

“WOMEN AND ...” SERIES

“*Women and ...*” is a continuing conversation organized by the New York City-area supporters of the Wellesley Centers for Women to share the vitality and relevance of the Centers’ research and influence.

2010 “Women and Sports: Get in the Game”

October 27th – New York Athletic Club

What causes (or thwarts) a thriving sports career for professional women athletes, why do professional women’s sports succeed (or fail), and how does sports participation prepare young women athletes to become trailblazers in business and society? *Panel to be announced.*

2009 “Young Women and Violence”

November 10th – Yale Club of New York

A panel of activists, writers, and researchers debated what’s working – and not – to curb the incidence of sexual harassment, violence, and exploitation of girls and young women. [To hear the panelists: www.wcwonline.org/audioarchive]



Speaker Linda Wertheimer, Senior National Correspondent for National Public Radio (center), and attendees of the 2009 event.



Panelists at the “Young Women and Violence” program included (from left to right) Joyce M. Roché, MBA, President & CEO of Girls, Inc.; Linda Fairstein, J.D., author and former Sex Crimes Prosecutor for the Manhattan District Attorney’s Office; and Jean Kilbourne, Ed.D., author and senior scholar, Wellesley Centers for Women.



Panelists addressed and answered questions from the sold-out crowd of 280 at the Yale Club of New York.

**2008 "Post-Election: What's Next for Women and the Media" _____
November 20th – University Club of New York**

Our panel – some of America's most authoritative broadcast journalists – considered how women candidates were portrayed, what changed for women as a result of coverage of women's political participation, and whether media can be a positive tool for women in politics. *[To view the presentations: www.wcwonline.org/videoarchive]*



Michelle Caruso-Cabrera, from CNBC Television, listens as Diane Sawyer, from ABC News, makes a point during the 2008 program.



Panelists, from left to right, Lynn Sherr, ABC News; Michelle Bernard, Independent Women's Forum and MSNBC; and Diane Sawyer, ABC News; react to CNBC Television's Michelle Caruso-Cabrera's comments on media coverage of women during the presidential campaign.



Audience members at the University Club of New York posed questions to the panel of leading journalists.

For more details about the "Women and ..." New York City luncheons, please visit: www.wcwonline.org/nycevent or call 781 283 2831.

WCW was founded in the mid-70s, just as the implementing regulations for Title IX (the Education Amendments of 1972) came into effect. Since then, WCW researchers have maintained a steady focus on gender equitable education in classrooms, on playing fields, and in extra-curricular activities. Our work has led to new policies, programs, and practices that provide wider opportunities for girls—and boys.

Our work is more than scholarly, it is program- and policy-focused. Findings are published widely in both academic journals and the popular press. The work thus reaches a varied audience including educators, athletes, coaches, policymakers, and the larger community, framing public discourse and fostering changes needed to improve the status of women and girls.

Recognizing the value of sports in preparing leaders, WCW continues to investigate where and how women athletes succeed, as well as the barriers they still confront, on and off the field.

Recent WCW projects include:

The Women's Sports Leadership Project

WCW researchers and scholars are collecting, analyzing, and disseminating valuable data on gender disparities across organized athletics—from youth sports to college conferences to professional leagues. Their findings are legitimizing and connecting athletic experience to essential, off-the-field leadership skills.

Fairgamenevents.com

This WCW-affiliated news blog is dedicated to gender equity on and off the court. Scholars, journalists, advocates, and athletes report on a breadth of factors tied to girls and women's participation in sports. This dynamic blog also connects individuals interested in promoting social, political, and economic fair play. Launched in the spring of 2009, the number of visitors to the site grew 42% over the last seven months, with more frequent posts about Fairgamenevents reports on other prominent sports blogs, such as those at the NCAA and Women Talk Sports Network.

Sports as Protective of Girls' High-Risk Sexual Behavior

With funding from the federal government, WCW researchers identified which adolescents benefited from the protective effect of sports in relation to their sexual activity. The data also showed how participation in sports during high school helped predict safer behaviors into early adulthood for young women.

