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Abstract

Angela J. Schneider Ph.D.
University of Western Ontario

“Ethics and the Challenges of the Potential Use of Genetic Technology in Sport”

This paper will analyze some of the ethical challenges of the potential uses of genetic doping in sport. The discussion will focus on some important conceptual distinctions about contested concepts such as: natural and unnatural (artificial); Restorative and additive; Medical use (treatment) and enhancement and decision points that sport leadership has to deal with in regard to gene doping. It will also focus on some of the ethical foundation of anti-doping efforts such as: preventing avoidable harm; performance enhancement; a vision of sport and how gene doping fits within this context.

It will also address leadership from the sport community and leadership challenges around acknowledging that sport exhibits values and that leadership must choose which values will be endorsed because sport can be used for many ends. There are also still many important unanswered questions of social value – for example: equity of access; implications of genetic therapy for those who currently live with the disability; specific sport oriented issues around the treatment of injury through genetic modification. Connections with other forms of doping and enhancements such as: simulated high-altitude chambers, etc. will also be examined. The paper will conclude with discussions about privacy issues and access to genetic information. There remain great social questions about maintaining the privacy of personal genetic information and the potential role of the sport community becoming a wedge used to drive greater general access to genetic information.