The experiences of ethnic ‘Other’ females have – until recently – been widely overlooked in the study of sport. There continues to be a need to produce critical scholarship about ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women in sport and physical culture, in order to represent their complex, multifarious and dynamic lived realities. This international collection of critical essays provides compelling insight into the lived realities of ethnic ‘Other’ females in sport.

Throughout the book, contributors either draw on the political consciousnesses of ‘Other’ feminisms, or privilege the voices of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women so as to broaden, diversify and advance critical thinking pertaining to ethnic ‘Other’ females in sport and physical culture. The purpose of the collection is both to produce knowledge and privilege otherwise subjugated knowledges, which individually and collectively present counter-narratives that better speak to the lived realities of racially oppressed groups of women and girls.

_Race, Gender and Sport: The Politics of Ethnic ‘Other’ Girls and Women_ is important reading for all students and scholars with an interest in the sociology of sport, gender studies, or race and ethnicity studies.

**Aarti Ratna** is a senior lecturer in the sociology of sport and leisure at Leeds Beckett University. Dr Ratna’s scholarship is shaped by the contributions of Black feminist intellectuals, and she uses this theoretical lens to inform her research about race, gender, sport, leisure, and popular culture. Many of her publications have specifically focused upon the multifaceted subjectivities of British Asian female footballers. Her more recent projects aim to examine gender, belonging, diaspora communities and the changing leisure lifestyles of older South Asian men and women.

**Samaya Farooq Samie** is a critical educator whose interdisciplinary research interests include the fields of sociology, race and ethnic studies, south Asian studies, women and gender studies, post-colonial feminist epistemologies, sport and popular culture. Her published work focuses not only on the complex identity work of young British Pakistani Muslim men and their constructions of religious masculinities through sport and physical education, but also explores the intersections of gender, ‘race’, culture and religion in the lives of sporting (south Asian) Muslim women living in diaspora communities in the ‘West’.
The Routledge Critical Studies in Sport series aims to lead the way in developing the multi-disciplinary field of Sport Studies by producing books that are interrogative, interventionist and innovative. By providing theoretically sophisticated and empirically grounded texts, the series will make sense of the changes and challenges facing sport globally. The series aspires to maintain the commitment and promise of the critical paradigm by contributing to a more inclusive and less exploitative culture of sport.

Also available in this series:

**Soccer, Culture and Society in Spain**
An Ethnography of Basque Fandom
*Mariann Vaczi*

**Olympic Exclusions**
Youth, Poverty and Social Legacies
*Jacqueline Kennelly*

**Critical Geographies of Sport**
Space, Power and Sport in Global Perspective
*Edited by Natalie Koch*

**The Sexual and Gender Politics of Sport Mega-Events**
Roving Colonialism
*Heather Sykes*

**Race, Gender and Sport**
The Politics of Ethnic ‘Other’ Girls and Women
*Edited by Aarti Ratna and Samaya Farooq Samie*

www.routledge.com/sport/series/RCSIS
# Contents

*Notes on contributors* vii  
*Acknowledgements* xi  

**Introduction: sport, race and gender – the politics of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women** 1  
**Aarti Ratna and Samaya Farooq Samie**  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Mapping the field: research about ethnic ‘Other’ females, sport and physical culture</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Aarti Ratna and Samaya Farooq Samie</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## PART I  
Theoretical interventions and knowledge production 33  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>De/colonising ‘sporting Muslim women’: post-colonial feminist reflections on the dominant portrayal of sporting Muslim women in academic research, public forums and mediated representations</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Samaya Farooq Samie</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Theoretical considerations in the examination of African American girls and women in sport</td>
<td>63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Akilah R. Carter-Francique</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Re-confronting whiteness: ongoing challenges in sport and leisure research</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Beccy Watson and Sheila Scraton</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Contents

## PART II  
**Experiences at the intersections of identity** 107

5 ‘Using the pen as a weapon’: the resistance of an outsider within  
AARTI RATNA 109

6 Confronting the ‘whiteness’ of women’s cricket: excavating hidden truths and knowledge to make sense of non-white women’s experiences in cricket  
RAFAELLE NICHOLSON 126

7 Ladies-only! Empowerment and comfort in gender-segregated kickboxing in the Netherlands  
JASMIJN RANA 148

## PART III  
**Everyday struggles and transformative practice** 169

8 Lorena ‘La Reina’ Ochoa: disidentifying toward brown solidarity  
KATHERINE M. JAMIESON AND YEOMI CHOI 171

9 Do women get the offside rule? Female fans, labelling and stereotypes in Turkey  
ITIR ERHART 189

10 Sport coaching and the inclusion of Black women in the United Kingdom  
ALEXANDRA J. RANKIN-WRIGHT AND LEANNE NORMAN 204

