

WOMEN IN SPORTS JOURNALISM: A “VISION BEYOND THE SURFACE”?

MULHERES NO JORNALISMO ESPORTIVO: UMA “VISÃO ALÉM DO ALCANCE”?

MUJERES EN EL PERIODISMO DEPORTIVO: ¿UNA VISIÓN MÁS AMPLIA Y PROFUNDA?

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Keywords:
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Abstract: Despite being a majority in Brazilian newsrooms, women still seem to be a minority in sports departments. News about female sports and athletes are also a minority on the media. By using the methodology of oral history and interviewing ten sports journalists from Curitiba (Paraná, Brazil), we intend to better understand the social point of collision between three distinct and interrelated fields: sport, gender and media, focusing on the difficulties they face in their jobs and the processes they use to select information with potential to become news. In their speeches, they reproduce the journalistic production model under capitalist and male dominance in sport, also subject to pressures.

Palavras chave:
Jornalismo.
Esportes.
Identidade de gênero.
Meios de comunicação.

Resumo: Apesar de serem maioria nas redações jornalísticas brasileiras, as mulheres ainda são, aparentemente, minoria nas editorias de esportes dos meios de comunicação. Também são minoria as reportagens sobre esportes e atletas femininos. Visamos melhor compreender, utilizando a metodologia da História Oral, com entrevistas de dez jornalistas da área esportiva em Curitiba (Paraná, Brasil), o ponto de embate social entre três campos distintos e inter-relacionados: esporte, gênero e mídia, sobre as dificuldades que elas encontram em seus trabalhos e quais processos utilizam para selecionar as informações com força para se tornarem notícias. Em seus relatos, verificou-se que reproduzem o modelo de produção jornalístico sob a dominância masculina e capitalista no esporte e que também estão sujeitas a pressões.

Palabras clave:
Periodismo.
Deportes.
Identidad de género.
Medios de comunicación.

Resumen: Aunque son mayoría en el ámbito periodístico brasileño, las mujeres todavía son, probablemente, minoría en las secciones de deportes de los medios de comunicación. También son menos los reportajes sobre deportes y atletas femeninas. Este trabajo tiene como objetivo entender mejor, utilizando la metodología de la Historia Oral, con entrevistas a diez periodistas deportivas en Curitiba (Paraná, Brasil), cuál es el punto de enfrentamiento social entre tres campos distintos y relacionados entre sí: deporte, género y medios de comunicación, centrándose en las dificultades que encuentran en su trabajo y qué procesos utilizan para seleccionar la información con potencial de convertirse en noticia. En sus relatos, se constató que reproducen el modelo de producción periodístico bajo la dominación masculina y capitalista en el deporte y que también están sujetas a presiones.

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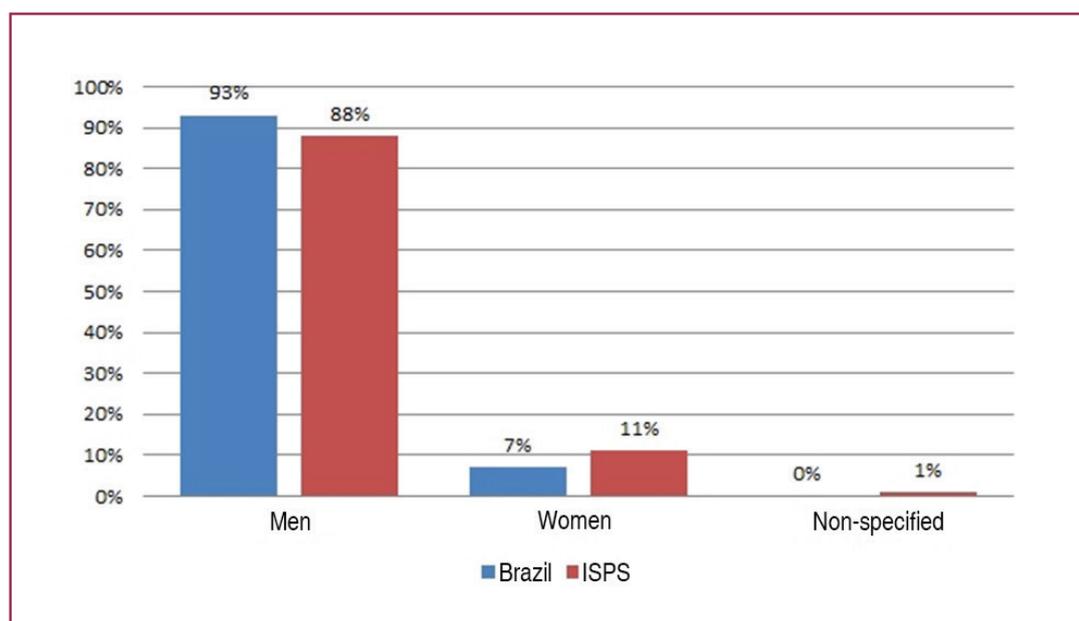
1 INTRODUCTION

