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## ORIGINAL

### WOMEN AND SPORT PAINTING: COLLECTION OF SUPERIOR COUNCIL OF SPORTS (SPAIN)

### MUJER Y PINTURA DEPORTIVA: LA COLECCIÓN DEL CONSEJO SUPERIOR DE DEPORTES (ESPAÑA)

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#### ABSTRACT

The aim of this study is to analyse how women are represented in the sports paintings, taking as reference a selection of works supported by the Superior Council of Sports, collected in the publication "Sport, art and literature". Quantitative analysis note that the female figure appears in a very small number of works and they are represented young and thin. Qualitative analysis allows to identify a sexist treatment and discriminatory of women, who is painted from an androcentric perspective: a sexual object, passive character, secondary and based on the male character. When the women appears as an active character and central of the work, they are marked by the emphasis in the aesthetic aspects and expressive of the movement, what defines the physical-sports activities that the gender ideology considers to be female. In conclusion, sport painting offers an image skewed and uneven, reproducing stereotypes regarding the masculinization of the sport and the limited nature of female sports.

**KEYWORDS:** Stereotype, inequality, sport, gender.

## RESUMEN

El objetivo del presente estudio es analizar cómo es representada la mujer en la pintura deportiva, según la selección avalada por el consejo superior de deportes, que aparece en “Deporte, arte y literatura”. El análisis cuantitativo muestra a la mujer en un número muy reducido de obras y caracterizada como joven y delgada. El análisis cualitativo identifica un tratamiento sexista y discriminatorio de la mujer, pintada desde un enfoque androcéntrico: bien como objeto sexual, bien como personaje pasivo, secundario y en función del personaje masculino. En las escasas ocasiones en las que la mujer aparece como personaje activo y central de la obra, aparece con énfasis estético y expresivo del movimiento, lo que caracteriza las actividades físico-deportivas que la ideología de género considera femeninas. En conclusión la pintura sobre el deporte ofrece una imagen sesgada y desigual, reproduciendo los estereotipos respecto a la masculinización del deporte y relega la presencia femenina.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Estereotipo, desigualdad, deporte, género.

## INTRODUCTION

Sport offers, like any other cultural manifestation, a reflection of the society in which it takes place. Paintings, for their part, also reflect the values and interests of the social and cultural context. Therefore, the image of sports offered by paintings provides a mixture of representations that reflects a particular manner of perceiving and interpreting sport itself. An obvious example is how sports images are “sexualized” in many sports when being TV broadcasted, through explicit images focused on specific parts of women bodies or in attitudes with high sexual content: beach volleyball, athletics, swimming... (Wanneberg, 2011). This, to point out that sports screen a visibility of women not only referred to the game itself (competition, physical activity), but also includes a beauty ideal, a certain body movement and a body that is exhibited (López-Villar, 2011).

Although sport is presented in our society as a means to promote both social and personal values and qualities, not everybody has access to it in the same conditions of equality and therefore not everybody enjoys its benefits equally (Hanson and Kraus, 1999; Klomsten, Marsh and Skaalvik, 2005; Scofield and Heicht, 2012; Szabo, 2003). The scarcity of studies about the nature of women representations in sports, and more specifically about the ideology associated with those representation, calls for more studies about the image of women in sports contexts, and about how that image points towards aspects that, in many cases, have no relation whatsoever with the practice of sports. Therefore, whether women are represented practicing sports or not, the scenery and the role assigned to them, their clothes, attitude, etc., derives from a given perception of the relationship of women with sport, perception that, far from

being neutral, is usually loaded with prejudices (Duncan 1994; Wanneberg, 2011; Weber and Carini, 2012). The analysis approach might comprise different spheres, but for a number of reasons that will soon be explained, we will focus here on the inequalities derived from gender ideology, and we will analyse the way in which paintings dealing with sports reflect those inequalities.

### **Women in modern sports**

The way in which we perceive modern manifestations of sport is nothing more than a reflection of physical activity as understood by western society: what at first was a game, a practice of a more or less playful nature, has become with time a complex phenomenon that includes manifestations as different as spectacle sports, sport as health or competitive sports (Coakley, 2004; Hargreaves, 1994), and others related to leisure, culture and education.