*Index* 225
Contributors

Akilah R. Carter-Francique (PhD, University of Georgia) is an assistant professor in the Department of Health and Kinesiology at Prairie View A&M University. To date, her research interests seek to explicate the intersections of race/ethnicity and women in the contexts of sport and physical activity, education, and health. Having a specific emphasis on Black girls and women, Carter-Francique employs a critical interpretivist standpoint (e.g. Black feminist thought, Critical Race Theory) to illuminate experiential marginalizations and promote social justice strategies to redress inequalities. Dr Carter-Francique is the co-founder (with Dr Deniece Dortch) and director of Sista to Sista, a co-curricular leadership development programme designed to foster a sense of connectedness amongst Black female college athletes. She is the co-editor of Critical Race Theory: Black Athletic Experiences in the United States.

Yeomi Choi, PhD, completed her doctoral degree in the Department of Kinesiology at University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG), with a focus in Sociohistorical Studies. Before studying at UNCG, Dr Choi received an MS in Sport History Studies and a BS in Sport and Leisure Studies from Korea National Sport University. Pursuing an interdisciplinary approach crossing sport studies, cultural studies, sociology, history, and feminist studies, her dissertation examined discursively produced transnational masculinities through mediated Korean-born sport celebrities playing in Major League Baseball. Dr Choi’s current research interests centre around mediated (American) Asian sporting subjectivities considering the intersections of gender, class, race, sexuality, and nationality. Dr Choi has taught courses in both the US and South Korea including Sociocultural Analyses of Sport and Exercise; History and Philosophy of Sport, Physical Activity, and Physical Education; Introduction to Kinesiology; Introduction to Sociology; Korean Society and Multiculturalism.

Itır Erhart studied philosophy and Western Languages and Literatures at Boğaziçi University. She completed her MPhil in Philosophy at the University of Cambridge. In 2001 she started teaching at Istanbul Bilgi
University, Department of Media and Communication Systems. In 2006 she earned her PhD from Boğaziçi University in philosophy. In 2015 she became an associate professor. She is the author of the book *What Am I?* and several articles on gender, sports and media including ‘United in Protest: From “Living and Dying with Our Colours” to “Let All the Colours of the World Unite”’ and ‘Ladies of Beşiktaş: A Dismantling of Male Hegemony at Inönü Stadium’.

**Katherine M. Jamieson** serves as Professor and Chair in the Department of Kinesiology and Health Science at California State University at Sacramento. Dr Jamieson’s scholarly endeavours focus on physical activity and human movement(s), equity issues, and feminist-informed, interpretive forms of knowledge production. Her research has been published in *Sociology of Sport Journal; Journal of Sport and Social Issues; Avante; Reading Sport: Critical Essays on Power and Representation; and Contemporary Issues in Sociology of Sport*. Dr Jamieson is co-author (with Dr Maureen Smith) of *Fundamentals of Sociology of Sport and Physical Activity* (Human Kinetics, 2016).

**Rafaelle Nicholson** has recently completed a PhD thesis at Queen Mary University of London entitled ‘“Like a Man Trying to Knit?” Women’s Cricket in Britain, 1945–2000’. Prior to this she gained a BA in Modern History and Politics at Merton College, Oxford, and an MSt in Women’s Studies at Mansfield College, Oxford. She has published her research in *History of Education and Women’s History Review*, and has also written freelance on women’s cricket for, amongst others, ESP-Ncricinfo and *Wisden*.

**Leanne Norman** is a senior research fellow in the School of Sport, Leeds Beckett University. Her research utilises a sociological lens to examine the culture of coaching to address gender equality within the profession. She also leads work around understanding the relationship between gender and occupational well-being for coaches, examining the influence of gender on the coach-athlete relationship, and analysing the impact of components of coach education on coaching practices and relations. Dr Norman has written for a number of academic textbooks and has published widely in academic journals. She also works as a consultant with a variety of sporting organisations to improve diversity within their coaching and athletic workforce.

**Jasmijn Rana** is a PhD candidate at the Berlin Graduate School Muslim Cultures and Societies, Freie Universität Berlin, Germany, and a lecturer in cultural anthropology at Leiden University, the Netherlands. Her research focuses on daily life of young Muslim women in kickboxing and examines gender, race, the body and belonging in and through sports in Europe.
Alexandra (A.J.) Rankin-Wright is a researcher in the School of Sport at Leeds Beckett University, UK. Her PhD thesis examined racial and gender equality, diversity and coaching development pathways in sport organisations and national governing bodies in the UK. Using a Critical Race Theory approach and Black feminist lens, the research explored organisational perspectives towards racial and gender equality, and the experiences of under-represented Black coaches. Dr Alexandra Rankin-Wright works with a number of sporting organisations to improve racial and gender equality policy and practice.

