“GET THAT SON OF A BITCH OFF THE FIELD!”: SPORT IN UNIVERSITY CLASSROOMS

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Discussions about sports continue to permeate the news and political realms and may prove to be a useful but underutilized tool to teach difficult subjects like race, gender, and sexuality. However, most scholarly work on sport focuses on a specific systemic inequality within a sport and/or how an issue affects sport and thus are sociological in nature, rather than providing educators strategies so that they can utilize sport as a pedagogical vehicle to teach systemic inequalities. Through semi-structured interviews with university educators, this dissertation examines how and why these participants employ sport to educate students on systemic social issues (racism, classism, sexism, homo/transphobia) in their classrooms. Theoretical constructs from Critical Race Theory and Critical Masculinity Studies aided in understanding how discussions of race/White supremacy, gender/sex/patriarchy, and heteronormativity/homo/transphobia operated in a curriculum that draws from sports. Findings include the assumptions of participants in utilizing sport as critical pedagogy, particularly around sport being an access point both as content and as a humanizing factor for the educator. An important finding is participants utilized critical sport pedagogies in both sport-centered and non-sport-centered courses, highlighting an aspect of accessibility. Further, the study revealed how the identities of participants (which included disciplinary training as well as their race, gender, and sexual orientation) shaped their focus in teaching a critical sport pedagogy. Another finding focused on the varied strategies participants employed when utilizing a critical sport pedagogy, including the use of media and providing student choice for assignments and projects. Findings will prove valuable to educators, both in K-12 schools and higher educations (as well as informal schooling) as they ponder how and why to develop their own critical sport pedagogies.