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Towards a feminist playology: social sport studies and the limits of critique

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Appendix: Overview data collection and data

Table 1. Overview data collection⁴⁴

Method	Objectives	Settings	Activities
Content Analysis media material	Reconstruction of the public debate and tracking down networks of informants and key stakeholders.		
Semi-structured interviews	Eliciting in-depth insights into the experiences and perspectives of elite women's football players.	At interviewees' homes, club cantinas and offices, and a few at my office or via skype.	In total 31 interviews. 15 with current elite football players, 12 with elite players active between the 70s and the 90s, 2 with (former) male coaches of the Dutch/Belgian national teams and 2 with female managers, one working at national and the other at club level. The interviews lasted between one and two hours, but they generally tended towards two hours.
Observations during club visits and matches	Establishment of rapport with gatekeepers and eliciting insights into the experiences of sponsors and relatives of the players.	Elite women's football clubs based in either the Netherlands or Belgium.	In total 10 of the 15 clubs taking part in the Dutch-Belgian transnational competition were visited. Eight clubs based in the Netherlands and two clubs based in Belgium. Some Dutch clubs were paid several visits.
Week of participant observations	Immersion in the settings, cultural practices, and daily activities of elite women's football players and eliciting insights in what the interviewees believe and why and how they experience the place of football in their lives.	An elite women's football club located in the Netherlands.	

⁴⁴ To protect confidentiality, I have made agreements with the interviewees that the interview transcripts will not be made available to third parties, not even in anonymized form. Elite women's football is a 'small' world, meaning that even in anonymised form, interview transcripts run the risk of revealing the identity of the interviewees.

Table 2. Evaluation Matrix: Matching data collection to key themes

Key Themes	Content analysis media material	Semi-structured interviews	Observations during club visits/ matches	Week of participant observation
Sports biography	x	x		
Social networks		x		
Everyday life		x		
Gender identity	x	x	x	
Physicality		x		x
Media		x	x	
Future plans		x		
Group behaviour			x	x
Relationship between staff and players			x	x

Table 3. Distribution of current players according to their experience with national A teams and (inter)national club football

	Dutch club level	Belgian club level	International club level
Current players with a position in national team	5	2	3
Current players without a position in national team	4	1	
Total			15

Table 4. Distribution former players according to their experience with national A teams and (inter)national club football

	Dutch club level	Belgian club level	International club level
With a position in national team	7		5
Without position in national team			
Total			12

Table 5. Distribution of coaches and managers according to their experience with national/club level football

	National level	Club level
Coaches	2	
Managers	1	1
Total		4

Table 6. Demographic characteristics of the interviewees in terms of gender and ethnicity

	Dutch ethnic background	Belgian ethnic background	Non-European Ethnic background
Current Women's football Players	12	2	1
Former Women's football players	11		1
Male coaches	1	1	
Male managers	1		
Female managers		1	
Total			27

Table 6. Overview of the interview data and key findings

Major categories	Associated concepts
High performance	Culture of competition, Working attitude, Structures of control, Public expectations and surveillance concerning performances, Fragility and uncertain nature of football career, Post football plans
Gender Policing	Youth experience, Club culture, Gender identity, Negative view of Femininity, Sexualisation, Female Apologetic, Cynicism and self-protection.
Sacrifice	Football versus real-life values, Disempowerment

Table 6 presents the major results of the coding analysis of the interviews conducted with former and present elite women's football players. The table shows three superordinate and 15 subordinate categories emerging from the analysis of the experiences of elite women's football players. The superordinate categories include 'high performance', 'gender policing' and 'sacrifice'. The table also indicates that six subcategories are associated with the major category 'high performance', seven with the 'gender policing' and two with the major category 'sacrifice'. All players discussed the superordinate categories 'high performance' and 'gender policing' and the overall majority 'sacrifice'. However no individual player discussed all the 15 categories in describing their experiences of being and becoming an elite women's football player.

Curriculum Vitae

Nathanja van den Heuvel was born in Ede, the Netherlands. She studied Cultural Studies and Philosophy at Erasmus University Rotterdam and Literary Studies at the University of Amsterdam. Nathanja started her PhD project at the Institute for Philosophy, Leiden University. In addition she held a seat at the University Council of Leiden University, was a founding board member of the PhD council of the Institute for Philosophy, Leiden University and of the OZSW study group Feminist Philosophy and a board member of the Dutch Society for Women in Philosophy (SWIP.NL). She secured diverse grants from the Leiden University Fund for the organisation of conferences and from the Prins Bernard Cultuur Fund for the Open Performance Academy (OPA), a research and presentation platform for performance arts. Nathanja has published several articles and book chapters on eco-feminism, queer pedagogies and the philosophy of play and sport. In 2019, Nathanja started the research and development project Multiform, an emancipatory education programme, in collaboration with Studio Fontana, Rotterdam-based primary and secondary schools and co-funded by Rotterdam CityLab. Nathanja worked as a lecturer at Leiden University, ArtEZ University of the Arts and the Willem de Kooning Academy and developed and taught courses on eco-philosophy, feminist philosophy and aesthetics. In addition she supervised both bachelor and master theses.