Taylor & Francis
Online

International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics ›
Volume 6, 2014 - Issue 2: Anti-Doping Policy in Sport

1,711 Views | 32 CrossRef citations to date | 19 Altmetric

Articles

How social fear of drugs in the non-sporting world creates a framework for doping policy in the sporting world

Ross Coomber

Pages 171-193 | Published online: 18 Jan 2013

Cite this article https://doi.org/10.1080/19406940.2012.756824 Check for updates

Sample our Politics & International Relations Journals
>> Sign in here to start your access to the latest two volumes for 14 days

Full Article Figures & data References Citations Metrics
Reprints & Permissions Read this article Share

Abstract

Doping policy is usually presented as though it sits separate from other societal issues, and yet in part, it is clearly a reflection of the broader concerns and historical responses to drug use in the non-sporting world. This is an under-researched aspect of doping policy formation and continuity. With reference to a number of key ‘drug myths’ and a broad discursive framework of fear and ‘othering’ in the non-sporting world, this article will attempt to show how the ‘drug problem’ has been essentially framed in that arena so that comparisons can be made to the development of doping policy. It will be argued that the broader social context has long inflected upon doping administrators and doping policy and that this has resulted in a relative mirroring of policy formation discourses and trajectory found in the non-sporting world. It will be further argued that this mirroring is reflected in a number of key drug myths and discursive positionings

that have emerged in the sporting world: for example, that efficacious performance enhancement is a simple issue, that the health risks are like playing Russian Roulette, that doping undermines sport/morality to a degree that other forms of cheating do not and that doping policy is rational. It will be argued that a fear-based approach to drugs policy can result in a policy that does not protect those it is supposed to and results in a disproportionate and uninformed response.

Keywords:

drug problem | PIEDs | performance-enhancing drugs | history | fear | policy | moral panic | mirroring | myths | sport

Related research

People also read | Recommended articles | Cited by 32

Information for

- Authors
- R&D professionals
- Editors
- Librarians
- Societies

Open access

- Overview
- Open journals
- Open Select
- Dove Medical Press
- F1000Research

Opportunities

- Reprints and e-prints
- Advertising solutions
- Accelerated publication
- Corporate access solutions

Help and information

- Help and contact
- Newsroom
- All journals
- Books

Keep up to date

Register to receive personalised research and resources by email

Sign me up

Copyright © 2026 Informa UK Limited Privacy policy

Cookies Terms & conditions Accessibility

Registered in England & Wales No. 01072954
5 Howick Place | London | SW1P 1WG