**Praxis Paper**

Grade nine Physical Education teachers are required to describe skills and strategies that can be used to prevent or respond to situations of verbal, physical, and social bullying (ex: racial teasing or conflict, homophobic comments, gender-based violence, etc.) according to the 2015 Ontario Health and Physical Education Curriculum (C3.3). The goal of our Multiliteracies Project is to provide teachers with a platform from which they can educate students on racism, sexism and discrimination in sports.

The lesson that we have developed allows students to draw back on their own preconceived stereotypes pertaining to sports. The public service announcement then puts these stereotypes to rest and educates students on how everyone deserves an equal opportunity in sport. Through class discussion and additional research, students are to think of previous athletes who have broken barriers in sport, study their characteristics and think of strategies to end discrimination in sports. The teacher should facilitate all class discussion but allow the students to collaboratively complete the work with no teacher assistance.

Sexism in sport is unfortunately a bigger global issue than one may think. According to DiAngelo & Sensoy (2012)

“Girls and women in sports are not taken seriously in the mainstream culture…once girls who are highly interested in sports reach puberty, a new pressure to establish their heterosexuality emerges…The stereotype of women hockey players not being female follows Wickenheiser, as it does all female players” (p. 85).

The reason to address sexism in sport in the grade nine curriculum is to allow female athletes to be comfortable in their own skin and make them understand it is totally acceptable to compete in sports. By educating students there is no need for female athletes to establish their heterosexuality while competing in sports, we as teachers are trying to end stereotypes in mainstream culture and make sports more inclusive for everybody.

In summary, this Multiliteracies Project provides teachers with an educational tool in order to bring forward social justice issues that exist in sports. Specifically showcasing equality and hope for racial, gender and sexual orientation and ability barriers and stereotypes in sports. Furthermore, it disproves assumptions students may hear in the media about different types of races and sexes connected to certain sports and makes students realize every athlete is labelled whenever they participate in physical activity. Not only can teachers use the screening of the video as a motivational tool, they can use it as an informational tool requiring students to research the history of stereotypes and discrimination in sports along with thinking of various strategies to disrupt this type of behaviour. We feel implementing this lesson in a grade nine class will send a powerful message to the students and they can apply what they learned here throughout the remainder of their high school years to make the school a more inclusive environment.

References

Sensoy, O. & DiAngelo, R. (2012). *Is everyone really equal? An introduction to key concepts in*

*social justice education.* Teachers College, Columbia University, New York: Teachers

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