Recent media features/publications highlighting WCW experts and/or studies include:

- **When It's Woman Vs. Man, Sometimes There's An Upset** on National Public Radio's "Only A Game" with Bill Littlefield (3/10)
- **I Am an Emotional Creature: The Secret Life of Girls Around the World** by Eve Ensler, published by Random House (2009)
- **Women in Sports ~ The Buzz from the Twin Cities** on Prairie Public Broadcasting, MN (12/09)
- **Soccer hair-pulling fuels debate over sport sexism** widely carried article by David Crary, Associated Press (11/09)

Recent media features continued...

- **Ponytail Pull Was Bad (But Good for Women's Sports)** by Laura Pappano, Huffington Post (11/09)
- **Even at Elite Programs, Ticket Prices for Women's Basketball Lag Behind Men's, Report Says**
The Chronicle of Higher Education (10/09)
- **The price gap between men's and women's basketball tickets is madness** by Laura Pappano, *Christian Science Monitor* (4/09)
- **Beating Men at Their Own Games** by Emily Schmall, Forbes.com
- **Playing with the Boys** by Eileen McDonagh and Laura Pappano, Huffington Post (5/08)
- **Women and men in sports: Separate is not equal** by Laura Pappano and Eileen McDonagh, *Christian Science Monitor* (1/08)

(See all media coverage at www.wcwonline.org/recentcoverage)

Recent and upcoming publications and presentations by WCW scholars include:

- **International Working Group on Women and Sport World Conference** (May 2010) Laura Pappano and Allison Tracy, Ph.D. will attend and present during the premier international conference on women and sports in Sydney, Australia
- **Ticket Office Sexism: The Gender Gap in Pricing for NCAA Division I Basketball** (2009) WCW Working Paper Series publication by Laura Pappano and Allison Tracy, Ph.D. (www.wcwonline.org/publications)
- **Squeeze Play: Why Title IX Is Not Enough** (WCW Seminar 2007) presentation by Laura Pappano and Eileen McDonagh, Ed.D. (www.wcwonline.org/audioarchive)
- **Playing With the Boys: Why Separate is Not Equal in Sports** (2007) book by Eileen McDonagh, Ed.D. and Laura Pappano, published by Oxford Press (www.wcwonline.org/publications)
- **Predicting adolescent self-esteem from participation in school sports among Latino subgroups.** (2002) by Sumru Erkut, Ph.D. and Allison Tracy, Ph.D. in *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*
- **Gender and Race Patterns in the Pathways from School-Based Sports Participation to Self-Esteem** (2001) WCW Working Paper Series publication by Sumru Erkut, Ph.D. and Allison Tracy, Ph.D. (www.wcwonline.org/publications)
- **Protective Effects of Sports Participation on Girls' Sexual Behavior** (2000) WCW Working Paper Series publication by Allison Tracy, Ph.D. and Sumru Erkut, Ph.D. (www.wcwonline.org/publications)
- **Raising Competent Girls: Athletic Competence and Self-Esteem** (WCW Seminar 1996) recorded presentation by Fern Marx, M.H.S.M., and Sumru Erkut, Ph.D. (www.wcwonline.org/publications)

(See a listing of WCW publications at www.wcwonline.org/publications)

Learn more about WCW's work at www.wcwonline.org.

Since 1974, scholars at the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) have helped drive change through their social science research projects and training programs. Work at WCW addresses three major areas:

- the social and economic status of women and girls and the advancement of their human rights both in the United States and around the globe;
- the education, care, and development of children and youth; and
- the emotional well-being of families and individuals.

Issues of diversity and equity are central across all the work, as are the experiences and perspectives of women from a variety of backgrounds and cultures. By sharing our work with policymakers, educators, practitioners, and the media, WCW helps to shape a more just and equitable society.

WCW and Wellesley College

The Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) at Wellesley College is the largest women's research organization in the United States. In 1995, the College's Center for Research on Women (est. 1974) and its Stone Center for Developmental Services and Studies (est. 1981) joined to become WCW.

