

# Sexy Bodies?: Women Athletes in the Media

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# Women Athletes in the Media

- Outside major events:
  - 0.1 – 5% focused on women athletes
- Major events
  - 2004 Athens Olympic Games:
    - 25% of coverage focused on women athletes
  - Only few athletes covered



Bruce, Hovden, Markula  
(2010)

# Successful Women Athletes

- Medal Performance



# Spectacular Failure

- A successful woman athlete fails



# “Freak Show”



# The Sexy Star



- Performance
- The Looks

# The Sexy Athlete

- The looks?



# Selling Sexy Sporting Bodies

- Sexualization of performance





# Selling Sexy Sporting Bodies



# Selling Sexy Sporting Bodies

- Sexy Sports:



# Selling Sexy Sporting Bodies

- 'Feminine' sports



# Selling Sexy Sporting Bodies

- Outside of sport
  - Calendars
  - 'Make-overs'





# The Result:

- Emphasis on looks, not on performance
- Feminist research:
  - Trivialization
  - Feminization
  - Heterosexualization
  - Infantilization



# Result: Funding



- Sponsorship
- Endorsements



# Why Does Sex Sell in Women's Sport?



- Women's best results remain inferior to men's best results





# Why Women's Sport Sold Differently from Men's Sport

- Is sexualization good for women's sport?
- If the results inferior to men's results, how do we market women's sport?
- Women's bodies a problem within discursive field of sport

