

Sports as History

	Mental Health	Trans Rights	Sexual Violence
Summary of issue			
What's this tell us about America?			

	Racism	Sportswashing	Intersectionality of gender, race & politics
Summary of issue			
What's this tell us about America?			

Defining Terms Worksheet

Directions: Review the following terms and definitions. Next to each word, write the letter that represents the word's definition.

TERMS

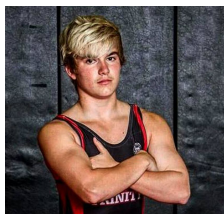
DEFINITIONS

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 1. ____ Bisexual | A. An umbrella term for people whose gender identify differs from the sex they were assigned at birth and/or whose gender expression do not match society's expectations with regard to gender roles. |
| 2. ____ Cisgender | B. Refers to the ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior, clothing, haircut, voice and emphasizing, de-emphasizing or changing their bodies' characteristics. |
| 3. ____ Non-binary | C. People whose gender identity falls outside of the "gender binary" or who don't identify as exclusively male or female. |
| 4. ____ Gay | D. A person who is emotionally, physically and/or romantically attracted to some people of more than one gender. |
| 5. ____ Gender Expression | E. An umbrella term used to refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual & transgender people. Some use it as an alternative to "LGBT" in an effort to be more inclusive. (Depending on the user, the term can have a - or a + connotation.) |
| 6. ____ Gender Identity | F. A term for when someone's gender identity/expression matches their assigned sex at birth. |
| 7. ____ Gender
Non-Conforming | G. How an individual identifies in terms of their gender. Since gender identity is internal, one's gender identity is not necessarily visible to others. |
| 8. ____ Lesbian | H. Refers to people who are in the process of understanding and exploring their sexual orientation or gender identity. They are often seeking information and support during this stage of their identity development. |
| 9. ____ Questioning | I. A person who is emotionally, physically and/or romantically attracted to people of the same gender. Can be used to refer to people of all genders, though it is used most commonly to refer to males. |
| 10. ____ Queer | J. The process when a person begins living as the gender with which they identify rather than the gender they were assigned at birth, which often may include changing one's first name and dressing and grooming differently. Not a one-step procedure; it is a complex process that occurs over a period of time. |
| 11. ____ Sexual Orientation | K. A person who doesn't adhere to societal pressures to conform to gender norms and roles. |
| 12. ____ Transgender | L. A woman who is emotionally, physically and/or romantically attracted to some other women. |
| 13. ____ Transition | M. Determined by one's emotional, physical and/or romantic attractions. |

Social & Political Context

1. How big is the LGBTQ+ population in the US?
2. How big is the transgender population in the US?
3. Why has there been an increased focus on trans people & rights at the state level?
4. Sports is just one small piece of a broader experience for trans. Americans. What do we know about discrimination & other challenges faced by trans people beyond sports? (Use slides 31-39 to answer this question with specific detail.)

Changing the Game Film Questions



Mack Beggs



Sarah Rose Huckman



Andraya Yearwood

1. What do you learn about each of the 3 athletes? Jot down some brief notes about each athlete:

Mack Beggs	Sarah Rose Huckman	Andraya Yearwood

2. What benefits do these athletes seem to get from participating in their sports? Consider why they are fighting so hard to be able to play/compete.

3. What do the families of these teens share about their fears and wants for their teens?

4. How are the athletes treated by their teammates & coaches?

5. Critics:

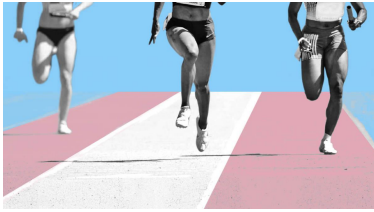
a. What are some of the negative comments directed at or about these athletes?

b. How are the athletes treated by spectators at their events?