If ruggedness or competition are associated to sport and its male practice, qualities such as rhythm, expressiveness or flexibility, socially characterized as female, are associated with minority sports practiced by women (such as synchronized swimming or gymnastics rhythmic). Male preponderance in sport is still evident, but, depending on the context, there is also a certain female participation, although to a lesser extent and not in all sport modalities (García and Llopis, 2011; Maguire and Mansfield, 1998; Messner and Sabo, 1990).

Media offer their own particular way of understanding sport, dominated by mercantilism and androcentric bias (Bairner, 2007; Bishop, 2003). By virtue of their characteristics (action, social meaning, spectacularity, etc.), the images provided have a great visual force and their own iconography. Under the pretext of gaining audience and profitability as main values, they broadcast and amplify an image of sports focused on male practice and male achievements and less on those of females (Weber and Carini, 2012).

### **Sports in paintings: ¿Images of women?**

Painting is a form of representation that implies expressing by means of icons, symbols, bodies, places, spaces and contexts (Betterton, 1987). The way paintings look at the world of sport attracts our attention in virtue of the cultural and social influence of sport itself. The pictorial image is after all innocent, and what it represents, its implicit meanings, deserve to be scrutinized.

Our culture models us towards a way of seeing and looking that is not nature-given (Bourdieu, 1991; Mitchell, 2005). Painting offers a reflection and an interpretation of society. When it comes to works that deal with sport, they have represented it in the same way society perceives it, with its same values and ideology (Lynn, Walsdorf, Hardin and Hardin, 2003; Pearson, 2001).

The description of sports paintings presents a context, forms and a bodily culture that we identify as characteristic of the practice of sport. Likewise, that image represents characters, those that do or do not practice sports, those that assume a leading role and those that are secondary or mere spectators, and we

also recognize the male and female models that they provide us, as well as beliefs and a certain ideology that accompany them. Thus, iconography uncovers social models and stereotypes and it feeds and strengthens them in the same degree in which it makes them visible and legitimizes them (Greenleaf, 2002).

The importance of image in the transmission of gender stereotypes is a fact; images act in an unconscious manner, contributing to create or strengthen a certain way of looking at and interpreting reality that generally coincides with the dominant social models. Thus, analyzing the message transmitted through images, whether they are pictorial, photographic, cinematographic, etc., allows us to detect and identify the implicit ideas and the sexist and discriminatory treatment that those images carry within themselves (Bishop, 2003; Wenner, 2013). The images that deal with sport contain the concept and the content (Shields, Gilbert, Shen and Said, 2004), conditioned by the reality of the male and androcentric treatment of sport (Pedersen and Whisenant, 2003).

The stereotypes that characterize the treatment of women in painting have already been analyzed. Paintings provide us virgins, saints, goddesses, muses, etc. and, while art history deals with techniques, styles or artists, seldom does it stop to analyze the characteristics of the presence of women: the meanings, implicit conceptions or stereotypes that are transmitted. There are some contributions regarding the treatment of the female body in art (Ecker, 1986; Pollock, 1996) that show and characterize women in paintings throughout the ages. An example is the study by Chicago and Lucie-Smith (1999) in which they describe, with the aid of 200 illustrations, the characteristics of the representation of women, and in which they conclude that the presence of women is minimal, biased and generally far behind the male and patriarchal dominion in art (Strong, 2002). On the other hand, there are works that have focused on sport as a pictorial motif. An example is Andy Warhol and his "Athletes" series, in which, of 11 images, eight are only of men, one of a man and a woman and two images are of women only. The sports reflected by the artist are seen as a purely masculine manifestation: boxing, football, American football, basketball, hockey and golf. The rest, including a mixed representation and the two with female characters, are dedicated to tennis and skating.