Aarti Ratna is a senior lecturer in sociology of sport and leisure at Leeds Beckett University. Dr Ratna’s scholarship is shaped by the contributions of Black feminist intellectuals, and she uses this theoretical lens to inform her research about race, gender, sport, leisure and popular culture. Many of her publications have specifically focused upon the multifaceted subjectivities of British Asian female footballers. Her more recent projects aim to examine gender, belonging, diaspora communities and the changing leisure lifestyles of older South Asian men and women.

Samaya Farooq Samie is a critical educator whose research interests are interdisciplinary, making contributions to the fields of sociology, race and ethnic studies, south Asian studies, women and gender studies, post-colonial feminist epistemologies and sociology of sport and popular culture. Dr Samie’s published work focuses not only on the complex identity work of young British Pakistani Muslim men and their constructions of religious masculinities through sport and physical education, but also explores the intersections of gender, ‘race’, culture and religion in the lives of sporting (south Asian) Muslim women living in diaspora communities in the ‘West’.

Sheila Scraton was Pro-Vice-Chancellor and Director of University Research at Leeds Beckett (formerly Metropolitan) University from 2004 to 2008, and retired in 2010, where she holds an Emeritus chair. As Professor of Leisure and Feminist Studies she has led and contributed to research including cross-national qualitative work on women and sport, ethnicity and gender, women and football, older women and leisure, gender and physical education, leisure and feminist theory and intersectionality. She was a panel member for RAE2001 Unit 69 (Sport-related Subjects) and was the Deputy Chair of RAE2008 Unit 46 (Sport-related Studies). She has published extensively across leisure and sport studies, was the Managing Editor of Leisure Studies from 2000 to 2003 and is a current member of the advisory boards of Leisure Studies, Journal of Sport and Social Issues and Sport, Education and Society.

Beccy Watson is a Reader in the Institute for Sport, Physical Activity and Leisure at Leeds Beckett University, where her research focuses on
interrelationships between gender, ‘race’ and class. Her work reflects critical, social analysis of leisure and sport and is informed by debates on intersectionality and the continuing significance of feminist epistemologies. Recent studies have focused on masculinity, gender and dance and the challenge of interdisciplinary research across leisure, sport and physical activity. Dr Watson has been a Visiting Research Fellow and a Visiting Scholar at Newcastle University (NSW, Australia) and the University of Texas at Austin (US), respectively. She has been closely involved with the Leisure Studies Association and until recently was one of the managing editors of the Routledge international journal, Leisure Studies.
The book reflects the intellectual endeavours of nine other scholars who contributed chapters to our edited collection. We praise them, we cherish their respective insights, and believe that together, we have renewed a much-needed critical dialogue in the sociology of sport for other scholars to join. We thank the contributing authors for their individual efforts, and for their patience with the editorial process.

We thank Dan Burdsey, who, at very short notice, read and provided comments in regards to both the Introduction and Chapter 1. Dan Burdsey, Ben Carrington and Jon Dart also offered timely advice during the editorial process, and we are grateful for their support. We also acknowledge and thank Kevin Hylton here for his critical guidance and feedback in terms of securing a book publication, and his ongoing support of the project.

We are both indebted to Stan Thangaraj, for his academic generosity, collegiate approach, and friendship. We also thank the anonymous reviewers for their kind and constructive comments, which we used to shape the production of the final manuscript. We would also like to acknowledge the research administration support of both Sabina Khan and Izram Chaudhry.

Aarti would personally like to express her gratitude to Dean Allen, Dan Burdsey and Philippa Velija for their respective friendships and long-standing academic solidarities. To Jennifer Hargreaves, my former PhD supervisor, who over the last 15 years or so has become/is like a mother-figure to me. If she did not open up the doors of academia to me, I am not sure I would be here now. I would also like to recognise my colleagues at Leeds Beckett University (too many to name in person) who as teachers and researchers inspire me, and show me how ‘it’s done’ on a daily basis. I would, though, like to personally acknowledge Jason Arday, Viji Kuppan, Anne Flintoff, Sarah Squires, Lee Tucker, and last but not least, Beccy Watson, who have all in different ways listened when I most needed a friendly ear. Finally, my parents and family who support me through it all, and who make it all possible, thank you. To my husband Dan Massey and
our children, Lennie and Saffron, thank you for your love, smiles and patience. And to Samie, finally, my dear friend, this book is for us, and all the things that we individually, and collectively, stand for.

