

I. Women's Olympic Sport Participation from 1896-2020



© *Sport, a vehicle towards social emancipation*

Women's Olympic
Sport Participation from 1896-2020

2nd lecture October 21/10/ 2021

The Hellenic Olympic Committee
today: One woman – 21 men)



next class:

© **II. The Olympics, a means/tool/social space for promoting Human Rights**

3d class lecture November 4, 2021

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2. Women's Exclusion from Sport Participation

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At the first modern Olympics in Athens, in 1896, women were not allowed to participate (**at least officially**)...**half a century later** at the 1952 Helsinki Games only 10.5% of the athletes were women [...] in the Athens 2004 Olympics **40.7%** of the athletes were women; in the London Olympics in 2012 women's participation reached **43%**; at the Rio Olympics in 2016 **over 45%** of the athletes were women, in the **Tokyo Olympics 49%**, ***the largest participation rate yet!!!***

http://www.olympic.org/Documents/Reference_documents/Factsheets/Women_in_Olympic_Movement.pdf



Year	Sports	Events*	Women Athletes	%	Year	Sports	Events*	Women Athletes	%
1896	—	—0	—0	—	1960	6	29	611	11.4
1900	2	3	22	2.2	1964	7	33	678	13.2
1904	1	2	6	0.9	1968	7	39	781	14.2
1908	2	3	37	1.8	1972	8	43	1059	14.6
1912	2	6	48	2.0	1976	11	49	1260	20.7
1920	2	6	63	2.4	1980	12	50	1115	21.5
1924	3	11	135	4.4	1984	14	62	1566	23
1928	4	14	277	9.6	1988	17	72	2194	26.1
1932	3	14	126	9	1992	19	86	2704	28.8
1936	4	15	331	8.3	1996	21	97	3512	34.0
1948	5	19	390	9.5	2000	25	120	4069	38.2
1952	6	25	519	10.5	2004	26	125	4329	40.7
1956	6	26	376	13.3	2008	26	127	4637	42.4
					2012	26	140	4676	44.2%
					2020				45.0%
									49%

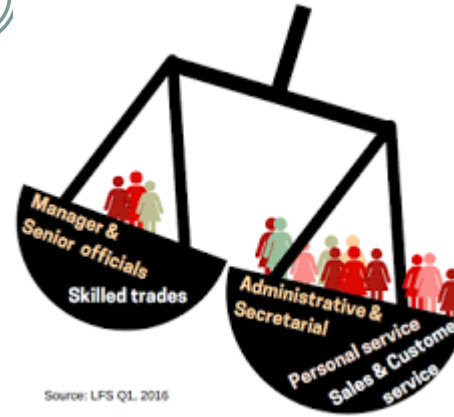
19. Women's participation in the Games of the Olympiad



4. POSSIBLE TOPIC FOR RESEARCH PAPER

- *Is it possible that gender segregation/categorization in competitive sports has been creating or reproducing inequalities for women? (e.g. underrepresentation in SGBs, the IOC, sport federations, etc.)*
- *Is it possible that gender segregation in sport is a social construction, and not really necessary?*
- *What about non-binary identities???*

There are many opinions-positions here.



- For example, as regards non-binary identities, see
- Voyles, Caroline (2019) Sex Segregation in Sport: A Denial of Rights and Opportunities for Health. *Health and Human Rights Journal*. June 28, 2019 <https://www.hhrjournal.org/2019/06/sex-segregation-in-sport-a-denial-of-rights-and-opportunities-for-health/>
- See also, OHCHR (2018). Regulations regarding eligibility for the female classification (athletes with differences of sex development) (OL OTH 62/2018). Retrieved on June 27, 2019 from: https://www.ohchr.org/Documents/Issues/Health/Letter_IAAF_Sept2018.pdf
- Rider, G.N., McMorris, B.J., Gower, A.L., Coleman, E., Eisenberg, M.E. (2018). Health and care utilization of transgender and gender nonconforming youth: a population-based study. *Pediatrics*, 141(3).

5. Social stereotypes/myths *the 'weaker sex' and the 'weaker brain' theory*

The “weaker brain” theory in nineteenth-century Britain ...**“need to conserve energy ... Doctors hospitalized ‘abnormal’ women who dared to rebel”** “deciphering the way theories of female inferiority managed to permeate **all scientific, public and private areas** (to a point where women came to convince themselves of their own inferiority – the ultimate symptom of alienation” (Fauvel, 2013).

