

NEGOTIATING SPORTING AND SEXUAL IDENTITIES

Agnes Elling & Jan Janssens

In the social practice of sports not only athletic abilities are challenged and competed in by people with various social status positions. It is also a social arena in which participants constantly negotiate, affirm and challenge (among other power relations) gendered and sexualised meanings, bodies and identities (Butler, 1993 ; Hargreaves, 1995). In mainstream competitive sports, hegemonic normative images of sporting identities and heterosexual masculinities and femininities are (re)constructed and expressed (e.g. Caudwell, 1999 ; Eng, 2003 ; Griffin, 1994 ; Hekma, 1994, 1998 ; Messner & Sabo, 1994 ; Pronger, 1990a). However, within the very differentiated sports landscape in/exclusionary mechanisms largely differ for gays and lesbians and between types of sport and sports organizations. Many gay/lesbian/bisexual people participate in mainstream sport organisations without feeling discriminated against. Others use different prevention, passing and assimilating strategies to refrain from or adjust to homophobic and heterosexist cultures. Again others resist normative constraints, by being « out » and expressing « difference ». Conforming and resisting strategies are used both by individuals as well as by (in)formal GLBT alliances. Fear for homophobia might be both over- and underestimated by gay/lesbian and straight athletes.

In this article sport participation pattern of gays and lesbians and negotiation of sporting and sexual identifications and distinctions in sport biographies are explored. To what extent are sport participation patterns and biographies structured by gender and sexuality ? How do gay/lesbian and straight people give meaning to sport participation, sexual identifications and feeling of « belonging » within mainstream and GLBT initiatives ? We argue that particular (sexualised) sport profiles are not only a matter of « free

choice » and « taste », but are influenced by a complex network of interacting – often implicit and ambiguous – in- and exclusionary mechanisms. Contrary to most other studies about gender, sexuality and sport, the focus in this study is not on either (gay) men or (lesbian) women, but on similarities and differences in participation patterns, experiences and discursive meanings between gays and lesbians.

Challenging hegemonic heterosexuality

Over the last few decennia, in many western European countries personal life and leisure choices have become less restricted by structural and cultural constraints based on unequal social status positions with respect to age, gender and socio-economic class (e.g., Beck & Beck-Gersheim, 2002). This has also led to equity developments in sport, although multiple studies have shown that fundamental inequalities still exist with respect to sport participation and representation in positions of leadership.

Most formal constraints may have been eliminated, but various in/exclusionary mechanisms, like socialization aspects, normative images and hegemonic group cultures, still limit individual sporting possibilities and experiences, especially for people belonging to non-hegemonic status groups like gays & lesbians (Arai & Pedlar, 2003 ; Coakley, 2007 ; Elling, Knoppers & De Knop, 2001 ; Elling, 2007).

Especially in the last two decades many publications in different western – mainly North American and North-western European – countries explored hegemonic sexuality discourse and practices of in/exclusion in mainstream sport contexts. The studies are sometimes gender specific, congruent to the gender segregated (team) sports). For example Anderson (2002), LeBlanc (2005), Pronger (1990a) wrote about gay men ; Griffin (1998), Mennesson & Clément (2003), Palzkill (1990) focussed on lesbians. A Norwegian study by Eng (2003) on elite athletes and several Dutch studies (Bos, 2006 ; Hekma, 1998 ; Janssens & Elling, 2007) studied both gay men and women. Some authors (also) analysed the emergence and contested heteronormative meanings within women's mainstream and/or gay/lesbian sport initiatives (Caudwell, 1999 ; Elling, De Knop & Knoppers, 2003 ; Elling &

Ferez, 2007 ; Ferez, 2007 ; Ferez, Elling, & Beukenkamp, 2006 ; Pitts, 1998 ; Price & Parker, 2003 ; Ravel & Rail, 2006 ; Stöpler & Schuyf, 1997 ; Wellard, 2003).

Social critical scholars like Butler (1993) and Connell (1995) argued that heteronormativity still is a leading hegemonic ideology in most capitalist societies. According to the « natural » gender order men are physically and mentally stronger than women and have power over them and « real » men and women are considered heterosexual. They argue that unequal power relations and dominant meanings relating to gender, sexuality, class and ethnicity are both reflected, constructed and challenged within social practices, like (competitive) sport and other leisure practices. Homophobia is prevalent among both (young) men and women, but opposite gender behaviour is especially sanctioned among male youth (McNamee, et al, 2003 ; Plummer, 2001). Out of fear of being labelled as « sissy » or « poofter » and/or being « discovered » as gay, both heterosexual and homosexual boys and men refrain from behaviour and participation in activities that are associated with women and « femininity », like individual refereed « aesthetic » sports (e.g. figure skating ; Elling & Knoppers, 2005 ; Kivel & Kleiber, 2000 ; Laberge & Albert, 1999). They are also constantly challenged to « prove » their heterosexuality, for example by participating in traditional « masculine » sports, like most team and contact sports (e.g., basketball, football, martial arts) and by « playing hard » (Connell, 1995 ; LeBlanc, 2005 ; Messner & Sabo, 1994). Pronger (1990a, b) argued that explicit hostility against gays in these « masculine » -defined team sports might be fostered by their ambiguous gendered images. Qualities related to hegemonic masculinity like competition and aggression are celebrated, but at the same time accompanied by aspects with homoerotic connotations, like male bonding, physical intimacy (e.g., dressing room, shower) and emotional expression. Heteronormativity within competitive can be regarded as an enabling constraints for legitimate physical intimacy among men (Shogan, 2002). Compared to other leisure fields like popular music that bring about role models for (young) gays, gay men are present but very closeted in elite (media) sports (Eng, 2003 ; LeBlanc, 2005). Therefore, many gay men may choose for relatively gay friendly sport environments instead or for not being active in sport at all.

Research in different countries has acknowledged the fact that, compared to gay men, lesbians more often seem to find a sort of refuge in competitive « masculine » team sports, notwithstanding they also experience (severe) sexism and homophobia (Caudwell, 1999 ; Griffin, 1998 ; Menneson & Clément, 2003 ; Palzkill, 1990 ; Riemer, 1998). Although, compared to boys, gender norms might be somewhat less strict for girls, women who participate in « masculine » -defined sports, are often suspected of being lesbians, which affects both straight and lesbian women. Many sports teams turn out to be relatively « safe » havens for lesbians where they can be « out » , socialize with other lesbians and transgress traditional gender boundaries, but at the same time experience heterosexism and homophobia. Ironically, Hekma (1994, 1998) in his study about discrimination of homosexual men and women in sports, found that the strongest and most explicit examples of discrimination were cited by lesbians in football as reactions to the relatively visible lesbian presence in that sport.

