

## **Everyday Sexisms: Exploring the Scales of Misogyny in Sport**

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### **Introduction**

In this chapter I focus on sexism and sport with a focus on the context of Higher Education (HE) in the UK. I start with a brief introduction to the importance of work on discrimination before offering ways feminists have challenged sexism and misogyny. The latter involves a turn to the idea of *feministkilljoys* (Ahmed, 2010) and a return to the work of Joan Smith (1989). I consider contemporary sexism and misogyny within sporting cultures and practices in HE in the UK. I end with the idea of networks of solidarity as one way to challenge and transform discrimination in sport.

This edited collection—*Sport and Discrimination*—is important because it keeps on the agenda the critical examination of discrimination. Whether we are academics, practitioners or policy makers, we cannot afford to let discrimination slip from our current, and future work. It is apparent that by documenting discrimination we raise awareness of discriminatory practices and provide possibilities to challenge existing cultures. Such work contributes to a broader agenda of anti-discrimination. However, at the same time, discrimination frequently transforms and re-configures new means and modes of existence. These neo-discriminations might be covert and concealed, never the less they require forensic scrutiny in order to achieve anti-discrimination work in sport.

For examples of the existence of these new means and modes of discrimination, we do not have to look very far. Perhaps a cursory glance at the recent electoral (2015) and EU referendum (2016) debates in the UK, especially UKIP's rhetoric's of immigration, serves as evidence of what we might call neo-discriminations. These neo-discriminations circulate within, and are legitimatised by, our now-established neo-liberal worlds of politics, commerce, education and sport. Within these developed neo-liberal worlds there are frequent failures to critique and prevent processes that serve unfettered individualism; there are failures to

interrogate values and norms that propel individual progress regardless of the cost to Others.

Katie Hopkin's very public statements, which we cannot forget were delivered by the UK tabloid press, are disturbing. Her comments, in the wake of the appalling conditions and tragic loss of life in the Mediterranean Sea, reflect extreme views:

*Rescue boats? I'd use gunships to stop migrants.*

NO, I don't care. Show me pictures of coffins, show me bodies floating in water, play violins and show me skinny people looking sad.

I still don't care.

Her remarks are a reminder of what neo-liberal individualism can engender: extreme apathy and aggressive discrimination. This type of discrimination attacks the core, universal value of Human Rights, which is 'All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights'. She, and *The Sun* newspaper, were heavily criticised by the United Nations high commissioner Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein. Such public opposition to discriminatory rhetoric and behavior is paramount to processes of anti-discrimination.

A form of resistance to this contemporary ethos is collaboration and the forming of networks of solidarity. This edited collection provides one opportunity for us to develop a form of collectivism, which concerns itself with discrimination, anti-discrimination and sport. The aim of which must be to create a text that is influential on different levels – including challenging discrimination on the level of the personal, the professional and in praxis.

### **The Feminist Challenge**

Recently, I attended a seminar at the University of Sussex, it was delivered by Dr Alison Phipps, who is Director of Gender Studies. The seminar was on the University's National Union of Students (NUS) report entitled: *That's what she said: Women students' experiences of 'lad culture' in Higher Education*. Phipps spoke to a lecture theatre full of students, predominantly female students. After her initial introductory slide, a slide appeared with an image depicting a cartoon-style monster. This was accompanied by an explanation. Her message was that

regardless of what people might think feminists are, they *are not* monsters. A bit bewildered by this insertion, I read her intend to use wit, as a form of apology, and I read Phipps as a feminist apologist. This reading might not be a fair representation. However, my unease with her equation—feminist does not equal monster—made me think about how feminism is declared within the formal spaces of sport and HE.

In her blog *feministkilljoys: Killing Joy as a World Making Project*, Sara Ahmed (2010) considers the position of the feminist related to her experience as an academic. She asks some important questions, specifically, she asks: 'does the feminist kill other people's joy by pointing out moments of sexism?' (§12).