In Brazil, women are a majority in newsrooms, occupying senior positions in media outlets. According to a survey released by the National Federation of Journalists (BERGAMO *et al.*, 2013), they are 64% of professionals in newsrooms while they continue being a minority in sports desks.

Considering the difficulty in finding data,¹ it is not possible to determine what proportion of male and female journalists work in Brazilian sports desks. However, a survey by the *German Sport University Cologne* (HORKY; NIELAND, 2011), the *International Sports Press Survey* (ISPS) points out that only 8% of journalistic texts in sports coverage worldwide are signed by women. In Brazil, they are only 7%.

The same survey showed that sports journalism is a man's world also in its topics: 85% of news stories published in newspapers from 22 countries² are about male athletes and sports while only 9% of it are about female athletes and sports (the other 6% did not specify gender).

Figure 1 – Gender profile in signed news stories in sports supplements



Source: apublica.org 2012.

We are interested in investigating how female journalists develop their work in a predominantly male field on a topic that is predominantly male, i. e. sport.

These are three separate but interrelated fields: genre, journalism and sport. For sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1983, p. 90), the structure of the field “[...] is a state of balance of power between agents or institutions engaged in the fight or, if one prefers, the distribution of the specific capital that, by being accumulated in the course of previous fights, guides subsequent strategies”. A field is found in the constitution and definition of its objects of dispute and their specific interests. According to Bourdieu (1983), the sporting field comes from a (progressive or not) break of ancestral recreational

¹ Neither Brazil's National Federation of Journalists (FENAJ) nor the Brazilian Association of Sports Writers (ABRACE) have updated figures on the number of members of each sex registered in both organizations.

² The ISPS evaluated 17,777 articles from 81 newspapers from April to July 2011. In Brazil, it evaluated 556 articles from newspapers *O Globo* (RJ), *Tribuna de Minas* (MG) and *Meia-Hora* (RJ).

activities, until it becomes an area of specific practices where an entire culture or a specific competency is placed or invested. However, it emerges predominantly through the male gender.

Despite not working exactly with the concept of gender,³ Bourdieu (2007) approaches the issue of male domination from a symbolic perspective, as a particular form of violence in which biology and bodies would be spaces where sex inequality would be naturalized: “The fundamental principles of the androcentric worldview are naturalized as elementary positions and dispositions of the body that are perceived as natural expressions of natural tendencies” (BOURDIEU, 2007, p. 156).

Being a predominantly male space, sport is a field in which the power of male domination appears with:

[...] Symbolic violence, gentle violence that is insensitive and invisible to its own victims, which is exercised primarily by the purely symbolic paths of communication, knowledge or, more precisely, discovery, recognition or, in the final instance, feeling” (BOURDIEU, 2007, p. 8).

Therefore, it is no surprise that Coakley (2007, p. 246) states that “[...] sport participation among girls and women will not continue to increase automatically, naturally. [...] In most cultures, there is a tendency to give priority to male sports and athletes. This is because **the world of sports is usually dominated by, identified with and centered on men**” (our translation and emphasis added).

Being interested in investigating how female journalists work in sports desks, we also want to find out which criteria they use to select information with potential to become news,⁴ using the following question-problem: how, in their work, do those professionals follow the approaches commonly addressed by male journalists in sports coverage or seek to contribute in any way to define their topics of interest/assignments⁵ and the news stories they sign to give greater gender equity to what is published about sports?