Kivel and Kleiber (2000) argued that lesbian and gay youth on the one hand often refrain from behaviour and participation in leisure activities that may reveal their « true identity ». On the other hand, however, they may want to try out opposite gender conforming activities, out of intrinsic interest or because of instrumental social reasons that they expect to find other « like-minded » individuals. This refers to the fact that stereotypical social images function both as inclusionary and exclusionary mechanisms. Apart from inhibiting free choices, they can also be viewed as enabling constraints (Shogan, 2002). For example, the lesbian or butch image of women's football in various west European countries became a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy (Hekma, 1998) through which homonormative subcultures emerged within mainstream sports (Caudwell, 1999, cf. Ravel & Rail, 2006). Participating in a specific sporting activity may partly reflect one's individual « taste », but can also be regarded as the outcome of negotiating different (enabling) constraints (Elling, 2007).

The emergence and development of gay/lesbian sport groups, clubs and events

The history of the institutionalisation of sports in North-Western Europe shows that mainstream associational organizations have existed apart from categorical sport practices and organizations based, for example, on religious denomination, life phase (e.g. student sport) or ethnicity (Carrington, 2003 ; Duke & Renson, 2003 ; Krouwel et. al, 2006). The emergence of categorical political and leisure organizations is often based on both inhibiting constraints in mainstream society and organizations (e.g., discrimination) and enabling possibilities of « own » cultural spaces (e.g., agency, empowerment) as is the case for the foundation of gay and lesbian (leisure) organizations and events (Adam, et al., 1999 ; Stöpler & Schuyf, 1997).

Increasing integration of homosexuals in Dutch and other western societies does not seem to lead to a decrease in lesbians » and gay men's desire to meet and join together in « own » (in)formal groups. Indeed, there has been a clear growth in gay/lesbian (inter)national associations and events, like participating in sports or singing in a choir (Elling, 2005 ; Pitts, 1998 ; Stöpler & Schuyf, 1997 ; Miller, 2001). These possibilities may be seen as welcome alternatives for the political Gay-Lesbian-Bisexual-Transgender (GLBT) movement or commercialised bar subcultures (Ferez et.al, 2006). For more competitive athletes, gay/lesbian sport groups or activities may offer opportunities of finally being able to combine sport performance, being « out » and social connectedness, like for former Olympic decathlete Tom Waddell, founder of the Gay Games (Messner, 1994). To participate in gay/lesbian sport and other leisure groups may be a deliberate positive choice of (some) lesbians and gay men to be active in specific activities and to meet other like-minded individuals. However, Sandfort (1997) and McNamee et al.(2003) showed that not all lesbians and gays experience GLBT associations as enabling. Gay/lesbian leisure subcultures can be experienced as normative and constraining as well.

Together with a greater societal tolerance towards non-heterosexual life styles, more general societal developments like commercialisation and hybridisation of leisure activities, life styles and identities have fostered the development of a gay/lesbian

sports leisure sector (Miller, 2001). Commercialised gay subcultures include gay/lesbian tourism, sport facilities and prescribe an athletic image among (young) gay men. Demetriou (2001) argues that some traditional aspects of « gay masculinities » are not only present in pop music and show business, but have also entered mainstream male dominated media sports, like the « metrosexual » images of Dennis Rodman or David Beckham. In the social arena of sport social status and identity borders are constantly drawn and challenged. « Push and pull factors » to participate in mainstream or gay/lesbian leisure initiatives may be experienced and negotiated differently by gay/lesbian individuals and may be mediated by opportunities, specific competences and motivations (Elling, 2007).

Heterosexuality still dominates in the mainstream social status hierarchy (e.g., media images) and homophobia prevails, but in relatively tolerant societies like the Netherlands, gays and lesbians can express « different » life styles. They are or can be « out » in mainstream and/or be visible in sub-cultural leisure practices. Still, there is little known about the extent to which homosexual men and women participate in sport compared to heterosexuals, and to what extent sexual identities are related to (specific) choices, motivations and constraints.

Methodology

Like other social categorisations that are frequently used in studies (e.g., gender and ethnicity), sexual categorisation is a social construction, that cannot completely grasp the complex and dynamic relations between homosexual conduct, desire and identification in daily life (Butler, 1993 ; Donovan, 1992). In this article, sexual categories are mainly based on sexual self-identification and expressed sexual desires. We present some results of three different studies.

Quantitative

In 2003, the Dutch national centre for research on sports in society, the Mulier Institute, conducted a study to gather representative data about gay/lesbian sport participation. It was commissioned and subsidized by the Dutch Ministry of sports (Ministerie van VWS, 2001, see also Janssens, Elling & van Kalmthout, 2003 ; Janssens, & Elling, 2007).

Qualitative research has revealed specific constraints for gays and lesbians in sports, but compared to other social relations, « hard data » about sports participation indexes with respect to sexual identities are nonexistent. Since sexuality is hardly ever an independent social variable in representative and longitudinal inquiries, relatively little is known about the life situation of gays and lesbians, for example compared to other minority groups, like ethnic minorities. It is known, however, that only a small percentage of the general post adolescent population reports non-heterosexual behaviour, identifications (e.g., homosexual or bisexual), or desires (Sandfort & De Vroome, 1996). Therefore a large population sample is necessary to include enough gay/lesbian respondents to do reliable pronouncements. In our study gay men and lesbians were selected via a computer panel – Capi@home –, drawn from a database of approximately 25 000 adult persons (18 years and older) who take part in all kinds of research studies via their own (multimedia) PCs ¹.

The original screening of the Capi@home panel for sexual identity took place in the spring of 2002 at the request of a commercial client. This screening traced 932 persons (3.7%) who identified as gay/lesbian or bisexual (Sandfort & De Vroome, 1996 found a similar percentage of 3,8 asking about homosexual conduct and desire among Dutch men). Among the respondents identifying as homo/bisexual, elderly and women were underrepresented. Moreover, compared to heterosexuals, homo- and bisexual respondents more often live alone and in large cities and they are relatively high educated and affluent. Most of these findings support the « elicitation/opportunity hypothesis » (Laumann, et al., 1994) that more self-identifying gays and lesbians are found in relatively tolerant environments (e.g. big cities, higher educated).

We were able to complement the group of homo/bisexual respondents with 119 male and 54 female same-sex partners to a total research population of 1105 gay/lesbian/bisexual respondents. This group was matched with 1200 heterosexuals on the basis of personal characteristics of gender, age, educational level, region and household situation. Therefore, especially the group of (self identifying) heterosexual respondents is not representative for the

1. The Capi@home database was compiled by NIPO, a leading market research institute in the Netherlands.

total population. The focus in our research, however, was on similarities and differences in sport participation between comparable groups of heterosexuals and homo/bisexuals.

