NEW REALMS OF AGENCY: PROMOTING PEACE EDUCATION AND GENDER EQUITY THROUGH SPORT

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Summary

"Having a well attuned sociological imagination can provide a compass for sport-activists to navigate a course between hope and expectation, or between idealism and fatalism. (Sugden 2012: 57)

This chapter provides an overview of new realms of agency, pioneering work that advocates peace, empowerment and active participation. Drawing from the experiences of existing models of coexistence, such as the expanding sport, development and peace (SDP) sector, it offers a focus for scholarly inquiry into sport’s relationship to conflict and peace. Remarkable results have been documented on the ongoing peace education programs—age-appropriate curricula, service-learning
activities and civic engagement projects— that have been inspiring a new generation of athletes, educators, students and volunteers to become activists (peacemakers). In exploring the evolving realms of sport agency in this process the following questions are raised: Can sport serve as a platform for bridging socio-cultural and political gaps? Is sport an effective agent of social change, a means for building sustainable peaceful relations? Can sport be used as a tool to bring gender issues into the mainstream of society since gender equity is never separate from diversity issues or respect for diversity: ethnicity, race, disability, age, language, colour, income, etc. Global grassroots movements for peace education have been underway for many years. A wide variety of organizations have been using sport to nurture peacemaking across divided communities, to promote gender equity and eliminate racism and violence in schools and communities, and in particular campaigns to rid sport of anti-Semitism and islamophobia. The social space of Sport has been building up knowledge and experience in the promotion of peace and development and deploying this expertise in areas such as peace education.

1. Introduction: Peace Education

Peace education today is a broad field which uses different approaches and disciplines. As a concept, it lends itself to many definitions. It has been defined as as multicultural education, as conflict resolution education, as human rights education and as global citizenship education. To put it in simple terms, peace education empowers social groups and individuals with the values, tools and knowledge necessary to end violence and social injustices. It means learning the skills, behaviours and attitudes to live together successfully by valuing and respecting diversity: race, religion, gender, physical disability, age, etc. The Peace Education Foundation (http://www.peace-ed.org/about.html) defines it as educating children and adults in the dynamics of conflict resolution and promoting peacemaking skills in our homes, schools, community, the nation and the world. The United Nations (2012) defines it as an education that is "directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms". According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, UN Article 26, Peace education promotes understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups and furthers the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.

In this context, evolving realms of sport agency are explored in this chapter by focusing on the ongoing peace education programs, cross generational dialogue and collaborative-intergenerational activities of grassroots community-based organizations, non-profits, social movements and NGOs such as (1) Football 4 Peace (F4P), (2) Ultimate Peace (UP), (3) Athletes United for Peace (4) Sport in Society (SIS), (5) Peace First, formerly (Peace Games), (6) Mercy Corps (7) Teachers Without Borders, (TWB) and (8) Women’s Initiative for Peace (Winpeace).

Sport can and does make a difference, despite the degeneration or devaluation of Olympic values today such as the recent abuse of an Olympic symbol. Specifically, in downtown Edinburgh, on June 21, 2012, a Scottish man stopped the Olympic torch-bearer to light his cigarette from the Olympic flame! However, what is extremely disturbing is the fact that the Olympic torch-bearer stopped running to light Calum MacDonald’s cigarette! This could only have happened in Scotland— reports the Daily Star in an article entitled London 2012: Olympic Torch doubles as a Cigarette Lighter(21/06/2012)— and reporters rushed to capture this dreadful incident which was not disseminate widely in the media as opposed to the social media. Will the International Olympic Committee (IOC) issue an official statement condemning such acts of disrespect for Olympic symbols (values)? Other examples of the degeneration of Olympic values today are the systematic abuse of substances (doping), obsessive
competitiveness that leads to violence, racial intolerance at sporting events, the gender leadership gap in sport governing bodies, commercialization, the modelification or deathletization of male and female athletes in the mass media, the poor coverage of female athletes and women’s sports, sexual harassment in sport, the social capital drain due to the migration of athletic talent or the so called by researchers sport migration phenomena, the global migrant athlete, the migration of athletic talent and sports labour as well as the under-representation of migrants in mainstream sport institutions. One need point out here that although many of the world’s finest athletes and players are migrants or ethnic minorities, they are still under-represented in non-playing positions, in sport governing bodies (SGBs) and in positions of authority. Moreover, some sports still perceive themselves as not affected by exclusionary practices such as racism and the exclusion of migrants.

Conversely and alternatively, the international community has been systematically drawing on the power of sport as a resource of hope, a means to promote gender equality, development and peace. One need point out here that the field of sport is not restricted to Olympic, elite or competitive sports. The social space of sport encompasses social interaction, such as play including indigenous games and sports, physical activity, fitness, physical education, leisure and recreational sports, etc. The United Nations (UN) member states have been increasingly recognizing the role of sport in their policies and legislation. Since the appointment of the first Special Adviser to the UN Secretary General on Sport for Development and Peace in 2001, the UN has been promoting sport as a cost-effective tool to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals—a set of benchmarks agreed on by the international community to be achieved by 2015.

Reconciliation through sports, namely bridging social inequality gaps through sport, combating the globalization of extremism in and through athlete activism, the promotion of new role models and mentors and intercultural synergies are vital, not only in view of the systematic misuse of Olympic values today but primarily in light of the impact of globalization on racism and xenophobia.

Accordingly this chapter presents arguments for the institutionalization of peace education as an integral part of the curricula in public schools beginning in pre-school or kindergarten. Incorporating peace education into educational policies and teaching practices means getting them while they’re young before they start formulating social prejudices and stereotypes.

2. New Realms of Agency: The Impact of Sport Interventions

"There is no single agent, group or movement that can carry the hopes of humanity, but there are many points of engagement through sport that offer good causes for optimism that things can get better." (Jarvie 2011: 21)

Sport has been increasingly seen as having a role to play in peacemaking processes and contributing to the resolution of enduring societal problems. It has been documented that sport serves as an effective tool for social mobilization on issues such as universal education, student engagement/activism, environmental sustainability, poverty reduction, racial inequalities and conflict-resolution. A number of studies have identified the expanding sport, development and peace (SDP) movement, contributing to the broad research field of conflict resolution. For example, in addressing the role of sport in peacemaking processes, Richard Giulianotti (2011) argues that sport’s role in peace-building can come in many forms: pressure groups, social forums, campaigns, activism, legislation, policy, writing, investigating, uncovering silences, reallocation of resources and by just refusing to accept injustice.
In defining the field of sport for development and peace, John Sugden (2012) draws lessons from sport interventions in three of the world’s most troubled regions—the Middle East, South Africa and Northern Ireland—illustrating how small scale community-based sporting initiatives can evolve in ways that have positive impacts beyond their original boundaries. Sport initiatives have been successfully implemented in divided societies to develop and encourage respect, trust, responsibility, equality and inclusivity. Sugden also points out that "note should be taken of Bruce Kidd’s view that, in and of itself, sport is of no intrinsic value: it is neither naturally good nor irrevocably bad. It is, like all collective human endeavours, a social construction that is malleable according to the social forces that surround it." (2012: 51)

Simon Darnell (2012) acknowledges that Sport in development initiatives has grown dramatically over the last five years, now finding a place in the UN's millennium development goals. However, he raises questions as to whether sport can offer long-term solutions to societal problems. Looking at mega-sporting events, sporting celebrity and volunteer experience in the context of development, Darnell focuses on political, cultural and power issues, questioning the belief that sport can offer enduring solution to development issues. In outlining the most recent sociological research on the role of sport in development and drawing on the latest empirical research, he looks at what this reveals about the socio-political economy. Darnell does not seek to discredit or, as he says, "derail" SDP or any of the sport contributions in meeting development goals, but rather to raise critical questions about the social and political implications involved. Darnell asks questions such as who are the targets of SDP, what inequality issues are addressed and what kind of world ideology or world view is championed through SDP?

Conversely, Grant Jarvie (2011) argues that there are many points of engagement through sport, stressing that many NGO’S have been at the forefront of initiatives that use sport to attack social and economic inequalities, i.e. using sport as a facet of humanitarian aid, providing pathways for hope in different parts of the world, such as Africa and Asia. One need point out here that international recognition for the potential role that sport can play in achieving the Millennium Development Goals has placed sport higher up the agenda of organisations aiming to facilitate humanitarian aid packages for countries in need. For example, in examining the role of sport in producing social change, especially in areas of major crisis, such as war-torn zones and locations of forced migration, Jarvie (2011) argues that sport has become a means to an end, utilized by the United Nations and non-governmental organisations in partnership with local grassroots agencies.

Such an example is the Annual Match Against Poverty which mobilizes the public and promotes action on the Millennium Development Goals to end extreme poverty worldwide by 2015. For instance, the proceeds from the 9th Annual Match Against Poverty Match, held on 13 December 2011 in Hamburg Germany, have gone towards the ongoing food crisis in the Horn of Africa, where over 13 million people suffer from famine, drought and conflict, and for humanitarian as well as for recovery activities in Djibouti, Ethiopia, Kenya and Somalia. The UN has been working in these countries to provide emergency food aid, water, shelter and health services, while working on longer term development plans. Ronaldo and Zidane have been the driving force behind the Match Against Poverty since its inception in 2003, and in 2011 the organisers and players joined the global effort to address the ongoing crisis in the Horn of Africa. The 8th Match Against Poverty was held in Greece in 2010—hosted by Olympiacos Football Club in Piraeus—at which more than 30 international football players from top teams around the world competed. Clubs throughout Europe were invited to host the UEFA-backed 10th Match Against Poverty in 2012 organized by the United Nations Development Program
Top-flight clubs from UEFA’s 53 member associations were invited to submit their proposals by 22 June 2012.

