The Center for Research on Women will host a community-wide forum on Thursday, December 1, 2005 to discuss the issue of teen sexual activity in Memphis and its impact on girls’ health. The forum represents the first public opportunity for local educators, parents, health care workers, clergy, and local policy makers to confront an issue that is all too often ignored or denied.

According to data compiled from the 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, approximately 52% of female students in grades nine through 12 in the Memphis City Schools have had sexual intercourse as compared to 48% of female high school students in the state of Tennessee, and approximately 44% in the entire United States.

(Teen Sex, page 18)
Long-time readers of this column will have noticed that the picture at left is not the usual shot of Barbara Ellen Smith. Barbara Ellen has left Memphis for a position as director of Women’s Studies at Virginia Tech, in Blacksburg, Virginia, after serving as CROW’s director for nearly ten groundbreaking years. Losing anyone as dedicated to her work, as committed to community-based research and policy development, and as respected by her colleagues as Barbara is, would be a loss to any organization—but particularly to a center whose academic and outreach missions were so effectively advanced by its director.

The bright side, since we are forced to look for one, is this: Barbara’s departure encourages us to look back and to appreciate fully her accomplishments as leader of the Center for Research on Women since 1994. We saw the exciting Rockefeller Program, which brought in visiting scholars from across the country and from the U.K. to study race and gender in the South. We saw the publication of controversial living wage research that highlighted the interrelationships between poverty and the status of women in this region and across the country. We saw the formation of several crucial partnerships between CROW and community organizations such as the Memphis Area Women’s Council, and with other local academic groups, such as the UT Health Sciences Center. We saw a shift toward research on immigration, NAFTA, and the global South, the implications of which she and the Center had only started to explore.

And indeed, those very explorations will not continue entirely without her—because Barbara will collaborate with us from Virginia Tech in what we expect to be another fruitful external partnership. To read Barbara’s own retrospections on the work she leaves as well as the work she sees before her, please turn to page 5. And please note: more information about the open director’s position can be found on the back cover of this issue.

This new issue of StandPoint is evidence enough that the work of CROW goes on without interruption. Guest-edited by CROW affiliate and sociologist Dr. Cynthia Pelak, this issue reports on important research concerning gender equity and sports in America today. Thanks to Title IX the University of Memphis will gain a softball team and new facility —so I learned only yesterday at an administrative retreat. But as sociology graduate student Emily Bates demonstrates, very few of our students—only 32.9%, to be exact—are even familiar with Title IX, much less its impact on their campus (Knowledge is Power, page 6).

I would also like to announce to readers in Memphis and within driving distance that CROW is sponsoring an exciting Community Issues Forum planned for December 1, 2005, entitled Teen Sex in the Bluff City: Examining the Health Implications of Teenage Sexual Behaviors on Girls in Memphis (Forum, page 1). Not only are teen pregnancy rates higher here than the national average, but so are our rates for STD’s and, most alarmingly, for new HIV cases among teens. In Memphis, 34% of all new HIV diagnoses are among youth aged 13-24, as compared to “only” 13% nationally.

I want to thank all of you for your continuing support of CROW—and to say once again that this interim year will not be a period of dormancy but one of continued vigorous activity and of opportunity. Sad as it was for us to say goodbye to Barbara, we hope to say hello by the end of this academic year to a new director who will continue the wonderful legacy of research, community partnerships and activism that Barbara has given to us. I know I speak for many in thanking Barbara for her wonderful leadership, and for leaving for the next director a research center that has been so effective and is known so well and widely for its work as a nexus for research, education, activism, and community partnership.

Jennifer Wagner-Lawlor
Interim Director

Dr. Jennifer Wagner-Lawlor
Interim Director,
Center for Research on Women
Associate Dean,
College of Arts & Sciences
Professor of English
Gender, Race and Sport:
The Struggle for Equal Opportunities Continues
Cynthia Fabrizio Pelak, Department of Sociology

Over the past several years the Bush administration has been maneuvering to weaken the enforcement of Title IX in the area of athletics. Although their efforts for the most part have failed, these actions remind us that equal opportunities in education are secured only through continued struggle.

This issue of StandPoint contains several feature articles on Title IX and athletics to help us gain the knowledge necessary to sustain the struggle for equitable treatment in our educational institutions. You will find a chronology of the history of Title IX legislation, a summary of results from a survey on college students’ familiarity with Title IX, a review of a recent book on Title IX, an essay on reclaiming classrooms and teaching sport studies, and a reference list of select scholarly books and articles on gender, race, sexuality and sport as well as a list of current on-line resources for Title IX and gender equity in sports.

According to social science research on Title IX, only half of our universities and colleges offer equal opportunities to women and men in athletics. Moreover, white middle-class girls and women enjoy many more opportunities in athletics than working class girls and women of color.

I invite you to use the resources in this issue of StandPoint to find out more about compliance with Title IX law and racial diversity at a school in your community. Go to your university’s athletic department and request a copy of the latest gender equity report or go on-line to get the data for your school. Hold your school administrators accountable and continue the collective struggle for equal opportunities in education.

