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# Intercollegiate athletics' senior woman administrator: a qualitative assessment of her quest for effectiveness and empowerment

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Intercollegiate athletics' senior woman administrator: A qualitative assessment of her quest  
for effectiveness and empowerment

by

Stephanie Lynn Dohrn

A dissertation submitted to the graduate faculty  
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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2003

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**For the Major Program**

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### Chapter Overview

Senior woman administrators (SWA) face a myriad of challenges and experiences in intercollegiate athletics. This study analyzes the roles and responsibilities of these individuals, as well as issues of power structure and voice in the SWA's efforts to be effective in those roles.

The first chapter explains the significance of the study by providing statistical information and the fundamental issues regarding the roles and responsibilities of the senior women's administrator in a Division I collegiate athletics program. The study's statement of purpose and research questions illustrates the focus of the research. The contextual and theoretical framework provides a lens through which the study is structured. Next, the foreshadowed issues and the identification of the groups who will benefit from the research demonstrate the need for this study. Finally, delimitations are explained to provide rationalization for the focus selected.

### Significance of the Problem

Thirty years have elapsed since Title IX was enacted to rectify inequality in educational opportunities, which includes athletics. Although it has been a slow and arduous process, women have made significant gains in intercollegiate athletics participation; however, the fact remains that few women are in positions of power within collegiate athletic structures. This phenomenon is captured in the results of Carpenter and Acosta's (2000) 23-year longitudinal study of women in intercollegiate athletics. It determined that the status of

women as administrators is declining and non-representative: "Division I leads with 1.32 females [administrators] per school but the overall average for all Divisions is just 1.04 females [administrators per school]" (Carpenter & Acosta, 2000, p. 2). In 2000, only 27 or 8.5 percent of athletic directors in Division I were female and 13.3 percent of Division I institutions had no female representation on the administrative level. Not only are few women in positions of power, but women are not being hired to fill new positions to correct the problem of representation: "Although there were 418 new jobs in the athletics administrative structures from 1998 to 2000, only 45 or 10.8 percent of those new positions was filled by a female" (Carpenter & Acosta, 2000, p. 10). A greater percentage of institutions have no females at the administrative level than institutions with female athletic directors. To help correct this inequity at the administrative level, the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) initiated a structure in the 1980s that mandated a high-ranking female representative at each member institution, but its effectiveness to give these SWAs power and voice has yet to be determined.

The SWA in an athletics department is defined by the NCAA as, "the highest-ranking female administrator involved with the conduct of a member institution's intercollegiate athletics program" (NCAA Constitution, 4.02.4, 2002). Despite this new initiative, many institutions did not comply with the SWA title and were not sanctioned by the NCAA. According to *NCAA News* (1994) 42 percent of the 198 schools across all divisions who did not have an SWA at the time of the NCAA SWA study indicated they had no plans to fill the position. The 1994 SWA study is the most recent, but these numbers should be reasonably representative because of the sluggish nature of change in regard to gender equity in athletics. After all, Title IX has been the legal standard since 1972 and institutions are still



not in compliance. This large percentage of non-representation poses a conclusion that the ruling by the NCAA was not taken seriously or enforced effectively.

One reason the ruling has not been more effective could be the definition of the SWA position itself. The title of SWA, according to this definition, suggests that the seniority of the woman is the sole qualification for this title. Superficially, this may not appear as a paradox because if the SWA holds a senior position within her organization, it may be assumed that she is highly qualified. However, if only 1.32 female administrators exist in Division I athletics, mathematically one woman may be the senior woman administrator by necessity or default because she is the only woman on the administrative team. Thus, this definition raises many questions with respect to the role and impact of these women in collegiate athletics.

The intended role of SWA aimed to enable the woman administrator to gain access to and a voice in issues she would not have if it were not for the title. However, the title alone does not speak for the woman behind the role because the SWA title is meant to be an addition to her position and to her daily departmental responsibilities. The SWA's position in the athletics department can range from the director of athletics to an entry-level manager in any department. Unfortunately, the title does not coincide with an appropriate administrative level, such as assistant, associate, or senior associate athletic director, to provide the SWA a platform to be effective. If the only woman is the director of marketing, then she is automatically the SWA. Therefore, since the SWA title is attached to the highest-ranking female in the department, the structure of her pre-existing duties may or may not lend itself to a cohesive blend of responsibilities. If more time is not structured into the position or she

is not in daily contact with the inter-workings of the department, it is doubtful she can maximize her effectiveness as a SWA.

Due to the many variations of roles and responsibilities placed on the SWA, a clear understanding of the SWA title and the implementation of her added role for current and incoming female administrators and other department personnel in intercollegiate athletics are lacking. A survey of SWAs by the NCAA (1994) reported that only 62 percent of the Division I-A SWAs felt they had the authority to effectively exercise their designated responsibilities such as monitoring gender equity and voicing women's issues in the department. The majority of the SWAs acknowledged the importance of having someone oversee and voice concern about women's issues. The responses indicated that the position aided in the increased visibility of women on campus. However, the power structure in a majority of institutions does not seem to be conducive to an effective realization of these goals.

Approximately 43 percent of the respondents in the 1994 survey felt they needed more power, 37 percent wanted a clear definition of their role as SWA, and 10 percent claimed they held a token position within their respective athletics department (NCAA SWA survey summary, p. 10). A specific concern was that men defined issues seemingly relevant to the SWA. One SWA (1994) noted, "I think the SWA is often asked for input on women's issues; however, the loop that SWAs get left out of are those areas that affect women but may not be women's issues. There are many decisions made for the men's programs that do have a spin-off effect on women" (NCAA SWA survey summary, p. 12).

The denial of access commonly referred to as the "old-boy's network" has not only impacted the SWA's voice and influence at the table, but it also has hindered their ability to

get to the table in the first place. According to another NCAA report (Suggs, 2000), women's employment in intercollegiate athletics remains low:

Women held only 42 percent of the 7,918 head coaching jobs for women's teams in 1999, down slightly from 1995. The lack of women perpetuates itself through a vicious cycle: because women are so rarely able to crack the "old-boy's network" to land top coaching and administrative jobs, few female athletes aspire to careers in athletics. (p. A54)

In addition to the "old-boy's network" influence, other factors may account for the disproportionately low number of women in administrative roles. The NCAA Committee on Women's Athletics (CWA) met in June 2001 and proposed homophobia education to the NCAA management council, noting that, "homophobia may be a contributing factor to the significant reduction in numbers of women in coaching and athletics administration" (Hawes, p. 1). Despite the growing participation of women in athletics, there remains a fear that women in athletics are stereotyped as lesbians. Unfortunately, speaking out about gender inequality or simply having a career in athletics administration or coaching is a typecast concern for some women.

As recommended by the CWA, a breakout session for homophobia was held at the 2002 NCAA Convention and it was reported that some women did not attend for fear of being stereotyped as a lesbian. The CWA suggested that the workshop become one of the inclusive sessions to alleviate this fear and inform more individuals about homophobia. This behavior by these professionals indicates that homophobia remains an area of concern and these stereotypes of women have a potential effect on her effectiveness as a leader and as a champion of women's issues.

Power structure, voice, experience, and homophobia have been cited as probable causes for the decrease of women in athletics administration. It is apparent that more women who are interested in athletics administration need to be educated and provided support and structure conducive to success. The current system needs to evolve with the expansion of women's athletics in order to be effective. Simply adding women to the existing male-dominated structure is not feasible and does not avail itself to the strengths of diversity, because athletics now includes both men and women and the original system was created by and for men only. A woman can be appointed the SWA, but if the system is not in place for her to be successful it will continue to be a paradox of power and smack of some amount of tokenism.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to determine what experiences and initiatives senior woman administrators need in order to have effective voice and power within their respective athletic departments.

#### Research Questions

1. What is a SWA and why is she needed in collegiate athletics?
2. How can the SWA title be more effective?
3. What obstacles should these women be prepared to overcome?
4. What departmental support should be in place for the SWA to create and ensure power and voice within the department?

5. What experiences should the SWA have to succeed in her position?
6. What is the future of the SWA in athletics?

### Conceptual Context and Theoretical Framework

The organization and culture of athletics departments affect the roles and responsibilities of the SWA. Therefore, the contextual framework for this study is gendered organizational theory and organizational double-bind theory. These theories focus on the gender aspects of organizations and their impact on power and culture within the organization and are detailed in the next chapter. Furthermore, the aspects of marginalization and feeling of the “no-win” paradoxical situations that impact the power and culture will be examined. Critical feminist theory, critical social theory, and feminist poststructuralist critique theory will be the interwoven methodological framework throughout the study.

This bricolage, the combination of useful and related theories, according to Denzin and Lincoln (1998), "is a pieced-together, close knit set of practices that provide solutions to a problem in a concrete situation" (p. 3). According to LeCompte and Preissle (1993), "Theorizing is the cognitive process of discovering or manipulating abstract categories and the relationships among those categories" (p. 239). Combining aspects of contextual and methodological theories and using that collection to better understand the SWA provides a lens and basis for researching the underlying structures of the SWA's roles and responsibilities.

There is limited research completed specific to the SWA. However, using these theories is a process to utilize existing research to help understand the nature of this position in intercollegiate athletics. The conceptual framework is, "a formulation of what you think is

going on with the phenomena you are studying - a tentative theory of what is happening and why" (Maxwell, 1996, p. 25). Therefore, meshing existing information specific to the SWA with related theories and research frames the research process to determine why the paradox of power for female leaders in athletics exists and how it can be improved for current and future generations.

The feminist perspective or the women's movement as defined by Smith (1987) captures the basis of this framework. She states that the women's movement's discovery is "as women we had been living in an intellectual, cultural, and political world, from whose making we had been almost entirely excluded and in which we had been recognized as no more than marginal voices" (p. 1). According to Lather (1991), "feminist researchers see gender as a basic organizing principle which profoundly shapes/mediates the concrete conditions of our lives" (p. 71). Critical social theory takes into account the social, economic, and political aspects of a situation and uses those three entities to explain the power structures that affect the marginalized group, which in this study is the SWA. Fay (1987) concludes that the goal of critical social science is to encourage "the emergence of people who know who they are and are conscious of themselves as active and deciding beings " (p. 74). Feminist poststructuralist critique theory focuses on how gender influences knowledge, power, and discourse. According to Fletcher (1999):

Poststructuralist critique gives voice to these marginalized perspectives and calls attention to the systems of power that have marginalized them. Feminist poststructuralism adopts these same principles but with a focus on the gendered nature of knowledge production and the way it maintains and reinforces the power relationships between the sexes. Thus, the goal of feminist poststructuralist inquiry is

to add a specific marginalized voice to organizational discourse - women's voice - and, by doing so, disrupt a particular system of power: patriarchy. (p. 21)

This theoretical framework will provide lenses for analyzing the SWA's power in an organizational construct from economic, political, and social perspectives. Furthermore, the focus will center on the number of women in athletic administrative positions and the structures that have contributed to the phenomenon of fewer women in collegiate athletic administration, as well as the power and structure issues that inhibit the success of these women.

#### Foreshadowed Issues

Level of experience and age will impact the participants' viewpoints on the SWAs' roles and responsibilities. Those women who were administrators during the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) prior to the NCAA most likely will perceive things differently than those women who competed, coached, or who served as administrators during the early NCAA years. These differences may be greater compared to those women in intercollegiate athletics post-Title IX. This post-Title IX group may not be aware of the burdens placed on them because they are not as blatant as in the past. Some of these barriers may exist, for instance, in the types of departmental positions that do not lend themselves to promotion and power but which women may be filling.

It is an unspoken rule in Division I athletics that one must possess experience in football, men's basketball, and fundraising to climb the administrative ladder. Even though women have gained access to the senior staff, few have exposure to these areas because they are not viewed as "women's issues" or concerns. The new generation of SWAs may not

understand these and other underlying power structures that preclude more women from attaining upper-level or director positions.

#### Who Will Benefit from the Study?

The analysis of structures and dynamics of the SWA position will benefit athletics departments by providing an opportunity for successful Division I SWAs or female athletic directors who were SWAs at Division I institutions to share their experiences and pass on their knowledge. Understanding that the next generation will continue their strides in gender equity will be significant. Additionally, this study will assist women who are promoted or appointed as the SWA from within their departments, those women who are accepting a new position as SWA at another institution, and future SWAs who are looking for a model and path to follow.

#### Definitions

**Division I:** These member institutions have to sponsor at least seven sports for men and seven for women (or six for men and eight for women) with two team sports for each gender. There are minimums for number of participants, contests, scheduling, and financial aid.

**Division I-A:** Institutions with a football program that are usually elaborate in amount of resources, media attention, and sponsorship. These schools have to meet attendance requirements or seating capacities for football.

**Division I-AA:** Institutions that sponsor football but do not have to meet attendance requirements and have different scholarship structures.



Division I-AAA: Institutions that do not sponsor football.

Title IX: Amendment to the 1964 Civil Rights Act that states, "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 educational program or activity receiving federal assistance" (Title 20 U.S.C. Section 1681).

#### Delimitations of the Study

SWAs are the only females who are studied because each institution is legislated to have an SWA on staff. Although SWAs hold a range of different positions or roles within the athletics department, they each are charged with overseeing gender equity. The SWA is the woman with the most power and voice in the department and theoretically is the most informed person to speak about the issues relating to the gender and power structures in her department. Current SWA's in Division I and past SWA's in Division I who have advanced to a director of athletics position in Division I are the focus of the interviews.

In response to a request, the National Association of Collegiate Women Athletics Administrators (NACWAA) and the Women's Sports Foundation executive directors and leaders in other national committees provided a list of successful Division I SWAs and current female Division I athletic directors as potential women to interview for the study. Successful SWAs were categorized by national prominence by reputation as being successful in her respective department, position on national athletic committees, and peer approval. All interviews were completed in person and a diverse representation of region, age, and experience was achieved.

### Outline of the Remainder of the Study

The next chapter reviews the literature and provides a historical background about women's athletic organizations and the path for women's sports and administration to current day issues. The methods chapter reviews the research methodology and outlines the research design. The site, participant selection, data collection techniques, and procedures define the interview process. Finally, quality assurance, triangulation, and limitations of the study lead to the concluding summary of the chapter.

The fourth chapter reveals the results of the study. This chapter is divided into three major themes. The participant's and researcher's insights explain what is happening and initial theory references are provided to tie the themes together. The final chapter delves into the conclusions of the study. A summary of findings and connection to theory addresses each research question. Next, implications and limitations of the study are provided. Finally, the recommendations for further study and the conclusion complete this work.

## CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Chapter Overview

The literature review consists of three sections, each dealing with the senior woman administrator (SWA) and how those areas affect her roles and responsibilities within an athletics department's structure. The first section begins with a historical overview of women's athletics beginning at the turn of the twentieth century to the present. The overview focuses on societal and organizational constructs that shaped women's athletics as it is today. Historical information spanning from the 1890s to the onset and demise of the AIAW are recounted and the section ends with an explanation of legal cases of Title IX and current opposition to the law.

In the second section, the organizational structure and culture for women in intercollegiate athletics is examined. Specifically, gender organizational and double-bind theories as they relate to power and marginalization are highlighted in this review. The final section relates to the SWA's power and voice. The SWAs as a community of difference, and their pioneering status, power, and political influence are examined.

### Historical Overview of Women's Athletics

In this section, a broad historical overview of women's athletics is recounted to provide basic understanding and perspective. Past experiences and growth will help explain and predict current and future trends in athletic administration opportunities for women.

### History of Women's Athletics - 1890's to 1971

It was believed in the late nineteenth century that exercise should be different for women than men due to their different biological make-up (Mechikoff & Estes, 1998). "As the argument went, defective women produced defective children, whereas healthy women strengthened the race through their offspring" (p. 212). Even though women were encouraged to be healthy, Victorian principles did not allow them to dress or act in a manner that led to productive exercise and fitness. The societal purpose of exercise for women at this time was to prepare them for childbirth and motherhood.

According to Gorn and Goldstein (1993), "So deep had been the assumption that sports were for men - that sports defined masculine identity - that women's absence has often gone unnoticed" (p. 197). Women's sports have been connected with the developments of feminism and the public's perceptions of gender roles. Wealthier women have had more opportunities in this arena.

In the 1880's, women who attended prestigious private women's colleges were encouraged in mental and physical development and flourished due to their relative isolation from the disapproving public (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993). However, this was still a period in which the medical community questioned a woman's ability to survive in higher education. Dr. Edward Clarke (1873) suggested that intellectual education would unduly tax the nervous system of women by redirecting the nervous energy necessary for reproduction toward intellectual development. Even though women could participate in sports, male or female spectators did not accept these public displays of athleticism by women. This public criticism turned many women away from sports (Gorn & Goldstein, 1993).

According to Park and Hult (1993), women's sports were to be facilitated and run by other women. It was this philosophy that created opportunities for women in the field of physical education and was the precursor to intercollegiate athletics:

Opportunities in physical education were facilitated by Victorian properties that held that women should oversee exercise programs for young women. When it suited their purposes, early leaders capitalized on these sensibilities and used them to their own ends. In many ways the women's physical education department replicated the "separate spheres" ideology of the larger society. Female directors, and later chairs, presided over these with considerable authority. The insularity of their programs was, in part, protection against the possible incursion of men and unqualified females. (p. 37)

Many men and women who were trained as physical education teachers had to have medical school training due to the importance placed on health at this time (Mechikoff and Estes, 1998; Ziegler, 1916). This extensive training viewpoint was opposed by those already in the field coupled with the need for additional educators in physical education. As a result normal schools, training schools, and eventually four-year school programs were developed to teach physical education instructors in a college curriculum. Professional organizations were later implemented at the turn of the century to insure the quality and legitimization of the profession. With World War I approaching, the nation focused on the physical abilities of its young men and licensure laws for teaching in physical education were implemented (Mechikoff and Estes, 1998).

Following World War I, more opportunities for women became available when businesses wanted to provide recreational activities for their employees and attempt to

appease union hostility (Gorn and Goldstein, 1993). Women's baseball, basketball, softball, and gymnastic teams were popular during this time period. Although recreational activities were gaining respectability, collegiate athletics remained a battle.