To this end, we chose to interview women who are sports journalists. The group who contributed to this research included professionals with academic training in Social Communication/Journalism working in sports desks of media outlets in the city of Curitiba⁶ in the first half of 2013.

The interviews used Oral History as their methodology, since it “launches life into history itself, thus widening its field of action [...]; it brings history into the community and draws history from the community” (THOMPSON, 1998, p. 44-45). We chose the thematic type of oral history where “interviews mainly concern respondents’ participation in the chosen theme. [...] it is suitable for themes with a relatively well defined status in respondents’ life trajectory” (ALBERTI, 2005, p. 37-38).

A guiding script of questions was created for the interviews, which included questions in four areas: personal trajectory in sports journalism; choice of news topics and what influences their decisions about what is newsworthy; women in sports journalism; media coverage of women’s sport.

³ Gender construction takes place through the dynamics of social relations. Humans are constructed as such only in relation to others (SAFFIOTI, 1992, p. 210).

⁴ “News are a combination of (1) importance and (2) interest. [...] Information will be stronger – and more attractive to readers – the more it has of these two characteristics”. (PINTO, 2009, p. 60). Other criteria that strengthen news include: originality; unlikelihood; usefulness, appeal, empathy; conflict, prominence.

⁵ According to Nilson Lage (2003), *pautas*, or topics of interest/assignments include: a) planning an edition (in newsrooms organized as desks – city, politics, economy, sports) by listing facts to be covered in the news and issues to be addressed in news stories reports; b) each of the items of this planning when assigned to a reporter.

⁶ Capital of the southern Brazilian state of Paraná, with 1.76 million inhabitants, the city with the 4th highest GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and the 10th highest IDH-M (municipal human development index) in the country. (ATLAS BRASIL, 2013, available at http://www.pnud.org.br/IDH/Atlas2013.aspx?indice=1&li=li_Atlas2013 Accessed on: September 12, 2013).

Respondents' accounts allow activating a group's collective memory, considering that when a person provides a description of his or her experiences, they do so regarding specific time, place and social context. And, as pointed out by Meihy (2011, p. 14), oral History, by availing itself of memory, "[...] establishes links with the identity of the respondent group and thus refers to the construction of related communities" – in this case, female sports journalists. He points out that the sum of interviews with the same set of participants alone does not assign the "social" or "collective" character, but rather the repetition of certain factors that ultimately characterize collective memory.

The use of individual interviews in respondents evokes information on what they lived as recorded by memory itself. Pollak (1992) states that memory is a collective and social phenomenon built collectively and subjected to fluctuations, transformation, constant changing, as well as an integral part of identity. Precisely because it is a socially and individually constructed phenomenon, it is very closely connected to the sense of identity taken in its most superficial sense, which is the sense of the image of oneself, for oneself and for others.

Though Oral History, we seek identity elements of the group of journalists, which point out how they work in their area regarding sports coverage and gender. By also evoking their narratives about their work routine, we aim at seeking, in their memory, how their behavior influences the definition of what will be news or not and from which point of view.

2 THE JOURNALISTIC FIELD AND SPORT

Note, however, that the "male reserve"⁷ in the sports field is justified not by the biology of men's and women's bodies, but by social, cultural and historical aspects (BOURDIEU, 2007). Jay Coakley (2007) states that sport is a reflection of the social world while constituting that world. It is the place where social worlds are produced, reproduced and changed. For the author, specialized journalism in the field must record and publish for society, in a contemporary way, the facts that are produced, reproduced and changed by sport:

Sports journalists are key in this construction process because **representations of sport can influence the ideas and beliefs** that people use to define and ascribe meaning to themselves, [...] (COAKLEY, 2007, p. 432, our translation and emphasis added).

At the same time, Bourdieu (1997) says that the world of journalism has its own field – a microcosm with its own laws and which is defined by its position in the global world and the attractions and repulsions it suffers from the other microcosms. That is why it is critical to understand the practice of those who are part of that field and what mechanisms to use to make it work and produce its main product – news.

Trying to unravel the processes that make an event newsworthy – that is, contributions that appeal to journalists and which are considered relevant for publication – is one of communication theories' interests that focuses on information senders and on media's production logic.