WCW at a Glance

- 40 research and action projects underway each year
- 100 staff members
- 30-50 Wellesley College student employees
- ... as well as postdoctoral research scholars and undergraduate interns
- Housed in three buildings on or near the Wellesley College campus

Since 1974, WCW scholars have produced:

- 400+ papers, reports, and curricula
- 200+ scholarly journal articles
- 100+ books

These have resulted in:

- Millions of readers
- Tens of thousands of practitioners trained
- Thousands of citations in scholarly journals and the popular press
- ...and critical changes in public policies, perceptions, and practices

Funders

Funding for WCW's work comes from federal, state, and local government agencies, private foundations, the Centers' endowment, and the generosity of corporations and individual donors. Major grant funders have included, among others:

- Carnegie Corporation of New York
- Centers for Disease Control
- Ford Foundation
- NASA
- National Institute for Justice
- National Institutes for Health
- National Science Foundation
- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation
- UNICEF

Revenue: \$6.8 M*

*based on unaudited data for FY 2009

- 58% Project revenue
- 19% Restricted endowment distribution
- 9% Unrestricted endowment distribution
- 6% Annual giving
- 5% Wellesley College support (+/-2% net)
- 3% Publications, interest, and other income

Learn more at: www.wcwonline.org



For 35 years the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW) has conducted research and action projects that inform public policy and shape public opinion.

This includes our work on:

Child care for school-age youth: WCW scholars were the first in the nation to respond with research to the urgent need for workable solutions. Our groundbreaking research, policy development, and training programs set the standards for out-of-school time, profoundly improving the lives of parents and children.

Gender equity in education: Our 1992 report, *How Schools Shortchange Girls*, influenced federal legislation on programs for girls in science and math, shaped public discourse on these and related issues, and led to new community-based programs for girls across the country.

Influencing boardroom culture: Our research indicated that a “critical mass” of three or more women is needed on a corporate board before the contributions, values, and perspectives of female board members can effect positive change.

Home/work stresses on the family: We pioneered research on work-family balance that examined stresses associated with both women’s and men’s roles in the workplace and at home. Our investigations resulted in a deeper understanding of – and appreciation for – the similar home/work stresses on women and men, and helped generate new workplace policies.

Women and Sports: WCW was founded in the mid-70s, just as the implementing regulations for Title IX came into effect. Since then, WCW researchers have maintained a steady focus on gender equitable education in classrooms, on playing fields, and in extra-curricular activities.

We have disseminated our work widely through scholarly publications, the general media, and groundbreaking conferences, including:

2009 Achieving Equity for Women: Policy Alternatives for the New Administration
Washington, DC--This policy-research conference brought together top researchers and policy makers to share insights and practical applications with nearly 300 attendees. (www.wcwonline.org/dcsymposium)

2009 Advancing Women's, Children's, and Disability Rights Conferences
Bangladesh and Nepal--WCW and its partners in Asia organized innovative conferences that brought together experts on the rights of women, children, and persons with disabilities to help coordinate law and policy making. (www.wcwonline.org/international)

2007 Women and Children: The Human Rights Relationship - Asia
Bangkok, Thailand--WCW and UNICEF cosponsored an innovative conference bringing together 100 leading women’s rights and children’s rights experts and advocates from the Asia region. (www.wcwonline.org/asia2007)

2004 International Research & Action Conference: Innovations in Understanding Violence Against Women
Wellesley, MA--WCW brought 130 delegates from 32 countries together to advance the understanding of violence against women through innovative concepts and research from around the world. (www.wcwonline.org/international)

Squeeze Play: Why Title IX Is Not Enough



What brought you to the Wellesley Centers for Women?

LP: While I was writing a weekly education column called “The Chalkboard” for *The Boston Globe*, I had interviewed researchers and scholars from the Wellesley Centers for Women. I learned more about Centers’ work and I was interested in the focus on women’s experiences, the international work, and several projects that had been undertaken. I had been a visiting scholar at Radcliffe’s Murray Center for four years and appreciated that environment and the chance to be around thoughtful people doing interesting work. I met Eileen McDonagh there and we started talking about our book project. I felt WCW would be a perfect community for me to continue my research and writing.