The Conference of College Directors of Physical Education was opposed to women competing in intercollegiate athletics. In 1920, they outlined the following reasons to deny women the opportunity to compete in college. With the exception of nerve fatigue, these points mirror the complaints of excesses in intercollegiate athletics heard today:

It leads to professionalism; it emphasizes the training of the few at the expense of many; it is unsocial; the necessity of professional coaches; physical educators, both men and women, of our leading colleges find the results undesirable; the expense; and unnecessary nerve fatigue. (Mechikoff & Estes, 1998, p. 317)

Although there was a staunch stance with regard to women competing at the collegiate level, there remained a drive to provide women the opportunity to participate in sports; without the threat of professionalism. The women's division of the National Amateur Athletic Federation (NAAF) in 1924 set forth the motto: "Every girl in a sport and a sport for every girl." This motto promoted participation and limited awards and publicity. This goal was established in response to women being recruited to compete in the 1922 International Track and Field meet in Paris. The Amateur Athletic Union (AAU) controlled women's athletics at this time and many women physical educators did not support AAU's efforts to send women to this competition because it conflicted with their vision. The NAAF convened in 1923 to set resolutions for women's athletics:

Resolved, in order to develop these qualities which shall fit girls and women to perform their functions as citizens:

- (1) that their abilities be conducted with that end definitely in view and be protected from exploitation for the enjoyment of the spectator, the athletic reputation, or the commercial advantage of any school or other organization;
- (2) that schools and other organizations shall stress enjoyment of the sport and the development of sportsmanship and minimize the emphasis which is at present laid upon accomplishments and the winning of championships. (Mechikoff and Estes, 1993, p. 318)

Some collegiate programs disagreed with this stance and the creation of varsity teams and competition against others within the same school began to emerge. However, competing against teams from other colleges was not yet a reality. More socially accepted "women's" sports such as tennis, swimming, track and field, and golf began to appear in the public spotlight in the 1920s and 1930s. Some critiques of women athletics were later silenced when legendary Mildred "Babe" Didrikson dominated the 1932 Olympic Games. Despite her accomplishments, the NAAF women's division of athletics continued to oppose intercollegiate athletics until changes began to emerge later that decade (Mechikoff & Estes, 1998).

However, media coverage of these athletes focused more on their personal lives and looks rather than their athletic talents. Socially accepted sports such as ice skating, golf, or tennis are also individual in nature. According to Gorn and Goldstein (1993), "The worlds of sports and of public relations - both overwhelmingly controlled by men - preferred individual women to women in groups" (p. 202). Single women also faced scrutiny concerning their sexuality:

By their very existence, female athletes posed questions of sexuality. Through their intense experience in the world of the body, they demonstrate a public involvement with their own physiques that still scandalizes a broader sexual culture which, if superficially libertine, is in fact built around prudery and repression, especially for women. (p. 204)

The 1940s saw an increase in participation for women in sport, improvement of programming, a greater social acceptance of women in sport, and the relaxing of restrictions against women competing in intercollegiate athletics (Mechikoff & Estes, 1998). Colleges implemented play days against other institutions in a variety of sports in the 1950s and the Girls' Athletic Association (GAA) provided opportunities for girls in high school to compete. In 1957, the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, and Recreation (AAHPER) created a Division for Girls and Women in Sports (DGWS).

Early in the 1960s, play days and sport days were all but eliminated and competition as sports clubs and coached teams emerged. Virtually no budget existed, students raised their own funds, coaching was voluntary, facilities were almost nonexistent, and practice times were only available early in the morning or late at night so as not to interfere with the men's schedule (Hulstrand, 1993). In 1966 the Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (CIAW) was developed to grow women's athletics on the national scene by providing national championships and governing boards. A push during the 1960s provided more skill training for coaches and teachers by providing national coaching institutes.

In 1971, the DGWS executive board met to form an organization to exclusively govern women's athletics. Women's athletics had grown in acceptance and popularity and



was outgrowing the constraints of the DGWS. The AIAW emerged from this meeting and 278 institutions became charter members for the 1971-72 school year (Hulstrand, 1993).

#### The Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW)

The AIAW was administered by women for women; its mission was to conduct competitive programs for women in colleges and universities. Administrators of the AIAW petitioned to the writers of the Title IX amendment for the inclusion of athletics. According to Morrison (1992), the writers knew little about sport and its organizational structure. This naivete allowed the AIAW and NAGWS to present to the writers with a list of athletic discriminatory practices (p. 43). By 1973, the AIAW hired an attorney to lobby for women's athletics and women's organizations in Washington D.C.

When Title IX, an anti-discrimination provision of a federal statute of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964, was enacted women's athletics changed dramatically. The NCAA filed suit against these provisions claiming that equal funding would threaten the financial stability of intercollegiate athletics. They lost the suit and the NCAA felt it was in their best interest to control women's athletics and was able to entice women's programs from the AIAW with more championships, money, and incentives for athletics departments.

The AIAW folded in 1983 and women's athletics fell under the male jurisdiction of intercollegiate athletics. The AIAW had to grown to more than 900 members and was the largest intercollegiate sports governing body at the time (Hulstrand, 1993).

## Title IX and the Office of Civil Rights

Historically, women have been discriminated against with regard to educational and athletic opportunities. In the last thirty years, society has viewed these inequities as problems that should be, and can be, remedied by encouraging and requiring gender equity within educational institutions. This societal pressure influenced the federal government's enactment of Title IX in 1972. Title IX states that, "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 educational program or activity receiving federal assistance" (Title 20 U.S.C. Section 1681). An educational institution is defined as:

Any public or private preschool, elementary, or secondary school, or any institution of vocational, professional, or higher education, except that in the case of an educational institution composed of more than one school, college, or department which are administratively separate units, such term means each such school, college, or department (Title 20 U.S.C. Section 1681).

If any part of a university receives federal assistance, then the entire university is considered to receive federal aid and the laws of Title IX are applicable. For example, if an engineering department is the only department at a university that receives federal assistance, that still holds every department accountable to Title IX, including the athletics department.

The United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW) was the original overseer of Title IX. Led by Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger, HEW stated that Title IX was based upon principles of equity under which our nation was founded. Weinberger (U.S. Department of Education, 1975) further noted that Title IX, "is based on the sound premise that, in a knowledge-based society, equal opportunity in education is

fundamental to equality in all other forms of human endeavors” (U.S. Department of Education, 1975, HEW News: Final Title IX Regulations, Implementing Education Amendments, p. 2). In reaction to the Title IX policies enacted by HEW, hundreds of discriminatory complaints poured in from universities across the country. In response, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) the successor to HEW, was asked to create a policy interpretation in 1979. From that time on, the OCR acted as the enforcer and educator for Title IX.

The Office of Civil Rights, a division of the Department of Education, regulates every educational institution and is responsible for policing Title IX efforts. The OCR “protects the rights of students in education programs or activities that receive financial assistance from the Department of Education. People who meet the programs’ qualifications and eligibility requirements are given an equal opportunity to participate, regardless of their race, color, national origin, sex, handicap, or age” (U.S. Department of Education, 1990). The OCR investigates complaints of violations of Title IX including the denial of equal opportunity in intercollegiate athletics on the basis of gender. The OCR also investigates compliance reviews and tries to aid in any compliance problems. If those problems are not resolved, then the OCR is responsible for the initiation of the enforcement of the law.

When the OCR investigates each institution, 13 different areas are examined: athletic financial assistance, accommodation of interests and abilities, equipment and supplies, scheduling of games and practice time, travel and per diem allowance, tutors, coaches, locker rooms, practice and competition facilities, medical and training facilities and services, housing and dining facilities and services, publicity, support services, and recruitment of student-athletes. The OCR analyzes each of the 13 sections by using designated policy

interpretation factors that help evaluate the data and responses from interview questions. For gender equity, the analysis is the comparison of men's and women's athletic programs on each of the 13 components. Based upon these comparisons, the investigator decides whether or not there are any discrepancies due to gender discrimination. If the institution cannot clarify or justify the disparity between the genders, then a violation exists.

To determine compliance, the OCR looks at the above sections and compares the benefits of all the men's teams to the benefits of all the women's teams. Benefits can range from scholarship dollars to the number of shoes an athlete receives. Looking at all the teams is important, because Title IX protects the benefits based on gender, not individual sports.

For example, men's and women's track do not have to be equitable. The men's track team can have three pairs of shoes per athlete to one pair for the women's team athletes as long as distribution is equitable among all sports. Each athletic department can choose how it wants to allocate its funds as long as it equals out among all the sports. Through the guidelines set by the Policy Interpretation, Title IX does allow different benefits based on the nature of the sport. For example, the cross country team is not going to practice as long as the golf team, and the golf team is not going to need as many pairs of shoes as the cross country team.

Another variation of the rules is when a coach intercedes with his or her own preferences. Some coaches may prefer to only recruit in their home state, even though they have the budget to recruit nationally. Choosing specific brands is also their professional preference, because cost does not always reflect quality or brand loyalty. The OCR evaluates compliance based on the benefits and services received by all the sports, the needs of each sport, and the decisions made by the coach or athletic personnel.

## Implications of Title IX Based on Legal Cases

There has been a progression of court cases and appeals based on Title IX since it was enacted in 1972. On May 20, 1974, the Tower Amendment was proposed and later rejected. Senator John Tower wanted an amendment exempting revenue-producing sports when determining Title IX compliance. However, it failed to garner enough backing and in 1975 President Gerald Ford, a former college football player, signed legislation that included provisions prohibiting sex discrimination in athletics and established a three-year window for educational institutions to comply. This meant that revenue-producing sports like football and men's basketball would be held to the same rules as every other sport. Unfortunately the three-year window was not enforced, and the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights was severely criticized for its failure to require compliance with the laws of Title IX (U.S. Department of Education, 1990).

To alleviate the criticism and lack of enforcement, a policy interpretation focusing on three general areas was developed by the OCR. Commonly called the three-pronged test of Title IX, it was developed to help universities understand the criteria for compliance. This test was initiated in 1975, when Congress reviewed and approved Title IX regulations and rejected resolutions disapproving them. In 1975 and 1977, the Senate refused to act on bills to limit Title IX enforcement. On December 11, 1979, the final policy on the interpretation of Title IX and intercollegiate athletics was issued. One year later, the Department of Education was given the duty to oversee Title IX through the OCR.

Grove City v. Bell. In 1984 Title IX suffered a setback. In one of the most important Title IX court cases, Grove City v. Bell, the Supreme Court concluded that only athletics

programs that received federal financial assistance were to be held under the Title IX umbrella. Congress negated this ruling when it voted to override a presidential veto of the Civil Right Restoration Act by Ronald Reagan on March 22, 1988. The act mandated that all educational institutions which receive any type of direct or indirect federal financial assistance be bound by Title IX legislation. By the 1990s, OCR had created an investigator's manual to aid in the equity evaluations of institutions. However, this did not prevent institutions from attempting to circumvent compliance by claiming financial hardship.

Cohen v. Brown. The Cohen v. Brown case began April 29, 1991 when Brown University changed the status of men's golf, men's water polo, women's volleyball, and women's gymnastics teams from varsity status to club status. Less than a year later, April 9, 1992, Brown was served with a class-action lawsuit led by Amy Cohen. The district court ordered the gymnastics and volleyball teams to be reinstated to varsity status and prohibited Brown University from eliminating or reducing any existing women's team until the case was resolved.

The circuit court upheld the district court's ruling that Brown violated the third prong of the Title IX test: Brown had ineffectively accommodated female students' abilities and needs. Due to Brown's violation, the district court ordered the university to submit a comprehensive plan that would show how they would achieve compliance with Title IX. Brown appealed the ruling, challenging the constitutional and statutory grounds of the test used by the district court. The circuit court found no error in the district court's interpretation or application of the Title IX law, but found error in their award of specific relief. The district court noted that if the sports were demoted to a club team, they would be

unable to obtain varsity-level coaches, recruits, and other financial needs. Cutting the sports would save Brown money, while leaving the gender ratio relatively unaffected. Although the ratio was unaffected, the male athletes already had a disproportional share of participation and financial backing. So, though it appeared that Brown was evenly cutting male and female participants, it perpetuated the unequal gender ratio (U.S. Court of Appeals, 1996). After several years of deliberation, the case was taken to the Supreme Court in April of 1997, which ruled in favor of Amy Cohen. The court rejected Brown's constitutional and statutory challenges to the Policy Interpretation's three-part test, upholding the district court's interpretation of the Title IX framework.

Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools. On February 26, 1992, the U.S. Supreme Court took another step that would prod institutions toward greater Title IX adherence. The Supreme Court handed down a unanimous decision in the Franklin v. Gwinnett County Public Schools and "thereby made it clear that plaintiffs in Title IX lawsuits may successfully include claims for compensatory and punitive damages" (Women in Intercollegiate Sport, 1996). This allowed victims to forcefully proceed with legal action and stimulate athletics administrators to move closer to compliance.

To help insure Title IX compliance, the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act (EADA) was developed in 1994. It stated that any institution receiving federal financial aid had to disclose certain information concerning its athletic programs in an annual report. The first EADA report was due October 1, 1996, and all institutions had to make information available to all whom inquired.

Louisiana State University. There have been Title IX lawsuits surfacing despite these compliance informational assistants. Recently, Louisiana State University (LSU) reached a \$1.2 million settlement with five former women's soccer and softball players. The suit argued that LSU "had discriminated against women by failing to offer enough sports opportunities for them and lagged in providing support for the teams it did have" (Suggs, 2001, p. 1). In addition to the payments, LSU agreed to finance scholarships, facilities, travel opportunities, as well as accommodating opportunities and interests of females on campus.

#### Groups in Opposition to Title IX

Opposition to Title IX has emerged from lawmakers like Senator Tower, but it also has emerged from the public sector. The Independent Women's Forum and groups led by wrestling coaches called Simply Common Sense and the National Coalition for Athletics Equity argue the proportionality prong of Title IX because they feel it has led to a quota system that was never intended. Wrestling and other men's Olympic or non-revenue sports have been eliminated to help balance athletics department budgets. The National Wrestling Coaches of American recently filed suit against Title IX citing that utilizing the proportionality prong discriminated against men's non-revenue programs. The justice department filed an appeal to dismiss the suit.

Although Title IX stresses the expansion of women's sports and not the elimination of men's sports, athletics departments do not want to cut back on their revenue sports like football and basketball. Donna Lopiano, executive director of the Women's Sports Foundation (WSF), agrees that institutions are choosing not to give women the same opportunities as men and would rather cut a men's program and bring men down to the level



of women instead of bringing women up to the level of men (Steinbach, 2001).

Unfortunately, some institutions are eliminating men's Olympic sports instead of increasing funding and support for women's programs. It is not the intention or goal of Title IX or its proponents to eliminate these men's sports. The intention is to provide opportunities and equity for the under-represented gender. In response to complaints about how Title IX was enforced and the unintended consequences against male student-athletes, a commission was formed to examine these issues.

#### Commission on Opportunity in Athletics

On June 27, 2002, U.S. Department of Education Secretary Rodney Paige assembled the Commission on Opportunity in Athletics. The Commission comprised of 15 individuals, namely current Division I athletic directors and other athletic or university personnel, were charged with analyzing the effectiveness of Title IX and present, if any, revisions. It is the Women's Sports Foundation's (2002) opinion that, "the purpose of the Commission is to weaken Title IX" (p. 1). To counter this possible motive, the WSF is actively educating the Commission and general public to the current and future successes of Title IX. "The Foundation's leadership is profoundly concerned that the current misinformation campaign being conducted by extremely conservative groups and embraced by disenfranchised men's sports teams is misleading the media, the public, and our elected representatives" (p. 3). At the town hall meeting in Atlanta on August 27, 2002, co-president of the National Women's Law Center Marcia Greenberger testified before the Commission:

The three-part test is a critical, necessary and flexible tool to comply with Title IX's requirement of equal participation opportunities. Attacks on the test - that it imposes

quotas and that it forces cuts in men's teams - are factually insupportable and have been resoundingly rejected by the courts. In fact, to modify the test would inject inappropriate uncertainty to the detriment of Title IX enforcement - and to do so in the ways opponents have proposed would unlawfully weaken Title IX; freeze into place still-pervasive patterns of discrimination in athletics; enshrine the unlawful and inaccurate stereotype that women are less interested in athletics than men; and convert the government from an entity charged with enforcement of the civil rights of all to a protector of special interests (p. 1).

Greenberger (2002) also reminded the Commission that Congress and courts have consistently supported Title IX. The courts have recognized that, "interest can only be demonstrated as a result of opportunity ... the dramatic increases in women's participation throughout the last 30 years show that when offered the opportunity, women do play - and reap enormous, and well-deserved, educational, health and other benefits as a result" (p. 4). However, outspoken opponents of Title IX like J. Robinson, men's wrestling coach at the University of Minnesota, insist that the proportionality test of Title IX is a quota system. He contends that, "feminist radicals have hijacked the current interpretation" (Robinson, 2002, p. 1). Others on the Commission have voiced that they were, "unhappy with the current regulations on the balance of male and female athletes that colleges must maintain" (Suggs, 2002, p. 1).

Seven months later at the January 28-29, 2003 public meeting in Washington D.C., the Commission set forth 28 preliminary recommendations to the Secretary of the Department of Education (Appendix G). Many recommendations were controversial and were met with mixed-emotions by members of the Commission, advocates, and interested

public who attended the meeting. Title IX supporters argued that the panel was not as informed as it should have been to make these decisions. As voiced by one of the commissioners, she felt it was irresponsible to vote on the proposals because it was not clear what effects these decisions would have on institutions. Lopiano (2003, *NCAA News* ) voiced this concern:

The commission has failed to operate on the basis of an agreed-upon set of participation statistics; on a number of occasions it refused to read, discuss or accept the distribution of the 1996 Office for Civil Rights (document) it was proposing to amend; members failed to ask for or consider any data on the impact of proposals under consideration; and the group refused to accept the opinion of research experts that the use of interest surveys were nothing more than measures of attitudes that reflect gender stereotyping. The public deserved a better effort (p. 5).

Dr. Christine Grant, former athletics director at the University of Iowa, summarized the perceptions of the Title IX advocates' discontent with the results. "Many of these recommendations are, in effect, asking the government to decide on the degree of discrimination that will be practiced. That is a predetermined discriminatory practice. If these recommendations are successful, women are going to be underrepresented in perpetuity" (2003, *NCAA News* , p. 6). Regardless of what the intent of the Commission, it appeared to be set up for failure from the beginning. The act of analyzing Title IX in this format, with individuals that represented few of the many factions that are affected by the law, was doomed to fail because individuals with a vested interest, and working within a limited time frame, were going to disagree and discredit each other. Maybe that was the intent. However,

all sides agreed that this Commission was only the beginning in deciding the future of Title IX.