“Whether gynaecologists or psychiatrists, those British doctors who were the most deeply convinced of the debility of the **weaker sex** thus came up against the opposition of women, who counter-attacked on three different fronts. Firstly from within the associations, activists fought to make cases of medical abuse known...” (Fauvel, 2013)

...the construction and consolidation of the social myth (stereotype) of the “weaker sex”, primarily from medical fields...

(Kamberidou, 2019; Kamberidou, Bonias & Patsantaras, 2019; Kirk 2002; Pfister, 1990; Sandow 1898, Moebius 1908, Weininger 1917, Webster 1930)



6. Crazy brains and the weaker sex: the British case (1860-1900) BY AUDE FAUVEL (2013)

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Translated by Jane Yeoman

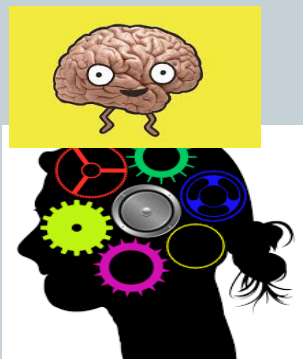
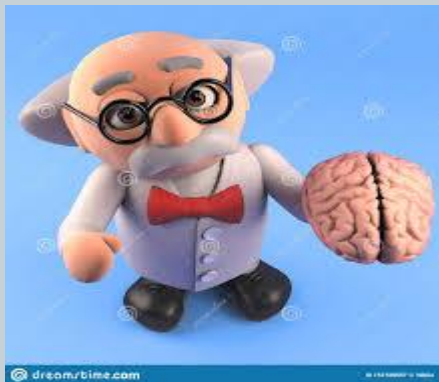
<https://doi.org/10.4000/cliowgh.352>

“Physiological truth” of woman’s inferiority

“... it was thought that any such **gentle** and **fragile** creatures who dared practise a sport, or, worse, handle weapons, would almost inevitably succumb to **dementia**, **so alien** was the female body to such activity.”

(Vertinsky 1990, in Fauvel, p. 9)

WEAKER BRAIN THEORY



The “**physiological truth**” [...] also actively helped promote the repression of non-conformists by **encouraging husbands to hospitalise** all those who behaved in a manner “**contrary to nature**”, in the name of protecting the evolutionary process” (Fauvel, 2013, p. 10).

A Game of Tennis, by English artist George Goodwin Kilburne (1839-1924)

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Women's sport involvement/participation – until 1914– was a privilege of the aristocracy, the upper class...

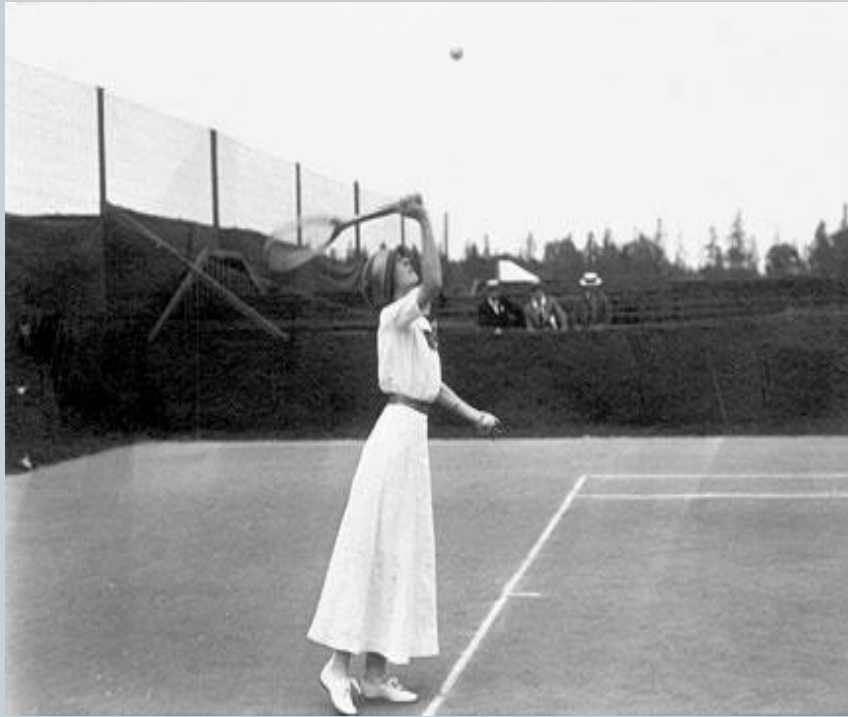
**1908 London, Women's archery:
Ladies Doubles National Round**
(IOC, 2006)