Your first book—*The Connection Gap*—what was its focus?

LP: The book stemmed from a *Boston Globe Magazine* piece that I had written, called “The Connection Gap,” which explored changes in American society that made us feel alone—even if we technically weren’t. It was really somewhat of a social commentary on the things that were making us less present, less connected. It wasn’t just about technology, but about the evolution of modern life and human relations. There are all these thousands of decisions that we make—

or fail to make—without really being conscious about what will result. And in the end, you know, it profoundly changes our lives and our society.

We received such a huge response from the *Magazine* piece that I knew it struck a nerve and was worth exploring. I spent about five years researching aspects of social change and people’s responses to those changes, like how it affected relationships when people stopped using horses and started using cars, when the “ideal” American home went from being “efficient” in that it minimized the number of steps you had to take—all the bedrooms were close to one another and designed around a single bathroom—to houses in which privacy and separation are prized and bedrooms are built very far apart and increasingly with their own bathrooms. When you share intimate space with people, you know different things about them—even if they are in your family.

So much of your current work focuses on athletics. What’s the appeal for you?

LP: I’ve always been athletic, always been interested in sports. I played Varsity field hockey at Yale; in high school my sister and I were the only girls on the town soccer team. When I was in middle school I signed up for the Danbury News-Times Carrier League baseball—I was the only girl I came across in the league at that time.



What was it like breaking through barriers so early in Title IX's history?

LP: I didn't at first think of myself as "breaking barriers" so much as wanting to play baseball, which I'd always enjoyed. I didn't have a lot of recreation options at the time, so when I saw a flyer attached to my bundle of newspapers at the start of the summer, it seemed perfect. Only after I'd signed up, did I realize that I wasn't who they had in mind when they created the league. What I recall from that experience most potently was that even my own teammates didn't want me there. I remember once I stole a base—and I knew the league rules cold. I knew that you could move on the motion of the pitcher, and yet, after I stole the base, the other team was so upset and embarrassed that even my own teammates chimed in and yelled at me to "go back, go back!" I just stood on second base and stared down at my sneakers.

How old were you?

LP: I would have been 13. Earlier, when I was in sixth grade—right when Title IX was passed—the school decided that they would no longer require just girls to take home economics and only boys to take shop—we could choose which class we wanted to take. But the catch was, without ever having sampled the other course, in sixth grade you had to choose for the next two years. Clearly, in retrospect, it was meant to intimidate people into not switching across genders. But I had decided to take shop and I assumed lots of other girls were going to do that, too. The next year, in seventh grade, I found out there were only two of us in the whole school – and Heidi wasn't in my class. When I had first turned in my sign-up sheet, my sixth grade homeroom teacher was so outraged that he led a kind of mini-campaign to try to get me to change my mind and take home economics. In front of the class he would issue graphic

warnings, describing how my long hair would get caught in the machinery. I stuck with my choice, but he had rattled me. During one of the first shop classes, the teacher was standing there in his grey smock and monotone voice making that old point about measuring twice and cutting once. Well, it turns out that one of the *boys* cut his board the wrong length. I remember just being stunned, I can still envision standing in that shop class feeling confused because I had been told so many times that I didn't "belong" and I had convinced myself that if anyone was going to make a mistake it would absolutely be me. To discover that a boy could make a mistake in woodshop was so freeing. It was really, really incredible. Those sorts of things made me realize that there was a lot more going on there than sports and shop.

The concerning thing is that this past spring, my daughter had a similar experience. She's a very good athlete and she had chosen to play softball, but when we were watching her brother's baseball team play, and she saw that some boys missed catches or didn't follow the coach's direction well—in essence, weren't like mini-Major Leaguers—she turned to me and said, "I should have played Little League." It made me realize that after these 30-plus years, there is this silent way in which we women get in line and accede to things we have no need to accede to.

What did you and Eileen McDonagh want to accomplish with your new book?