Female Participation in Intercolligate Athletics Increased by 100% Over Past 30 Years

Female Participation in High School Athletics Increased by 800% Over Past 30 Years
As the Center for Research on Women conducts our search for a new Director, it is especially important to reinforce our commitment to community-based research and partnerships. This includes "issues" research and problem solving such as CROW’s partnership with the Memphis Area Women’s Council in its emphasis on domestic violence and the processing of orders of protection. Or our partnership with Dr. Nancy Hardt from the University of Tennessee Health Science Center, PI for the “Blues Project,” where pregnant teens are participating in a clinic-based, mediated peer support program. Nancy and CROW’s interest is in outcomes. Good outcomes just might justify replication of the strategy – even in this age of shrinking public and human services – given that peer support is less resource intensive (i.e. less expensive) than home visitation. These examples demonstrate that community-based research and partnerships often have immediate and concrete implications.

Community-based research is also about things that are more open-ended and less concrete. Barbara Ellen Smith’s commitment was evident throughout the special spring 2005 issue of *StandPoint*, with its emphasis on immigration, social justice, and bridge building. These themes reflect CROW’s original mission to both embrace scholarship on the role of race, class, and gender in our society (and, increasingly, in the global society), and to work collaboratively with our communities toward more meaningful equality. Clearly, immigration affords many “teachable moments,” where the richness of our experience is enhanced when erstwhile “subjects” (immigrants themselves) become a part of the conversation. These grassroots community partners are just as important to CROW scholarship as our organizational partners.

CROW’s respect for and tradition of community-based research means that we can be a special resource as Memphians (and indeed Americans) come to grips with the race and class implications of recent disasters such as hurricane Katrina. We have already been contacted by NBC News, contemplating a story on the meaning and consequences of race and class in Memphis.

Alas, New Orleans is not the only place where institutional racism and classism is easy to ignore on a day-to-day basis. What I will emphasize when asked is that we need not imagine a "conspiracy of whiteness" or resort to personalized images of George Bush’s individual racial sensitivities. Rather, the significance of race and class in the first hours and days of rescue and recovery are reflected in the very taken-for-grantedness of acts small and large.

Interviewed by our metropolitan daily for a human interest survivor story, an evacuee from Gretna, Louisiana, casually noted that he had been among those “turning away” groups of looters from across the bridge. Were these groups of looters carrying signs announcing their intention? Were they carrying booty from earlier rounds of looting in New Orleans? Or were they simply victimized because they resembled the victimizers we had all just seen portrayed by TV news crews?

Then there is another story about a faith-based organization opening their church camp to evacuees. Reported as a Good Samaritan story, how many of us noticed that cabins were open only to “intact” families? The good people of the church probably thought they were taking only reasonable precautions that their property would be respected and that harmony would be retained within the newly created neighborhood. But the end result was that many households and families with children were not eligible. The disqualified families were disproportionately black.

This – not white citizens’ councils, let alone burning crosses— is the stuff of institutional racism. Embedded in the very fabric of reasonable people, the consequences of many layers of institutional racism and classism can only be understood when we listen to others’ experiences and attempt to put ourselves in their situation. This – as much as anything – is what community-based research is all about.

Phyllis Betts
Associate Director for Community Partnerships
Memphis’ loss was Blacksburg’s gain this past summer as CROW’s Director of nine years, Barbara Ellen Smith, headed east to direct the Women’s Studies program at Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University. Under her leadership the Center for Research on Women at the University of Memphis became even better known nationally and internationally for its for integrative approach to research in social inequality. Smith’s passion for making the Center’s research relevant to the community at large was made evident through the many kinds of public programs and local partnerships that CROW developed under her leadership. In October, StandPoint spoke with Dr. Smith from her new office at Virginia Tech.

Your early years of activism and research focused on labor issues and black lung disease. Does your return to the mountains make you feel like you’ve come full circle?

Yes, in some respects it feels like coming home. I have a deep attachment to this part of the country and my initial research on labor issues and the coal industry took place in West Virginia. But at the same time Appalachia has changed dramatically. One of the reasons I left this region was that I was becoming more and more interested in issues like women and employment, women and poverty. I was looking for a new research direction and I was able to pursue that in Memphis in ways that were important to me. Now that I’m back I’m focusing more on women in the region, employment, and globalization as it affects this part of the country.

You were personally active in so many social issues during your time in Memphis – ending the war in Iraq, supporting the local Living Wage Initiative, abolishing corporal punishment in the public schools, stopping domestic violence – where does your activist heart lie these days?

My activism has always been place-based, rooted in the issues that I find where I stand. So the issues that were dear to me in Memphis will not necessarily be the issues that are most urgent to me here. I’m still trying to discern what the specific issues and needs are in this community. Even though my activist heart lies less in the direction of a single issue, the general arena of economic life, employment, and changes in the workplace – particularly as they affect women – will be central for me wherever I am.

Do you see any national trends in the work currently being done by centers for research on women?

Two of the things we were doing at CROW are representative of what’s happening these days at centers across the country. The first is an increasing interest in forming international or transnational linkages driven by the research agendas and locations of specific centers. For example, in the Southwest many centers have begun to form linkages with organizations in Latin America. The second is an increased focus on engaged scholarship... that is, research directed toward urgent issues of concern to women or girls.

Is the growing collaboration between CROW and the Women’s Studies Program at UM unique?

