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## **Point/Counterpoint: Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

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## **Point / Counterpoint: Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

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### **Point One (Fairness): National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Board of Governors Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

I am looking forward to a spirited point/counterpoint regarding the NCAA (2022) policy on transgender sport participation. The NCAA Board of Governors voted in support of a sport-by-sport approach to transgender participation that preserves opportunity for transgender student-athletes while balancing fairness, inclusion, and safety for all who compete. The national governing bodies for each sport will determine policies for transgender participation (e.g., USA Swimming). The NCAA policy became effective in January. The policy requires transgender student-athletes to document sport specific testosterone levels beginning four weeks before their sport's championship selections. In the 2022-2023 competition season, transgender student-athletes will need documented testosterone levels at the beginning of their season, six months later, and four weeks before their sport's championship selections.

Throughout our point/counterpoint approach, I hope we can respectfully discuss various components of the NCAA policy and the impact this policy has on student-athletes, coaches, administrators, and a larger global audience. When reading the NCAA policy, there are three words that jump out at me – fairness, inclusion, and safety. I would like to begin with a discussion about fairness. In full disclosure, I personally struggle with this policy. My struggle centers mainly on the premise of fairness. There is a constant dialogue that exists in my head. This arises from my multiple roles in the arena of college sport. I am the co-founder of the Alliance of Social Workers in Sports (ASWIS). The mission of ASWIS (2022) is to promote individual and community well-being through partnerships between the profession of social work and the field of athletics. ASWIS focuses on partnerships in practice, research, and policy, with involvement and awareness in all areas where social work and sports systems intersect. Based on the deep commitment of ASWIS to the National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 2021) Code of Ethics, there is a shared position to support the dignity and worth of

individuals, to promote social justice, and to foster the importance of meaningful human relationships. This equates to an unwavering support to all transgender student-athletes.

From a second viewpoint, I am also the Head Men's and Women's Tennis Coach for an NCAA membership school. This is where I have a personal challenge with the concept of fairness. While there are many definitions of fairness that exist, I am placing an emphasis on competitive fairness. Sailors (2020) defines competitive fairness as a fundamental value in sport, even a prerequisite for the existence of sport. There should exist a reasonable chance of all participants to win, without such a chance, sport is neither competitive nor fair to the participants who are certain to lose (Pike, 2021). This topic of competitive fairness took centerstage with recent NCAA swimming competitions, where Lia Thomas set school and conference records in the pool.

Lia is a member of a growing number of transgender student-athletes. I respect Lia's bravery and Lia's outstanding athletic accomplishments. Evidence also shows Lia's swim times would not set school and conference records if competing in the sport of Lia's assigned sex. Is it fair to say that all NCAA swimmers competing against Lia enter the pool with a reasonable chance to win? Lia's competitors pour their hearts into their training and development. They spend hours working on the technical, tactical, physical, and mental aspects of their sport. Can we say the changes created by the NCAA policy protect the experience of non-transgender student-athletes related to competitive fairness?

### **Counterpoint One (Fairness): National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Board of Governors Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

It is an honor to engage in this spirited-but-respectful point/counterpoint regarding the NCAA (2022) policy on transgender sport participation with my friend and colleague. I am a member of the Alliance of Social Workers in Sports (ASWIS) and the ethical dilemmas that organically arise from transgender student-athlete participation in relation to fairness, inclusion, and safety can test the National Association of Social Workers (NASW, 2021) Code of Ethics. It is rare that fairness for one party can mean unfairness for another, inclusion of one party can mean exclusion of another, safety for one party can mean danger for another. But here we are...

As a former football player and current boxer, it is difficult to envision myself competing against a female-assigned athlete. However, that is primarily because I have not competed against a female-assigned athlete yet. From the outside-looking-in, it might seem unfair but only because of pre-existing ideas about gender and sex differences. Assuming the same weight class and experience levels, it could very well be that I would be evenly matched with a female-assigned athlete in the ring, and it would be sexist of me to think otherwise. Consequently, suggesting athletes should compete exclusively against same-sex-assigned athletes could be considered transphobic. And thus, the root ethical dilemma arises, sexism vs. transphobia.

