports and athletes. For example, the WNBA has directly embraced its LGBTQ fans and is forthright about its lesbian and bisexual players in a league dominated by African American players and supported by a racially-diverse fan base looking for family-friendly events. This positive engagement with LGBTQ fans and players continues a long history of African American community support for women athletes despite their challenges to gender roles, and reveals a unique intersection of sports, gender, and race.⁷ Meanwhile, tennis' white upper-class roots have made the sport extremely inhospitable for out gay men. The rumors of Bill Tilden's homosexuality in the 1940s cost him his career, and the expectations of a game still shaped by racialized and classed standards of decorum continues to make elite men's tennis unwelcoming for gay and bisexual athletes (Figure 1). Because of the homophobia and transphobia woven throughout sport, LGBTQ athletes, coaches, and fans have historically found shifting and uneven access to athletic cultures. While doors continue to open as mainstream US culture increasingly embraces gender and sexual diversity, some aspects of sporting culture remain hostile to LGBTQ participants. For example, nearly all of the top men's professional sports (football, basketball, baseball, and hockey) have seen players come out after retirement, but very few during their playing years. Meanwhile at the amateur level, a 2015 study of nearly ten thousand gay and straight people found 78 percent believed youth sports were not safe

⁷ For more on this history, see Sarah K. Fields, "Title IX and African-American Female Athletes," *Sports and the Racial Divide*, ed. Michael E. Lomax (Jackson, MS: University of Mississippi Press, 2008), 126-145; for analysis of the gender disruption posed to white norms by African American female athletes, see L. Anima Adjepong and Ben Carrington, "Black Female Athletes as Space Invaders," in *Routledge Handbook of Sport, Gender and Sexuality*, eds. Jennifer Hargreaves and Eric Anderson (London: Routledge, 2014), 169-178.

for gay people and over 80 percent of gay men and lesbians had experienced verbal slurs in sports settings.⁸ LGBTQ presence in sports at all levels and in all roles continues to challenge such obstacles, and in some cases offers opportunities to reimagine the potential of sports in community and culture building.

Addressing the history of LGBTQ sports presents certain complications. First, mainstream sports history *is* LGBTQ sports history; people with same-sex sexual partners, those who challenge gender roles, and individuals who understand themselves as somehow different from the heterosexual mainstream have always existed and participated in all forms of American culture, including sports. Second, scholars have demonstrated that homosexual identity—understanding a lesbian or a gay man as a particular *type* of person instead of seeing homosexuality as a deviant sexual *act*—is a very recent concept stemming from the historically-specific confluence of medical sexological studies, the appearance of antisodomy and cross-dressing laws, and the rise of early queer subcultures in the first decades of the twentieth century. The solidification of bisexual and transgender identities happened even later. Therefore LGBTQ sport history can only begin with the origination of these concepts, addressing those individuals who understood themselves as having an LGBTQ identity. This eliminates the histories of athletes who participated in sexual activity that today would be read as gay, bisexual, or lesbian but did not identify that way. For example, historian George Chauncey explains that in the early 1900s, men who had sex with effeminate male “fairies” would not have understood themselves as gay or bisexual, given their dominant role in the sexual exchange.⁹ Even after homosexual identity began to solidify, cultural norms around homosocial spaces, including single-sex locker rooms, sports facilities, camps, and branches of the military often permitted quiet sexual activity between men free from the stigma of homosexuality, ostensibly because of the absence

⁸ Erik Denison and Alistair Kitchen, *Out on the Fields: The First International Study on Homophobia in Sport* (2015), see study website at <http://www.outonthefields.com>.

⁹ George Chauncey, *Gay New York: Gender, Urban Culture, and the Making of the Gay Male World, 1890-1940* (New York: Basic Books, 1994).



of women.¹⁰ This “boys will be boys” attitude muddies the line between histories of homosexuality and histories of sexual identity. Meanwhile, women often benefitted from the queer possibilities in same-sex environments such as military Women’s Army Corps (WAC) units and boarding schools.¹¹ The permissiveness granted women’s friendships allowed greater physical and emotional intimacy and simultaneously presumed impossible any sort of sexual activity between women, allowing many lesbian relationships to go unnoticed.¹²

In light of legacies of homophobic persecution, many athletes who did understand themselves as lesbian, gay, or bisexual did not disclose this for their own protection. Further complicating these limitations, individuals who may have understood their own desires and identities as bisexual may have chosen to exclusively be seen in heterosexual relationships as a protection from homophobic stigma, leaving even fewer out bisexuals in the sporting record. A similar pattern exists with gender expression: athletes who might have been inclined to transgress gender norms for personal identity or sexual pleasure would not have done so publicly, to protect themselves from censure. Given these limitations, this essay focuses on the histories of notable athletes and sport cultures that directly and openly identified as LGBTQ, knowing that for each out athlete there are many others who were and are unable or unwilling to be so. As many of the stories below attest, the choice to be out about one’s queer identity caused some athletes to lose their jobs, end up in jail, lose sponsorships and earnings, and endure shame, ridicule, and media harassment. More recently, other athletes have fared far better, and discovered post-playing

¹⁰ For examples, see Colin R. Johnson, “Camp Life: The Queer History of ‘Manhood’ in the Civilian Conservation Corps,” in *Just Queer Folks: Gender and Sexuality in Rural America* (Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press, 2013); Allan Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire* (New York: Free Press, 1990); Mariah Burton Nelson, *The Stronger Women Get, the More Men Love Football* (New York: Harcourt, 1994); and Jane Ward, *Not Gay: Sex Between Straight White Men* (New York: NYU Press, 2015).

¹¹ For examples, see Leisa D. Meyer, *Creating G.I. Jane: Sexuality and Power in the Women’s Army Corps During World War II* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992) and Bérubé, *Coming Out Under Fire*.

¹² See Martha Vicinus, *Intimate Friends: Women Who Loved Women, 1778-1928* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Judith C. Brown, *Immodest Acts: The Life of a Lesbian Nun in Renaissance Italy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986); and Lillian Faderman, *Surpassing the Love of Men: Romantic Friendship and Love Between Women from the Renaissance to the Present* (New York: HarperCollins, 1981).

careers in LGBTQ advocacy or connected with partners, communities, and social support systems as a result of announcing their sexual identity. Beyond the top caliber athletes, there have been millions of everyday LGBTQ athletes who did not rise to the top levels of sport and made individual decisions about whether or not to share their sexual identity with their teammates. They too, made choices about the pros and cons of disclosing their sexual and gender identities with teammates, friends, family, and communities, and may have had to weigh their love of sport against a desire to live openly.

The history of LGBTQ sport cannot be separated from the gendered norms in US culture, nor from the operation of gender in mainstream sport cultures. American gender norms presume people with male bodies develop large muscles and pursue activities centered on competition, aggression, power, and even violence. Meanwhile, those with female bodies are expected to remain quiet and docile, engaging in caring and nurturing activities. Sport cultures embrace the masculine attributes, valorizing aggressive, muscled, and powerful athletic men demonstrating strength, physical skill, and emotional stoicism. While our culture has made some space for female athletes, these women often walk a careful line between athletic prowess and the limits of feminine respectability. In earlier eras, the image of a “mannish lesbian athlete” haunted women athletes of all sexual identities and discouraged women from participation. Ironically that same conflagration of masculinity, lesbianism, and sports also meant possibilities for women who embraced that image.¹³

The masculinity of American sport cultures is enmeshed with sexually dominant forms of heterosexuality, meaning that “real” male athletes are attracted to women and are sexual aggressors. Linking athletic masculinity with a particular form of heterosexual practice results in homophobia, as those men who do not meet the gender or sexual standard are denigrated and harassed. This shaming and ostracism can

¹³ Susan K. Cahn, “From the ‘Muscle Moll’ to the ‘Butch’ Ballplayer: Mannishness, Lesbianism, and Homophobia in U.S. Women’s Sport,” *Feminist Studies* 19, no. 2 (1993): 343-364.



be destructive for LGBTQ athletes even when the athlete isn't out to teammates. Bruce Hayes, a top-ranked University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) swimmer in the 1980s, wondered if his self-destructive training regimen was a way to “compensate for his homosexuality through athletics, proving to himself and the world that he was a real man.”¹⁴ Some sporting cultures are not just homophobic, but characterized by a heightened paranoia about gender and sexuality called “homohysteria,” which sports historian Eric Anderson defines as a “homosexually-panicked culture in which suspicion [of homosexuality] permeates.”¹⁵ Anderson argues that the 1980s and 1990s were a period of homohysteria in the United States, marked by purges of LGBTQ athletes and coaches, terminated careers, and emotional terror, all of which have shaped today's sport environments.¹⁶ Furthermore, male and female athletic bodies are intensely sexualized, put on display and desired as ideal forms, investing further focus on bodies and desires. Given these elements, gender and sexuality are inseparable from US sport cultures and LGBTQ sport histories.

Golf

A good place to start in LGBTQ sport history is with the legendary Babe Didrikson Zaharias, born in 1911 in Port Arthur, Texas. Her story reveals how gender and sexuality are heavily policed within sports, particularly for women. In the late 1920s and early 1930s, Babe was a track and field champion, winning two gold and a silver medal at the 1932 Olympics in Los Angeles. Simultaneously, she led her Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) basketball team to a 1931 National Championship and set AAU records in track and field at the 1932 national championships.¹⁷ She took up golf and quickly became a top player, even competing in a men's Professional

¹⁴ Young, *Lesbians and Gays*, 109.

¹⁵ Eric Anderson, “The Rise and Fall of Western Homohysteria,” *Journal of Feminist Scholarship* 1 (2011): 87.

¹⁶ See the section below on Penn State University women's basketball under Coach Rene Portland, for a prime example of the destructive effects of homohysteria.

¹⁷ Babe was a leader on the famous “Golden Cyclones” team of AAU athletes from Dallas, Texas, who dominated AAU competition in their era. See Robert W. Ikard, *Just for Fun: The Story of AAU Women's Basketball* (Fayetteville, AR: University of Arkansas Press, 2005).

Golfers' Association (PGA) tournament, the first woman to do so.¹⁸ Zaharias dominated women's golf for the next twenty years, and became a founding member of the Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA).¹⁹ Yet Babe was mocked in the press for her "mannish" features and "tomboyish" behavior until she married pro wrestler George Zaharias.²⁰ Though they remained a celebrity couple until her death from cancer in 1956, Babe's real relationship was with fellow golfer Betty Dodd, who lived with Babe and George.²¹ Scholars agree the marriage was a cover for Babe's lesbianism, and posthumously Babe has been recognized for contributions to LGBTQ culture.²² Since Babe's groundbreaking career, women's golf has somewhat embraced other openly lesbian players, including Sandra Haynie, Muffin Spencer-Devlin, Patty Sheehan, and Rosie Jones, even if these women generally kept their personal lives off the greens.²³ Lesbian fans helped turn the Dinah Shore LPGA tournament in Palm Springs into an annual lesbian party weekend, to the chagrin of LPGA officials who remain committed to portraying their athletes as normatively feminine, mothers, and above all, heterosexual.²⁴

Baseball

Baseball has celebrated its players who made America's game more inclusive by breaking racial barriers. Less attention has been given to

¹⁸ Babe competed in the Los Angeles Open in 1938, held at the Los Angeles Tennis Club, 5851 Clinton Street, Los Angeles, California.

¹⁹ The LPGA is currently headquartered at 100 International Golf Drive in Daytona Beach, Florida.

²⁰ Cahn, "From the 'Muscle Moll' to the 'Butch' Ballplayer," 351.

²¹ Babe died in Galveston, Texas.

²² Susan E. Cayleff, *Babe: The Life and Legend of Babe Didrikson Zaharias* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1996); Zaharias was memorialized on Chicago's LGBT Legacy walk in 2014, see Daniel Reynolds, "Photos: 7 LGBT Heroes Honored With Plaques in Chicago's Legacy Walk," *The Advocate*, October 11, 2014, <http://www.advocate.com/pride/2014/10/11/photos-7-lgbt-heroes-honored-plaques-chicagos-legacy-walk?page=full>. Babe has also been memorialized in Beaumont, Texas, her childhood home, through the Babe Didrikson Zaharias Museum, 1750 I-10 Frontage Road, Beaumont, Texas.

²³ Karman Kregloe, "Interview with Rosie Jones," *AfterEllen*, April 9, 2007, <http://www.afterellen.com/people/9214-interview-with-rosie-jones>.

²⁴ "Tee Party," *Guardian*, May 6, 2001, <http://observer.theguardian.com/osm/story/0,,482447,00.html>. It should be noted that the Dinah Shore tournament no longer holds that name, but is still colloquially referred to as the "Dinah Shore." The tournament is held at the Mission Hills Country Club, 34600 Mission Hills Drive, Rancho Mirage, California.