Well, maybe not unique but the situation there is unusual in that the Center for Research on Women preceded the Women’s Studies program, and for so long we had a strong research center without any academic program to speak of. That is a highly unusual configuration. But it does bode well that there is strong leadership now in Women’s Studies and a strong research base in the Center. The possibility for great mutual benefit through collaboration is obvious, and it positions both CROW and Women’s Studies very well for the future.

In your years here, how did you find Memphis as a place for research on social inequalities?

The complexity of its racial history, the extent of change in current economic and social trends, particularly with regard to immigration and globalization, the importance of Federal Express as...
Knowledge is Power:
Survey findings on college students’ familiarity with Title IX legislation

By Emily Bates, M.A. student, Department of Sociology, University of Memphis

Students Largely Uninformed of Rights

Students today have grown-up surfing the internet and researching topics with a click of a button on a computer. They have grown up in a time when educational opportunities have expanded and the rhetoric of “no child left behind” has taken center stage. In such a society, one would expect that today’s generation of college students was well informed and aware of their educational rights. Surprisingly, this is not necessarily the case. Findings of a survey conducted by sociology graduate students at the University of Memphis show that students are largely uninformed about Title IX, one of the primary legal mechanisms for encouraging gender equity within educational institutions.

On the heels of the civil rights movement and during early years of the second wave women’s movement, Congress passed Title IX of the Educational Amendment Act of 1972. Title IX prohibits sex discrimination in any educational program or activity at an educational institution that receives federal funds and applies to areas such as access to higher education, employment, sexual harassment, standardized testing, technology, career education such as vocational courses, and athletics. The impact of Title IX is undeniable; however, challenges to Title IX still persist.

Findings Do Not Support Expectations

The Equity Issues in Education Survey was designed to assess students’ overall knowledge of Title IX and their attitudes towards gender equity in athletics. The survey was administered during two consecutive spring semesters of 2004 and 2005. Cluster sampling procedures were used to produce a representative sample of students taking undergraduate sociology classes on the main campus of the University of Memphis. Completed surveys were collected from 773 students for a response rate of 64%. The sample included 77.5% women and 22.5% men. The ages of respondents ranged from 18 to 65 years and averaged 24 years. The sample was racially/ethnically diverse with 44% of the respondents identifying as African American/Black, 47% identifying as White, 2% identifying as Asian, .5% identifying as Hispanic/Latina, and 5% reported having a mixed or some other racial/ethnic heritage. Two-thirds of respondents (67.8%) reported an annual household income of below $60,000.

One of the first questions posed to respondents was whether she/he was familiar with Title IX. The vast majority of the respondents (67.5%) were not familiar with the legislation. Only one-third (32.5%) of the respondents claimed that they were familiar with Title IX. To test whether women were more likely than men to have knowledge of Title IX and whether former high school athletes were more familiar with Title IX, we ran some basic statistical analyses. Since Title IX was established to address the historical discrimination that women face, we expected that women students would be more familiar with the law than men students.

Moreover, since athletics has been such a focus of Title IX, we expected that the students who participated in high school sports would be more familiar with Title IX than students not active in athletics during high school. Our findings however, do not support these expectations. Women were no more likely than men to be familiar with Title IX and those participating in high school sports were no more likely to have knowledge of Title IX than those who did not participate in high school sports. As shown in Table 1, only about 30% of each grouping of students was familiar with Title IX.
We also explored the effect of age on knowledge of Title IX. We expected that older students would be more familiar with Title IX than younger students because the law was enacted 33 years ago. The findings support our expectations. Respondents who were 25 years or older were more familiar with Title IX than respondents who were 24 years or younger. As shown in Table 2, about 42% of students 25 years or older were familiar with Title IX and only 28% of younger respondents had knowledge of the law. In a multivariate regression analysis of age and other control variables, age had a significant positive effect on familiarity with Title IX.

### Table 2: Crosstabulations of Students’ Age and Knowledge of Title IX (n = 748)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age of respondent</th>
<th>18-24 years old</th>
<th>25 years and older</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>28.2% (150)</td>
<td>41.7% (90)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>71.8% (382)</td>
<td>58.3% (126)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100% (532)</td>
<td>100% (216)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

After Title IX legislation was explained to respondents, they were asked whether they agreed or disagreed with the law in terms of equal opportunities for women and men students in athletics. The vast majority (79.6%) said they “strongly agreed” or “agreed.” Only 2.6% said that they “disagreed” or “strongly disagreed” with Title IX and 17.7% said they “neither agreed nor disagreed.” In a follow-up question, respondents were asked if they thought women’s sports should receive the same amount of funding as men’s sports. Again, an overwhelming majority (87.4%) of respondents agreed with equal funding for women’s and men’s sports.

### Contributing Factors

I would like to suggest two factors that may contribute to the lack of familiarity with Title IX among college students. The first factor is the lack of formal teaching/training in areas of equal opportunity laws and policies. These findings suggest that students may be learning very little about basic equal opportunity protections. Are lessons of historical struggles against gender/race/class inequalities confined to Women’s and Black History Months? And, are those lessons limited to token heroes such as Rosa Parks and Eleanor Roosevelt rather than collective struggles? Many students today may be enjoying the privileges of equal access and equal opportunities in education without knowing how those privileges have been gained or without realizing how maintaining access and opportunities requires continued collective struggle.