Numerous viewpoints abound about the future of Title IX and opinions range from status quo to radical change. Ironically, the major players in these arguments are women's and non-revenue men's sports while those who hold a major stake in the success of men's revenue-producing sports are waiting in the wings watching them attack each other. The next section delves into the organizational systems that have led athletic departments to this point.

### Organizational Structure and Culture

This section focuses on organizational structure and culture in athletic departments and how these affect SWAs. For women in athletics, gender plays a large role due to the traditional male dominance of athletics. It was not until 1983 that the NCAA incorporated women into its structure. The onset of the SWA in the organizational administrative structure inevitably impacted the gender assumptions about women in athletics.

Gendered organizational theory incorporates a perspective that takes into account power differentials between the genders in organizations. According to Gherardi (1995), "one must learn to recognize the prestructuring of management, workplaces and organization in gender assumptions, rules and values, without forgetting that gender is a pervasive symbol of the power relation" (p. 17). A study by Jensen (1994) revealed that the organizational theory literature discussed only a few gender-related concepts. She points to a lag between the literature and the reality of organizations. Since women have not always been considered in organizations, the theories have not reflected these gender issues (Jensen, 1994; Morgan, 1986). Therefore, gender must be considered when analyzing women in organizational

structures, especially in intercollegiate athletics because the existing social structures were created before women were part of the system. Strati's (1992) definition of an organizational culture demonstrates that it is deeply rooted in the history of the organization and points to why the combining of men and women under the NCAA umbrella in 1983 was problematic:

An organizational culture consists of the symbols, beliefs and patterns of behavior learned, produced and created by the people who devote their energies and labor to the life of an organization. It is expressed in the design of the organization and of work, in the artifacts and services that the organization produces, in the architecture of its premises, in the technologies that it employs, in its ceremonials of encounter and meeting, in the temporal structuring of organizational courses of action, in the quality and conditions of its working life, in the ideologies of work, in the corporate philosophy, in the jargon, lifestyle and physical appearance of the organizations members. (Strati, 1992a: 578)

Simply adding women into the existing male structure with its symbols, beliefs, and patterns of behavior was not effective because the cultures of the NCAA and AIAW were fundamentally different from each other. Women entering the administrative ranks were forced to learn a new language and change to fit another structure, a structure that favored men and not women.

To further illustrate gender differences in an organization, Acker (1992) describes four sets of processes in the organizational production of gender. The production of gender refers to a socially-created vision or meaning of the male or female gender based on certain organizational processes. These gender processes are concrete organizational activities that are, "both material and ideological, whereby advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and

control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of distinction between male and female" (p. 146). The four processes are:

(1) The production of gender divisions, i.e. the gender patterning of jobs, wages, hierarchies, power and subordination; (2) the creation of symbols, images and forms of consciousness which explicate, justify or oppose gender divisions; (3) the interactions among individuals in the multiplicity of forms that enact dominance and subordination, create alliances and exclusions; and (4) the interior mental work of individuals as they consciously construct their understanding of the organization's structure of work and opportunity (p. 253).

To illustrate this concept in terms of the SWA, it is common for women in athletics to be pigeonholed into certain areas of athletics and restricted from others (Suggs, 2000).

Gender patterning in athletics is visible because there are only 27, or 8.5 percent, women functioning as Division I athletics directors (Carpenter & Acosta, 2000) and few women in the fields of development, football or men's basketball operations, or with experience in negotiating television contracts. If women are not accepted, trained for, or placed into these high-visibility roles, the cycle will continue. Gherardi (1995) states that, "if an organizational culture expresses a gender regime which systematically devalues everything connected with the female, the organization can never become democratic" (p. 9). Written and unwritten rules are embossed into the athletics culture. Therefore, the verbal and non-verbal cues within the organizational culture can influence the effectiveness of the SWA. Fink, Pastore, & Riemer (2001) found that athletic departments valued similarity rather than diversity and this supports why these organizational structures are slow to change to include, embrace, and value women.

## Double-bind Theory and Change

Compounding built-in gender assumptions, double-bind theory also affects organizational culture as it relates to the SWA. Like organizational structures and cultures, double-bind theory creates an environment for SWAs that is contradictory in nature and makes her role more difficult to perform. Organizational double-bind theory, as described by Wendt (2001) is, "a no-win situation initiated by a paradoxical statement or injunction that leaves the listener in a state of powerlessness, disorientation, and frustration" (p. 15). The double-binding situation may lead to silence or frustration by the marginalized worker because she finds herself in an organizational paradox.

Smith and Berg (1987) define paradox as, "a statement or set of statements that are self-referential and contradictory and that trigger a vicious circle" (p. 12). Similar to Wendt, Smith and Berg (1987) define double-bind theory as a type of "stuckness" or "impossible situation" a group can find itself within a social situation: "Stuckness is a consequence of the contradictory meanings and of the injunctions for simultaneous contradictory behaviors emanating from two or more contexts in which the entity's actions are embedded" (p. 56).

The very concept of the SWA is itself a paradox due to the number of women administrators in a given department. The fact women need to have this title with the force of the NCAA or Title IX behind it before they can be taken seriously is paradoxical, because the individual should be in a position of power automatically. Because the position is enforced, it will have an aspect of tokenism to it because the merits of a woman on the administrative staff were mandated, not recognized and automatically valued.

The onset of the SWA and the creation of national networking organizations for female athletic administrators are attempts to bring about change in how these women view

themselves and how athletic departments need to adapt to women. In order to bring about change or become a change agent, one needs to be aware that gender is part of the organization. Morgan (1986) states that gender does make a difference. "Many organizations are dominated by gender-related values that bias organizational life in favor of one sex over another" (p. 178). Gender in athletics departments can play an important role in the culture of the department because athletics traditionally has been constructed by and for men and the nature of the system is therefore patriarchal. SWAs are the main force behind creating a less patriarchal and more democratic system where women are fully integrated into the administrative and coaching ranks and both male and female student-athletes are afforded equal opportunities, experiences, and expectations. However, a double-bind environment exists when attempts are made to create this change because women are not in the position to enact the change and those in power do not want to relinquish it. According to Hurst & Usher (1984):

Perhaps the most frustrating experience of any group attempting to bring about change is the perception that gatekeepers are listening, but not hearing; that there is action without any real movement; that the energy of the change movement is being deflected or dissipated without having any impact. Arguments are not refuted, nor positions challenged, but the net effect is that the system does not change. There is "lip service" to the change agenda and attempts may be made to co-opt key proponents of the movement. (p. 53)

Society influences how people view gender equity and the onset of the SWA and anti-discrimination laws have helped put women into these roles in order to have others adapt their thinking and assumptions. Lip service can occur because gender equity is a politically



charged term and the fear of being caught in non-compliance with Title IX is commonplace. However, athletic departments are strapped with facility upgrades and spiraling coaching salaries and feel they are cornered into making decisions that favor football and men's basketball because of the potential revenue streams successful teams can create to support other programs. If athletic departments are forced to be self-subsidized, an argument is that they cannot afford to provide women equal opportunities. So, although gender equity and hiring plans say one thing, actions point in the opposite direction.

Therefore, the SWA has to find creative ways to impact outcomes. This change can occur in various methods, including the inside-out or the outside-in approach. Hurst & Usher (1984) noted that the change occurs in such minimal stages that the change appears to be seamless or non-existent. Inside-out change occurs so that it will appear as if this system has been in place for quite some time, and reinforce a sense of "this is how we do it around here." If the SWA can build consensus to instill the mindset to include women in the decision-making process it may lead to what Zucker (1987) describes as the "taken-for-grantedness" of the change that has occurred. "Once organizational activities are institutionalized, they may become relatively stable, enduring, reproducible, and sustainable over long periods of time without continuing justification" (p. 460). Therefore, it would not be a rarity to include or value women, it would become automatic and women would create a voice in the organizational structure.

This gradual change also can be impacted socially over time. The natural replacing of older administrations with outdated views on gender by those new administrators who have been socialized differently also will occur gradually. At the 2002 NCAA Title IX Seminar in Washington D.C., guest speaker Marcia Greenberger, co-president of the National Women's

Law Center, reminisced about interest tests given when she was in elementary school. The blue tests that were given to boys asked if they wanted to be president, while the pink tests for girls asked if they wanted to be the first lady. She asserted that current leaders who are making the decisions grew up with this same understanding as she did. "So it shouldn't come as any surprise that the fight has been so hard" (Hawes, *NCAA News* , p. 18).

The opposite approach for change to occur is from an outside source. It is argued that an organization is unlikely to change unless an outside source or phenomenon forces them to change, and an entity is not going to relinquish its power on its own accord (Kimberly, 1988; Baron, 1991). According to this theory, athletics will not change unless it is forced to do so. Those who have the power do not want to relinquish it. Athletics today is most likely a combination or relationship of the two approaches. The inside-out and outside-in theories create frustration and a double-bind for the SWA because both approaches take time and force the SWA to be ever watchful of everything she says and does. In many cases, she is the only woman and her actions, fair or not, represent all other women. Her approach to enact the cultural change in the organization can be misconstrued because she has to behave in a manner that will be accepted by the dominating group in order to impact outcomes for the underrepresented group.

#### Power and Voice in Athletics

The final section of the literature review concentrates on the literature on power and voice and relates it to SWAs. This section takes a deeper look into the culture of SWAs themselves and issues that have emerged based on this intercollegiate athletics culture.

### The SWA Community of Difference

Gaining access into a predominantly male profession, the SWA is subject to being stereotyped into a preconceived role, so assumptions regarding the SWA are based on males' definition of the community. However, each SWA has her own unique position and experiences the community differently.

Tierney, as cited by Rhoads (1994), expressed the meaning of a community of difference that seemed to describe SWAs effectively. The community of difference means that although the community is one, in this case the SWA community, the dynamics, and how one defines her role within the community are quite diverse. Yet, despite the difference of how each member of the community defines, uses, or relates to the actual group, each is still a member of the community based upon who she is which consequently affects her role based on the other members of the community.

### The Pioneer SWA

As outlined by the NCAA, one of the main charges these administrators have is to ensure that female student-athletes are provided a platform to voice their concerns and issues and gender equity is attained (NCAA Senior Woman Administrator Brochure, p. 1). The traditional mainstay of athletics has been male sports, and the thought of women in athletics and federal mandates to force the gender equity issue through Title IX have not been embraced whole-heartedly. Therefore, the first generation of SWA's diverse visions did not fit the mold of the traditional collegiate setting.

In order to be heard and taken seriously, these pioneering administrators had to fight an uphill battle for gender equity. This feminist approach was met with backlash and lesbian

stereotyping by the old guard. Similar to Fordham's (1997) "loud black girls," it was an attempt to discredit and suppress these administrators, "...their stubborn refusal to conform to standards of 'good behavior,' without actually entering the realm of 'bad behavior' ... they were sending a distinct message of being in and for themselves" (Evans, 1988, p. 183). It was easier to "discredit" the female administrators as militant lesbians than to dispute them on the merit of their arguments.

The old guard was able to continue their ways by creating an atmosphere in which any woman that agreed with gender equity was labeled in the same manner, regardless of her sexuality. This threat was effective and harmful to the development and social acceptance of gender equity; these "loud black girls" were not going to suppress their passions and goals, but each tried varying approaches to gain a voice.

Gender passing (Pagano, 1990) was a term used to describe how females took on male traits to gain the approval of their male counterparts and fit into the system. According to Fordham (1997), "women are compelled to 'pass' as the male dominant 'other' if they desire to achieve a modicum of academic success" (p. 81). In athletics, these administrators may work long hours and accept added responsibilities to prove themselves to their male counterparts. In hopes of being promoted and respected, and to foster their agendas, SWAs made these sacrifices. According to Parks et al. (1995), women in predominantly male fields had, "pride in their 'pioneer' status and the implicit prestige associated with doing 'men's work'" (p. 73).

According to Luke (1996), women must battle continuously to earn respect: "The image we present to students or to senior male colleagues on whose formal and tacit institutional support many of us still depend, can have an important bearing on others'

perceptions of our intellectual authority and credibility, and the extent to which we are taken seriously” (p. 288). Luke was referring to women in higher education, but this same concept is true to a greater extent in intercollegiate athletics. To gain this respect or credibility, SWAs could not appear to be radical in their statements or irrational in their vision.

Those afraid of being stereotyped were conscious of every movement they made, apologizing for every miscue and appearing to be very feminine, even to a point of being overly submissive. This approach may have enabled them to fly in under the radar to have their messages heard in a non-threatening manner. These SWAs led double lives, constantly watching what they said and to whom they were speaking. Luke (1996) argued that, “... after having been powerless for many years, women who have gained powerful senior positions often continue to feel and act powerless and victimized because, in part, feminists have a lot of trouble with our own authority because women are not in general in power” (p. 285).

The way in which women interact with other women in power relations has been described as a type of minority group self-hatred (Myrick, 1997, p. 17). This term indicates that women denigrate other women, accept dominant stereotypes, and resent successful women. This behavior causes women to de-value their potential and accomplishments and have a general lack of belief in their abilities. According to Hudson and Vance (1983), it is the lack of cooperation and leadership among women who currently hold these leadership positions that cause friction. Because few women exist in athletics administration and the struggle to find their place continues, these women are more apt to compete for limited resources and question each other’s approach.

These varying approaches to power cause debate within the community of difference. In Rhoads’ (1994) analysis of the term “queer” as a label, different members of the

community interpreted the term differently and each made the other uncomfortable to varying degrees. In this case, the more militant feminists took great pride in their stances and those who took the more submissive approach did not want to adopt their stance; they felt it hindered their cause by being too "radical".

#### SWA: Power

The power that held SWAs at bay was not physical power, but a power that had purpose: to keep athletics as it had been. According to Fletcher (1999), "poststructuralist perspectives see the production of knowledge as an exercise of power where only some voices are heard and only some experience is counted as knowledge" (p. 22). When the NCAA overtook the AIAW, the women entering the new structure did not share the same experiences as the men. The pioneering SWA's experiences and voices were not counted as knowledge because their experiences were different. This decreased their power, because their input was not sought after or valued by the men.

Societal pressures contributed to keeping the pioneering community of SWAs powerless because these women were defying social norms. "Pastoral power enables and precludes certain action, thereby exerting a normative influence over the lives of individuals" (Howley, 1992, p. 272). Athletics was not considered "lady-like," and it made people in general uncomfortable to see women involved in collegiate athletics in important roles. The societal pressures that kept women at odds with the means to gain power in the athletics department were enough to keep the group from combining their strength to change the balance of power. Fraser (1989) made a similar argument in relation to the dynamics of welfare. The system in place seeks to maintain the imbalance of power. The structure of the

welfare department purposefully was designed so that the different groups of workers could not unite. They were kept isolated and contained like mismatched pieces of a puzzle. In the milieu of athletics administration, the group with less power is kept separate, isolated, unable to mobilize its efforts, and is perceived as substandard to the group with the superior power. The group with the power, men and a patriarchal system, is able to maintain its own status quo.

A recent study by Claussen & Lehr examined the decision-making authority of SWAs and discovered that most SWAs, "possessed advisory (merely consulted or informed) rather than decision-making (responsibility or approval power) authority for all job functions analyzed" (2002, p. 220). Most of the decision-making authority resides in more nurturing factions of the department like student-athlete welfare and gender-equity issues. Claussen & Lehr argue that this division is purposeful:

It is possible that providing decision-making authority to SWAs, particularly in areas involving control of resources, poses too much threat to the traditional modus operandi of intercollegiate athletics. If women with authority are perceived as a threat to the core values of those controlling intercollegiate athletics programs, SWAs and other female administrators are likely to continue to have limited decision-making power, and thus a limited voice, in the daily functioning of intercollegiate athletics. (p. 226)

Claussen & Lehr's (2002) research demonstrates that the SWAs are divided. They have diverse job functions and while one-third of the SWAs had decision-making authority in areas of gender equity and student-athlete welfare, another third of the SWAs self-identified as having no decision-making power in all other areas of the department. Lacking

access or decision-making power in such areas such as marketing, development, business, and strategic planning not only hinders these SWAs for promotional opportunities, but distances them from the main functions that drive the department: "This is an unfortunate finding because it means that women's interests are not being strongly represented in decision making about allocation of resources that could affect the development of visibility and profitability of women's intercollegiate athletics programs" (p. 224). Claussen & Lehr (2002) conclude that this isolation of women into certain areas and exclusion from others seeks to protect the current power structure. "It may be that male athletics directors perceive a need to protect the status quo in these vital areas from potential challengers seeking a larger share for women's athletics" (p. 225).

#### SWA: Political Influences

The political policies put in place dramatically affected higher education, especially intercollegiate athletics. Women gained some backing and political weight in 1972 when Title IX was enacted to prevent sexual discrimination for any institution that received federal assistance. Not surprisingly, athletic departments were not flocking to comply with Title IX, because of its financial strains and social attitudes that accompany such action. In 1979, the Office of Civil Rights (OCR) enacted a three-pronged test to determine compliance with Title IX. The tests, that included proportionality, expansion, and opportunity provided guidance to institutions. However, it was evident that athletic departments did not think that the federal mandate would actually be enforced until certain key law suits upheld Title IX.

Recently, there have been severe backlashes in athletic departments because money continued to be disproportionately distributed to men's sports. Athletic departments may



have thought it would be unrealistic to actually enforce Title IX. Facility, salary, and other expenditures were spent for male sports to remain competitive while the female sports were left untouched causing serious gender equity issues. Now that Title IX is being enforced and punitive damages have been awarded, more attention has been given to compliance with the law. With this concern, SWAs are looked to for more guidance and avenues to improvement.

A generation of "Title IX babies" have had the opportunity to participate in athletics under the NCAA structure and are now entering the administrative ranks. As more female student-athletes finally are provided opportunities and benefited from Title IX, the SWA community of difference saw an increase in power because more women had experienced a collegiate experience with scholarships, increased funding, and benefits as the men before them had.