6. How could you make the case that the three students are not just athletes but also activists?

The Next Cultural Battle: States Take Aim at Trans Athletes

JULIE KLIEGMAN, *Sports Illustrated*, MAR 12, 2021



Emily Wilson likes basketball. Before the seventh-grader came out as transgender a year ago, she played with boys for three years at her local Boys & Girls Club in coastal Mississippi. There, she had coaching, teammates, camaraderie. Now, at school, she's relegated to practicing her dribble in PE class. She'd love to be part of a team again next year, but her school district allows kids to play sports based only on the sex on their original birth certificate, not their gender identity, says her mother, Katy Binstead.

Organized sports could be a refuge for someone like Emily, who says she gets bullied constantly with little intervention from her teachers, to the point that Binstead is considering homeschooling her or transferring her to private school. "They call me a f---- behind my back," Emily says of her peers. And when she misses a day of school, they tell her they were glad she was gone.

Emily, who has never considered herself a boy, does not want to try out for basketball on the boys team, like her principal has suggested. Before this week, she could at least hope that her school district would change its policy. But now, that hope is gone: A new law passed by the state has made it illegal for her to suit up to play on her school's girls team.

Starting July 1, the so-called Mississippi Fairness Act, signed into law by Governor Tate Reeves, bans trans women and girls throughout the state from playing school sports on women's and girls teams.

The Mississippi law is similar to one passed in Idaho last year; together, they represent the leading edge of a nationwide wave of legislation seeking to ban trans youth from athletics. Cheered on by former President Donald Trump—who recently spoke in support of the push—legislators in at least 26 states have proposed new laws. A bill in South Dakota is awaiting the governor's signature, and bills in Tennessee, and Montana are close to passing. Meanwhile, one in Minnesota would take the ban a step further by criminalizing the act of a transgender athlete playing in girls or women's sports: It would be a petty misdemeanor to do so.

The proposed laws evoke the "bathroom bills" of the previous decade, which sought to ban transgender people from public restrooms matching their gender identity. Those bills were widely introduced and campaigned on, but ultimately the only state to pass one was N. Carolina, which faced swift backlash from organizations threatening to pull business (that included the NBA, which relocated an All-Star Game, and the NCAA, which moved out championship events). Unlike bathroom bills, these new bills are likely to pass in meaningful numbers.

Even though they're still heavily discriminated against, as transgender people slowly gain more prominence and more rights, activists say that bills like these—as well as others that would criminalize medical care for trans youth—are the backlash...

The Idaho law, passed on March 30, 2020, was set to effectively ban trans women and girls from competing in public sports before a judge granted a preliminary injunction in August that currently prevents its enforcement. Lindsay Hecox, a trans would-be cross-country runner for Boise State, has sued the state, along with the ACLU, a cisgender Jane Doe, and the northwestern feminist organization Legal Voice.

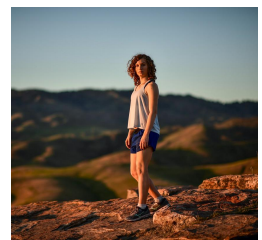
Why has this become a sports issue?

It's no coincidence that sports are proving a particularly popular and effective tool for legislators targeting transgender civil rights. It's a sentimental pastime to which nearly everyone has some connection. Sports and cultural issues, of course, have always been inseparable: from Muhammad Ali's anti-Vietnam War stance, to the implementation of Title IX, to Colin Kaepernick's protests against police brutality.

"People have a lot of feelings about sports competition," says Elizabeth Sharrow, an associate professor of public policy and history specializing in gender and sports at the UMass, Amherst. "There's a lot of emotion tied up in their memories of participating as a youth. Maybe it's their memories of watching their children participate. Maybe it's their memories of being spectators."

"Sports is something that permeates almost every aspect of our lives," adds Jones, "whether or not we play sports, whether or not we watch sports, whether or not we like sports."

In other words, sports—and the question of whether a game is fair—provides the type of emotional battleground perfectly suited to a political wedge issue.



