

## Free Agents - Sexism and Misogyny in the Esports Business

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**Abstract**

This paper explores the ongoing struggle for gender equity within the esports industry, using recent events as a lens to examine broader societal conflicts over Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) in America. It highlights the challenges faced by women in esports, such as sexism, misogyny, and barriers to representation, illustrated by the activism of players like Josefine Jensen. The analysis connects these experiences to larger trends-intensified resistance to DEI initiatives, legislative and social pushback, and the strategic adaptation of civil rights tactics by opponents of equity. The paper further discusses legal avenues for recourse, such as filing discrimination charges with the EEOC, while acknowledging the limitations of institutional protections amid rising anti-DEI sentiment. Through analogy and contemporary examples, the paper underscores the importance of leveraging economic and cultural influence to advance inclusion, and argues that the evolving dynamics in sports and entertainment may offer new pathways for marginalized groups to contest exclusionary practices and reshape the status quo.

**Keywords:** Equality and Diversity, Sports, Women in Sports, Streaming, Esports, Workforce Diversity, Diversity & Inclusion

On February 28th, 2024, Josefine Jensen, a member of Astralis' Women's Counter-Strike team, took a stand. She Xed a letter to Valve Corporation, demanding a change in their business practices. Specifically, she urged them to make female agent skins free to use in Counter-Strike. This issue, she believes, is not just about Skins but about the deep-rooted sexism and misogyny that pervades the esports industry.

The esports world has a rich history of mistreating women. However, women in America do have a way to counterattack. For example, suppose the misandrist is someone you work with. In that case, you can file a Charge of Discrimination with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). The EEOC enforces "federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person's race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, disability, or genetic information. If you sign and file a Charge of Discrimination, you are "asserting that an employer, union or labor organization engaged in employment discrimination." You must file a Charge of Discrimination with the EEOC before you

can sue your employer for discrimination.

Filing a Charge of Discrimination is not your only option. In fact, as the war against Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) intensifies, the EEOC may be unable to protect you. Unfortunately, your enemies intend to compel the EEOC to enforce the status quo. If DEI is important to you, then a showdown with your adversaries is inevitable [1-5].

**Mr. Monopoly's Wisdom**

Your opponent's view DEI as a zero-sum game. Fear and insecurities are at the center of the conflict. We ought to celebrate your accomplishments. Instead, your adversaries recognize that these fears and insecurities make their followers susceptible to viewing your success as a threat. Mr. Monopoly can help you understand the schism. Until recently, your enemies owned the entire board. Their rule was ruthless and absolute. Over time, your foes' forefathers were forced to make half-hearted concessions. Your forebears were given Mediterranean Avenue-Connecticut Avenue. Their adversaries expected them to be content.

Those whose shoulders you stand upon continued to press the issue. You landed on Atlantic Avenue, and your sights are set on

Boardwalk. The last seven to eight years in American politics should have clarified one thing for you: Your enemies consider your desire to own Boardwalk wholly unacceptable [6-8].

### Their Strategy

Your enemies are clever. They copied the tactics of Civil Rights activists. Now, your opponents are erasing them from your history books. Their recent legislative and judicial victories show that your adversaries are reaping the rewards of their efforts. Your enemies likely believe their victory will be absolute if they can expunge the history of your forebears [9-12].

### The Counter-Strike

The sports and entertainment worlds have not acquiesced to your enemies' demands [13]. As we enter the next phase of the streaming wars, alienating marginalized groups is a surefire way to lose [14]. You can leverage the pursuit of profits to your advantage. For example, working at the FDIC was a never-ending party until the Wall Street Journal arrived [15]. The author hopes that soon, every woman will feel safe in the workplace. Perhaps your enemies feel secure because the esports world is not mainstream. The author hopes you show them that they are misreading the tea leaves.

The spotlight is shining brightly upon the women's sports universe. The WNBA is capitalizing on Caitlin Clark and Angel Reese's fame. The NWSL is expanding. Private equity firms are investing heavily in the sports world. The NFL arrived fashionably late to the dance, but their dance card is full. The esports world claims to be unhappy with its dependence upon the Saudis, and the business model needs to be tweaked. Investors not chosen by the major sports leagues will need a date. If DEI is important to you, now is the time to press the issue [16-28].

Advance your token to Boardwalk.

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