She writes:

*I learnt very quickly how feminists are assigned the status of difficult people, and how that assignment carries an institutional weight. This is what the figure of the feminist killjoy teaches us. It is not only that you are caught up in tense situations but that you become the cause of tension. ... You can inherit an agreement. This is how there can be an expectation that you will be difficult before you even arrive into a situation. The killjoy is often judged to be difficult in advance of what she says, such that whatever she says, she is heard as making things difficult for herself as well for others.*

As feminists, many of us develop advanced and well-informed responses to incidents of abuse, injustice, oppression, prejudice and subjugation. Briefly, it is worth noting that on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2016, Ahmed resigned from her post as a Professor of Race and Cultural Studies at Goldsmiths, University of London, in protest of the institution's failure to address the sexual harassment of students. As activists and as academics, we are often willful—as Ahmed points out—in our communication of these responses. As feminists, we provide coherent and convincing arguments and these treatises are serious declarations, which are made in earnest and accompanied by intensity. Many feminists are *killjoys*. Does this make us monsters?

Eva Carneiro provides an example of a woman working in professional sport who was framed as problematic and troublesome. In many ways, she was situated as a *killjoy* at the onset by José Mourinho. This was followed by a pitiful

response by the Football Association, which also positioned Heather Rabbatts similarly. Both women experienced overt and subtle discrimination, sexist slights and misogyny. They, along with others, had to fight hard to challenge the male-dominated culture of professional men's football.

Carneiro is known to have experienced sexist chanting and abuse at professional football games when she worked as Chelsea FC first-team doctor (Gibson, 2015). At the end of the football season 2015, manager José Mourinho publicly abhorred and admonished Carneiro's on-field treatment of an injured player during the final stages of a match against Swansea. His reaction was in spite of the referee repeatedly indicating for the team doctor to attend to the player, and of the General Medical Council's guidelines on patient care. After experiencing on-going discriminatory behavior, including enduring sexually explicit comments from her colleagues, Carneiro claimed she was personally discriminated against and wrongly criticised by Mourinho. Following the incident, Carneiro was not selected as first-team doctor; she took her case to the Football Association, who were heavily criticised for not acting appropriately by Heather Rabbatts the chair of the FA Inclusion Advisory Board (IAB). Graeme Le Saux and Paul Elliott (Independent IAB members) supported Rabbatts in her challenge of the inadequate FA inquiry, which failed to invite Carneiro to speak of her treatment. In fact, Rabbatts was investigated as a consequence of life vice-president Ron Barston (82 years old) and law lecturer Richard Tur (70 year old chairman of the Oxford University FA) condemning her criticism of the FA's handling of the Carneiro case.

In her efforts to seek justice, Carneiro took legal action and alleged discrimination and constructive dismissal. The case went to tribunal and she received an official unreserved apology from the Chelsea Football Club and an offer of an out-of-court settlement. She rejected the settlement on 6<sup>th</sup> June, 2016. The case is on going, but the campaign group Women in Football deployed her treatment and welcomed the public apology, and reinstatement of her professional reputation.

Carneiro's case highlights the off-hand, discriminatory treatment of women by some men in positions of power in sport. It also demonstrates the degree to which women challenge this treatment as well as the parties involved in supporting such a challenge. Mourinho, Barston and Tur appear to hold particular views about women working in men's football. These views are despite the many advances women have made in a wide range of contemporary professions.

In 1989, Joan Smith wrote her book *Misogynies*. In her introduction to the 1996 edition, she writes of how, during the writing of the first edition, she had to keep explaining the word misogyny. She explained that it was 'the term for a range of hostile attitudes which expressed themselves in everything from casual jibes to the systematic exclusion of women from whole areas of public life' (p. vii) and that it 'was a phenomenon, which began with a joke and ended in murder, a thesis which drew startled looks...' (p. viii). She recounts the response to the 1989 edition, citing the headline from a right-wing British newspaper. The headline read: 'the feminist final solution', which suggested she had presented an ideology that led to the gas chambers of the holocaust. The media re-presented her, and her views, as extreme. Given this response, she reflects on the irony that she 'had written a book about woman-hating and suddenly [she] was supposed to be a *man-hater*' (p. viii). She affirms that during her time talking and writing about gender, she has met very few women who actually hate men.