Glenn Burke, who was the first player to be out to his teammates (but not the public) during his career. An African American outfielder for the Los Angeles Dodgers and the original source of the high five hand slap, Burke was pressured by the Dodgers to get married and was traded when he refused—evidence of how team managers and officials felt about his sexual identity.²⁵ Though he struggled with drug use and eventually succumbed to AIDS, Burke was undeterred, saying, “My mission as a gay ballplayer was to break a stereotype... I think it worked.”²⁶ Burke’s legacy paved the way for Billy Bean, an outfielder who played from 1987-1995 to come out in 1999.²⁷ Though both Bean and Burke came out to the public after retirement, they made it possible for players like rising Minor League player David Denson to come out while still playing. In his role as MLB’s “Ambassador for Inclusion,” Bean was able to support Denson in his 2015 coming out to his team and the Milwaukee community.²⁸

Major League Baseball (MLB) has few out gay umpires: longstanding National League umpire Dave Pallone was forced to resign in 1988 when rumors of his homosexuality surfaced; meanwhile umpire Dale Scott, who has worked in the American League since 1986, came out in 2014 and remains the only out umpire in the MLB.²⁹

²⁵ Young, *Lesbians and Gays*, 63-65. The Dodgers play at Dodger Stadium, 1000 Elysian Park Avenue, Los Angeles, California.

²⁶ Dylan Vox, “A High Five to Baseball Great Glenn Burke,” *This Week in Texas*, December 11, 2006, http://www.thisweekintexas.com/artman/publish/printer_Glenn_Burke.shtml. Burke’s athletic career began at Berkeley High School, located at 1980 Allston Way, Berkeley, California. The Berkeley High School Campus Historic District was listed on the NRHP on January 7, 2008.

²⁷ Bean played for the Detroit Tigers, briefly for the LA Dodgers, and finished his career in San Diego with the Padres; in San Diego he felt so much pressure to remain in the closet he played a 1995 spring training exhibition game just hours after his partner died of AIDS. See Kevin Baxter, “David Denson, pro baseball’s first openly gay player, has help on his journey,” *Los Angeles Times*, August 22, 2015, <http://www.latimes.com/sports/la-sp-denson-gay-baseball-20150822-story.html>.

²⁸ See Baxter, “David Denson, pro baseball’s first openly gay player, has help on his journey,” Denson has moved between the Brewers and their lower-level farm teams, including the Timber Rattlers (Appleton, Wisconsin) and the Helena Brewers (Helena, Montana). The Milwaukee Brewers play at Miller Park, located at One Brewers Way, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

²⁹ Pallone was born in Waltham, Massachusetts and currently lives in Colorado with his partner Keith; see Pallone’s website at <http://davepallone.com>; Scott was born in Eugene, Oregon where he was inducted into the Sheldon High School Hall of Honor.

Softball

While baseball has generally not allowed for the openness of gay players, softball suffers from a split consciousness. On one hand, the top collegiate and national caliber women players struggle with an environment similar



Figure 2: Gay Activists Alliance Softball Team. Photo by Kay Tobin, ca. 1969-1974, courtesy of the New York Public Library.

to elite women's basketball—there are a number of lesbian players, but heterosexual feminine appearances are the norm. At the same time, recreational softball is an important community-building tool for the lesbian community, a tradition that reaches back to the 1940s (Figure 2).³⁰ A women's softball game provided a guaranteed lesbian crowd in places where no gay bar or other public space was available, and proved vital to women trying to meet others.³¹ Where there were gay bars available, they often sponsored teams as a way of expanding the community being built within their institutions. For many gay women, softball teams offered a safe, vibrant, and supportive community that provided a counterbalance and even resistance to the homophobic mainstream in which they lived and worked. Softball as a lesbian institution continues in today's LGBTQ softball leagues and built the Gay

³⁰ For more on lesbian softball cultures, see Yvonne Zipter, *Diamonds Are a Dyke's Best Friend* (Ithaca, NY: Firebrand Books, 1988), also Lillian Faderman *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 154, 161-62.

³¹ Cahn, "From the 'Muscle Moll' to the 'Butch' Ballplayer," 358.

Softball World Series into the cornerstone of the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance.³²

Tennis

Tennis' openly LGBTQ history rests predominantly on the women's side, and is tied to a series of players in the 1970s and early 1980s. Three matches in American tennis history have been dubbed the "Battle of the Sexes," but the most famous was the exhibition match between Billie Jean



Figure 3: Tennis champion Billie Jean King playing in Phoenix, Arizona in 1978. In 1973, she beat male opponent Bobby Riggs in the famous "Battle of the Sexes" tennis match. Photo by Mitchell Weinstock.³³

King and Bobby Riggs in 1973 (Figure 3).³⁴ Riggs felt women's tennis was a joke and he boasted that he could beat the top players despite being fifty-five years old. Billie Jean King, who had been ranked Number 1 in the world in 1966 and had won ten Grand Slam titles since, took his sexist challenge and beat him in three straight sets, as a television audience of fifty million watched. King had been romantically involved with women for years but did not come out publicly until 1981, when a lawsuit from her ex-girlfriend hit the news.³⁵ King is considered the first professional female athlete to publicly

³² See North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance website, <https://www.nagaasoftball.org/Legacy/Default.aspx> (web page no longer online, see archived web page at <https://web.archive.org/web/20150911085516/https://www.nagaasoftball.org/Legacy/Default.aspx>).

³³ License: CC BY-ND 2.0. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/schlepper/5304275555>

³⁴ The match was played at the Houston Astrodome, located at 8400 Kirby Drive, Houston, Texas. The Astrodome was added to the NRHP on January 15, 2014.

³⁵ King was sued by Marilyn Barnett in a 1981 "galimony" suit after their relationship ended. See Michelle Kort, "Billie Jean King - interview," *The Advocate*, August 18, 1988.

announce her lesbianism while still playing. Since then, she has worked for women's tennis and LGBTQ organizations.³⁶ King's current partner, South African-born Ilana Kloss, was also a top player in the 1970s, and is one of few Jewish women in professional tennis.³⁷

Even before the Battle of the Sexes, Renée Richards used tennis to challenge America's understanding of sex and gender. Richards was a champion men's tennis player with a lethal backhand at Yale and in the Navy before she transitioned to living as a woman in 1975. Hoping to continue competing in the game she loved, she tried to enter the US Open in 1976, but was barred when she refused a chromosome test given to all women athletes.³⁸ She sued for her right to play, setting off a media frenzy, and in 1977 was granted entrance into the tournament held in Forest Hills, Queens, New York. During the next four years, Richards saw major successes, including winning the 1979 35-and-over singles title, despite media mockery and competitors cancelling.³⁹ In 1981, she retired and turned to coaching and medical practice in her hometown of New York City. In 2013, Richards was one of the inaugural inductees into the National Gay and Lesbian Sports Hall of Fame.⁴⁰

³⁶ See her autobiography, *Pressure is a Privilege: Lessons I've Learned from Life and the Battle of the Sexes* (New York: LifeTime Media, 2008).

³⁷ *Portrait of a Pioneer: The Billie Jean King Documentary* (New York: HBO Sports, 2006).

³⁸ The 1976 US Open was held at the Highlands Course of the Atlanta Athletic Club in Duluth, Georgia at 1930 Bobby Jones Drive, Johns Creek, Georgia; Renée Richards, *No Way Renée: The Second Half of My Notorious Life* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2007).

³⁹ Since 1978, the US Open has been held at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center in Flushing Meadow-Corona Park, Flushing, New York. The Arthur Ashe Stadium, opened in 1997, is located within the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center. It was named after Arthur Ashe, a world-ranked tennis player who was the first African American selected for the US Davis Cup team and the only black man to win singles titles at Wimbledon, the US Open, or the Australian Open. Ashe contracted HIV in the early 1980s, likely from a blood transfusion (in the years before blood banks began screening blood donations for HIV). He announced his illness in 1992 and founded the Arthur Ashe Foundation for the Defeat of AIDS, an educational non-profit to educate others about AIDS and HIV. As one of only a few straight athletes to come out publicly about his HIV status, he helped challenge stereotypes of AIDS as exclusively a "gay disease." He died from AIDS-related pneumonia on February 6, 1993.

⁴⁰ Matthew Breen, "National Gay and Lesbian Sports Hall of Fame's Inaugural Class Announced," *Out Magazine*. June 18, 2013, <http://www.out.com/entertainment/popnography/2013/06/18/national-gay-lesbian-sports-hall-fame-chicago>. The NGLS Hall of Fame is based out of Chicago but does not have a location open to the public, instead it operates at <http://gayandlesbiansports.com>.



Another famous out LGBTQ player from this era is Czech American Martina Navratilova, who held record-length top rankings in singles and doubles, the most singles and doubles titles in the open era, and is considered one of the top women players of all time. Her long rivalry with Chris Evert produced years of exceptional play.⁴¹ Yet like other LGBTQ tennis champions, Navratilova faced public scrutiny and painful gossip when her personal life spilled into the tabloids and onto the courts.⁴² Today she is an advocate for LGBTQ rights. Other lesbian players have also dominated the tennis elite. Helen Jacobs, who won multiple singles championships in the 1930s, had several women partners and broke tradition by wearing men's tennis shorts on the court. Included in her victories were a string of US Open singles titles from 1932-1935, all won at the West Side Tennis Club.⁴³ Puerto Rican-born Gigi Fernandez was a top player in the 1980s and 1990s and now has children with Jane Geddes, a former LPGA champion.⁴⁴ Between 1996 and 2012, Lisa Raymond earned a number one ranking in women's doubles (2000) and eleven Grand Slam titles, during which she was open about her relationship with her doubles partner, Australian Rennae Stubbs.⁴⁵

⁴¹ The "open era" refers to the 1968 decision allowing professional players to compete with amateurs at major tennis tournaments like the Grand Slam. Navratilova and Evert traded victories in several tournaments at the Amelia Island Plantation (Beachwood Road, Fernandina Beach, Florida) but it was their 1985 French Open Final that is considered one of the best women's tennis matches of all time, which Navratilova lost. Navratilova ended up topping Evert in the career titles and in their head-to-head matches. Navratilova now lives in Sarasota, Florida.

⁴² Navratilova initially came out as bisexual in a 1981 interview, but has since identified herself as lesbian. See Johnette Howard, *The Rivals: Chris Evert vs. Martina Navratilova Their Epic Duels and Extraordinary Friendship* (New York: Crown Archetype, 2005), 181.

⁴³ Jacob's partners include her lifelong companion Virginia Gurnee, and an earlier relationship with Henrietta Bingham, daughter of US Ambassador to England Robert Bingham. See her obituary, Susan B. Adams, "Helen Jacobs, Tennis Champion in the 1930's, Dies at 88," *New York Times*, June 4, 1997; and also Bingham's biography; Emily Bingham, *Irrepressible: The Jazz Age Life of Henrietta Bingham* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2015), 223-266. The West Side Tennis Club is a longstanding US Open venue, located at One Tennis Place Forest Hills, Queens, New York.

⁴⁴ Karen Crouse, "A Dream Deferred, Almost Too Long," *New York Times*, August 29, 2010. Fernandez now lives in Connecticut and coaches at Chelsea Piers Connecticut (1 Blachley Road, Stamford, Connecticut) and The Long Ridge Tennis Club (Long Ridge Road, Stamford, Connecticut).

⁴⁵ See Lisa Raymond website at <http://www.lraymondweb.com>, for Raymond's professional history. For personal history, see Linda Pearce, "Rennae out of closet, in your face," *Sydney Morning Herald*, January 7, 2006. Since their success on and off the court in the early 2000s, Stubbs and Raymond have ended their personal and professional relationships. Raymond was born in Norristown, Pennsylvania and played for the University of Florida's Gators tennis team at Linder Stadium (Gainesville, Florida) where she helped her team win its first NCAA championship.

Few professional tennis players on the men's circuit have been out about their homosexuality. Perhaps the most famous is William Tilden. A native Philadelphian and alumnus of Germantown Academy prep school, located in the Philadelphia suburb of Fort Washington, and Peirce College, "Big Bill" Tilden is often considered one of the greatest men's players of all time, winning seven US Championships (1920-1925, 1929) and holding the number one world ranking from 1920-1925.⁴⁶ Tilden's tennis dominance did not protect him from antisodomy laws and homophobic culture, however; the end of his playing career was hastened as Tilden was plagued by rumors, arrests for soliciting minors, and jail. These charges left Tilden broke, unable to teach lessons, and shunned from his home club, Philadelphia's Germantown Cricket Club.⁴⁷ Tilden's athletic dominance posed a direct challenge to expectations tying masculine athleticism with heterosexuality, and ultimately resulted in the destruction of his athletic career and life.