However, we have not found previous studies that analyzed specifically the way in which paintings treat sport (after a search in the *SportDiscus* database and in *Science Citation Index* using the terms painting, gender, sport, characterization) or the features of female representations in this kind of works, and therefore, when it comes to establishing the present state of the subject and its discussion, we will make reference to related research studies that focus on the analysis from the point of view of gender in sport images, although in different types of media. These are images distributed by means of different media that also show differences by gender (Buysse and Embser-Herbert, 2004; Ginsberg and Gray, 2006; King, 2007; Yu 2009).

In the case of books and the figures that appear in them, the differences in roles and activities (domestic sphere for women, work and professional sphere for men) have already been studied and highlighted (for instance, Anderson and

Hamilton, 2005). The same can be said of the images reproduced in toys (Auster and Mansbach, 2012) and videogames (Downs and Smith 2009; Ramírez-Macías, 2011). In the concrete case of image analysis in texts dealing with Physical Education, we also find differences in the proportion of male and female sport images (Moya, Ros, Bastida and Menescardi, 2013; Moya-Mata, Ruiz, Martín, Pérez and Ros, 2017; Parra, 2002; Táboas-Pais and Rey, 2012), and of roles and characterizations that associate men to a “rugged” physical activity in which the emphasis is on action and effort on the one hand, and a more light or reduced physical activity, of expressive or rhythmic content, for women (López-Villar, 2011).

The institution that deals in Spain with the promotion and development of sport is the Superior Counsel of Sports (*Consejo Superior de Deportes*, CSD, 2012a). Amongst its goals, this body emphasizes the practice of sports and certain values that are usually accepted with barely any criticism: fair play, competition amongst equals, respect of rules, fighting spirit and perseverance, etc., and it follows the trail of sport as conceived by classical thinkers, such as Pierre de Coubertin, and keeps its Olympic mottos, like “the important thing is to take part” or other health-related mottos: “healthy mind, healthy body”. In this sense, this implies a certain myth of sports practice as carrier “per se” of values and virtues, and also that this institution is an advocate and transmitter of those ideals. Otherwise, overcoming gender stereotypes in the practice of sports and promoting women practice of sports constitute one of its main functions (Manifest for equality and participation of women in sports, CSD, 2009).

In the case of pictorial works, CSD contributed to the publishing of a Journal issue in which these sport values appear from the point of view of image (Litoral, 2004). The best endorsement for the CSD itself is that it assumes that the images have a certain beauty, but it does not say that it also communicates another perception. We are aware that this way of accepting and taking for granted a certain way of looking at sports on the part of the social collective is illustrative; it is a perception that carries with itself an idea of health and care that makes sense in our society but, paradoxically, it articulates a certain discrimination, as it gives more importance to sport from a male and androcentric perspective.

This positive conception of sport needs, in our opinion, a more reflexive and critical analysis. In this regard, and from the perspective of equality, sport must be called into question inasmuch as it moves away from the values attributed to it. The existing inequality, both quantitative and qualitative, between the male and female practice of sport is an evident reflection of the stereotypes still present in sport.

The goal of this study has been to know the characteristics of the representation of women and female sport in the CSD-endorsed paintings than can be seen in its website (CSD, 2012b), and also published in the Litoral journal (Litoral, 2004). This purpose may be divided into the following objectives:

- Analyzing the features of the treatment of the female figure in the selection of works belonging to the chosen sample.
- Detecting and identifying the stereotypes present in the images studied.

## **METHOD**

A descriptive study is proposed in which frequencies and percentages have been analyzed in order to find out the difference in the presence of men and women in the paintings of sports content. It is complemented by a qualitative study using as research technique the content analysis of images (in this case, paintings) (Banks, 2010).

The quantitative analysis is done according to the total amount of works, the percentage of works dedicated to the different sports and the percentage of works that include representations of the human body, both male and female. Qualitative analysis, on the other hand, focuses on the description of those features that will help us to identify the presence or absence of gender stereotypes in the selected works. The categories for the qualitative analysis are defined in the instruments section.

