

## Should the women's bridge world championships continue?

If the women-only game both helps and hinders women's progression in the card game bridge, should we consider the radical move of abolishing women's bridge? The latest academic paper by *Bridge: A MindSport for All* (BAMSA) argues that no, there are good reasons for the existence of the women-only game.

BAMSA's fifth and sixth academic papers have recently been published, and both are about gender inequalities and bridge:

Rogers, A., Snellgrove, M.L. and Punch, S. (2022) '[Between Equality and Discrimination: The Paradox of the Women's Game in the Mind-sport Bridge](#),' *World Leisure Journal*.

This paper discusses the existence of women's events in the mindsport bridge. It shows how the women-only game can be viewed as both hindering women's progression in bridge whilst also providing opportunities for women to compete internationally.

Punch, S. and Rogers, A. (2022) '[Building, not Burning Bridges in Research: Insider/Outsider Dilemmas and Engaging with the Bridge Community](#),' *Journal of Leisure Research*, 53(2): 272-289.

The above paper offers insights into some of the exchanges that have taken place between two sociological researchers working on the thorny topic of sexism within the bridge community. The BAMSA team reflect on the challenges of balancing their commitment to funders, academic institutions, and the pursuit of knowledge, as well as to those individuals, communities and organisations that they are researching.

Both papers are based on 151 email questionnaires from bridge players largely from the USA and UK (84 men, 67 women) covering a range of ages and levels.

In a recent interview with [Sorry Partner podcast](#), Prof Samantha Punch talks about the *Bridging Gender* BAMSA research project. She discusses potential ways of addressing neurosexism and gender inequalities within the game.

Practical two-page summaries are on the *Bridge: A MindSport for All* (BAMSA) website:

[Summary on the paradox of women's bridge](#)

[Summary on the process of doing research on gender and bridge](#).

The development of an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) policy by the World Bridge Federation, the ACBL and the European Bridge League would enable recognition and awareness-raising about (neuro)sexism and gender inequalities. An EDI policy could be followed up with unconscious bias training for coaches, mentors, tournament organisers and team selection committees.

As always, BAMSA is interested to hear what you think about the latest published papers. If interested in helping to develop an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion policy, please email: [bamsa@stir.ac.uk](mailto:bamsa@stir.ac.uk)