At this point one need call attention to the recent strategic alliance between the organization Peace and Sport (l’Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport) and the Dubai Sports Council, a collaboration established to make sport a driving force for social cohesion, development and peace in the Middle East region. Through this collaboration, the first Peace and Sport Forum in the Middle East will take place next year, April 2013, in the Emirate of Dubai. The target of this alliance is to introduce concrete measures to reconcile divided communities through sport—to encourage dialogue and ultimately help societies reconstruct peaceful foundations through youth education—vital in the unsettled climate following the social, economic and political upheavals in the aftermath of the "Arab Spring", the Arab rebellions or the Arab revolutions and their global repercussions. Arab Spring refers to the uprisings that arose independently and spread across the Arab world in 2011, and are continuing in 2012. The movement originated in Tunisia in December 2010 and quickly spread to Egypt, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Jordan. This revolutionary wave of demonstrations and protests that began on December 17, 2010, has to date forced from power rulers in Egypt, Libya, Tunisia and Yemen. Civil uprisings and protests erupted in Syria, Bahrain, Jordan, Morocco, Algeria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Lebanon, Mauritania, Oman, Western Sahara as well as clashes at the Israeli borders, etc.

The 2013 Peace and Sport Forum plans to bring together—in a neutral environment—the region’s leading decision-makers from sport, civil society and the private sector in order to define actions and long-term programs for social unity in the Middle East. The forum will include field programs in the region’s disadvantaged areas and the involvement of top-level Arab athletes to inspire and act as role-models for young people.

Also dedicated to the thematic field of sport and development is the International Platform on Sport & Development (the ‘Platform’), currently supported by key stakeholders from non-profits to private sector actors to government agencies. The ‘Platform’—initiated after the first International Conference on Sport and Development in Magglingen, Switzerland in 2003—provides a hub for working together to enhance the profile, credibility and effectiveness of using sport as a tool for development: sharing knowledge, increasing visibility, encouraging alliances, building good practice, facilitating coordination and fostering partnerships.

Another platform which is also empowering the societal role of sport and supporting sport agency is the one established in November 2011—the Nyon Declaration—giving athletes a united global voice on issues such as the athletes’ rights, the equal treatment of all athletes regardless of gender, ethnic background, religion, the crisis in sport governance, transparency issues, and the right to organize collectively in player associations and unions. “There is a consensus among players that a crisis in sport governance exists. Athletes now have a platform to assert their independent voice without being filtered by sport administrators,” said Walter Palmer, responsible for sport at UNI Global Union, speaking at the World Athletes Summit in Nyon. (UNI Global Union 2011)

2.1. Athletes Rights: The Rights of Sportsmen and Sportswomen

“Dear Mr. Howman, Dear Mr. Rogge […] It’s finally time to give the sport back to the athletes. The athlete trade unions are the only independent voice of sportsmen and sportswomen. And they need to take their place within the family of sport.” (Yves Kummer, President of the European Elite Athletes Association, 2011)
Yves Kummer, speaking at the World Athletes Summit, following his reference to David Howman the WADA Director General and Jacques Rogge, the eighth and current President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), stressed the need for athletes to assert their independence. The elected representatives of 150,000 athletes from across the globe voted unanimously to establish a federation of world player associations at the World Athletes Summit to champion athletes’ rights, hosted by UNI Global Union in Nyon, Switzerland on November 15, 2011. Specifically, representatives of more than 100 player unions gathered at the Summit to ratify the “Nyon Declaration” asserting their status as key stakeholders in world sport. Also speaking at the summit Philip Jennings, General Secretary of UNI Global Union (2011), said: “The players’ associations now have a united global voice and the governing sports bodies and governments will have to listen.”

The “Nyon Declaration”, a landmark in the fight to champion athletes’ rights, is a new platform that has been established to tackle the crisis in the governance of world sports organisations. The two key issues that the federation of world player associations focused on were the Olympic Athletes Agreement and the reform of the WADA anti-doping rules. Discussions at the summit also included anti-corruption measures, the status of players, collective bargaining, image rights, dual careers/transition programmes, the importance of education for athletes and tailored training that will give athletes the chance to fulfil their potential once their playing careers have come to an end.

Walter Palmer, responsible for sport at UNI Global Union (2011), told the participants they will engage with WADA, the IOC and international federations over the unfair Olympic contract and they will support-players worldwide with their struggle to be recognised and heard, adding that “we regret that Frank Fredericks, the head of the IOC Athletes Commission, did not choose to respond to our invitation to join the meeting in Nyon.” Theo van Seggeln, Secretary General of the International Federation of Football Players Unions argued that “professional sport is global and therefore solutions to the problems we have in sports need to be solved on a global level.” (UNI Global Union 2011)

What also needs to be discussed in this platform is the issue of financial fair play. Despite the enormous personal and professional commitment required to engage in a career as a professional athlete, most athletes are modestly paid and have very insecure employment conditions. This platform could also facilitate discussions on the illegal trafficking of minors in football—players aged under 18—with regard to transfers and in particular the abuse and exploitation of minors from outside the EU who are not selected for competitions and abandoned in a foreign country, often in a state of poverty which fosters their further exploitation.

Additionally, what needs to be discussed— and not only in this platform—is integrating a gender perspective. Enabling everyone to realize their full potential, regardless of religion, race, age or politics requires bridging major social inequality gaps which also include the gender participation gap, the gender pay gap and the gender leadership gap in sport.

3. Integrating a Gender Perspective

"In terms of gender, generally speaking, all over Europe, men participate more often in sports than women." (Scheerder et al. 2011: 43)

The peace initiatives—examined in the sections that follow—have integrated a gender perspective into their peace education programs, peacemaker projects and activities. All over Europe integrating a
gender perspective to enhance sport participation is one of the most prominent targets of sport policy today since research shows that men participate more often in sports than women.

Although remarkable progress has been made in the last half century, Charlotte Van Tuycom & Jeroen Scheerder (2010), when comparing sport participation based on the European Commission Eurobarometer survey 64.3, found an average gender gap of eight percent in Europe among the 27 member states. A new report by the Women’s Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF 2012) reveals the rising gender gap in physical activity between school aged girls and boys today. Additionally, Scheerder, Vandmeerschen, Van Tuyckom, Hoekman, Breedveld and Vos (2011) identify the gender gap in sport club participation in Europe.

In a comparative analysis on sport participation in 23 countries, based on a fact sheets approach—strong national data and cross-national comparisons—Scheerder et al. (2011) reveal that although sport participation in the last decades has increased in all 23 countries under study and continues to be on the rise in most, it is still socially stratified. The study, a result of intensive cooperation between researchers from the research Unit of Unit of Social Kinesiology & Sport Management, KU Leuven (Belgium), Hedera (Ghent University, Belgium), and the Mulier Institute (the Netherlands) contributes to develop effective policy making and to set realistic targets, at the European as well as the (sub)national level.

According to the results, with regard to monthly sport participation, the gender gap is higher in the southern countries. Moreover, countries with lower levels of sport participation reported larger gender inequalities than countries with high levels of sport participation. For example, France, Flanders, Switzerland and the Netherlands, having high levels of sport participating, show the lowest gender gap, i.e. less than three percent. Denmark has an even higher level of weekly sport participation for women than for men! More analytically, gender inequality is higher in Italy and Spain. The same is true for Northern Ireland, showing the highest difference in the sport participation level between men and women (more than ten percent) whereas England, Poland and Finland occupy an intermediate position. With regard to weekly sport participation, women surpass men in Denmark. Namely, more women engage in weekly sport activities than their male counterparts. In Finland, Flanders, France, Germany, the Netherlands and Switzerland, women are comparatively equal, that is they are more likely to be weekly sport participants: the lowest gender gap (less than three percent). On the other hand, Spain and Northern Ireland have the largest gender gap (over ten percent). A gender gap is also observed in club sport participation, which is the highest in Switzerland and Northern Ireland (13 and 16 percent respectively) while in France and the Netherlands it is the most egalitarian: equally inclusive for both women and men (the gender gap is less than three percent). In Finland, Denmark and Flanders the gender gap is three to five percent, rather low in comparison to Northern Ireland’s ten percent.

Schools hold the key to closing the gender gap, reads a recent report by the Women’s Sport and Fitness Foundation (WSFF 2012), based on research carried out by the Institute of Youth Sport at Loughborough University. The WSFF report points out that schools hold the key to encouraging girls to get active and engage in physical exercises. The study included a survey of 1,500 school children to examine their attitudes to fitness and sport. According to the results over half of secondary school girls (51%) in the UK put off sport and physical activity because of their experiences of school sport and physical education. Only 12% of 14 year old girls reach the recommended levels of physical activity, despite the fact that three quarters (74%) of girls say they would like to be more active. Moreover, 45% of girls say “sport is too competitive” and over half believe that boys enjoy competitive sport more than girls do. Over half of all boys and girls agree that “there are more opportunities for boys to succeed in
sport than girls.” About half of the girls surveyed (48%) say that getting sweaty is “not feminine” and
almost a third of the boys surveyed think that girls who are sporty "are not very feminine". Additionally, 43% of girls agree that “there aren’t many sporting role models for girls.” The WSFF
(2012) report also highlights the rising and progressive gender gap between boys and girls during the
course of their lives, as they grow up. For example, in primary school (year four) and boys carry out similar levels of physical activity, but by the time they reach year six girls perform considerably less exercise than boys – a gap that widens as girls reach year nine of secondary school.