Complicating matters, the science as to whether trans athletes retain a physical advantage over their cisgender competitors is still unsettled. While advocates of these anti-trans bills contend that trans women and girls are inherently bigger and stronger than their cisgender peers, those who oppose the bills counter the advantage is overstated, if it even exists—and, in youth sports, ultimately not that important. The research on trans athletes is slim, and it can't be neatly applied to trans athletes undergoing puberty, Joanna Harper, a Loughborough University Ph.D. student researching performance analysis in trans athletes, [has told Sports Illustrated](#).

Q: Why does the issue of transgender rights seem to find so much controversy within the conversation of sports?

Q: What appears to be the biggest concern from those opposed to allowing transgender athletes from participating on teams that align with their gender identity?

What is settled is the severe toll being sidelined from competition takes on trans competitors' mental health. Transgender youth are more [likely to experience](#) negative mental health effects, including suicidality, when faced with gender-exclusive policies, including sports policies, according to a policy review by the Center for American Progress. Trans youth are already at greater risk of suicide and self-harm than their cisgender peers. Moreover, suicide attempts over the course of a year were more than double for trans and nonbinary youth who experienced discrimination based on their gender identity, compared with trans and nonbinary youth who did not, according to a peer-reviewed study by Trevor Project researchers in [The Journal of Adolescent Health](#).

“What I am hoping for is that trans youth get the same thing, that they get to experience that joy, that they get to experience the things that I got to experience,” says Zooney Zephyr, a 32-year-old trans woman in Montana who was a state-ranked wrestler in her high school. “I got to experience it prior to my transition. I want them to be able to experience it during and after their transitions. I want trans girls to have a girlhood. I want trans boys to have a boyhood.” ...

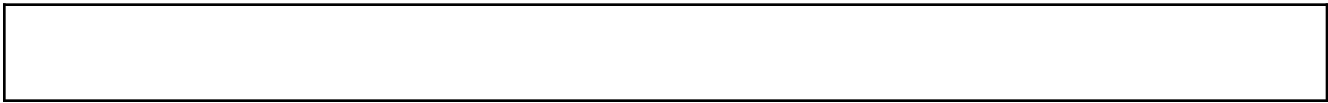
Passing these bills doesn't pose the only threat to trans health—simply proposing them signals to trans kids and young adults that their humanity is up for debate, according to experts. A spokesperson for the Trevor Project, which runs a confidential suicide hotline for LGBTQ youth, says that in a national survey conducted between October and December 2020, the group found that more than 90% of queer kids said that recent politics have negatively affected their well-being.

“[These bills are] not costless,” says Erin Buzuvis, a Western New England University law professor who specializes in gender and discrimination in athletics. “Even if you're trying to score some political points like, ‘Oh, this would never pass, because the state would never,’ the fact that the bill is introduced is just reminding a vulnerable community that they're not wanted and not validated.” ...

Meanwhile, athletes—especially children—just want to play. “I mean, we're kids, O.K.?” says William, a 15-year-old trans boy in North Dakota who wants to join the tennis team for his sophomore season and asked SI to identify him by his first name only. “We're not out there to take people's scholarships and stuff. No, we just want to compete. We don't have a secret agenda.”

North Dakota is one of several states whose bills would prevent trans boys and men, in addition to trans girls and women, from competing in the division that matches their gender identity. These bills, therefore, stray from the stated objective of protecting girls and women's sports; on their face, they seem less concerned with competitive fairness than exclusion. And while technically allowed under these bills, playing with girls is a humiliating prospect for William, he says: “That would be absurd.”

Q: What are two ways that the bills, whether passed or just considered, impact transgender athletes?



Why have these bills been proposed and passed?



