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Anthony Sortino

Professor DiDomenico

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Paper: Gender Role or Race Role

There are many different issues when it comes to gender roles in sports. Throughout history, sports have been dominated by men. There have always been **women's sports**, but it has not become as popular in today's society. In more recent years, there are three issues that have been controversial in the media **in regards to gender in the sports industry**. Currently, transgender athletes are able to compete with the opposite sex at the collegiate level. Another gender role issue is that women do not make as much money as men athletes. The last issue is **there is not an** equal opportunity for women to be able to coach male sports at the professional level. These issues are important to the gender roles in sports in today's society. "And there were those like Burnett, who saw religion in Odessa used not to reinforce religious beliefs at all but as an excuse for people to come together and be made comfortable with their own social beliefs in racial and gender bigotry" (Bissinger, 34).

At the University of Pennsylvania, a transgender female is competing on the women's swim team. For the past three years, she **has** competed as a male on the men's team and is now on the women's team. This has brought up a lot of controversy because she has now broken all of the female records for swimming. Many people do not feel this is fair, since she still has the physical **strength and** ability of a male. Other female college athletes also do not agree that she

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should be competing as a female because it is taking away scholarships and awards from other women. On the other end, there are also women athletes that are in support of transgenders competing in women's sports. A former University of Pennsylvania student, Maya Reddy, supports this issue based on her own experience as a women athlete. She was a transgender college golfer that wanted to join the LPGA Tour. She said in an interview, "I know what it feels like to not feel welcome in your sport". She later was able to compete in one of the LPGA tournaments. Gender roles in sports have changed throughout the years and are in the news now as a main topic. This issue has caused much controversy on both sides and seems to be a very important issue with gender roles in sports.

Another gender role in sports that has been an issue for many years is the equality between professional male athletes and female athletes with how much money each makes. Over the years, male professional athletes are paid much more than women professional athletes. This has caused many people to wonder why this is the case. Some believe that women's sports are not watched as much on TV, which is why they are not paid the same as males. Others do not believe this should not be a reason not to be paid equally and feel the women are being discriminated against. The roles of both male and female athletes are the same and just as much work is displayed by both genders, so many feel there should be no difference in how much they are paid. In today's sports, women's golf is becoming just as popular as men's golf, however, the women golfers do not make nearly as much money when winning a tournament as the men golfers. Part of the issue is that the men's golf tournaments have many more sponsors than the women's tournaments, which helps pay the winners large amounts of money. Women's tennis has become the closest in having the same pay as men, however, women professionals are still paid less. This is promising in appearing that the sport is going in the right direction of equal pay

between genders. Still, there is a gap between how much money professional men and women athletes make and continues to be an ongoing **gender role issue and debate** in sports.

The last issue with gender **roles** in sports is if women should be able to coach a professional male sport. Over the years, male professional sports have all been coached by men. **Oftentimes, even women professional sports are coached by men.** Some believe that women should not coach a men's only sport, such as football, because they have never played that sport and would not know how to coach. It has not been until **recently** that women have become professional coaches in male sports. In 2016, Katie Sowers became the first female coach in the NFL with the Atlanta Falcons. She has broken the barriers of male and female coaches in a male dominant sport **such as** football. Since then, there are now several women **who are** professional baseball coaches in the minor leagues and also female NFL referees. There are now also female NBA referees as well as many more female NFL and NBA announcers. Men have always been the announcers for male professional sports up **until recent years.** Now, there are many women announcers for baseball, football and basketball, the three major male professional sports. While this is a good sign of things to come, we still have a long way to go with the issue of women coaching male professional sports.

Although gender roles in sports **have** been dominated by male athletes, there are many factors contributing to women having a larger role as professional athletes. Gender has become a major factor when it comes to competing as a man or a woman and now with certain rules and guidelines, it is becoming more important to compete as a man or a woman. Equal pay for male and female professional athletes continues to be an issue and will always be looked at as something to think about. Most people believe that women should be paid more and that there

should not be any difference in pay between women and men athletes. We will see in the future how this will turn out and if female athletes will start to make the same amount of money as the men. Men and women are now able to coach at the professional level which is leading to many more opportunities for women in male professional sports. All of these issues and factors are very important to the gender roles in sports. As the years progress, we are seeing many changes with all of these areas and it will be an ongoing journey for the gender roles in sports in the future.

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