LP: Sports haven't been studied as much as other areas. The institution of sports hasn't been viewed as a political tool or social tool, in the way that matters around workplace rules, access to education and political rights have. Sports has been treated as entertainment and recreation and hasn't gotten the same scrutiny. In this book, we're looking to raise consciousness



Laura Pappano is the first writer-in-residence at the Wellesley Centers for Women (WCW). An experienced journalist, Pappano has been widely published in *The New York Times*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Boston Globe Magazine*, *Good Housekeeping*, *Working Mother*, and *The Harvard Education Letter*, among other publications. While at WCW, Pappano is working on a book proposal that will combine her more than 20 years writing about education with her interest in women's issues. Her new book, co-authored with Eileen McDonagh, *Playing with the Boys: Why Separate Is Not Equal in Sports*, has just been released by Oxford University Press.

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Laura Pappano and her Yale University field hockey teammates in 1981.

around the very powerful role that sports plays in our society, particularly in enforcing a gender hierarchy in which males represent the standard and females occupy second-class status. There is a connection between the gender hierarchy enforced in athletic rules, practices, and public treatment and the maintenance of gender hierarchies in political, social, and economic arenas. In making our case, we considered legal, historical, biological, cultural, and sociological contexts. Sports are not neutral, what are the messages, the numbers, the rules, the practices, saying?

For example, why does badminton for men go to 15, and go only to 11 for women? Why are lengths of new (1996) Olympic off-road bike races designed to be 15 minutes shorter for women than for men when research has proven that women excel in endurance events? When we look at the biological differences between men and women—and we certainly acknowledge that there are biological differences—we found that the physical and physiological differences between men as a group and women as a group really didn't justify rule differences. There wasn't a relationship between the sex difference and the rule differences. In fact, the rules differences just served to enforce the gender distinction: the men's game is the standard, leaving the women's game to still feel secondary, and in some cases, temporary.

Why is that? What would you say are the biggest barriers when we look at Title IX?

LP: One big issue is that when Title IX was first passed in 1972, there was this moment historically when people weren't sure what that meant. Many schools, even colleges started integrating football teams or just allowing co-ed play. Then there were draft regulations in 1975. There was just such an extended period of time for determining what the regulations were. So the result was very unlike No Child Left Behind in which the regulations hit retroactively. Obviously, people were not eager to clarify this or implement it. When the regulations for Title IX came out, they allowed for sex segregation in contact sports. So, all of these sports that had become integrated then became separated. The act of separating contact sports in effect separated all sports. It became *quid pro quo*: if you have football you have field hockey. If you have gymnastics you have wrestling. There was a whole separation. The law doesn't demand equality, it demands progress. The regulations and interpretations of those regulations allow a lot of leeway. And, it's not particularly well enforced. Title IX's approach of separating sports is a disservice. Separate but equal is not equal. There is a legal conflict between Title IX and the Equal Protection Clause in the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution. There is a ten-

sion between American egalitarian values and the way sports have played out under Title IX.

As far as the money, it is nowhere close to equal. Only 15 of the 326 Division I schools spend more on all women's sports combined than they do on football. I happen to really love football, but if the NFL wants a farm league, then they should develop it. We shouldn't be spending our equal education dollars on this. There are a lot of paternalistic attitudes toward women's sports and even toward female athletes. Even when you look at women's soccer—they're incredible athletes but there's still that parallel of little girls in ponytails, just a bigger version than what you see on a Saturday morning on the local playing field. You can see this attitude played out in ticket prices—even when sports aren't trying to make money. It costs \$4 to see the Rutgers women's soccer team play—but \$7 to see the Rutgers men's soccer team play. That is not about athletic department revenues; it's about enforcing gender differences and placing different values on male and female play, regardless of how talented, interesting, or competitive the players and games may be. There's also research that shows that when you pay different amounts for tickets, that you value the events where you paid more or made a greater investment. I would argue that if we're going to properly enforce Title IX, that's an aspect that must be considered.



What are your concerns, most, about the future of Title IX for the playing field and the classroom?