Football

Despite baseball's title as "America's pastime," it is American football that is the juggernaut of sport dollars, viewership, and collegiate athletics in the United States. As a result, definitions of masculinity are closely woven in and around the gridiron game. Despite the huge number of collegiate and pro players, there are very few who have ever come out as gay, and even fewer who have done so while playing. As sports scholar Mariah Burton Nelson argues, football offers a homosocial environment in which men can express emotion, touch one another, and enjoy male bodies on display, but does so by perpetuating an understanding of sex that is violent, misogynist, and unrelentingly homophobic.⁴⁸ Although

⁴⁶ Tilden lived luxuriously for a while from his victories, even keeping a suite at the famous Algonquin Hotel at 59 West 44th Street, New York City, New York.

⁴⁷ Richard Schickel, *The World of Tennis* (New York: Random House, 1975). For more on Tilden, see Frank Deford's biography, *Big Bill Tilden: The Triumphs and the Tragedy* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1976). The Germantown (Manheim) Cricket Club is located at 5140 Morris Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. It was listed on the NRHP and designated an NHL on February 27 1987. In 1953, Tilden died at the age of sixty, in his home in the Hollywood Hills neighborhood of Los Angeles, California.

⁴⁸ Mariah Burton Nelson, "Men in Tight Pants Embracing," in *The Stronger Women Get, the More Men Love Football: Sexism and the American Culture of Sports* (New York: Harcourt Brace, 1994), 103-126.



pioneer David Kopay came out in 1975 after finishing his NFL career in Green Bay a few years earlier, his contemporaries who were widely known to be gay, did not.⁴⁹ The few who did often experienced years of misery beforehand trying to come to terms with their homosexuality or bisexuality. Roy Simmons, a guard for the New York Giants (1979-1982) and Washington Redskins (1983-1985), contracted HIV and struggled with drug addiction and homelessness after his career fell apart.⁵⁰ Ed Gallagher, a University of Pittsburgh offensive tackle, was so distraught by his homosexuality he attempted suicide in 1985 and was left a paraplegic. After the suicide attempt, Gallagher devoted the rest of his life to advocating for disabled and gay rights.⁵¹

Football players who have come out as gay recently include Esera Tuaolo (NFL rostered 1991-1999, primarily Minnesota Vikings 1992-1996), Wade Davis (NFL practice

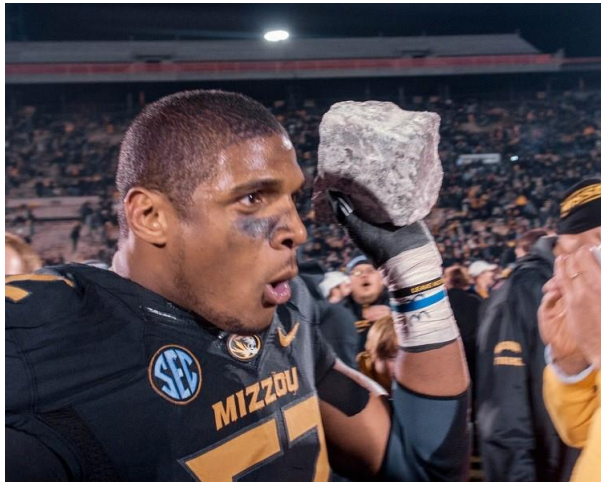


Figure 4: Michael Sam celebrates a win at his last game for the University of Missouri. Sam played defensive end for the University of Missouri, and then became the first openly gay player to be successfully drafted in the NFL draft when he signed with the St. Louis Rams in 2014. Photo by Marcus Quertus, 2013.⁵²

⁴⁹ Players like Jerry Smith (Redskins tight end), Ray McDonald (Redskins running back), and Jackie Walker (49ers linebacker) are widely believed to have been gay, but never publicly confirmed their sexuality. See 'A Football Life': Jerry Smith – *Living a Double Life* (NFL Films, 2014); and Betty Bean, "The Jackie Walker Story," *Metro Pulse*, November 22, 2007. David Kopay played for several teams during his career, but his gay history is grounded in his time with the Washington Redskins when he was in a relationship with teammate Jerry Smith. During this time, the Redskins played at RFK Memorial Stadium, located at 2400 East Capitol Street SE, Washington, DC.

⁵⁰ For Simmons, see his memoir *Out of Bounds: Coming out of Sexual Abuse, Addiction, and My Life of Lies in the N.F.L. Closet* (Boston: Da Capo Press, 2006). Simmons was born in Savannah, Georgia, played for Georgia Tech, and died at the age of fifty-seven at his home in the Bronx, New York.

⁵¹ For Gallagher, see Cyd Zeigler, "Greatest Sports Moment #68: Ed Gallagher survives suicide attempt," *Outsports*, July 29, 2011. Gallagher attempted suicide off the Kensico Dam, located at 1 Bronx River Parkway, Valhalla, New York, and marks his survival as a turning point in his life.

⁵² License: CC BY-SA 3.0.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Michael_Sam_final_Mizzou_home_game.jpg

squad member 2000-2003, ending with the Washington Redskins), Kwame Harris (NFL 2003-2010, primarily with the San Francisco 49ers, 2003-2007), but these professional players each waited until after retirement. Meanwhile college players Brian Sims (Bloomsburg University, 1997-2001), Alan Gendreau (Middle Tennessee State University, 2008-2011), and Conner Mertens (Willamette University, 2013-present) felt comfortable coming out as gay or bisexual while still playing, evidence of the divide between the NFL and NCAA sports cultures, and possibly a generational shift.⁵³ Michael Sam was drafted by the St. Louis Rams after being a collegiate All-American, and is considered the first openly gay player to be successfully drafted into the NFL (Figure 4).⁵⁴ Sam was later cut from the Rams and now plays in the Canadian Football League; some have argued that Sam's experience and those of other openly gay players send a clear message about the NFL's inability to change its underlying homophobic culture.⁵⁵

⁵³ Tuaolo came out during a 2002 interview on HBO's "Real Sports", see "Former NFL Player Speaks Out on Being Gay," *ABC News*, <http://abcnews.go.com/GMA/story?id=125632&page=1>. Davis came out in 2012 in an interview with *Outsports*, see Associated Press, "Ex-Titans CB Wade Davis Comes Out," *ESPN*, June 7, 2012, http://espn.go.com/nfl/story/_/id/8022419/former-nfl-cornerback-wade-davis-comes-gay. Kwame Harris talked openly of being gay on CNN in March 2013, see Mike Foss, "Former 49ers player Kwame Harris talks about being gay," *USA Today*, March 29, 2013, <http://www.usatoday.com/story/gameon/2013/03/29/san-francisco-49ers-kwame-harris-gay/2034509>. Brian Sims was open with his college teammates and later worked publicly to advance LGBTQ rights, currently serving in the Pennsylvania House of Representatives, see Cyd Zeigler, "Former College Football Captain Was Openly Gay," *Outsports*, April 27, 2009. Alan Gendreau was an openly gay kicker aiming for the NFL in 2013, see Cyd Zeigler, "Coming Out Kicking," *Outsports*, April 23, 2013. College kicker Conner Mertens came out as bisexual publicly in 2014, see Cyd Zeigler, "Conner Mertens came out to his college football team. Now he comes out publicly," *Outsports*, January 28, 2014, <http://www.outsports.com/2014/1/28/5348936/conner-mertens-willamette-football-kicker>.

⁵⁴ Sam came out during an interview on ESPN's "Outside the Lines" on February 9, 2014, see Chris Connelly, "Missou's Michael Sam says he's gay," *ESPN*, February 10, 2014, http://espn.go.com/espn/otl/story/_/id/10429030/michael-sam-missouri-tigers-says-gay. The 2014 NFL draft, in which he was the first openly gay player to be drafted, was held at Radio City Music Hall at 1260 Sixth Avenue, New York City, New York. Radio City Music Hall was added to the NRHP on May 8, 1978.

⁵⁵ For example, see Michelangelo Signorile, "What's the Probability That Michael Sam Was Cut Because He's Gay, Really?" *Huffington Post*, October 24, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/michelangelo-signorile/whats-the-probability-that-michael-sam-was-cut-because-hes-gay-really_b_6041468.html.



Rugby

Rugby's British roots and similarity to American football create a unique position in US sports culture. The intense physicality of the game has meant an opportunity for women, traditionally excluded from football, to play a contact sport. For men, rugby has offered a contact sport for those disinterested in or marginalized from American football, including gay and bisexual men. The game has for decades drawn women already interested in pushing past gender norms, and cultivated a deep history among lesbian and bisexual women. In 1987, the US Women's National Team (the Eagles) was formed, and in 1991 won the inaugural Women's World Cup.⁵⁶ Beginning in the 1990s, gay men's rugby teams began to form, eventually uniting as the International Gay Rugby league. One of the most famous gay rugby players (ruggers) is Mark Bingham who was one of the passengers on United Airlines Flight 93 that was hijacked by terrorists on September 11, 2001.⁵⁷ Bingham led several fellow passengers in an uprising against their hijackers, preventing the plane from being used to attack US cities. Media coverage of Bingham's personal sacrifice often mentioned his leadership in founding a gay rugby team, the San Francisco Fog. This attention reveals America's unfamiliarity with the game of rugby, as well as the existence of gay rugby teams, but also points to the homophobic assumption that gay men couldn't embody the strength, courage, and selflessness that Bingham modeled. His legacy is memorialized in the gay rugby league's world cup tournament, as well as a memorial at the University of California at Berkeley, his alma mater.⁵⁸

⁵⁶ See "About USA Rugby," USA Rugby website, <http://www.usarugby.org/about-usa-rugby/history>. USA Rugby is based in Colorado at 2655 Crescent Drive, Lafayette, Colorado.

⁵⁷ Flight 93 was forced down in a field just off Lincoln Highway, Stoystown, Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The Flight 93 National Memorial is a unit of the NPS, established on September 24, 2002.

⁵⁸ John Morrison and John Donegan, "Mark Bingham: The 9/11 hero behind rugby's gay World Cup," ABC Sydney, August 21, 2014, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2014-08-21/the-hero-behind-the-bingham-cup/5685996>. The SF Fog are based at 2370 Market Street #232, San Francisco, California. Cal rugby plays at Witter Field, 210 Stadium Rim Way, Piedmont, California.

Hockey

Hockey's rough and tough image presents a similar challenge for its gay athletes, at least on the men's side. Brendan Burke, son of the former general manager of the Toronto Maple Leafs and the US Olympic hockey team, was a student manager for the Miami University RedHawks men's ice hockey team when he came out in order to combat homophobia in hockey.⁵⁹ When Burke was killed in an accident several months later, his family began the You Can Play Project, a campaign dedicated to ending homophobia in sports.⁶⁰

Caitlin Cahow played on two US women's Olympic hockey teams (2010 Vancouver and 2006 Turin) and in the Canadian Women's Hockey League (CWHL), and now works in CWHL administration.⁶¹ She is one of a handful of women's hockey players to publicly discuss her lesbian identity.⁶² In 2014 she was chosen by President Obama to represent the United States as part of the official Sochi Winter Olympics delegation. The selection of Cahow and Billie Jean King was considered a challenge to Russia's antigay policies, specifically a 2013 prohibition on gay "propaganda" available to minors and increasingly homophobic cultural norms promoted by President Putin.⁶³

⁵⁹ Sarah Boesveld and James Mirtle, "Brian Burke's Son Killed in Auto Accident," *Globe and Mail*, February 5, 2010, <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/sports/brian-burkes-son-killed-in-auto-accident/article4305035>; also

Chris Peters, "Remembering Brendan Burke," *The United States of Hockey* (blog), February 5, 2013, <http://unitedstatesofhockey.com/2013/02/05/remembering-brendan-burke>. The Miami RedHawks play at the Goggin Ice Center, 610 South Oak Street, Oxford, Ohio.

⁶⁰ See "Welcome from the Founders," You Can Play Project website, <http://youcanplayproject.org/pages/welcome>.

⁶¹ "CWHL Board Approves League Expansion," Canadian Women's Hockey League press release, June 19, 2015, http://www.cwhl.ca/view/cwhl/news-644/news_306062. The CWHL administration is based in Ontario at 734 Srigley Street, Newmarket, Ontario, Canada.

⁶² Lucy Hollowell, "Two-time Olympian Caitlin Cahow Comes Out," *AfterEllen*, November 14, 2013, <http://www.afterellen.com/people/202810-two-time-olympian-caitlin-cahow-come-out>.

⁶³ Eddie Pells, "Obama Selects Gay Athletes for Sochi Delegation," *Associated Press*, December 18, 2013, <http://sports.yahoo.com/news/white-house-unveils-us-delegation-224216706-spt.html>.