1908 Danish Gymnasts



1912 Female Olympians Marguerite Broquedis



1912 Female Olympians



Australian swimmers Fanny Durack and Mina Wylie, who paid their own way to Stockholm in 1912

French artist **Leopold Franz Kowalski (1856-1931)**



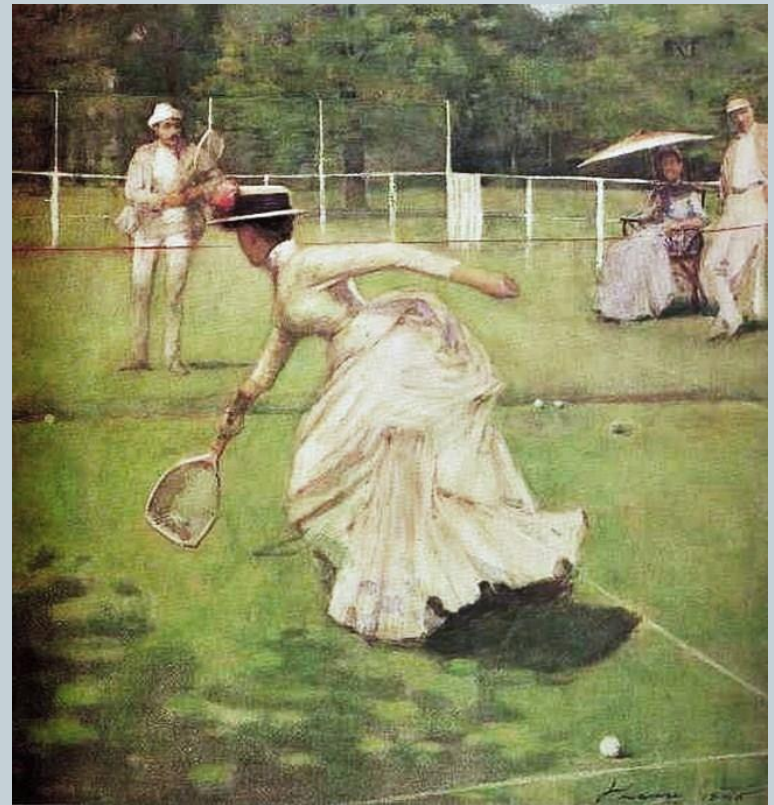
A Game of Tennis in Battersea Park, by British artist James Wallace (1872-1911)



Match, by English artist Horace Henry Cauty (1846-1909)



A Game of Tennis, by the Irish artist John Lavery (1856-1941)



SECOND PRESIDENT OF THE IOC

In line with the spirit of his time...

Pierre de Coubertin's views

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13. Coubertin, 1902, 1911, 1912, 1924, 1931 ...

“I do not approve of the participation of women in public competitions. In the Olympic Games, their primary role should be to crown the victors.”
... “against woman’s nature...”

“.... a distinct **threat** to the spectators’ morals”.... (Coubertin, Revue Olympique, 1902)

- “L’escrime et les femmes”... he warns against the **féminisation** (Coubertin, 1911: 78 in Patsantaras 2007)
- Olympic sports exclusively for men (Coubertin, 1912: 109).
- Women’s participation a social and moral deviation (Coubertin, 1924)

...A culturally superior race had the right to limit the privileges of a culturally inferior race... (Coubertin, 1903, Patsantaras & Kamberidou, 2006: 374)



14. FIRST (1st) PRESIDENT OF THE IOC: 1894-1896

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DIMITRIOS VIKELAS (1835-1908)

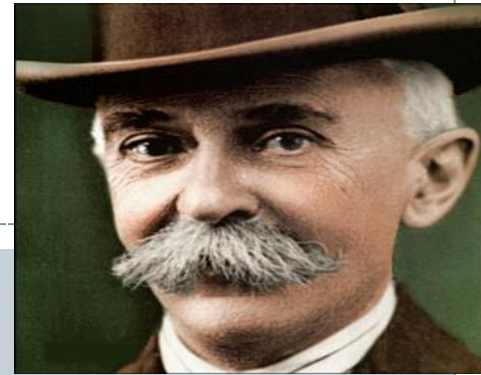


The first International Olympic Committee (IOC) in Athens 1896 with Vikelas (President) in the middle, and Coubertin (left, next to Vikelas)



Recruited by Pierre de Coubertin ...

