

The Power of Knowledge in Combat Sports Coaching

Sanna Erdoğan

University of Lapland, Rovaniemi, Finland

serdogan@ulapland.fi

Abstract: A growing number of studies develop recommendations for improving the expertise of coaching better athletes. Scholars build knowledge of how to coach and what competence a sports coach should have. Following feminist ideology in knowledge production, this paper explores who can decide on approved coaching know-how. It investigates the assumed expertise and the identification of competition-level coaches' competence and asks what capability is required to qualify as a sports coach. It scrutinises existing practices and collectively formed concepts that influence coaches' pathways: how to become a coach and what possibilities are there for different positions as a coach. The study is conducted at the sports club level, where coaches are voluntary workers. The research includes judo, boxing, and wrestling, referred to as combat sports. Through feminist studies and analysis, the research examines power structures between people or groups. The study focuses on how practical, procedural knowledge is valued in the culture of combat sports. By describing culturally shared meanings and practices in sports, the study reveals the gendered practices by which situations are planned, implemented, and managed. The analysis shows how the male-dominated coaching environment relies on tacit knowledge of learning, cultural behaviour, and assumed know-how. The implied procedural knowledge is proven performatively in physical manners learned through experience, especially expertise from winning competitions. As a result, the study highlights the unchangeable, traditional environment, where repetition of current knowledge is indispensable. Consequently, the study suggests that coaches without previous sport-specific knowledge are excluded from coaching.

Keywords: Feminist Research, Combat Sports, Coach, Tacit Knowledge, Gender, Power, Equity.

1. Introduction

Previous research has emerged that sports coaching remains male-dominated; disproportionately, few women are in high-level coaching positions (Lavoie & Baeth, 2017). Even though girls' and women's participation numbers in sports have decreased, there remains an unequal gender balance in coaching (Kane, 2016). Of all sports coaches in Finland, 67 % are male (Blomqvist et al., 2019). Compared to male coaches, female coaches are younger, less likely to be head coaches, and more likely to coach females and children (Reade et al., 2009). Male coaches have the power as decision-makers, leading to females occupying positions and feeling side-lined with relatively limited opportunities (Fasting et al., 2019). Everyday language and symbols reinforce the ideological gender stereotypes and patriarchal dominance within the sports context (Sartore & Cunningham, 2007). The status quo makes female coaches pessimistic about career possibilities as competition-level coaches (Fasting et al., 2019). Feminist scholars have documented the barriers preventing female coaches from progressing in career paths, such as cultural norms and stereotypes affecting especially females' possibility to coach. The leadership labyrinth has been used to describe bias against female coaches, who are evaluated based on male performance (Burton & LaVoi, 2016). Kirjoita tekstiä napsauttamalla tai napauttamalla tätä.

Scholars have used Kanter's (1977) theory to explain the development of hierarchies and how dominant groups utilise exclusionary mechanisms to preserve their privileged status (Walker, 2016; Wells, 2016). The traditional image of a coach is based on masculine behaviours such as authority, strength, muscularity, and demanding character. Such manners construct the unconscious formation of coaches' identities consistent with homologous reproduction (Burton & LaVoi, 2016). The gendered resemblance has created an environment where coaches are comparable in their knowledge of male attendance. Inherited beliefs, cultural meanings, and standard practices shape the formation of a coach, and the current male coaches have the power to define the best way to coach (Hovden & Tjønnndal, 2021).

Sports institutes being a part of society, the understanding of male dominance and gender-based segregation can be compared to organisational studies. Joan Acker (1990) has focused on gendering organisations, developing a theoretical framework of the 'ideal worker,' referring to a model for a respected employee. Acker's theory helps to explain deeply embedded gendered culture hidden in organisational structures, including informal social relationships supporting career development. (Acker, 1990.) Scholars in sports have had similar ideas of researching successful coaches' knowledge to develop a model of effective coaching. The foundation of coaches' knowledge is represented as declarative (knowing) and procedural (doing), where procedural knowledge benefits past experiences and organisational routines (Gilbert & Côté, 2013). Intuitive, practical knowledge can be described as tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1983). It is formed on practical knowledge and skills connected to the cultures and traditions of the communities (Toom, 2012).