### **Data source**

In the concrete case of our study the detailed info may be found in the website (CSD, 2012b) and also published in the Litoral journal (2004). The election of this magazine is due to the added interest that it gathers in a collection of the CSD, institution that backs this publication as a reference for sports in graphic arts. The selection consists of a broad set of paintings of different authorships and styles (a similar alternative can be seen in Kühnst, 1996). The journal presents paintings in eight main sections: Leather, Air, Fire, Heart, Roars, Water, Snow and Earth. In this study some literary works are included that deal as well with sport but that are not the object of this study.

### **Instruments**

Starting from a first exploratory review and with the help of the proposals done in previous studies (López-Villar, 2011; Parra, 2002; Táboas and Rey, 2011), the dimensions and categories that would be valid for the objectives of this study were identified.

In the first place, for the quantitative analysis, a feature list was established (Table 1) and validated by a workforce composed of a university professor specialized either in sport or in gender studies. The groups of experts consulted included a total of four (two men and two women), all of them with over ten years of teaching experience both in sports and gender studies and authors of works published related to the present study. After consulting them, they accepted to collaborate in the study disinterestedly. The list of features used for the quantitative analysis was included in a registry form in Excel in order to obtain percentages and frequencies.

**Table 1.** *Categories for the quantitative analysis of the analyzed paintings.*

Feature	Elements of each feature
Human figure	Man, Woman, Both
Type of sport	Individual, Adversary or Collective
Representation by sport modality	Representation of the female figure Representation of the male figure
Attitude	Active, Passive
Who practises it	Man, Woman, Both

Secondly, for the qualitative study undertaken by means of the content analysis technique (Banks, 2010; Krippendorff, 1990; Riffe, Lacy and Fico, 2005; Sex Roles, 2010), a template or registry form was used as instrument, prepared on the basis of the dimensions and categories referred in other studies (López-Villar, 2011; Ramírez-Macías, 2011; Táboas and Rey, 2011), that were adapted or completed by consensus of the aforementioned professors, regarding its significance and the clarity of its definition (Table 2) and that define a set of dimensions, categories and subcategories that have been used in the selected works.

**Table 2.** Dimensions, categories and terms for the content analysis of the selected paintings.

Dimension	Categories	Subcategories
Physical features	Age	Girl
		Young
		Adult
		Elder
	Somatotype	Ectomorph
		Mesomorph
		Endomorph
	Clothing	Naked
		Sport clothes
		Other
Role	Image area	Centre
		Peripheral
	Space occupied	Interior
		Exterior
		Not perceived
	Attitude	Active
		Passive
		Not perceived
	Stereotype	None
		Sexual object
Companion, girlfriend, wife		
Femininity		

**Physical features.** This dimension includes physical aspects of the women portrayed, defined by their aspect or physical presence, and the following categories are included: (a) *age*, which establishes the approximated chronological stage of the represented image, and includes the possible differences in which ages are socially perceived: girl, young, adult and elder; (b) *morph type*, which establishes the morphologic features of the women depicted in the sample works according to the bone, fat or muscle predominance that is usually employed in biological analysis, known as: *ectomorph*, elongated or

long linear and thin shapes, with low muscular and fat development; *endomorph*, round forms and fat development; and *mesomorph*, angular shapes and muscular body; and (c) *clothing*, we believe clothing to be an important feature in sport, whether that is by the circumstances in which it is practiced (mountain, water, etc.), or due to the distinctions between teams, rivals, etc., and its categories are: naked, representations in which the female figure appears without any kind of clothing that covers wholly or partially her body; adequate or proper for the practice of the different sport modalities portrayed in the works analyzed; and an option for others, that includes any other clothes that do not make explicit reference to the practice of any physical-sporting activity.