Thinking about how journalists select what may be newsworthy, we wrote the question script for the interviews with female sports journalists in Curitiba, seeking more information on whether gender equality is one of the evaluation criteria considered to produce news stories.

⁷ Based on the example of rugby in British society, Eric Dunning (1992) points out that sports with the highest rates of aggression and violence have become one of the few areas of male identity reserve.

For Tuchman (1983), journalists’ common sense system of thought formulates a professional work logic according for which a newspaper’s role is to provide accounts of events in a narrative way. But how can we choose newsworthy stories from a plurality of daily events?

Pierre Bourdieu (1997, p. 25) states that journalists wear “special glasses” through which they see certain events and not others. Such glasses are an analogy to the criteria that make a fact more or less newsworthy – the “news values”. The more an event meets those qualities, the higher its chances of being published in the newspaper:

News values are qualities of events or their journalistic construction whose relative absence or presence recommends them for inclusion in the news product. The more of such qualities a story exhibits, the greater its chances of inclusion. (GOLDING-ELLIOTT, 1979, 114)

3 THE PARTICIPANTS: FEMALE SPORTS JOURNALISTS IN CURITIBA

Ten journalists who worked in sports desks of Curitiba-based media outlets in the first half of 2013 were selected as participants. Their average age⁸ was 27.9. All of them have college degrees and five took specialization courses. One holds the position of publisher, one is a free-lancer, and the others are reporters. They are 15% of professionals in their desks. Two of them work in printed newspapers (both as reporters); one through the Internet (as a free-lancer); three work in television (one desk editor and two reporters), and four work in radio (all of them are reporters). Only one has children (two); she and two other respondents are married while the others are single.

We did not include journalists who worked as freelancers or in press offices or who only worked as sports programs anchors, without participating in definition of news topics, reports and editing. College-level academic training in Communications was considered a factor for inclusion. Interviews were conducted face to face between May and June 2013 and recorded on a digital audio recorder with participants’ consent.

Since most of them do not hold senior positions, decisions on content to be published and finalization of the news reports signed by them are subjected to edition by their bosses and may be changed in form and content.

Lack of career advancement perspective in the media in which they work also stands out in their accounts. The most experienced one, 38-year-old newspaper reporter 1, has been a reporter for ten years and has no interest in rising to the position of desk editor because it would demand more hours of her day and thus make it more difficult for her to raise her two children.

Today my personal life conflicts with my professional life. And we have a commitment [to work] that is greater than in other areas because our schedules are like that. Today I even think of leaving the field because of the conflict with my family”. (Newspaper reporter 1, 38, emphasis added).

Salary increase, she said, would not be proportional. Other reporters mentioned their desire to be mothers and the lack of a clear career path in the companies where they work as critical factors in their profession. In common, their liking sports before having journalist careers was what led them to those positions.

I chose sports journalism because I’ve practiced sports since I was a child, tennis, swimming, [...] I wanted a profession that allowed me to keep connected to

⁸ Journalists’ names will not be disclosed. They will be referred to by the type of media in which they work (e. g. newspaper reporter 1).

sport. [...] **I've had the opportunity to leave Curitiba [to work] and didn't want to; my focus today is much more on my family** and that is why I intend to remain as a reporter. (TV reporter 1, 27, emphasis added).

Those speeches are examples that motherhood and family as institutions are virtually exclusive regarding work. Those respondents still seem to think that biological reproduction needs contribute to determine the symbolic organization of the social division of labor. However, Bourdieu (2007, p. 33) points out that this arbitrary construction of biology, of male and female bodies and their functions, "gives a seemingly natural foundation to the androcentric vision of the division of sex labor and the sexual division of labor".

Those women were willing to enter a field long dominated by men and even though that entry appears to have been peaceful, they raise constant suspicion about their ability to match men's work in quality. They learn to use that by distinguishing themselves for the tasks performed:

What we see is journalists with pretty faces presenting sports programs on TV. But in journalism itself, in the field, or going to cover other sports, I think men who are in sports journalism, especially older ones, do not believe that women can work well, and listeners, readers do not believe it also. (Radio reporter 4, 24, emphasis added).