Speaking at the Conservative Political Action Conference in February, [former president] Trump showed his support for bills like Mississippi’s. “Women’s sports as we know it will die,” he warned, if transgender women and girls are allowed to compete. Stephen Miller, Trump’s former senior adviser for policy, recently told [Politico](#) that he believes campaigning on the issue of trans women in sports will help Republicans win the 2022 midterm elections.

In a Feb. 28 speech at CPAC, Trump railed against trans participation in women's sports.

“We’re seeing a lot of Republicans scrambling to figure out their position, what position they’re going to take with respect to the party,” says Heath Fogg Davis, a Temple University political science professor and the chair of the gender, sexuality and women’s studies department. “It is interesting in a lot of these cases in a lot of these states, you’re not seeing the request for legislation coming from the populus.”

National anti-trans interest groups like the Alliance Defending Freedom are [working behind the scenes](#), and in some cases more publicly, with state lawmakers to conceive of and write these bills, as they did the bathroom bills before them.

That raises the question: What issue are these bills trying to address? [The Associated Press](#) recently asked two dozen state legislators who have sponsored bills to cite cases from their state or district where trans girls participating in sports had led to a problem, and found that hardly any of them could.

Q: How do politics play a role in states’ and politicians’ involvement in this issue?

“[Legislators] paint an image of a trans person as someone who can flick a light switch and decide to be trans and then a person assigned male at birth can say, ‘I’m trans now and run in the 400 meter,’ and then after that day go out and say, ‘Just kidding, but I still won,’” Zoe Zephyr, a 32-year-old trans woman in Montana, says. “They paint this image of being trans as if it were a box you could tick to gain an advantage. It’s just not that. It’s finally getting your head above water. It’s getting to live.”

Source: Kliegman, Julie. “The Next Cultural Battle: States Take Aim at Trans Athletes.” *Sports Illustrated*, 12 March 2021, <https://www.si.com/college/2021/03/12/states-take-aim-at-trans-athletes>. Accessed 19 March 2022.

Q: What factors are currently influencing the question of whether transgender athletes may participate in sports?

Q: How is the issue of trans athletes’ participation in sports a reflection of the current political/social moment?

Sports as History Project

One of the major premises of this course is that sports is more than just entertainment. Sports does not operate in a vacuum, isolated away from the world around it. Instead, sports, like most popular culture, is very much connected to and intertwined with the broader culture. Most major social, political & economic issues are reflected in sports and that is true of both today and sports in the past.

For this project, you are going to choose one example of sports being connected to the times, **research** it & **make a Google slideshow** to share that research with the class. ***You will present your finished project to your table group only.***

YOUR ASSIGNMENT:

1. Choose one example of how sports are connected to the times, research that topic (using *at least 3 reliable sources*) & take notes on your topic.
 - a. Notes (10 pts) should include:
 - i. an overview of your sports topic
 - ii. an exploration of the role historical or cultural events plays(ed) in accelerating/influencing the topic
 - iii. and a clear explanation of what we can learn about history, society, culture, and conflict through this sports topic
2. Using your notes, build a slideshow presentation (30 pts) to share with the class.
 - a. ***You will be presenting slideshows to your table group only*** for this assignment. Think about how you can engage the group throughout. That may mean incorporating images or video to demonstrate what you're talking about, posing a question to start or end, etc.. You want to avoid a slideshow that is a wall of words.

REMINDERS:

- **You do need a bibliography so make sure to keep track of your text sources when you are researching!** Make an additional slide after your content with your source citations.
- Make sure to include *at least* one image per slide
- Bullet text wherever you can (vs. blocks of paragraph text)
- Font should be *at least* 18 pt or larger. Also remember that light colors, fancy fonts and text laid over images are hard to read when projected.

Sources: *You must use at least 3 credible sources (NOT Wikipedia!). Good resources to consider: sports media sites like Sports Illustrated, Andscape, The Undeclared, The Players Tribune, ESPN, The Ringer, Yahoo Sports, Deadspin, Complex, or the LS library databases (Pop Culture Universe OR U.S. History in Context.)*