On the other hand, with regard to Olympic sport participation it seems we’ve come a long way since the
1948 Olympic Games in London where women represented only 9.5% of the Olympic athletes. In the
2012 Olympics, an estimated 45 percent of the 10,500 athletes in London were women, the largest
participation record yet! The London Olympics are the first where women competed in all 26 sports
and where every country had female athletes. Female boxers also made their debut in these Olympics.
In the Athens 2004 Olympics the percentage of female athletes was 40.7% and in Beijing 2008 women
represented 42.2% of the total athlete delegation.

However, even though the number of women participating in Olympic sports is almost equivalent to
that of men, women are still under-represented in executive and administrative decision-making
positions of the Olympic movement, in the administrative structures of NOCs, in all sport governing
bodies, national sport federations and international sport federations. (IOC 2011) Undeniably, gender
devaluation processes and the gender order of sport, that is to say the lack of female leaders, mentors
and role models still persists today. According to a report released by the IOC (2011:2): "In 2011, 19
women are active IOC members out of 110 (i.e. more than 17%). Four women are honorary members",
which is no sign of progress in the 21st century. It is a clear contradiction to the Olympic Charter,
according to which “The IOC strongly encourages, by appropriate means, the promotion of women in
sport at all levels and in all structures, particularly in the executive bodies of national and international
sports organizations with a view to the strict application of the principle of equality of men and
women.” (Olympic Charter, 18/07/1996, rule 2, paragraph 5) Consequently the IOC is addressing the
need to further develop training and educational programs for women in sport, namely integrating a
gender perspective in its strategies so as to enable women to take leadership positions in the
administrative structures of NOCs and national sport federations.

Gaining a thorough understanding of this wastage of talent—sport participation trends, rates and
differences—is essential in order to set realistic targets. Needless to say, we already have all the
necessary research and analyses so what we need to do now is act, namely integrate a gender
perspective or the gender dimension into the equation. Integrating a gender perspective means
incorporating the human dimension, promoting diversity so as to change mindsets and stereotypes.
Integrating a gender perspective means eliminating the wastage of talent— utilizing all human
resources— and in particular eliminating gender devaluation, specifically the subtle processes by
which women’s participation and contributions are minimized, undervalued or devalued in the sport
hierarchies or in the so-called male fields.

Integrating a gender perspective means identifying and eliminating systemic or unconscious bias and
discrimination from sport structures, sport governing bodies, looking at the data on recruitment,
promoting new role models and mentorship programs, developing and applying effective policies, etc.
It means shifts in organisational and institutional practices, attitudes or ways of thinking, in resource
allocations, goals and structures along with monitoring processes. In fact, the goal of mainstreaming
gender equality is to transform exclusionary or unequal social and institutional structures into equal and just structures for both women and men.

Gender integration refers to the process of assessing and reassessing the implications for both women and men of any legislation, policy, program and action plan at all levels, social, economic and political. The main goal of integrating a gender perspective is that of gender equity/social equality for both women and men. This requires gender-specific interventions, policies and practices that may target exclusively women or interventions that target men exclusively, or even men and women together. One need point out here that gender issues in sports do not only concern women, as men also have a gender and are subject to gender stereotyping, distinctive social expectations, social inequalities and exclusions. For example, one need reiterate that although many of the world’s finest athletes and players are ethnic minorities or migrants, they are still under-represented in non-playing positions, in SGBs, in positions of authority, etc.

In the near future gender-specific interventions and policies that target exclusively men will also be addressing the question of men's participation in traditionally female-dominated sports. In the last two decades men have been demanding equal participation in competitive rhythmic gymnastics, and specifically that FIG (Fédération Internationale de Gymnastique/International Gymnastics Federation) takes the necessary steps towards making men’s rhythmic gymnastics an official sport. Men's rhythmic gymnastics is not acknowledged as an official sport by FIG and obviously it is not a competing category for the 2012 Olympics. Men’s rhythmic gymnastics teams have been active in Japan, Australia, Canada, the United States, Russia, Korea, Malaysia, Mexico, Greece, Spain and Italy. A growing number of male rhythmic gymnasts have been participating in competitions – solo, individual, team and even mixed pair – on a non-competitive (unofficial) level, since FIG recognizes only women's rhythmic gymnastics. However, rhythmic gymnastics for men and boys is growing and how far it will go remains to be seen. The results of a case study conducted by Kamberidou, Tsopani, Dallas and Patsantaras (2009) show that female athletes (rhythmic gymnasts), coaches/trainers, judges and members of the technical committee of rhythmic gymnastics support the official recognition of men’s rhythmic gymnastics as an Olympic sport. Moreover, they are also in favor of the official recognition of mixed group and mixed pair competitions in rhythmic gymnastics.

Rhythmic gymnastics for men may sound atypical or peculiar to many, as did hockey, wrestling, football and bodybuilding for women in the past, but it has become a reality. In February 2009 the President of the Spanish Gymnastics Federation, Antonio Esteban Cerdán, announced the organization of the 1st National Championship of Men’s Rhythmic Gymnastics and that the Spanish government supports the federation’s initiative. This is a ground-breaking venture since it is the first federation that recognizes men’s rhythmic gymnastics. If FIG officially recognizes men’s rhythmic gymnastics, and subsequently mixed groups and mixed pairs, will this signal the beginning of a process that will eventually break down the structurally secured gender segregation system of competitive sports? Undeniably the sport is growing and how far it can go remains to be seen.

Men and boys are also participating in synchronized swimming, often associated with homosexuality, as in the case of rhythmic gymnastics, and with no actual grounds for this association. Yet the question of men's acceptance in traditionally female-dominated sports is practically unaddressed today, even though a growing number of men are organizing their own competitions: solo, duet, trio, team and combo. For example, the Third Men’s Cup of Synchronized Swimming (Men’s Cup 3) was held in Milan, Italy on April 11, 2009 with participants from 12 countries: Germany, France, Belgium, Spain, Sweden, the Netherlands, Japan, Italy, the Ukraine and the Czech Republic. This global biannual
Men’s Cup synchronized swimming championship—established in Prague in 2005—has been steadily growing over the past years. It is a global synchro competition for male competitors. The first Men’s Cup of Synchronized Swimming (Men’s Cup 1) was held in Prague in 2005, the second in Stockholm in 2007, the third (Men’s Cup 3) was in Milan in 2009 and the fourth (Men’s Cup 4 Synchro Tournament) was in Amsterdam. Moreover, although in both the Olympic Championship and the World Championship events of synchronized swimming men are not allowed to compete, male competitors are allowed to participate along with the women in the Canada and in the US Championships. Additionally, most of the synchronized swimming championships held in Europe allow male swimmers to compete as well, i.e. France has a male only synchronized swimming events.

Consequently, integrating a gender perspective, getting gender back on the agenda in the social space of sport does not only mean re-examining women’s sport participation and their under-representation in sport governing bodies or in the IOC and formulating best-practices that will break the glass ceiling and get more women to ride up the glass escalator. Getting gender back on the agenda in sport and respect for diversity also means re-examining changing attitudes and social stereotypes, i.e. the official participation of men and boys in the so-called female sports, despite gender stereotypes concerning masculinity.

Inevitably as traditional social categories diversify, sport identity also diversifies and is challenged. Integrating a gender perspective or respect for diversity is part of a more fundamental equation that not only entails ensuring a gender balance, but also increasing the talent pool and enabling everyone to realize their full potential. In fact, the constructivist gender perspective not only applies to women but to men as well. “The constructivist gender perspective has reinforced demands that women be admitted to ‘men’s sports’ and vice versa, although men are only excluded from a few sports such as synchronised swimming and rhythmical sport gymnastics”, argues Gertrude Pfister (2010: 235) Pfister examines the discourses on gender, starting off with deliberations on the ‘nature’ and significance of gender differences and gender relations, using a constructivist approach to gender. If gender is understood as a social construction, then gender differences, she argues, are not ‘natural’ but acquired and enacted, and also vary according to the particular social and gender order, stressing that currently observable in many respects is a tendency towards gender bending and gender play. This raises the question as to whether this dismantling and/or de-dramatization of gender differences in, as well as outside, sport is a sign pointing towards a new gender order. Or has gender enactment become more subtle? Have gender scripts shifted to other areas, for example to media sports with their focus on (hetero)sexuality? Which course will gender relations take in future, in as well as outside sport? In discussing the issues raised above, Pfister analyzes the present situation and considers future developments with regard to sport participation, media sports and leadership in sport.