The selected research population of 2305 people was approached and invited by e-mail to take part in a study on participation in sports, and to complete an attached digital questionnaire. Almost three-quarters agreed to participate. Questions about sexual identification and desires revealed that many respondents identifying as bisexual lead a « heterosexual life ». Although this finding is interesting for further research into the complex and dynamic processes of (hidden) sexual identifications, desires and conduct, we chose to regroup the respondents to make a better comparison possible between the constructed categories of people with « straight » and « gay/lesbian » lifestyles. We focused on a comparison between a group of 562 gay/lesbian/bisexual and 845 heterosexual persons. About half of the respondents is between 35 and 54 years old ; more than a quarter is between 18 and 34 years old (more women than men) and approximately one out of five is older than 55 (more men than women).

The questionnaire contained many and diverse questions about involvement and experiences in sport. Respondents were shown a list of 44 different sports, and were asked whether they had participated in one or more of these sports over the last 12 months and how often they had participated in these sports in total. For the three sports in which they had most often participated, extra questions were asked concerning, for example, the frequency, the organizational context (e.g., club, commercial setting, informal group), whether they participated in competition, with whom they participated regarding gender and sexuality (mainly straight, mainly gay/lesbian, mixed, no idea) and to what extent they felt « at home ». The data presented and discussed beneath direct attention in particular to the sense in which homosexual men and women differ from heterosexuals concerning sport participation and to what extent possible differences can be explained by « taste » and/or inclusionary and exclusionary mechanisms.

Qualitative (interviews)

In two research projects directed towards other main themes – « Sport and integration » and « Sport careers during the life course » the first author interviewed several gay/lesbian and

straight respondents with respect to sexual diversity issues (see Elling, Knoppers & De Knop, 2003 ; Elling, 2007). Some were only active in mainstream sports ; others were (also) active in gay/lesbian sport initiatives. The respondents played badminton, basketball, volleyball, tennis and/or participated in fitness, running or swimming. Most respondents were active in a competitive team sport at the local or regional level, some had performed at the (inter)national level in the past. All interviewed people had ended their active elite sports career and were therefore more likely to be (critically) reflective. The interviews were mostly conducted at the home of the respondents and lasted approximately one to one and a half hour. All interviews were taped and fully transcribed. Respondents were asked about their sport « career » , sport group compositions, social contacts and friendships in/through sport and experiences of bonding and distinction with respect to gender and sexuality. The interviews were conducted from a biographical life course approach, suggesting that events, choices and experiences respondents talk about are analysed and interpreted to form a logical picture with respect to (changes within) the social and historical-geographical context. Social identifications were expected to be context specific and dynamic throughout the sport and life biographies. People's own experiences and achievements and appreciations by other persons in and outside the world of sport, are important for the ways in which meaning is given to (particular types of) sport, existing social networks and interactions and feelings of (sexual) « belonging ».

All relevant text fragments were coded, using concepts that were derived from the literature, from the respondents (in vivo coding) or via hermeneutic interpretation. Four general themes with respect to sexual bonding and distinction could be distinguished : passing and proving ; search for social fit (sporting and social identifications) ; (resisting) discrimination and stereotyping ; and (de)sexualization.

Results and discussion

In this section we will first present some statistical findings with respect to general and specific sport participation patterns relating to gender and sexuality and will continue presenting and discussing findings concerning motives, experiences and negotiations with respect to gay/lesbian sports participation.

Sport participation figures

About twenty per cent of all respondents did not engage in any sports activities during the last twelve months and more than ten per cent was active at least twice a week (see table 1). No significant differences were found in the overall sport participation frequencies according to sexual identity among men and women. However, compared to heterosexual men, gays/bisexuals were somewhat less likely to participate in sport at least 12 times per year, which, according to (inter)nationally accepted definitions, means that gays are less likely to be regarded as « sport participant ». But the differences are not as large as might be expected on the basis of traditional conceptualisations. Moreover, gay and straight male sport participants are equally often active on a regular, weekly, basis. Among the total group of women no significant differences were found in overall frequencies or in the number of sport participants (> 11 times a year). When we looked more specifically at regular, weekly participation among sport participants, lesbian/bisexual women, turned out to be more active compared to heterosexuals.

Table 1 : Sport participation frequency, by gender and sexual identity (%)

	Men			Women		
	Heterosexual	Bisexual	Gay	Heterosexual	Bisexual	Gay
Not active	18%	17%	22%	18%	18%	21%
Once a week	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Twice a week	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Three times a week	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Four times a week	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Five times a week	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Six times a week	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
Seven times a week	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%
At least 8 times a week	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%	12%

sign. : * p < .05

A conducted logistic regression analysis for men and women separately, confirmed a significant explanatory effect by sexuality on sport participation among men ($\exp(B) = .607$; $p < .001$). When other demographic variables like age, education, household situation and urbanization were controlled for, gays are less likely to participate in sport compared to heterosexual men. Nonetheless the total explanatory variation (Nagelkerke R^2) was only 7%.

Compared to the relatively small differences between homo/bisexual and heterosexual men and women in terms of general sports participation, sport participants' choices for specific organizational contexts and kinds of sports might be more poignantly influenced by gendered and sexual identities. Table 2, indeed shows that gay and bisexual male sport participants are about half as likely to engage in sports via a sports club compared to heterosexual men, but they are more likely to be active within the predominantly privately organized fitness centres, just as (lesbian and straight) women are. Although it could be hypothesized that gays would more often participate in informal groups or alone to avoid institutional homophobic atmospheres, we found that straight men are more likely to participate in informal groups and no difference was found in individual sport participation. We found no significant differences in organizational context of sports participation between lesbians and heterosexual women.

Table 2 : Organisational context and type of sport
(at least one of three most practised sports),
by gender and sexual identity (in % of sport participants)

Organisational context	Men			Women		
	Gay	Lesbian	Other	Gay	Lesbian	Other
Bar sports	15	10	10	15	10	10
Team sports	10	10	10	10	10	10
Racket sports	10	10	10	10	10	10
Running	10	10	10	10	10	10
(Speed)cycling	10	10	10	10	10	10
Fitness	10	10	10	10	10	10
Swimming	10	10	10	10	10	10
Other	10	10	10	10	10	10

sign. : * $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$

a racket sports : badminton , squash, table tennis, tennis

b team sports : base/softball, basketball, football, handball, hockey, korfbal, volleyball

c « bar sports » : billiards/pool/snooker, darts

A part from differences in institutional affiliation, table 2 shows that, compared to straight men, gays are less likely to engage in team sports and racket sports and they are underrepresented in running and (speed)cycling². Gay men are over represented, however, in fitness and swimming, sports that are also popular among (straight) women. And although the figures conform common ideas that lesbians might be more involved within team sports and « bar sports » (e.g, playing pool) compared to straight women, these differences are not statistically significant ($p = .55$).