Smith draws on numerous examples within popular culture and everyday life to develop an in-depth construction of the concept misogyny. As she highlights, 'the same themes come up again and again ... namely that a woman who oversteps certain narrowly drawn boundaries is asking for whatever she gets' (1996: 206). She illustrates and documents a range of examples, and her book provides a sedulous account of misogyny; as such it is a substantive contribution that reveals the internal socio-cultural power mechanisms of gender relations.

In sport studies, sexism and misogyny have been documented since the 1990s. For example, Schacht (1996) and Muir and Seitz (2004) identify misogyny in

men's rugby culture, and Fair (2011) demonstrates the intersection of misogyny and homophobia in high school wrestling. In 1992, Griffin detailed sexism faced by women, in particular lesbians in sport. McGinnis, McQuillan and Chapple (2005) explored the persistence of sexism in golf, and Aicher and Sagas (2010) evaluated the effects of sexism on sport coaches. There are more recent incidents of sexism and misogyny in sport and this list, borrowed from Bates (2016), captures some of these:

'Go away and have a baby': these are the words with which cyclist Jess Varnish says she was dismissed from British Cycling's Olympic programme (§1)

... tennis players being asked to twirl and treated like pieces of meat and volleyball players being described as 'wet otters' by Boris Johnson (§8)

(L)ast year former Liverpool striker Ryan Babel responded to a female fan's question on Twitter by saying: "i think u should concentrate on growing some tits instead of speaking about football... Ur a girl.. Stay in ur lane.." [sic] (§13)

On Thursday (19 May 2016), members of the private golf club Muirfield this week voted against embracing the 21st century and admitting women as members. Veteran BBC golf commentator Peter Alliss then suggested that women who want to play at the club should marry a member (§18)

Previously, I have argued that we cannot forget feminist contributions from the past; that we must pay attention to previous feminist analysis when we begin to build our contemporary analyses and explanation (Caudwell, 2011). This referring back to existing feminist work to help make sense of the present is not a straightforward project. There is insufficient space in this chapter to provide details. Suffice to say that I have argued against a wave-approach to feminist thinking—here I'm referring to the model of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> wave feminism—because it suggests linearity and incremental progression when in fact issues surrounding gender, sexism, misogyny and discrimination are more complicated than a historic teleology can explain. Put simply, there are many recurring and repeated sexism and misogynies, especially in sport, despite the changing morphology of gender relations.

Sometimes, feminists forget and/or re-define the invaluable contributions of the past. Or, perform a type of re-branding. It is at this juncture I move to the recently introduced concept of 'everyday sexism'. By doing so, I want to make clear that there are significant commonalities with Smith's contribution *Misogynies*, which she made over 25 years ago. My aim is to show that Smith's project on misogyny can be woven together with the recent turn to everyday sexism. By merging the past and the present feminist work we can achieve a folding-in of feminist thinking.

The selection of just three of the arguments presented by Smith demonstrates the connections with more recent thinking within the feminist scholarship of everyday sexism. First, Smith argues that '[i]t is not about all men, just as it is not about all women. But the same themes come up again and again ... namely that a woman who oversteps certain narrowly drawn boundaries is asking for whatever she gets' (1996: 206). Second, '... misogyny is not the province of a few isolated individuals ... but one of the concealed well-springs of our culture' (1996: 207). Finally, '... while not all men are rapists, every woman is a potential victim' (1996: 208).