Basketball

Like other popular sports in America, basketball's LGBTQ history was for a long time about closeted secrecy. The sport may recently have entered a period of change, with athletes coming out as gay, lesbian, and transgender to relatively positive reception. Still, the complex dynamics of sexuality, race, and class within basketball culture create a challenge for those players wishing to be open and honest about their sexual identities.⁶⁴

Women's basketball history includes decades of semipro leagues, a well-organized physical education system in schools and universities, and the Amateur Athletic Union.⁶⁵ Each of these offered safe spaces for straight, bisexual, and lesbian female athletes to participate in highly competitive athletics, despite varying gendered expectations for women throughout the first half of the twentieth century. Since the 1970s, however, women's collegiate basketball created a more difficult environment for lesbian and queer women players, despite rumors of many players and coaches themselves being lesbian. In the 1980s and 1990s, the pressures of cultural gender norms were heightened by the media spotlight on the new pro league (founded 1996), the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA). This produced an extreme level of homophobic gender policing in which female athletes' behavior, dress, and mannerisms were carefully groomed to not appear overly masculine.⁶⁶ Emblematic of this was Penn State women's head coach, Rene Portland, whose twenty-seven-year career was overshadowed by her ban on lesbian

⁶⁴ See, for example, Cheryl Cooky et al., "It's Not About the Game: Don Imus, Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality in Contemporary Media," *Sociology of Sport Journal* 27, no. 2 (2010): 139-159; and Jane Duvall Downing, "Welcome to the Ball, Cinderella: Investigating Gender, Sexuality, Race, and Class Through a Study of the Lived Experience of Women Athletes," PhD Diss., University of Missouri-Columbia, 1999.

⁶⁵ See Adolph H. Grundman, *The Golden Age of Amateur Basketball: The AAU Tournament, 1921-1968* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

⁶⁶ Sarah Banet-Weiser, "We Got Next: Negotiating Race and Gender in Professional Basketball," in *Paradoxes of Youth and Sport*, SUNY Series on Sport, Culture, and Social Relations, eds. Margaret Gatz, Sandra J. Ball-Rokeach, and Michael A. Messner (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2002), 93-102.

players and the hostile environment she fostered, prompting nearly half of her players to transfer or quit.⁶⁷

Despite this uneven history of acceptance, the archives of women's basketball still boasts many women who have openly been in, or are in, relationships with other women. Early players include Sue Wicks (Rutgers University 1984-1988, New York Liberty 1997-2002), Sheryl Swoopes (Texas Tech University 1993, Houston Comets 1997-2007, six-time WNBA All-Star and four-time WNBA Champion 1997-2000), Michele Van Gorp (Duke University 1997-1999, Minnesota Lynx 2001-2004), and Sharnee Zoll-Norman (University of Virginia 2004-2008, European leagues, Chicago Sky 2013).⁶⁸ More recently, younger players like Glory Johnson (University of Tennessee 2008-2012, Tulsa Shock/Dallas Wings 2012-present) and superstar Brittney Griner (Baylor University 2009-2013, Phoenix Mercury 2013-present) have also been upfront about their lesbian identity, even when their dramatic relationships became tabloid fodder.⁶⁹ The '6'8" Griner linked her size and lesbianism in recalling childhood experiences of ostracism: "It was hard. Just being picked on for being different. Just being

⁶⁷ *Training Rules: No Drinking, No Drugs, No Lesbians*, directed by Dee Mosbacher and Fawn Yacker (San Francisco, CA: Woman Vision Films, 2009). Penn State Lady Lions basketball is played in the Bryce Jordan Center at 127 Bryce Jordan Center, University Park, Pennsylvania.

⁶⁸ Sue Wicks came out as a lesbian in 2002, see Lena Williams, "Wicks's Statement Stir Little Reaction," *New York Times*, July 7, 2002. Sheryl Swoopes came out as a lesbian in 2005, but is now married to a man and hasn't chosen to publicly label her sexuality, see Cyd Ziegler, "Sheryl Swoopes is not a lesbian, now engaged to marry a man" *Outsports*, July 14, 2011. Michele Van Gorp said she'd "never been in the closet" but still caused a stir when she was interviewed by a gay and lesbian magazine in 2004, see Jim Buzinski, "Van Gorp Out and Proud," *Outsports*, July 13, 2004. Sharnee Zoll-Norman was open with teammates about being married to a woman, but hadn't seen her lesbian identity as relevant to her as a basketball player until she shared her sexual identity with the media in 2013, see Ross Forman, "Lesbian Chicago Sky player set to attend her first Pride Parade," *Windy City Times*, June 27, 2013. The Phoenix Mercury play at the Talking Stick Resort Arena (201 East Jefferson Street, Phoenix, Arizona); the New York Liberty play at Madison Square Garden (New York, New York), with a brief stint (2011-2013) at the Prudential Center in Newark, New Jersey; the Houston Comets played for most of Swoopes' reign at the Summit, renamed the Compaq Center, and now comprises the Lakewood Church Central Campus, an evangelical church (3700 Southwest Freeway, Houston, Texas); the Minnesota Lynx play at the Target Center (600 First Avenue North, Minneapolis, Minnesota); the Chicago Sky play at the Allstate Arena (6920 Mannheim Road, Rosemont, Illinois); the Tulsa Shock played in the Bank of Oklahoma (BOK) Center (200 South Denver, Tulsa, Oklahoma) but relocated to become the Dallas Wings in 2016, playing in the College Park Center (601 South Pecan Street, Arlington, Texas).

⁶⁹ For an example of the widespread gossip on Griner and Johnson, see Bossip Staff, "Sweet Black Love: Brittney Griner Shows Off Her Girlfriend Lola Just Weeks After Glory Johnson Marriage Annulment," *Bossip*, July 29, 2015, <http://bossip.com/1197080/sweet-black-love-brittney-griner-shows-off-her-girlfriend-lola-just-weeks-after-glory-johnson-marriage-annulment>.





Figure 5: Out lesbian Brittney Griner dunks the ball at the 2015 WNBA All-Star Game at Mohegan Sun in Uncasville, Connecticut. Photo by Danny Karwoski.⁷²

bigger, my sexuality, everything.”⁷⁰ Griner continues to challenge expectations of what a female athlete can accomplish, being one of only three WNBA players to dunk and holding a National Collegiate Athletics Association (NCAA) career block record for all players, male and female (Figure 5). In 2013, she was even asked to try out for the National Basketball Association’s (NBA’s) Dallas Mavericks.⁷¹

In the last decade, elite men’s basketball has begun to follow in the steps of the women’s game with several players openly affirming their gay and bisexual identities, even if mostly after

their playing careers. They included Will Sheridan (Villanova University 2003-2007, Italian leagues), who came out to teammates as gay while playing and publicly after retiring in 2011; and Travon Free (Long Beach State University 2008-2011) who shared his bisexuality in 2011.⁷³ Most visible was Jason Collins, a collegiate All-American who played for thirteen seasons in the NBA, including the 2014 season, after he had publicly come out as gay and became a free agent.⁷⁴ Collins is the first publicly gay

⁷⁰ Doug Feinberg, Associated Press, “Griner, Delle Donne and Diggins dealt with bullies,” *Washington Times*, April 18, 2013, <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2013/apr/18/griner-delle-donne-and-diggins-dealt-with-bullies/?page=all>.

⁷¹ The Mavericks play at the American Airlines Center, 2500 Victory Avenue, Dallas, Texas.

⁷² License: CC BY-SA 3.0. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/andymiah/12515038085>

⁷³ Cyd Ziegler, “Will Sheridan, former Villanova basketball player, comes out as gay,” *Outsports*, May 16, 2011; Aymar Jean Christian, “Travon Free Comes Out as Bisexual,” *NewNowNext*, January 12, 2011, <http://www.newnownext.com/travon-free-comes-out-as-bisexual/01/2011>.

⁷⁴ Jason Collins, “Parting Shot: Jason Collins announces NBA Retirement in his own words,” *Sports Illustrated*, November 24, 2014. Collins’ coming out was the cover story on the May 6, 2013 issue of

athlete to play in any of the “Big Four” major North American pro sports leagues (NBA, NFL, National Hockey League [NHL], and MLB). Collins has already inspired other athletes, including Derrick Gordon (University of Massachusetts, Seton Hall University) to come out.⁷⁵ Collins chose to wear number 98 with the Brooklyn Nets in honor of Matthew Shepard, a gay teen killed in 1998 in Wyoming.⁷⁶

Further challenging gender and sexual norms in basketball, George Washington University women’s basketball player Kye Allums broke new ground when he came out as transgender in 2010 first to his team, and then publicly.⁷⁷ Allums received notable support from his team and coach, and despite personal struggles now educates audiences on transgender identities and sports.⁷⁸

Soccer

American soccer’s LGBTQ presence has also recently seen a positive shift toward more lesbian and gender-alternative-friendly publicity, greatly aided by the 2015 World Cup victory of the US Women’s National Team in Canada, led by publicly out lesbian players Megan Rapinoe and Abby Wambach.⁷⁹ Rapinoe’s precision on the field earned her a Goal Olimpico at the 2012 Summer Olympic Games in London, the only player in the world, male or female, to have done so that year.⁸⁰ Wambach holds the

Sports Illustrated. The game after his announcement was the Nets against the LA Lakers, played at the Staples Center at 1111 South Figueroa Street, Los Angeles, California.

⁷⁵ Pablo S. Torre, “Why did Derrick Gordon make history and then suddenly shun the spotlight?” *ESPN*, October 27, 2014, http://espn.go.com/mens-college-basketball/story/_/id/13950235/openly-gay-basketball-player-derrick-gordon-transfers-seton-hall-shuns-spotlight.

⁷⁶ Driadonna Roland, “NBA Will Donate Sales of Jason Collins’ Jersey to LGBT Groups,” *BuzzFeed*, February 28, 2014, https://www.buzzfeed.com/driadonnaroland/nba-will-donate-sales-of-jason-collins-jersey-to-lgbt-groups?utm_term=.eiWZ8QYLE#djiXAnWmPy.

⁷⁷ Erik Brady, “Transgender male Kye Allums on the women’s team at GW,” *USA Today*, November 4, 2010, http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/sports/college/womensbasketball/atlantic10/2010-11-03-kye-allums-george-washington-transgender_N.htm. George Washington University basketball is played at the Charles E. Smith Center located at 600 Twenty-Second Street NW, Washington, DC.

⁷⁸ Elliott Moore, “Kye Allums Discusses his Personal History as a Transgender Athlete,” *GLAAD* website, February 19, 2013, <http://www.glaad.org/blog/kye-allums-discusses-his-personal-history-transgender-athlete>.

⁷⁹ Jim Buzinski, “For Abby Wambach, passion for soccer changed after she married Sarah Huffman,” *Outsports*, May 26, 2015.

⁸⁰ A Goal Olimpico is a goal scored off a corner kick untouched by any other player.



world record for international goals scored for both men and women, two Olympic gold medals (Greece 2004, London 2012), and shared captain duties for the 2015 World Cup winning American team.⁸¹ These two are part of a longer tradition of lesbian and bisexual women's soccer players: Joanna Lohman has played professionally since 2001 and has developed opportunities for girls to play soccer in India.⁸² She is open about her marriage to National Women's Soccer League (NWSL) teammate Lianne Sanderson.⁸³ Several other out lesbians play at soccer's highest levels: Lori Lindsey has made the national team pool since 2005 and came out in 2012; Natasha Kai is a national team player who also played for the national women's rugby union sevens team; and Keelin Winters plays professionally in the United States and Australia.⁸⁴

On the men's side, fewer players have been open about their homosexuality or bisexuality, particularly while still actively playing, testament to the power of heteronormative masculinity in soccer. Yet a few gay men have chosen to challenge this norm. David Testo came out in 2011 after ending an eight-year professional career with the Montreal Impact, and Robbie Rogers came out as gay during a retirement in 2013 from playing in Britain but then returned to the United States to play for the Los Angeles Galaxy.⁸⁵

⁸¹ See Abby Wambach, player profile, U.S. Soccer website, accessed August 12, 2015, <http://www.ussoccer.com/players/2014/03/15/05/05/abby-wambach#tab-4>.

⁸² Val Henderson, "Soccer players change lives of girls through sport," *ESPNW*, December 19, 2011. <http://espn.go.com/espnw/news-commentary/article/7360694/pro-soccer-players-joanna-lohman-lianne-sanderson-want-change-lives-girls-sport>.

⁸³ Shira Springer, "Breakers have only gay couple in pro sports," *Boston Globe*, June 1, 2014. The Boston Breakers play at Jordan Field at 65 North Harvard Avenue, Boston, Massachusetts.