2. Institutional contexts are not independent of the types of sport people participate in. Some sports are primarily offered by sport clubs (e.g., team sports), others mainly by commercial organizations (e.g., fitness, squash). Again other sports are mainly participated in by use of public accommodations or the 'natural' environment (e.g., swimming, running).

These results only partly correspond to traditional conceptualisations of lesbians as being more « masculine » and thus more sport-oriented than heterosexual women and homosexual men as being more « feminine » and less sporty than heterosexual men (Griffin, 1998 ; Hekma, 1994, 1998 ; Pronger, 1990a, b).

Although we found that gay men are significantly underrepresented in sport, the data also shows that nearly two out of three gay men participate in sports, and more than half is active on a weekly basis. Furthermore, our results indicate that lesbians are not more likely to be involved in sport than heterosexual women. It can be concluded from our study that hegemonic images of gays and lesbians with respect to sport participation are not (entirely) based on empirical reality (cf. Kivel & Kleiber, 2000). The results may also be interpreted in the light of emancipatory developments and shifting norms of gender and sexuality in society and leisure participation in general, and in sport in particular. Traditional hegemonic images of sport in the Netherlands largely concern competitive (« masculine ») sports practised within the context of voluntary managed associations. Possibly, gay men were and are underrepresented in these traditional sport contexts, but their participation might have increased with the rapid emergence of new sports and physical activities and other organizational contexts like privately organized sports institutes. The quest for a trained and muscular athletic physique as the dominant body image among (young) homosexual men is also of recent origin (Miller, 2001 ; Pronger, 1990b). Due to a global health and fitness trend « being physically active » is no longer mainly associated with heterosexual masculinity.

Our findings of particular forms of sport participation by gays and lesbians are more confirmative to dominant images³. It might be argued that the results reflect the constraining homophobic climate in mainstream sport clubs, which forces or « enables » non-heterosexual men to participate in other organizational contexts. Unequal leisure participation figures, however, do not always

3. It is important to notice that the constructed sport categories (e.g., 'team sports') consist of several sports that are hardly comparable apart from being played in a (club) team, which involves group interactions and (often) physical contact. The gendered image of team sports seems mainly related to the largest team and club sport in the Netherlands and many other countries in the world: football. Korfball, however, is a mixed gender sport and both the korfball and handball federation in the Netherlands do have more female than male members (NOC*NSF, 2004). Furthermore, the gender ratio among volleyball and hockey participants is about equal.

indicate exclusionary practices (Coalter, 2000). The findings may also primarily reflect (socially constructed) preferential or « taste » differences between social groups. To understand better to what extent sport specific choices are based on discriminatory experiences or on fear for homophobia in mainstream clubs, it is necessary to look more closely at actual experiences and motivations. In the next section results from the quantitative study are integrated with interview results.

The history of the institutionalisation of social and sporting (dis)identifications

A matter of preference ?

Motivations for engaging in sport turned out to be more or less the same for all sport participants, disregarding gender and sexuality. Health and (intrinsic) activity enjoyment ranked highest, scoring 8.1 and 8.0 respectively on a 10 point scale. These were followed by social contacts (6.3), appearance (e.g. lean body, muscular torso ; 6.1), compensation of work/daily life (5.6) and athletic achievement (5.2). Apart from a general similarity in motivational factors, we also found some significant differences that reflect earlier findings.

Where the motivations of athletic achievement, social contacts and activity enjoyment are significantly more important for heterosexual men than for gay men, the latter category scored higher on appearance⁴. These findings not only reflect stereotypical images of straight versus gay men, but also the different organizational contexts and enabling constraints (Shogan, 2002) in which they are active. Achievement and social contacts are more intrinsically related to club contexts and team sports, whereas fitness activities are more directed towards someone's « looks ». Again, among women no significant differences were found, although straight women tended to value appearance somewhat higher compared to lesbians (6.5 and 6.0 respectively ; $p = .08$).

4. Straight men scored 5.4, 5.7, 6.5, and 8.1 respectively on appearance, athletic achievement, social contacts and activity enjoyment compared to 6.5, 5.0, 5.9 and 7.5 respectively by gay respondents.

These findings give some support to explain the institutional and sport type differences in terms of « taste ». Gay and straight men express partly different gender-related motives and preferences for sport participation. The results can be read as affirming stereotypical images of the « feminine » homosexual, who is supposed to be more interested in a functional use of sport with respect to bodily appearance than in athletic achievement, as associated to heterosexual masculinity (Connell, 1995). This might be reinforced by an increasing focus on an athletic appearance in gay subcultures (Miller, 2001). Other results, however, show that sport participation patterns are not only a matter of « taste ».

Complying to and resisting heteronormativity and homophobia

Both in the survey and in the interviews the argument that in mainstream (team) sport environments, men are constantly expected to prove their heterosexuality (Connell, 1995 ; Messner & Sabo, 1994 ; Pronger, 1990), was underlined. Gay men often referred to a « macho-norm » of aggressive heterosexual masculinity, that excludes or « silences » gay men and made mainstream club sport an « unsafe » place. All the heterosexual men that were interviewed, indicated they had never played in a sports group or team with openly gay men. Especially male football players affirmed that homosexuality is a taboo in their team/sport. They did not regard the fact that they didn't know any gay players as a coincidence. Other male sport participants more often argued that gays would be accepted. Several men referred to a generally acknowledged prevalence of homosexuality (e.g., Sandfort & De Vroome, 1996) and wondered whether possibly closeted gays might be around in sport and football.

« According to statistics 5% of the population is homosexual. Then you start counting and the longer you don't have a girl friend the more suspect you are... in football it is even worse than ethnic deviance, belonging to an ethnic minority. The behaviour and the humour is killing. At the highest playing levels you find the most handsome boys and the most machismo behaviour. It's all about women, cars and sex, straight sex. » (straight male football player)

Whereas the homophobia within male football is often blatant overt, in many mainstream sport situations homonegativity is

expressed in more ambivalent ways. Jokes and remarks are made in such ways that may not readily be interpreted as discriminatory, « for example calling me ‘madam’ » (gay volleyball player). Especially gay men are often used to general forms of « funny » teasing.