One need reiterate here that gender is never detached or separate from diversities that define us as human beings, such as ethnicity, race, religion, disability, age, etc. Sport is a vital social space to counteract exclusionary practices, social prejudices and stereotypes. Integrating a gender perspective not only means increasing the number of discriminated social groups (ethnic minorities, migrants and women) into power positions, appointing diversity officers, promoting media campaigns against sexism, racism or raising the profile of role models and mentors in sport, but it also means reassessing changing identities and gender relations.
4. Racism and Xenophobia

Policy makers consider sport contributes to a wide range of ideals such as respect for diversity and multiculturalism, social integration, intercultural understanding and cross-cultural understanding. Remarkable results have been documented showing the use of sport—as a socio-cultural and interventional tool—in reducing racial and nationalist tensions and violence across divided communities. Sport can make a difference—as we will see in the sections that follow—and sport interventions are crucial, particularly in light of today’s xenophobic worldviews and their fatal consequences. For example, the Norway tragedy, the terrorist attacks on July 22, 2011, where 86 persons were killed by the Norwegian right-wing extremist Anders Behring Breivik in the framework of his mission for the violent annihilation of multiculturalism. Specifically, the bombing of government buildings in Oslo that resulted in 8 deaths, and the mass shooting at a camp of the Workers' Youth League (AUF) of the Labor Party on the island of Utoya where Breivik killed 69 people, mostly teenagers. Breivik’s far-right militant ideology is described in a compendium of texts (1,510 pages) titled 2083 – A European Declaration of Independence, which he distributed electronically a few hours before the attacks.

In his texts (published under his anglicized pseudonym Andrew Berwick, London, 2011), Breivik lays out his worldviews which include support for varying degrees of cultural conservatism, anti-feminism, Islamophobia, ultranationalism, white nationalism, right-wing populism, and so forth. He regards Islam and "cultural Marxism" as the enemy, and argues for the violent annihilation of Multiculturalism and Eurabia—the annihilation of the Muslim population in Europe—stressing that this merging of Europe and the Middle East must be stopped in order to preserve a Christian Europe. "It is our duty as Europeans" he further argues, "to prevent the annihilation of our identities, our cultures and traditions and our nation states!" He believes that "Multiculturalism is wrong because not all cultures are equal [...] Multiculturalism equals the unilateral destruction of Western culture [...] We will not allow our corrupt and traitorous EU elites to sell the European people into Muslim slavery. We will not allow them to annihilate Western civilisation, our identities and culture by allowing them to continue to institutionalise and implement multiculturalism. We demand their full surrender." (2083-Declaration of Independence, 2011: 332, 957-958) The term annihilation/annihilate appears in his manifesto at least 55 times.

Additionally disturbing are the results of EU studies concerning perceptions of migrants and migration in Europe. A survey, carried out as part of the EU funded Femage project, “Needs for female immigrants and their integration in ageing societies” (European Commission 2009, Cordis 2007), examined the views of 21,000 native citizens in eight European countries: Germany, Austria, Finland, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary and Slovenia. In all countries studied, the majority of the respondents were found to have more negative views and attitudes towards the immigrants in their countries than positive ones. Additionally, the survey found a correlation between traditional conservative views on gender roles and migration: “The more individuals advocated the traditional position of women in the family, the more they express negative attitudes towards immigrant in all countries studied”, reads the report. (Cordis, 2007:13)

A survey conducted by the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia (EUMC) and the RAcism and XEphobia Network (RAXEN) reveals that one in two Europeans is xenophobic and one in three is racist. (EUMC 2005) Another study regarding manifestations of anti-Semitism in the European Union carried out on behalf of the EUMC reveals that anti-Semitic conspiracy theories are rapidly spreading over the Internet (Bergmann and Wetzel 2003). Anti-Semitism is also on the rise in...
Canada where the League for Human Rights of B’nai Brith Canada reported 965 cases of harassment, 317 incidents of vandalism and 24 cases of violence. Incidents were reported across the country in sporting events, synagogues, schools, playgrounds, on campus, etc. (Kaplan 2011) The League for Human Rights also reported that it received 564 reports of web-based hate activity with a Canadian connection, a significant increase compared to the 435 reports in 2009 and the 405 reports in 2008. “New technologies are giving a modern twist to age-old anti-Jewish messaging,” argues Frank Dimant, CEO of B’nai Brith Canada while stressing that Cyber-bullying is one of the newest threats to society.” (Kaplan 2011)

Inevitably the sport expression has not remained unaffected. Manifestations of anti-Semitism, as well as intolerance against Muslims, Roma and Sinti have been reported in a number of high profile football events, including verbal and physical attacks, hate crimes and even death of spectators.

**Racial Intolerance and Harassment In Sport**

“The internet has proved to be an effective medium for the dissemination of racist, hate-filled ideas and dialogue,” reads a EUMC report which examined football supporter sites carrying violence and racism. (Baletri 2002: 4) With regard to the islamophobia hysteria, Egyptian striker Mido-Ahmed Hossam Hussein Abdelamid was subjected to chants of “He’s got a bomb, he’s got a bomb” (Sekar 2009) by Newcastle supporters when Middlesboro entertained Newcastle on August 27, 2007.

Sport is not immune to manifestations of racism and has repeatedly served to intensify or exaggerate certain ethno-national enmities and hostilities. Ultranationalist and neo-Nazi groups have been systematically using mass sporting events to spread racial prejudice and xenophobia. According to a report by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE 2012), hate crimes and racial violence have been documented even at youth, amateur and professional sporting events and the upcoming mass sporting events, such as the Olympic Games later this year, will not be immune to such incidents of racial intolerance.

In recent years we have seen many manifestations of racial abuse at football matches that have been converted into stages for regional and identity conflicts. For example, on February 11, 2012, the Uruguay striker Luis Suarez refused to shake the hand of Manchester United defender Patrice Evra, resulting in a protest letter signed by the National Black Police Association (NBPA), the Liverpool Black Leadership Forum, North West United Against Fascism, the Society of Black Lawyers, Merseyside TUC, among others. The letter reads: "LFC actions, in vehemently rejecting the findings of the Football Association (FA) inquiry, their public displays of support for a player found guilty of racist abuse and his subsequent refusal to shake the hand of Evra at a recent game is completely unacceptable […] These actions we believe could be considered as inciting racial intolerance." (Euro Sport com 2012) Although both Liverpool and Suarez apologised for the handshake incident and Suarez issued a public apology five days after the FA released their written judgement on the case, he never apologised directly to Evra in a public forum. Prior to this incident Suarez was banned from eight games for racially abusing Evra during the two sides' Premier League clash at Anfield in October 2011.

The English club Chelsea lodged a complaint to the Malaysian Football Association about the anti-Semitic racist abuse of Israel captain Yossi Benayoun during the match in Kuala Lumpur on July 21, 2011 (CNN 2011). In a play-off series in April 2011, a junior hockey league team in Ontario reported that its opponents directed anti-Semitic slurs at two Jewish players during the game. With regard to the islamophobia hysteria, as previously cited, on August 27, 2007, when Middlesboro entertained
Newcastle, Egyptian striker Mido-Ahmed Hosam Hussein Abdelamid was subjected to chants of “He’s got a bomb, he’s got a bomb”, by Newcastle supporters associating him with the shoe-bomber Richard Reid. Reid had attempted to destroy a commercial aircraft in flight (American Airlines Flight 63 from Paris to Miami) by detonating explosives hidden in his shoes. Reid—aliases Abdel Rahim and Abdul Rof—was a self-admitted member of al-Qaeda reported to have received training at camps in Afghanistan run by al-Qaeda, the organization headed by Osama bin Laden. In Greece, an Albanian fan was stabbed to death by a Greek at a qualifying match for the 2006 World Cup and the list goes on! Even at friendly matches many athletes have been racially abused, such as at the friendly match between Spain and England, at which black England players Shaun Wright-Phillips and Ashley Cole endured monkey chants from Spain supporters.

Undeniably, given the above, we need to focus on alternative paths, namely on the potential of sport to combat racial violence. Accordingly, the next section examines the ongoing and expanding peace education programs, peacemaking projects and initiatives that highlight how sport agency and sporting events can serve as a mechanism or means to build mutual understanding and reconciliation, unifying individuals from diverse backgrounds.

5. Bridges to Understanding: Sport Activists

5.1. Sport for Peace Projects bringing Arabs and Jews together

In its tenth year Football 4 Peace (F4P 2011) brought together over 6000 young people and 700 coaches from Jewish and Arab communities helping to build greater cooperation and understanding on both sides, creating life-long positive relationships. Football 4 Peace (F4P), a values based sports project for Jewish and Arab children in Israel, has been bridging communities and promoting equality, inclusion, respect, trust and social responsibility.

F4P is an activity-based community relations and reconciliation initiative where coaches, community leaders and volunteers work alongside each other bringing differing communities together through football and diverse aspects of outdoor education. The F4P project in Israel—which began in 2001 with 100 Jewish and Arab children from two communities—has reached 24 mixed communities with over 1000 children. Namely, in 2011 over 1,000 youth aged 10-14 participated in the summer football camps in Israel, run by specially trained local coaches and 60 coaches from the University of Brighton’s Chelsea School of Sport in the UK and the Sports University in Cologne, Germany.

By watching this multicultural sport program in action, speaking with the organizers, coaches, athletes, youth and volunteers as well as participating in their fun activities, I got a glimpse of how sport builds friendships and reconciliation, that is how sport can contribute to cultivating a culture of peace. Boys and girls from mixed communities (Jewish and Arab) told me how they bonded and became friends at the summer football training camps in Israel and continued to see each other after the end of the program.