⁸⁴ Greg Hernandez, "US soccer star Lori Lindsey comes out as lesbian," *Gay Star News*, September 6, 2012, <http://www.gaystarnews.com/article/us-soccer-star-lori-lindsey-comes-out-lesbian060912>; Lindsey is from Indianapolis, Indiana and played college soccer for the University of Virginia Cavaliers (Charlottesville, Virginia). Kai was born in Kahuku, Hawaii and played soccer for the University of Hawaii's Rainbow Wahine (Honolulu, Hawaii); Sarah Warn, "The New York Times blogs about out soccer player Natasha Kai," *AfterEllen*, June 5, 2009, <http://www.afterellen.com/people/52059-the-new-york-times-blogs-about-out-soccer-player-natasha-kai>; "Soccer star joins US 7s squad," *ScrumQueens*, November 2011, <http://www.scrumqueens.com/news/soccer-star-joins-us-7s-squad>. For Keelin Winters, see player interview in *Let it Reign* (Seattle, WA: LEVYfilms, 2013); Winters was born in Cleveland, Ohio and played collegiate soccer for the University of Portland Pilots (Portland, Oregon).

⁸⁵ For the costs David Testo paid coming out, see Leander Schaerlaeckens, "Out of Bounds," *SB Nation*, September 28, 2012, <http://www.sbnation.com/soccer/2012/9/28/3419354/david-testo->

Bodybuilding and Boxing

The sport of bodybuilding has a complex relationship with gay male culture. The physique magazines popular in the 1940s and 1950s displayed bodybuilders in nude and seminude poses, offering a culturally acceptable way for men to admire male bodies. The magazines also became a coded way for gay men to make connections, whether in person or through pen pal and hobby directories.⁸⁶ Yet because of gendered expectations, bodybuilding remains a sport misunderstood as exclusively heterosexual, despite the visible presence of lesbian, gay, and bisexual bodybuilders.

Bob Paris came out in 1989 as gay while still competing as a bodybuilder, one of the first professional athletes in any sport to do so.⁸⁷ The result was a major hit to his career, including death threats and lost bookings and endorsements.⁸⁸ Jim Morris competed as an openly gay African American champion bodybuilder (1973 Mr. America) from the 1970s through the 1990s (1996 Mr. Olympia Masters Over 60). Morris took to the Internet in 2011 as a seventy-six-year-old to challenge stereotypes of the elderly and encourage others to increase their fitness.⁸⁹

[gay-soccer-player](#). Testo was born in Winston-Salem, North Carolina and played for the Montreal Impact (Saputo Stadium, 4750 Sherbrooke Street, Montreal, Quebec, Canada) from 2007-2011. Robbie Rogers, born in Rancho Palos Verdes, California, also struggled with his gay identity, "Gay soccer star Robbie Rogers: Living in closet 'creates this monster inside you,'" *NBC Today Show*, November 25, 2014, <http://www.today.com/popculture/soccer-star-robbie-rogers-reveals-why-he-came-out-gay-1D80314694>. The LA Galaxy play at the StubHub Center at 18400 Avalon Boulevard, Carson, California.

⁸⁶ See Martin Meeker, *Contacts Desired: Gay and Lesbian Communications and Community, 1940s-1970s* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006); later, homophile magazines like *DRUM* would incorporate physique photography as part of their appeal to gay male readers, see Marc Stein, "Birthplace of the Nation: Imagining Lesbian and Gay Communities in Philadelphia, 1969-1970," in *Creating a Place for Ourselves: Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Community Histories*, ed. Brett Beemyn (New York: Routledge, 1997), 253-288. See also Johnson (this volume).

⁸⁷ "Bob Paris, Former Mr. Universe, Talks About Coming Out: 'My Life was Threatened,'" *Huffington Post*, February 25, 2014, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/02/25/bob-paris-mr-universe-gay-oprah_n_4849671.html.

⁸⁸ Terri-Lynne Waldron, "Former Mr. Universe Bob Paris on Oprah, coming out, marriage," *Windy City Times*, April 1, 2014, <http://www.windycitymediagroup.com/lgbt/Former-Mr-Universe-Bob-Paris-on-Oprah-coming-out-marriage/46835.html>.

⁸⁹ Carla Hall, "Mr. America has bulk – three decades after winning the title," *Los Angeles Times*, September 4, 2007, <http://articles.latimes.com/2007/sep/04/local/me-morris4>. For Morris' video, see "The Story of a 78-year-old Vegan Bodybuilder-Jim Morris: Lifelong Fitness-Short Film," YouTube video, posted by Lifelong Fitness, March 11, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tUtv4slpm-U>.



Other notable gay male bodybuilders include Chris Dickerson, the first openly gay Mr. Olympia title holder (1982) and the first African American Mr. America (1970). He competed from the mid-1960s until the 1990s, came out as gay in the late 1970s, and now spends his retirement coaching in Florida.⁹⁰ Morris and Dickerson received different responses to being gay bodybuilders than Paris, perhaps shaped by the timing and manner of their outing (Paris on Oprah in the late 1980's versus Dickerson and Morris quietly in the 1970s) or Paris' public advocacy for gay marriage. Their experiences would also have been shaped by race, as Dickerson and Morris struggled against the racism that kept African Americans out of the championship circles until their arrival in the 1970s. In women's bodybuilding, Shelley Beattie was an openly bisexual woman who also was deaf, and after her professional bodybuilding career (early 1990s), she sailed on the all-women's America's Cup sailing team (1994-1995) and competed on the American Gladiators television show (1992-1996), though her bisexuality was not discussed in those contexts.⁹¹

Women's boxing joined the Olympic offerings in 2012, evidence of the growing popularity of women's fighting. American boxer Pat Manuel won multiple women's national championships until a 2012 shoulder injury gave him time to officially move to the men's division as part of his gender transition. Based out of Los Angeles, Manuel now uses his sport as a platform for advocating LGBTQ and women's equality while working on his own career in the men's USA Boxing amateur circuit.⁹² The rise of Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) style fighting, including the 2013 start of Ultimate Fighting Championship (UFC) matches for women, have given athletes like

⁹⁰ Walker Tisdale III, "Exclusive Conversation with Chris Dickerson," *Healthy Black Men*, March 20, 2011, <http://healthyblackmen.org/2011/03/20/talking-truth-with-chris-dickerson>. Dickerson's Mr. Olympia title was won at the Wembley Conference Centre, London, England.

⁹¹ Jerry Casey, "Life Story: Shelley Beattie," *Oregonian*, April 19, 2008.

⁹² Kylie Krabbe, "A Transgender Boxing Champ Plans His Return to the Ring," *LA Weekly*, September 11, 2015. Manuel has also opened an online gym for "oppression-free fitness" for queer clientele at www.buffbutch.com. See also Spectra Speaks, "Queer Female Boxer Pat Manuel Launches BUFF BUTCH: Masculine of Center Fitness Resource," April 2013, <http://www.qwoc.org/2013/04/female-boxing-champion-pat-manuel-launches-buff-butch-an-online-fitness-resource-for-masculine-of-center>, and Kylie Krabbe, "Pat Manuel poised to blaze trail as transgender amateur, then pro," *The Ring*, December 3, 2015, <http://ringtv.craveonline.com/news/405687-pat-manuel-poised-to-blaze-trail-as-transgender-amateur-then-pro>.

lesbian UFC fighter Liz Carmouche a chance to shape their own emerging sport cultures.⁹³ Carmouche faced off against fellow lesbian fighter Jessica Andrade in July 2013 at the KeyArena in Seattle, Washington for the first lesbian-lesbian UFC fight.⁹⁴

Rodeo

In 1975, Phil Ragsdale, a Reno, Nevada businessman, suggested a gay rodeo as a community fundraiser. Initially struggling to secure a site and animals, the rodeo finally took place at Reno's Washoe County Fairgrounds in October 1976.⁹⁵ The event was a hit, and by the early 1980s had grown into a multiday event raising thousands of dollars for charity. The idea spread and by 1985, the International Gay Rodeo Association (IGRA) was founded to unite local Gay Rodeo Associations.⁹⁶ IGRA events include traditional rodeo competitions, like bull riding and calf roping, as well as special gay rodeo events, including the Wild Drag Race (cowboys help a person in drag mount a wild steer) and Goat Dressing (put underpants on a goat). Events are open to all participants regardless of gender, unlike other rodeo associations, which are often marked by hostile cultures toward homosexuality and gender deviance.

Gay bars in the West and Midwest are an important part of IGRA advertising and Charlie's Bar in Denver provided notable support for the Colorado Gay Rodeo Association and the IGRA.⁹⁷ Major figures in gay rodeo include cowboy Greg Olson, a seven-time IGRA All-Around

⁹³ Kaitlyn, "A Talk With The Fighters From The First UFC Match Between Two Lesbians," *Autostraddle*, July 25, 2013, <http://www.autostraddle.com/a-talk-with-the-fighters-from-the-first-ufc-match-between-two-lesbians-187123>.

⁹⁴ The full fight report is available at Shaun Al-Shatti, "Liz Carmouche vs. Jessica Andrade full fight video highlights," *SB Nation*, July 28, 2013, <http://www.mmfighting.com/2013/7/28/4564518/liz-carmouche-vs-jessica-andrade-full-fight-video-highlights-ufc-on-fox-8>. The KeyArena is located at 305 Harrison Street, Seattle, Washington.

⁹⁵ The Washoe County Fairgrounds are located at 1001 Wells Avenue in Reno, Nevada. For more information about the Gay Rodeo, see Auer (this volume).

⁹⁶ See IGRA's website at <http://www.igra.com>.

⁹⁷ Rebecca Scofield, "Too Legit to Quit: Gay Rodeo, Camp, and the Performance of Gender in Reagan's America," in *Riding Bareback: Imagining American Gender, Sexuality, and Race through Rodeo*, PhD diss. in American Studies, Harvard University, November 2015. Charlie's also provided support to other LGBTQ recreation groups, including social dancing groups like the Denver Country Cloggers and the Mile High Squares. Charlie's is located at 900 East Colfax Avenue, Denver, Colorado.



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Champion,⁹⁸ IGRA's historian Cowboy Frank Harrell, and gay rodeo producers Wayne Jakino (Colorado), John King (Colorado), Linn Copeland (Kansas), Al Bell (California), and Terry Clark (Texas).⁹⁹

Diving

Occasionally the disclosure of an athlete's sexuality invoked other fears. Greg Louganis was America's top diver for most of the 1980s, and was widely considered the best ever in his events (Figure 6).

After having won two gold medals, five world championships, and many other international events, Louganis found himself at the Seoul Summer



Figure 6: Diver Greg Louganis won four gold medals between the 1984 Los Angeles and 1988 Seoul Olympics before coming out about his gay identity and his HIV-positive status. Here he speaks at the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and Journalism about his role representing both the United States and the LGBTQ athlete community, 2011. Photo by Brett Van Ort.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Olson was born in Erickson, Nebraska, and was a bartender and regular at Charlie's in Phoenix, Arizona where he lived most of his adult life. Charlie's is located at 727 West Camelback Road, Phoenix, Arizona. See "IGRA Hall of Fame: Greg Olson," IGRA website, <http://gayrodeohistory.org/HallOfFame/OlsonGreg.htm>.

⁹⁹ Jakino was born in Durango, Colorado but spent most of his adult life in Denver, Colorado, where he owned Charlie's bar, helped raise thousands for local AIDS charities, and served as a consultant to the local police department, see "IGRA Hall of Fame: Wayne Jakino," IGRA website, <http://gayrodeohistory.org/HallOfFame/JakinoWayne.htm>. King grew up on a farm in Iowa, was involved in starting Charlie's bars as well as gay rodeo in Denver, Phoenix, and Chicago, see "IGRA Hall of Fame: John King," IGRA website, <http://gayrodeohistory.org/HallOfFame/KingJohn.htm>. Copeland owned Our Fantasy Club (3201 South Hillside Street, Wichita, Kansas), Wichita's oldest gay and lesbian bar, which closed in 2015, and was a founding member of the Kansas Gay Rodeo Association, see "IGRA Hall of Fame: Linn Copeland," IGRA website, <http://gayrodeohistory.org/HallOfFame/CopelandLinn.htm>. Bell founded Floyd's, a Long Beach, California gay country western bar with his partner, which served as the home for the Golden State Gay Rodeo Association, see "IGRA Hall of Fame: Al Bell," IGRA website, <http://gayrodeohistory.org/HallOfFame/BellAl.htm>. Patricia Nell Warren, *The Lavender Locker Room* (Beverly Hills, CA: Wildcat Press, 2006), 276. Simonton, Texas was host of the first Texas gay rodeo event organized by Terry Clark, in November of 1984, see "Texas Star Page A1, November 9, 1984," IGRA website, <http://gayrodeohistory.org/1984/1984-11-09-TexasStarA1.htm>.