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“At the same time that the International Olympic Committee and the modern Olympic Games were founded in 1894 **the first IOC members were also recruited by Coubertin** from amongst a small group of mainly aristocratic men. In a European society that has traditionally separated the rich from the poor and men from women, it was **normal** and **convenient** that these first IOC members would all come from the same social class and be of the same sex.

- “One might even say that the Olympic Movement was conceived as a tool to promote and spread European aristocratic values and masculine values”

-

Florence Carpentier & Jean-Pierre Lefèvre (2006)

Pierre de Coubertin

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“Women, to his mind, were like other **‘weak’** members of society – children, the elderly, and the sick – and were **best suited for physical education and the pursuit of public and personal health-oriented goals.**



“ Women’s athletic ‘exhibitions’ were a **distinct threat to the spectators’ morals.** Noting that athletic clothing was lighter than ordinary dress, he **[Coubertin] was concerned that the sight of women’s nearly nude bodies would arouse the primordial passions of the male spectators.** A clear danger was thus that the spectacle of **the lightly clothed female body would become more attractive than the athletic performance itself.”**

Carpentier & Lefèvre (2006)

Count Henri de Baillet-Latour, the third (3d) IOC President: 1925-1942

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As he could not totally eliminate or exclude women from the Olympics, the Count proposed a **limited number of socially acceptable sports for the *weaker sex***, such as figure skating, swimming, gymnastics, and tennis, **rejecting all sport activities that were judged too energetic or not aesthetic** (Carpentier & Lefèvre, 2006; Patsandaras & Kamberidou, 2006).

Sigfried Edström 1942-1952, the 4th IOC President also against women's participation

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Following IOC president Henri de Baillet-Latour's death in 1942, Edström became the acting president until the end of World War II, when he was formally elected...

- ❑ He played a **major role**—with his dual membership in the IAAF and the IOC—to subjugate women/create barriers for women in Olympic sport ...



Avery Brundage, the 5th IOC President: 1952-1972

See list: http://olympic-museum.de/president/pres_ioc.html:



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- The next IOC President also opposed women's participation in the Olympic Games,
- prior to becoming IOC President, he was President of the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) which was in a continuous battle with those in favor of women's participation (Pfister 1990, Patsantars, 2007, Kamberidou, 2011)

1894 - 1896	1. President:	Demetrios Vikelas (Greece)
1896 - 1925	2. President:	Baron Pierre de Coubertin (France)
1925 - 1942	3. President:	Henri de Baillet-Latour (Belgium)
1946 - 1952	4. President:	Sigrid Edström (Sweden)
1952 - 1972	5. President:	Avery Brundage (USA)
1972 - 1980	6. President:	Lord Killanin of Dublin and Spittal (Ireland)
1980 - 2001	7. President:	Juan Antonio Samaranch (Spain)
2001 - 2013	8. President:	Jacques Rogge (Belgium)
2013 -	9. President:	Dr. Thomas Bach (Germany)

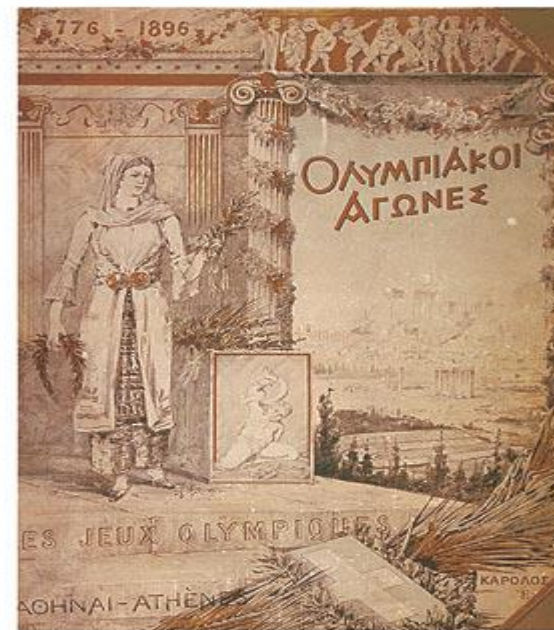
THE FIRST GREEK WOMEN MARATHON RUNNERS IN 1896