Interpreting previous research, some assumptions are that experienced coaches have valuable skills respected in sports culture. Tacit knowledge is highly valued, and organisations believe in losing knowledge when people change the sports environment or stop coaching. Conversely, this paper contemplates tacit knowledge as a stagnant practice and collectively formed concept investigating whether it affects coaches' pathways in Finland. Concentrating on the sports club level, where coaches work voluntarily, the research examines how coaches determine their chances of becoming a coach, focusing on identifying competition-level coaches' competence and discovering what kind of know-how is required to get qualification as a coach. Following feminist research, this study examines power structures between current coaches and those willing to coach, addressing the influence of internalised coaching practices on coaching possibilities. The analysis focuses on how the power of knowledge is used in the culture of combat sports by recognising how training is planned, facilitated, and managed in combat sports clubs. It examines the meanings of knowledge in learning, cultural behaviour, and assumed know-how, establishing the operating conditions of how these policies affect volunteer-based coaching possibilities.

2. Researching Gendered Power Structures

This study follows Judith Butler's (1990) theory, considering gender a complex constructed object of social discourses. The theory comprehends gender as a masculine or feminine performativity focusing on gender-related characteristics. (Butler, 1990.) Gender is a matter of social relations, including differences, dichotomy, and hierarchies. It is a pattern of social arrangements addressing reproductive differences into play. (Connell, 2002.) Gender qualities are assigned inherent belief systems, values, cultural patterns, and collectively shared knowledge structures maintaining gender stereotypes in sports (Wood & Eagly, 2013). The gendered substructure includes beliefs about gender differences and reproduced understandings of optimal performance (Acker, 2012). Gendered norms, which legitimise appropriate representations of femininity and masculinity, limit opportunities to exceed gendered habitus or express feminine or masculine social expectations otherwise (Metcalf, 2018). Scrutinising how gender roles are maintained develops the understanding of what is considered an appropriate gender-related presence and how these assumptions affect power relations.

The assumption of approved behaviour and a coach's knowledge can be described as discourse. Michel Foucault (1980) defines discourses as power-knowledge systems that reproduce power relations in ongoing discursive processes by defining ideal codes of conduct. Discourses are intertwined in power mechanics, representing knowledge in the intertwined mechanics of power, reproducing power relations by defining typical or ideal meanings, thoughts, bodies, and feelings. (Foucault, 1980.) Knowledge is produced by anonymous structures, divisions, regularities, rules, and codes of knowledge that organise and limit lives. Power is intertwined with complex relationships affecting strategies and policies, narrowing people's thinking and opportunities. (Markula & Pringle, 2006.) Discourse governs how opinions are reasoned, ideas put into practice and used to regulate the conduct of others. It defines an acceptable and intelligible way to talk, write or conduct oneself, restricting other ways of talking. Discourses are specific ways of constructing knowledge and managing ourselves concerning it. (Hall, 1997.)

Foucauldian theorisation of power explores how humans learn about themselves and their practices through social relations. The surrounding environment, values, and beliefs determine how individuals constitute themselves into certain kinds of individuals. (Foucault, 1977.) In the sports context, it can be used to scrutinise cultural assumptions of ideal attendance and how gender is decisive in complying with sports requirements (Markula, 2003). Sports coaching is a social practice related to autocratic and hierarchical culture, where coaches' roles and activities are presented with a congruent, gendered affiliation (Cushion & Jones, 2006). Gendered, masculine structures regulate social, implicit rules that have governed the selection of coaches (Soler et al., 2022). An extensive activity of socialisation in coaching relates to the distribution of enduring values and an ideology that guides behaviour following given expectations (Cushion & Jones, 2014). Values and attitudes strengthen commonly agreed rules and create norms of behaviour, appraising togetherness and confidence in belonging and multi-layered social cooperation (Messner, 2002). The different forms of implicit rules govern the possibility of coaching and general assumptions of knowledge and competence that are assumed to occur in coaching. The Foucauldian idea is relevant when questioning a 'truth' in coaching practices (Denison, 2019). It gives perspective to inquiry into hidden potential in coaching force: whenever there is a power, there must be counter-power, too. Contemporary actions can always be contested and changed (Foucault, 1977).