Fairness is artificial, and thus quite subjective. If a male-assigned athlete is permitted to compete against a female-assigned athlete, the public views it as unfair to the female-assigned athlete (sexist). However, if a male-assigned athlete is *not* permitted to compete against a female-assigned athlete, the public might view it as unfair to the male-assigned athlete (transphobic). Which party is more entitled to fairness, the female-assigned athlete, or the male-assigned athlete? Which would an individual or organization rather be called, sexist or transphobic?

Although the NCAA policy prioritizes fairness, how fair are sports supposed to be? Allen Iverson, at 6'0", 165lbs, is just as much of an NBA Hall of Famer as Shaquille O'Neal at 7'1",

324lbs. During any given NHL game, Wayne Gretzky has been head and shoulders above the second-best athlete at the rink. Tom Brady could simultaneously be the slowest, the weakest, and the best football player on any football field. Internationally, who can make the argument that it is ever fair to go up against Cristiano Ronaldo or Lionel Messi?

On the other side, none of the aforementioned “unfair” advantages that these athletes have against their opponents on their respective playing surfaces can be attributed to biological sex and/or testosterone levels. Although the line continues to remain a moving target over the decades and centuries, let us not forget that it was not long ago the line was penciled at Black athletes competing against White athletes (Evans, 2022), perhaps this is where the line should exist in permanent ink. Powerlifting and weightlifting world records denote a 65% male advantage in the squat, a 60% male advantage in the bench press, a 67% male advantage in the deadlift, a 67% male advantage in the snatch, and a 69% male advantage in the clean and jerk (Keys, 2022).

The world record advantages favoring males go beyond strength and into speed and stamina. Female-to-male world record performance ratios denote a 9.9% male advantage in the 100m freestyle, a 9.3% male advantage in the 100m breaststroke, an 11% male advantage in the 100m butterfly, a 10.6% male advantage in the 100m backstroke, a 9.6% male advantage in the 200 medley relay, a 9.2% male advantage in the 400 medley relay, a 7.3% male advantage in the 1500m swim, an 8.7% male advantage in the 100m race, a 9.3% male advantage in the 400m race, a 10.6% male advantage in the 1500m race, an 11% male advantage in the 5k race, and an 8.7% male advantage in the marathon (Meyer, 2012).

Based on this data, one of two things could be assumed: a) male-assigned athletes have too much of an advantage to compete against female-assigned athletes because in every measurable category of speed, strength, and stamina, male-assigned athletes prevail. Or, they could assume that b) male-assigned athletes do not have too much of an advantage to compete against female-assigned athletes because in many measurable categories of strength, male-assigned athletes have a less-than 70% higher likelihood to prevail and in many measurable categories of speed and stamina, male-assigned athletes have a less-than 15% higher likelihood to prevail.

Is a 15-to-70% male-assigned athlete advantage any less fair than playing basketball against Shaquille O’Neal, or playing football against Tom Brady, or defending Wayne Gretzky, Cristiano Ronaldo, or Lionel Messi? Furthermore, is the theoretically unfair male-assigned athlete advantage nullified by the inclusion achieved in the pursuit of social justice? Is the potential to be called sexist worth not being called transphobic?

### **Point Two (Inclusion): National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Board of Governors Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

I so value the opening statement of your counterpoint. The notion that inclusion of one party can mean exclusion for another is an ethical dilemma that torments my social work heart. While there will always be varying perspectives related to competitive fairness for trans athletes, fairness must not be the fundamental value defining sport. Your counterpoint helped shift my focus from fairness to inclusion. Both the social worker and coach in me believe inclusion moves beyond fairness and presents sport as a mechanism for creating meaningful narratives (Gleaves & Lehrbach, 2016). Gendered narratives certainly constitute at least one type of sport-related narrative that propels an athlete’s understanding of their social environment.

Your question about the relationship between sexism and transphobia demonstrates how far we must go to reconcile clashing narratives of inclusion. Far too often, we take a balancing approach to conflicting ideologies. The problem with balancing sexism and transphobia is the tradeoff that ensues – trading risk of injury or unfairness against inclusivity (Pike, 2021). How do you decide between the safety of competitors, fairness of the sport, and the inclusion of all who wish to play a sport in the way they wish to be included?