In 2001, Swim *et al.* gleaned from the diaries of research participants the daily incidents, experiences and prejudice, displays and behaviours of discrimination to confirm the prevalence of everyday sexism. They identified successfully the nature and impact of discrimination embedded in the daily. These findings are affirmed by Ronai, Zsembik and Feagin (2013), who start their book (*Everyday sexism in the third millennium*), by asserting the fallacy that '[s]exism is a thing of the past' (1). They challenge the view that 'feminist theory is irrelevant to everyday lives' and critique the familiar discord that 'feminism is overbearing or unfeminine' (2). Importantly, with this turn to the everyday, there has also been a much-needed and powerful critical engagement with contemporary 'laddism' and 'rape culture'.

Notably, contemporary observers and authors argue that sexism is actually exaggerated and not on the decline. Researchers are, very importantly,

documenting the manifestations of new sexist-based discrimination and they are turning to extreme manifestations. For example, the recent call (2015) for papers for a special issue of the Journal of Gender Studies requested work that addresses 'laddism, rape culture and everyday sexism: Researching new mediations and contexts of gender and sexual violence'.

Further evidence of continued concern vis-à-vis sexism, and an example that is outside of the confines of academia, but not unrelated, is the *everyday sexism project* (see: <http://everydaysexism.com>). The home page for this social media forum introduces the aim of the project, which is to 'catalogue instances of sexism experienced by women on a day to day basis'. Visitors to the website are encouraged to document their experiences:

*They might be serious or minor, outrageously offensive or so niggling and normalised that you don't even feel able to protest. Say as much or as little as you like, use your real name or a pseudonym – it's up to you. By sharing your story you're showing the world that sexism does exist, it is faced by women everyday and it is a valid problem to discuss.*

Laura Bates (founder of *everyday sexism project* and author of the book *Everyday Sexism* (2014a)) realised that women's and girls' experiences of sexism 'weren't random one-off events, but reams of tiny pinpricks' (2014b, ¶3). Like Smith's (1989) notion of 'concealed well-springs' these 'reams of tiny pinpricks' when exposed and accumulated provide substantive evidence of pervasive sexism and misogyny. The success of the everyday sexism project is the opportunity to report, to share and to give a voice to many women. This social media forum is a network of solidarity. It allows a mode of collective expression. It is available avenues such as this where we can find empirical evidence of the sexist features of our society. By documenting behaviours that are: "*so niggling and normalised that you don't even feel able to protest*" women, and some men, have raised and documented numerous trite, banal and mundane, daily practices that buttress sexism.

For easy examples of trite, banal and mundane, daily practices of sexism we might consider two cultural habits that were recently given public scrutiny. These are: Manspreading and Mansplaining.

Dame Helen Mirren reiterated the long-standing recognition that some men take more than ample space in the public sphere. This taking of space is termed *Manspreading*. It serves to symbolize, and assert, a form of spatial, embodied dominance. This seemingly benign embodied dominance is both practice and display of masculine style, which often denies Others, mostly women, but some men too, certain entitlements in the public domain. The photograph of Helen Mirren sitting on a New York City subway train, which was mediated in March 2015, offers an indelible image. Commentating on the picture during an interview, Mirren makes an important final point:

“He’s doing the classic, the manspreading thing,” she said “... guys do do that, don’t they?”

When Fallon agreed and commented that manspreading is the “new thing,” Mirren said, “No they’ve always done it! It’s just now they’re being called on it.” (Vagianos, 2015: ¶2)

Related to *Mansplaining*, Selina Todd (2015), in an article in *The Guardian*, exposes the ways men dominate so-called intellectual space through speech and tactics of oration. In her quest to promote the Oxford University’s women-in-humanities group, advocate for feminist study and improve the working lives of female scholars, Todd documents the fundamental challenge through a recounting of her experience at an academic conference on history:

*I stepped back in time, and not because we were all talking about history. Here was a group of men who announced they were “redefining” modern history. They swaggered through presentations—about men—asserting that only those in their charmed circle had anything of significance to say. Male speakers were introduced as great scholars—“he needs no introduction” a favourite opening—while the few female speakers were granted brief, unenthusiastic descriptions of their work. Few women asked questions; those who did were often ignored, though if a man picked up and repeated their ideas, these were then considered worthy of debate. We are all wearily used to “mansplaining” and being talked over, excluded or ignored. But this conference was a personal nadir. (¶ 1)*

The author continues:

*Behind the numbers lie depressing examples of everyday sexism. A new survey by the Royal Historical Society (RHS) shows that female academics, regardless of whether they are PhD candidates or professors, are exploited and marginalised by “macho practices and cultures”. Combative behaviour in academic debates and a long-hours culture are de rigueur. And, as a report by Women in Philosophy points out, the problem is “not that women are somehow less able to cope when aggressive behaviour is aimed at them... It is rather that aggressive behaviour can heighten women’s feeling that they do not belong, by reinforcing the masculine nature of the environment within which they work and study.” (¶ 5)*

These cultures and practices of sexism within the profession of HE, and activities related to HE, such as conferences and the verbal demonstration of domination through assumed expertise, are easy to trace into general statistics concerned with gender and the gender gap. For example, in 2014/2015 only 23% of HE Professors are women and 34% of senior academics are women (Higher Education Statistics Agency, 2016). In 2012, the University and College Union reported on the slight rise of women at professorial level from 12.6% in 2000/2001 to 19.8% in 2010/2011. Based on these figures the report concludes that it will take 38.8 years (circa 2050) to achieve equal proportions of women and men Professors in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). These figures are applicable to sport studies with a visible dominance of male professor of sport-related studies.

The issues identified by Todd and her colleagues in the academic discipline of history and philosophy are easily transferable to the working worlds of sport. Perhaps this connect can be imagined when I quote more from her article.

She writes:

*Even women who have a track record of research aren’t treated equally. As Women in Philosophy reveals, lazy stereotyping means men are assumed to be “brighter” than women; assertive polemic is taken as evidence of intelligence. Lecturers who research women are considered esoteric or marginal to “mainstream” scholarship. ... Look at the course requirements of most humanities degrees and you’ll very rarely find any obligation to study women. (¶ 7)*

There is so much more that can be said about Manspreading and Mansplaining. The terms appear somewhat playful in their intent to identify the seemingly casual ways everyday sexism functions. And yet, it is easy, for me anyway, to imagine an in-depth and extensive categorising, perhaps a detailed taxonomy, of Manspreading and Mansplaining, in the working worlds of sport. Existing examples might include women's experiences in sport organisations and management (Knoppers and Anthonissen, 2008; Shaw and Hoeber, 2003), in coaching (Norman, 2010; Walker and Bopp, 2010), and specifically in football in the UK (Fielding-Lloyd and Meân, 2013; Welford, 2013). Fielding-Lloyd and Meân (2013) demonstrate, through critical discourse analysis, the ways women are treated during coach education courses. Women participants are viewed as less knowledgeable and less able as a consequence of the particular style of the male-dominated nature of these courses.

### **HE, Lad Culture and Sport**

Returning to the work of Dr Alison Phipps and her important findings in the report: *'That's what she said: Women students' experiences of 'lad culture' in HE'*, it is worth noting that this report does not stand-alone; it proceeds a 2010 report and precedes a larger project initiated in 2014. In 2010, the National Union of Students published a report entitled 'Hidden Marks: A study of women students' experiences of harassment, stalking, violence and sexual assault'. The 2010 report found that:

Over two thirds of respondents (68 per cent) have experienced some kind of verbal or non-verbal harassment in and around their institution. This kind of behaviour – which includes groping, flashing and unwanted sexual comments – has become almost 'everyday' for some women students.' (3)

In February 2014, the NUS launched a Lad Culture Summit with the aim to complete an audit to assess the manifestations of sexism on University campuses. The audit ran from December 2014 to February 2015. One of the findings highlights that '[b]oth SUs and institutions were shown to have 'gaps' in policy that specifically target lad culture' (NUS, 2015).