### Summary

The three sections of the literature review - historical framework of women in athletics, organizational structure and culture, and power and voice in athletics explain how and why the SWA emerged and the challenges she faces in intercollegiate athletics. The contextual and theoretical frameworks and supporting literature were utilized to support these challenges and explain why they exist. The following chapter delves into the research methodology and explains how the study will answer how the SWA can identify and overcome these challenges and understand her roles and responsibilities as a part of the athletics department.

## CHAPTER 3: METHODS

### Chapter Overview

The methods chapter begins with a review of the research methodology and is followed by the research design. Next, site and participant selection and the rationale for selection criteria are provided, and the data collection techniques and procedures are outlined. Finally, quality assurance, triangulation, and the limitations of the study lead to the concluding summary of the chapter.

### Research Methodology

Feminist theory, critical social theory, and feminist poststructuralist critique theory create the interwoven methodological framework of this study. According to Lather (1991), "Very simply, to do feminist research is to put the social construction of gender at the center of one's inquiry." Lather further stated that, "feminist researchers see gender as a basic organizing principle which profoundly shapes/mediates the concrete conditions of our lives " (p. 71). The feminist perspective, or the women's movement as defined by Smith (1987), captured the basis of this framework. As previously cited, she stated that the women's movement's discovery was that "as women we had been living in an intellectual, cultural, and political world, from whose making we had been almost entirely excluded and in which we had been recognized as no more than marginal voices" (p. 1). The SWA represents the marginal voice in collegiate athletics, the women's voice. The fact that the SWA title itself is gender specific demonstrates that gender is the basic organizing principle and that the feminist perspective is critical in explaining the SWA's viewpoints.

Critical social theory accounts for the social, economic, and political components of a situation and uses those three entities to explain the power structures that affect the marginalized group. In this study, the SWAs explained how they overcame these structural biases that impacted their effectiveness. Feminist poststructuralist critique theory focuses on knowledge, power, and discourse from the female perspective. This theory gave voice to the marginalized group and paid special attention to the power imbalance this group experienced (Fletcher, 1999). Fundamental issues related to power and obtaining knowledge were major areas of contention that the SWAs voiced as potential barriers to successful leadership.

This combination of useful and related theories provided a lens for analyzing the SWA's power in an organizational construct from economic, political, and social perspectives. Furthermore, it focused on the paradox of women in senior athletic administrative positions and the structures that have contributed to this phenomenon in collegiate athletics.

### Research Design

The research design for this study was one that captured the true essence of what it meant to be a successful SWA. It allowed these women to reflect on their careers and experiences, and created a forum to pass on that knowledge to other aspiring female administrators. A qualitative study enabled the SWAs to tell their own story in their own words. Maxwell (1996) emphasized that, "research design does not begin from a fixed starting point or proceed through a determinate sequence of steps, it recognizes the importance of interconnection and interaction among the different design components" (p. 3). Similarly, according to Denzin and Lincoln (1998), "Qualitative research is multimethod in

focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter... attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them" (p. 3). So although the interview questions provided an initial framework, the SWAs dictated the common themes and surfaced the issues that were most important to them. Therefore, this study utilized an emergent qualitative design to provide the SWAs with a platform to best represent their viewpoints. As the study progressed, the questions or approach evolved due to the data and analysis thereof. An initial set of questions and preliminary designed based upon three distinct groups existed, but the researcher adapted to the findings and direction the interviews went to fit the interests, experience, knowledge, and passions of the participants.

Qualitative methodology created more in-depth information and rich description than a survey instrument would have produced. Rich data provided a detailed picture of what was happening because the interviews enabled an opportunity for a deeper explanation of the situation (Maxwell, 1996). Utilizing rich data became a method of testing theories and hunches. Developing multiple viewpoints and reaching beneath the surface assisted the researcher instead of simply selecting theories and other research that supported her initial hunches. Therefore, qualitative research created the flexibility needed to shift the study into another direction depending on what was found throughout the process.

Determining what would be found before the study was difficult, without going below the surface. Initially, it was anticipated that three distinct groups of SWAs, a pioneering group, a transition group, and a new group would exist. Although these three groups were apparent, it was difficult to distinguish between the transition and new group, because the SWA is supposed to be senior and in order to have proven oneself to be successful she had to have been in the business for some time. Once this was discovered, it

made more sense to distinguish between the pioneering group and the generation that followed instead of focusing on the three original groups.

Each woman interviewed had a story that was unique in its own way. Each SWA had her own set of circumstances that made her different from the rest. Because a qualitative study is contextual in nature, it will enable other SWAs and women in athletics to take pertinent information from the participants and to weave it into their own sets of experiences.

#### Site and Participant Selection, Rationale for Selection Criteria

What experiences and initiatives do SWAs need in order to have effective voice and power within their respective athletic departments? The paradox was that although the SWA title was designed to provide information and a meaningful administrative role for women in the athletics structure, it is not happening. Collegiate athletics, under the NCAA structure, was not created for female student-athletes or administrators and it has thus had an impact on the SWA's effectiveness. Women's athletics, housed under the AIAW format, was inserted into the existing NCAA governance. So, what made this group of women successful and how could other women learn from them? Aside from the physical make-up of the department there were various social layers and approaches that women took to create voice and power. Did age and level of experience impact their approach? Leading up to the study, I made my own observations, discussed this paradox with current female administrators on an informal basis, and initiated email and phone discussions with a handful of SWAs to determine if my topic was useful to pursue. It was important that my initial thoughts and questions were backed on a basic level and that these women, the gatekeepers of information, felt the study would be useful and that they embraced the concept.

I attended the 2001 NACWAA Fall Forum conference in October, a networking conference of women athletic administrators. Ample opportunities existed to ask several women their input on my research questions and gauge the appropriateness and value of my study. From these interactions as well as my background and experience as a student-athlete and administrator, I was able to initiate trust and respect to ultimately gain the invitation to call or email these women with follow-up questions or formal interviews.

The NACWAA and Women's Sports Foundation executive directors and members of national committees each provided a list (Appendix A, B) of successful SWAs to contact for an interview. This interview list created trustworthiness because representatives from national organizations provided the names of those whom they felt were successful and not the researcher. Trustworthiness is a term used to describe a qualitative study's value and credibility and gaining these organization's support maximized this trustworthiness (Maxwell, 1996). The internal validity was strengthened because NACWAA and the Women's Sports Foundation are well known by women administrators and act as a strong voice and platform for women's athletics as a whole. Since I was younger than these SWAs, gaining their trust was paramount. I had to insure that I would depict their stories and experiences accurately. According to Denzin & Lincoln (1998), "the academic enters into a relatively close relationship with the researched, and ... in order to conduct research the field-worker has to break through to some form of social acceptance with a group" (p. 177). My athletics experience and sharing my insights demonstrated my knowledge of the SWA paradox. This reality combined with their mentoring attitude created trust and open rapport from the participants.

The population of SWAs interviewed were Division I senior women administrators, or former-Division I SWAs who are now athletics directors at the Division I level.

Technically, female athletic directors may be considered the SWA, but most departments have a SWA separate from the athletics director because the director cannot devote the time needed to fulfill the SWA role. Even though both groups were utilized, the focus of the discussion was on the SWA position. Utilizing women from these positions provided diverse, rich information from two vantage points. Division I was the only division examined because it is the most visible, well-known, and scrutinized division. It is also the division in which I have the most interest and experience. In order to narrow the parameters of the study and abide with the meaning of the creation of the SWA role, men were not interviewed.

Nine women were selected to participate in the interview. Donna Lopiano, the executive director of the Women's Sports Foundation, who was a former athletics director, also responded to the interview questions in writing choosing to use her own name opposed to an alias. Therefore, her responses were utilized in the literature review and concluding chapter due to her prominence in the field and expert analysis. The nature of her responses best fit these two areas due her status and public presence as an advocate for women's athletics.

Each woman was asked to provide a fictitious name for the study, and this name and only broad descriptions were used to ensure confidentiality. The nine participants represented five athletic conferences, six states, and four regions. Years of experience ranged from interim basis to 23 years in their current institution's administrative structure (Table 1). Five participants held the SWA title, two were former SWAs and are now athletic directors, one was retired, and one held the position as an interim and aspires to become a SWA. Two

athletic directors, three senior associate athletic directors, one associate athletic director, one assistant athletic director, one coach/SWA (no administrative title), and one interim (Table 2) were interviewed. The age range was 33 to 61 with the average age of 47 years (Table 3). Four women represented Division I-A major institutions, three were Division I-AA, and two were Division I-AAA (Table 4). There were five women from the Midwest, two from the Great Lakes region, one from the Northeast, and one from the Southeast (Table 5).

Table 1: Years of Experience					
Years	0-5	5-10	10-15	15-20	20-25
No.	2	2	1	2	2

Table 2: Administrative Level						
Level	AD	Sr. Assoc.	Assoc.	Assistant	SWA only	Interim
No.	2	3	1	1	1	1

Table 3: Age of Participants						
Age	30-35	35-40	40-45	45-50	50-55	55-60+
No.	1	1	2	2	1	2

Table 4: Athletic Department Division			
Type	I-A Major	I-AA	I-AAA
No.	4	3	2

Table 5: SWA by Region					
Region	West	Midwest	Great Lakes	Northeast	Southeast
No.	0	5	2	1	1

All of these women were recognized as being successful by the associations and their peers. "Successful" was defined by participation on various regional or national boards and committees, through networking, and reputation. The executive directors of NACWAA and the Women's Sports Foundation, and leaders in national committees served as the experts in determining who was successful. The list was narrowed to those women who received



multiple nominations and represented a range in years of experience, age, administrative level, type of institution, and location. A letter requesting participation in this study (Appendix C) was sent to each selected woman asking her to participate in the study. Every woman invited to participate agreed. One woman initially accepted, but her schedule did not allow her time and the next woman asked agreed and filled the final slot.

A preliminary list of research questions (Appendix E) and the consent form (Appendix D) were attached to the request letter to provide the respondents more in-depth information. It was important for them to see the list of questions so respondents had a strong background of the type of information that would be asked of them and a detailed focus of the study. Each interview question was in paragraph format that demonstrated my preparation and knowledge of the subject.

#### Data Collection: Techniques and Procedures

Human subjects clearance was gained before the formal interview process began. Once a formal interview agreement was secured and a date and time was agreed upon, each participant was provided a human subject consent form to be signed. Participants were informed that the interviews would be tape-recorded and notes would be taken. They understood that they could end the interview or turn the tape recorder off at any time. Interviews were conducted in a location that was convenient and where they felt most comfortable. All interviews were conducted in person. Four interviews were held at the participant's institution, four were staged at the 2002 NACWAA Fall Forum in St. Louis, and one was conducted off-site at an agreed upon location that was most convenient for the

participant. The interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Follow-up correspondences were conducted by email as the need arose.

### Quality Assurance

Triangulation was utilized to help insure validity. Triangulation is defined as collecting a diverse range of information from various individuals, settings, and sources. In addition to personal interviews, existing surveys and studies, participation numbers, and other pertinent information was utilized. According to Maxwell (1996) triangulation, "reduces the risk that your conclusions will reflect only the systematic biases or limitations of a specific methods, and it allows you to gain a better assessment of the validity and generality of the explanation you develop" (p. 76). However, triangulation does not automatically ensure validity due to the researcher's possible bias to select certain types of information. Finding differing opinions and showing multiple sides of an argument aid in triangulation (Fielding & Fielding, 1986). While common themes and viewpoints were abundant, opposing ideals and experiences were presented and were based primarily on age and experience levels.

In addition to the interviews, The NCAA's primarily quantitative SWA survey in 1994 was utilized and combined with other related literature in the field. Additionally, each participant was given ample opportunity to review her transcript for quality assurance. Each participant was mailed a typed transcript of her interview and she was asked to review and make changes or add further comments to the document. Follow-up emails were used to insure the correct interpretation of the interview. The results chapter was sent to each participant with her quotations highlighted for easy reference (Appendix F). It was important

that each participant's words were put into the correct context and that these ideas accurately reflected her intentions. This opportunity for feedback and member checking confirmed that I captured the essence of their experiences. Their voices were heard. A participant responded, "I don't know whether to laugh or cry -- so much of it makes sense to me so it must mean I'm not crazy (that's the laughable part), but just the state of it all makes me weepy." This feedback affirmed the study's trustworthiness.

### Limitations

I decided to wait to interview a large portion of women at the 2002 NACWAA Fall Forum due to the availability of the women and to diversify participant representation. It was difficult to find times before the conference that worked into both our schedules and the study was delayed because of this availability. In order to be considerate of their time, the interviews were designed to last not more than one hour. Although many of the participants voluntarily went beyond that limit, a few were pressed for time and may have gone into more detail or shared something they would not have otherwise if time had not been a factor. These women are extremely busy and response time to review transcripts and responses to emails were additional time factors.

Several women recommended for the study possessed several years of experience, but there were far fewer younger women. Obviously, more years of experience enable one to become well known and respected. The average age of the participants was 47 and the study included a range of ages and experiences while still ensuring that the SWAs were all considered successful.

Finally, the nature of a qualitative study made it necessary to limit the total number of participants in the study. It was felt that saturation of the data was provided and there was representation across several age groups, levels of experience, and regions of the country. Although these nine women cannot speak for all SWAs, their insights and stories are significant.

### Summary

This qualitative emergent design assisted the researcher in determining the experiences and initiatives these senior woman administrators needed in order to have effective voice and power within her respective athletics department. This study enabled successful SWAs and female athletics directors to pass on their knowledge and to provide the current and future generations of women administrators a framework and vision to continue in collegiate athletics.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

### Chapter Overview

After the completion of interviews, three major themes emerged. The first major theme related to the identity of the senior woman administrator (SWA). The second involved the intricacies of the SWA role, and the final category related to the future of the SWA and her role in women's athletics. Each major theme consisted of subsets of themes that reinforced each category. This chapter is divided into these three major themes. The participant's insights are provided for depth for each concept. Insights to explain what is happening and initial theory references unite the participant's themes together.

### The SWA Identity: Problematic Issues Regarding Authority and Effectiveness

This section focuses on three areas that explain what problems exist and the history behind the initiation of the role. The first subset is the current definition of the SWA. This category delves into the purpose of the SWA, obstacles to her effectiveness, and areas for improvement. The second area explores issues of access and examines how the SWA can be more effective. The third subset examines patterns of pigeonholing women into particular areas of athletics and the negative effects of that trend.

### Current Definition

The NCAA's purpose for implementing the appointment of the SWA was to create meaningful female leadership positions. It evolved because women needed a mandated

avenue to gain access to information in a time where women were not provided upper-level administrative responsibilities. Bailey Johnson, a 21-year administrator states:

I think, like a lot of things in the world today, there's a time and place for certain things because something isn't being served. In the time and place it [the SWA title] was put in, there was not a lot of communication going to anybody but to the males on the campus. So, this allowed the NCAA to have another place to send the information and this gave - well, knowledge is power - because the more information you had, the more knowledgeable you were.

Access to information was clearly an important first step in the process of women gaining a place in athletics. If she was not provided the information and not kept abreast of current happenings, she would not be able to provide meaningful input to the department. However, the woman receiving the information had to be able and willing to do something with that information.

After the passage of Title IX, and the subsequent gain of female student-athletes as a larger percentage of the total student-athlete population, female representation at the administrative level was essential. The respondents felt that unless the department was mandated to appoint a woman, it would not have happened. Current director of athletics Susan Smith agrees:

I think when it [the SWA definition] was originally done, it was to give institutions some flexibility in determining what the SWA should do. I think what happened, or how it evolved, is that institutions either couldn't afford it or weren't in a mindset that they wanted to embrace women in the same way, started assigning the SWA title to women who were already in their department. And I think as a result you find there

were some groups of women out there who really weren't interested in advocating on behalf of the student-athletes period, whether they were male or female.

This phenomenon that Smith points to is one of an uninterested advocate. So, while there were women who struggled to find ways to be the advocate, there also were women who did not want the role in the first place. The woman who was simply appointed to fulfill this role that was neither well defined nor provided the structure to be successful was a hindrance, especially if she did not want the title.

Unfortunately, the SWA position has struggled to be effective because of inconsistency in regard to level of authority, significance, and impact. In order to give institutions flexibility and autonomy with the position, little consistency exists among the administrative titles and the responsibilities they perform. These inconsistencies have led to tokenism and a group of individuals without a common set of working responsibilities to unite. For example, even a group of SWAs within an athletic conference may all hold different positions within their department and have different levels of power, so they do not have a common set of experiences. Long-time coach turned administrator Paula Musburger explains:

The range is vast, even within my own conference the range is so vast. What they [the other SWAs in the conference] do and don't know, what they have access to, what they are empowered to handle, what they are not empowered to handle, it is mind blowing to me. The range in my conference is school X to me. It creates a problem for me in the [SWA] meetings because I am expecting things to get done, we make a decision and this is the way it should or should not be, and we need to do this. And the rest of the room is going - my God, who made her queen? My AD does.

If women within the same conference, which is made up of similar types of institutions, do not hold the SWA to the same standard, then think what the variations are nation-wide. Without a common voice and power to make decisions and influence her department, the group will struggle to find direction. Johnson agrees:

The SWA title doesn't always go a woman on campus that has any power.

Therefore, while it serves one role - getting the information to a woman who then has knowledge- they don't always serve in a role in the structure to do anything with that knowledge. So, the definition itself, it doesn't serve the purpose I don't believe, because the purpose is to provide information to someone who is empowered to do something with the information and that is not clearly being done. And that is not going to be done whether you have a SWA title or not. It is more the structure of how the institution is set up.

Johnson's point about having the power to actually do something with the information as the SWA rang loudly. Yes, it was a positive first step for the NCAA to identify a woman to funnel information through; however, if the organization's infrastructure is not set up to allow her to do anything with it, the information and the role become ineffective. This phenomenon ties into Wendt's (2001) double-bind theory because the SWA is put into a no-win situation because although she may be provided information, she may not be able to do anything with it. This paradox may lead to silence or frustration by the SWA.

In addition to needing both the knowledge and the power to enact that information, there is an issue about who best fits the role of the SWA. The current definition states that the SWA should be the highest-ranking female in the department. If there is more than one



woman, the SWA also serves as an advocate role and it is felt that this title should go to someone whom can best serve that role. Seasoned director of athletics Mary Moore states:

I personally don't agree [points to the highest-ranking part]- I am the highest-ranking female and I have an SWA. And, sometimes the highest-ranking female is not the best person for the job; it is really the one who will shoulder the views of women athletes and coaches.