Samie would like to personally extend her heartfelt gratitude to Professor Christina Hughes and Professor Andrew Parker. You were both early readers of my work, and have guided and supported me, and for this I will always be profoundly indebted to you. For the many Muslim women whose critical voices and actions inspire me, and drive my empirical work: Thank you! I know that this emotional journey is as empowering for you as it can be painful. Know that you are important, and that your perspectives and feminisms matter. Thank you to my academic colleagues: Gerald Griggs for the many wonderful personal tutorials during my undergraduate years; Malcolm MacLean for those coffee and cake breaks in which we satisfied our gluttonous urges, and indulged in delightful debate about all manner of insanity related to sport; and Dan Burdsey, Aarti Ratna and Mahfoud Amara for believing in my work and giving me the confidence to write what I write. Last but not least, I would like to thank my family, especially my parents whose lifetime of support, love and affection continue to nurture and sustain me. To my beloved Dad and my devoted brother, Mubs, thank you for supporting this cause, and for your earlier reviews of my work. Thank you also to my husband, Farid, and to my son, Aydin Samie, for your energy and spirit.
Introduction

Sport, race and gender – the politics of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women

Aarti Ratna and Samaya Farooq Samie

The scholarship about ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women and their relationships to sport and physical culture has undoubtedly grown over the past three decades. Work that is progressive in this field demonstrates the importance of sport and physical culture as a popular and public arena to examine the reproduction (and resistance to) omnipresent structures of inequality and control (see e.g. Ahmad, 2011; Burdsey et al., 2013; Hargreaves, 2000; Jamieson, 1998; Scraton et al., 2005; Thangaraj et al., 2016). There is a growing body of knowledge that aims to critically read the experiences and perspectives of ethnic ‘Other’ women and girls (see e.g. Birrell, 1989; Douglas, 2002; Douglas and Jamieson, 2006; Jamieson, 2003; McDonald and Birrell, 1999; Scraton, 2001; Smith, 1992). Many mainstream ‘White’ academic traditions and disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, cultural studies and so on, have moved beyond uncritical representations of racialised (female) ‘Others’ (Brah and Phoenix, 2004; Davis and Lutz, 2000). The belief that there are other ways of knowing the relationship between ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women, and their diverse, dynamic and polymorphous relationships to sport and physical culture, is beginning to gain some traction (see Ratna et al., 2017; Toffolletti and Palmer, 2015). And different feminist perspectives, like Black feminist politics, have been used within sporting literatures (see e.g. Armstrong, 2007; Carter-Francique and Flowers, 2013; Pelak, 2005; Ratna, 2017; Scraton, 2001). The critical use of intersectional thinking, as advanced by scholars of colour more broadly, has helped to uncover and critically analyse the multiple realities of ethnic ‘Other’ women. For instance, Jamieson’s (2003) appropriation of mestiza consciousness in/through studies of sport specifically questions the dualistic, linear and Western norms of thinking which polarise identities, desires and power structures. Using the work of Anzaldúa (1987), she persuades readers to think about identities, desires and power as not just existing between the ‘borderlands’ (between the southwestern US/Mexican border) but also in and between the artificial boundaries of subject positionings, which can result in ambiguous, contradictory, shifting and multifarious
'standpoints'. Nevertheless, epistemological and methodological concerns about the validity and quality of much of this literature remain. As we explicate in Chapter 1, when much of the so called ‘critical’ literature can itself still be implicated in the problematic reproduction of stereotypes about ethnic ‘Other’ family life, cultures and physical dispositions, it is a sign that progress has not only been limited, but in fact is quite narrow. Furthermore, even as research has begun to yield contradictory, shifting and multifarious ‘standpoints’ pertaining to ethnic ‘Other’ women, many studies continue to purport the positive influence of Western sport in liberating such groups of women, overlooking in turn the complex and unexpected ways in which power operates and circumscribes the life chances of different groups of people, at any given moment in time, in and across different societies (see e.g. Birrell, 1990).