According to the Director of the F4P project, John Sugden (2012), this program is helping to build bridges between divided communities, neighbouring Arab and Jewish villages and towns in Israel through a dedicated values-based teaching curriculum and coaching style that develops and encourages inclusivity, equality, respect, trust and responsibility. In a series of Cross Community Sports Partnerships (CCSPs) children from both communities (Arab and Jewish) are coached in mixed groups, growing into teams and taking part in football and multi-activity festivals. Additionally, a girls only
project—staffed entirely by female coaches, in respect for cultural traditions and customs—is part of their trust-building, recreational and cultural activities program. Sugden (2012) points out that before helping with the delivery of the program during the summer months in Israel, volunteer coaches from Israel and other countries are schooled in the F4P methodology at training camps, one in Europe and one in Israel. Participating in F4P are community partners—the dozens of Arab and Jewish towns and villages that willingly provide their children as well as volunteer coaches and leaders to work alongside their European counterparts—as well as a growing list of key institutional partners including the German Sport University, the London Marathon, the University of Brighton, the British Council, the Israeli Sports Authority and the (English) Football Association (FA).

5.2. Ultimate Peace (UP) in the Middle East

"Ultimate Peace brings Palestinians, Israeli Jews, and Arab Israelis together to play the sport of Ultimate Frisbee, and much more." (UP 2011)

In 2011 at the Ultimate Peace Camp in Israel—which uses the team sport of Frisbee to cultivate bridges to understanding—Ultimate Peace (UP) hosted 175 youth and 35 community leaders from 14 Arab and Jewish communities in partnership with the Israeli Ministry of Culture and Sport. Arab and Jewish youth, coaches and volunteers practiced, dined and competed side-by-side on a daily basis. As a result boundaries blurred, friendships formed and a community of hope came to life.

Ultimate Peace (UP) is a young organization, which began its work in the Middle East in April 2009, expanded to Colombia in November 2011 and is currently seeking partners to help support its work and social mission. During my visit to the UP activity site in Israel, which uses the sport of Frisbee to build friendships and understanding among youth, I had the opportunity to speak with Palestinian and Israeli children and teenagers. They told me they felt grateful to have been given the opportunity to participate in this program otherwise they would never have met each other and become friends, they would never have exchanged visits to each others homes, towns and cities, etc. Undeniably UP is laying the foundations for sustainable peace: youth from different social and cultural backgrounds play together, share experiences and develop long-term relationships. Regardless of politics and politicians, UP is building bridges of friendship and understanding, focusing on promoting peace and transcending difference.

Isn’t it amazing how Frisbee (UP) or football (F4P) can cultivate cultural understanding? Isn’t it wonderful that community divides seem to disappear when young people learn to play a sport in non-threatening settings? If you put politics aside and just look at the many grassroots activities taking place, you can find a multiplicity of initiatives in which divided communities cooperate peacefully. No political or private agendas, just competing in integrated teams and just having fun.

5.3. Athletes as Mentors in Violence Prevention: Bullying Prevention Institute

The Centre for Study of Sport in Society (SIS), a leading social justice organization, located in the heart of Boston has also been cultivating bridges to understanding, in other words promoting respect for ethnic/racial and gender diversity. Through research, peace education and advocacy, SIS has been using sport to create social change both nationally and internationally. Through consulting and capacity building, SIS has been supporting and educating leaders and organizations within sport to implement innovative and impactful solutions for social change. For example, their mixed-gender leadership program focuses on gender equality due to the lack of female role models, leaders, coaches, etc. (Sport
The SIS programs – also staffed by former students and professional athletes – have been cited as the National Crime Prevention Council’s 50 Best Strategies to Prevent Violent Domestic Crimes.

After decades of work and research contributing to peace education, SIS and the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association teamed up on May 2, 2012 to create an anti-bullying leadership initiative for high-school student-athletes, coaches, teachers and community members and invited schools to apply for participation in an innovative Bullying Prevention Institute. (Sport in Society 2012)

Key stakeholders, including student athletes, parents, adult advocates and other community members are being trained to create a bully-free culture in their communities and schools. Adult coordinators and student athletes participated in a 2-day training (August 9-10, 2012) to develop competencies and skills to promote respect in their schools and communities. Seminars are also being held for school coaches, teachers, administrators and athletic directors who would like to become certified facilitators of the Project Teamwork Curriculum while serving as advisors to their student athletes. Upon completion of the training, student athletes, as role models, apply their learned skills through community service activities with middle school students.

In 2010, SIS launched its Olympism and Social Justice Institute, marking its official recognition as one of the IOC’s Olympic Studies Centres (OSCs), one of ten OSCs worldwide, and the only one in the United States. With the goal of drawing attention to the values of Olympism – human rights and social justice – SIS has been active in promoting athletes as mentors of peace and hosting a series of activities, workshops and seminars, partnering with other organizations. For example, on July 28, 2010, in partnership with the Urban Soccer Collaborative, SIS hosted a screening of Fair Play at its annual Youth Leadership Institute. High school students from communities throughout the United States participated to learn about the pivotal role that sport played in ending apartheid and discuss what opportunities exist today to use sport to create a more just world.

Another successful SIS program is “Mentors In Violence Prevention (MVP)”, a mixed gender and racially diverse leadership program composed of former professional and college athletes: men and women working together in preventing gender violence, solving problems that historically have been considered women’s issues, such as sexual harassment and rape. MVP will be holding a global conference on May 31-June 1, 2012 which will be devoted to exploring the roots of the bystander approach to gender violence prevention and setting an agenda for the next steps in the field.

To date the MVP program has successfully facilitated training sessions with 15,000 high school students and administrators at over a hundred Massachusetts schools. It has developed original teaching materials, including MVP playbooks for high school and college students, professional athletes and adult professionals, along with accompanying trainers’ guides and supplemental exercises that utilize media excerpts from popular culture. Sessions have been conducted with thousands of student athletes and administrators at over 100 colleges nationwide, and the list goes on. Other successful SIS peace programs and activities include 1) Workshops and Awareness Raising Sessions, 2) Train the Trainer Programs, 3) Project TEAMWORK (PTW) Diversity and Violence Prevention Training, 2) Human Rights Squads, and 3) the Squad of Student Athlete Volunteers: Athletes in Service program.
5.4. Athletes United for Peace

Athletes United for Peace (www.athletesunitedforpeace.org) have also been using the positive qualities of sports to bridge cultural differences and transcend international barriers. The Athletes United for Peace (AUP) teamwork philosophy is fostered through collaborative partnerships with sports organizations, educational institutions, municipalities, law enforcement and other nonprofits.

AUP was founded by a group of concerned Olympic athletes in the 1980s after the boycott of the Moscow Olympics by the United States. It is a nonprofit organization and member of the United Nations team of worldwide NGOs committed to promoting peace, education and friendship through sport and media projects. The AUP programs and ongoing projects include: the Academics & Sports Project, the Community Media Outreach Project and the Digital Technology Academy.

Additionally, AUP activities include Peace Runs, such as the Heartland Chapter of Athletes United for Peace that ran for peace on Feb. 13, 2011, August 14, 2011, November 20, 2011 and Dec. 31, 2011, on New Year’s Eve, Feb. 12, 2012, etc. And there are many more social movements out there, such as Peace Walks Barefoot (http://www.irt.org.uk/barefoot-past/) and Moveable Peace-Peace Walk (http://www.moveablepeace.org/2011/peace-walk-photos-july-30/).

6. Sport’s Role Acknowledged by Non-Sport Affiliated Contemporary Agencies: Non-Governmental Organizations and Social Movements

6.1. Peace First – Peace Games

Peace First although not a sport affiliated organization, includes sports in its peace education programs and peacemaker projects throughout the world. Peace First (2011a, 2011b, 2009), formerly Peace Games, was initially established by college students in the United States to promote a culture of peacemaking. Student-run until 1996 when it became an independent non-profit organization, Peace First has since then received requests for collaboration from all over the world. Peace First staff, volunteers, athletes and other activists have been working directly with entire communities, empowering children, students and parents in creating their own safe classrooms. Documented results in the Peace First partner schools have shown a 60 percent reduction in violence – as well as invisible forms of violence, such as racism, sexism, homophobia and bullying – and a 70 to 80 percent increase in instances of children breaking up fights as well as in helping one another.

Peace First’s holistic school change model in Boston, Chicago, New York, Los Angeles and Fairbanks Alaska, which has become international, has taught over 40,000 students critical conflict resolution skills. It has recruited over 4,000 volunteers who have provided 400,000 hours of volunteer teaching service. Peace First (2011a) has trained 2,500 teachers in conflict resolution and classroom management skills. It has worked with 9,000 family members and executed 2,500 peacemaker projects: volunteerism, social service and civic engagement.

The long-term positive effects of this program are clearly shown in the data for the 2008-2009 school year. During this period Peace First (2011b) worked with 14 schools in Boston, Los Angeles and New York: 3,575 students received the weekly Peace First curriculum and executed 135 original community service learning projects with the help of 408 volunteers who provided approximately 15,940 hours of direct service:

- 72 percent less students brought weapons to school
• 87 percent of students reported they rarely tease others
• 77 percent reported that they are rarely teased, pushed or threatened by others
• 81 percent reported that they can walk away from a fight without feeling like a coward

At the same time, students reported that Peace First helped them improve their peacemaking behavior as well as their commitment to school. Specifically, Peace First helped them:

• Understand how other people feel (95%)
• Cooperate and share with others (97%)
• Include other students in games or groups (94%)
• Improve their school work (95%)
• Want to come to school more (84%)

The Peace First age-appropriate curriculum – applied in elementary schools and high schools – focuses on Team and Trust: collaborative games, fun sport activities, the power of play, teamwork, democratic discipline, multicultural awareness, non-violent conflict resolution, combating hate-filled dialogue and respect for cultural diversity.