Therefore the personnel in the department does not have to be limited to one female on the administrative team. As stated above, some departments simply will add the title to an existing female in the department. In some cases this woman, or the role she is currently in, may not be the best fit for the SWA role and another woman may need to be promoted or be part of the senior management team. Twenty-three year veteran Emma Homeister adds to Moore's statement that it is more than seniority:

I think you need to include in the definition that this person needs to have a strong understanding of the role of athletics in the development of males and females. A strong understanding of the opportunity - I think they need to be a feminist, quite honestly. To me, feminism is equal rights, not only for women. So, to me they don't have in here enough strong statements - the NCAA doesn't - about the understanding of the role of athletics in the education of a student. Who knows about the student-athletes, the coaches, and the athletic trainers - the whole spectrum of athletics, not just the highest-ranking female? I've seen that disaster too many times. Sometimes it is the only female who becomes the highest-ranking female with no background. She could come out of marketing and does well in that area but has no sense of students or coaches.

Consequently, the SWA title becomes more than the title. It is more than the seniority and it is more than dealing with women's issues. The role and the title are designed to get them into the rooms where the decisions are made. However, that is only the beginning. In order to be successful and limit the tokenism that this position is prone to, the role becomes one of an advocate for all students. One cannot become a major player if she does not know what to do with the information she is given. Pioneer Carol Smith states:

I've been to the compliance workshop and listened to these women who have been appointed to this [SWA] role and they have no idea what SWAs do in other institutions. They have no idea they have a voice or should have a voice. They have a title and a title is that, a title, unless you have the responsibility and an authority that goes along with that title.

Smith's statements that some SWAs have no idea they have or should have a voice is shocking and concerning. This speaks loudly and clearly about the current system and how the definition that is set up is not effective.

In order to improve the effectiveness of the SWA there are four basic initiatives the participants believe must be available to maximize effectiveness. It should include a hands-on approach to the day-to-day operations, sport oversight, role of gatekeeper to Title IX and gender equity issues, and a title reflective of her seniority and importance.

Homeister sums it up best, "I think the classification is essential. It is horrible to have all the responsibility and none of the authority." Susan Smith agrees:

I don't think that the SWA should hold any other position like the business manager or the marketing director or something along those lines. I think it clearly has to be somebody that oversees varsity sports and is in more of an assistant or associate role

to the athletic director so they can be very hands-on in the day-to-day operations of the program.

If someone is appointed the SWA and is not provided a level of authority to follow-up and impact change and influence, how could she possibly be effective? In addition, if it is simply a title, and her day-to-day activities are not encompassing and she does not have access to the administration, coaches, and student-athletes, then how can she be taken seriously? This imbalance relates to Smith and Berg's (1987) double-bind interpretation that the SWA is stuck or put in an impossible situation based on her contradictory duties. Therefore, the SWA title and role should be in addition to her regular upper-level administrative title with duties that should include oversight and a hand in the decision-making processes of the department. Homeister explains:

I cringe at the SWA title, but I understand the purpose of it. To me, the purpose of it is to ensure that women are developed, to have the opportunity to be involved, but you also get a different perspective than just the simple good old boys - the standard.

The SWA is in parenthesis, in addition to a person's real job is critical, that is what I keep coming back to, what is that person supposed to do in addition to the SWA?

Don't simply create a position to have an SWA; that is where I really struggle. I don't like to be introduced as the SWA. I don't like to be introduced as THE SWA. That is, she is also the SWA.

If the SWA has no direct line to the athletic director and is not current in the daily happenings of the department, it does not matter what her title is or what her written or announced responsibilities are. The constituents are going to know they cannot go to her for help because they know her hands are tied. So, not only does the title and level of authority

need to be in place, the system's cues also need to be in place in order for her to be effective in her role as SWA.

#### Access

In order for the role to be more effective, she should have a seat at the table, own access to all knowledge, retain a position of authority, be exposed to business after hours, and have access to national committees and memberships. Moore states, "I think the access is the critical piece, you need to be in the meetings - at the table. If you don't have that level of authority then you can be as ornery as you want and you aren't going to be effective." If you are at the table and have a chance to provide insight and to understand the big picture, then you are better equipped to formulate solutions to the problems the SWA faces. Musburger argues that having access to all parts of the business vastly changes how she functions in her job:

He [the AD] is never going to put me in a situation where I am at a disadvantage for information, because he wants me to understand why he is deciding this right now so there is no conflict. But, if you don't have that type of relationship with your AD then you are going to be making judgements on inaccurate information and therefore it is going to create natural dissidence in your relationship. Because I would be saying we should and he would be saying how can we? I would be saying we should anyway, and he would say you aren't paying attention. To make any significant decision in an athletics department you have to have all knowledge. You have to have all knowledge all the time.

Musburger's point is critical, but unfortunately very few SWAs have the access she does within her department. All the participants felt it would be ideal if the SWA were in the number two position in the administrative structure. If she were second in command and her opinions were valued, she would have the access and power to be effective.

Having all knowledge extends beyond normal office hours. The SWA needs not only to have access to the table in the boardroom, but also during the social interactions where other decisions are made. Issues with this arise since she is already overworked. Additionally, it may be harder to gain this type of access in an informal traditionally male setting. Musburger explains:

You have got to be available, because they are. Most of the discussions that drive the department are not happening nine to five. The hard part for the SWA is that they are working so hard from nine to five and working all the events - to break that barrier you have to be fit and put out more energy than anyone else in the department. You have to have enough political savvy to know what are CP [command performance] and CM [central to the mission], when do I need to be there and when is it ok to go and not kill myself. How do I get in those informal settings without being intrusive?

The SWA is not only trying to gain access at work and during informal settings, but she needs to extend herself beyond her institution. Networking is vital in intercollegiate athletics. People generally do not hire others they do not know. Women in athletics are so overworked that rarely they allow themselves to network by working on national committees. Being overworked and constantly watching her step, with an ever-mindful approach can be exhausting. So much time needs to be committed to her position and role in the department.

But, by spending so much time in her own environment and not branching out to gain contacts nationally can pigeonhole her and impede her professional growth.

### Pigeonholing

Connected to Acker's (1992) and Gherardi's (1995) theories of gender patterning in organizations, SWAs tend to be pigeonholed into specific areas within athletics. These positions often are the ones that prevent branching into other areas and contain tedious work. All participants pointed to women working in compliance and student-athlete services. Roles in student-athlete services can be rewarding and self-satisfying. Women may feel like they can make a difference in these positions, but they are not in the public and they do not have time to have access across the board. Musburger referred to this concept as putting women in silos:

The men in our lives in the athletic department are not mentoring women up the ladder; they are putting and moving them in silos. Then, they are aggravated when they don't know why when they are sitting in senior management and the SWA's opinions are one-sided. Because she is the only woman in the room, the AD is sitting there and thinking she doesn't see the big picture. Well, how can she see the big picture when she is just the head of compliance? So, the whole thing is a dysfunction.

By isolating these women into these areas, it inevitably will cause problems. Without question student services and compliance are vital and necessary functions of the department. Unfortunately, the everyday business functions that allow the department to operate are not connected to these areas. Development, budget issues, revenue-producing sports, and television contracts are areas that are given top billing in departments. The SWA's main

function may be in a specific area, but she needs access and a working knowledge of these other areas in order to understand and work within the mission of the department. If she does not have that understanding, she runs the risk of being discounted because she does not see the big picture.

Despite the importance of having the SWA possess this knowledge, some athletic directors intentionally pigeonhole the SWA into these positions in order to bury her with work so that she is not able to bring issues to the table. Homeister explains this no-win situation that is prone in double-binding situations:

What some ADs have done, whether it is intentional or whether they are conniving and controlling, or by sheer stupidity, they create this position where they (SWA) oversee compliance. I know SWAs who are the director of compliance and they are so bogged down just managing their actual job that being the role of being an advocate, a colleague, somebody to really promote opportunity for women, promote gender equity, she is not going to have time to do it. That is one way to really control a SWA, to give her an impossible job, where they are in charge of all of event management - well there is no way they will have time to help. There has to be enough flexibility to allow this person [SWA] to grow as an individual, to be able to work with sports, to be able to exercise some critical thinking, as well as develop their own career. But, if you saddle them so much with responsibilities that they can barely keep their head above water - you're doing the SWA a real disservice to opportunities to young women in athletics.

In addition to women being placed into these areas, an additional hurdle to overcome exists: the realization that this is happening to her. Discrimination is not as overt as it used to

be, but hidden discrimination remains and SWAs need to know when they are being isolated and denied access from critical areas. Johnson explains the need for women to look out for themselves and each other:

There are lots of strategies, but the best one is to know them when they are happening so you can deal with them. I don't know if we've taught women these strategies. The first 24 years I didn't think anything was going on until somebody pointed it out to me, then I was like oh yeah, how come that happens? We just need to tell women for themselves or if they see it happening to someone else.

Ideally, the SWA should have the entire package. She should hold a meaningful leadership position in her department. In order for it to be meaningful, she needs to have access to the information and be a decision-maker in the department. Her role as gatekeeper of Title IX and gender-equity issues is a function of her role that is in addition to a viable position in the department that has direct contact to students, coaches, and administrators. Institutions need autonomy in deciding what roles the SWA holds in the department, but more understanding and guidance needs to be provided for the enhancement of the SWA's effectiveness in that organization.

The next major theme expands upon the SWA identity, the intricacies of the position, and how these relationships and issues can increase the role and impact of the position.

#### The Intricacies of the SWA's Position: Approach, Appearance, and Relationships

This section is divided into four areas. The first subset examines approach, specifically as it relates to the last two generations and the impact that experience has on approach. Next, relationships the SWA has with the athletic director, university, and other



women are examined. Third, the importance of consensus building is developed. Finally, power and voice are detailed and why the SWA must gain these tools to be effective.

#### Approach: Generational Issues

The manner in which the SWA approaches others is an interesting phenomenon. The SWAs are divided into two distinct groups: the first generation that fought the initial battles and who were pioneering in their field and the generation who followed in the pioneer's legacy. Both groups have similar issues, but differ in approach based upon the social and political surroundings of the time. The first generation of SWAs were pioneers. Women's athletics had been housed under the AIAW and were taken over by the NCAA in the early 1980's. As assistant athletic director Anne Silliman recollects, a different perspective held sway:

Well I think there is no question about the pioneers, those are the people I learned from, and the decisions were just fundamentally different. Those were the AIAW days, the NCAA wasn't even offering then; the max scholarship was only \$200. The decisions were different, they were can I afford team uniforms this year? It wasn't a matter of if they were staying in nice places; it was a matter if they could travel at all. If you come from that background where the decisions were based on just to get things started, and now I think we're tied in to doing what the guys do.

These pioneering women had to be generalists or practicalists because of the budget restraints. Because these women were the administrators, coaches, and about everything else, they developed and brought a broad background with them as SWAs. As Johnson explains, having this generalist background was important:

I think the one reason why having a generalist background is very helpful is when you are the SWA, you have to do more, show more, know more. Having a generalist role, you do know it all, not just from reading about it, but you've experienced it. The more you have done, the better you can speak to a topic. You can talk from what you have gathered and what you have experienced and that prepares you to do a better job.

A broad-based background in women's athletics was deemed not enough when men's and women's athletics merged under one administrative umbrella. The addition of women into a male-dominated domain was not received with open arms. Musburger states, "I think the problem before was the men's perception - the wrong perception - that the SWAs 20+ years ago and where they came from; they didn't respect where the women came from." According to Evans (1998) these differences made it easier for the men to discredit this pioneering generation because their experiences were different than theirs and therefore felt the women could not understand the new system. Because these women started with a disadvantage, they faced further scrutiny, discrimination, and bias than the SWAs today. Women's athletics and women in power positions were not as accepted socially as they are today. Therefore, these women were forced to gain political savvy in order to be heard. Susan Smith recollects:

I got great advice from Charlotte West when I was a young administrator about how to be more political and getting done what you wanted to get done. I tried to craft my language skills so not to be offensive to people and I could still make my point and not have my approach be bitter or angry. I think that is really important and that is what I learned from the NCAA convention format about the kinds of women that

carried the day and the kinds of women people tuned out. I think Christine Grant was particularly effective and I think Charlotte West was particularly effective and I think Donna Lopiano, as firm as she was, was still very effective. They are well thought out, well prepared, and presented great arguments when compared to someone on occasion who would approach the microphone and appear to be more complaining. That wasn't it, it was really about organizing your thought processes and not appearing to be a male basher, but was really about the best interests of all student-athletes. I think it is really important how the message gets communicated. I think it is careful and thoughtful and not offensive, you want to get outside of people thinking you are a male basher.

Across the board these women are held in high regard and if it were not for their efforts and persistence, female athletes and administrators would not be where they are today. Without question these women had to fight. How they fought varied. Some women pushed their way, some found ways around the walls instead of through them, but all had to be aware of their approach. With so many battles needing to be fought, call it being political or tap dancing around issues, or stomping the door down, each was perceived on her actions or for the principles for which she stood.

This group of women won and lost many battles. What this next generation is doing to carry the flag is uncertain. Perceptions range from positive to hesitant. A structural occurrence that is fundamentally different than that in which the generalist SWA functioned is present. This next generation faces a different athletic departmental structure and a new set of challenges. The competitiveness for positions in athletics is so intense that people often are forced to specialize in order to advance. The track to gain an upper-level administrative

position often requires mastery in only one area to advance. Having a limited range of expertise may eliminate the valuable generalist approach the pioneering generation experienced. Long-time coach and future SWA Rae Magnuson anticipates this trend impacting the future of SWAs:

You know, maybe it's more women coming in and it is comparable to a student in a really large high school who tends to specialize in a sport, where you don't play three or four sports like someone coming from a small school. Maybe it is a plural situation because there are so many people coming in that there really isn't a reason to have them not be specialized. I think the end product 10-20 years from now when women have been so specialized and there isn't that generalist perspective that will hurt and won't be as effective if you will. I still think we are in a position where those [generalists] are still the most effective, have the most credibility and experience, and respected because they have been in their shoes. I feel like it would certainly assist the SWA in making and giving decisions if they had a chance to work with student-athletes or were a student-athlete.

In addition to this one-track trend, this group of women has benefited directly from Title IX and the previous group's fights. These experiences can have positive and negative consequences on the perception of the "future" SWA. While the participants were positive about the future of SWAs, there was uncertainty if this group did understand or appreciate what the group before them had done. Homeister provides this insight:

I think there is an age difference. I think older women had to fight hard, they probably will act more quickly if something isn't appearing to be equitable; whereas, young people - some are scared to death to be labeled a feminist. Not understanding what the

definition of a feminist is and not wanting to alienate the girls. They are so used to having - they don't know what happened to get them where they are. They don't understand all of the hard work, the fight, respect that got them to the level where they are - they are taking it for granted and just assuming that it will be ok. I think you have to be ever watchful, persistent, and I think some of the younger generation think - they will take care of me - it is not going to happen.

Silliman agrees with Homeister and believes that some of the younger female administrators and SWAs have not dealt with impending and existing barriers:

I think SWAs are younger, coming in younger and they have had the benefit of what the pioneers have fought for so to speak, so it probably has not been as hard for them to break in and be where they are but they don't have that same sort of perspective. I think, no disrespect, but they sort are just bobble heads. They shake their heads yes, because that is what they have been exposed to; they haven't ever been on the other side or had to fight. They don't perceive the issue of equity and they don't know where we've been or how far we have come and don't appreciate what they have. It is not a big a struggle for them. It was personal in the old days. It is not as personal now. So, I think they take a career path of least resistance and that is to agree - be the bobble head so you are one of them. I understand that, it is hard. I think the young people come in trained in one thing, like a marketer, and that is the one perspective they bring, that is their "in" to the administrative area.

One participant who is new to the position and is in her early 30s confirmed this perspective. Although she is aware now, when she originally entered the profession, she did not have a true appreciation of what came before her. Courtney Davis recounts:

At NACWAA/Hers, I realized this a great thing that had happened to me, that I am in this position. For a long time I struggled because I didn't know what it meant to be the SWA. I got into this position that I knew nothing about and trusted that my AD was being honest about what it was. But, he told me what he thought I wanted to hear. I wonder sometimes if I was hired to be the token female administrator, one who doesn't make waves and just sort of does what he needs me to do. I had a job description but I can't really tell you what it was or if I've lived by it. It has been a difficult ride. I've survived, but a lot on my own...without administrative teammates. I have taken for granted everything the women before me have done. The Christine Grants - the women who fought their asses off for every woman out there. That was something I haven't been a part of and totally took for granted. I've learned that.

Whether or not Davis' case is unique or not, a fundamental question exists. Yes, this group should understand the history in order to make informed decisions and understand their role; however, is it possible for them to truly understand? Johnson provided this reasoning:

Yes, there are some young people coming through who don't realize what we fought for. But, they can't live that experience that I lived. [Would you want them to?]  
Exactly. That is why we fought. I didn't get a scholarship, but I don't begrudge the people who do now. But, I do get frustrated when they don't realize how special it is. The day will come when they will understand it, because in society in general women aren't treated well. The question is, as an administrator or coach, is how to get them to deal with it when it first strikes, because it will strike.

The participants demonstrated a guarded optimism. On the one hand, it was a positive that what the pioneers had fought for was taken for granted because that meant that change did occur. It was not an abnormality for women to have access. As Moore states, "They don't have to apologize for being interested. They don't understand that there is an urgency to it, because it has always been there for them." Women in athletics have become socially acceptable. On the other hand, concern abounds that because the young women do not truly understand the urgency and time and effort that went into getting this far. Title IX continues to be fought and debated. With its potentially fragile existence, if this group does not continue the fight, the growth and momentum could slip away.

However, because these women have tasted what it is like to gain access and share a piece of the pie, some feel that when these women do find resistance that they will speak up sooner. The question becomes whether or not they will recognize the fronts and not give in to them. Johnson agrees:

Absolutely, they [young administrators] are going to react. Some of us would have been like; well this takes time, and just bear with it because we know we have gotten it slowly but surely. They have always had it, so I think you are right, they will react quicker.