This collection aims to respond to the lacuna in critical knowledge about ethnic ‘Other’ females in sport, so as to better represent their complex, multifarious and dynamic lived realities. Like a number of other critical feminist scholars (see e.g. Lewis, 1996) we too found ourselves embroiled in a pressing debate about who could and should research ethnic ‘Other’ women and girls. We both knew all too well that such discussions have (falsely) polarised relational identities (see e.g. Burdsey, 2007; Fletcher, 2014; Watson and Scraton, 2001) and distracted otherwise reflexive and engaged scholars from producing much needed critical research, both within and outside of the field. The challenges of reading and representing ethnic ‘Other’ women’s bodies is not straightforward, regardless of ‘who’ the author is (Ratna, 2017). Much of the burden of representation has traditionally fallen on, and in many cases continues to fall on, Black and ethnic ‘Other’ scholars themselves; it is left to them to unhinge uncritical knowledge and/or redress the epistemic erasure of alternate ways of knowing and thinking with and through difference. Women of colour, according to Smith (1992: 244), because of their “shared historical traditions and personal experiences” can become “subjects of (their) own research rather than objects” by “developing critical thinking and a critical consciousness” so as to challenge “patterns of oppression and domination”. Yet this kind of ‘retreat response’ from scholars, who do not share the identities of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women, is not necessarily the answer. It reproduces the narrow viewpoint that consciousness of oppression is inextricably connected to bearing an identity of oppression, which, in turn, ignores how particular identities, at particular times and in certain contexts, may be marginalised, privileged, and linked to the complex interplay of both freedom and control. It also removes White men and women’s responsibilities for addressing the lives of people different from themselves (Ratna, 2017; this volume), but it “ultimately paralyses meaningful discussion or advocacy” (Vertinsky and Captain, 1998: 536). As Vertinsky and Captain (1998: 536) eloquently state:
The final collection brings together voices and subjugated viewpoints from scholars, of various racial and ethnic backgrounds (English, and non-English speaking), geographies and personal and political sensibilities, who are working across various disciplinary boundaries and writing about the relationship between sport, physical culture, and the participation of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women. As a part of this process, we connected with a range of scholars both male and female. But we do acknowledge that the final collection does reflect ‘female’ voices, and this was by no means deliberate or intentional. We recognise the possibility for many male scholars to struggle for and against the material and cultural structures that have traditionally limited females. Nevertheless, those who proactively responded to our call for contributions happened to be female, and in similar and different ways, they privilege theoretical frameworks that ‘speak to them’, and which inform their methodological choices and methods, to provide new and original approaches to analysing sport, physical culture and the lives of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women.

**What’s in a name?**

Through this very personal and political project, we pondered long and hard about the use and misuse of labels. A pertinent place to begin this discussion is to state, overtly, that the girls and women at the centre of this edited collection constitute a minority or majority ethnic population within the national boundaries of their ‘home’. But regardless, and simultaneously, they are predominantly read and positioned as ethnic ‘Other’, meaning in this sense, ‘different to the White, female body’. Of course, the language which can be used to represent the heterogeneity of ethnic ‘Others’ is not tension-free. For instance, the terms ‘Black’ and ‘women of colour’ hold different cultural and political meanings for people in America and in England (Brah, 1996; Mirza, 1997). Yet, to find another term to capture the politics of diverse groups of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women is not straightforward either. For example, terms such as ethnic minority and ethnic majority; first world and third world; global north and global south; and one third world and two third worlds. For different reasons they can all be confusing and/or problematic. That is, differences between ‘them’ still become unintentionally masked and often universalised, and moreover, ‘they’ may represent a majority within a nation but still be publically and politically read and treated as minority: that is, ‘Other’ (Mohanty, 2003). Indeed, some groups of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women may
represent a minority within the nation, but their citizenship status means that they may view themselves as part of the social, cultural and political ‘majority’ (Brah, 1996). In this volume, the incorporation of diasporic groups within particular national boundaries is meant to trouble assertions about specific ethnic groups from ‘there’ (e.g. South and/or East Asia, South America and Africa) over ‘here’ (Australia/New Zealand, Europe and North America). We believe this elucidates the (re)construction of identities as not fixed to particular spaces (of origin) but dynamic and in tension across a number of transnational contexts, disrupting notions of core/periphery from both research and analysis (see e.g. Burdsey et al., 2013; Carrington, 2010, 2015; Joseph et al., 2012). Nevertheless, vernacular such as ‘West’ and ‘non-West’ are still common even though the processes of globalisation mean that those terms, in the late modern epoch, are becoming erroneous. The point is not to fragment the experience of different groups of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women, so that they are read as quintessentially different from one another. But to assert that despite the differences within and between groups, they nevertheless possess agency and resistive power which unites their struggles for visibility, representation and acceptability in/through sport and physical cultures. As editors, we adopt the term ethnic ‘Other’ to centre the politics of how different groups of girls and women make sense of their lived materialities. In this volume, we have given flexibility to contributing authors to make their own decisions about labels and naming practices, rather than to overly police selected nomenclature. Thus, the varied labels evident throughout this collection may reflect popular terminology across different moments in time, dominant discourses in the academic literature, common parlances used across different geo-political sites, and as self-selected by the participants included in and across the different chapters.