However, most questionnaire respondents claimed they had never experienced homophobia in sport. « Only » fourteen percent among gay men and seven percent of lesbian respondents confirmed they had to contend with hostile comments, jokes and/or discrimination on the grounds of sexual identity. Most incident(s) referred to tasteless jokes and abusive language, which were not personally directed towards the respondent. Some male respondents recalled more personal discriminatory incidents, like being called names ; one gay man had been beaten up. The tendency to mitigate (potentially) discriminatory language among gays/lesbians is similar to the coping behaviour of ethnic minorities with respect to racial/ethnic discrimination in mainstream sports (Carrington, 1998).

Gays and lesbian may also be complicit of homonegativity. It is often the stereotypical effeminate gay male (« queen ») among men and the butch dyke among women that are distanced from or ridiculed by both straight and gay athletes (cf. Bos, 2006 ; Caudwell, 1999 ; Ravel & Rail, 2006). Both lesbians and gays in competitive team sports may comply with heteronormativity and homonegativity, due to fear of « disclosure » and/or internalised homophobia :

« I wasn't quite sure about my own sexuality... I thought it may turn out well [by playing professional basketball]... I just laughed along and even dated a girl. » (gay basketball player)

« There was one other lesbian in the club, but we didn't talk about it. Actually I had a boy friend then, maybe because that was expected. » (lesbian basketball player)

Playing within masculine team sport environments may constrain acceptance of « different » sexual desires and coming out by gay men, but also be used as a means by trying to overcome their own « deviance ». Resisting discrimination and homonegativity is easier when not alone. The above quoted male basketball player joined a gay team after quitting his professional career. Playing together with other gay men empowered him and made resistance possible.

« We are known as a gay team... Sometimes teams with younger opponents can make denigrating remarks. But when they are losing, we remind them that « these queers are 30 points ahead. » (gay basketball player)

The interviewed lesbian and straight women reported less overt and blatant homophobia compared to mainstream men's sport. Moreover, especially in mainstream women's football teams, straight women sometimes form the quantitative minority, it's a form of « reverse integration » (Elling, et al. 2001, 2003). As Caudwell (1999) has argued for mainstream football in Britain (and arguably for most other European countries) and Ravel & Rail (2006) for (French) Canadian ice hockey, specific sports spaces are (perceived to be) rather inclusive towards lesbians or even form homonormative subcultures. From our studies, also an image of relatively integrated sexual diversity emerged, especially in team sports. All interviewed straight women in football, field hockey and basketball, either (had) played with lesbians or knew lesbian players in other teams.

« Sometimes straight players were the minority... I didn't like the fact that when we went out for a drink, we always went to a women's bar. » (straight female football player)

Apart from her irritation of the existing informal homonormativity in the team, she would also resist homonegativity expressed by outsiders, like when people asked her whether she didn't mind showering with those « dykes ». Although « being out » may often be less difficult for lesbians, this doesn't mean that they are not at all expected to conform to heteronormative culture (Bos, 2006).

The sometimes ambivalent expressions of homophobia or homonegativity may be accommodated by equally ambivalent forms of compliance and resistance. Also within the development and « staging » of GLBT sport initiatives like the gay games (and out games) expressions of resistance may be accommodated with compliance to heteronormative principles (cf. Pronger, 1999 ; Wellard, 2002).

(De)sexualization

Akin to Hekma's (1994, 1998) study, several survey respondents seemed to feel attacked by the question in the survey about whom they preferred to play sport with (followed by several listed cate-

gories including : doesn't matter, (wo)men, straight (wo)men, gay men, gays & lesbians) and why. Three quarters of the gay/lesbian respondents reported that it didn't matter with whom they were active. They explained their answers by giving comments like : « It's the sport that counts » or « It doesn't matter » (Janssens & Elling, 2007). Some (gay men) responded in quite defensive manners :

« One shouldn't be bothered about one's sexual orientation, while participating in sport. »

« If the dog would play bridge, I would play with the dog, no matter whether it would be ho-, he- or bi-[sexual]. »

« I'm not interested in the sexual orientation of other people. He/she might sleep with a horse ! »

Their emphatic confirmation that it is purely the sport that counts may be seen as an experienced threat by gay (sexual) subcultures (McNamee et al., 2003) and/or a reaction to the dominant stereotypical conceptualisation of homosexual men as being above all else sexual beings. These examples indicate that not all gay men (are able to) « allow » themselves a fluidity and ironic sensibility of being gay (Pronger, 1990a, b). Participating in club sport or fitness may often be experienced by people (gay or straight) without any sexual significance, but may at other times be interpreted with a specific (ironic) sexual sensitivity. However, many gay men may not express (possibly) sexual interpretations, since they feel stigmatised by as only sexual persons by homophobic environments. Whereas mainstream sport clubs also form a well known public area to meet potential partners (marriage market), they are not characterized by a similar sexualising discourse as gay (in)formal organizations. This was affirmed in some interviews with straight men, in which they mainly interpreted gay sport initiatives (and in particular gay men) from a perspective of sexualization.

« I really think that [to start a separate club] is bull shit. Those clubs only exist to meet a new partner... For gays I think it is also something practical. It is nice to meet people with whom you might start something. I don't mind that being a reason for gays to do something together. Although I myself once found a girlfriend via volleyball, I don't associate sport directly with sexuality. » (heterosexual male volleyball player)

The survey respondents that expressed a specific preference for a sports group (one quarter) mainly mentioned a gender separated group of either only homosexuals or a combination of homo- and

heterosexuals (cf. Hekma, 1994). In addition many of these respondents indicated that their preference depends on the playing level, again underlining the fact that enjoyment in the specific sport activity itself is as important as the people with whom they are active.

Passing as straight or gay

As Pronger (1990a, b) argued, « passing » as straight is a common strategy and experience of gay men, especially in heteronormative environments like competitive sports (cf. LeBlanc, 2005). Our survey and interview findings suggest that sport is one of the social spheres in particular, where homosexual and bisexual identities and desires are concealed. Compared to their relations with family, friends, colleagues and neighbours, homo/bisexual men and women are least candid in the sphere of recreational pursuits and sports. Eighteen percent of gay men and nine percent of the lesbians who engage in sports indicate that in this sphere no one is aware of their sexual identity, compared to eleven percent and two percent respectively in the context of work/study. When asked more specifically in which context respondents are least open about and prefer to hide their sexual identity, gay men mentioned sport as the most concealing area.

Many gay men and women who are active in mainstream sports and fitness may pass as straight. Often by not being visibly « different » or more actively by complying to heteronormative norms in their « looks and acts ». With the existence of gay/lesbian subcultures in (mainstream) sport, mechanisms of passing may also be reversed. For example, in mainstream women's team with many lesbian players or in lesbian sport groups, a homonormative subculture may emerge, where straight participants may pass as lesbians (cf. Ravel & Rail, 2006). Such examples of « reverse integration » (Elling, et.al, 2001, 2003) have probably increased with the rise of the number of gay/lesbian oriented sport groups and associations. Straight women may join lesbian sports friends with whom they were active in mainstream contexts in becoming member of a (gay)/lesbian sports group.