Magnuson adds that this has become a social norm and will impact younger and future SWA's approaches:

I think that is a cultural thing too. My initial thought is that they don't have the background or knowledge and they didn't have to fight for it, and don't have as much knowledge about gender equity and Title IX so it would be easy to let it go. But on the other hand, it is a culture, they have fathers who are not used to having their

daughters' opportunities denied. If it started to happen, to threaten, not only would the daughter and mother speak out, but also so would the father and brother. I have confidence that there has been education over the last 30 years and as a whole different generation is having daughters that expect it. I think when there is that expectation; the demand is there. So, I think they will speak out, "of course it would be like this", "how could you deny that?" The young women that I am around, I mean they would just not be denied that opportunity, there is no way. I don't think their parents would either.

Despite generational differences, approaches have emerged across generations and successful SWAs utilize this approach in their respective departments. Each participant pointed to issues of fairness, consistency, persistency, and honesty as the core values of their approach. Johnson's approach is a good example:

If I go into a meeting and I need something, I better know why and I better want it to be the right way to do it, not just do it because somebody else does. If I can't get it done, a financial reason, you don't want your approach to be well, take it away from them. That is also not the solution and I know some women say that, fine if it is a money issue then they shouldn't have it either. I have to say ok, they have it, I don't, I need it for some very good reasons, how can I do it in a methodical way to eventually get us both what we want? So, I've always tried to have my approach be fair, well thought out, and if they are going to say no, then I am going to pose back to them, explain to me why then our male athletes have the benefit of being in class and our women don't? Let them give you the answer that you know is going to sound very unfair. Ask them. Or, if I think that I have laid it out very fair then I will ask them,



what would you like me to tell them? Just tell me. There are times when it is budgetary or we don't have the staff and I say let's make a way for it to be the fairest in the short amount of time until we can move to something that is more optimal for everybody.

To conclude, approach is an interesting issue because if two people, one from each generation, took the same approach, it could be interpreted differently. Each group can get away with a certain approach and each is handcuffed based upon social constructs. Both groups have an amount of respect and skepticism about how the other approaches the issues.

This new generation's approach is logical and can be instrumental in future expansion of the women's identity in athletics. They were the "Title IX babies" and they were student-athletes that received scholarships and other benefits that their male counterparts received. They participated solely in the NCAA structure and know the drill. However, they cannot underestimate the steps that were taken to get them to this threshold. As Carol Smith states, "If we hadn't done that, none of us would be where we are today. I think when the women who come after the pioneers and sit at the table; they don't realize who cooked the meal." It is inherent that every generation will feel the next have it easier or do not appreciate what those before them have done. What is important is that this next generation understands that while women are further along than they were, they still are not there yet. They stand on the threshold of a slippery slope yearning to continue to raise the standards and expectations of women's athletics.

## Appearance

In addition to approach, appearance also is important. As Susan Smith alluded to earlier, being and looking professional make a difference as to how one is perceived. She continues:

I think appearance is tremendously important and I believe strongly in that. It is one of the biggest mistakes we make in our profession; women do not take appearing business-like more seriously. They will dress in a way they feel is appropriate, but is not accepted socially or culturally in our society and I think that when you step up to the podium and you are dressed business-like vs. you are dressed in a certain way that conveys that I have a message and an agenda and it is about my gender and my choice of who I want to be, I think people who are offended by that - even though they shouldn't be - they are going to tune you out. I think if you appear to be professional, your appearance is good and what comes out of your mouth is professional, people will respect you for that. That is just social norming; that is just society. We can all say that is not right and that's not fair, whatever, but it is also the reality of the situation.

Smith's statement supports the double-bind issue. Do women need to adhere to social norms in order to be heard and then enact change or will nothing change unless they break those social norms? Smith argues that although it is not fair or right, women are forced to dress and look professional in order to be taken seriously. Unless these women are taken seriously, nothing they have to say will enact change. This situation also points to Pagano's (1990) theory of gender passing where women take on male traits to gain approval of their male counterparts and fit into the system. Some argue that by changing to fit the dominant

interpretation of what is professional, societal norms will only continue. Appearance also translates into stereotyping and homophobic issues that are examined later in the chapter.

Not only is appearance important, in intercollegiate athletics physical fitness is another barrier to overcome. Because the SWA works in a field that holds fitness in high regard, she is held to a standard appearance of fitness. Musburger believes it is critical for her to be fit:

I will not do this job and not be fit. I will not do this job and not look like someone who played sports once. That has to be part of what I do. To me in this job and the perceptions, it is critical. You are making it harder on yourself if you don't look like you ever played sports. In society in general we are deeply judged by our appearance, then when people come to athletics and people expecting you to be fit so the judgements comes up even more. It is critical to perception.

The crux of the issues of approach and appearance boils down to a statement made by Musburger, "I think what it asks of us is to present ourselves at a level of professionalism that makes it really hard to attack." According to Luke (1996), women continually must battle to earn respect. The SWA is in a position where she constantly has to prove herself. At a time when women historically have not been in this position, it is as if every move is scrutinized. The fewer deviancies from the expected or perceived male interpretation of the female the harder she is to discount. The less she is discounted, the better chance she has to be successful.

### Relationship with the Athletic Director: Trust and Empowerment

This section details the relationship between the athletic director and SWA. It discusses the elements that make it successful and the potential pitfalls that can occur. Athletic directors have the ultimate impact on the SWA's success. Participants recommended several methods that the director can enact to make the relationship positive for the athletic director, SWA, and department. Mentoring and cultivation of women up the ladder, creating an environment that demonstrates a commitment to gender equity, exposing them to information, and providing access and voice at the table are all methods to increase communication with the SWA.

What has happened in many institutions is that the athletic director simply appoints a SWA because he or she is mandated to do so. Instances have occurred where a man has been appointed to fulfill this role. In other situations the directors clearly show that he has no intention of utilizing this individual, she is simply the token woman. This causes problems on so many levels and serves as a real disadvantage to the institution. As Carol Smith reasons, the range is vast:

Some [athletic directors] are very, very good and involve their SWA on everything or every decision almost and some never speak to them. I think that is very common. Sometimes the AD hires someone to be the yes person. I don't think there is a lot of thought about what this person is to do, they are just appointed. Some women have prostituted themselves, some fought until people got tired of hearing us fight, some of us had wonderful bosses that understood that there is a place for a SWA, a place for women's athletics in the world, gender equity and Title IX and it is right. He moved

along and was happy to have us move along with him and sometimes to push us out in the front.

What is even more interesting is that the SWA is a voting member for the institution at the national level. Her input and mastery of the issues and her synthesis of what is best for her department is essential. She is a representative of the department on campus, nationally, and within the conference. Decisions are made everyday and the department eventually will suffer if the SWA is not cultivated. According to Musburger:

I think the breakdown now is that you have very few situations where directors are actually cultivating a SWA. If you are required to hire someone who is going to be a decision-maker for you and who is one of the few voting members on your campus - when you go to the NCAA convention or within the conference - she better know what is going on.

As discussed earlier on issues of access, if the SWA is put in a silo and does not know or understand all the inter-workings of the department her views are going to be myopic that must be corrected by the athletic director. How can she see the big picture if she is not exposed to it? Access to the budget is critical, Musburger continues:

I think until the SWA has access to all parts of the business, I mean I know where every single dollar in our department goes - I helped build the budget, and when you know that, it vastly changes how you function in your job. Because, 99% of the people say oh they have money, they just don't want to spend it, we just aren't important enough. That is the thinking. The best thing I can do for all the sports I manage is say it's not there, it is not about not wanting to give it to X sport.

By informing and providing the SWA authority, she can assist the director and quell issues brought about by coaches and other administrators because she knows how the money was allocated and had a role in deciding where it was dispensed. By understanding the big picture and the direction the department is headed, she is better equipped to address concerns that are raised and can find ways to make other issues work. Musburger emphasizes how important it is to have that knowledge because it has freed up the director to take care of other matters: "I can make decisions on anything at anytime about anything. But, that is because he has exposed me to all the business, I have access to all the business, and I'm in meetings about all the business."

Knowing why decisions are made, where the money is allocated, and having direct input into those decisions drastically can decrease the amount of tension that can emerge between the SWA and athletic director. In addition to opening communication lines and working as a team, it also provides the director an opportunity to spend time tending to other matters that drive the department such as fundraising. The SWA title was designed to get these women in the rooms and if afforded the information and power, she can strengthen the department and the director at the institutional, conference, and national levels.

The SWA also has a role in strengthening the relationship between her and the athletic director. Communicating with the director in a non-threatening matter, knowing her role, exhibiting confidentiality and loyalty to build the trust system, and demonstrating what she can take off the director's plate are areas the participants posed to create a successful relationship between the SWA and director.

Few people want to be spoken to in a threatening manner and be put on the defensive. Due to the emotionally-charged issues the SWA faces and the nature of her job, she is prone

to let issues build and have frustrations mount, especially if the communication lines are not maintained. These participants have found creative ways to get their ideas across to their directors. In essence, the SWA is like an assistant coach and it is the assistant coach's responsibility to make the head coach be the smartest person. According to Musburger:

Let me be a change agent as much as I can. That is what I am hired to do, I was hired to help them be the smartest person and to not let them miss anything that is critical. Get them to figure it out, get it in their head, that is the number two spot.

Unfortunately, people don't understand or feel comfortable in that role. It is not about having ego; it is about knowing the role. I am sure I have a huge ego, but how do I get my AD's athletic department to function better? Bringing that skill set in at the beginning of our relationship was such an integral part of the trust system that now it is so easy between us.

The SWA faces the difficulty of using different avenues to make her point. It is not always who came up with the idea but what was the end result. Homeister adds that sometimes the idea has to come from someone else:

In my first five years, I spent my time hitting the wall instead of finding a way around it. Once I enlightened myself with, you know I can work this person better by working with them than attacking all the time. So, I changed my tactics. I didn't care if it was their idea as long as it accomplished my goal. I was very satisfied, or I was a master manipulator I am not sure, but once I changed my tactics and when I knew how to get things done, I was much more effective.

Johnson argues that you have to be creative with your approach with the director. It cannot always be the same argument, he has heard it before:

If you go in and fight the Title IX fight and it has been 30 years, who cares? That is not the point. The point is to get accomplished what you need to get accomplished that is not going to take something away, that is going to advance what it is you are trying to do and that you are respectful of all the athletes.

Carol Smith shared the lengths she went through in order to get her former athletic director to listen or change his views on topics:

You have to read your AD, sometimes different approaches work. In the past, I had an AD and I would go in and say we need to do this, this, and this and he would say no and I would leave it at that. Then the next day, I would say did you have time to think about that and his answer would be no. So I would leave it for a couple days and I would go back and I would say I think we really need to think this one through a little more. Sometimes that works and sometimes it doesn't. I don't think that anyone likes to feel like they are threatened. I think there are many men and women who feel threatened by a younger person or a person that has been there longer than they have. So, you begin to try and protect your own situation and by doing that you don't allow those people around you to speak, and they have good ideas, and we shut them down. I've probably done that myself. There are emergency decisions, but I think most decisions should be spoken about over a period of time before they make the decision. I do think there is a great difference between a woman speaking out and a man speaking out. He is aggressive, he is trying to get ahead; she is a bitch.

Smith's point about the perception of a woman speaking out adds yet another dimension to the SWA's approach. After trust has been built, the manner and bluntness of how the SWA addresses the director will vary, but until that trust and teamwork have been



established, her approach will be scrutinized. Musburger outlines how vital confidentiality and trust are to the SWA/director relationship:

Whoever I work with needs to see me as being excruciatingly confidential. I was talking to a sports management class and they asked me what was the most important trait to have in this job. I told them everything comes down to loyalty. Every single thing I do and say, every non-verbal, everything is an act of loyalty toward the mission or it is against it. There is no middle ground. Is what I am saying going with the mission or against it? Is that helping or hurting? Not saying anything is a statement. Even standing in the back of the room looking disinterested sends a message and the higher up you go the more people watch every thing you do. I am careful about my body language, how I am standing, all of that because it is all a message. I don't want to ever have anyone question if I am loyal to them. You've got to hone that early.

Once the trust system is established and the SWA has built up this equity, she can expand her involvement and gain value in the department. The SWA needs to show what she can do to help the director with the daily activities of the department. What can she take off his or her plate? Once the SWA gains this wealth of knowledge and demonstrated competence, she makes herself extremely valuable. This not only assists her in her current department, but enhances her marketability and career advancement. It becomes very clear what she can do for the department, proves why she is so valuable, and gives credibility to what she stands for and what she sees as important.

### President and Campus Community: Accountability and Networking

The president, regardless of the amount of attention he or she gives the athletic department, dictates the leadership and focus of the department. Director of athletics Susan Smith argues that the president and to a degree, human resource personnel, have to hold directors accountable:

I think all too often what happens is, we will put a lot of things down in writing but no one has ever held the director accountable for following through on those processes. Those are institutional, administrative details that need to be attended to. That is one of the reasons in the NCAA said you had to have a gender equity report, you have to have a hiring plan. I think all too often those get done for the event or to say we completed them and then nobody ever goes back to them. It would be my view that it is incumbent on the university's human resource vice president as well as the athletic director to be accountable for following those plans. I think they are a necessity and must happen.

But, in the end, it is going to come down to the type of leadership the president conveys to the athletic director. If the president says it isn't an important issue, then it is not going to be an important issue and the director is going to go about his or her merry way and do what they want to do. I don't think we should do anything to overstep the institution's individual autonomy. I really believe those are presidential, vice-presidential, and human resource-type decisions that should happen internally.

Using Hurst and Usher's (1984) double-bind theory, lip service to these important issues causes frustration for the SWA because it is as if the gatekeepers are listening but not

hearing: there is no real movement. If gender equity and the hiring plan states a commitment to gender equity but there is no backing by the president and university to do so, it sends a message that although that opinion is voiced, it really is unimportant. The SWA will receive two different messages on gender equity: yes it is important and we should have it, but we are not going to hold anyone accountable for it.

Johnson argues that it is the president and board who dictate the mission of the athletic department. If the department is forced to support themselves with little or no outside help from the university, that narrows the decisions that the department can make and still be competitive. She compares it to a business-model versus the educational model:

To be honest with you, I don't necessarily think it is the male model vs. the female model. I believe it is what I believe to more of a business model vs. an educational model. I believe there are many men right now who don't like the business model. But, that is not what they have been asked to do. It appears to be the male model, because most directors are males and their chancellors, board of trustees, or boosters are enforcing upon the leader who is predominantly male to be a business model. I don't know if they necessarily like it. Because there are many, many males who I have worked with over the years who would love the educational model and are committed to the model, but can't run the educational model because frankly, that is not what they are asked to do right now.

I am an educator. I would give my eyeteeth for an educational model (not driven by the bottom line). But, I know that if I was to become a Division I athletic director, in one of the top schools in the country and I said, we are going to run an educational model - I probably wouldn't be there very long. That has to do with it not

being possible in the structure that we have set up. That is your chancellor, your board of trustees, and that is society telling us what kind of model we are.

If a department feels their hand is forced financially and they need to increase revenue to not run a deficit, gender equity may become problematic because more money is normally pumped into the revenue-generating sports in an effort to increase funds to support the remaining teams. Issues of excess have been criticized and the manner in which the business is run is in question. Participants in the study represented Division I-A, AA, and AAA and it was felt that AA and AAA were more realistic in terms of budget and balance of programs. At Division I, there is more concern. Homeister explains:

At Division I, in order to have success, you have to run it as a business operation.

But, you can conduct it like Enron or you can conduct it like P&G - you have your values. If you sell out at all costs, losing the focus of providing an educational opportunity for a young person, that is where you run into a problem. There is nothing wrong with running an athletic department with an assigned business structure, particularly if it provides additional revenues and support to enhance opportunity, no qualms about it. It is when you sell out the values and that is where I really struggle. I think there is a lot of wasted money, a lot of people who want to change it. There are also people who don't want to change it because the rich get richer and the poor get poorer.

The participants recommended researching the university and its record of equity and representation across campus before accepting a position at that institution. She will need to know what the gender equity and hiring plans are, what was found in the last NCAA certification process and what steps have been taken for improvement, and what the role of

the president was in those issues. Magnuson asserts, "The president has to take the lead and demand that you have to have a gender equity plan, a diversity plan and take care of it and make the commitment with resources."

Does the president know who the SWA is and what she does? Moore states, "That is a real need, a void: most presidents don't even know what a SWA is." In addition, what type of access will she have to the president? According to Carol Smith:

In some institutions, the SWA sits alongside the AD when they meet with the president or vice president, but I think in most institutions that doesn't happen. The power to get things changed, sometimes it doesn't go through the AD, it comes through networking of our own in the university support - the athletic council, the provost's office, something like that. Someone that has some authority and power on campus that you can network with; there are more women in positions like vice presidents all across the nation.

Every single participant stressed the importance of networking across campus. Relationship-building across campus is vital, it is an invaluable commodity. If one does not have it, one needs to find a way to get it. If the SWA is having difficulty gaining access, she can utilize these resources to attain it. Carol Smith states, "I think it goes back to if you don't have a voice in the athletic department then you have to go outside of the department, carefully, and boldly in others, and find someone who is going to support things that you feel are right."

This approach in one sense is conflicting with the loyalty and confidentiality section above. How will the director trust the SWA if she goes outside the department to gain support? However, if her contacts within the university gain her access to know what is going

on and can in turn make her more valuable to the department, trust may ensue eventually. In many cases, the athletic department and the rest of campus lead separate lives and the SWA can find ways to interact with the campus and become the one link the campus knows and trusts. Since the SWA is more often involved with student services and compliance, it becomes a natural partnership. When issues arise, she may be looked to for assistance. In turn, when she needs assistance she already has created those ties with campus. Susan Smith is adamant about the importance of this relationship:

I think to get to that point, you have to establish a network and begin to create some credibility on your campus if you want people to take you seriously. Whether it is student affairs, or the theater, music school productions, whatever...it is about making yourself visible. If you want to create credibility, you have to make yourself visible and you have to create an atmosphere about yourself that you are a strong professional and you work in the athletic department.

