3C Allison Levin, Webster University
“Boys Will Be Boys: The Implicit Acceptance of Domestic Violence in Sports”

Athletes have the power to influence society both implicitly and explicitly. Some of their influence is very positive, including drawing attention to important causes and raising funds for disaster relief. Unfortunately, not all celebrity influence is positive. As Charles Barkley, a member of the NBA Hall of Fame said in 1993, “I’m not paid to be a role model.” Since then, athletes have been forced to accept that their actions are followed closely on social media and they are viewed as role models. One of the unexpected benefits of the widespread use of social media is that the in-depth coverage of these real or alleged transgressions sends a message to fans that these activities are not acceptable in society. Unfortunately, domestic violence is treated differently. Indeed, domestic violence is treated by the media, the athletes, and their employers as a necessary evil of employing “real men” (ESPN, 2015). This presentation uses discourse tracing to examine how the media framing of domestic violence has changed from Charles Barkley’s 1993 statement to the present. It will demonstrate that the conversation about domestic violence is occurring more often amongst women’s organizations, but the media’s coverage of the sports cases negates the work being done by sending the message that if you date a “real man” domestic violence is something you have to accept. The presentation critiques the language used in domestic violence stories and demonstrates how media framing implicitly sends the message that domestic violence is not newsworthy.

3C Belinda-Rose Young, University of South Florida; Sarah L. Desmarais, North Carolina State University; Julie A. Baldwin, Northern Arizona University & Rasheeta Chandler, Emory University
“Sexual Coercion Practices Among Undergraduate Male Recreational and Intercollegiate Athletes”

Research over the past thirty years has identified that intercollegiate athletes are at higher risk for sexual violence perpetration compared to non-athletes, and has suggested that negative elements of the sporting environment contribute to that heightened risk. Our research sought to explore the rates of verbal and physical sexual coercion among recreational athletes, who are regularly immersed in a similar environment. Our study assessed the associations between attitudes toward women, rape myth acceptance, and prevalence of sexual coercion among 379 male, undergraduate recreational and intercollegiate athletes and non-athletes. The results showed no significant differences between the responses of recreational and intercollegiate athletes for all dependent variables. The results were significantly different between athletes (both recreational and intercollegiate) and non-athletes. Controlling for rape myth acceptance and traditional gender role attitudes removed differences between athletes and non-athletes in prevalence of sexual coercion. With only two publications specifically addressing sexual violence perpetration by male intercollegiate athletes in the last 15 years, it is necessary to continue research on environmental factors that support rape myth acceptance, lower opinions of women, and sexual coercion among both recreational and intercollegiate athletes.

3C Jen McGovern, Monmouth University
“Consent Communication: What Does it Mean for Student Athletes?”

The intersection of binge-drinking, hookup culture, and rape culture on college campuses has inspired scholarship about affirmative consent, yet this research does not focus specifically on how student-athletes understand and communicate consent. While they are part of the larger campus culture, athletes often operate with a set of norms and expectations that differ from their non-athletic peers. For example, the culture of hegemonic masculinity in some sports is associated with higher levels of sexual violence. The goal of this study was to gather information about student-athlete attitudes towards consent in order to recommend more effective rape awareness and prevention programs. Data were collected through
student focus groups and from an online survey of 1,003 students at a mid-sized Division I University. The results showed that male and female student-athletes had different conceptions of consent. Female athletes were more likely to misunderstand consent than female non-athletes, demonstrating a need for more programs tailored to the unique experiences of female athletes. Among male athletes, the findings indicate that a positive team construct plus a variety of program delivery modes reinforced throughout the athlete’s career were the most effective ways to teach consent.