LP: Title IX, ironically enough, was not meant to be about sports. It was meant to be about education opportunities, at a time when girls weren't allowed to work the movie or slide projector. But, it has become most popularly debated as a vehicle for fairness in sports. The problem is that Title IX has forced all these important changes, but it's become our own worst enemy in the sense that it codifies an inequality. I think that we need to look at it fresh—enforcing it more rigorously, being clearer about the guidelines, what it should comprise.

The most provocative part of the argument is that we don't have just men's sports and women's sports, but we need more opportunities where men and women are playing together.

In terms of the classroom, I think sports need to be a nice complement to an education, not the reason that kids are in school. Sports should not take over the school or university, but in many, many cases they do. Increasingly, the best physical education programs in K-12 schools are really about life sports. The aim these days, and probably for the past 10-15 years, has been to teach kids skills that are going to promote fitness and health throughout the lifespan. And a lot more of that is done on a co-ed basis, which is a positive thing. Sports, if it's not taken to the nutty extreme, is an incredibly, incredibly valuable experience. It provides a sense of self, of physical competence, of teamwork, of resolve and resilience. That's very important.

What do you imagine, or envision for making sports equal?

LP: Title IX came along at a moment when we could not imagine females being legitimate ath-

letes. Today, you watch a NCAA women's basketball game and these are just as exciting, just as competitive as when men are on the floor.

The most provocative part of the argument is that we don't have just men's sports and women's sports, but we need more opportunities where men and women are playing together. There are so many levels of competition and play at which we create separate male and female versions of sporting experiences. When really, let's base it on skill. Let's create a great model for social relations by having men and women playing together on the same field. Certainly there are stereotypes of the male athlete and the female athlete—the NFL lineman,

and the petite gymnast. But if you look in any room or gathering, you find that there are more physical differences within genders than between genders. And that's what we're saying—sports are played by individuals and the rules shouldn't be defined by stereotypes.

As women, we need to attend sports, we need to follow sports, we need to own teams. We need to play. We need to coach at all levels. We need to create more opportunities for co-ed sports, and for girls to do sports females don't typically play and for boys to do sports males don't typically play. We need to mix it up! We need to not make sports a site of rigid gender identification, because it has become a powerful gender-coding entity in our society. We need to create more comparable playing times, support venues, publicity, ticket prices. I think we need to do all of those things.

We should all be sports enthusiasts if we know what's good for us as feminists. R

JUST OFF THE PRESS!

**Playing with the Boys:
Why Separate Is Not Equal in Sports**

EILEEN McDONAGH AND LAURA PAPPANO

**Price: \$28.00*

Order: BK1020

From small-town life to the national stage, from the boardroom to Capitol Hill, athletic contests help define what we mean in America by success. And by keeping women from playing with the boys on the grounds that they are inherently inferior to men, society relegates them to second-class status in American life.

In this forcefully argued book, Eileen McDonagh and Laura Pappano show in vivid detail how women have been unfairly excluded from participating in sports on an equal footing with men. Using dozens of colorful examples from the world of contemporary American athletics—girls and women trying to break through in high school football, ice hockey, wrestling, and baseball, to name just a few—the authors show that sex differences are not sufficient to warrant exclusion in most sports, that success usually entails more than brute strength, and that the special rules for women in many sports do not simply reflect the "differences" between the sexes, but actively create and reinforce them. For instance, if women's bodies give them a physiological advantage in endurance sports like the ultra-marathon and distance swimming, why do so many Olympic events—from swimming to skiing to running to bike racing—have shorter races for women than men? Likewise, why are women's singles games in badminton limited to 11 points while men's singles go to 15? Surely female badminton players can endure four more points. Such rules merely reinforce a "difference" for social—not competitive—purposes.

An original and provocative argument to level the athletic playing field, *Playing with the Boys* issues a clarion call for sex-sensible policies in sports as another important step toward the equality of men and women in our society.

**Please note that price does not include shipping and handling. This book may be purchased from the WCW publications office by calling 781.283.2510 or by visiting www.wcwnline.org/publications.*