Phipps and Young (2012) point out that within Universities, “laddish’ behaviours tend to coalesce around activities such as sport and drinking, which are integral elements of student life’ (p. 10). The presence of online social media forums further encourages and promotes sexist attitudes and behaviours, for example, forums such as *Uni Lad* and the *Lad Bible*. Phipps and Young found that these websites ran features such as ‘Cleavage Thursdays’, ‘Smash and Dash?’ and promote merchandise sporting the tagline ‘Beer, Bacon and a Blowjob’. They concluded that there is evidence that such ‘raunchy’ content can collapse into a normalisation of sexual violence. A disturbing example, which did receive widespread press coverage and condemnation, was a post entitled ‘Sexual Mathematics’, in which the *Uni Lad* author wrote:

“If the girl you've taken for a drink... won't 'spread for your head', think about this mathematical statistic: 85 per cent of rape cases go unreported. That seems to be fairly good odds. Uni Lad does not condone rape without saying 'surprise'” (cited in Phipps and Young, 2012; and in Mitchell, 2015)

Through the normalisation of sexual violence, websites such as *Uni Lad* provide sufficient evidence to verify Smith’s point that ‘while not all men are rapists, every woman is a potential victim.’ Clearly, student cultures surrounding alcohol and sport can be potent grounds for abhorrent misogynist behaviours. In recent times, a number of men’s university sport teams and clubs have been held to account for blatant and severe sexism. For example, in October 2014 London School of Economics (LSE) men’s rugby team was banned for 12 months following their production and circulation of a misogynist and homophobic pamphlet. In November 2013, after an event that publicly documented attitudes in support of date rape and domestic violence, Cardiff University men’s football team were banned for 2 weeks. Prior to these cases, in 2012 Durham University, Nottingham University, University of East Anglia and Sussex University men’s sport teams all received university sanctions for specific overt sexism.

Phipps and Young (2012) identify numerous behaviours that constitute ‘lad culture’. These include sporting initiations, forums such as debating societies (e.g. Glasgow University Union Ancients Debate), the sexual pursuit of women freshers (termed ‘seal clubbing’ in one institution) and the practice of ‘slut-

dropping' (male students offer a woman student a lift home, they then drop her off at an unfamiliar location). Their report has had an impact. The NUS and some HE institutions have implemented initiatives to begin to address lad culture within HEIs. With that said, it is worth returning to the broader academic culture as evidenced by Todd (2015), above, when she discusses the humanities, history conferences and the gender gap in HE.

### **University Sport Professors**

Like many people I try not to pay attention to work emails during evenings and at weekends. However, at 7pm on a Friday in January 2015, I noticed an email from a male member of staff whom I respect. It read, simply:

Dear Colleagues,

This is a very rare instance in which I want to dissociate myself from remarks made by a colleague at the University of Xxxxx:

[http://www.thexxxxx.co.uk/news/11712459.Footballers\\_from\\_lower\\_classes\\_\\_\\_not\\_role\\_models\\_\\_\\_/](http://www.thexxxxx.co.uk/news/11712459.Footballers_from_lower_classes___not_role_models___/)

I will explain his dissociation, but first of all I'd like to raise two questions: How do we identify discrimination, namely sexism and misogyny? This might seem a straightforward question, but as is evident, perpetrators and commentators often contest both actions of discrimination and discourses of discrimination. Second, what do we do once we identify discriminatory behavior?

Returning to the Friday night email declaring dissociation, the embedded webpage link is to a local newspaper, more specifically to a news item about Ched Evans. The journalist responsible for the article, unsurprisingly, pitted two points of view. One was the opinion of a former visiting professor at the University of Xxxxx, and the other view, was from the Director of a local Rape Crisis Centre. The actual scenario is slightly more convoluted than this. It follows on from an interview on a local radio station. Suffice to say, the professor in his position as a leading authority on sport made public his controversial opinion of the Evans' case.