« Many from my old club now probably think : 'So you see, she is a lesbian'. My looks are also similar to that of the prototype of a lesbian woman : short hair, no make up and these things. And I never had boy friends... In my new club they do not all know that I am not a lesbian. » (straight female volleyball player)

Since homophobia and heteronormativity is often more « aggressively » overt among male athletes, it can be expected that reverse integration and passing as straight is less common. Nevertheless, within fitness centres publicly known as « gay » , also straight men are active and may pass as gay (Elling & Ferez, 2007). In the interview with the former professional basketball player, another example of reverse integration and passing was mentioned. His straight male friend joined within a gay team and at tournaments a kind of « double passing » occurred : his straight friend would pass as gay, whereas he himself would be « detected » as straight.

« My friend had already become a member of the gay club and had his coming out [as a straight person]... At tournaments they sometimes ask me whether I'm the only straight guy on the team. » (gay male basketball player)

The example also illustrates the fact that many people may switch sport groups, organisations or types of sport during their life course. These changes are related to changing motivations, ambitions and identifications.

Searching for the right « fit » : negotiating sporting ambitions and social identifications

Motivations to participate in sport, sporting ambitions and social identifications are not stable over the sport career and life course. Our results showed a tendency for gays and lesbians to experience less bonding within and loyalty to their sporting organisations, compared to straight men and women. General differences, however, are largely related to organizational context. In privately managed fitness centres (« gyms ») social interaction and bonding is less common compared to voluntarily managed sports clubs (Elling, 2007 ; Elling & Ferez, 2007). The fact that fitness centres are relatively non-social sporting spaces may actually partly explain their attractiveness among gays and lesbian. Since it also means less heteronormative social interaction.

Although the growth of gay/lesbian sports organisations indicates a present desire among gays and lesbians to be active among likeminded, it is important to notice that most gays and lesbians

are active in a mixed company, in mainstream environments (including fitness). From our survey respondents only small minorities among lesbians (3%) and gays (6%), participated in informal gay/lesbian sport groups or formal GLBT associations. Another 6% indicated they would prefer to join a GLBT sports group, but have no possibilities in the immediate vicinity (cf. Sandfort, 1997)⁵. This relative small participation in specific GLBT sport groups corresponds to the earlier mentioned result that 75 percent indicated that it didn't matter with whom they are active. This small degree of explicit sexual identification, however, doesn't match with a much larger number of gays and lesbians (40 percent) that is actually active with other gays/lesbians. There appears to be a paradox between explicit and implicit identifications, that may be related to internalisation of the hegemonic public discourse of social integration, that problematizes categorical leisure organisations, like GLBT or ethnic minority sport clubs (Krouwel et al, 2006 ; Sandfort, 1997). According to Butler (1993) the dominant heteronormativity within such discourse remains implicit.

The main reasons to join gay/lesbian (sporting) organizations, is that among « birds of a feather » (McPherson, Smith-Lovin & Cook, 2001) many gays/lesbians feel more « at home », « at ease », « better understood » or « less different » (cf. Hekma, 1994, Sandfort, 1997 ; Messner, 1994 ; Price & Parker, 2003 ; Ravel & Rail, 2006). Paradoxically, one's homosexuality become's less an issue, since it is self evident. Gay/lesbian sporting spaces may offer alternative places to both mainstream sporting organizations and to gay/lesbian nightlife (Ferez et al, 2006) in terms of feeling « safe », experiencing « bonding » and/or expressing « difference ». However, most gays and lesbians feel no need to join a GLTB sports club, do not know of such initiatives or may even feel threatened by such an expressive « staging » (Eng, 2003) of gay/lesbian sporting identities (McNamee et al, 2003).

5. In Sandfort's (1997) study among – a less representative sample of – 1.385 members of gay/lesbian organisations (including magazine readers) one quarter of the men and one fifth of the women indicated a preference for a gay/lesbian sports group. More gays/lesbians expressed their identification with homosexuality at a more abstract level like reading a book with a gay/lesbian theme (68% men and 80% women, Sandfort, 1997, p. 11).

From the interviews with gay and lesbian athletes who had been active in competitive sports at national level and ended up in a gay/lesbian sports group, shifting priorities and identifications became apparent during their sports biography. During their competitive career it was their sporting ambitions that were most important. Similar sport goals and ambitions and not so much social identification with respect to sexual identification (or ethnicity, class) that were the most important aspects for bonding and belonging. Social differences are subordinated to sharing the same goals, as was acknowledged for example by a straight female football player, who was active in a team with many lesbians : « for everybody, football was the most important thing ».

Although such a competitive sporting identification is probably no different for (sexual) minority and majority members, it is likely that minority members more often may have to « surrender » specific social fits and identifications. Therefore (competitive) sports biographies of gays and lesbians seemed to be somewhat more « restless » and less loyal, resulting in a relative high tendency to switch clubs or even sports. Like a lesbian badminton player, who gave up badminton, since « It didn't fit anymore that they were all straight and I was a lesbian... There was no connection anymore and therefore I quit. » She joined a tennis club with more gay/lesbian members and when she nearly turned forty, she switched to a mainstream running club. In her case « sexual identification » became less important again and her change was more related to new sporting ambitions.

From this and other interviews shifting - and at certain times paradoxical - sporting and social identifications appeared that are sometimes ambiguously related to actual sporting behaviour. Some interviewed athletes who joined a gay/lesbian group after quitting competitive sports, expressed experiences of finally feeling « home » and being able to combine the sports they love in a sports group they fit socially as well.

« Until I came here, I played volleyball in a club that I didn't like [socially] but that offered what I looked for [competitively]... It's the same story for everyone in my team : take it a bit easier and play primarily for fun while in good company. » (lesbian volleyball player)

« At some point I noticed that I missed social things. I couldn't make fun with my team mates about the handsome boy in the

other team...Two things of being gay and being an athlete, which had always been opposites and which I kept apart, I could finally combine during the Gay Games in Amsterdam, that I experienced as one of the finest moments. » (gay male basketball player)

Once team athletes are « over the hill », many choose to participate in a so called « friends team », that is more socially homogeneous. Compared to the sexual majority, sexual minority members searching for a better social fit, are more conscious of sexual (dis)identifications. The fact that heterosexual people mostly end up in predominantly « straight » groups is more or less self-evident and not questioned within a heteronormative society (Butler, 1993 ; Connell, 1995).