This question leads to a larger conversation about inclusion and shifts away from fairness. As you pointed out above, fairness among competitors is not always a reality in sport. We know this because there can only be one gold medalist in an Olympic event and not all athletes can play at the high school, collegiate, and professional level. If we know there will always be a lack of fairness in competition – fairness not solely based on gender identity – why do recent narratives focus primarily on gender.

During my undergraduate career, I was a philosophy major. When thinking about this idea of trans athlete inclusion, I am reminded of the work of Immanuel Kant. Kant argued the supreme principle of morality is a principle of practical rationality known as a categorical imperative (Kant, 2007). This helps me process the conflicting nature of my now role of a social worker and college coach. In my opinion, excluding trans athletes is an immoral action despite natural desires I might have as a coach to the contrary. Kant's focus on deontology, right versus wrong as opposed to good versus bad, also helps with my understanding of inclusion. We have a rational obligation to support trans athlete inclusion regardless of the consequences we face for standing strong in our conviction.

If only Kant's vision of morality reflected the sociopolitical environment. In a poll conducted by National Public Radio (NPR, 2022), Americans widely opposed trans athlete inclusion with a 63% to 24% margin. Furthermore, 20 states passed laws that prohibit transgender youth from participating in sports consistent with their gender identity (NPR, 2022). This includes my home state of Indiana. Flores et al. (2022) also provided evidence of the opposition to trans athlete inclusion. From this viewpoint, it appears many in society support a utilitarian perspective. From this viewpoint, the exclusion of trans athletes would do the best for others, with most Americans not supporting this movement.

As you reflect on the concept of inclusion, should we place more weight on the greatest good for the greatest amount of people (the large percent of Americans opposing trans athlete inclusion), or should we remain committed to what I see as a categorical imperative - the exclusion of an individual based on their gender identity as being morally flawed?

### **Counterpoint Two (Inclusion): National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Board of Governors Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

The ensuing tradeoffs you mentioned as we attempt to reconcile clashing narratives of inclusion between sexism and transphobia may be one of the more complex ethical dilemmas we face as a society. Retrospectively, women's suffrage, racial equality, marriage equality, etc. all appear today to be obvious sociopolitical endeavors with clearly right and clearly wrong conclusions. I could be wrong, perhaps retrospectively, three decades from now, we might look upon this topic as having a clearly right and clearly wrong conclusion as well. But at this moment, it would appear to me this is less a conflict between right versus wrong, and more a conflict between right versus right (which could also mean wrong versus wrong) (Kennedy, 2009).

The inclusion of trans athletes in sports seems right... until it results in the exclusion of female-assigned athletes, which would be wrong. Safeguarding women's sports (Lopiano, 2000) seems right... until it results in the exclusion of trans athletes, which would be wrong. Right versus right is simply wrong versus wrong from differing perspectives. What is good versus good to some can be evil versus evil to others.

You mentioned that by employing a utilitarian perspective, the exclusion of trans athletes would do the best for others, with most Americans not supporting this movement. However, it is not an overwhelming majority (Flores et al., 2020). Dissecting this ethical dilemma along deontological versus teleological lines (Vallentyne, 1987) to formulate a methodology for resolution, reveals an interesting ethical sub-dilemma: deontology for some can mean teleology for others. Teleology (pursuit of "greater good") from a non-sexist perspective of preserving female-assigned athlete participation at all costs would oppose deontology (pursuit of "do no harm") by intentionally excluding trans athletes. However, teleology (pursuit of "greater good") from a non-transphobic perspective of preserving trans athlete participation at all costs would oppose deontology (pursuit of "do no harm") by potentially excluding female-assigned athletes. The non-sexist perspective involves an intentional exclusion of trans athletes while the non-transphobic perspective involves a potential exclusion of female-assigned athletes. Should we now widen the Overton Window (Bobric, 2021) for sport-inclusion since doing so results in potential exclusion of some while not doing so results in intentional exclusion of others?

Common sense is often the most elusive lesson of all, perhaps especially so for highly credentialed academics like you and me. I struggle with common sense, primarily because there are few peer-reviewed, academic-rigor sources that review and report on common sense. In my opinion, common sense is a clear area where the non-academic public has a significant advantage over the academic elite. Since most Americans are not Ph.D.'s, perhaps they figured out the common sense conclusion to the question of trans athlete inclusion, and we academics are trailing behind.