The senior sport academic said he empathised with the 'bullied' Evans and defended the lack of remorse he had shown over the rape. The director of the local rape crisis centre responded by calling the professor an 'uninformed rape apologist.' She said she was left physically shaking by his comments, adding that:

"The thing that concerns me about Professor Xxxxx's remarks is that he seems to be saying there are better or worse cases of rape... and this is somehow a crime that's not as serious as others. What he's doing... is perpetuating myths in society around rape... and to me that's exceptionally dangerous." On Evans she said: "I think he doesn't understand what rape is" (The Xxxxx 09/01/15)

I realise we can have lengthy discussion about the events surrounding Evans. However, it is the dissociation from a professor's comments by a male work colleague that I am keen to explore. I'll add to this framing, Joan Smith's recent and specific commentary on the issue. This helps provide some context for the dissociation and it supports a perspective of the compounded, devastating impact of rape on women.

When the Sheffield United player was convicted of rape, in April 2012, the identity of his victim should have remained a secret, protected by a law that gives lifelong anonymity to complainants. Instead, she has repeatedly been named on the internet and forced to move home five times. It is one of the worst instances of victim-blaming ever seen in this country.' '... if this vile spasm of victim-blaming proves one thing, it is that they are finally losing the argument.' (theguardian.com 16.01.15)

Several e mails followed the initial dissociation, including e mails sent out on Saturday and Sunday. I have captured (below) the flavour of the interaction because I think the correspondence tells us something about how we might identify discrimination and what we might do to oppose discrimination.

I never normally feel compelled enough to comment on things that go round uni info, but I have to say I am disgusted and enraged by these comments made by Professor Xxxxx. It may be The Xxxxx [newspaper], but a direct quote is a direct quote. I'm ashamed to be associated with an institution that would employ/maintain employment of an individual who would publicly make such comments. I would like to hear an official response from the powers that be within University Management.

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As a University of Xxxxx academic working in the social sciences of sport - primarily challenging discrimination and pursuing social justice in/through sport - I support Xxxxx, Xxxxx and Xxxxx in disassociating myself from Prof. Xxxxx's comments.

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Aside from repeating the dissociation from the comments made by Xxxxx Xxxxx, I echo the call demanding University Management provide a response detailing: how and why these comments were allowed to be made in such a way that Xxxxx was seemingly representing the University, and whether they intend on maintaining his position as a Visiting Professor. I, for one, should hope not.

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But who or what is being dissociated from what? Or whom? Aren't WE the university and, given the tragic events in France [Charlie Hebdo], a community that not only should welcome offence but actively encourage it? Voltaire put it more eloquently... The correct way to fight opinion is with opinion. Not by attempting to suppress the man's views whatever they may be.

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These comments are absolutely disgusting. Regardless of what has happened in France, mindless regurgitation of the dominant culture's stereotypes of the 'lower classes' does not pass as academic debate. Is this what academia represents in ConDem Britain?

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I have to say that I find it dispiriting that otherwise intelligent colleagues are bringing up issues that have nothing to do with what's being proposed. No one is proposing censorship; no one is objecting to anyone's expressing their views; no one is objecting to giving offence. All that is being proposed is that the University of Xxxxx publicly dissociate itself from the views expressed in the Evening Xxxxx, lest anyone suppose that their author's membership of the University implies the institution's agreement with them.

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I support all of the messages here that disassociate from these comments. This is deeply troubling to me because it seems to be yet another expression of how there is a complete and general lack of understanding of rape culture in our society. To so earnestly and nonchalantly compare rape to "drink driving" or "assaulting a police officer", as though there could ever be some kind of equivocation between these, either on the level of how they are experienced by individuals, or in terms of their deep social meaning and history, is not simply mindless, but extremely damaging. Given that the university itself is currently a site on which structural and cultural problems of rape and misogyny are being combated, I think that comments like these must not be allowed to slip.