-Melpomeni from
Corfu, and
-Stamatia Revithi from
Sytos

See: Lernartz (1994) and
Tarasouleas, (1997) who
suggests it may be the same
person

See also: [The Olympic
Marathon](#) by David E.
Martin, David A. Martin, Roger
W. H. Gynn - Sports &
Recreation -Publisher, Human
Kinetics 2000

- In 1894, when the 1896 Olympics were being planned, Michel Breal, French linguist and historian, proposed that a 40K (24.8 miles) race be included in the track and field program, in order to commemorate the run of Pheidippides from Marathon to Athens in 490BC, and of course the Greek organizers agreed enthusiastically.



*Greek newspaper
ASTY
March 31, 1896*

Stamatia Rovithi
from Syros, age 35,
a mother of seven
children, ran the
official Marathon
5½ hours....

Stamatia Rovithi



Free hand drawing

Produced by Stamatia Rovithi



Melpomeni (last name unknown) unofficially ran the Marathon course in **1896 in 4½ hours ...**
it seems she was faster than Stamatia Revithi....

Alice Joséphine Marie Million, later Alice Milliat (1st woman Olympic entrepreneur and Sport entrepreneur)

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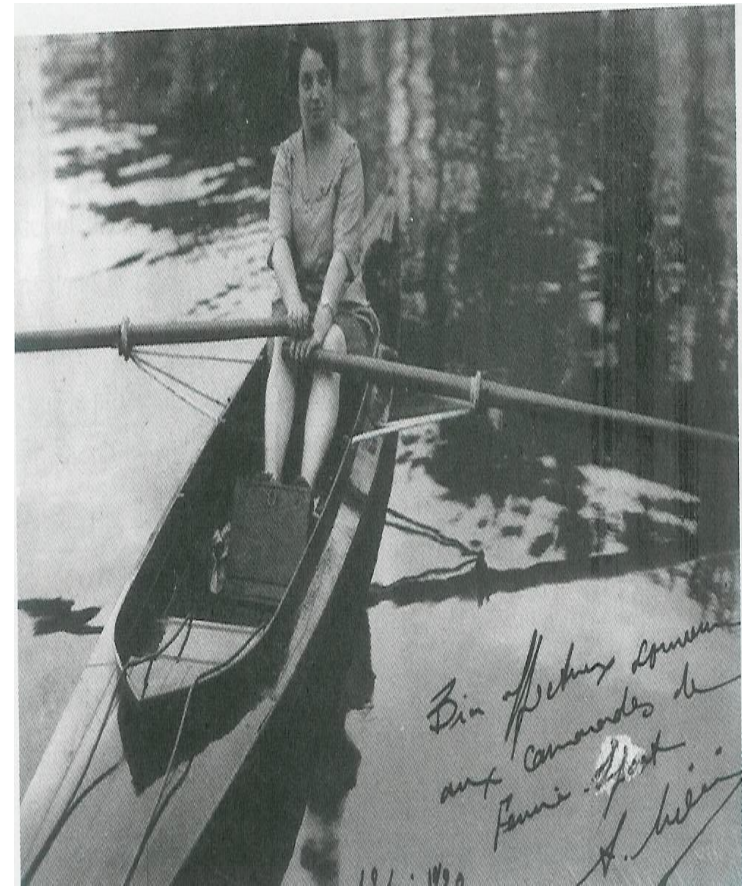
**ALICE MILLIAT
(1884-1957)**

**THE FIRST WOMAN SPORT
ENTREPRENEUR AND
OLYMPIC ENTREPRENEUR**



23. Mme. Alice Milliat, Presidente, Federation Sportive Feminine Internationale

"She entered a plea for the inclusion of women's track and field in the Olympic Games before 1920." (Miragaya, χ.χ.έ)



FEMINA SPORT (1912)

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26. Mme. Alice Milliat - Federation Sportive Feminine Internationale (FSFS) 1921-1936

- **Treasurer of the Fédération Française Sportive Féminine de France--FSFSF (1917)**
- **General Secretary (1918)**
- **President (1919):** “Her first act was to ask the IOC President – Pierre de Coubertin – to allow for women’s participation in the 1920 Olympic Games in Antwerp Belgium”
- **and since the IOC ignored her she organized.....**



27. she organized the "Monte Carlo Women's Olympics" in March 1921



- 1 **Monte Carlo Women's Olympics:** Czechoslovakia, Great Britain, France, the U.S. and Spain (Miragaya, n.d.).
2. After the Monte Carlo Women's Olympics Alice Milliat "entered another plea for the inclusion of women's track and field in the Olympic Games in 1921" (Drevon, 2005)
3. and since the IOC again ignored Milliat or the FSFSF demands for inclusion in the Olympics.... The result was the first Women's Olympic Games in Paris in 1922!!!