Conclusions

The results from a representative quantitative study shows that gays and lesbians in the Netherlands have only partly distinct sports profiles compared to straight men and women. Differences are most explicit among men. Our findings show that the majority of the gay and lesbian sport participants is involved in mainstream contexts, but also indicate that homo-/bisexual men and women (implicitly) tend to choose leisure activities and organisations where they are not marginalized as homosexuals. Most gay men refrain from taking part in mainstream competitive club and team sport. Partly because these sports don't fit their « taste », but also because they are (rightly) regarded as « unsafe ». Prevailing gendered/sexual images of sport participation, are not only constraining, but can also work enabling. In this respect, many mainstream (team) sports can be regarded as enabling sports spaces for many lesbians and fitness centres are enabling to many gay men. However, the existence of both overt and blatant homophobia and more ambiguous homonegativity in mainstream sport was also affirmed, especially in men's football. As well as the fact that gay and lesbian athletes are often compliant to heteronormativity.

A minority of gays and lesbians, especially in the larger cities is active within specific GLTB sport associations. Membership is less often motivated by the fact that these spaces are « safer », than by social affectionate motivations. These sporting spaces are experienced as more enjoyable with respect to social identification.

Others argue that sport has nothing to do with sexuality and experience such organizations as threatening. Many homo/bisexual people have apparently discovered environments in which they can practice sport without being « separative » or having to integrate too much in heteronormative networks.

Sport biographies are not only a matter of « free choice » and « taste », but are constantly influenced by a complex network of interacting – often implicit and paradoxical – in-and exclusionary mechanisms. Sexual and other social identifications in sporting biographies appear to be complexly layered, contextual and dynamic. During the life course and peoples sports career, changing sporting ambitions, (enabling) leisure constraints and sexual and other social identifications are constantly (implicitly) negotiated. The outcomes of such negotiations seem to be influenced by many different factors like sporting abilities and experiences, self-confidence, sexual identification, social support, geographical context, et cetera. Shared sporting enjoyment, talent and ambitions can (temporary) lead to sexual bridging, but also to neglect of sexual difference or accommodation to heteronormative spaces. Some may join a gay/lesbian sports group, whereas many find other sporting space that fit their life course related sporting and/or social identifications.

References

- ADAM, B.D., DUYVENDAK, J-W. & KROUWEL, A. (1999). « Gay and lesbian movements beyond borders. National imprints of a worldwide movement ». In B.D. Adam, J-W. Duyvendak & A. Krouwel (eds.), *The global emergence of gay and lesbian politics. National imprints of a worldwide movement* (pp. 344-371). Philadelphia : Temple University Press.
- ANDERSON, E. (2002). « Openly Gay Athletes. Contesting Hegemonic Masculinity in a Homophobic Environment », *Gender & Society*, 16 (6), pp. 860-877.
- ARAI, S. & PEDLAR, A. (2003). « Moving beyond individualism in leisure theory : a critical analysis of concepts of community and social engagement ». *Leisure Studies*, 22, pp. 185-202.
- BREEDVELD K. (red.) (2003). *Rapportage Sport 2003*. Den Haag : SCP.

BECK, U & BECK-GERSHEIM, E. (2002). *Individualization : Institutionalized individualism and its social and political consequences*. London : Sage.

BOS, D.(2006), « Omdat ze zo ontzettend hetero zijn. Ervaringen van homoseksuele hockeyers en fitnessers », in : S. Keuzenkamp, D. Bos, J-W. Duyvendak & G. Hekma (red.) *Gewoon doen. Acceptatie van homoseksualiteit in Nederland, Sociaal Cultureel Planbureau*, Den Haag, pp. 111-140.

BUTLER, J. (1993). *Bodies that matter. On the discursive limits of « sex »*. New York : Routledge.

CARRINGTON, B. (1998). « Sport, masculinity and black cultural resistance ». *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 22, pp. 275-298.

CAUDWELL, J. (1999). « Women's football in the United Kingdom : Theorizing gender and unpacking the butch lesbian image ». *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 23, pp. 390-402.

COALTER, F. (2000). « Public and commercial leisure provision : active citizens and passive consumers ? ». *Leisure Studies*, 19, pp. 163-181.

COAKLEY, J.J. (2007). *Sport in society : issues and controversies*. New York : McGraw-Hill.

COAKLEY, J. & DONNELLY, P. (eds.) (2001). *Inside sports*. London : Routledge.

CONNELL, R. W. (1995). *Masculinities*. Berkeley : University of California Press.

DEMETRIOU, D.Z. (2001). « Connell's concept of hegemonic masculinity : A critique ». *Theory and Society*, 30, pp. 337-361.

DONOVAN, J.M. (1992). « Homosexual, gay and lesbian : defining the words and sampling the populations ». *Journal of Homosexuality*, 24, pp. 27-47.

DUKE, V. & RENSON, R. (2003). « From factions to fusions : the rise and fall of two-club rivalries in Belgian football ». *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 38/1, pp. 61-77.

ELLING, A (2005). « Gay Games ». In Levinson, D. & Christensen, K. (eds.), *Berkshire Encyclopedia of World Sport*, volume 2 (pp. 661-665). Great Barrington MA : Berkshire Publishing Group.

ELLING, A. (2007). *Het voordeel van thuis spelen. Sociale betekenissen en in- en uitsluitingsprocessen in sportloophanen*. Den Bosch/ Nieuwegein : W.J.H. Mulier Instituut/ Arko Sports Media.

ELLING, A, DE KNOP, P. & KNOPPERS, A. (2003). « Gay/Lesbian Sport Clubs and Events. Places of Homo-social Bonding and Cultural Resistance ? ». *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 38(4), pp. 441-456.

ELLING, A. & KNOPPERS, A. (2005). « Sport, gender and ethnicity : Practices of symbolic inclusion and exclusion ». *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, 34/3 : pp. 257-268.

Elling, A., Knoppers, A. & De Knop, P. (2001.) « The social integrating meaning of sport : A critical and comparative analysis of policy and practice in the Netherlands ». *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 18/4 : pp. 414-434.

ELLING, A. & FERREZ, S. (2007). *Fitnesscentra als vluchtige gemeenschappen*. Nieuwegein : Arko Sports Media.

ENG, H. (2003). *Sporting Sex/uality : Doing sex and sexuality in a Norwegian sport context*. Oslo : the Norges Idrettshogskole.

FERREZ, S. (2007). *Le Corps homosexuel en-jeu. Sociologie du sport gay et lesbien*, Nancy : PUN.