**Book structure**

The chapters included in this edited collection are bound together in similar and different ways; they shift our analytical gazes from the supposed ‘problems’ of female ethnic ‘Others’ to debates about broader discourses, language, practices and social systems which operate in/through the domains of sport and physical culture. That is, the mechanisms of sport and physical culture which work to position ‘them’ as marginal, and ‘Other’. This collection begins with a mapping the field chapter written by the editors, establishing what has been assumed to constitute the relationship between ethnic ‘Other’ females, sport and physical culture. We provide a theoretical critique of such work, reviewing persisting challenges and alternative ways of researching the lives and sporting preferences of different groups of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women. By mapping the developments across this field of study, we offer theoretical ingredients for
developing a counter-narrative to the prominent and problematic ways ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women are represented in/through sport and physical culture. The edited collection is then split into three key sections; that is, chapters that exemplify feminisms of the ethnic ‘Other’, stimulating debates about various disciplinary and methodological traditions as well as using connected theories and methods to critically read the lived, sporting, physical needs and desires of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women. The chapters are specifically structured as follows:

Theoretical interventions and knowledge production: research in this section draws on important theoretical interventions to studies of sport that are significant to international scholars of sociology, cultural studies, feminism, race, diaspora and ethnicity. For example, Black feminist thinking (Carter-Francique’s chapter) and Postcolonial feminist theories (Samie’s chapter) are used to elucidate the complex manifestations of structural relations of power and agency. The theories adopted are not just drawn from discourses predominant in the West, but also engage subjugated ideologies and perspectives that expose structures and cultures of control, exclusion and oppression, and centralise the advocacy of the subaltern. Both Carter-Francique and Samie invite us to cross boundaries of knowledge/discipline, to find other ways of critically engaging with the different, changing and complex lived realities of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women in sport. Meanwhile, Watson and Scraton draw on a critical feminist lens, to further (re)consider researching the sport and leisure experiences of ethnic ‘Others’ as White researchers. Their chapter not only lays bare the researchers’ desire to confront the implications of Whiteness, in and through scholarship about race, gender and sport/leisure, but demonstrates how racialised scripts pertaining to ‘Others’ and the privileged ‘White’ self can be questioned, and unhinged throughout the research process, so as to better facilitate knowledge deconstruction and reconstruction.

Experiences at the intersections of identity: the collection of knowledge in this section of the book aims to use relevant theories and concepts to unearth and unpack the multiply constituted nature of identities, giving voice to a range of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women (from different parts of the world) exploring the problems and possibilities of their sporting (and physical) engagements. Ratna, in her chapter, deconstructs and reconstructs, through an analysis of her own career, the intersections of race, gender and class. She argues that her outsider within status – as a British Asian woman in the elite, White and male spaces of academia – provides the creative energy to write back to systems and structures of domination, and representations of ethnic ‘Others’ more broadly in the field of sport studies. Nicholson explores the history of gendered and racialised myths of ‘difference’, that have arguably shaped the experiences of non-White female athletes right up to the present day. By consulting written diaries produced by White female cricketers, who participated in numerous
international cricket tours during the postwar period, Nicholson examines
the constructedness of White superiority. She further explores the effect
this construction of ‘Whiteness’ had when non-White cricketers were
encountered. Rana, through the kickboxing engagements of Dutch-
Moroccan women, focuses upon the geographical, social and pious context
of their bodily choices and experiences, presenting a narrative that speaks
back to the Dutch government’s neoliberal, integrationist rhetoric.

Everyday struggles and transformative practice: chapters in this section
of the book employ theoretical lenses and different methodologies in order
to centre the perspectives of ethnic ‘Other’ females, and their roles in the
shaping and making of their sporting engagements as either coaches, fans,
players, etc. Instead of viewing ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women as docile,
and sport as a fixed and repressive body of power, the chapters in this
section address the transformative agencies of ethnic ‘Other’ females. Thus
they explore the structural continuities and changes that have impacted
different ethnic ‘Other’ women’s engagements with physical culture and
sport. Jamieson and Choi – using a Chicana feminist lens – powerfully do
this by re-addressing the neoliberal and consumptive goals of ‘a global girl
project’, in order to contextualise the career of Mexican golfer Reina
Ochoa and her disidentifying manoeuvres in/ through the professional
game. Erhart, drawing upon the intersection of discourses about gender
and ethnicity, reveals the pleasures and resistant practices of Turkish,
Muslim women fans of men’s football. Both of these chapters rely on and
access knowledge contained in articles not written in English. Finally,
Rankin-Wright and Norman critically debate the problems and possibil-
ities of being a Black and/or South woman in/ across the predominantly
White and male spaces of the coaching workforce, in the UK. The authors,
using Critical Race Theory and a Black feminist theoretical approach,
make visible their research participants’ struggles for recognition and
respect.