... the first Women's Olympic Games in Paris on August 20, 1922:
20,000 spectators (Carpentier & Lefèvre, 2006; Drevon, 2005; Woolum 1998)

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US Team



Women's Olympic Games held in Paris August 20, 1922 with **20,000** spectators and **300 women athletes** from France, Great Britain, Norway, Italy, Switzerland, Belgium, and Czechoslovakia....

Alice Milliat, **the first woman Olympic entrepreneur**, who also negotiated women's track and field entry in the Olympic Games....

"Olympic Games for women" Monte Carlo 1921, 1922, 1923

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- **Organized by International Sporting Club of Monaco**



- ❑ **THE FIRST MONTE CARLO WOMEN'S OLYMPICS** held March 1921...with the participation of female athletes from 5 countries (France, Great Britain, Norway, Italy and !
- ❑ Moreover, according to Miragaya (2006), **these first 'Olympic Games' for women** held in Monte Carlo **1921**, **1922** and **1923** were organized by the International Sporting Club of Monaco.

Women's Olympic Games in Paris 1922

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British Women's Team at the Opening ceremony



AMERICA'S TEAM OF WOMEN ATHLETES, LED BY MISS GODBOLD, PARADING BEFORE THE STANDS AT PERSHING STADIUM
Prior to the Olympic Games, in Which the United States Team Finished Second, With a Score of 31 Points.
(Times Wide World Photos.)

Women's Olympic Games in Paris 1922

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"She was so successful that the August newspaper edition of *Le Sportif* compared Madame Milliat to Coubertin" (Drevon, 2005).



- Photo published in the New York World, 1922

<http://lits.columbiasc.edu/edenslibrary/LA%20100/Miss%20Ludy/LM1.html>



32. The name 'Olympic', property of the IOC

“...the name ‘Olympic’ has been unrightfully appropriated by the organizers of the Women’s Games and it [the IOC] will take the necessary steps to obtain the help of the international federations so that this designation, which is the property of the IOC, is exclusively reserved for the Games organized by the IOC the first year of every Olympiad.”

Minutes of the IOC Executive Board, Paris, 5 Nov. 1925
(IOC Archives, Lausanne, Switzerland, in: Carpentier & Lefèvre, 2006: 1118)



Milliat negotiated with the IOC
the participation of women in track &
field in the **Amsterdam Olympic**
Games of 1928

-Five (5) disciplines were included:
800m, 100m, 4x100, high jump and
discus throw ... (Miragaya & Dacosta n.d).

33. VISIBILITY



Alice Milliat at the 1928 Olympic Games

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Amsterdam 1928 Summer Olympics

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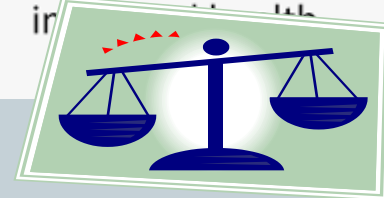


Need to remember....

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Gender equality and
in



- Social change, social transformations especially during the two world wars (WWI 1914-1918 and WWII 1939-1945), the women's movement, social activism, etc. as regards the social gender, gender stereotypes, gender roles....that as a result led to women entering the workforce and many male-dominated social spheres (economy, politics, sports, etc.)