That being said, and admitting that I am a trailing academic, I learn best through data gleaned by research (perhaps to a fault). The fact that much of the data between male-assigned and female-assigned athlete differences in performance presents them in parallel competition with one another (Meyer, 2012; Keys, 2022) suggests to me we may need to do away with gender designations in sports and simply have the best athletes compete on the same field, same court, same ring, prioritizing and scientifically arriving at an answer an overwhelming majority of Americans can agree on. I do not know that we can leave sports gender-designated and simultaneously expect to definitively answer the question, "do male-assigned athletes have an unfair advantage over female-assigned athletes?"

Fairness and inclusion are certainly important endeavors. How realistic can we be in achieving universal fairness and inclusion in sports? This remains a topic for continued discussion. However, the topic of safety may supersede both fairness and inclusion. We certainly do not want athletes getting injured; however, the risk of injury is baked into participation in any sport at any level. What level of injury risk is an appropriate level to accept in the pursuit of social justice?



### **Point Three (Safety): National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Board of Governors Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

Your mention of clearly right and clearly wrong conclusions is the inevitable outcome of a politically motivated society. My hope with this entire point/counterpoint effort is to remind individuals that we live in a world far too complicated for absolute right and absolute wrong. Instead, we live in a world where critical thought and reflection should be the driving force behind our decisions. Absolute rights and absolute wrongs almost always include body counts. I also appreciate your sentiment about generational tides, and how these tides will likely influence the topic of transgender sport participation. We all have a responsibility to reflect the wisdom of our time and to provide society with the opportunity to evolve the narrative. I hope our conversations are part of that evolution.

As a faculty member that teaches multiple policy courses, I have strong familiarity with the Overton Window (Bobric, 2021). The Overton Window provides a helpful framework for understanding the debate existing with transgender sport participation. To date, this topic does not have a widely accepted solution embraced by society. There is not a clearly defined popular opinion – there is not a clearly defined level of acceptability – there does not appear to be a consensus decision that is sensible to all. This would indicate the topic of transgender sport participation is radical or unthinkable. I have a tough time accepting this viewpoint. This is where we must maintain a focus on the heart of this debate. Are fairness, inclusion, and safety radical and unthinkable concepts? This goes back to your statement about common sense. Common sense would tell us these are not radical ideas. Yet, despite the best of common sense and even academic debate, we still have no singular answer. Perhaps your question about injury risk could help us solidify both a common sense and academically embodied retort. After all, one of our most basic needs is that of safety (Maslow, 1943). We can look at safety from multiple perspectives. Safety related to athletic training services, safety concerns in competition, and broader societal safety. These could each be articles of their own so please excuse my brevity.

Recent studies demonstrate athletic trainers do not perceive themselves as competent in their patient care knowledge or abilities with transgender athletes (Eberman et al., 2021). Additionally, research suggests athletic trainers have a more challenging time providing patient-centered care for transgender student-athletes (Nye et al., 2019). These studies highlight a major safety concern – transgender student-athletes are not receiving equal access to care as compared with their cisgender counterparts. I am confident with ongoing education and advancement of evidence-based practices, this safety concern will have a short lifespan.

Safety in competition is a different subject to tackle. Not only do I think about safety from a physical lens, I also wonder about psychological safety. There are multiple medical considerations to ponder during competition such as genetic, bone health, musculoskeletal, and cardiovascular risks (Dubon et al., 2018). From a psychological perspective, transgender student athletes live in a world of limbo with uncertainty around how policy will impact their engagement with the sport they love (Stanford, 2022). Furthermore, we know bullying behaviors keep transgender athletes from participating in sport (2021) and transgender athletes can experience social isolation, depression, anxiety, etc. (Dubon et al., 2018). I do not see a silver bullet response for these aspects of safety.

It is possible the absence of a silver bullet response rests with the challenges facing transgender athletes from their broader society. Conversations about transgender athletes often include polarization, tension, and messy debates that place perception ahead of reality. I think

most of us would feel unsafe in a world where our individual rights are consistently questioned. Being a member of the transgender community is not morally impermissible. Sadly, many look at the world from a “mine and thine” perspective (Locke, 1967). As John Locke articulates no one ought to harm another in their life, health, liberty, or possession. We all have identities – we all value our identities – we all do not want others questioning who we are. Thus, why do we question our transgender neighbors? Why do we create an environment where they feel unsafe and unwelcome? This includes feeling unwelcome in many athletic settings.

