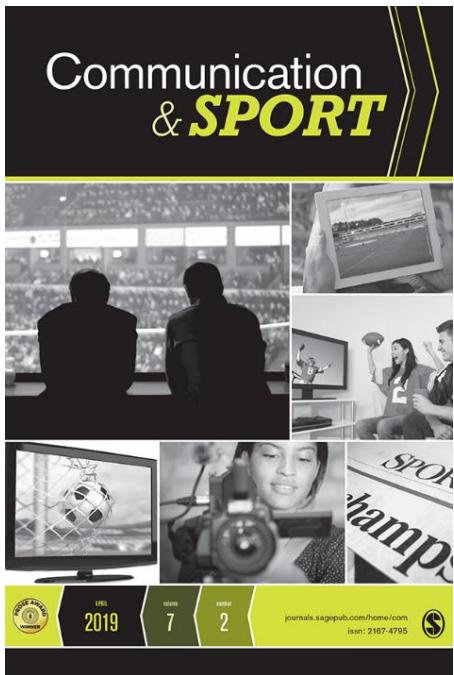


Communication & Sport

CALL FOR PAPERS

Special Issue on Sport Communication and Social Justice



About Communication & Sport

Communication & Sport is pleased to announce a Call for Papers for a Special Issue on “Sport Communication and Social Justice.” Now in its seventh year, *Communication and Sport* (C&S) is a cutting-edge, peer-reviewed bimonthly journal that publishes research to foster international scholarly understanding of the nexus of communication and sport. C&S publishes research and critical analysis from diverse disciplinary and theoretical perspectives to advance understanding of communication phenomena in the varied contexts through which sport touches individuals, society, and culture. In 2018, *Communication & Sport* was the winner of the prestigious PROSE Award as the Best New Journal in the Social Sciences. *Communication & Sport* has a current Clarivate Analytics two-year impact factor of 2.395 and is ranked 14/83 (Q1) in the Communication and 17/50 in Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism categories, ranking above many longstanding legacy journals in both Communication/Media and Sport Studies. Detailed information about *Communication & Sport* may be found at: <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/com>.

About the Special Issue *Sport Communication and Social Justice*

Sport has long been a conduit for societal debates on important and often contentious topics. In particular, media sport is a highly celebrated and influential constituent of popular culture that intersects with shifting political, economic, technological and cultural conditions (Whannel, 1992). This context creates tensions where mainstream media representations are framed around normative ‘accepted’ production practices by dominant organisations, which fosters an (in)visibility and marginalisation of non-normative groups around gendered, raced, disability and sexuality dynamics. These tensions are inexorably embedded in power, politics and issues of social justice.

At the same time – as Bell Hooks (1990) reminds us – marginality is not simply “a site of deprivation” but instead, it can also be “the site of radical possibility”. Here, leading athletes from traditionally marginalized groups have been able to seize on their visibility to highlight issues of inequality and discrimination through innovative, mediated and highly symbolic forms of protest, from Tommie Smith and John Carlos’s Black Power Salute at the 1968 Mexico City Olympics to Colin Kaepernick’s kneeling protest in 2016. Through social media, these iconic moments have started to transcend individual athletes’ activism and communities have coalesced around hashtags such as #takingaknee and the U.S. women soccer team’s high profile “Equal Play. Equal Pay” campaign.

While mainstream media organizations continue to play an important role in how these debates are framed, the emergence of new sport/digital media has the potential to disrupt dominant relations of power, offering renewed forms of ‘democratization’ and the prospect of meaningful change (Hutchins & Rowe, 2012, 2013; Wenner, 2015). Within a contemporary moment dominated by a highly commodified and corporatized media sport landscape, marginality can itself be re-fashioned as a commodity, centered on “celebritized” marginal subjects that can be exploited by media organisations and global sporting corporations for marketing and public relations purposes. For instance, consider the rainbow flag be-decked advertising campaigns from U.S. corporations Visa and Coca Cola that surrounded the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics following a repressive approach against LGBT rights activists by the Kremlin and Russian lawmakers.

Communication & Sport

Despite these memorable examples, discussions of activism, civic agency and social change have largely been the domain of the political sciences, sociology and political communication. Only relatively recently has the field of sport communication began to contribute to such debates, stimulated in part by the rapid expansion of digital and social media which has led to new ways of communicating in sporting cultures, a new visibility of cultural (counter / resistant) narratives, and mediated forms of democratic renewal. Importantly, following Dart (2012), this shifting sport media landscape has led to articulations of seemingly 'old issues' and cultural debates in new relatively distinct ways, bringing to the surface *original* critical questions in *new* emerging contexts. These are questions that focus on the nature of power, the way in which sport media serves to uphold, challenge, contest and negotiate dominant narratives within socio-political structures and the role and function of representation in effecting progressive social change.

In this special issue of *Communication & Sport*, we welcome theoretical and empirical inquiries that address the theme of "Sport Communication and Social Justice" by examining the following areas and other relevant topics:

- The emergence, resistance and contestation of new sport cultures via mainstream and alternative sport media platforms;
- The capitalization on – and exploitation of – marginalization and resistance in the context of a neo-liberalized enterprise sport media culture;
- The dynamics of public opinion and audience meaning-making with respect to sport, politics and social justice;
- The negotiation of identity politics in sport media representation; in particular, issues of (in)visibility (and resistance) of marginalized, non-normative groups who remain mostly under-represented in mainstream sport media (e.g. gender, race, disability, sexuality, etc.);
- The use of sporting platforms (media and sporting mega events) as a vehicle for social justice campaigns by activists, social movements, and other actors;
- The causes and consequences of athlete activism as symbolic protest;
- The role and function of sporting media representations (including self-representations and encounters between representations and reception practices) in addressing social justice issues;
- The role and function of non-mediated communication practices (interpersonal, group, organization) in effecting and generating social change in a sporting context.

Manuscript Submissions

Manuscripts for the special issue should be submitted beginning June 3rd 2019 and before October 1st 2019 at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/commsport> to facilitate full consideration. In the submission process, authors should highlight in their cover letter that the submission is for the "Sport Communication and Social Justice" special issue of *Communication & Sport* and choose "Sport Communication and Social Justice Special Issue" as the "Manuscript Type." Manuscripts should follow the Manuscript Submission Guidelines at <https://journals.sagepub.com/home/com>. All manuscripts will be subject to peer review under the supervision of the Special Issue Editors and Editor-in-Chief. Expressions of interest, abstracts for consideration, and questions may be directed to the Special Issue Editors: Dan Jackson (jacksond@bournemouth.ac.uk), Emma Pullen (epullen@bournemouth.ac.uk), Michael Silk (msilk@bournemouth.ac.uk) or Filippo Trevisan (trevisan@american.edu).