Trained teaching teams help school children and students plan and implement age-appropriate community service-learning activities called peacemaker projects and full-time Peace First coordinators spend years working with students, teachers and families. In addressing important community issues, they promote reconciliation through a range of activities that invite reflection and conversations in the classrooms about complex subjects such as human rights, cultural violence, homelessness and ecological policies. These intergenerational activities connect three or four generations. They link community volunteers with students, schools, families, high school alumnae, young adults, etc. Before introducing students to peacemaker projects, teachers and volunteers learn the theory and the practice of service-learning. They then research the school community, connect with local organizations, meet with school staff and gather materials, thereby laying the foundation for successful projects.

The Peace First curricula include language arts, biography, science, math, art, music and decision-making. These academic skills are integrated into real-life activities that benefit the students, the volunteers and the school community. The connection between peacemaking and civic engagement is different for kindergarten children, for 1st – 6th-grade students and for high school students. First-grade children, for example, may use collaborative games, a gardening or an art project for cross-cultural understanding— to learn about one another, breaking cultural and language barriers. Third-grade students learn about social stereotypes related to gender, age, race, and class through shared projects with peers and elders. Fifth-grade students learn about the ecological webs that connect humans with other species. For adolescents and young adults, there are many traditional measures of civic engagement such as voting, participation in service clubs and in community-related careers.

These peacemaker projects support diverse activities, such as sports, environmental awareness, peace plant projects, puppet shows depicting cultures, writing, publicity, acting, fund-raising, music activities and art activities. For example, a school with a large Haitian population learned about deforestation in that country, including what they can do to prevent rain forest destruction across the globe. A kindergarten class prepared hand-drawn cards and placemats and delivered them to a nursing home in their neighbourhood— an appropriate for their age group service-learning and intergenerational activity— connected with the elderly and decided to call on them regularly. Most peacemaker projects
are completed in 10 weeks in order to avoid boredom while allowing the timeframe for student choice, depth of experience and reflection.

Peace First also offers training to institutions of higher learning, colleges and universities, non-profit agencies, clubs and corporations, providing a spectrum of services from their one-time trainings to their full model of a three-year partnership. Additionally, student volunteers are offered course credits to participate in the program. Studies confirm that having university students work for the program offers pupils and high school students excellent role models and mentors.

6.2. Mercy Corps: Moving Forward through Sport

Many NGOs acknowledge that sport plays a crucial role in enhancing social cohesion and encouraging social interaction. Mercy Corps, although not a sport affiliated organization, recognizes that sport can transcend difference. Mercy Corps—a non-profit organization with innovative programs that have reached 16.7 million people in more than 40 countries—is using sport to build constructive communication and solidarity. (http://www.mercycorps.org/) For example, their program Moving Forward is a sport and play-based social support program designed for youth affected by the January 12 earthquake in Haiti. In July 2011, in the framework of their Mercy Corps Moving Forward sports program, local youth workers were being trained in Port-au-Prince, the largest city of the capital of Haiti. Mercy Corps has also trained 55 mentors from 23 local organizations to hold their own sport programs. Through these 23 institutions, Mercy Corps is directly reaching about 1,650 children and youth. These 55 local mentors were trained in a unique curriculum of innovative games and fun sports activities that support the recovery and development of youth in four key areas: teambuilding, constructive communication, self-esteem and resiliency. This program has also been brought to 23 orphanages as well as to local and national organizations, camps and schools in the Port-au-Prince area.

6.3. Teachers Without Borders (TWB) and many more!

Since sport has a proven track record in promoting reconciliation, as previously documented in this chapter, it could and should be included in the ongoing peace education programs and initiatives of non-sport affiliated NGOs. Namely, NGOs that have the expertise and confirmed background among those contributing to the growing movement towards a global culture of peace, such as Teachers Without Borders, (TWB), Volunteer Action for Peace (VAP) and the International Institute on Peace Education.

The Teachers Without Borders (TWB 2012a) peace education program has been adopted by educators in several countries. It has been successfully implemented in San Diego, Uganda, Mexico, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kenya, South Africa etc. An new Introduction to Peace Education course was offered in June 19-July 17, 2012 to support educators in their professional development as peace educators through a supportive virtual learning environment. Course participants develop an understanding of key theories and principles of the peace education field in a 3-part online course which includes of weekly discussion forums and assignments, nonviolent communication and experiential learning. Educators learn about peace education theory and practice, how to apply it to their personal and professional lives and how to build an online community and support system of peace educators from around the world.

Another TWB program, Introduction to Bullying Prevention for Educators, is offered to help teachers, education and community leaders better understand the issue of bullying and develop strategies to address and stop bullying as well as cyberbullying in their schools. (TWB 2012b).
2010-2011 TWB provided a worldwide community of teachers with a framework for peace education: offline and online courses and workshops, mentors for support, feedback, volunteer and internship opportunities, community radio programs, etc.

TWB is currently looking for strategic partnerships and requesting more ideas on how to expand their peace education program. It is presently developing additional modules to supplement their main curriculum, such as anti-drug education, art, music, critical media and literacy. Needless to say sport, as a tool for cultivating a culture of peace, can and must be included in this peace education program, as it should be included in the peace programs and activities of Volunteer Action for Peace (VAP), which currently operates through a network of partner organizations in over 80 countries. Sport should also be included in the activities of the International Institute on Peace Education (IIPE) whose social purposes are also directed toward the development of the field of peace education in theory, practice and advocacy. The time to act is now, since the IIPE is also seeking strategic international and institutional alliances with universities and agencies involved in peace education today.

Sport could also be incorporated into the peace education program of Women’s Initiative for Peace (Winpeace). In the last ten years Winpeace (http://www.winpeace.org) has been implementing its peace education program for high-school students and teachers around the globe, building trust and communication beyond stereotypical prejudices and hostilities. For example, in July 3-9 2011 Winpeace organized a Conflict Resolution Camp for Greek, Turkish and Cypriot Youth, at the Robert College Campus in Constantinople. This program included an age appropriate comprehensive peace education curriculum and workshops where each day started off with Dance and Movement exercises. On August 31, 2009 Winpeace organized a peace education and conflict resolution workshop for youth on the Greek island of Spetses with participants from Greece, Turkey and Cyprus. In May 2006 Winpeace held the first international peace education seminars for teachers in Athens at which a group of peacemakers from Bosnia, Cyprus, Turkey and Greece combined their conflict resolution skills to train 50 teachers to become peacemakers.

And there are so many more social movements, social networks and NGOs out there! So the question is how can we pull together all these peace education programs and initiatives and establish the required synergies? How can we include or integrate sport into all these activities and initiatives? How can we draw on the experiences and insights of diverse peace educators and advocates from all world regions, learn from each other's experiences and work together towards resolving conflicts?

The answer may be in setting up a Common Platform for Peace, an All Encompassing Hub of Information for Peace for thinking globally and acting locally. In order to revive Olympism (Olympic values), teach youth pro-social attitudes and values through sport –instead of obsessive competitiveness that leads to violence and racial conflicts– the Olympic movement requires diverse stakeholders working together. It needs to work with the leaders in the field of peace education today and not only those that are sport-affiliated since documented experiences in many countries shows the impact of peace education on the societies where it has been applied.

7. Concluding Remarks – Recommendations: An All-Encompassing Hub of Information for Peace

There are no patent or quick solutions available since it is not possible to formulate only one strategy which would be effective everywhere in the world due to socio-cultural diversities. Consequently, a common hub or platform could facilitate future synergies with those who are at the forefront of
implementing change, networking with progressive thinking peers, experts in the field and especially
the new media. Such a platform for peace could pull together all the ongoing and diverse peace
education initiatives, and in particular those that offer both leadership programs as well as a foundation
for new ones. This could ensure that peace education is mainstreamed throughout the system and
disseminated in the mainstream media. For example, to date, raising awareness campaigns, peace
education programs and social inclusion practices through athlete activism or sport agency are not
disseminated widely in the mainstream media. Increasing visibility, the dissemination of sport activism
is vital, not only in view of the systematic misuse of Olympic values today but primarily in light of the
impact of globalization on racism and xenophobia.

Such a social movement–driven forum, specifically a platform for peace, would facilitate in going from
global discussion to global action and in particular going beyond political or self-serving agendas or as
Alejandro Bendaña (2006:16) stresses in his discourse on social movements and NGOs, "putting more
energy into the building of networks of autonomous movements together with the ethical recognition of
multiple sources of knowledge." Conceivably, such a dynamic plurality can become instrumental in
the development and nurturing of new alternatives, in attracting social forces and individuals, multiple
social actors and possibilities for joint actions and especially in achieving processes characterized by
transparency. In other words, bringing together NGOs and social movements in a way that each
contributes according to their particular strengths without losing their autonomy. No doubt a complex
task, but an indispensable first step in promoting peace and development issues.