3. Methodology

Addressing the long-standing issue of unbalanced power relations is central to feminist studies. Feminist epistemology challenges the dichotomies of positivist approaches and instead considers how and by whom knowledge is produced and valued (Davis & Craven, 2020). Feminist studies are committed to marginality and power differentials, seeking justice for people, communities, and organisations often outside the dominant paradigms (Davis & Craven, 2016). Knowledge production is socially situated, and reflexivity includes the researcher's positionality about the people and topic studied (Deitch, 2020). Following feminist writing, this paper recognises the significance of reflexivity (Harding, 2007). It acknowledges the relative privilege and status of the researcher, relations to the topic, emotions, and experiences (Hesse-Biber, 2007). The study recognises the relationship between the researcher's positionality in the field of research, considering the author's extensive sports knowledge from a professional career as a coach educator and boxing coach for over 20 years.

Participants were recruited using purposive sampling via personal contacts and networks. The snowballing was used, and participants invited other coaches to participate. Participation was voluntary, and the main criterion for selection was that the coaches were competition-level coaches or interested in being one. Participants were provided with an information sheet and consented via the consent form. Considering that participation was voluntary, one could assume all participants were positively predisposed to this research. The data was collected within eight (8) focus group discussions (n=34) involving 23 male and 11 female combat sports coaches from different districts of Finland. Two projective methods guided the conversation (Morgan & Scannel, 1998). Each group discussion was 90 minutes face-to-face, hybrid or remote in 2022. The author's educational background tailored the schedule to inform participants beforehand about the duration. Discussions were digitally recorded with the permission of the participants and transcribed verbatim. All participants have been given pseudonyms to protect their identity. The data was collected in Finnish, and the author translated the extracts reflecting the presented themes.

The study followed six phases of analysis: familiarisation, code generation, generating initial themes, review of themes, defining themes, and producing the report (Braun & Clarke, 2022). The analysis began with familiarising the data through writing, reading, and rereading the transcripts. Exploring the data through a reflexive thematic analysis approached to acknowledge the researcher's active role in interpreting the data (Pillow, 2003). The analysis focused on aspects guiding and shaping the formation of positions of power, such as cultural meanings and practices. While re-reading the data and reviewing themes, the concept of knowledge in various ways drew the researcher's attention, revealing something interesting about unconscious habits and norms. Scrutinising knowledge production between people or groups contemplated a compelling approach to studying the coaching pathway.

4. An Exclusion of Coaches Without Victorious Practical Knowledge

Coaches tend to have a former competition career as an athlete before taking the position as a competition-level coach. The previous research indicates that sports club board members prioritise people with the last history of being elite athletes when recruiting coaches in high-performance team sports (Blackett, 2021). Retaining talent within the coaching staff in national organisations has been substantial, and organisations have created support systems for the career shift from athlete to coach (Chroni et al., 2020). A 'glass ceiling' prevents coaches who do not possess competitive-athletic careers from taking positions as high-performance coaches (Blackett, 2021). Valuing champions and believing in possibilities to benefit from competition-based knowledge is deeply embedded in combat sports culture. The conversation between the three judo coaches illustrates the situation:

Getting respect as a judo coach in Finland takes a long time. You must have many merits from competitions. Both your own merits and your athletes. It is the only way that you are taken seriously. (Anita, female judo coach)

Education is not valued. The athletes and coaches appreciate only coaches with successful competition careers as athletes. They ignore other kinds of coaches, like those who have taken part in coach education. This hierarchy of merits is embedded in the culture. Previous successes need to be mentioned before training sessions or camps. Black belt in judo, if nothing else. (Heidi, female judo coach)

I agree. If there is a coach who is a European champion, everyone listens, no matter what kind of coaching experience they have. The difference is enormous for coaches without a victorious background. It is useless

to say: "Look at me! I just had Level 2 coach education. I have plenty of information about training." (Katja, female judo coach)