Authors of this edited collection overall push the boundaries of know-
ledge production, to go deeper into their interrogations of hidden, complex
and contested ways of understanding ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women’s
relationships to sport and physical culture. From this basis, we invite other
scholars to join this dialogue, to work from our different social, geographic
and political positionings as well as disciplinary boundaries in order to
continue to advance a critical reading of the sporting, physical and social
worlds of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women. We recognise this process may
engender epistemological tensions. But nevertheless, we urge scholars
within and beyond the sociocultural studies of sport and physical culture,
to take up this challenge, creating spaces in our scholarship to ‘speak to’
and ‘hear our each other’ into transformative knowledge production and
practice (Vertinsky and Captain, 1998: 536; see also Ratna and Samie,
Chapter 1 of this volume; Ratna et al., 2017). In this vein, we call for our
engagements in research to be politically motivated, using our research for humanitarian ends, and to make sport and physical culture truly inclusive and empowering for all those who may wish to be involved, in whichever way, and for whatever purpose.

Of course, as is quite often the nature of edited collections, we were unable to include or represent the experiences of many ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women, who remain overlooked in the academies of sport and knowledge production. Here we consider the political quests of intersex Indian athletes (Mitra, 2014), the feminine and national sensibilities of elite Japanese women footballers (Ho, 2014), the physical cultural practices of girls and women living across different parts of South America (Filho and Rubio, 2012), the imperial, indigenous, and new migration context of sport and physical culture for ethnic ‘Other’ females in Australia and New Zealand (Palmer and Masters, 2010; Nemani and Thorpe, 2016), and female participation in sport and physical cultures in the changing post-apartheid context of South Africa (Hargreaves, 2000; Pelak, 2005). Further still, we are cognisant of the under-representation of the lives and identities of minoritised White groups, who experience similar forms of racial and ethnic Othering, as well as the absence of testimonies pertaining to the experiences of dual heritage or multi-heritage groups of women within and across different national and diasporic boundaries. As Washington (1990: 32) states, these kinds of “heroic voices, and heroic images of ... [minoritised women and girls] (have been) suppressed”, from institutions of research and knowledge production, as well as institutions of sport, and yet their “heroism” is what many within those culture depend on “for its survival” (see also Hargreaves, 2000). Nevertheless, we hope that the theoretical and empirical insights developed in this volume will stimulate further research about female ethnic ‘Others’ and their relationships with sport and physical culture.

References


Chapter 1

Mapping the field
Research about ethnic ‘Other’ females, sport and physical culture

Aarti Ratna and Samaya Farooq Samie

Introduction

This chapter critically charts research about race, gender and sport, particularly as it pertains to the representation of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women’s voices, identities and experiences in sport and physical culture. In mapping developments in the field, our objectives are twofold. First, to interrogate the theoretical interjections and critical turns in knowledge production, that shape the predominant representations of different groups of ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women, across time and space. And second to critically assess the theoretical contours that have broadened knowledge, and expose moments when researchers have (perhaps inadvertently) limited the possibility for further ‘critical’ insights to be produced. We begin with a broad debate about sport, race relations and gender, and emphasise the omission of knowledge about ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women during the 1970s and 1980s, as well as the largely positivistic, androcentric, assimilationist, ethnocentric and Eurocentric thinking which has colonised much of the scholarship in the sociology of sport. Moving on from this, we problematise both the reproduction of dominant discourses about (some) ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women and the cultural institution of sport. Reflecting on subjugated knowledges and the agencies of ethnic ‘Other’ females, we critically debate the turn in knowledge production which sensitises the politics of difference and intersectionality. The final section of this chapter provides a critique of the growing body of scholarship about ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women, sport and physical culture, since the turn of the millennium produced in, by and predominantly for Western countries. Although the narrative developed is generally ordered from past to present, we do not suggest that shifts in knowledge production are by any means linear, becoming more progressive with the march of time (see Caudwell, 2011). Instead, we note that the process has been rather patchy and is characterised by peaks and troughs in critical understanding as well as progressions and regressions in theoretical engagement, in and across particular moments of time. Whilst we attempt to provide a critical review
Mapping the field: ethnic ‘Other’ females

of pertinent scholarly work written about particular gendered ethnic ‘Other’ groups, we remain mindful of one important fact: that this reflection cannot be deemed ‘complete’ by any means. Oppressive forces of power and control will be experienced differentially in and between ethnic ‘Other’ girls and women, and we do want to conflate and/or universalise group experiences (see below for further debate). Yet we cannot review the particular histories, voices, dynamic and manifold experiences of every group – who may fall within the ethnic ‘Other’ female label – in one chapter either. Instead, our intention for this chapter is to examine the interplay between structural determinants and systems of power, and the complexities and vagaries of particular ethnic ‘Other’ female experiences, and their agentic beings and becomings, purely as a means to illustrate critical issues and turns in knowledge production. This is our critical reading, but one which we sincerely hope provides an avenue and platform for other scholars who may also wish to further interrogate such issues in their own studies as well as to interrogate what this may mean for the sporting, physical needs, pleasures, experiences and endeavours of different groups, within and across broader ethnic ‘Other’ female groupings.