**Assigned role.** Refers to the dimension of the role assigned to the depicted women, defined by categories such as: (a) *image area*, which refers to the place the female figure occupies in the painting, and which can be: center, if the figure occupies the central area of the image; or peripheral, if the female figure occupies areas close to the edges, whether it's the side edges or the upper and lower edges; (b) *space occupied*, which refers to the characteristics of the space in which the female figure is represented, and which may be: exterior, if the painting depicts an open space, whether it is natural or built; and interior, if the painting depicts a closed space; (c) *attitude*, which refers to the passive or active behavior of the female figure, and subdivided itself into: active, if the figure is represented executing some movement; and passive, if the figure is not represented executing any movement, whether it is standing, lying down or resting; and (d) *stereotype*, which refers to what the women represented symbolize, and that includes: sexual object, if the representation of the woman is either naked or partially dressed but showing her sexual attributes and depersonalized, that is, reduced to her body and, sometimes, to fragments of the body (often, also the sexual attributes): companion, girlfriend, wife, referred to the representations in which women appear beside the male figure, which, usually, is the one that performs or is associated to the action; femininity, referred to qualities that, like beauty, style, sensitivity or fragility, our culture attributes to the traditional role of women; an extra option defined as none is included, when the figure does not represent any stereotype.

## Proceeding

First all the paintings that appeared in the journal were counted. Those that contained images of both men and women were selected, and those that did not were discarded, such as sports fields or sports equipment. Those that included symbolic representations and in which human figures did not appear were also discarded. The selected paintings were included in an Excel template in order to facilitate the percentage of quantitative analysis used for this stage of the study and that includes aspects such as the existence of human figures, the representation of male or female characters, the type of sport represented and the passive or active attitude of the characters. Next, those paintings which included women were selected and divided into those in which only women appeared and those in which there were both men and women; at the same time the qualitative analysis was done, following the list of dimensions and categories already described.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Two types of analysis were performed. First, a descriptive analysis of all paintings, with percentages and frequencies, which implies a proportion of works with female presence and the characterization according to the variables exposed in the instruments. Secondly, a descriptive qualitative analysis of the characterization of women in the paintings in which women appeared.

The total amount of paintings appearing in the journal is 181 from a total of 150 artists; of those, 11.3% appear more than once, and six paintings are anonymous. The majority are set, mainly, between the end of the XVIIIth century and the present time. Some are hard to place, such as a V b. C. jar, or authors that predated the time in which what we today understand as modern sport originated, such as Hieronymus Bosh (1450-1516). In the study we have considered only those paintings that include human figures (141 paintings), and discarded those that represent, for instance, trophies or sport equipment such as balls and the like (40 paintings). Non-figurative paintings were also discarded, as they could not be interpreted according to the objectives of this study.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Although, as already explained, we have not found previous studies that analyzed specifically the features of the representation of female characters in paintings related to sports, we may refer, for discussion purposes, to the results of investigations that have analyzed similar aspects in other contexts and media (Buisse and Embser-Herbert, 2004; López-Villar, 2011; Parra, 2001; Ramírez Macías, 2011; Táboas and Rey, 2011; Táboas-Pais and Rey-Cao, 2012; Yu, 2009).

### Quantitative analysis

**Human figure.** Of the 141 paintings with human figures, the number of works with an exclusively female presence is 8.5%, and the rest portray only males (80.8%) or both males and females (10.6%). It is significant that a great number of the paintings portray human figures with male characters only. It can be said that this presence exceeds by far the conception of an equal representation regarding the way in which sport is characterized in the paintings belonging to the CSD reference sample.

The studies that have dealt with this subject, although in textbooks (Parra, 2002; Táboas and Rey, 2008), reach similar conclusions, as they point to the fact that the sports that appear have a male prevalence, and, in contrast to men, the presence of women is characterized by being basically passive.

**Type of sport.** Regarding the sports that appear in the sample paintings (see Table 3), the frequency with which the different types of sports are represented shows a majority of a few sports, while the rest are relegated to a minority presence (see, for instance, Pedersen and Whisenant, 2003).