Respondents reported having high decision-making power in the choice of which topics will be covered. Only one said she had little influence on those decisions. Four of them said they had high decision power and five said they had full autonomy to change what was originally proposed and even to "drop the topics" (stories without enough news value for publication). When asked about which factors matter for a topic to be newsworthy (which increases the news values of information in sports desks), they answered: coverage and match results; unprecedented achievements; stories of people overcoming difficulties; stories of local athletes with national and international prominence⁹.

Worthy topics for TV are good stories that are of interest to the public. When I started on TV, **I was often told to 'take the information from the text'**. [...] You must have a **narrative** and try to embellish that narrative with curiosities. (TV reporter 1, 27, emphasis added).

All journalists said that gender is not taken into account when defining news topics, even though they frequently mention that female sports journalist have a "typical viewpoint" as their distinguishing feature.

But this distinct focus does not refer to other women in the sports field, but rather to their own ability, as women, to use attributes commonly seen as female as factors to help them at work. Seven of them pointed out that women add that peculiar vision to sport journalism:

Women have visions beyond the surface. Men have very practical visions of things, they'll do the lead.¹⁰ Women have a more romanticized view and can see beyond the topics defined, thus exploring the stories better. Since they are a minority [in sports desks], they can see that women are a minority in sports. (Radio reporter 1, 24).

I think it's natural [that women] are more sensitive. They see a match differently [from man]. **They add a bit of lightness, softness. Maybe not just the numbers, the [athletes'] marks; they have very high sensitivity** to see the athlete, the person, they can humanize them. (Newspaper reporter 1, 38, emphasis added).

⁹ We take into account media coverage of local facts: even a sport with little media appeal gains space in the agenda because it serves the local news coverage.

¹⁰ The first paragraph of a news article. One of the techniques used to build a lead is the "inverted pyramid", where the "text begins with what is most relevant and ends with the least important", thus ranking the information (PINTO, 2009, p. 202). The classic lead answers the following questions: Who? What? Where? When? How? Why? What for?

Respondents indicated that sports that provide more news topics are football, followed by volleyball, Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) and auto racing. This order is consistent with surveys like that conducted by market research firm Nielsen Sports. It shows that in 2012, men’s football occupied 60% of media space devoted to sports (BRUM, 2013). ISPS shows that in 2011, 74.6% of sports stories were about football, followed by Formula 1 (3.3%) (HORKY; NIELAND, 2011).

Table 1 – Most recurrent Sports in sports media in Brazil and in the World

Sports on the news	Brazil (% in newspapers)	ISPS (% in newspapers)
Football	74.6%	40.5%
Formula 1	3.3%	2.2%
Volleyball	2.8%	0.6%
Swimming and water sports	2.6%	0.7%
Tennis	2.6%	7.6%
Street running	1.9%	2.3%
Martial arts and wrestling	1.8%	0.5%
Other motor sports	1.4%	2.1%
Basketball	1.1%	3.6%
Equestrian sports	0.9%	2.3%
Cycling	0.7%	3.7%
Boxing	0.4%	1.8%
Bodybuilding and fitness	0.2%	0.1%

Source: apublica.org, 2012

The coverage is so focused on football that three of the four journalists working in radio cover only that sport, as well as the journalist who coordinates the website. They point out market demand as the reason for such dominance: “We first consider popular appeal, its relevance to people. The flagship of our program is football” (TV desk editor, 26).

These words confirm what Wanderlei Marchi Junior (2001, p. 26-27) highlights in Bourdieu’s discourse on spectacularization of sport:

Modern sports [...] are institutional practices built for social actors with varied and distinct potential for consumption, expressed by the demands within the field. On this wake, the sporting phenomenon happens to be governed by relations typical of the market logic, in which sports are led to the spectacularization and commodification process.

4 AN EXAMPLE OF MALE DOMINATION: SPORTS JOURNALISM

Pierre Bourdieu (2007, p. 44) states that the androcentric view is continually legitimized “[...] by the practices which it determines itself: because its provisions result from the incorporation of **unfavorable bias** against women, set up in the order of things, women cannot but confirm such prejudice” (emphasis in the original).