Imagining this situation gets a lavish laugh in the group discussion, mainly imagining this educated, non-merited coach who would try to convince using declarative knowledge. The discussion illustrates how a successful ex-athlete will be adored respectfully in contrast to the disregard of an educated coach with pedagogical competence. Laughing is tragicomic, describing the shared experience of female coaches' efforts to get respect in a male-dominated environment. Valuing champions relies on past victories and male images, in contrast to looking forward to new pedagogical ways of coaching. Supporting the climate of champions leads to a situation where an educated coach with 20 years of coaching experience is ignored compared to someone who has achieved international success as an athlete but hasn't gathered any experience in coaching. A path from athlete to coach is taken for granted, even though former athletic expertise does not guarantee coaching success (Ewing, 2019). Communication and decision-making processes are made through personalised and informal conditions, supporting the present coaching style (Schlesinger et al., 2021). Male-dominated culture is noticeable in authoritarian, stagnant training methods and monotonous practices, where authority and social reality are enacted in socio-historical structures. Tradition-based functional knowledge inhibits females from taking positions as coaches, as a female boxing coach describes her experiences:

Only one person, the head coach of the club, has the authority to make decisions. He assumes everyone follows his decades-old training plans. I cannot entirely agree with all those methods. That is different from the way I want to coach. I would want to coach based on my coaching philosophy. At least to have a conversation instead of assuming nothing needs to change. (Taina, female boxing coach)

So far, the head coaches have been males, believing experience in coaching is an asset. Everyday coaching practices are based on masculine routines and behaviours (Hovden & Tjønnndal, 2022). The sensible way of knowing (hearing, seeing, feeling, etc.) is culturally disseminated and generated by the social operation of power, which distinctions interiority and exteriority (Meriläinen et al., 2015). Female coaches meet barriers of deeply embedded behaviours that are normalised and unchallenged by coaches who have the power to maintain a deep-seated traditional coaching culture. It is based on tacit knowledge carried out with routines (Gherardi, 2000), as another coach delineates:

Many of these so-called old-fashioned male coaches in boxing say: "We have coached 50 years like this and continue the same way the next ones, too". It is the same old way from the 1960s. Anything new is ignored. (Amanda, female boxing coach)

Old male coaches are committed to the sport and believe they know how to coach and what kind of atmosphere should be in the sports clubs. Activities are tied to established patterns and structures, creating a feeling of security, predictability and permanence. A male coach confirms the idea of trusting the current coaching culture:

If someone wants to be a coach, they must participate daily in the training sessions to learn how to coach. It is essential to embrace the culture and traditions. Otherwise, you will start to coach differently than before. (Oskari, a male boxing coach)

Repeating the same coaching methods is connected to procedural knowledge in skilful and competent action in the sporting context. Coaching skills are related to the physical involvement in teaching sport-specific movements. Pierre Bourdieu's (1989, 1990) *habitus* is an implicit familiarity of knowing how to engage in accepted and legitimised traditions and values (Grenfell, 2018). *Habitus* is appropriate interaction in multiple-layered *fields* where people produce accepted and legitimised traditions and values (Blackett, 2021). The power of knowledge is held by coaches, who are recognised as representing their knowledge in an embodied way. Valued knowledge is conceptualised as a natural practical development, and intuitive knowledge is the capacity created through experience to trust one's instincts (Bereiter & Scardamalia, 1993). Moreover, learning the approved coaching style is based on physical competence that can be visually seen. Learning around practical, contextualised and reflective coaching experiences establishes coaches to construct, implement, and evaluate strategies related to their everyday coaching practices to maximise learning from practical coaching experiences (Nelson & Cushion, 2006). Coaches' competence depends on the ability to perform, as one wrestling coach puts it:

Jussi is an excellent example. He does not have any athletic background in wrestling. He is responsible for the competition-level training group in their sports club. Once, I asked how he can teach the wrestling techniques to the athletes. Jussi said he comes before his working day and practices with the exercise doll.