**Table 3.** *Percentage of paintings that represent the different sport modalities.*

Sports	%	Sports	%
Athletics	2.8	Football (soccer)	32.4
Auto racing	8.6	Golf	1.9
Aviation	0.9	Show jumping	0.9
Badminton	0.9	Skating	0.9
Baseball	2.8	Rugby	3.8
Boxing	14.3	Tennis	7.6
Horse riding	0.9	Sailing	1.9
Cycling	8.6	Undetermined	3.8
Cars	1.9	Multisports	3.8
Fencing	0.9		

Football (soccer) is the most represented sport, with approximately one third of the paintings, probably due to the influence football has in our present society and its leading role in media. The next most represented sport is boxing, followed by auto racing, cycling and tennis. These sports are not amongst those with a bigger actual female participation (García and Llopis, 2011). Not just boxing, with an exclusively male presence (in the 2012 Olympic Games there were three female boxing categories), but also sports like football, which has a recent female participation (the first world championship took place in 1991, and the presence of female football in Olympic Games began in 1996), or auto racing, where women's presence is practically non-existent. Cycling and tennis are the sports with a greater female participation. The rest of sports have a testimonial presence.

Men are represented more often, and they appear performing sporting activities such as football, athletics, or basketball, that is, those that enjoy a greater social prestige or that are more practiced, as already pointed out (Pedersen and Whisenant, 2003). On the contrary, women generally appear performing expressive activities (for instance, in Táboas and Rey, 2008) or dancing and swimming (López-Villar, 2011).

**Male-female proportion by sport modality.** In this section we analyze (Table 4) the types of sport appearing in paintings, and with it the proportion of female versus male presence.

**Table 4.** *Male-female proportion by sport modality.*

Sport	% Men	% Women
Football	97.1	2.9
Boxing	100	-
Cycling	77.8	22.2
Auto racing	88.9	11.1
Tennis	50	50
Other (14 sports)	73.3	26.7

For this analysis we have chosen the most represented sports on the one hand and those least represented on the other. Again, the results show that the percentage of works that include male figures is significantly bigger in all represented sport modalities, except in the case of tennis, with a similar proportion of male and female figures. Some sports, like boxing, also one of the majority modalities, do not include any female figure at all. In any case, even in the sample's minority sports, the female figure may be considered practically absent, except in the works dedicated to swimming, in which, just as in the case of tennis, there is a similar proportion of male and female characters.

**Attitude.** The results show that, in paintings in which the only figure represented is female, in 58% of the cases she appears performing an activity, and in the remaining 42%, she is resting or passive. However, in paintings with an exclusively male presence, only 13.7% represent characters that are not practicing sports, while in the remaining 76.2% they appear performing the corresponding sporting activity. We can deduce from this data that when women are depicted in sports paintings, they do not always appear practicing sport, whereas when it is men who are depicted, most of the times they are practicing sports.

**Who practices it?** In paintings that include both males and females, we find that men are represented performing sports activities in all cases, whereas in the case of women, only 52% appear practicing any sport modality. In the rest of paintings, female characters assume a passive role that, in many cases, highlights the active or linked to the practice of sports role of female characters. In this case, as in the previous one, female participation is highlighted as more passive when compared to men.

### **Qualitative analysis**

As has already been mentioned, the number of paintings that include female figures is very reduced, so this analysis has been made in relation to the group of works with female presence (27 paints, 19.1% of the total). Of this percentage, there is a 44.4% in which the paintings' depict women alone, and a 55.5% in which they are in company of others. In this analysis we address an interpretation of the features of the female figure presented in the works that compose this selection, applying the set of dimensions and categories that have

been previously defined in the instruments section. Each painting has been marked with its page number, and a letter “a” is added to that number in case there is more than one painting in the page. Thus, each of the paintings can be located by its page number, for instance, 22 means the painting is in page 22 of the journal (see Table 5). In case the painting takes up two pages, both numbers will appear joined by a hyphen, for example 122-123. In case there is more than one painting in the same page a letter will be placed in the page number, following a right-left and up-down order, for instance, 126a, 126b.