A second contributing factor may be the weak enforcement of the law. The ultimate penalty for non-compliance with Title IX is that a school loses its federal funding. To date, not a single school has

(Knowledge, page 17)
**Selected References & Resources on Gender, Race and Sport**

**Scholarly Books and Articles on Gender, Race, Sexuality and Sport:**


on women’s lives and livelihoods,” says Henrici, “that free trade agreements can encourage posi-
tive conditions for women, not only in North America, but throughout the world.”

The impending development of the NAFTA corridor (I-69), which stretches from Monterrey,
Mexico to Toronto, Canada, with Memphis, Tennessee at its mid-point, was an additional incentive for
the creation of the Network. NARAN members hope that by focusing on this discrete instance of global-
ization, which tends to evade local accountability, they can promote civic engagement with issues per-
tinent to the corridor, assist residents in linking local decision-making to larger dynamics of globaliza-
tion and promote citizen-driven interventions to shape public policy.

Some of North America’s most respected scholars in studies of disparities and free trade
policy have signed on as NARAN’s advisors, including Dr. Isidro Morales Moreno, Universidad de las
Americas in Puebla, Mexico, Dr. Marjorie Griffin Cohen of Simon Fraser University in Vancouver, Brit-
ish Columbia, and Dr. Ann Kingsolver of the University of South Carolina. NARAN currently operates
primarily through new electronic media, sharing not only text-based information, but also images,
audio recordings, and other materials. “We hope to have our new website fully functional by the end
of the year,” said Henrici. “It will provide invaluable access to information for researchers, policy
makers, and social activists working on these issues around the world.”

For more information on NARAN contact: Dr. Jane Henrici, Center for Research on Women,
University of Memphis, 337 Clement Hall, Memphis, TN 38152, 901-678-2770, or email
crow@memphis.edu.
Excerpt from Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

The text of the entire law can be found at http://www.dol.gov/oasam/regs/statutes/titleix.htm

Chronology of Title IX

June 23, 1972
Title IX of the Education Amendments is enacted by Congress and is signed into law by Richard Nixon. Representative Edith Green and Senator Birch Bayh were the main sponsors of the bill.

1974
Senator Tower proposes an amendment that would exempt revenue-producing sports from Title IX compliance. The amendment is rejected. Senator Javits submits an amendment directing the HEW to issue Title IX regulations. The Javits' Amendment is enacted and included in the Education Amendments.

1975
HEW issues proposed Title IX regulations. Congress debates and approves Title IX regulations and rejects resolutions aimed to alter Title IX. President Ford signs the regulations into law on July 21, 1975. Educational institutions are given three years to comply with Title IX.

1976
NCAA challenges the legality of Title IX regulations.

1978
HEW issues proposed policy interpretations for Title IX compliance. Three year deadline to comply with Title IX requirements is reached.

1979
HEW issues final policy interpretations on Title IX including the factors that will be considered in assessing actual compliance. These factors have become known as the 3-prong test to providing equal opportunity in athletics.

1980
Department of Education is established and given oversight of Title IX through the Office for Civil Rights (OCR).

1984
Grove City v. Bell decision limits the scope of Title IX, effectively taking away coverage of athletics except for athletic scholarships. The Supreme Court concludes that Title IX only applies to specific programs that directly receive federal funds. Under this interpretation, athletic departments are not necessarily covered.

1988
Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987 passes Congress over a veto by President Reagan. This act reverses Grove City, restoring Title IX's institution-wide coverage. If any program or activity in an educational institution receives federal funds, all of the institution's programs and activities must comply with Title IX.

Haffer v. Temple University Title IX athletics lawsuit won by plaintiff female athletes gives new direction to athletic departments regarding their budgets, scholarships, and participation rates of male and female athletes.

1990
Title IX Investigator's Manual is issued by Office of Civil Rights (OCR).
1994

Senator Mosley-Braun and Representative Collins sponsor the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA), requiring that any co-educational institution of higher education that participates in any federal student financial aid program and that sponsors an intercollegiate athletics program must disclose certain information concerning its intercollegiate athletics program. Under the EADA, annual reports are required by October 1st of each year.

1996

OCR issues a clarification of the three-part "Effective Accommodation Test" that reiterates the requirements of the policy interpretation. Institutions may choose any one of three independent tests to demonstrate that they are effectively accommodating the participation needs of the underrepresented gender.

A federal appeals court upholds a lower court’s ruling in Cohen v. Brown University, holding that Brown University illegally discriminated against female athletes. Brown argues that it did not violate Title IX because women are less interested in sports than men. Both the district court and the court of appeals reject Brown’s argument. Many of the arguments offered by Brown are similar to those relied upon by colleges and universities all over the country.

2001

The Supreme Court issues a decision in Brentwood v. Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association, holding that a high school athletic association is a "state actor" and thus subject to the Constitution. This means, for example, that the Equal Protection Clause of the 14th Amendment applies to athletic associations in gender equity suits.