¹⁰⁰ License: CC BY-ND 2.0. https://www.flickr.com/photos/public_diplomacy/16572760405

Olympics in 1988, looking to repeat his previous double gold victory. During a preliminary round Louganis hit his head on the springboard, and with the spectators and television viewers aghast, got out of the pool clutching his head. Fortunately, he only needed a few stitches, and returned to win his third and fourth gold medals. Louganis retired after Seoul, and then revealed that he was gay and HIV positive. His announcement touched off a wave of panic given the bleeding head injury. When questioned about not disclosing earlier, he explained the terror he faced despite the minimal risk he posed to others. "At the time, if people in Seoul knew I was HIV-positive, I would never have been allowed into the country," Louganis said, "I was paralyzed by fear."¹⁰¹

Other divers were inspired by Louganis. Patrick Jeffrey competed for the United States in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics as openly gay, as did diver David Pichler who went on to become the US Diving Team Captain for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.¹⁰² Both Pichler and Jeffrey attended Ohio State University and competed for the Buckeyes dive team.¹⁰³

Figure Skating

In sports like figure skating, the gendered expectations are already far from dominant understandings of masculinity. Despite these athletes' incredible physical abilities, male figure skaters are derided for participating in a sport that demands grace, artistic sensibility, and

¹⁰¹ Bill Plaschke, "Greg Louganis remembers the Olympic dive that made history," *Los Angeles Times*, September 12, 2013, <http://articles.latimes.com/2013/sep/12/sports/la-sp-plaschke-louganis-20130913>.

¹⁰² "David Pichler," Gay Swimmers website, May 2008,

http://www.gayswim.co.uk/pages/david_pichler.htm; Jim Buzinski, "Moment #93: David Pichler, Patrick Jeffrey compete as openly gay in Olympics," *Outsports*, July 11, 2011. Jeffrey currently coaches at Stanford University and owns the Stanford Diving Club, operating out of the Avery Aquatic Center at 235 Sam McDonald Mall, Stanford, California. The Atlanta Olympics held their diving events at the Georgia Tech Aquatic Center, 750 Ferst Drive NW, Atlanta, Georgia. A pipe bomb explosion at the 1996 Atlanta Olympics resulted in two deaths and over one hundred injuries. The same man responsible for that bomb also detonated bombs at the Otherside Lounge, a lesbian bar at 1924 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia in 1997 and at two abortion clinics in 1997 and 1998 before his capture.

¹⁰³ The Buckeyes dive at McCorkle Aquatic Pavilion, 1847 Neil Avenue, Columbus, Ohio.





Figure 7: Figure skater Johnny Weir reporting at the Sochi 2014 Olympic Winter Games. A 2004-2006 US National Skating Champion, Johnny Weir's flamboyance challenged figure skating's gendered norms. Photo by Andi Miah.¹⁰⁴

costumes. In response to these pressures, figure skating's history includes written and unwritten gender rules covering everything from performance wear to particular moves, including particular spins and difficult jumps; for example, male skaters often find not just their skating but their manhood questioned if they don't perform a quadruple jump, and women skaters are expected to display emotion, not power, in their performances.¹⁰⁵ In line

with this gender policing, figure skating has not been hospitable to its LGBTQ skaters, and those who flaunt these rules have paid deep personal costs. Ronald "Ronnie" Robertson left his mark on skating in the 1950s through his spinning techniques, but was often passed over for gold medals and was posthumously outed by a vindictive coach.¹⁰⁶ Rudy Galindo was a Mexican American skater in the mid-1990s who came out as gay while still skating, and struggled with the death of his brother and coach from HIV. Galindo revealed his own HIV-positive status not long before he won the men's title at the 1996 US Championships at the San Jose Arena in legendary late career performance in front of his elderly

¹⁰⁴ License: Public Domain. <https://www.flickr.com/photos/andymiah/12515038085>

¹⁰⁵ Chloe Angyal and Daniel Eison, "Policing Gender in Figure Skating," *Sociological Images*, March 31, 2010. <http://thesocietypages.org/socimages/2010/03/31/guest-post-policing-gender-in-figure-skating>.

¹⁰⁶ Newsweek Staff, "LGBT Moments in Figure-Skating History," *Newsweek*, January 31, 2014, <http://www.newsweek.com/lgbt-moments-figure-skating-history-227576>. Robertson was born in Brackenridge, Pennsylvania and silvered in the 1956 Olympics in Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy.

mother.¹⁰⁷ Brian Boitano, who won gold at the 1988 Calgary Olympics and several world championship medals, came out in 2014 when angered by Russia's homophobic policies brought to light by the Sochi Olympics.¹⁰⁸ The recent rise of young Johnny Weir and his wildly flamboyant, gender-queer performances in the 2010 Vancouver Olympics forced skating to reconsider its gendered assumptions. As homophobic media and skating world comments were countered by a younger generation of skating fans through social media, Weir continued to declare that his sexuality was unrelated to skating and called for a change of sexist and homophobic attitudes. Weir officially came out as gay in his 2011 memoir and, after retiring in 2013, joined skating broadcasting with NBC's Olympic coverage (Figure 7).¹⁰⁹

Other Sports

Other sports have seen one or two athletes come out of the closet in the past decades. Professional lacrosse goalie Andrew Goldstein came out while attending Dartmouth College and was out during his professional career playing for the Long Island Lizards in the mid-2000s, and now works to undo homophobia in his beloved game.¹¹⁰ Even the conservative world of stock car racing saw its first out gay driver in 2003, as Stephen Rhodes joined the national touring circuit.¹¹¹

Even new sports continue to move uncertainly into an era of LGBTQ acceptance. The newly-developed sport of CrossFit merges aerobic endurance, weightlifting, and gymnastics. Based primarily in local gyms, CrossFit includes an international competition in which men and women

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. Galindo was born in San Jose, California where he lives today. The San Jose Arena (now renamed the SAP Center) is located at 525 West Santa Clara Street, San Jose, California.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Johnny Weir, *Welcome to My World* (New York: Gallery Books, 2011). Weir was born in Coatesville, Pennsylvania.

¹¹⁰ Cyd Ziegler, "Why I'm increasingly frustrated with closeted pro athletes," *Outsports*, September 1, 2015. The Long Island Lizards of Major League Lacrosse play at the James M. Shuart Stadium on Hofstra University's campus at 900 Fulton Avenue, Hempstead, New York.

¹¹¹ Joseph Ehrman-Dupre, "Stephen Rhodes Hopes to be NASCAR's First Openly Gay Success Story, Seeks LGBTQ Sponsorship," *Towleroad*, September 10, 2014,

<http://www.towleroad.com/2014/09/stephen-rhodes-hopes-to-be-nascars-first-openly-gay-success-story-seeks-lgbtq-sponsorship-video>. Rhodes was born in Goldsboro, North Carolina.



compete in multipart events over several days. Though some of its early CrossFit Games champions in the women's division were out about their lesbianism, the organization's media coverage carefully avoids discussion of athlete sexuality and continues to promote highly gendered workout apparel and heterosexist culture.¹¹² Yet cities like New York, San Francisco, and Los Angeles now boast LGBTQ-friendly CrossFit gyms and organizations like OUTWOD, which bring LGBTQ CrossFitters together in a merging of community building, gay male cruising cultures, and this new model of fitness.¹¹³ The erasure of LGBTQ participants at the national level while LGBTQ connections flourish at the local level suggests the moment of transition that CrossFit and many other sports drawing a younger audience are currently experiencing.

Gay Games

In response to the extreme homophobia and closeting that elite sports and particularly the Olympic Games seemed to foster, one man dreamed of a different athletic culture. Tom Waddell knew he was gay at an early age, and found friends through sports while growing up in the 1940s and 1950s.¹¹⁴ A tireless decathlete, he finally made the US Olympic team in 1968. There, Waddell, who is white, worked in solidarity with the African American athletes who made Black Power statements, earning the ire of the US Olympic Committee.¹¹⁵ After the games, Waddell was inspired to organize a Gay Olympics festival. Despite the US Olympic Committee's lawsuit over the name "Olympics," the first event held in San Francisco in

¹¹² Samantha Briggs, a British competitor who won the 2013 games, spoke openly of her partner, Jo Cartwright. See "The Woman Behind Sam Briggs: Jo Cartwright," Reebok CrossFit Games website, March 23, 2011, <http://games.crossfit.com/video/woman-behind-sam-briggs-jo-cartwright>.

¹¹³ For example, see Chadwick Moore, "My Month of Hell: Thirty Days in a Gay CrossFit Cult," *Out Magazine*, July 9, 2015, <http://www.out.com/lifestyle/2015/7/09/my-month-hell-gay-crossfit-cult>. For more on OUTWOD, see <http://www.outwod.com>.

¹¹⁴ Tom Waddell lived in a home in the Mission District of San Francisco, California from 1975 until his death in 1987.

¹¹⁵ Young, *Lesbians and Gays*.



Figure 8: The Closing Ceremonies of the 2006 Chicago Gay Games held at Wrigley Field. Photo by Rick Aiello.¹¹⁶

1982 was a huge success.¹¹⁷ The Gay Games, as it is now called, emphasizes sportsmanship, personal achievement, and inclusiveness over competitiveness or nationality (Figure 8).¹¹⁸ Events were open to anyone interested, and alongside traditional Olympic sports the Gay

¹¹⁶ License: CC BY-SA 2.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gay_Games_2006_End_Ceremonie_01.jpg. Wrigley Field is located at 1060 West Addison Street, Chicago, Illinois.

¹¹⁷ The Gay Games have been held in the following locations: 1982 San Francisco, California; 1986 San Francisco, California; 1990 Vancouver, Canada; 1994 New York City, New York; 1998 Amsterdam, Netherlands; 2002 Sydney, Australia; 2006 Chicago, Illinois; 2010 Cologne, Germany; 2014 Cleveland and Akron, Ohio; and are scheduled for 2018 in Paris, France. The Gay Games are an important part of San Francisco LGBTQ History. For more, see the Citywide Historic Context Statement for LGBTQ History in San Francisco, available at the City and County of San Francisco Planning Department website, <http://sf-planning.org/lgbt-historic-context-statement>.

¹¹⁸ Caroline Symons, "The Gay Games: A Beacon of Inclusion in Sport?" in Hargreaves and Anderson, eds., *Routledge Handbook*, 318-327.

Games currently offers darts, cheer, and scheduled for future games, wheelchair rugby and roller derby.¹¹⁹

Beyond a basic operating model that removes the hostility and aggressive competition that underlies mainstream sports, the Gay Games also celebrate LGBTQ culture through physical movement. Beginning in 1990, the Pink Flamingo has been an “aquatic spectacle” involving teams of swimmers competing via a costumed, choreographed skit and synchronized swimming routine. Wildly popular among spectators and participants alike, the Pink Flamingo mixes histories of drag and camp into sports, essentially upsetting what “sports” can be.¹²⁰ By doing so, this particular Gay Games tradition continues to directly challenge mainstream heteronormative and gender-normative sport cultures.¹²¹

LGBTQ sports and recreation organizations have continued to expand as more and more individuals are comfortable with their gender and sexuality and seek others who also enjoy physical and outdoor activity. The North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance oversees a range of LGBTQ recreational sport leagues. Across the United States, LGBTQ sports and leisure groups formed between 1970 and 2015 include running clubs, volleyball teams, hockey leagues, equestrian groups, wrestling teams, and gyms. The New York Sundance Outdoor Adventure Society is a gay hot air ballooning group; the Tarheel Outdoor Sports Fellowship offers gay and lesbian canoeing camaraderie; Unusual Attitudes Flying Club is a Southern California LGBT pilots association; OutRiders is a Boston-based LGBT bicycling club; the Houston Outdoors Group organizes LGBTQ hiking and

¹¹⁹ Jim Buzinski, “Gay Games Oks New Sports – including roller derby – for 2018 Event,” *SB Nation Outsports*, December 20, 2012, <http://www.outsports.com/2012/12/20/4054112/gay-games-oks-new-sports-including-roller-derby-for-2018-event>.

¹²⁰ See Terry Allison, “The Pink Flamingo: A Gay Aquatic Spectacle,” in Hargreaves and Anderson, eds., *Routledge Handbook*, 328-336.

¹²¹ See Scarlett Drury, “Gay Sports Spaces: Transgressing Hetero/(Homo)normativity and transforming sport?” in Hargreaves and Anderson, eds., *Routledge Handbook*, 309-317.

camping trips; and the Ruby Red Flippers, the Village Dive Club, and the Sea Squirts are all LGBT dive clubs.¹²²

Various LGBTQ dance groups arose when straight dance clubs would not permit dancing in same-sex pairs. This was the motivation for the formation of the International Association of Gay Square Dance Clubs (IAGSDC) in 1983.¹²³ The Boston Gay and Lesbian Folk Dancers operated from 1977 through 1985. The Lavender Country and Folk Dancers began as the South East Gay and Lesbian Country Dancers in 1987, changing their name to the LCFD in 1992. The LCFD has hosted dances at the First Church in Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts since 1988.¹²⁴ Founded in 1980, Greg's bar in Indianapolis, Indiana hosted regular gay line dancing lessons and events from the late 1990s until recently.¹²⁵ These groups and others like them allowed, and continue to allow, safe and fun ways to meet partners, socialize, and learn new skills for everyday LGBTQ people.