FERREZ, S., ELLING, A & BEUKENKAMP, K. (2006). « Geen clubbers en politiek activisten, maar sporters – Over het ontstaan en de relevantie van een homolesbische sportbeweging ». *Sociologie*, 4/2 : pp. 416-435.

GRIFFIN, P. (1998). *Strong women, deep closets. Lesbians and homophobia in sport*. Champaign (IL) : Human Kinetics.

HARGREAVES, J. (1995). *Sport, power and culture*. Cambridge : Polity Press.

HEKMA, G. (1994). *Als ze maar niet provoceren*. Amsterdam : Het Spinhuis

HEKMA, G. (1998). « “As long as they don’t make an issue of it...” : Gay and lesbian sport participation in organized sports in the Netherlands ». *Journal of Homosexuality*, 35(1), pp. 1-23.

JANSSENS, J., ELLING, A. & KALMTHOUT, J. van (2003). « Het gaat om de sport » : *Een onderzoek naar de sportdeelname van homoseksuele mannen en lesbische vrouwen*. Den Bosch : Mulier Instituut.

JANSSENS, J. & ELLING, A. (2007). « “It’s the sport that counts” : On homosexual participation in sports in The Netherlands ».

In M.V.L. Badgett & J. Frank (eds.), *Sexual orientation discrimination : An international perspective* (pp. 253-266). London : Routledge

KIVEL, B. D. & KLEIBER, D. A. (2000). « Leisure in the Identity Formation of Lesbian/Gay Youth : Personal, but Not Social ». *Leisure Sciences*, 22, pp. 215-232.

KROUWEL, A., BOONSTRA, N., DUUVENDAK, J-W. & VELDBOER, L. (2006). « A Good Sport ? : Research into the Capacity of Recreational Sport to Integrate Dutch Minorities ». *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 41 : pp. 165-180

LABERGE, S. & ALBERT, M. (1999). Conceptions of masculinity and of gender transgressions in sport among adolescent boys. Hegemony, contestation, and social class dynamic. *Men and Masculinities*, 1/3, pp. 243-267.

LAUMANN, E.O., GAGNON, J.H., MICHAEL, R.T. & MICHAELS, S. (1994). *The social organization of sexuality. Sexual practices in the United States*. Chicago : University of Chicago Press.

LEBLANC, R. (2005.) « “The sum of all fears”. Reconciling sport and sexuality ». Paper presentation 3rd World Congress of *Sociology of Sport. Sport and social exclusion/ inclusion*. Buenos Aires 30 November – 3 December 2005.

MCMAMEE, S., VALENTINE, G., SKELTON, T. & BUTLER, R. (2003). « Negotiating difference : Lesbian and gay transitions to adulthood ». In G. Allan & G. Jones (eds.), *Social relations and the life course* (pp. 120-134). Houndsmills : Palgrave Macmillan.

MCPHERSON, M., L. SMITH-LOVIN & J.M. COOK (2001). « Birds of a feather : homophily in social networks ». *Annual Review Sociology*, 27 : pp. 415-444.

MENNESSON, C. & CLÉMENT, J.-P. (2003). « Homosociability and homosexuality. The case of soccer played by women. » *International Review for Sociology of Sport*, 38/3, pp. 311-330.

MESSNER, M (1994). « Gay athletes and the Gay Games an interview with Tom Waddell ». In M.A. Messner & D.F. Sabo (1994), *Sex, violence & power in sports : Rethinking masculinity* (pp. 113-119). Freedom (CA) : The Crossing Press.

MESSNER, M.A. & SABO, D.F. (1994). *Sex, violence & power in sports : Rethinking masculinity*. Freedom (CA) : The Crossing Press.

MILLER, T. (2001). *Sportsex*. Philadelphia : Temple University Press.

MINISTERIE VAN VWS (2001). *Paars over Roze, nota homo-emanipatiebeleid*. Den Haag : VWS.

NOC*NSF (2004). *Ledental NOC*NSF over 2003*. Arnhem : NOC*NSF.

PALZKILL (1990). *Zwischen Turnschub und Stöckelschub*. Bielefeld : AJZ.

PITTS, B. (1998). « From leagues of their own to an industry of their own : The emerging lesbian sports industry ». *Women in Sport and Activity Journal*, 6(2), pp. 109-140.

PLUMMER, D.C. (2001). « The quest for modern manhood : masculine stereotypes, peer culture and the social significance of homophobia ». *Journal of Adolescence*, 24/1 : pp. 15-24.

PRICE, M. en PARKER, A. (2003). « Sport, Sexuality, and the Gender Order : Amateur Rugby Union, Gay Men, and Social Exclusion ». *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 20, pp. 108-126.

PRONGER, B. (1990a). *The Arena of Masculinity. Sports, Homosexuality, and the Meaning of Sex*. New York : St. Martin's Press.

PRONGER, B. (1990b). « Gay jocks : A phenomenology of gay men in athletics ». In M.A. Messner & D.F. Sabo (1990), *Sport, men and the gender order. Critical feminist perspectives* (pp. 141-152). Champaign (Ill.) : Human Kinetics.

PRONGER, B. (1999). « Outta my endzone : sport and the territorial anus ». *Journal of Sport and Social Issues*, 23/4 : pp. 373-389

RAVEL, B. & RAIL, G. (2006). « The Lightness Of Being "Gaie" : Discursive Constructions of Gender and Sexuality in Quebec Women's Sport ». *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 41/3-4 : pp. 395-412.

RIEMER, B.A. (1998). « Lesbian identity formation and the sport environment ». *Women in Sport and Activity Journal* : pp. 83-108.

SANDFORT, T. (1997). *Samen of apart. Wat homoseksuele mannen en lesbische vrouwen beweegt*. Utrecht 1997.

SANDFORT, T. & DE VROOME, E. (1996). « Homoseksualiteit in Nederland : een vergelijking tussen aselechte groepen homoseksuele en heteroseksuele mannen ». *Tijdschrift voor Seksuologie*, 20, pp. 232-245.

SHOGAN, D. (2002). « Characterizing constraints of leisure : A Foucaultian analysis of leisure constraints ». *Leisure Studies*, 21 : pp. 27-38.

STÖPLER, L.& SCHUYF, J. (1997). *Seksueel Onbekend. Een verkenning rond de verdere mogelijkheden tot samenwerking tussen homoseksuele en lesbische sportclubs en de bonden*. Utrecht : UU.

WELLARD, I. (2002). « Men, sport, body performance and the maintenance of exclusive masculinity ». *Leisure Studies*, 21, pp. 235-247.

Agnes Elling & Jan Janssens, “Negotiating Sporting and Sexual Identities”

on line on <http://www.revue-quasimodo.org>

2009