

# Men and Women Engaging in Non-traditional Sports

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## Men and Women Engaging in Non-traditional Sports

What are the social and cultural costs and benefits of an individual (male or female) entering a non-traditional sport for their gender/sex (e.g. women who enter body building, power lifting, boxing; men who enter synchronized swimming or field hockey)?

Social change has been marked by men and women participating in non-[traditional](#) roles for their sex. Athletics is one field where non-traditional roles are both applauded and derided by society. Female body-builders and [male](#) ice-skaters push the boundaries of what is socially acceptable in our society. While there are many rewards for such activity, there are also many costs, both to society and to the individual.

There are many cultural and personal costs to engaging in non-traditional sport. Women and men face personal humiliation and the derision of friends, family, and society. They can be denied advancement in the work force, be ostracized by society, and suffer a multitude of slights and slurs. Women, in particular, bear the brunt of this particular brand of humiliation.

Mere personal humiliation is not the only cost of non-traditional participation in sport. Some people may see it as a lessening of the game. For example, there are slightly different rules for women's basketball than for male basketball. By allowing women to play and compete in a supposedly "weaker" version of the game, we lessen the value of the game and the competition in which the players are engaged. Such difference also reinforces cultural beliefs that men and women cannot compete on a level playing field. Supposedly, women must have easier rules, because otherwise, they would not be able to play. This particular cultural attitude can arise from women participating in sport. However, it is a goal of such participation that that attitude be eliminated from our society.

There are also a number of benefits to men and women engaging in supposed non-traditional activities. It pushes the boundaries of what is acceptable in our society, paving the way for future pioneers. It makes difference more acceptable in our society by not backing down. We can only become more accepting of other people when there are such extreme points of view out there to compare our opinions to.

Athletics, in general, benefits with the presence of both men and women in all [sports](#). With such a wide range of potential competition, sport is much more exciting and rewarding - personally and monetarily. Both sexes contribute something to their respective sport, and challenge the other to accept new ideas and change.

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