The highly competitive world of sports writing and journalism has not been an easy place for LGBTQ journalists. Yet sports writers LZ Granderson and Christina Kahrl have come out as gay and transgender, respectively, and been able to have successful careers (Figure 9). Kahrl is best known for her work on the MLB and BaseballProspectus.com, and currently lives in Chicago. Granderson is a native Detroiter and has worked for both ESPN and CNN. These individuals and even Chicago Cubs superfan Jerry Pritikin, who is open about his homosexuality, help

¹²² Sundance Outdoor Adventure Society headquarters, 208 West 13th Street, New York City, New York; Unusual Attitudes is based out of Signal Hill, California and can be found at <http://www.unusualattitudes.org>; OutRiders website <http://www.outriders.org/contact.html>; Houston Outdoor Group website <http://www.houstonoutdoorgroup.org/contact.html>; Flippers are based in Portland, Oregon, <http://www.rubyredflippers.org/RubyRedFlippers/Home.html>; The Village Dive Club is in New York City, New York, see website at <http://www.villagediveclub.org>; The Sea Squirts are headquartered in Greensboro, North Carolina, see website at <http://www.sea-squirts.net>.

¹²³ See the IAGSDC website at <https://iagsdc.org>.

¹²⁴ See "Chris Ricciotti's History of the JP Contra Dance," Lavender Country and Folk Dancers website, December 2013, <http://lcfid.org/jp/JPContraDanceHistory.html>. The First Church of Jamaica Plain is located at 6 Eliot Street, Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts. It was added to the NRHP on July 15, 1988 and is a contributing property to the Monument Square Historic District, added to the NRHP on October 11, 1990.

¹²⁵ Greg's/Our Place is located at 231 East Sixteenth Street, Indianapolis, Indiana.



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normalize the vocal presence of LGBTQ fans and press.¹²⁶ LGBTQ sports and activity organizations expand the world of physical recreation and sports to include a diversity of sexualities and genders while remaining separate from the dominant sports culture, both for protection and for community building. As such, these spaces held fewer social costs and greater rewards for their participants. They also reflect the ethos of many LGBTQ leisure spaces—separate and specifically created to celebrate LGBTQ cultures—explored in the next section.



Figure 9: Sportswriter Christina Kahrl came out as transgender in 2003 and continues to be an important voice in baseball and other sports coverage on ESPN. Photo by The SABR Office, 2009.¹²⁷

Leisure

While America's top LGBTQ athletes struggled against gender and sexual norms that dominated mainstream sport cultures, leisure activities and cultures produced a different history. Rejected by so many

¹²⁶ LZ Granderson, "No contradiction: I'm black and gay," *CNN*, June 8, 2012, <http://www.cnn.com/2012/05/22/opinion/granderson-black-and-gay>; Kristie Chong Adler, "ESPN writers LZ Granderson, Christina Kahrl inducted into National Gay & Lesbian Sports HOF," *ESPN Front Row*, August 2, 2014, <http://www.espnfrontrow.com/2013/08/espn-writers-lz-granderson-christina-kahrl-inducted-into-national-gay-lesbian-sports-hof>; David Murray, "Nothing to Cheer About," *Chicago Reader*, August 22, 2002, <http://www.chicagoreader.com/chicago/nothing-to-cheer-about/Content?oid=909480>.

¹²⁷ License: CC BY-SA 2.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Christina_Kahrl_2009.jpg

mainstream leisure communities and cultures, LGBTQ individuals and communities formed their own places and forms of leisure and entertainment. LGBTQ contributions to mainstream and alternative literary, art, music, and performance cultures in particular are too numerous to be



Figure 10: Male impersonator Ella Wesner gained fame in New York City's vaudeville and music-show circuits in the 1860s and 1870s where she appeared in male and female roles. Scandal erupted when she eloped to France with Josie Mansfield, a famous mistress of several wealthy New York business barons. Photo by Napoleon Sarony, ca. 1873, from the Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.¹²⁹

addressed here.¹²⁸ Instead this section addresses the uniquely LGBTQ leisure histories of drag and ballroom cultures, resort communities, and women's music festivals.

Drag

Woven throughout urban-based LGBTQ leisure cultures, in particular bar and club scenes, is a rich history of performance including cabaret, burlesque, and drag. Within the contemporary LGBTQ context, drag often refers to male-bodied performers in highly feminized clothing and makeup, often performing in bars or cabaret settings. Yet drag and cross-dressing entertainment histories reach back into the late 1800s, and have often been associated with gender and sexual deviance.¹³⁰ In

¹²⁸ See Burk (this volume).

¹²⁹ License: Public Domain.

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ella_Wesner,_Gilded_Age_male_impersonator_photograph_by_Sarony.jpg

¹³⁰ Drag histories draw on, but are separate from the even earlier theater traditions of cross-gender performance. Cross-dressing history is complex and culturally-specific. For some examples in the

particular, a popular trend in mainstream music houses and variety shows of the 1920s was the male impersonator, a female-bodied performer who dressed as a man and often sang songs and performed short skits. The pleasure of these acts was in heterosexual and non-gender transgressing audiences' confusion over whether they were "real" men. Annie Hindle (1868-1886, New York City), Ella Wesner (1860-1880s, traveling vaudeville), Gladys Bentley (1920-1930s, Harlem, New York), and Stormé DeLarverie (1950-1960s, New York City and touring) were all successful performers from the late nineteenth through mid-twentieth century who wore male attire in their acts (Figure 10).¹³¹ Early male-bodied female impersonators include Julian Eltinge (1904-late 1920s, vaudeville and Hollywood), whose sexual identity was unclear.¹³² Yet these forms of gender-transgression and gender play have particular meaning within LGBTQ communities. Throughout the 1950s and 1960s, gay clubs began more regularly including female impersonators, some of whom preferred the newer term "drag queen." Performers might lip-synch, sing, dance, or otherwise entertain a crowd in glamorous or sexy dresses and makeup.¹³³ Though there has been some conflict between drag and transgender communities over whether drag's gender play is positive or negative for transgender representation, there is also crossover between

American context that include but are not exclusively linked with queer and LGBTQ people, see Peter Boag, *Re-Dressing America's Frontier Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012); Claire Sears, *Arresting Dress: Cross-Dressing, Law, and Fascination in Nineteenth-Century San Francisco* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2014); and Martin Manalansan, "Diasporic Deviants/Divas: How Filipino Gay Transmigrants 'Play with the World,'" in *Queer Diasporas*, eds. Cindy Patton and Benigno Sánchez-Eppler (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000), 183-203.

¹³¹ Hindle had previously married a man who was also a performer, but divorced, and later married her dresser Annie Ryan in Grand Rapids, Michigan. Wesner scandalously eloped to Europe in the early 1880s with Josie Mansfield, mistress of multiple wealthy New York men. Bentley was open about her lesbianism until she met and married Charles Roberts at age twenty-eight. Bentley rose to stardom at the famous Harry Hansberry's Clam House at 133rd Street between Lenox and Seventh Avenue, New York City, New York. DeLarverie was MC of the Jewel Box Revue, North America's first racially-integrated drag revue, which regularly played the Apollo Theater in Harlem, New York, and lived much of her adult life immersed in New York City's butch lesbian and LGBTQ communities, including taking part in the Stonewall Riots in 1969 at the Stonewall Inn. The Apollo Theater, 253 West 125th Street, New York City, New York was added to the NRHP on November 17, 1983. Stonewall, 51-53 Christopher Street, New York City, New York was added to the NRHP on June 28, 1999 and designated an NHL on February 16, 2000.

¹³² Julian Eltinge lived in the Silver Lake neighborhood of Los Angeles, California in the 1920s. Elmer Grey, "Architectural Rambling: Julian Eltinge Home - 1921," *Architectural Record* February 1921.

¹³³ For more on 1960s and early 1970s drag cultures, see Esther Newton, *Mother Camp: Female Impersonators in America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979).

the two—some drag queens identify as transgender women, though they are not necessarily the same.¹³⁴ In 1979, the Pyramid Club opened in New York City.¹³⁵ This club played a key role in nurturing a new style of drag performance that was politically and socially conscious, including performers Lady Bunny, Lypsinka, and RuPaul, whose first New York City show was at the Pyramid Club in 1982. RuPaul brought drag culture to mainstream television in 2009 with a competition show, RuPaul's Drag Race. Other famous drag queens include José Sarria, Vaginal Davis, Chi Chi LaRue, Divine, Shangela, Miss CoCo Peru, Hedda Lettuce, The Lady Chablis, and Harvey Fierstein. Famous drag clubs of the past few decades include Lucky Cheng's (New York City), Hamburger Mary's (Los Angeles), and the Stud Bar (San Francisco)¹³⁶ among many, many others.

Parallel to these primarily white performers and audiences arose a similar form of entertainment and community building rooted in African American and Latino LGBTQ communities known as ballroom culture or ball culture, for short. Contemporary ball culture also traces its roots back to the late-1800s music hall performances, and particularly to the Balls of the Harlem Renaissance, but reworks some of this gender play with a contemporary twist.¹³⁷ Ball performances may involve cross-gender clothing, or dressing in a manner that mocks the heteronormativity of gender roles. Influenced by 1970s and 1980s music, fashion, and cultures of resistance, performers “vogue” or strike poses as a fashion model on a catwalk. Ballroom culture extends beyond performances to include Houses, organizations led by an accomplished performer that serve as a family, and may include shared living spaces. Famous early

¹³⁴ For example, see Zack Ford, “The Quiet Clash Between Transgender Women and Drag Queens,” *ThinkProgress*, June 25, 2014, <http://thinkprogress.org/lgbt/2014/06/25/3449462/drag-queens-trans-women>.

¹³⁵ In 1979, the Pyramid Club opened at 101 Avenue A, New York City, New York. This club has played a key role in nurturing a new style of drag performance that was politically and socially conscious, including those of Lady Bunny, Lypsinka, and RuPaul, whose first New York City show was at the Pyramid Club in 1982.

¹³⁶ Lucky Cheng's was at 24 First Avenue, New York City, New York. Hamburger Mary's was located at 8288 Santa Monica Boulevard, West Hollywood, California. The Stud Bar is located at 399 Ninth Street, San Francisco, California and hosted the Trannyshack regular drag show in the early 2000s.

¹³⁷ Early twentieth century drag balls were held at venues like the Webster Hall and Annex, 119-125 East 11th Street, New York City, NY and Rockland Palace, 280 West 155th Street, New York City, New York (now demolished).



houses in Harlem, New York include the House of LaBeija (founded 1970), the House of Pendavis, and the House of Xtravaganza (founded 1982), though the tradition extends back into the early 1960s.¹³⁸ Houses extend balls from entertainment into a family and community structure that supports poor and homeless LGBTQ youth of color. The excitement and energy of ball culture was captured in the award-winning 1990 documentary *Paris Is Burning*.¹³⁹

Post-Stonewall, drag's gender play helped build lesbian and feminist communities. Drag kings are women who dress and perform as males, often to skewer heteronormativity and patriarchal definitions of masculinity. The International Drag King Community Extravaganza (IDKE) is an annual gathering of troupes and individuals for workshops, performances, and networking, and the San Francisco Drag King Contest, first organized in 1994 by Nancy Kravitz and Katherine Murty, claims itself the oldest drag king contest in the world.¹⁴⁰ Though many of the longest-running drag contests and organizations are in coastal cities with large LGBTQ populations, drag exists from coast to coast. Recent work has uncovered the histories of equally thriving drag cultures in the 1990s and 2000s in the South, Midwest, and rural America.¹⁴¹

¹³⁸ See Michael Cunningham, "The Slap of Love," *Open City Magazine*, vol. 6, <http://opencity.org/archive/issue-6/the-slap-of-love>; also Douglas Martin, "Pepper LaBeija, Queen of Harlem Drag Balls, is Dead at 53," *New York Times*, May 26, 2003, <http://www.nytimes.com/2003/05/26/arts/pepper-labeija-queen-of-harlem-drag-balls-is-dead-at-53.html>.

¹³⁹ *Paris Is Burning*, directed by Jennie Livingston (Burbank, CA: Miramax Home Entertainment, 1990). For more on ballroom culture, see Marlon M. Bailey, *Butch Queens Up in Pumps: Gender, Performance, and Ballroom Culture in Detroit* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2013); David Valentine, *Imagining Transgender* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007); Frank Leon Roberts, "There's No Place Like Home: A History of House Ball Culture," *WireTap Magazine*, reprinted at TransGriot website, June 6, 2007, <http://transgriot.blogspot.com/2008/02/theres-no-place-like-home-history-of.html>.