The 1928 Olympic Games

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Alice Milliat at the Olympic Games in 1928



Alice Milliat (center) with the athletes and delegation



According to Carpentier & Lefèvre, 2006:

- **“The brief existence of the FSFI (from 1921 to 1936) was enough to create the momentum and international unity needed for the growth of women’s sport between the two world wars.**
- **“The repeated, regular and successful organization of the Women’s Games was a source of worry for the men’s sports movement: the domination and power of men in organized sport were threatened in the face of the women’s demands.**
- **“The IAAF leaders, seeing the opportunity to benefit from the [WOMEN’S] federation’s financial weakness, provoked the entrance of women athletes into the Olympic Games with the sole goal of better controlling its development.**



So the IOC and the International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF) came to an agreement with the Federation Sportive Feminine Internationale (FSFI), demanding the end of the Women's Olympics (the use of the name) and included **10 women's sports in the Olympic program.**

- ❑ “Whether they [THE IOC] wanted to see a complete separation between the women's and men's sports movements, like IOC President Henri de Baillet-Latour, or preferred to integrate the women in order to better control them, like the majority of members, one principle was common to them all: sport is the affair best led by men” (Carpentier & Lefèvre, 2006).

The introduction of women's competitions at the Olympics eventually lead to the end of the Federation Sportive Feminine Internationale (FSFI) in 1936:

- In the 1928 Olympics in Amsterdam, **277** women athletes, more than three times as many as those at the *1926 Women's Games* in Goteborg (Sweden), marking the future losses of the FSFI.
- In the 1932 Olympic Games in Los Angeles, although the number of events hardly increased, **126** women went to the US.
- In the 1936 Olympics in Berlin, although no real increase in events, **331** women went to Germany....

See: A Timeline of Women in the Olympics

<https://nuunlife.com/blogs/news/a-timeline-of-women-in-the-olympics>

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- **“1921-** In protest of the restrictive Olympic regulations keeping women from competing in almost all Olympic sports a group of women joined together to establish a separate event for women athletes. At its first meeting, the group voted to establish a [Women’s Olympics](#) as an alternative to the male-centric Games. In total four Women’s Games were staged, in 1922 (Paris), 1926 (Gothenburg, Sweden), 1930 (Prague), and 1934 (London), with participants coming mostly from North America, Western Europe, and Japan.
- **1928-** Women’s participation in the Olympics reached 10%. However, after completing the 800-meter run in the summer Amsterdam games **a few of the women competitors fell to the ground to regain their strength. Citing this and medical “evidence,” the IOC then ruled that the 800-meter run was too dangerous for women. Women were not allowed to compete in the 800-meter run until the 1960 Olympics in Rome.**
- **1932-** Mildred Ella “Babe” Didrikson gained international acclaim for setting four world records and winning two gold medals and one silver in track and field events. She later became known as a professional golfer and has been honored with numerous inclusions on “Best of” lists. Her Olympic victories set the tone for the rest of her [successful athletic career](#).
- **1936-** The controversial Berlin Olympics saw many notable moments, but one often overlooked accomplishment is **the gold medal win of 13-year-old Marjorie Gestring. She remains the youngest person to have won a medal in the Olympics.**
- **1956-** Australian Betty Cuthbert won three gold medals in track events and set an Olympic record for her time in the 100m sprint.”

Introduction of Women's Sports

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Year	Sports
1900	Tennis, Golf
1904	Archery
1908	Tennis, Figure skating
1912	Swimming
1924	Fencing
1928	Athletics, Gymnastics
1936	Alpine skiing
1948	Canoeing
1952	Equestrian sports
1960	Speed skating
1964	Volleyball, Luge
1976	Rowing, basketball, handball
1980	Field hockey
1984	Shooting, cycling
1988	Tennis, table tennis, sailing
1992	Badminton, judo, biathlon
1996	Football, Softball
1998	Curling, Ice Hockey
2000	Weightlifting, Pentathlon, Taekwondo, Triathlon
2002	Bobsleigh
2004	Wrestling
2008	BMX
2012	Boxing



2014

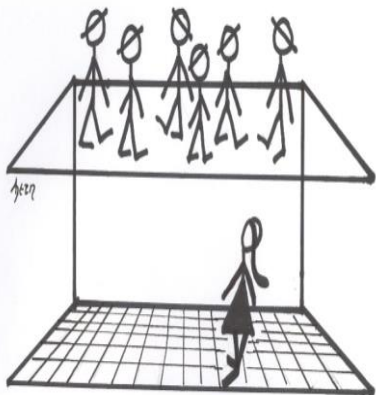
2016

2020 ?