Communities for Equity v. Michigan High School Athletic Association is decided, holding a state athletic association liable under Title IX, the Equal Protection Clause, and Michigan state law for discriminating against girls by forcing six girls’ sports, but no boys’ sports, teams to compete in nontraditional and/or disadvantageous seasons.

2002

The National Wrestling Coaches Association, College Gymnastics Association, and the U.S. Track Coaches Association, along with several other groups representing male athletes and alumni of wrestling programs files suit alleging that Title IX regulations and policies are unconstitutional. The suit is dismissed.

The U.S. Department of Justice (DOJ) files a motion to dismiss on narrow procedural grounds a complaint filed in federal court against the U.S. Department of Education attacking the three-prong test developed for schools to determine their compliance with Title IX in women’s athletics programs.

U.S. Secretary of Education establishes a Commission on Opportunities in Athletics. Proponents of Title IX viewed the commission as an attempt by the Bush Administration to weaken Title IX. Two members of the commission issue a minority report to raise concerns about the final report of the commission.

2005

The Department of Education issues new Title IX policy guidelines approving the use of internet surveys to gauge women’s interest and abilities in competitive sports. Proponents of Title IX suggest that these new guidelines appear to be the latest in a series of attempts by the Bush administration to weaken Title IX.

Interested in finding out about the status of gender equity in Athletics at your university?

In 1994, Congress passed the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) that requires all co-educational institutions participating in a federal student financial aid program and supporting intercollegiate athletics to disclose information regarding gender equity in athletics. Information on student participation rates, team revenues and expenditures, coaches’ salaries and more must be made available upon request to students, potential students, and the public by October 15th of each year. To obtain your school’s EADA report contact your athletic department. Or, visit the Office of Post-secondary Education’s Equity in Athletics Disclosure website at http://ope.ed.gov/athletics/Search.asp

This timeline was compiled from several websites including Gender Equity in Sports Resource of the University of Iowa and the Women’s Sports Foundation.
Pedagogy for Social Change

We are living in challenging, often catastrophically so, times. A generalized hostility toward the social, public, and collective—wrought largely from the destruction of a liberal democratic political order—has spawned, amongst other things: a growing culture of surveillance; normalized social inequality and political cynicism; the collapse of meaningful democracy; a regressive transformation of the legal system and the attendant denial of basic rights of citizenship, and the replacement of the public sphere with invidious and invasive commercial space. As such, there is a pressing need to create and encourage the type of knowledge which would intervene into a “world in which it would make some difference” (Hall, 1992, p. 286). This pedagogy needs to offer strategies of understanding, engagement and transformation in addressing the most demanding social problems of our time, fight for civil liberties, provide a progressive language of critique and possibility, connect diverse struggles, and traverse the public and the private (Giroux, 2001). Yet, within Universities that are increasingly defined in market terms, that resemble a corporate culture that subsumes democratic culture and in which critical learning is replaced by an instrumental logic that celebrates the imperatives of the bottom line (Giroux, 2003), how can we enact pedagogies required for social change?

Ground in our civic responsibilities as educators, we embrace an education that interrogates the relations between domination and oppression, power and powerlessness, privilege and under-privilege, and experiences of abundance and experiences of scarcity. Our pedagogical practice involves a contextual and historical focus on “popular” spaces, experiences, and institutions as well as power relations that operate in, and through, spaces, places, and cultures and that (re)present competing discourses on bodies, politics, class, gender, race, local and national affiliations, multiculturalism, and sexuality.

Our particular focus—sport—is a domain that has frequently been overlooked by mainstream academics and educators and widely assumed to be apolitical. Despite its inherent ‘popularity’ and the undeniable pleasures that sporting practices and experiences may bring, to reduce the complex structure and influence of sport to a set of largely trivial facts or statistics, is to crucially overlook its central place in everyday life within contemporary America. Indeed, such a superficial, un-critical, and taken-for-granted attitude toward sport appears so pervasive that many people (especially those undergraduate students within ‘sports studies’ programs) are disinclined toward acknowledging that there exists any links between the society in which they live, and the sacrosanct world of sport. Fortunately, along with a near 40 year history within the field of the sociology of sport, there is a burgeoning project of the critical interrogation of sport.

Using Sport to Develop a Sociological Imagination

Pedagogically then, how do we mobilize sport within the classroom as an important site for critical conversations about cultural politics, multiracial, economic, and political democracy—conversations that address the imperatives of consumption, the dynamics of the marketplace, commercial space, the sweeping reach of neoliberal ideology, power and influence, the production of knowledge and identifies nation-states, globalization, freedom and community (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Giroux, 2001)?