Personally, I feel weary of the recent climate in which feminists are constantly being forced into a position of "moral outrage" by thoughtless and/or reactionary comments. So, rather than taking this position, which is simply a pole in a pre-formed debate, I would prefer that we begin to do something more constructive. I think that University of Xxxxx should take this as a cue to invigorate its attempt to turn itself into an institution with model gender relations, and to direct more of its apparent radical and forward thinking energies and resources to this end. Of course, this may well begin with requesting that the university respond to these comments.

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For Professor Xxxxx to claim that Ched Evans has been bullied, and for the player himself to state that he is the victim of 'mob rule', completely ignores the plight of the victim. More importantly, it ignores the symbolic effect on thousands of victims and potential victims. It suggests that football is happy to welcome unrepentant convicted rapists. Whether the convicted rapist Ched Evans wanted to be a role model is irrelevant in this case. He has chosen to pursue a career which confers upon certain public responsibilities. The FA, football clubs, PFA, and players have that public responsibility.

The University-wide e mailing correspondence involved debate as well as detailed explanation of the ramifications of a sport professor's apparent lack of insight when it comes to rape and rape culture. The email activity might be viewed as a reflection of collective challenge to sexism and misogyny, and it is possible to see moments of support and solidarity. Additionally, an example of this support can be found in a private email interaction, which involved myself:

Xxxxx,

Without sounding patronising, I want to say, this is a very important response - thank you.

Jayne

Hi Jayne,

I really appreciate your personal response to me. To be honest after sending I was nervous/anxious at what response I may get. I don't have the academic lexicon or weighty intelligence to battle with some of the heavy thinkers in the uni. I was just mad as hell as a working class woman who has experienced gender/sexual violence. So, thank you!

It is not always easy for all individuals to make agented responses to incidents of discrimination. The electronic world of e mailing offers a form of anonymity and might make it easier for individuals to contribute to anti-discriminatory rhetoric.

At the same time, e-mailing as well as virtual forums such as Blogs and Twitter provide fertile grounds for discrimination to develop. Rani Abraham's disclosure to the press (May 11, 2014) of Richard Scudamore's ribald sexist e-mail commentary provides one case that is not specific to university culture, but involves the sports workplace of football. The incident demonstrates both the production of discrimination and the construction of calls for anti-discrimination.

## **Conclusions**

In this chapter I have introduced the idea of neo-discriminations and gone on to demonstrate how everyday forms of sexism and misogyny are contemporary feminist concerns. I have linked the recent scholarly and popular cultural turn to the everyday with the existing feminist work on misogyny. This demonstrates the importance of historical context in any current analyses. Additionally, I have exposed how feminists who challenge the trite, banal and mundane forms of sexism and misogyny (e.g., manspreading and mansplaining) are often viewed as monster/not monsters and killjoys. This positioning can operate to devalue anti-discriminatory efforts by agented individuals, and collectives.

I have asked: How do we identify discriminations? And, I have asked: How do we oppose and challenge the 'concealed well-springs' and/or 'reams of tiny pinpricks' of sexism in our sporting worlds? To answer the first question, I advocate a reflective and bold approach, which at times will, no doubt, position the challenger as *feministkilljoy*. In terms of how do we oppose discrimination, my contention throughout is for collaboration and to take collective action: for individuals to coalesce into collectives and form networks of solidarity. Ideally this coming together should be sustained, but if this is not possible then short-lived actions of opposition are valuable as is evidenced by the dissociation e-mail scenario (note: the University did publicly and officially dissociate from the male sport professor). The example demonstrates the ways the Internet is proving useful as a platform for agented and collective expression of anti-discrimination.

Finally, as a feminist, it is much easier to have men and women in the realm of sport academia who are feminist allies and feminist interventionists, than it is to have men and women who are apologists for, and bystanders to, sexism and misogyny. Everyday discrimination in the form of sexism and misogyny can be opposed and there are various official and unofficial ways this can be achieved.

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