Sport, race relations and gender: the problems and perils of categorical research

In 1989 Birrell published what many sports scholars deem to be a canonical text in sport studies. Race Relations Theories in Sport heightened awareness about the extent to which the complex issues of race, ethnicity, cultural difference and so on were either being obscured or explored superficially. When we first encountered this text in the early 2000s, being amongst a handful of non-White feminist (and female) scholars trying to get ahead in what remains a predominantly White, masculinist institution, we embraced it for many reasons. We were concerned about the ways in which issues of race, ethnicity and gender had traditionally been documented (by White, Western researchers, in and through selected epistemological, ontological and methodological traditions) written in and predominantly produced for English speaking countries (or ‘the West’). That earlier discussions of racial and gendered tropes were replete with a plethora of omissions, inaccuracies and misrepresentations about non-White women and girls, and their multifarious relationships to sport and physical culture. Yet at the time of Birrell’s publication, little attention had been placed on such issues. Only a handful of critical sport scholarship about non-White women and girls even existed within the sub-discipline of sport sociology, or sport and leisure studies (see e.g. Douglas, 1988a, 1988b; Raval, 1989; Trivedi, 1984), and most of what was produced was unpublished (and therefore not widely available to the general public, or for citation in scholarly or other intellectual contexts) (e.g. Abney, 1988;
Alexander, 1978; Barclay, 1979; Murphy, 1980). Some critical literature about minoritised females did exist, but it was published in cultural studies or mainstream sociology, and did not deal with sport per se. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, for instance, Black feminist theorists were critiquing the essentialism and the referentiality in theorising ‘woman’ in (secular, liberal) feminist theory and political activity (Davis, 1981; Feminist Review, 1984) and Black feminist politics were taking aim at the concept of “global sisterhood” for its failure “to fully take on board the power relations that divided” women (Brah and Phoenix, 2004: 76). (South) Asian feminists, too, were vigorously challenging the essentialist connotations of racism, rejecting in particular universalist theories of ‘Other’ women’s identity as unjust and oppressive (Amos and Parmar, 1984; Grewal et al., 1988; Trivedi, 1984). However, sports scholars rarely engaged with this broader spectrum of feminist thinking and/or critical studies of race, controlling and limiting, in turn, the ways that ethnic ‘Other’ women and girls’ engagement with sport was known and understood (both within and beyond the sporting literature).²

Instead, sport was romanticised as an arena for social and civic progress, and positioned as an essential ‘social service’ and an integral feature of ‘social planning in Britain’ (Coghlan and Webb, 1990; DoE, 1975). That is, sport was portrayed as an arena for racial progress, a force for good (Carrington, 2010). Issues of racial inequalities were explored idiosyncratically and represented as a ‘thing’ that Black men were believed to live with as the otherwise meritocratic system of sport adapted and adjusted (see Birrell, 1989). During the 1960s and 1970s, researchers sought to develop “a generalized sociological framework for the analysis of race, racism and race relations” (Jarvie and Reid, 1997: 213; see also Cashmore, 1996), but gender was rarely considered as a relevant or necessary area of social inquiry. The persistence of racial myths and fallacies about ‘natural’ physical strengths, and ‘intellectual’ inadequacies of certain (male) cultural groups (e.g. African Americans) dominated the literature (e.g. Kane, 1971). As Wiggins (1989: 158) noted, “people from all walks of life – coaches, athletes, trainers, cultural anthropologists, psychologists, sociologists, physical educators, biologists, medical doctors, and sportscasters” were putting forward “their own theories regarding racial differences and their possible effects on sport performance”, especially as it related to Black (male) athletes. Likewise, quantitative studies that privileged androcentric and positivistic epistemologies erased females from this documented knowledge, and rarely critiqued the character of racial oppressions either. For example, researchers seldom questioned the production of “stereotypes, prejudices and myths about ethnic minority groups” and the various contributions this type of thinking had on strengthening discrimination against, and legitimising the under-representation of ethnic minority peoples within certain sports (Jarvie and Reid, 1997: 211; see also Coakley,