

It is my great pleasure to be selected as the new editor of the *Sociology of Sport Journal*. I am honored and humbled to be entrusted to serve the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport as well as the broader field of sociology of sport in this role. I wish to express gratitude and appreciation to the past Editor, Michael Giardina, for his leadership and commitment to the journal. He served as editor for the past 12 years, two terms as associate editor and another two terms as editor. During this time, Michael has been steadfast in his commitment and open and inclusive in his vision. Under his leadership, the journal has experienced much growth and success. Given this, I deeply appreciate Michael's generosity in offering guidance and mentorship as I accept this role. I will do my best to honor the legacy he and all the past editors helped build. I would also like to thank the outgoing Associate Editors, Simon Darnell and Kim Toffoletti, for their dedication and contribution over the past years. I am confident that Michael joins me in thanking you both for your service and commitment. In addition, I would like to extend a special thank you to Daniel Burdsey, who has agreed to serve another term as associate editor. I appreciate Daniel's acceptance of the invitation as it ensures we will have continuity and institutional memory in the associate editor position. I would also like to thank those who have served on the editorial board and all the anonymous reviewers for their contributions. And a special thank you to the team at Human Kinetics, including Kathleen Bernard Burgener, Crystal Robinson, and Christina Johnson for all the work you do to keep the journal in production. I have relied heavily on these individuals to help in the transition, and I appreciate all the help, resources, and advisement they offer.

I am very excited about the next chapter of the journal, and it is my great pleasure to introduce and welcome the incoming Associate Editors: Rachel Allison (Mississippi State University, USA), Daniel Burdsey (University of Brighton, United Kingdom), Joseph Cooper (University of Massachusetts, USA), Audrey Giles (University of Ottawa, Canada), Shannon Jette (University of Maryland, USA), and Yuka Nakamura (York University, Canada). Each of the associate editors is a leader in their respective area of study and brings to the journal a diverse array of theoretical and methodological approaches. Their expertise also reflects the diverse and inclusive way "sociology of sport" is understood. Sociology of sport, both the journal and field, encompasses a range of scholarship that includes, but goes beyond, sociology as a discipline and "sport" as an area of inquiry. It offers a wide range of inter/disciplinary approaches and diverse study of forms of movement, institutional sites, and cultural meanings and practices that include, but are not limited to, what is traditionally understood as "sport." I look forward to working with the associate editors and all the members of the editorial board and extend a heartfelt thank you to each of you for your commitment and willingness to serve. Moreover, I would like to introduce and welcome our new editorial assistant, Maria Mears, who is one of my doctoral students at Purdue University. I am optimistic and hopeful for the future of the journal given the expertise and commitment of all those involved.

As we begin the 2021 New Year, we continue to face unprecedented challenges as a result of the COVID-19 global pandemic. This, alongside the ongoing climate change crisis, human rights violations and abuses, systemic racism, and the rise of right-wing movements and threats to democracy have impacted our lives and our communities, some more so than others. Certainly, the possibilities of knowledge production have been constrained in many ways. Academics and researchers have experienced a number of barriers to scholarly inquiry, including the challenges of working from home and, for many, increased childcare (including virtual learning) and eldercare responsibilities. Some have contracted COVID-19 and are struggling with the long-term impacts. Some have had a friend or family member die from the virus and are grieving the loss along with the inability to engage in the rituals of mourning that often provide comfort and closure. For those fortunate to have avoided the costs of the pandemic (for now), the toll of social distancing, sheltering-in-place, and stay-at-home orders all have a profound impact on our health and well-being. For those who are instructors, the pandemic meant rapid shifts in how we teach and engage with our students and required learning how to deliver content to our students in new ways. While being stretched thin, our students relied on us for stability and a sense of normalcy as class meetings became an opportunity to escape from the stressors in our students' lives. Educators were classified as "essential workers." Some instructors were tasked with teaching face-to-face despite the risks to our health and our family's health, creating anxiety and uncertainty in simply doing our jobs. Along with so many, we faced the choice between our physical and our financial health. Most universities enacted restrictions on travel to conferences, impacting our ability to connect and engage with colleagues and to disseminate research to our scholarly communities. Our research may be on hold or projects may have shifted as we no longer have the institutional resources needed to support our work. "Human subjects" research was suspended. Sports were canceled. The very places and spaces where we might conduct our inquiry were no longer accessible.

All the myriad impacts of the pandemic will be reflected in the scholarship we produce and what is published in the journal in the upcoming years. The impacts of the pandemic will also be reflected in who is able to produce knowledge and who is able to author articles. Indeed, research indicates that during the early phase of the pandemic, women submitted proportionately fewer manuscripts to journals than men (Squazzoni et al., 2020) and started fewer research projects than their male peers, in part due to increased teaching and childcare responsibilities (Viglione, 2020). Moreover, the Social Science Research Council expressed concerns about the disparate impacts of COVID-19 on Black and Brown communities and how that affects the research of scholars of color who are "most likely to face the devastating personal and professional consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as state and vigilante violence" (Cogburn, 2020). As one of my colleagues explained during a faculty meeting the other day, the pandemic did not create these inequalities; instead, they are preexisting conditions exacerbated and made more visible to institutions as a result of the

pandemic. As editor, I am committed to working with the editorial board and the executive board members of North American Society for the Sociology of Sport to navigate and address these realities.

The global pandemic has deep implications for how it is we study, teach, learn, conduct research, and produce and disseminate knowledge. Yet, the challenges posed by the pandemic have opened opportunities for new ways of thinking, being, and doing. What can the journal do to support and elevate the scholarship produced by those at the margins? The health and future of the journal and the field of sociology of sport depends on how we collectively address these questions and rise to these challenges. As I embark on this journey as editor, I take inspiration from the words of U.S. national youth poet laureate Amanda Gorman's (2021) inaugural poem, *The Hill We Climb*,

When day comes we step out of the shade,
 aflame and unafraid
 The new dawn blooms as we free it
 For there is always light,
 if only we're brave enough to see it
 If only we're brave enough to be it.

Cheryl Cooky, Editor

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