If your boss won't acknowledge you, you certainly will have people in the institution acknowledge you. When they are in dean's meetings, or administrative meetings, your name or your ability will surface. But, if you stay in your little cocoon in the athletic department and you let yourself be oppressed it is because - in my view - you didn't take advantage of the opportunity to network with the other women on your campus or to network with the other directors and vice presidents. So, I think that is really key, you have to be assertive and I don't think that is unlike any other growth opportunity other women have shared. It took a group of women - women - to be assertive and to be accountable and responsible for what happens to them and not leave it up to someone else. If I weren't successful, I would never let myself say it

was somebody else's fault. You have to be assertive and accountable to what happens to you, be responsible for your own destiny.

Smith's point challenges the SWA to become more aware of her surroundings and take the initiative to break down prevailing barriers. Understanding these conflicts can help SWAs better navigate and overcome double-binding issues SWAs commonly face when pigeonholed into certain areas. Smith continues with networking advice:

I think they also have to have some contact on some level with the president or vice president, whomever athletics reports to, because I think it is important for the senior woman in the department to have some visibility. Again, a seat at that table, so that voice can be heard, because half the time that is the person that speaks on behalf of the student-athletes and the program, speaking on behalf of the coaches. Most of the time the athletic directors, especially at the D-I level, have become so much more focused on generating revenue, contract negotiations, and fundraising to keep the operation going so you really need a strong advocate for students and coaches. That second-in-command person, which in my opinion, should be the SWA - the access on campus is key.

The participants noted not only how important it was to create these relationships but the ability to create the time to do so. The SWA is already juggling so many aspects of her career and trying to gain credibility in her own department, within the conference, and nationally in athletics that they do not always take the time to build those bridges on campus. If the SWA is not as exposed as she should be, it makes it more difficult to start making those connections. One participant stressed the importance of the faculty athletic representative (FAR) as a potential advocate for the SWA. Every institution must appoint a FAR and this

person is required to have access and should be fostered to bring the SWA along and help mentor her and gain contacts on campus.

#### Relationships with Other Women: Who Has the Whistle and What Does That Mean?

All participants acknowledged a degree of community of difference (Tierney, 1993) among SWAs as a group and among other women in athletics. All believed that women could be their own worst enemies. Silliman states, "We are the worst at supporting each other. I understand; we have fought for so long that we tend to fight everybody." This is not to say that women do not help or mentor each other, but it becomes an issue of divide and conquer. Because women have not been able to unite and create a strong enough voice to gain power, they are prone to fight among themselves. Many issues exist and different approaches to addressing those issues may cause one group to dismiss another group's approach or credibility, ultimately weakening the group. Susan Smith points to a lack of education that causes the divide:

I was amazed at how many people don't understand the issues. I think there is a broad spectrum of understanding of what exactly is out there, so you do have a divergent viewpoint among SWAs because they are not as educated. How to educate them is to obviously provide them with a lot more information as to what the issues are and to do a much broader campaign and that is where I think we missed the mark.

Through educating SWAs, they will understand what the goals are, what to push for, and what is important. If a SWA is not exposed to the issues, her viewpoints may be myopic. Moore points to the importance of having a common goal:



Women are pretty bad about not accepting differences, it is either you are with me on this or you are not. I think now we understand, you don't have to be with me, but let's keep the goal out there. I think we are doing better, but there is still a long way to go. Women need to do a much better job with this, men are much better at this - meeting and greeting and accepting people at face value. Women don't do as good a job - they criticize, critique, and put people in boxes and never open them up. We're getting better but still need a lot of help.

In addition to educating SWAs on the issues, mentoring is another key factor the participants felt would draw this group together. Mentoring can occur at the national, conference, and department levels and is essential to networking and sharing information.

Homeister agrees:

I hope this is something that I have done in my career, and that is to nurture and develop other women and support them. I think so many women hear about the glass ceiling and some can be like - look I have the power and I don't want anyone else to take it away - we still have that. That is a real problem. Another SWA at another school may not have all the tools, so why aren't we helping that person, educating them? I think NACWAA tries to do that. They are creating seminars to learn how to negotiate through those situations, how to negotiate a contract, or if you don't understand here are some sources - educational training.

The divide and conquer phenomenon directly relates to the definition of the SWA and the broad scope of positions and responsibilities for these women. Because most SWAs have different job functions and levels of power, they inevitably tend to be less homogeneous. Diversity among SWAs within a conference can prove to be valuable because

they each have a certain level of expertise in an area and most SWAs have gender equity under their purview. However, due to the variances in power and access, frustration and incompatibility can arise from these differences. In contrast, the athletic director role remains constant and is more homogeneous because each deal with the same types of issues and hold the same level of power. Johnson states:

Women speak a million different languages, because we aren't all homogeneous, we all have different issues in our lives and what we fail to understand is what your issue is as a single person is also my issue, I just don't walk in it today. But, if I can fix it for you, it is better for me.

In addition to the relationship among SWAs, a unique relationship exists between the SWA and other women in the department. Johnson refers to the queen bee syndrome as a potential deterrent to creating unity:

Sometimes the male, but also some of the women intimidate you. When women finally get into these top positions and have that power, you don't always have time to reach back and help out. I don't think women do a good job with that, it's kind of like the old "queen bee syndrome" - if anyone is getting to the top it is me and I don't want anyone else there because it is threatening to me. As opposed to the other where you say come on up everybody, let's get there together. We may only have one represent us but we can enjoy it all together. Women tend to have the "queen bee syndrome", primarily because there aren't very many spots open. You can't have tunnel vision that you just want to get to the top and not figure out how you got there. Some women are very career driven, but when you get there it isn't always all that.

Whether or not her actions warrant attack from the other women in the department, Musburger feels that because the SWA is in a senior-most position, she will be attacked regardless. She compares it to the Marines, where the first rows are going to be shot at and some make it and some do not. The ones who make it allow others to follow. The first and second waves of women in athletics have gone through and a few have made it:

Really, it isn't going to be until three or four rows back that you have a generation coming through where you won't have people getting shot and killed. Until you build a pool of women or minorities, the first ones through get shot at and some make it and you are the only woman up there and it doesn't seem like she recognizes your plight, and she doesn't understand your plight because she has access and knows what is going on, she is being judged by what she is not doing.

Musburger continues that in addition to not understanding and judging, women's expectations of each other are another hurdle. She recounts a speech given by Kathy DeBoer, long-time SWA and nationally-acclaimed coach. In the story she explains the difference between how men and women are motivated. DeBoer witnessed an interaction at her nephew's basketball camp and likened the use of a whistle as the motivation. The coach kept blowing the whistle and barked out commands to the boys until he got his way. In Musburger's retelling of DeBoer's story, she says:

She is watching this and thinking this is men learning to become men.

Conversely, at her volleyball camp, by the third time she blows the whistle at these 12 year old little girls, half of them are crying and one of the precious little things will come up to her and say, "look Kathy if you just tell us what you want, we'd be glad to do it, but you don't need to keep blowing the whistle at us." It is just a difference.

When she translated this into the work place, the male paradigm was, the whistle was power. So, the questions were: who has the whistle, how can I get the whistle, and when I get the whistle there will be a lot more whistle blowing. The female model was: do we really need the whistle? If we do need the whistle we need to evaluate how to use it more equitably, effectively, and fairly, and third if I get the whistle I won't use the whistle because I don't really think we need it.

This example was then translated into the workplace and DeBoer recounted an interaction with a male and female staff member. She and the director had to work over lunch; she found a male assistant, gave him some money, and told him to get them lunch. The guy did not have a problem because she had the whistle. The same situation arose again; this time a female was the only one available and DeBoer instinctually felt she had to handle it differently. Instead of giving a quick directive, she explained the situation and apologized for asking her to do this for her. The response from the female was she would be happy to do it because she considered her a friend and it was not because she was her boss. Musburger says that was the problem:

Female to female, we have an expectation that we do not have of men. With men, when they don't mentor us and go on without us, well they are just egotistical assholes. It is not about me, I don't see that it is about me, it is just a guy being a guy. If a woman doesn't take the time to empower you and express and connect and treat you fairly, you have an expectation of me that you don't have of any of the men and I get judged and the men don't.

Sometimes I feel if I had my way, I would have all men work for me, because I have the whistle. The men are like yep, [Paula] has the whistle. They don't care if I

am male or female, they just know I have the whistle. I get the whistle of taking care of [Paula]. Women don't care about the whistle so it is harder for me as a woman to manage other women, it takes more time and I don't always have time.

At a time when women need to mentor and bring other women through the system, the nature of how some women interrelate can hinder that goal. If the SWA is already overworked and she needs to take more time to interact with women on a personal level, it could prevent her from reaching out. Not only do SWAs need to take time to reach out but also other women need to understand their role and work with the SWA to make it easier. The woman needing mentoring may need to take the lead, be proactive, and ask and because of the SWA's time constraints, she may have to ask twice or maybe three times.

So, it may not be the "queen bee syndrome," but the time demands and the nurturing that some women require that prevent these women from taking more time to help other women. It could also be a difference between women who were student-athletes or coaches and those who were not. Student-athletes are used to reacting to directives and coaches are used to giving them. They are trained to perform in this type of setting and women who have not been exposed to this environment may be at a disadvantage when it comes to working with the SWA and other women in positions of power in the athletic community.

In addition to the working relationship, another factor that may lead to a community of difference is the issue of homophobia. All participants acknowledged that homophobia education was important but questioned whether homophobia was the sole issue. As Musburger explains, "the fastest way to attack her is ask who she is sleeping with." It does not matter if it is with a man or a woman; it is assumed that she is either gay or slept her way to the top. It becomes a no-win situation, especially for single women. "They are labeled

until they get married and that is unfortunate," says Homeister. Moore quipped, "It goes way back; it wasn't normal for women to be in athletics, so if you were, it was considered abnormal and you were assumed to be homosexual because it was considered abnormal in that world."

Women carry this extra burden, that men do not, and it is not an issue people feel comfortable discussing. According to Silliman:

I think most people chose to ignore it, because they don't want to have to deal with all the other issues that go along with athletics. You know, it is such a - no one wants to talk about it, the homosexual in athletics. It is sort of hidden back in the closet with the eating disorders and all the awful things that goes along with it. It isn't a fear with the person, it probably doesn't matter if they are gay or not; I think it is the public's perception and the damage it can do to you.

There is no question - well first you are judged on your looks. If you look a little bit male, as a female athletic administrator, you are immediately labeled. If you are single, you can be labeled gay, but you also can be labeled whore because in order to get where you are you had to sleep with a bunch of men. I have heard that before. People are afraid of the unknown. If you speak out for women's issues, instead of being labeled feminist or some academic term, you are labeled.

Others point to the larger issue of the double standard against women in general and how it effects their credibility. This refers back to issues of professionalism and how women present themselves. According to Musburger:

There is a real narrow window here. You can't be a slut and you can't be butchy and you can't look like someone's wife - I have to be right here. In my own mind I dress not to bring attention to myself.

Perception has played a significant role in homophobia education. Moore referred to the instance at the NCAA convention where a homophobia education session was held. She recalled that individuals feared being labeled simply by entering the room. If you cannot get people in the room, it makes it difficult to educate them. It is paradoxical that a profession that traditionally has been a safe haven for lesbians is fraught with the fear of guilt by association. The participants did not necessarily see it as against homosexuality per se, but one of perception and fear of one being labeled incorrectly or how being outed will affect their career. One could argue that this is homophobia, or at least a form of it. However, it seemed that the participants separated the person from the professional perceptions.

Homeister believes that it will improve:

I think the stereotype associated with single women is very difficult; they are labeled until they get married and that is unfortunate. That can be used against them, there is no question about it. I think education is important and I think it will be better received than it was 15 years ago and I think there will be more acceptance. I don't think the stereotyping will be as prevalent and hinder their ability to speak out and not be outed. I think that was the case for a long time and it takes a strong person to not let that interfere.

Two different viewpoints abound: the perceptions of the straight woman being mislabeled gay and the gay woman. Both groups are less likely to speak out for gender equity

if they felt their sexuality was judged. Silliman argued that married women are even questioned:

I heard once - she only got married because it looks good. Her husband was like a figurehead; it was like you got married just to enhance your career. They labeled you, they didn't take it seriously - you just did it to look good. I don't know if it stops you from speaking out or if it strengthens your resolve. The battle continues on and there are a lot of stupid people out there that have to be educated.

Across the board, the participants felt this was yet another hurdle women have to face in athletics. No one talks about gay men in athletics and this is a real area of concern, because if a man is outed, he is physically at risk, as well as emotionally. Homeister concludes, "It is almost like if you're female and they find out you are a lesbian, it is like - it figures and life goes on. Whereas, if you're a man and gay, you'll get the daylights beat out of you, ostracized, and your career is over." Therefore, double-bind issues also relate to gay men in athletics because they are faced with the struggle of fitting into a system that has not and does not accept them.

To conclude, the SWA's relationship with the director of athletics, president, university personnel, and other women has unique hurdles and obstacles to navigate in her quest for effectiveness as the SWA. Each of these take time, time away from the myriad of responsibilities she must already tackle. However, these relationships provide her more support and will increase the likelihood of her success.



## Consensus Building

Approach and working relationships have been cited as two major intricacies that SWAs need to master in order to be effective. The ability to build consensus has been the critical component for these successful SWAs to bridge both real and perceived gaps in her relationships with those around her. Magnuson states:

You have to have a very diplomatic approach, I think you have to get people to get on board with you and understand that you do things for the right reason - not because it [Title IX] is just the law - it provides opportunities for women. I think you have to be patient because there are a lot of barriers you'll have to overcome and I think it takes a real individual to do that. I think you are always going to have to make sure you are not always that person way out in front and independent that you don't have the rest of the department behind you too. I think you lose a lot of your power and credibility when you do something like that. So, everything has to be done in sync with the department and upper level administration. I think it has to be a person who is really well thought out and very strategic and certainly somebody that people want to follow.

I think that if people feel they have some input or at least an opportunity to communicate and express their views - I call it a circular leadership style that ultimately the SWA and the AD make the decision if that is how the power structure is set up - but I think people need to be able to provide input. Just like you would in a family, I think everybody needs some say and may not always like the decision that is made - that has a lot to do with it. If one or two people are making the decisions that affect everyone else - especially when it has to do with budgets and allocation then

you are just asking for trouble. The more people know about the inter-workings of the budgets - the good and the bad - I feel they become greater stakeholders if you keep them in the loop. To me, that is key in any level of leadership is strong communication and a lot of access to the information.

Johnson stresses the point of not everyone agreeing with the decision that is made. In an environment where the budget is tight and everyone is competing for the same resources and attention, not everyone will be happy. "I have to ask myself if I made a decision that does the greatest good for our student-athletes, and that is what I tried to live with."

Participants believed in order to build consensus, they tried to be as fair and honest as they could. This consistency has enabled them to be looked to for guidance and assistance.

Johnson explains that although she does not have direct oversight of football, her credibility has enabled her to gain the respect of the coach as well as others on campus:

The bottom line is, when you do have those rare opportunities and I don't work with them [football] much, but when I do, I need to make sure that I am a consensus builder. I care about their issue, because I'll be honest with you - if you are half way smart as a women - you'll understand that if you settled it for them you just got it for the women. I am not stupid; you've got to understand how that works. So, they don't want you to interfere but if you can find ways to present yourself to football personally or through a side door, take advantage of that from time to time. If you find a roadblock, don't push your way through it; find a way around it.

It is important to me [campus relationship], because I have built a reputation that is straight up, is honest, is fair, will tell you, will fight fairly for the things they need, and time to time you will find people on campus need that. They get the B.S.

here, the run-around there, and the politics and sometimes they want the refreshing - here is how it is done.

In addition to positive connections with others, the ability to see the big picture is invaluable. Susan Smith asserts that consensus building is understanding what each individual or group is trying to accomplish. Especially if she is managing a diverse group, it is beneficial to know their underlying motives and what will work best for each party. This skill allows her to try and come up with the best solution for everyone, or at least something everyone can live with. It becomes an issue of give and take and keeping the big picture intact and not forcing the issue:

I think that is how women need to do a better job of communicating and I think sometimes we just want to ramrod our position down their throats because it is the right thing to do - we're women and we've been discriminated against, we're oppressed - and I'm not saying in some cases that is not the right approach. But in other cases in my experience, we've had a high level of success in expanding championship brackets for women, and for adding women's sports, and a whole host of other things that literally has been to provide the information and educational tools so people can see - yes this is a better thing, or we have been discriminated against and we need to do more.

Women trying to build consensus often need to prove themselves first and build credibility. Homeister says that normal initial hesitancy surrounds women in athletics. They need to prove they understand the sport or win the coach over by taking a sincere interest in their program. This is especially true of male coaches of men's sports that SWAs may oversee. However, the Olympic team (non-revenue sports) coaches soon understand that they

now have a spokesperson they did not have before. Like women's sports, men's Olympic sports are second to football and men's basketball. According to Homeister it is a continual process:

You have to build your credibility and then you have to back it up. That is the job. If you do that, it takes time, but I think overall if you think it is a good thing for student-athletes, gender is not an issue. If you can demonstrate that and coaches understand that is where you are coming from, you've cleared a lot of hurdles very quickly. I think you always have to remove that suspension because you are female and that is an additional layer you have to remove before you can actually do what you want to accomplish and that is to make it a great opportunity for student-athletes. But, women are always going to have an additional hurdle that men do not have. I think society is changing and every generation we take another step where gender is not an issue, it is about a quality experience.

SWAs need to find ways to prove themselves and position themselves to command respect. A topic that co-exists with consensus building is what the participants referred to as picking your battles. According to Silliman, "You're on a fence. You know what happens, you fall off the fence and it hurts - either side." There is a fine line. The SWA has to determine what battles need fighting and how she is going to approach them. Everything cannot be a battle and she cannot undermine her principles in order not to cause waves in fear of losing her ability to build consensus. Either side of the battle she chooses, she inevitably will side with one group or the other. Silliman explains the difficulty:

Fight the fights that need to be fought, even if you can't win them sometimes.

I think that is where the outspoken comes - if I am fighting a battle and its something

that I know I can't win, because there is no money, etc. If you don't have a locker room and need a locker room, you keep asking for a locker room.

I think the other battles, you pick ones you think you can win. Sometimes the ones you know you can't win, you have to lay low a little bit. Then you get all torn up about it with guilt, sadness; did I do the right thing? Philosophically you might differ. It is a hard, difficult balancing act. If you are not outspoken enough you are one of the boys, and on the other hand you need to be one of the boys to make a difference.