¹⁴⁰ For more on drag king histories, see Judith Jack Halberstam and Del Lagrace Volcano, *The Drag King Book* (London: Serpent's Tale, 1999). The SF Drag King Show is currently held at Oasis, 298 Eleventh Street, San Francisco, California. For more SF Drag King history, see the SF Drag King Contest website at <http://www.sfdragkingcontest.com/aboutus.htm>.

¹⁴¹ See J. Basiliere, "Out of the Limelight: Queering Success through Nonmetropolitan Drag Kings," PhD diss. in Gender Studies, Indiana University, November 2015.

Women's Music

In the 1970s, urged by lesbian feminist desires to celebrate music that spoke to women's specific struggles, a network of women's music festivals arose to promote artists and offer women an opportunity to build community with one another. Though often labeled as "for women," these events became synonymous with lesbian culture. Women's music festivals in particular emphasized "women-only" space, which led to decades long struggles over whether transwomen should be included. The Michigan Womyn's Music Festival (MichFest), the largest and one of the longest-running women's music festivals, was a famous site of this conflict. Michfest was founded in 1976 as a women-only space to share knowledge, build community, and support women's music. It continually operated for forty years, bringing thousands of women together each summer for a communal living and working experience in the woods of rural Michigan.¹⁴² MichFest was one of many women's music festivals that began in the early 1970s, including the first one held in 1973 at Sacramento State University, the first National Women's Music Festival (Champaign-Urbana, Illinois, 1974), and the Midwest Wimmin's Festival (Kaiser, Missouri, late 1970s).¹⁴³ Performers included women of diverse racial and class backgrounds, as well as a host of musical genres; Cris Williamson, Holly Near, Alix Dobkin, The Indigo Girls, Tribe 8, Melissa Ferrick, Bikini Kill, Le Tigre, Betty, Bitch, Toshi Reagon, Staceyann Chin, Marga Gomez, and many others took the stage at Michfest over the years. The festival was limited to "women-born-women" which led to incidents of transwomen being harassed or turned away, and an ongoing media battle over the inclusion of transwomen. Between 1991 and 2011 both cisgender and transgender activists frequently formed a protest camp across the road from MichFest called Camp Trans, and called for full

¹⁴² For more on women's music festivals in general and MichFest in particular, see Bonnie Morris, *Eden Built By Eves* (Boston: Alyson Books, 2000).

¹⁴³ See *Midwest Wimmin's Festival* website at <http://midwestfestival.weebly.com>.



inclusion. In 2015, festival founder and organizer Lisa Vogel announced the fortieth festival in 2016 would be the last MichFest.¹⁴⁴

The interest in women's music also contributed to a thriving women's music industry in the mid and late 1970s in which women worked to gain control of all aspects of the music industry, from songwriting to producing and marketing. Olivia Records was originally founded with such a mission in 1973 by Judy Dlugacz and several friends and former members of the Furies Collective in Washington, DC. The group soon relocated to California to gain better access to the music industry.¹⁴⁵ Olivia Records was also the site of a notorious conflict over women-only policies. In 1978, an Olivia sound engineer named Sandy Stone was outed as a transgender woman by those who did not believe that transwomen are "real" women. Sandy Stone left Olivia Records but went on to help found the field of Transgender Studies with the publication of her famous essay "The Empire Strikes Back: A Posttranssexual Manifesto."¹⁴⁶ Meanwhile, Olivia Records floundered as they failed to keep up with a changing music industry in the 1980s, and finally by 1988 reworked their business model into a women's travel and cruise line. Olivia Travel continues to cater to lesbian and bisexual women by offering women-only cruises and events with performances by popular lesbian musicians, artists, athletes, comedians, and activists.¹⁴⁷

Resort Communities

With the rise of urban LGBTQ communities came a desire to escape the city in the summertime, particularly among those who could afford a

¹⁴⁴ Trudy Ring, "This Year's Michigan Womyn's Music Festival Will Be the Last," *Advocate*, April 21, 2015, <http://www.advocate.com/michfest/2015/04/21/years-michigan-womyns-music-festival-will-be-last>.

¹⁴⁵ From 1975 to 1988, Olivia Records operated out of offices at 4400 Market Street, Oakland, California. The Furies operated out of a home in the Capitol Hill neighborhood of Washington, DC, from 1971-1973. The Furies Collective was listed on the NRHP on May 2, 2016.

¹⁴⁶ For the manifesto itself as well as historical context provided by the editors, see Susan Stryker and Stephen Whittle, eds., *The Transgender Studies Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2006), 221-235.

¹⁴⁷ Founded in Washington, DC, in 1973, Olivia Records was an important publisher of women's music. They stopped publishing albums in 1988, and founded the Olivia cruise line that same year.

vacation. Yet most mainstream resort areas were dominated by heterosexual families and didn't offer the privacy or safety lesbian, bisexual, and gay vacationers desired. Thus within driving distance of many urban LGBTQ centers, there arose particular towns, islands, and spas known for their LGBTQ community.¹⁴⁹ While many of these resort towns were predominantly made by and for white, middle- and upper-class urban gay and bisexual men, lesbians and LGBTQ people of color have also been part of the development of queer vacation destinations.



Figure 11: Provincetown, Massachusetts has a long history as an LGBTQ vacation spot, including the Atlantic House, known as a safe spot for gay and queer people as early as the start of the 1900s. It has been an openly LGBTQ bar since the 1950s. Photo by Mararie, 2014.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ License: CC BY-SA 2.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Portland_in_all_its_glory_%2815381859282%29.jpg. [The Provincetown Historic District was added to the NRHP on August 30, 1989.](#)

¹⁴⁹ At the turn of the century, there were also resorts and spas that historians have uncovered as having certain queer tendencies, not clearly fitting in our contemporary understanding of heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual. For a unique examination of several such resorts, see Kevin D. Murphy, "Heterotopia, Queer Space, and the Turn-of-the-Twentieth-Century American Resort," *Winterthur Portfolio* 43, no. 2/3 (2009): 185-228.

One of the most thorough histories of a gay resort town is Esther Newton's study of Cherry Grove, a small town on Fire Island, a barrier island off Long Island, New York.¹⁵⁰ A short trip from Manhattan, the wind-swept dunes were originally the summer spot of gay men in the theater and entertainment industries.¹⁵¹ Lesbians later played an important role in the development and protection of Fire Island's LGBTQ institutions. Other east coast resort towns include Ogunquit, Maine; Asbury Park on the New Jersey shore; Rehoboth Beach, Delaware; and Provincetown at the tip of Cape Cod, Massachusetts. Beginning with the alternative culture of an 1899 artists' colony, Provincetown's LGBTQ history includes drag and other gay events throughout the first half of the twentieth century.¹⁵² By the 1970s, the town was known for its gay culture, and has since developed an extensive LGBTQ event schedule, drawing thousands each year (Figure 11).¹⁵³

The Midwest's gay resort areas include the sister towns of Saugatuck and Douglas, Michigan, who like Provincetown, benefitted from the early presence of an artists' colony in the early 1900s, drawing a liberal and often gay, bisexual, and lesbian vacation crowd to mingle with locals, who had already quietly formed networks and gay beach spots.¹⁵⁴ In the 1960s and 1970s, Saugatuck was home to one of the Midwest's earliest gay bars, the Blue Tempo House of Music, which served openly gay patrons in violation of state liquor laws of the time.¹⁵⁵ Today Saugatuck and Douglas

¹⁵⁰ Esther Newton, *Cherry Grove, Fire Island: Sixty Years in America's First Gay and Lesbian Town* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993).

¹⁵¹ The Carrington House, Cherry Grove, New York was listed on the NRHP on January 8, 2015; the Cherry Grove Community House and Theater, 180 Bayview Walk, Cherry Grove, New York was listed on the NRHP on June 4, 2013.

¹⁵² For more on the Provincetown artists' colony and the Cape Cod School of Art, see Nyla Ahrens, *Provincetown: The Art Colony - A Brief History and Guide*, rev. ed. (Provincetown, MA: Provincetown Art Association and Museum, 2000). The Provincetown Historic District was added to the NRHP on August 30, 1989.

¹⁵³ For more on Provincetown's history, see Karen Christel Krahulik, *Provincetown: From Pilgrim Landing to Gay Resort* (New York: NYU Press, 2007).

¹⁵⁴ Jay Deratany, "The Fascinating History of Gay Resort Towns," *Travel Pulse*, July 27, 2015. <http://www.travelpulse.com/news/features/the-fascinating-history-of-gay-resort-towns>; Emily Fox, "How the largest gay resort in the Midwest is in Michigan's 'Bible belt,'" *Michigan Public Radio*, January 11, 2016, <http://michiganradio.org/post/how-largest-gay-resort-midwest-michigans-bible-belt#stream/0>.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.* The Blue Tempo was located on Lake Street in Saugatuck but burned to the ground in 1976; much of Saugatuck-Douglas' LGBTQ history is chronicled at the Saugatuck-Douglas Museum (in the

boast many LGBTQ-owned and operated businesses, as well as parades, special events, and other attractions for LGBTQ tourists.¹⁵⁶

The South has its gay resort history as well: Both Fort Lauderdale and Key West, Florida, have long histories of LGBTQ resident and tourist culture. Asheville, North Carolina and Eureka Springs, Arkansas are also home to gay bed and breakfasts, artists' colonies, gay beach parties, and annual summer swarms of gay, lesbian, and bisexual and men and women. Eureka Springs originally began its resort town identity in the 1880s with the arrival of the railroad, and today continues that tradition, marketing itself as a "microcosm of San Francisco" with dozens of LGBTQ owned and operated businesses, three Diversity Weekends (Pride-like celebrations), beautiful Victorian homes, charming narrow streets, and a welcoming and affirming environment for LGBTQ residents and visitors.¹⁵⁷

The West Coast's most famous gay and lesbian resort towns include Palm Springs and Guerneville, California. Guerneville was first a popular mainstream resort town in the late nineteenth century, but shifting transportation patterns and destructive flooding in the 1960s left it run down.¹⁵⁸ The inexpensive real estate, proximity to San Francisco, and the efforts of a handful of individuals, including gay Philadelphian Peter Pender who bought a riverside hotel and named it Fife's, started the rebirth of Guerneville into an LGBTQ gay vacation hotspot.¹⁵⁹

LGBTQ leisure spaces have varied and uneven histories in the United States, often formed as spaces of safety, resistance, and community

Saugatuck Pump House at 735 Park Street, Saugatuck, Michigan), see "Mystery of the Blue Tempo House of Music, Topic of Saugatuck Museum 'Tuesday Talk,'" Saugatuck/Douglas Historical Society website, <http://sdhistoricalsociety.org/collections/histmystery/news072307-1.htm>.

¹⁵⁶ See Gay Saugatuck Douglas website at <http://gaysaugatuckdouglas.com>.

¹⁵⁷ See Out in Eureka website at <http://www.gayeurekasprings.com>.

¹⁵⁸ Catherine Cole, "How Did Guerneville Get to Be So Gay?" *The Bold Italic*, June 22, 2014, <https://thebolditalic.com/how-did-guerneville-get-to-be-so-gay-the-bold-italic-san-francisco-c1abf89c0566#rkjkrmq>.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid. Fife's struggled with a 1995 flood (see Michael Dougan, "Many are digging out in Guerneville; Fife's may be lost," *San Francisco Examiner*, January 23, 1995, <http://www.sfgate.com/business/article/Many-are-digging-out-in-Guerneville-Fife-s-may-3159623.php>) and was eventually sold and renamed Dawn Ranch Lodge and no longer operates as an LGBTQ-focused business (16467 River Road, Guerneville, California).



building outside of mainstream venues. As a result, some forms of LGBTQ leisure hold great importance to the LGBTQ community, as sites where relationships and lifelong connections are made, sites where gender and sexuality are in play, and sites where creativity and fun flourish. These environments sometimes sit at odds with the history of LGBTQ sporting cultures; instead of advocating for separate spaces, LGBTQ athletes usually push for acceptance in mainstream sports. As a result, the possibilities in community building and gender play available in LGBTQ-specific leisure spaces are often not available to LGBTQ athletes. Female athletes in particular face a particularly challenging set of gender obstacles, as athletic masculinities in women remain tied to homophobic accusations of lesbianism.

LGBTQ Americans are both central to our American culture, and yet still often outsiders from mainstream norms. When it comes to sport and leisure histories, LGBTQ Americans are everywhere and also sometimes nowhere—the lasting effects of our gender and sexual norms has meant many LGBTQ stories will go untold. Those who have the talent and abilities to gain sport or entertainment celebrity and then also are unabashed about their LGBTQ identities forge a connection with everyday LGBTQ Americans who struggle with the same homophobic, transphobic, and sexist cultural norms. Bringing more of these stories to light strengthens all our sport and leisure cultures, whether professional sport leagues and long-running television shows or backyard ballfields and quiet sunny beaches. LGBTQ sports and leisure history is America’s sport and leisure history.