You posed a question at the conclusion of your last response. What level of injury risk is an appropriate level to accept in the pursuit of social justice? I spent days thinking about this question. I consistently arrive at a one-word answer – indeterminate. There is an indeterminate amount of injury risk acceptable to pursue social justice. It is an indetermined amount because it depends on individuals, families, groups, communities, and organizations. There are also broader cultural and historical perspectives we must consider. To turn the question around, do you see there being another answer besides that of indeterminate?

### **Counterpoint Three (Safety): National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Board of Governors Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

Your point on safety transcending just physical and including psychological safety is a thought-provoking idea. With every point and counterpoint, ethical sub-dilemmas naturally arise within the overarching ethical dilemma this entire article is about. Here, the ethical sub-dilemma could be the degree to which sports accept unprecedented physical danger for female-assigned athletes in favor of preserving psychological safety for transgender athletes. In answering your question of whether there is an alternative answer to the amount of injury risk acceptable to pursue social justice being indeterminate, my one-word answer would be – unprecedented.

Oddly enough, unprecedented danger in the evolution of sports is not... unprecedented. In fact, every season in sport, new safety protocols are drafted, and often completed after piloting, to account for all athletes becoming more athletic: faster, stronger, and thus, more dangerous. Football players used to be able to chop block (Chop block: NFL Football Operations, 2022) and clip (Clipping: NFL Football Operations, 2022), but no longer. Basketball players used to be able to prevent airborne shooters from landing (NBA Video rulebook, 2020), but no longer. Baseball players now wear c-flaps on their helmets (Lukas, 2018) to protect against 105 mph pitches (Sepe-Chepuru, 2022). For context, a 9mm handgun bullet can break skin at 102 mph (Siegel, 2022). With sports naturally and organically reaching previously unprecedented levels of danger every season, it could make sense to continue that trajectory in the name of social justice.

However, the counterpoint here draws on a previously discussed ethical sub-dilemma: the non-sexist conclusion results in intentional psychological danger for trans athletes while the non-transphobic conclusion results in potential psychological danger for female-assigned athletes. Whose psychological safety should we prioritize? Should female-assigned athletes be psychologically protected from having to compete against transgender athletes? Or should transgender athletes be psychologically protected from being prohibited from competing against female-assigned athletes? Are we satisfied with shifting the experience of social isolation, depression, anxiety, etc. (Dubon et al., 2018) from transgender athletes today into female-assigned athletes tomorrow in the name of social justice? As we both mentioned, this is a rare ethical dilemma in which inclusion for one means exclusion for the other, truly a “mine and



thine” (Locke, 1967), zero-sum game. Widening the Overton Window (Bobric, 2021) for sport-inclusion could result in potential psychological danger for female-assigned athletes while not doing so could result in intentional psychological danger for transgender athletes.

I agree that it is sad that many look at the world from this “mine and thine,” zero-sum perspective. Although no one ought to harm another in their life, health, liberty, or possession, never questioning identities and making everyone feel safe and welcome, I cannot imagine John Locke could have predicted we would ever be asking the question of whether we make female-assigned athletes feel unsafe and unwelcome to make transgender athletes feel safe and welcome. Equal-access for transgender and female-assigned athletes cannot be achieved when there are a finite number of athletic scholarships, roster spots, and contracts available for access to begin.

I do not believe fairness, inclusion, and safety are radical and unthinkable concepts. I do believe fairness, inclusion, and safety have not yet been considered in this context, hence my excitement and gratitude in getting to write this article with you as we shift into our concluding thoughts. Learning from you while simultaneously collaborating to bridge the gap in literature on this socio-politically hot topic has been a treat.

#### **Point Four (Concluding Thoughts): National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Board of Governors Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

I want to thank you for agreeing to take part in this point/counterpoint with me. I wish there were more opportunities for individuals to have a spirited debate in this format. If we allow it, the human mind is capable of handling considerable critical thought and reflection. The essence of our work together embodies this notion. The question of trans athlete fairness, safety, and inclusion does not have a singular answer. Then again, the most important movements in our global history did not have a clear answer either. Instead, these movements tended to answer a question with another question. Eventually, through meaningful narrative we were able to make educated decisions based off the right combination of personal and professional values. This does not mean we all agreed with decisions; however, it does help ensure our decisions were based on our own principles of morality.

