

FOREWORD

On February 17-18, 1995, the *Duke Journal of Gender Law & Policy* hosted a conference entitled *Gender & Sports: Setting a Course for College Athletics*. Participating in the conference were distinguished scholars, practitioners, student-athletes, and athletic administrators and commentators. Panelists at the conference debated the legal, policy, and sociological forces affecting women in collegiate athletics today. The articles in this issue were submitted by the conference participants to allow a greater number of interested persons the opportunity to be a part of the discussion.

At the center of the debate over the place of women in college athletics is Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972. This statute requires educational institutions to provide equal opportunities to their students in the classroom and on the playing field. In recent years, female student-athletes have relied heavily upon this law to obtain the opportunity to participate in college athletics in greater numbers. Title IX's requirement of substantially proportionate participation opportunities for men and women has drawn much criticism from those who believe that college athletics is a zero-sum game, and increasing opportunities for women will mean decreasing them for men. There are also sociological explanations for the hostility to Title IX exhibited by many men's sports advocates. The articles in the following pages discuss these issues in depth, but go beyond just commenting on the history and current status of women in college athletics. To move the debate forward, these articles also analyze prescriptions for the future in an attempt to figure out how, after all of these years, the playing field finally can be leveled, and how women can achieve equality of opportunity in college athletics.

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