An approach is needed that provides students with the skills and information necessary to think critically about the (sporting) knowledge they gain and what it might mean for them to challenge antidemocratic forms of power and authority (Giroux, 2003). Following the continually relevant vein of C. Wright Mills, and, indeed, given the relative decline of public cultural spheres—trade unions, churches, social clubs, even schools—that have become handmaidens to commercial neoliberal social agendas (see Giroux, 2002), we view sport as one of the last bastions that enables conversations that connects politics, personal experiences and public life to larger social issues. We feel that a critical interrogation of the sporting popular offers a powerful peda-

Our goal is to theorize popular sport practices and representations in such a way that students may begin to “grasp, understand, and explain—to produce a more adequate knowledge of—the [sporting] world and its processes, and thereby to inform our practice so that we may transform it …”

(Stuart Hall, 1988, italics added).
Exploring Dominant Cultural Politics through Sport

It is this broad philosophy that energizes the curriculum we have designed at the University of Maryland. Necessarily interdisciplinary and somewhat eclectic, our aim within our undergraduate Sport, Commerce and Culture program and our graduate Physical Cultural Studies degrees is to synthesize the domains of popular cultural studies and the critical sociology of sport to encourage students to advance more theoretically informed, and empirically grounded, critical understandings of contemporary sporting culture. In particular, within foundational classes students explore how both popular sport practices (the sporting activities we engage in) and popular sport representations (the mediated images of sport we consume) are the products of particular historical, economic, political, and social arrangements.

In classes such as Gender, Sport & Culture, The Politics of the Sporting Celebrity, and, Sporting Hollywood: Contested Identities in the Filmic Popular, we explore the crucial role that sport plays in the way that dominant power relations become normalized and thereby constituted—particularly how sport mobilizes particular class, race, and gender based power relations, and inscribes them on and through individual bodies. Within “Sporting Hollywood” for example, we interrogate popular films to address how such cultural texts play an important role in placing particular ideologies and values into public conversation within our “image saturated culture” (Bordo, 1997) and “how the historical and contemporary meanings that films produce align, reproduce and interrupt broader sets of ideas, discourses, and social configurations at work in the larger society” (Giroux, 2002, p. 7).

For example, in its last rendition, this class utilized films such as Ali, Blue Crush, Million Dollar Baby, Fight Club, Miracle, and Bend it Like Beckham to spark discussions of gender politics, racial politics, historical revisionism, (dis)ableism, the homosocial continuum, the emasculated male, whiteness and white (male) redemption politics, stylish hybridity, multiculturalism, liberal pluralism, and, the construction of normality, difference and the other.

Out of necessity, our graduate focus is eclectic, allowing for students to negotiate a pathway through the diverse offerings available in Sociology, Women’s Studies, African-American Studies, Communications, Urban Studies along with those courses that offer a ‘soft-core’ within the our Department (including Sociology of Sport: The Cultural Politics of Corporeal; Politics, Paradigms and Methodological Philosophies in Physical Cultural Studies; Cultural Studies; and, Sport & Cultural Theorists). The program is specifically designed to allow students to engage with courses and academics available to them to advance their own theoretical, conceptual, contextual, and, methodological understandings and provide the basis for an academic career.

Exploding Sporting Mythology

In conclusion, at both the undergraduate and graduate level, our goal is to theorize popular sport practices and representations, in such a way that students may begin to produce a more adequate knowledge of the sporting world and its processes and thereby inform our practices so that we may transform it (Hall, 1981). This explodes sporting mythology in a manner that exposes the social, political, and economic forces and relations that shape individual’s experience of contemporary sport culture and encourages students to examine their own sporting lives, specifically in terms of the opportunities and/or constraints they confront as a result of their own social location.

We hope this proffers a pedagogical practice that is embedded with civic and political responsibilities, that engages in concrete steps to foster the conditions for collective struggle, and that attempts to “change situations” and “bring new value to identities and experiences that are marginalized and stigmatized by the larger culture” (Denzin, 2002, p. 486). Through the sporting popular, we aim for the co-production of knowledge that is meaningful, bridges the public and private, and reveals through multifarious forms of (re)presentation the shifting oppressive structures of global and local capitalism, the reproduction of gender, racial, sexual, and social class stereotypes, and creates space for
Despite the widespread attention that Title IX of the Education Amendment Act of 1972 has received over the past 33 years, there are few books that document the evolution of the law in terms of congressional debates, policy interpretations, court decisions, administrative maneuverings, and organized challenges. A Place on the Team by Welch Suggs does just that and thus is an important contribution to the literature. As a senior editor for athletics at The Chronicle of Higher Education, Suggs is well positioned to write this book and he does so skillfully. Besides being soundly researched, the non-polemic tone of the text makes the book a great resource for anyone interested in the history of the law minus the rhetoric that defends a particular view of the law.

Suggs begins his book with a brief history of the development of gender segregation in school-based sports during the twentieth century. His discussion is framed upon contrasting the “mass participation and non-competitive play” philosophy espoused by middle-class women physical educators with the “commercial and win-at-all-costs” philosophy espoused by dominant male physical educators. Although these gender differences existed, Suggs’ discussion tends to essentialize the differences. He downplays the importance of unequal power relations between women and men, as well as racial and class inequalities, in shaping the contrasting philosophies. For example, the philosophy of non-competitive play promoted by women helped them to create a professional niche within the male dominated domain of sport and to maintain control of the administration and coaching of women’s sports until the 1980s. Suggs’ effort to place the emergence of Title IX in a broader historical context is laudable; however, important nuances are lost in his discussion.

Suggs firmly places the passage of Title IX within the new paradigm of civil rights. Building on the successes of the civil rights movement, authors of the Title IX legislation adopted language directly from existing civil rights laws. Representative Edith Green from Tennessee introduced the bill to her Subcommittee on Higher Education in 1970. The legislation passed without too much opposition and was signed into law by President Nixon in 1972. The opposition that did emerge was centered on the desire to exempt revenue-producing sports from Title IX. The first regulations on Title IX were adopted in 1974.