The history of the trans athlete movement evolves daily. I do not think we are to a point in time where many individuals can see past their first gut reaction to questions. We should expect this – reactance is a natural course in thought formation. Personally, I look forward to partaking in this history and seeing how the world of athletics and our broader society navigates the ethical dilemmas and sub-dilemmas in our work. We can certainly use the prominent works of philosophers, social workers, sociologists, and other great thinkers to help us in our understanding of this topic. Yet, like you mentioned, many of these works reflected the best thinking of their time – not the modern world in which we reside.

We need new visionaries to help us through this historical moment in sport history. We need futurists that can help us avoid pre-existing thoughts and open our minds to divergent perspectives. We need seers who can combine common sense with new wisdom about a topic that is new to many. We need dreamers who can see a world where trans athletes and their cisgender teammates work together to manage fairness, inclusion, and safety to the best of their ability. Sure, a utopian world where everyone is happy is unrealistic. However, we do not need to approach this from a dystopian lens either. We simply need to approach this concept with an open heart, an open-mind, and a commitment to supporting a character of respect.

### **Counterpoint Four (Concluding Thoughts): National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Board of Governors Transgender Sport Participation Policy**

It has been a pleasure working on this point/counterpoint with you, I think this format shows readers that there is much thoughtful discussion and debate on the trajectory of society. We all operate in gray areas and that's perfectly natural. Fairness, inclusion, and safety are all starting points to what is an ethical dilemma that branches off into a myriad of ethical sub-dilemmas, some of which have been discussed here. More research needs to be done before we can make a final determination and perhaps there is a conclusion that would neither be considered sexist nor transphobic. However, at this time, we cannot have this conversation about who should be included without simultaneously having the conversation about who should be excluded.

It's no surprise that the general public does not approve of sexism or transphobia, but if a choice must be made, it would appear that many would be more open to a sexist conclusion so long as it isn't transphobic. However, there is a sea of milestones between phobia and inclusion. Simply lifting all prohibitions on transgender athlete participation would not equal inclusion. We encourage non-transgender athletes to compete in sports for the lessons learned, the community atmosphere, and the outlet sports serve as a catharsis for the betterment of mental health. True inclusion would go beyond just tolerating transgender athletes who choose to compete and into encouraging transgender athletes to compete against others in sports to their fullest effort, no matter the outcomes. If transgender athletes do not compete to their fullest effort against female-assigned athletes, it may be fair to deem them sexist for going easy on their opponents, thereby suggesting that perhaps transgender athlete exclusion, a non-sexist but transphobic solution, might be the better option.

Only when transgender athletes are as encouraged to compete aggressively in sports as non-transgender athletes will we have the data necessary to make a final determination, hence the implications for future research. Despite some convincing bits and pieces, there remains a scarcity of data on transgender athlete competition. Implications for future practice may be more complex because of the deontology versus teleology ethical sub-dilemma. Practice with whom? Implications for practice with female-assigned athletes could warrant the exclusion of transgender athletes. However, implications for practice with transgender athletes could result in the exclusion of female-assigned athletes.

The search for a solution that is neither sexist nor transphobic continues. Perhaps hormone level ranges for all athletes competing against one another is the solution. Perhaps designating between pre-puberty and post-puberty transgender athletes in determining where athletes compete is the solution. Perhaps, with the rate of transgender identification being on the incline, we may soon have enough transgender athletes to warrant the creation of a separate, third league for all sports: men's, women's, and trans. Perhaps the solution is a weighted combination of these and/or other ideas.

The longer we wait, the higher the national temperature and the greater the sociopolitical tension. For the teleological greater good, it may be time to merge all men's and women's leagues and allow the best athletes to compete against the best athletes, regardless of the deontological consequences. Those who are not the best athletes can wait until we have enough data to determine whether leagues should be separated again in the future. When an ethical dilemma yields solutions that will be unsatisfactory to one party or another, it may best to go

with the most politically correct option. In 2023, sexism is politically incorrect, but transphobia seems to be even more politically incorrect.

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