**Table 5.** Page number where paintings appear with female presence.

Page where paintings with women alone are found	22, 95, 122-123, 126b, 168, 183, 187, 189, 193, 197, 203, 209
Page where paintings appear with women accompanied by others	1, 23, 108, 125, 126a, 128, 133, 138-139, 166, 175, 200, 202, 220a, 220b, 232

**Physical features.** The analysis of this dimension shows that, regarding age, a majority depict young women (1, 22, 23, 95, 108, 122-123, 125, 126a, 128, 133, 138-139, 166, 168, 187, 189, 193, 197, 200, 203, 209, 220a y 220b). There are no representations of young girls, adults or elders. The results are similar to those described by Táboas and Rey (2008), and López-Villar (2011) in their studies about the images of physical education textbooks.

Regarding the *somatotype* or body morphology, the *ectomorph* is the only one represented (1, 108, 122-123, 125, 126b, 128, 138-139, 168, 187, 189, 193, 197, 200, 203, 209, 220a y 220b). In no case are women represented with *endomorph* or *mesomorph somatotypes*. No studies were found in which this aspect differentiated by gender was analyzed, and Táboas and Rey (2008), in their analysis, do not find a clear predominance of one single body typology. López-Villar (2011), meanwhile, describes in his study the existence of a dominant body model, mainly male, white, and young, with sport clothes and performing competitive activities in nature or outdoors.

Finally, regarding clothes, women are mainly represented with non-sport clothes, although, for some of them, the figure appears carrying some kind of material for the practice of sport (for instance, in 22, 23 and 126a). On the other hand, we find a group of paintings that reproduce women with clothes that we may consider appropriate for the practice of sport, particularly in the chapter called “Water”, which includes several works dedicated to swimming and in which swimmers appear with bathing suits (183, 187, 189, 193, 197 and 200). Likewise, in the chapter called “Snow”, the female figure is represented with skating clothes (202 and 203). We have not found results referred to this aspect differentiated by gender either. So, for instance, Táboas and Rey (2008), point out in their study that there is a majority percentage of images in which the dominant clothing is sports clothes (as already mentioned, there is no specification as to whether that is also so in the case of female characters). Finally, woman is represented naked in four of the paintings (1, 95, 126a and 168), although that nakedness bears no relation whatsoever with the context.

There are no male characters appearing naked in any of the paintings of the study. As López-Villar (2011) claims, women are represented naked more often, usually as an advertising tool, and they are represented naked as well in other visual media, as was pointed out in other studies (Yu, 2009).

**Role.** Referred in this case to the role, whether leading or secondary, assigned to the women depicted. Regarding the image zone occupied, practically in all works (24 of the 27 that were analyzed), the female figure occupies a central role or is in the foreground, regardless of whether or not her role in relation to the action being depicted is or not a leading one. In the two remaining works, the position is peripheral.

When it comes to the space in which women are represented, in 13 of the paintings it is clearly an open, outdoors space (whether it's natural or built). In a different group of paintings, a total of four, the work represents an indoor space, and in the rest it is not possible to ascertain clearly whether it is indoors or outdoors.

Practically half of the paintings reproduce women in a passive attitude (a total of 12 paintings), as spectators of a tennis match (painting 128) or a golf competition (painting 133), posing standing with a racquet in their hand (paintings 22 and 126b), showing a crystal (painting 166) or resting, whether lying down (painting 189), seated (painting 187) or standing (paintings 108 and 209). On the other hand, we find representations in which females appear performing some kind of activity (active attitude) such as running (painting 1), playing croquet (painting 23), badminton (painting 122-123), or tennis (paintings 125 and 126a), dancing (paintings 138-139, 220a and 220b), swimming (painting 183), jumping from a trampoline (paintings 193 and 200), skating (paintings 202 and 203) and walking (painting 232). They are never depicted with an active attitude in the paintings dedicated to football (a majority in the total selection of paintings), cycling, auto racing or boxing. López-Villar (2011) describes similar results in his study about the advertising images present in a selection of magazines in which female passivity contrasts with male dynamism, and Buysse and Embser-Herbert (2004) follow the same line in studies about photography and the presence of women in sports.

Finally, regarding the stereotypes that the women portrayed symbolize, the analyzed selection includes works in which women are depicted in a companion-girlfriend role, which, as has been already defined, we can find in paintings 108, 128 and 133. Some of these aspects corroborate the results referred to by López-Villar (2011) when she points out that woman is no more than a companion, and man is the protagonist.