Schools were given three years to comply with the law. The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) rallied against these regulations. Additional policy interpretations were written in 1978 and 1979. Clarification of the three-part test used to determine Title IX compliance was written in 1996 under the Clinton administration. Suggs presents a detailed account of the political dynamics and governmental actors involved in developing the policy interpretations and clarifications. The full text of these numerous documents are provided in the appendices, which in and of itself makes the book a valuable resource.

The effect of the Title IX legislation on women’s participation in athletics was immediate. Even before the three-year grace period had ended in 1978, women’s sports grew by leaps and bounds. Schools hired women coaches, added women’s teams, and converted existing women’s intramural programs into varsity programs. By the early 1980s, however, the progress toward equal opportunities for women in sports slowed. Control of women’s intercollegiate sport shifted from the women-dominated Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) to the male-dominated NCAA. In addition, the election of Ronald Reagan in 1980 ushered in a backlash against civil rights laws and gains. For Title IX, it was the 1984 court...
Hempel New Director of Women’s Studies

Dr. Nele Hempel has been selected as the Director of Women’s Studies at the University of Memphis. An outstanding feminist scholar, Dr. Hempel has received awards for excellence in teaching both at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst and the University of Memphis. Her current research includes an investigation of the mother figure in contemporary literature and draws heavily on insights gained from examining law, sociology, and political practice.

Dr. Hempel continues to serve as head of the German section at UM’s Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures. She recently returned from a six-month sabbatical stay at the Center for Feminist Studies at the University of Bremen.

“The current trend in Europe is especially to integrate natural sciences into Women’s Studies programs,” says Hempel. “Working with experts from such diverse backgrounds truly gave me an idea of what interdisciplinary scholarship can achieve. I hope to expand on the already impressive interdisciplinary focus of our program.”

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case of Gro
ve City College v. Bell that substantially weakened the law. In this case, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled (on the side of the administration) that only entities within universities and colleges that were direct recipients of federal funding were responsible for complying with Title IX regulations. This decision basically exempted athletic departments from Title IX.

The political and legal climate started to change when Congress passed, over a veto by President Reagan, the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987. This act restored the original power of Title IX and athletes once again started using the courts to force schools to abide by the law. Then, in 1992, in what Suggs describes as a watershed moment, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools that plaintiffs suing institutions for Title IX violations were entitled to compensatory damages. The decision immediately “gave Title IX more teeth” (p. 105). Schools that ignored the law before were put on notice that financial penalties could be awarded by the courts in Title IX cases. Suggs does a thorough job detailing the deliberations of critical Title IX cases including the lawsuit against Brown University, which was filed in 1992 and made its way to the Supreme Court in 1997. Brown officials ended up spending well over a million dollars to fight the case but in the end lost. The Brown case revolved around the appropriateness of the three-part test and particularly the issue of proportional representation of women in athletics. Suggs argues that the lengthy court battle “illustrated the formidable difference in common understandings of the role and status of scholastic sports” (p. 123).

Organized opposition to the way the courts applied the three-part test emerged on the heels of women athletes’ legal successes of the 1990s. Suggs chronicles the efforts of a group of male wrestlers and their supporters who believe that Title IX was the cause of the why men’s wrestling programs, and other non-revenue men’s sports, were being cut during the 1990s. The wrestlers and others opposing the way the courts were enforcing Title IX found a sympathetic ear in the new Bush administration. Roderick R. Paige, the new Secretary of the Department of Education, convened a Commission on Opportunity in Athletics that was charged with “strengthening enforcement” of Title IX and “expanding opportunities to ensure fairness to all athletes” (p. 157). The women’s rights community was outraged by the commission, which they saw as an effort to undermine Title IX enforcement. Suggs documents the commission’s proceedings in detail and observes that concern for the inequities that women still face in athletics was rarely expressed during commission debates.

As the subtitle of the book—The Triumph and Tragedy of Title IX—suggests, Suggs overall argument in the book is that there is a triumphant side and a tragic side of Title IX. This framework appears to be based on the standard journalist creed of presenting “both” sides of a controversy. For Suggs, the triumph of Title IX is the dramatic increase in the number of girls and women participating in athletics. The tragedy of Title IX, on the other hand, is the loss of the mass-participation philosophy espoused by earlier women physical educators along with the development of a highly competitive and commercial women’s sports model. Although I can appreciate Suggs’ concerns with the elitism and commercialism of contemporary women’s sports, I hardly think that it was an equal opportunity law that caused this “tragedy.” In an effort to be balanced, Suggs seems to have misplaced blame. Rather than citing men’s administrative dominance over women’s sports or the unrestrained commercial interests in collegiate athletics, Suggs blame Title IX. The incorporation of women’s sports in the dominant commercial model of collegiate sports corresponds with the passage and evolution of Title IX but there is hardly a causal link.