7.1. Researchers and Activists without Borders: Multicultural and Gender Diverse Task Forces

Researchers and Activists Without Borders—brought together through this hub—to deal with and
promote the following issues:

- The institutionalization of peace education as an integral part of the curricula in public schools,
  beginning in pre-school or kindergarten, getting them while they’re young before they formulate
  social prejudices and stereotypes.
- Mobilizing the support of political and social leaders to foster peace education and research in
  the field.
- Formal requirements for all teachers in the EU to take courses/seminars on multiculturalism:
  learning about different cultures, religions, traditions, etc.
- Expanding the use of thematic experts to improve research quality and skills, tackle research
  gaps, achieve innovative and socially sensitive methodologies, etc.
- Setting up multicultural and gender diverse task forces.

7.2. Sport Collaboration-Alliance

A sport alliance with non-sport affiliated institutions, NGOs and social movements, experts in the field
of peace education, to focus on the following objectives:

- Mainstreaming sport in the ongoing peace education programs and initiatives and
  ensuring institutional support,
- Evaluating sport interventions and their results,
- Establishing deliberative polls to examine intercultural and cross-cultural
  perspectives,
- Expanding and empowering an Athletes United for Peace social movement,
7.3. Internet and Digital Experts

The internet has proved to be an extremely effective medium for the dissemination of racism and xenophobia, necessitating the establishment of a task force of ‘digital’ experts, an international pool that will focus on:

- Mobilizing the new media and digital culture, the internet and the social media, for addressing socio-cultural issues in the spirit of promoting reconciliation and respect for multiculturalism.
- Using and mobilizing social media platforms and in particular transmedia—new modes of presentation and social integration—the online components that exploit the social conventions and social locations of the internet. The social media has a tremendous impact in mobilizing support. For example, the social media played a major role during the “Arab Spring”. In Egypt activists used Facebook and Twitter to organize and coordinate protests and YouTube to tell the world, leading to President Hosni Mubarak’s resignation on February 11, 2011, thus ending his 30 year old regime. Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest are only three examples of today’s social media, a type of online media (new media) that expedites, promotes and encourages mobilization and social networking as opposed to traditional media, which delivers content but doesn’t allow viewers/readers/listeners/audiences from diverse social groups to participate in the creation, development or dissemination of the content. In other words, social media is interactive and accessible to everyone throughout the globe. It includes mobile based and web-based technologies which allow conversation and turn it into interactive dialogue between social groups, organizations, communities and individuals.
- Developing projects for utilizing the internet to combat racial abuse: monitoring and blocking access to homepages with racist propaganda, filtering software and analyzing common patterns, supporting anti-racist hotlines and codes of conduct, exerting pressure on large scale internet providers to remove racist content,
- Investigating how racist content is conveyed via websites from football fans and how effective they are in mobilizing support.
- Media monitoring and developing strategies to address and stop cyberbullying (with regard to racial harassment and hate-filled ideas and dialogue), etc.

7.4. Social/Gender Equality Experts

A multicultural and gender sensitive task force, made up of diversity experts, not exclusively from the field of sport but from different disciplines, to deal with the following:

- Increasing the number of discriminated social groups into power positions (SGBs, IOC, NOCs): breaking the glass ceiling for ethnic minorities, migrants and women.
- Developing innovative approaches, campaigns and tools against exclusionary practices in sport, i.e. appointing diversity officers, promoting the self-organization and empowerment of migrant and minority groups,
- Examining the role of public sport bodies, associations and clubs in promoting social inclusion, integrating a gender perspective, etc.
• Promoting media campaigns against violence, including invisible forms of violence, such as racism, sexism, homophobia and bullying.

• Monitoring the implementation of preventive measures to confront racial violence at large-scale sporting events,

• Initiating partnerships for closing the gender gap in Europe: re-evaluating the gender agenda in sport, and in particular formulating policies and best-practices that will break the glass ceiling and get women to ride up the "glass escalator", (Kamberidou 2011b) in the gender-blind sport hierarchies.

• Identifying new approaches to actually improve the underrepresentation of girls/women in sport: to gain a more coherent view or insight into the various, closely connected aspects of career choices or professional careers of women in this direction, e.i. how pathways are affected and what could be done to improve the underrepresentation of girls/women in this area from childhood.

• Raising the profile of female role models and mentors with Annual Shadowing Sport Events – similar to the European Commission’s annual Shadowing activities (http://www.ec.europa.eu/itgirls).

• Inviting the Media (and social media) to focus on these events.

• Redefining professional success by rewarding volunteerism and social service. Studies confirm that women usually dominate as volunteers, members in non-profit organizations, NGOs, community service work and civic activism. At this point one need point out that athlete activism must be acknowledged and rewarded in order to inspire and reproduce participation. In this spirit, the Wingate Award, Sport for the Advancement of the Community (http://www.jewishsports.net/wingate_institute.htm) will be given to international organizations and agencies that have been using sport as a platform for bridging social, cultural and political gaps. On December 15, 2012, at the Wingate Institute for Physical Education and Sport in Netanya, Israel, awards will be granted for projects meeting the following criteria: (1) Novelty and creativity, 2) Impact and significant achievements in the community, 2) Stability of project, 3) Sustainability and potential in the long term. Another example are the Sport and Peace Awards. L’Organisation pour la Paix par le Sport, known as Peace and Sport (www.peace-sport.org), on 27 October 2011 held the Peace and Sport Awards Ceremony in Monaco to reward best practices, sport initiatives, athlete activism and individuals who use sport as a tool for peace and contribute to social stability.

7.5. Mentorship Experts

In order eliminate social stereotyping and reproduce engagement, this multicultural and gender-diverse task force, an international pool of experts from different disciplines, will focus on the following objectives:

• Promoting mentorship programs and new role models along the lines of the initiatives implemented by Peace and Sport, such as their Champions for Peace and their Ambassadors for Peace and Sport. (http://www.peace-sport.org/List-of-Champions/champions-for-peace.html)

• Establishing a gender sensitive training program for Mentors – similar or comparable to the one proposed at the European Commission annual Shadowing event. This includes re-training/re-educating mentors so that they acquire the necessary skills and know-how to deal with overt racial and gender discrimination, intolerance and prejudices as well as subtle institutional and
cultural forms of discrimination observed within sport federations, universities, colleges, and so forth.

- Formulating specific guidelines/handbooks/toolkits on what Mentor should do for mentees.
- Formal mentoring programs in the academia with compulsory participation of both male and female faculty members of all ranks, including professors and not just the lower academic ranks.
- At this point one need point out that social contributions and volunteerism are rarely recognized in promotions or tenure processes.
- Promoting audience research: setting up faculty-mentored cross-generational doctoral programs, workshops and seminars on audiences.

Glossary

Abbreviations

AUP: Athletes United for Peace
F4P: Football 4 Peace
IOC: The International Olympic Committee
MDGs: The United Nation’s Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
NOCs: The National Olympic Committees
OHCHR: The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
SGBs: Sport governing bodies
SIS: Sport in Society, or the Centre for Study of Sport in Society
TWB: Teachers Without Borders
UEFA: The Union of European Football Associations
UP: Ultimate Peace
WADA: The World Anti-Doping Agency
WINPEACE: Women’s Initiative for Peace
WSFF: Women’s Sport and Fitness Foundation

Terms

Agency: Most available definitions are unspecific, abstract or too broad and all-encompassing. Agency refers to instrumentality, dynamic participation and engagement, the means and mode of acting and the diversity of possibilities for social action and change i.e. potential of female agency. In the social sciences, structure versus agency— also understood as an issue of socialisation against autonomy— is a debate where structure refers to the repeated patterned arrangements which limit or influence available choices and opportunities and agency refers to the capacity of individuals to act independently, to act on free will, to act dynamically or to make their own free choices (see theories of social agency).

Anti-Semitism: Prejudice, discrimination or hostility against Jews. The term anti-Semitism was coined in Germany in the late 19th century as a more scientific-sounding term for Judenhass ("Jew-hatred"). A 2005 U.S. governmental report defines anti-Semitism as "hatred toward Jews—individually and as a group—that can be attributed to the Jewish religion and/or ethnicity." In recent years anti-semitic incidents have markedly risen, including web-based hate activities. Cases of harassment, vandalism and violence have been reported at sporting events, schools, campuses, synagogues, etc.
Degeneration of Olympic values: Refers to the systematic misuse of Olympic values, including disrespect for Olympic symbols (olympic torch, flame, etc). Pierre de Coubertin’s 19th century Olympism (Olympic values) and Olympic education (pédagogie olympique/ peace education) so as to acquire these values, is a process that operates on the basis of prototypes (role models). However, the Olympic movement and today’s Olympic athletes (role models) seem to be in dire need of Olympic education (peace education) since they themselves do not reflect or represent Olympic values: i.e. doping, obsessive competitiveness that leads to violence, racial intolerance at sporting events, the Olympic torch-bearer who stopped to light a Scottish man’s cigarette from the Olympic flame (21/6/2012), and the IOC to date (29/7/2012) has not yet issue an official statement with regard to this incident. Other examples of the degeneration or rather devaluation of Olympic values are commercialization, the gender leadership gap in sport governing bodies (SGBs), sexual harassment in sport, the social capital drain due to the migration of athletic talent or the so called by researchers sport migration phenomena, the migration of athletic talent, the global migrant athlete and sport labour, as well as the under-representation of migrants in mainstream sport institutions. One need point out here that although many of the world’s finest athletes and players are migrants or ethnic minorities, they are still under-represented in non-playing positions in SGBs.