Regarding the subcategory that makes reference to representations in which the figure is emphasized by what we have defined as "femininity", we find it in paintings in which the figure is represented highlighting beauty or with an elegant, striking appearance, with several ornaments (paintings 22, 23, 128, 133, 209 and 232), or composing a delicate, harmonious pose (paintings 108, 125, 128, 200, 202, 203, 220a and 220b). As to the subcategory defined as sexual object, we may identify it in paintings in which women are portrayed

naked, out of context and in the presence of a male (dressed) who watches (paintings 1 and 126), in those in which the focus is on sexual attributes (paintings 1 and 95), depicting a fragmented female body (painting 95), or explicitly turned into an object or a machine (painting 168). Also in this category there is a group of paintings in which we have not identified a clear stereotyped treatment of the female figure.

## CONCLUSIONS

The characterization of women in sport paintings represents a bias both in the disproportion between male and female figures and in the sports used, the activities depicted, presenting an active male and a passive female, an image, of sport, in short, significantly biased regarding genre.

Answering the goals proposed in this study, and after establishing a set of categories and indicators to help us characterized the feminine image, which have been: count of human figures (feminine and masculine), count of sport modalities, count of human figures according to the represented sport, count of characters by their attitudes (active or passive), description of the physical features of female characters, role (leading or secondary) played by female characters, description of the characteristics of the attitude of female figures and description of the stereotypes identified in the female figures. The study shows that the most represented sport, by far, is football, followed by boxing, cycling and auto racing. The rest of sport modalities have a significantly lower representation. In all of these sports paintings, the male presence exceeds by far the female, and that male presence strengthens the presence of the physical power of man in opposition to the fragility of woman.

Regarding when and how the female figure is represented in the selected paintings (first objective), the conclusions of the study are the following: The female figure is under-represented. The majority of paintings represent male figures practicing different sports: football, boxing, athletics, auto racing, tennis, etc., whereas women barely practice any sport and are found mostly in minority sports, especially in swimming and tennis. When both men and women appear, the male characters are portrayed mostly in active attitudes, that is, practicing the sport the painting alludes to. Likewise, when male characters appear alone, they are represented in an active attitude. In the reduced number of paintings that do include the presence of women, they appear in a similar proportion in passive and active attitudes (practicing sports), both in the paintings where they appear alone and in those in which they accompany male figures. Practically all female figures are representations of young women. There are no representations of young girls, adults or elders. Likewise, all female figures represented correspond to the ectomorph somatotype. Female characters are mostly portrayed with non-sport clothing, with the exception of the series of paintings dedicated to swimming, in which they wear bathing suits. There is a group of paintings, albeit a minority one, in which the female figure is presented naked, although that nakedness has no relation whatsoever to the practice of any sport. None of the paintings includes naked male characters.

Regarding the stereotypes portrayed in the images, which corresponds to the second goal of the study, we may conclude that in some of the paintings we can identify a stereotyped representation of the female figure, whether it is by reproducing a sexual object cliché, as companion or girlfriend, or as a stereotype related to beauty and femininity.

As we pointed out at the start, these data may be useful in order to show the inequality, regarding gender, that exists in sport. As the presence of women in sport is scarce, so it is in the analyzed paintings. If generally a stereotyped image of women is dominant, and particularly when it comes to the female practice of sports, that is also reflected in the sample. The image of sport presented in the treatment of sport in the sample of works selected for this study from the CSD collection is paradigmatic of the existing gender divide, projecting an image of sport itself and its practice that is androcentric and exclusive.

The limitations of this study are evident if we consider the sample used, as these paintings are endorsed by an institution; probably, there are other works at international level that might be useful to qualify the analysis of our study. There are other collections belonging to the institution, for example photography (CSD, 2012b), that it might be interesting to analyze in future studies, and this might be a line of work for the future: how the presence of woman in sport is characterized and how that representation differs in different media.

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