He can teach the athletes in the evening training session after he has learned the movements. (Markus, male wrestling coach)

In summary, the power of knowledge is built on learning by doing, the performance in combat sports. Accordingly, the dominating respect of doing exceeds speaking, limiting the possibility of coaching with another kind of competence. Female coaches face limited opportunities to take demanding coaching positions or possibilities to demonstrate how to coach (Kay, 2003). Alternatively, this study indicates that anyone who does not meet the socially shared idea of a coach's competence can be excluded from coaching. Interpreting the data, the tradition-based coaching culture is complex to challenge or change, and there is also trouble with diversity in coaching.

5. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper was intended to illuminate the aspects of knowledge in the sports culture. The feminist study examined the identification of competition-level coaches' competence and asked what kind of know-how is required to get a qualification as a coach. It exposed recognised and approved coaching styles and described female coaches' challenges in cultural practices. The paper gives insight into power as a strategy that produces cultural practices that exclude people who do not meet the shared coaching criteria. Potential readings of the data suggest that the dominant culture endorses coaches who can perform physically via tacit knowledge. The power in the combat sports environment maintains the status quo: values of past victories, procedural knowledge and performative practices. Old-fashioned coaching methods maintain the current coaching style and behaviours. The masculine traditions based on physical performance hinder others, especially women, from taking part in coaching.

This study suggests that experience-based, representative competence builds a valued coach pathway. The communal atmosphere involves people's adherence to regulations, manners, roles, and behaviours (Hall, 1997). Participating in coaching with physical activity, obedience, and involvement is possible in combat sports. Coaches are consented to act like others and share the same values and feelings of belonging. Accepting the existing practices and following the current rules makes it possible to be a coach. Relationships with unconscious habits, thoughts, and cultural behaviours keep representing the idea of a coach, marginalising everyone who does not meet the criteria. Being privileged materialises in a culture where current practices are justified by traditional interests (Skeggs, 2004). Coaches with previous athlete-based experience are accepted, valued, and respected with unchallenged normative manners. The power of knowledge in combat sports is held by coaches, who are recognised as representing their competence practically.

This study proposes that the status of implicit knowledge limits opportunities to coach in combat sports. The author suggests that current practices might exclude coaches with declarative knowledge willing to do otherwise. The results imply that female coaches who cannot rely on previous success, carry medals from competitions or perform with sport-specific skills are excluded. They interfere with athletic experience from championships, which can be seen as a lack of honourable knowledge. The knowledge from education is disrespected, considering how teaching by speaking is dispensable in the current operating ways of combat sports culture. If glorifying coaches with competence from previous experience from competitions is not challenged, it hinders the development of various coaches' paths. Therefore, understanding coaching as teaching should be recognised. Creating an appreciation for multiple forms of knowledge would support comprehensive coaching competence. In the future, the changes will be about developing an environment where diverse coaching styles are admired. Discussion is required to conceptualise societal expectations of approved coaches and acknowledge the barriers hindering coaching possibilities.

6. Limitations and Future Research

The article is a minor part of ongoing PhD research providing foundations to continue the study delineating power relations and intersectional differences affecting possibilities to coach.

References

- Acker, J. (1990) 'Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies: A Theory of Gendered Organizations', *Gender & Society*, 4(2), pp. 139–158. <https://doi.org/10.1177/089124390004002002>.
- Acker, J. (2012) 'Gendered organizations and intersectionality: Problems and possibilities', *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion*, 31(3), pp. 214–224. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02610151211209072>.