Gender devaluation: The subtle processes by which women’s participation and contributions are minimized, undervalued or devalued in the sport hierarchies or in the so-called male fields. It refers to the wastage of talent, to systemic bias and discrimination as well as unconscious, subtle and "invisible" forms of discrimination and exclusion. For example, even though the number of women participating in Olympic sports today is almost equivalent to that of men, women are still under-represented in executive and administrative decision-making positions of the Olympic movement, in the administrative structures of NOCs, in all SGBs, national sport federations and international sport federations. Gender devaluation processes and the gender order of sport, that is to say the lack of female leaders, mentors and role models still persists today.

Integrating a gender perspective: The process of assessing and reassessing the implications for both women and men of any legislation, policy, program and action plan at all levels, i.e. social, economic and political. It refers to the process of promoting gender equity/social equality for both women and men and reassessing changing identities and gender relations (i.e. men’s rhythmic gymnastics and men’s synchronized swimming). This requires gender-specific interventions, policies and practices. Mainstreaming gender or integrating a gender perspective means supporting engagement; increasing the number of discriminated social groups (ethnic minorities, migrants and women) into power positions; appointing diversity officers; promoting sponsorship and funding for women’s sports, along with media campaigns against sexism and racial discrimination; raising the profile of role models and mentors in sport, etc.

Islamophobia: Prejudice or racism against, or fear (phobia in Greek) and hatred of Muslims and Islam (Mohammedanism), including their politics or their culture. Islamophobia is a term that dates back to the early 1900s. Its modern use emerged during the late 1980s and early 1990s, becoming widespread and prevalent after the September 11, 2001 attacks in the United States. An extreme example of islamophobia in 2011, or islamohysteria in particular, is revealed in the texts (manifesto) of the Norwegian terrorist Anders Behring Breivik where he argues for the violent annihilation of the Muslim population in Europe in order to preserve a Christian Europe (See section on Norway tragedy on July 22, 2011).
**Multiculturalism:** A term used broadly, either descriptively or normatively, and escapes a simple definition. As a descriptive term, it refers to the demographic make-up or cultural diversity of a specific place, e.g. nation, city, neighbourhood, school, business, focus group, etc. As a normative term, it refers to policies, ideologies and practices that celebrate or respect this diversity and its institutionalisation, such as policies and strategies that promote the maintenance of cultural diversity, interculturalism, etc.

Multiculturalism is often contrasted with the concepts of assimilationism—processes, policies and practices of furthering cultural or racial assimilation, or encouraging the assimilation of people from all races and cultures, or processes whereby minority groups gradually adopt attitudes and customs of the prevailing culture. Multiculturalism has been described as "a salad bowl", "a cultural mosaic" and "a rich tapestry of human life" rather than a "melting pot" since in the melting pot metaphor and approach everyone is mixed together and becomes a single entity, one thing, without necessarily retaining their origins, diversity or cultural identity. On the other hand, the salad bowl metaphor or perspective—where different ingredients are mixed together—allows each ingredient to retain its own characteristic or trait (cultural identity). Many scholars support the salad bowl approach, namely the coexistence of different cultures, ethnic groups and races with their own unique composition rather than obliging them to assimilate into the one created by the dominating/prevaling majority. Indeed, as Kevin Bloor argues: "a vibrant society is one characterized by an active celebration of many diverse cultures. Embedded within this positive endorsement of multiculturalism are various liberal concepts such as tolerance, pluralism and the protection of minority rights from the tyranny of the majority. The normative element of multiculturalism can be understood as one at ease with the rich tapestry of human life and the desire amongst people to express their own identity in the manner they see fit». (2010: 272)

Conversely, scholars also argue that the European concept of multiculturalism, specifically the salad bowl approach, prevents the full integration of immigrant groups into host societies, as opposed to the melting pot approach (the American model) which has resulted in the successful integration of immigrants.

**Nyon Declaration:** At the World Athletes Summit in Nyon Switzerland on November 15, 2011, the elected representatives of 150,000 athletes from across the globe voted unanimously to establish a *federation of world player associations* to champion athletes’ rights. This platform is empowering the societal role of sport and supporting sport agency. The Nyon Declaration has given athletes a united global voice on issues such as, the equal treatment of all athletes regardless of gender, ethnic background or religion; the crisis in sport governance; transparency issues; and the right to organize collectively in player associations and unions.

**Peace Education:** Teaching and learning the skills and attitudes to live together successfully by valuing, respecting and celebrating *diversity:* race, religion, gender, physical disability, age, etc. Teaching methodologies include age-appropriate curricula, school activities and peacemaker projects, such as service-learning activities, civic engagement and collaborative intergenerational initiatives. Peace education is a broad field which uses different approaches and disciplines. It has been defined as multicultural education, conflict resolution education, human rights education and global citizenship education. It is the process of acquiring the values, knowledge and behaviours to live in harmony with others, with the natural environment and with oneself. Documented experience shows that peace education has been empowering individuals and social groups with the values and tools to end social injustices, prejudices and violence.

**Peacemakers:** A new generation of activists— i.e. athletes, educators, students and volunteers—participating in peace education initiatives, programs, projects and activities.
**Sport agency**: Refers to athlete activism, namely dynamic participation and active engagement, or the impact of sport interventions and that of individual athletes in the promotion of peace and development. It refers to the social space of sport as an effective tool in the following areas: social mobilization; bridging social inequality gaps; encouraging gender equality; promoting peace education; nurturing peacemaking across divided communities; and eliminating racism and violence.

**Sport, Development and Peace (SDP)**: A new social movement which promotes reconciliation through sport activism (sport agency). It refers to the power of sport as a resource of hope, to the intentional use of sport, physical activity and play to attain specific results. Sport has been increasingly seen as having a role to play in peacemaking processes and as a means and tool that contributes to the resolution of enduring societal problems, most notably the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). In other words there are many points of engagement through sport such as the Annual Match Against Poverty, the Peace and Sport Forum in the Middle East, F4P and UP. Certainly, sport alone cannot solve complex social problems and ensure peace, but it could be positioned in a broader toolkit to achieve optimal results, specifically with other holistic interventions, programs, initiatives and peace practices (i.e. peace education).

**The Platform**: The International Platform on Sport & Development (http://www.sportanddev.org) is dedicated to the thematic field of sport and development, supported by key stakeholders from non-profits, the private sector and government agencies.

**UNI Global Union**: The voice of 20 million service sector workers around the globe. Through 900 affiliated unions, UNI represents the workforce in 150 countries. It is working with its member unions to change the rules of the game in the global labour market, to organise the global service sector workforce, to expand and strengthen affiliated unions, to improve working conditions and to ensure respect and dignity in the global workplace. UNI Global hosted the World Athletes Summit in Nyon, Switzerland on November 15, 2011.

**Xenophobia**: Although composed of two Greek words, it is a neologism, a new term introduced into Greek society. It originates from the Greek word ἄνωξ (xenos), meaning "stranger," or "foreigner," and the word φόβος (phobos), meaning "fear." The term xenophobia is defined as irrational, excessive, unreasonable and abnormal fear, hatred or dislike of foreigners and strangers. It is fearing "the Other," the unknown or something that is different from you. It denotes fear or dislike of other cultures and beliefs. Xenophobia refers to anti-immigrant prejudices, unreal stereotyping, racial intolerance, social exclusion, aggression and violence. It refers to the rising migrant vulnerability, such as the growing anti-migrant practices and sentiments in receiving countries and/or practices of securing racial "purity". Research shows that migrant groups are becoming the scapegoats for socio-economic problems in host countries. An extreme example and consequence of such xenophobic beliefs and behaviours is the *Norway tragedy*, the terrorist attacks on July 22, 2011, where 86 persons were killed by the Norwegian Anders Behring Breivik in the framework of his mission for the violent annihilation of multiculturalism. One need point out here that, although xenophobia is used interchangeably with terms such as racism, prejudice and discrimination, these terms have different meanings.

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Biographical sketch

Irene Kamberidou is an Assistant Professor of Sociology at the University of Athens, the Faculty of Physical Education and Sport Science (http://www.phed.uoa.gr) where she teaches Gender Issues and Sport, Principles of Sociology (undergraduate courses) and Sport Sociology (graduate course). She received her PhD from the Sociology Department of the Panteios University of Social and Political Sciences in Athens, Greece, her MA from Boston College, Chestnut Hill USA, her BA from Emmanuel College, Boston Massachusetts, USA and completed her junior year abroad at the Sorbonne de l’Université Paris, France. Dr. Kamberidou is a member of the Executive Group of the ECWT- European Centre for Women and Technology (http://www.womenandtechnology.eu) and the Greek representative of the International Association of Physical Education and Sport for Girls and Women (IAPESGW). She is also a member of the Hellenic Sociological Society (HSS), the Panhellenic Union for the Promotion of Women in Sports (PEPGAS) and the International Sport for Development and Peace Association Platform (ISDPA). Dr. Kamberidou – with active participation at international and European conferences, including publications – has also contributed as a gender expert and moderator in many of the European Commission’s high-level conferences, meetings, projects and workshops addressing exclusionary practices in the digital age (see public profile in Women for Smart Growth:
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