Despite its weaknesses, A Place on the Team is a much-needed documentation of the thirty-three year history of a law that has been central to the struggle for gender equity on the playing fields. The book is a must read for anyone interested in understanding the evolution of Title IX.
lost federal funding because of a Title IX violation. Rather, when the Office of Civil Rights determines that a school is discriminating against female or male students, in athletics, for example, they negotiate with the school’s administration to encourage future compliance. Such negotiations usually happen without too much fanfare or media coverage. It usually takes a lawsuit filed against a school to generate media attention. High profile court cases such as Cohen et al v. Brown University have put Title IX on the map and have served as a wake up call for school administrators about Title IX requirements.

Opportunity Sparks Interest

As a former collegiate athlete myself, I have concerns with the slow progress that schools are making in complying with Title IX in the area of athletics. I have concerns about the argument that women who do not ask for more athletic opportunities have no interest in such opportunities. As sociological research shows, interests and opportunities are deeply interconnected. I personally had no interest in playing volleyball nor had I ever picked up a volleyball before I was encouraged to try out for my high school team. I made the volleyball team and played all four years of high school. My team ended up winning the first District Championship in volleyball for our school.

When it came to college, I earned an athletic scholarship, won conference honors, and was an All-American Scholar Athlete. All these rewards stemmed from a sport that I initially had no burning desire to play. Rather, it was the opportunity to play that sparked my interest in the sport. Many of the women athletes on the fields, courts, tracks, pools, and running trails do not know how they got there. They do not know who helped them get there but they all know that they love being there.

Whether it is in a math class, in an art class, as a teacher, in the band, as a principal, or on the field, Title IX was designed to address the gender inequities that were and still are prevalent in schools. If gender equity is to be realized in the future, young people need to learn of the historical struggles and be knowledgeable about their educational rights. Knowledge is power only if we have it!

For additional information on the survey findings contact Dr. Cynthia Fabrizio Pelak, Assistant Professor of Sociology, University of Memphis (cpelak@memphis.edu).
In addition, nearly twice as many female students in Memphis City Schools reported having had sexual intercourse for the first time before age 13 compared to the U.S. average (8% vs. 4%).

“These figures show that girls in Memphis are facing unacceptably high levels of risk for serious health complications such as unintended pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS,” says Dr. Phyllis Betts, CROW Associate Director for Community Partnerships. “We felt it was important to bring the issue to the attention of educators, parents and policy makers throughout the city.”

Entitled Teen Sex in the Bluff City: Examining the Implications of Teenage Sexual Behaviors on Girls’ Health in Memphis, the free public event will address the devastating health implications that accompany the unusually high level of sexual activity among Memphis teenagers. A community panel of scholars, health professionals and service providers will also address such related issues as Tennessee’s statutory rape laws, the role of domestic violence and coercion in teen pregnancies, sexual and abstinence-education programs, and psycho-social issues surrounding early intercourse.

“The goal of the forum is not only to educate but also, according to the Center’s mission, to advocate for change,” says CROW’s Interim Director, Jennifer Wagner-Lawlor. “We hope attendees leave understanding the breadth and depth of this issue, and committed to altering the stubborn systemic forces that make teen pregnancy so common in this city, both in the inner city and in its suburbs.”

The forum will take place at the Urban Child Institute’s new space at 600 Jefferson Avenue near downtown Memphis, with free parking in the building’s lot. The forum will be co-sponsored by the UM Center for Community Health, the Women’s Studies Program, the Memphis Area Women’s Council, and other community partners.

For more information contact: Rebecca Terrell, Community Relations Coordinator, Center for Research on Women, University of Memphis, 901-678-2153 or rterrell@memphis.edu.

1 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Surveillance Surveys, May 21, 2004, MMWR 2004:53 (No. SS-2)

Teaching, page 13

conversations and actions against glaring material inequalities and the growing belief that market forces can solve our major social problems (Denzin, 2002; Giroux, 2001).

References


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The Center Needs Your Support!
Applications and nominations are invited for the position of Director of the Center for Research on Women (CROW) at the University of Memphis. Applicants should have the academic rank of associate or full professor, and be tenurable in their home department. The Center seeks a dynamic and committed scholar prepared to lead the Center's commitment to community-based research and to work with community partners such as the Women's Foundation for a Greater Memphis, the Memphis Area Women's Council, Domestic Violence Council, and others. In addition to recognition as an academic scholar, strong interpersonal and administrative skills are important to this position. Successful grant activity (or evidence of the potential for success) is expected, as is participation in the new Women's Studies MA program, which is closely allied to the Center.

The University of Memphis is a comprehensive state university with an enrollment of approximately 21,000 students. CROW, an interdisciplinary unit within the College of Arts and Sciences, is a nationally and internationally recognized organization that conducts, promotes, and disseminates scholarship on women and social inequality. Its approach to research, theory and programming emphasizes the structural relationships among race, class, gender, and sexuality, particularly in the U.S. South and among women of color.

Additional information: Center for Research on Women information (http://cas.memphis.edu/is/crow), University information (http://www.memphis.edu), or contact Dr. Jennifer A. Wagner-Lawlor, Associate Dean, at 901-678-3370 or jawagner@memphis.edu.

Review of applications will begin on December 1, 2005, and may continue until the position is filled. Applicants should submit a letter of application and a complete curriculum vita including a list of five references to: Chair, Search Committee, Center for Research on Women, University of Memphis, 337 Clement Hall, Memphis, TN 38152.