- Bereiter, C. and Scardamalia, M. (1993) *Surpassing ourselves: an inquiry into the nature and implications of expertise*, *Surpassing ourselves: An inquiry into the nature and implications of expertise*. Open Court.
- Blackett, A.D. (2021) 'Do you have to walk to talk it? The significance of an elite athletic career in becoming a high-performance coach in men's football and rugby union', in A. Whitehead and J. Coe (eds) *Myths of Sport Coaching*. Sequoia Books, pp. 154–166.
- Blomqvist, M., Mononen, K. and Hämäläinen, K. (2019) *Valmentajakysely 2019*.
- Bourdieu, P. (1989) 'Social space and symbolic power', *Sociological Theory*, 7, pp. 14–25. <https://doi.org/10.2307/202060>.
- Bourdieu, P. (1990) *The Logic of Practice*. Cambridge, MA: Stanford University Press.
- Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2022) *Thematic analysis: a practical guide*. SAGE.
- Burton, L.J. and LaVoi, N.M. (2016) 'An Ecological/Multisystem Approach to Understanding and Examining Women Coaches', in N.M. LaVoi (ed.) *Women in sports coaching*. Oxfordshire and New York: Routledge, pp. 49–62.
- Butler, J. (1990) *Gender trouble: feminism and the subversion of identity*. London: Routledge.
- Connell, R.W. (2002) *Gender*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers Ltd.
- Chroni, S., Pettersen, S. and Dieffenbach, K. (2020) 'Going from athlete-to-coach in Norwegian winter sports: understanding the transition journey', *Sport in Society*, 23(4), pp. 751–773. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17430437.2019.1631572>.
- Cushion, C. and Jones, R.L. (2006) 'Power, Discourse, and Symbolic Violence in Professional Youth Soccer: The Case of Albion Football Club', *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 23(2), pp. 142–161. <https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.23.2.142>.
- Cushion, C.J. and Jones, R.L. (2014) 'A Bourdieusian analysis of cultural reproduction: socialisation and the "hidden curriculum" in professional football', *Sport, Education and Society*, 19(3), pp. 276–298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2012.666966>.
- Davis, D.-A. and Craven, C. (2016) *Feminist Ethnography. Thinking through methodologies, challenges, and possibilities*. Lanham, Boulder and New York: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Davis, D. and Craven, C. (2020) 'Feminist Ethnography', in N.A. Naples (ed.) *Companion to Feminist Studies*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, pp. 281–299.
- Deitch, C. (2020) 'Feminist Methodologies', in N.A. Naples (ed.) *Companion to Feminist Studies*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated, pp. 213–230.
- Denison, J. (2019) 'What It Really Means To "Think Outside the Box": Why Foucault Matters for Coach Development.', *International Sport Coaching Journal*, 6(3), pp. 354–358.
- Ewing, T.K. (2019) 'Rethinking Head Coach Credentials: Playing Experience, Tertiary Qualifications and Coaching Apprenticeships', *International Sport Coaching Journal*, 6, pp. 244–249. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1123/iscj.2018-0092>.
- Fasting, K., Sand, T.S. and Nordstrand, H.R. (2019) 'One of the few: The experiences of female elite-level coaches in Norwegian football', *Soccer & Society*, 20(3), pp. 454–470. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14660970.2017.1331163>.
- Foucault, M. (1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. London: Penguin.
- Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/knowledge: selected interviews and other writings 1972-1977*. The Harvester Press.
- Gherardi, S. (2000) 'Practice-based Theorizing on Learning and Knowing in Organizations', *Organization*, 7(2), pp. 211–223.
- Gilbert, W. and Côté, J. (2013) 'Defining Coaching Effectiveness: A Focus on Coaches' Knowledge', in P. Potrac, W. Gilbert, and J. Denison (eds) *Routledge Handbook of Sports Coaching*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 147–159.
- Grenfell, M. (2018) 'Pierre Bourdieu on sport', in R. Giulianotti (ed.) *Routledge handbook of the sociology of sport*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 61–71.
- Hall, S. (1997) *Representation: cultural representations and signifying practices*. London: SAGE Publications.
- Harding, S. (2007) 'Feminist Standpoints', in S.N. Hesse-Biber (ed.) *Handbook of Feminist Research: Theory and Praxis*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications, pp. 45–70.
- Hesse-Biber, S.N. (2007) 'Feminist Research. Exploring the Interconnection of Epistemology, Methodology, and Method.', in S.N. Hesse-Biber (ed.) *Handbook of Feminist Research. Theory and Praxis*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 1–28.
- Hovden, J. and Tjørndal, A. (2022) "'If There Were More Women Coaches Around, I Think Things Would Be Different". Women Boxing Coaches. Struggles to Challenge and Change a Male Dominated Sport Environment', in L. Norman (ed.) *Improving Gender Equity in Sports Coaching*. New York: Routledge, pp. 234–253.
- Kane, M.J. (2016) 'A Socio-cultural Examination of a Lack of Women Coaches in Sport Leadership Positions', in N.M. LaVoi (ed.) *Women in sports coaching*. Oxfordshire and New York: Routledge, pp. 35–48.
- Kanter, R.M. (1977) *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: Basic.
- Kay, T. (2003) 'Sport and Gender', in B. Houlihan (ed.) *Sport and Society: A Student Introduction*. London: Sage Publications, pp. 89–104.
- Lavoi, N.M. and Baeth, A. (2017) 'Women and sports coaching', *The Palgrave Handbook of Feminism and Sport, Leisure and Physical Education*, pp. 149–162. https://doi.org/10.1057/978-1-137-53318-0_10.
- Markula, P. (2003) 'The Technologies of the Self: Sport, Feminism, and Foucault', *Sociology of Sport Journal*, 20(2), pp. 87–107. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1123/ssj.20.2.87>.
- Markula, P. and Pringle, R. (2006) *Foucault, Sport and Exercise. Power, Knowledge and Transforming the Self*. New York: Routledge.
- Meriläinen, S., Tienari, J. and Valtonen, A. (2015) 'Headhunters and the "ideal" executive body', *Organization*, 22(1), pp. 3–22. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350508413496578>.
- Messner, M. A. (2002) *Taking the field: women, men, and sports*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

