

## **Is It Fair?**

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Imagine being a biological man competing against biological women in a sport. Does that seem fair? According to Melissa Block (2022), an *NPR* poll shows that approximately 45% of Americans "do not support allowing transgender athletes to compete on women's and girls' sports teams". Although, despite the widespread discrimination, a big chunk of our society is proud of those who are brave enough to come out as trans. They believe transgender women should be welcomed onto women's teams in order to keep sports fair and inclusive. Supporters of trans athletes claim that not doing so would be unfair and restrictive. Society stands firm on the belief that everyone is equal, no matter what somebody identifies as, and they believe that people should compete with whoever they want to compete with. In the world of sports, being inclusive and fair is extremely important. However, the situation changes when transgender athletes are involved. Transgender women should not be allowed to compete in women's sports. Our society ignores the fact that there is a regression in women's equality, safety risks are being faced, limited fair play is occurring, transgender women have immense physical advantages, and they are stealing athletic titles.

Our society tends to focus on the equal rights of transgender people when it comes to sports, but what about women's equality? According to Kathleen Megan (2019) on *CT Mirror*, "We speak from expertise when we say that nondiscrimination protections for transgender people – including women and girls who are transgender – advance women's equality and well-being." However, the Equality Act does not advance women's equality and well-being; rather, it jeopardizes women's opportunities. Participation in sports helps women develop leadership skills, and opportunities stem from the competition. "--these lessons and opportunities would be seriously endangered if transgender women are allowed to compete in girls' sports. Indeed, the

entirety of women's athletics would be deeply imperiled, " says Executive Director of American Principles Project Terry Schilling (2021) on *USA Today*. This conversation has two sides to it. In order to state that women's equality is advancing, evidence needs to be shown.

Regarding women's equality, competition in sports has become unfair because women are losing their rights to safety. Even though it seems to be that the safety of athletes is the number one priority, transgender women are affecting that. For trans women to compete in women's sports, there has been a continuous battle between inclusion and safety. Of course, our society wants to ensure transgender people are not being discriminated against, yet the safety of biological women is in danger. When female athletes that play contact sports are forced to compete against males, they face safety risks. On *Liberty Champion*, Peyton MacKenzie (2022) points out that "Men are at an astronomical physical advantage after their bodies go through puberty, which makes competing against women unfair and dangerous." There have been numerous times that the involvement of transgender athletes in women's sports have been proven to be extremely dangerous. MacKenzie (2022) speaks about the incident with transgender athlete Fallon Fox. "If you are familiar with MMA, the name Fallon Fox probably rings a bell. She is known for, in 2014, fighting Tamikka Brents and fracturing her skull within the first two and a half minutes of the first round of the fight. Fox is a biological male who transitioned to female, after hitting puberty," MacKenzie (2022) states. This is just one example of the many incidents that have occurred due to transgender women competing in women's sports. The safety of athletes should be prioritized, but if transgender women are involved, the situation changes.

In addition, inclusiveness is highly valued when it comes to transgender women joining women's sports teams. However, fair play is being put at risk. The fact that it isn't fair for transgender women to compete isn't just based on common sense—the science is conclusive. In

Alliance Defending Freedom, Maureen Collins (2022) digs deeper into an expert report by Br. Gregory A. Brown (an exercise science professor at the University of Nebraska). "Dr. Brown cites research showing that allowing males to compete against female athletes in track and field could allow 'many who would not be considered top tier male performers' to replace the world's most skilled female athletes on the podium," Collins (2022) states. This information gives us a glimpse of how unfair it can be for transgender women to compete in women's sports. It sheds a light on how policies that allow them to compete harms biological female athletes.

Furthermore, many people claim that trans women athletes do not have unfair physical advantages in sports, but the greater athletic performance displayed by males says otherwise. Biological males are proven to be faster, stronger, and have greater endurance capacity than women. This is proven at the *National Library of Medicine* by Allison K. Heather (2022). She says, "Male physiology underpins their better athletic performance including increased muscle mass and strength, stronger bones, different skeletal structure, better adapted cardiorespiratory systems, and early developmental effects on brain networks that wires males to be inherently more competitive and aggressive." All these factors give transgender women advantages in sports that ultimately harm biological women. There are pro-trans people in society that argue that there can be strong biological women and scrawny transgender women. However, that claim cannot be backed up. There is much more evidence found proving the significant differences between biological male and female. "Ultimately, the former male physiology of transwoman athletes provides them with a physiological advantage over the cis-female athlete," Heather (2022) concludes.

Transgender women competing in sports may not seem like a big deal, but biological women's futures are at risk. As I've stated before, allowing biological men to compete in

women's sports shatters dreams and opportunities. On *CBC News*, Laura McQuillan (2022) shares swimming champion Cate Campbell's thoughts on this controversial topic. "Australian Olympic swimming champion Cate Campbell on Sunday told FINA's congress that she believed its decision would 'uphold the cornerstone of fairness in elite women's competition,'" McQuillan (2022) states. Just like Campbell, there are many female athletes that believe excluding transgender and intersex athletes from elite sports would level the playing field. On the other hand, Bianca Stanescu (2020) is the mother of an elite track-and-field athlete. Stanescu (2020) has been watching her daughter for years as boys who identify as girls take her position on the winner's podium. The opportunity of young women to compete on a fair playing field has been taken away. Stanescu (2020) makes a great point by saying "Women's sports were created to give girls a fair chance at competition. That includes fair victories and fair defeats. Girls deserve the same opportunity as boys to excel, to advance to the next level of competition, to win, and to stand on that podium." As a woman, it's hard to hear that even young girls are undergoing this issue. We all deserve the right to a fair chance at competition, and if transgender women are affecting that, something needs to be done.

With all the supporting information given, our society still ignores the fact that there is a regression in women's equality, safety risks are being faced, limited fair play is occurring, transgender women have immense physical advantages, and they are stealing athletic titles. Whether or not transgender women should compete in women's sports is an extremely controversial topic that needs to be discussed. As a woman who plays soccer, I stand firm in my beliefs. The number of transgender women athletes competing concerns me. I would never want my opportunities to be stripped. I would never want my safety to be at risk. I deserve these rights, and so does every other biological woman. Learning more about how unfair it can be for

us has opened my eyes, and I hope it has reached the right audience. Deciding which side to support may be difficult, but, as I've learned, doing research to dig deeper makes it easier.

Whether you believe biological men have more physical advantages over females or not, keep in mind that sports are meant to be played fairly.

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