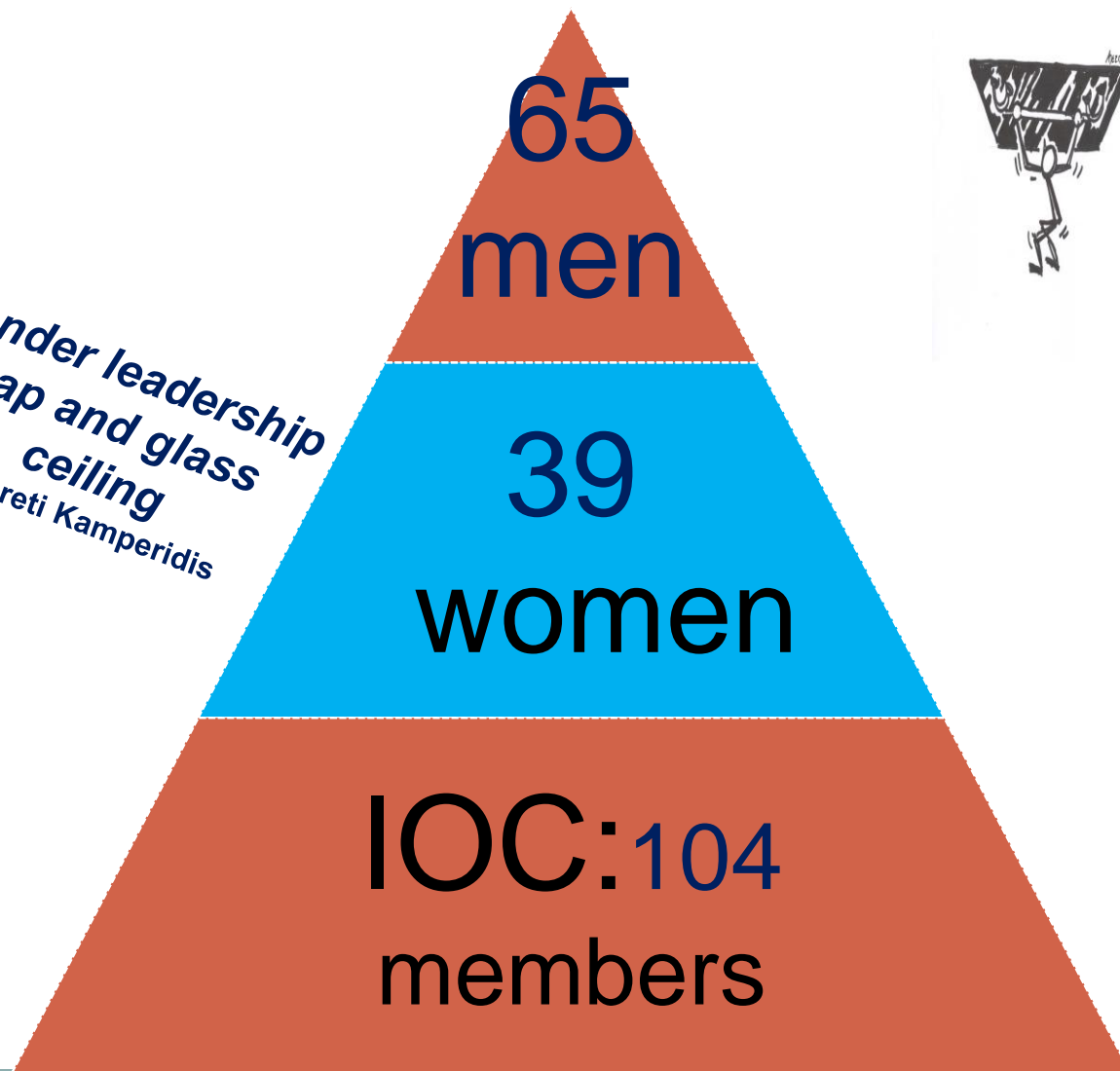
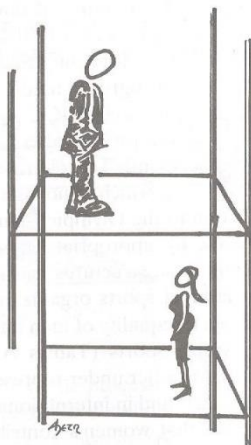
SKI JUMPING

RUGBY

Covid-19



**Gender leadership
gap and glass
ceiling**
by Areti Kamperidis



THE HELLENIC OLYMPIC COMMITTEE TODAY

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Sample sources/bibliography

45

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THANK YOU