Even though they consider that they hold high decision-making power over their news topics, 80% of respondents said they see constraints in a field occupied by men only during decades. This wealth of contradictions is possibly generated by the methodology of Oral History: one sees a hidden clash of forces that happens unconsciously to the speech’s narrator, but is

marked on it. They described bias situations from sources¹¹ and colleagues:

No one is surprised to see a guy talking about football, but when it's a woman, people are surprised. [...]. **I've felt embarrassed to say that I am a sports journalist on a first date. It has to do with them finding me masculine** or the guy feeling inferior. (Radio reporter 1, 24, emphasis added).

The interviewee usually doubts that you know the subject, he does that look of suspicion, of superiority, he doesn't pay much attention to the question. (Radio reporter 2, 27, emphasis added).

Such attitudes by male athletes and fellow journalists demonstrate repudiation to an invasion of their manly space – sport – disrespected by the inclusion of a woman journalist. In contrast, nine respondents said they have had privilege in access to information:

Once, interviewing a coach was pretty hard. Beat reporters,¹² commentators, narrators tried and no one could do it. The team decided that I was going to call him precisely because of that [being a woman] and bingo! I called him, said who I was, and the guy talked to me very well. (Radio reporter 3, 24).

The guy wants to please the girl, and if [the interviewee] doesn't talk to a man, he'll talk to you. A woman with a knack can do it. (Radio reporter 4, 20).

This “advantage” was recognized by most respondents, who said this is because of men's respect for women. They point out behavioral characteristics viewed as “female” as factors for gaining more space in sports desks. Bourdieu (2007, p. 43) states that “[...] the only way women can exercise power is by turning their own force against strong people [...]” and with the strategies women use, they remain dominated, for the set of symbols and mythical agents they set in motion originate in an androcentric vision.

Women's entry in the field of sports journalism did not intensify until the 1990s. Respondents highlighted two factors that contribute to the increase of the number women in sports desks: 1) the possibility of occupying a space that men have relinquished and 2) newspaper companies' answer to society by “balancing” their teams with greater diversity: “Women doing male sports coverage is starting to become common. But men [journalists] going to volleyball, gymnastics, fancy diving ... **There are still reporters who don't want to cover 'girl's sports'.**” (Radio reporter 2, 27, emphasis added).

The fact that they are a minority in sports desks and few of them hold leadership positions in the field contributes to keep a “traditional” look at gender issues when it comes to selecting news topics, according to one of the reporters:

The male majority in newsrooms contributes to a greater focus on male sports. **News topics are mostly selected by men.** [...] The guy who does the selection does not worry too much about innovation, he'll give what the public wants to consume. (Radio reporter 1, 24).

5 FEMALE JOURNALISTS AND COVERAGE OF WOMEN'S SPORTS

In addition to claiming not to include gender as one of the news values in selection of topics, respondents pointed out distinct news approach when it comes to male and female athletes/teams:

¹¹ Sources of information: coaches and experts, informants, characters of the news story and analysts (PINTO, 2009, p. 181).

¹²Reporter in charge of covering a specific area, usually a football club.

There's always a touch of overcoming difficulties in news topics involving women. Because in high performance sport, we know it will be hard for women [to establish themselves] **unless they are beautiful and wonderful. It is much easier to treat men in a statistical way:** the best scorer, how he broke a record. (Newspaper reporter 1, 38, emphasis added).

We're recommended to push strongly that **feminine** side. [...] Besides showing the female athlete, it is **to show the feminine woman**, the woman who is a housewife but practices her sport; she practices auto racing, she fights judo, but she is also feminine. They tell us to see if she does her fingernails, if she wears shorts, if she takes care of her children. **If she's beautiful, it'll sell¹³ more.** (TV reporter 1, 31, emphasis added).

Respondents underscore that values like beauty and femininity are important for news stories on female sports. However, the “sales” relationship is not limited to the internal link between reporter and editor: information that reaches the largest audience possible has more news value, with the most attractive approach, even if it is not the most informative one: “We can have no illusions: **we also work with audience rates, we must have results of games, goals, players talking. Fans identify with it**” (TV editor, 26, emphasis added).

Ignacio Ramonet (1999, p. 11-12) regrets that this is the general situation of world media: a situation dominated by the market and profit. We live the time of “*press people*”, which adds another dimension to everyday facts: they are experienced by exemplary, famous human beings who belong to today's golden legend. Now, athletes correspond to such a profile and are exalted by the media for their celebrated results and their exemplary behavior.

