“There’s nothing like that first Saturday morning when college football starts”

Football Fandom Among Muslim American Women in Wayne County, MI

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Research Questions

- Do Muslim American women in Wayne County, MI participate in local football culture?

- How do they participate in local football culture?

- How do they negotiate the creation of social identity through football fandom?
Methods

• From July-September 2018, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 6 women from Wayne County, MI who self-identified as Muslim and fans of American football.

• Interviews explored sport fandom, gender and sport, and religion and sport.

• Content analysis using grounded theory (Corbin and Strauss 2008) revealed key themes.
Fandom Involves Several Types of Participation
Key Theme 2

Religion Not Considered Influential to Sports Fandom
Gender as a Perceived Barrier to Authentic Fandom
Conclusions

• For the Muslim American women in my study, football fandom was a major part of their identities.

• Gender shapes how female sports fans feel they are perceived and the extent to which they feel included in sports communities.

• Methodological Considerations:
  o Limitations of Giulianotti’s (2002) taxonomy of spectator identities.
  o Studying Muslim women sports fans requires broader approaches.
    o Transnational feminist framework advocated by Toffoletti and Palmer (2017)
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