- Metcalfe, S. (2018) 'Adolescent constructions of gendered identities: the role of sport and (physical) education', *Sport, Education and Society*, 23(7), pp. 681–693. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2018.1493574>.
- Morgan, D.L. and Scannel, A.U. (1998) *Planning Focus Groups*. Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.
- Nelson, L.J. and Cushion, C.J. (2006) 'Reflection in Coach Education: The Case of the National Governing Body Coaching Certificate', *The Sport Psychologist*, 20(2), pp. 174–183.
- Pillow, W. (2003) 'Confession, catharsis, or cure? Rethinking the uses of reflexivity as methodological power in qualitative research', *Qualitative Studies in Education*, 16(2), pp. 175–196.
- Polanyi, M. (1983) *The Tacit Dimension*. Doubleday & Company, Inc.
- Reade, I., Rodgers, W. and Norman, L. (2009) 'The Under-Representation of Women in Coaching: A Comparison of Male and Female Canadian Coaches at Low and High Levels of Coaching', *International Journal of Sports Science & Coaching*, pp. 505–520.
- Sartore, M.L. and Cunningham, G.B. (2007) 'Explaining the under-representation of women in leadership positions of sport organizations: A symbolic interactionist perspective', *Quest*, 59(2), pp. 244–265. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00336297.2007.10483551>.
- Schlesinger, T., Ingwersen, F. and Weigelt-Schlesinger, Y. (2021) 'Gender Stereotypes as Mechanisms of Social Exclusion of Women as Football Coaches', in L. Norman (ed.) *Improving Gender Equity in Sports Coaching*. New York: Routledge, pp. 30–50.
- Skeggs, B. (2004) *Class, Self, Culture*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Soler, S. et al. (2022) 'Gender Equity Policies in Sport in Practice: From Words to Action', in L. Norman (ed.) *Improving Gender Equity in Sports Coaching*. New York: Routledge, pp. 121–137.
- Toom, A. (2012) 'Considering the Artistry and Epistemology of Tacit Knowledge and Knowing', *Educational theory*, 62(6), pp. 621–640.
- Walker, N. (2016) 'Cross-gender coaching: women coaching men', in N. LaVoi (ed.) *Women in Sports Coaching*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 111–125.
- Wells, J. E. (2016) 'Female assistant coaches: Planting seeds and growing roots', in N.M. LaVoi (ed.) *Women in Sports Coaching*. London and New York: Routledge, pp. 139–160.
- Wood, W. and Eagly, A.H. (2013) 'Biology or Culture Alone Cannot Account for Human Sex Differences and Similarities', *Psychological Inquiry*, 24(3), pp. 241–247. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2013.815034>.