Respondents' speeches reproduce a discourse of male competition as “normal” sports practice and female competition as secondary and sometimes atypical. “In male-centered sport, it is assumed that men are the center of attention without having to say it” (COAKLEY, 2007, p. 247). One of the respondents said that sports journalism contributes to that:

Not even women journalists see it [the presence of female athletes] naturally. Once I interviewed Cris Cyborg¹⁴ and I did it as if it [the fact that she fights] was strange, the way she had to face prejudice. **We sort of do a cycle, also contributing for it to remain uncommon.** (Radio reporter 1, 24, emphasis added).

The reasons why women's sports news assignments get a different tone – and extrapolate the competitive sphere, as quoted by the respondents – are a further indication of what Bourdieu (2007) points out as “incorporation of dominance” and end up reproducing an androcentric view.

Female journalists are included in newspapers' sports teams as long as they reproduce news models that were already in place before they arrived. Such dominant ideology is not only that of male dominance; it is also that of capitalist dominance: sometimes it emphasizes facts with potential to become good narratives, which hold public attention on the information content as “newsworthiness”.

Goellner (2007) reminds us that what defines the most suitable sport for a woman is not the body “itself” but the discourse built on the functionality of the body and its related association to socialization processes that cause and build such demarcations. Thus, the selection of topics that will become stories in newspapers and TV and radio news programs, as well as which angle will be highlighted for each story, are highly important issues for the representative construction of several factors, including gender.

¹³ In Brazil's journalistic jargon, it means to convince that the material produced deserves a special place.

¹⁴ MMA fighter from Curitiba.

6 FINAL REMARKS

Based on our interviews with female sports journalists, it is possible to say that, regarding the way they perform their work, they see themselves at a time of greater openness to women in sports journalism, believing in great autonomy to decide on the news topics they produce, although their speeches reveal that much of those decisions include their bosses' (mostly men) participation and other external factors such as the public's preference and audience rates.

We noticed that the reflection on gender equity regarding what is published in the media about sport is still fledgling. As reported by the respondents, they are in the process of gaining ground in sports desks, living with situations of prejudice from both their sources and colleagues (sometimes they do not even see such discriminatory situations). Bourdieu (2007, p. 110) points to the fact that although women are gaining ground in the labor market in many areas, their progress should not "[...] conceal men's corresponding advances, who cause that, as in a race with a handicap, the distance structure is maintained"; even where equality is seemingly reached, women are always in disadvantaged positions.

In light of this information, the situations of prejudice and lack of perspective for professional growth within sports journalism described by the respondents gain a more significant contour: while they celebrate acting in an area they chose, the professionals are in a field with low mutability and on which they can interfere little.

Sports news with selling value to the public end up much more committed to spectacle and entertainment, and the prime example is television production, where a story to be told is worth more than an informational piece, as one of the journalists said. Although they pointed out that their main contribution is women's "typical viewpoint", we can see that this vision is limited to constructing narratives of sports events without extending to a change in the editorial process of selection and implementation of news assignments.

Furthermore, we see that they reproduce news models in which the female athlete is often stereotyped with values based on sensitivity, fragility, beauty and under the shadow of men's competitions. Their responses show that in addition to gender not being a theme that pervades the choices of what is newsworthy, they unconsciously continue to produce pieces that reinforce the image of the "athlete, but feminine", thus contributing to maintain a sports model where women are a foreign element.

The female sports journalists from Curitiba showed in their speeches that it is not fully consciously that social values are reflected and reproduced. Therefore, those values are difficult to change in and through sport since, for example, in order for women to establish themselves in a mostly male field, they had to adopt strategies dictated by men to cover women's sports.

The fact that female journalists have pointed out that their list of priorities for news selection does not include gender in sport – whether it is for "balancing" the number of stories regarding gender or to question the approaches of traditional pieces proposed by the view of male journalists – shows that other social issues related to power struggle (even – and especially – non-explicit ones), such as ethnicity, social class, conditions of access to sport and sports policies, might lack journalists' critical assessment and reassessment of production criteria.

The interviews with the ten journalists, far from closing the issue (on the contrary!), serve as an initial investigation of future studies of relationships simultaneously involving gender, sport and media.

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