Some issues you feel like you have to have no compromises.

Picking battles becomes a balancing act and this encapsulates why the participants reasoned that they try to make the decision that is as fair and honest as they can. They want to be able to live with the decision they made and feel confident they did the best they could. They understand what they decide will not make everyone happy, so they hold true to their core values and keep what is best for the student-athletes at the forefront. Johnson concludes, "If your goal is to always make everybody happy, good luck; you won't make it in this business very long." This ties back to Johnson's educational vs. business example and her initiative to do what she feels is best for the student-athlete while existing in the bottom-line driven environment of a major D-IA institution.

It is not fair that that the SWA has to be one to make the compromise or find ways around the wall. Why should she have to compromise or apologize for wanting to do what is right? The participants have found that it was the most effective way to get what they want accomplished. Some have tried to go through the wall and realized through time that the most effective was to find a way around it or have some else help them over it. Musburger says she makes games out of barriers. "The goal is that it has to be his idea, so if I make it his idea

so that it impacts change over here then I did my job, I don't care." It is the end result and not the credit that becomes the goal and she has to be creative at times to make it happen, fair or not.

### Power and Voice

The definitions of power and voice provided by the participants seek a common goal and one is needed to do the other. Power is hard to quantify and it can be manifested in different forms. One can feel they have power by holding a certain title, but like Carol Smith said a title is just a title, "unless you have the responsibility and an authority that goes along with that title." The respondents urged that power is much more than the title. One needs the title to gain them access and provide them a platform to impact change and have their opinions valued. However, the SWA's ability to work within that system, to gain the respect and trust of others to have power and have her voice be heard and valued are the paramount to her success.

Musburger defines power as "the ability to impact outcomes" and Silliman states that you have power when "your input is sought after and valued":

I think you have to understand first what real power is. You have women who make decisions, but don't have any power. Day to day women make administrative decisions - yes you can do that no you can't - but by real power I mean are they in a position where their input is sought after and valued. I was fortunate here to work for an AD whom I could say anything to; I could call him any name in the book, if he asked my opinion it was because he wanted to hear it. Now what I always thought wasn't acted upon, but I knew that he was listening to what I had to say. I think that is

what real power is - you are in on the tough decisions, you are in on policy making. It is not - do you think we should buy planners for everyone this year, it is things like - are we going to re-seat, how should we do it, this way or that way. Are you even a priority, do you get to help choose important positions other than the coaches that report to you? If you are the SWA and women's basketball reports to you, do you get to run the search for the coach or does the AD run the search. It isn't necessarily just decision-making power, it is the value of what you have to say and the skills you bring to the organization and how those skills are used.

What is referred to as voice in the SWA's situation is also multi-layered. On one hand, her voice represents women as student-athletes, coaches, administrators, and in some cases all women in general. As Silliman states, the SWA's voice is going to be representative of an entire group:

The voice that you are using in the department, because more than likely you are the only woman, you have to understand that everything coming out of your mouth is perceived as the "women's voice." You are the spokesperson for women, do you really believe in why everyone is fighting?

The voice of the SWA is that of the advocate, whether she realizes it or not. Especially if she is the lone woman in the administrative ranks, she will be expected to provide the women's perspective. This is one person. How can she be expected to represent an entire population of people? What she says, whether she is asked overtly to provide the opinion of this entire population or not, will be perceived as the women's opinion (like other marginalized groups). She must be conscious that this is happening and help find ways for other women's voices to be heard.

Relating this to issues of divide and conquer and the community of difference, as a group it is important for these voices to become united and educated on important issues for the advancement of opportunities for women. As Susan Smith stated, "there needs to be a common set of principles so people understand what the issues are." If the SWAs can unite their voice with common themes and issues, that voice will become stronger and the power of the group can grow and become more influential.

Understanding that the SWA's voice is paramount, she must position herself to have that voice sought after and valued. Musburger stresses the importance of what the SWA brings to the table. It should not be solely that she is a woman. "The question for the SWA is what is she bringing to the table that no one else can bring to the table." If it is only because you are a woman, how can that command someone's respect? Susan Smith concludes, "you have to be serious about being taken seriously." The SWA should seek out ways to actively position herself to have her opinions sought out and recognized.

Often athletic directors are reluctant to give the needed power to the SWA so she must act with boldness and become outspoken. As Carol Smith states, "One of the things I think anybody has to have is the courage to speak out even if you know you are going to get into trouble because what is happening is wrong." The forum and method for which this is done will vary from person to person, but the underlying theme was to understand that it was the SWA's responsibility to address the issues and attempt to change outcomes. According to Musburger, most often the means to respect is through interaction and legitimization of the title and the role:

I think you have to be working hard to fix as many outcomes as you can and then you are just accruing equity. Everyone is watching to make sure you are the deal. I need to



show that coach that I can get it done for them. The guy above you can only empower you so much if you can't get things done.

To conclude, issues of power are symbiotic. She must be provided the structure to earn power. Power is not something that is tangible and can simply be anointed to the chosen individual by the director, president, or the SWA herself. That would only be a title of power. She must gain the respect from the individuals she impacts with that title of power. She will have voice regardless, but that voice will be more effective if she has real power, because with real power comes respect and with respect comes value to the voice.

The final section encompasses the SWA identity and the intricacies of the SWA. The respondents provide guidance, advice, and challenges to the future SWA. The first topic addresses the experiences needed for new and future SWAs to increase their chance of being successful along with career path advice. The final section considers the future and implementation of women's athletics and the SWA.

### The Future SWA

The respondents provided advice for the future SWA; things she learned along the way and things she wished she would have known. The first area relates to a set of experiences and the second speaks to the future of women's athletics and the SWA's role and input on that future.

### Experience and Career Path Advice

The main areas stressed by the participants as elements to the success of the SWA were the importance of education, business training, cross training, networking, coaching,

revenue sports, career planning, and mobility. These categories are not listed by importance, and tend to interrelate and create an optimal set of experiences. However, they are provided in list form to provide a clearer set of initiatives or goals for which a future or new SWA can look to for guidance.

A universal piece of advice was to maximize one's educational background. Education can be defined in many ways. Whether it is a particular degree or set of experiences, the simple idea of knowing as much as you can will only make you stronger. Davis advised knowing more about women's issues in general, "Read about feminism, read about Title IX, and the history of women in sport." The generalists discussed how the only educational opportunities they had when they came through the ranks was a physical education degree and recommended earning a degree in business. Homeister explains:

Well, if I could start my career over, I would be better educated for things that I need now. When I came up, Title IX was not in existence so I had no exposure to human relations, budget, or business format. The best I could do was administration of physical education. I would change my educational path a little and get more business experience, more human resource, probably a better understanding of the financial components. I was prepared on the athletics side, but not as much on the business side.

Although Moore would rather have individuals interested in athletic administration pursue an education background she recommended getting either a business or law degree. But, more importantly one should use that education to stand out in some manner:

Well, I think I would go get a law degree, that would be the first thing or a MBA. I would have them at NACWAA/Hers, NACWAA, NACDA. They would learn how to

glad hand and chose to be front-and-center. I would encourage them to be very good at something. I would get different experiences, but if you can be the best at something, be the president of the compliance association, or on the board, you start to make a name and that is really what you have to do.

Understanding the business side is important. In a time where funding is scarce and departments are being forced to tighten their belts, all participants pointed to the importance of understanding the business side and budgets. Carol Smith recommends, "for women coming up, they need to learn as much about financing and fundraising as they can." Because these are areas of concern, more importance is placed on those who understand how the funding works and who can bring in funds.

Cross training is also another form of education. By cross training, a potential SWA can "un-silo" herself and make herself more marketable. The participants noted several ways to get experiences in other areas. The basic premise of getting experience was the willingness to ask and be willing to get one's hands dirty. Most likely the experiences will not be glamorous, but one has to start somewhere. Homeister recounts when she began her administrative career 23 years ago:

When I first started, I dealt with parking at football. It is a whole different ballgame. I had to handle parking, traffic flow, making donors happy, and getting the president to his seat on time. It sounds pretty miniscule, but it was a good task because I got a clue as to how things happened. I got to work with the department of public safety, security, state patrol, and the university. So, sometimes you have to get your foot in the door and do the grunt work and I am not so sure young people are willing to do that.

Homeister's point about having a clue as to how things happened is important. The SWA should attain a minimum basic knowledge of the areas that make up the department. The more she knows, the more it enhances her job function and how she perceives things. Davis, who is the youngest participant in the study, explained how valuable it was to have this knowledge:

I was naïve at the beginning, so naïve that I believed everything my AD told me was the real deal. It was his perception. I was sort of his disciple. What he said, that was it. It has taken me three years to realize that the bullshit detector is going off. I don't agree with everything he does. Before I believed unquestionably. Now, I've gained enough knowledge to know better and enough confidence to say so. I respect him immensely, but his perceptions about some things are different than mine. And that is difficult sometimes because he is a dinosaur, and I am more liberal.

Working in other areas will educate one about different functions of the department, and exposes the SWA to other individuals in the department and on campus. By working extra hours, she will have another opportunity to demonstrate her skill set to others she normally would not interact with on a daily basis. In addition to exhibiting one's skill set, it also will be in a different setting. Potential mentors and networking opportunities will arise from these interactions. For example, if she is assisting with game operations at a basketball game, down times before, during, or after games allow informal time to get to know others better. These initial meetings open avenues to other conversations and mentoring opportunities. Musburger stresses the importance of positively presenting oneself to others by showing positive energy. "You have to be careful about who you talk to and who may

represent you to anyone in authority. People do not realize how fast things run up the pipeline."

Institutions often host a conference or championship event on their campus that draw outside administrators that can serve as networking opportunities. She can volunteer to be on the planning committees as a way to start meeting other administrators from across the nation. In short, she needs to expand her range and exposure.

Besides gaining experience across different departments, many respondents spoke of the importance of having coaching experience. Although it was noted that the SWA does not necessitate having been a student-athlete or coach, but it dramatically changes one's management style. All the participants interviewed were either a student-athlete, a coach, or in most cases, both. Johnson was a coach and an administrator at the Division III level before she became an administrator:

I'll be honest with you, at Division I it has been good having both the coaching and administrative experience at a lower level before coming to this level. I think it was key for me anyway. It is not something you must do, but I don't ask anyone here to do anything I haven't done myself. That just allows you to see the picture a little better, listen better, and understand where they are coming from better, because you have done it yourself.

Musbuger agrees that having been a coach at a high level has afforded her a management style that she would not be able to have if she had not had that experience.

I would never want to be managing our coaches having never been a coach. I can't even imagine. If you didn't, you would have to manage very differently than I manage

them. You would have to be much more of an information consensus builder. I can go in there and say no, no, no and they'll go she knows the drill and be ok with it.

Although coaching provides a person a valuable background and gives them the opportunity to manage more directly, this is not always an option for various reasons and other ways to at least gain a basic knowledge are available. The frustration with most of the participants lies in the person who has tunnel vision and earns their degree in sports management and is so focused on becoming an administrator. These candidates problematically are limited because they lack the grassroots experience of the individuals for which they are supposed to work, the student-athletes and coaches. How can they make decisions if they have not walked in their shoes? Johnson, a senior associate athletic director, sends the administrator overseeing a sport to travel with their team at least once a season. She wants them to experience what they go through and see things close up. Not everyone makes a great coach or has the skill set to be one, but anyone can volunteer and assist with a team. Most future administrators work their way up the ladder by serving as a graduate assistant or intern where ample opportunities are available to volunteer with a team and gain exposure in how the system works and what the student-athletes and coaches go through on a daily basis. One should really have this exposure and understand the drill in order to be effective. In a busy world, sometimes people lose sight of what is important: the student-athletes' experiences.

Tied closely with understanding the finances of the department is exposure to working with revenue-producing sports and the areas that accompany them such as fundraising, television and radio contracts, high-profile coaches and their contracts, and donor relations. These sports are primarily football and men's basketball and since women do

not compete or coach these sports, no natural tie to working with these sports exists unless she has knowledge in the areas that accompany them. Smith agrees:

I definitely think they have to have some fundraising experience, radio, TV, working with student-athletes, managing coaches, managing high-level coaches, negotiate their contracts - so, any of those kinds of things you can do - get a seat at the table. Getting a seat at the table was so valuable to me as an administrator, it took me five years to have my athletic director finally bring me to a TV or a radio meeting and I would ask him over and over again. Every year at evaluation time, it was really important to me because that was what was missing. In the end, he realized that I was competent in every else that I had done and he realized that I could be an asset for him and help him get done what needed to get done.

Knowing your resume's deficiencies is important. Silliman noted the importance of assisting one's career goals and then strategizing steps to achieving that goal:

I would be much more proactive with the people that hired me. I would say this is my career path, how can you help get me there? This is what I want; I need these experiences. And, I would be far more careful of who I worked for. I don't regret the moves I made, but the people you work with and the people you are surrounded by, I never checked that out. I was like, it pays more money, it's at a bigger school, and I'll take it. I would be much more careful. In essence, those things influence your effectiveness and your ability. I just learned that too late.

A common deterrent for women in advancing in their careers has been mobility. In order to advance in a timely manner, one must be willing to be mobile. If they are not able or willing to be mobile, it may take much longer and the pay increases will not be as substantial.

Davis reasons that women with children have a more difficult time with mobility than single women:

It is very hard to be a woman in this society, to have kids, to have a full-time career, to be and do it all. Even if I was married, and I don't care what anyone else says, I'd still be doing it all. Maybe it's my personality. Maybe it's nature. To be a mother and in college athletics administration or coaching is crazy. The hours are insane. I think that is why women are choosing to do other things.

Staying within the same department throughout one's career is a possibility. Some of the women in the study have worked in the same department for more than 20 years. Of course, other factors must play out in order for this to occur, and the likelihood of this happening may decrease with the increased competitiveness of departments today. Johnson states that generally the approach to mobility between men and women are different:

A lot of women aren't mobile. I am not faulting them, but they have to realize their limitations if they are not mobile. I believe that is one of the things that have made it difficult for women to advance and get into some key positions. They can't or don't want to move, and men are willing to move in a heartbeat.

To conclude, diversity was the respondent's recurrent theme. One should do what she can to cross-train in different disciplines, network, and gain as much education as possible. Once she becomes more aware of all the different areas of the department and has opportunities to exhibit her skill set, she can outline a career path and begin taking steps toward reaching that goal. Networking at the early stages of her career can open doors to opportunities and contacts that will last a lifetime. In order to do all of these things, she must be willing to ask. According to Susan Smith, "You have to be assertive and accountable to



what happens to you, be responsible for your own destiny." In most cases, she will need to make the first move. Everyone in athletics is, or at least believes, they are overworked and understaffed. If a willing and able participant approaches an administrator, normally a task awaits them. Smith states, "There are a lot of administrators, if you went up to them and say I want to do this or I want to help with that, won't say no. As long as you are competent with what you are already doing."

### Future and Implementation of Women's Athletics

What does the future hold? What is the end goal of women's athletics and what is the SWA's role in that vision? The respondents provided their insight into what they felt the future of women's athletics held. Title IX and funding issues, what product women's athletics offers, and the importance of finding a common ground and value for the SWA's role and her contributions are in this final section.

At present, a presidential commission is researching Title IX and may possibly recommend alternatives to the law. The future of Title IX is not clear. Many proponents of Title IX feel that the arms race spurred by facility updates, and spiraling costs to fund football and men's basketball coaches' salaries are to blame, not women. Susan Smith argues:

The issue is really about institutional autonomy and how we spend our dollars on our campuses. You would like to think that a fairer-minded type of person would say, don't cut men's sports - add women's sports, that is what this should be about. It shouldn't be about cutting men's sports or reallocation of resources, it should be about adding women's sports and providing opportunities for women. Title IX was never meant to be exclusionary and to cut out men's sports. But we all have budgets and

what has come about because we don't want to affect football or men's basketball is to cut men's sports. When in effect what we should be doing, and Christine Grant talked about it, is what the Knight Commission said. The Knight Commission is emphatic about the excesses and to this day - the report has been out since 2001 - it has not resurfaced. It has not resurfaced by the presidents, by the board of directors, or the Knight Commission.

But, we are sitting by and watching all this garbage go by that Title IX is ruining college athletics and ruining these opportunities for men's athletics, no one says except for us, nobody goes back and says - does the men's basketball coach really need a \$1.6 million dollar-a-year contract? That is what the issue is. It should never be pitting the men against the women; it should be about keeping those men's sports, adding women's sports, and finding a way to do it. That is the institution's responsibility and doesn't really belong in the political arena that it has gotten into, except that we have not demonstrated the ability that we can manage our resources and manage our problems on our campuses and it has now gone into this national political forum.

Other groups argue that men's Olympic sport programs have suffered at the expense of women and Title IX. Although interpretations of Title IX do not support cutting men's programs in order to gain compliance with the law, athletic programs have resorted to this method instead of decreasing spending in other areas and has in turn pitted the men against the women. Musburger feels that departments need to find ways to be creative:

Let's cost-contain and do the work and get creative. A much bigger issue than whether or not we're doing the right thing is finding good enough business people to

find a way to keep our ship afloat. Until you do that, we are going to have people going over budgets and crying wolf to people across campus saying they aren't going to make it. Now, our campuses are saying hey, we shouldn't have to be managing your deficit problem. We don't have a problem with athletics until there is a deficit. Now, people are running deficits because you are telling me I have to add women's sports and the only way I know how to do that is cut wrestling - if that is the only thing you can come up with to solve that - do some work! Who wants to cut opportunities for kids?

The intent behind Title IX was to create opportunities, not take them away. Moore believes that regardless of what the Commission decides, Title IX has gotten the ball rolling and it will not stop:

Well, I am an optimist. Title IX did what it was supposed to do - open the doors of education for women and now we have 60% of our campus that are women and it is climbing. So, they can fiddle with Title IX all they want, but eventually, the majority voice is going to speak loud. So, I am not as panicked about this - if they change it, fine. But, what is going to happen, well, they will exempt football and maybe wrestling or find a way to keep wrestling around - but in 10 years, 65 maybe 70% of your college campuses are going to be women. That voice is just going to be way too powerful and there may not be men who are that interested. The very element that they are throwing at us - that women just aren't interested - will come back and haunt them. I am a big believer of things coming around. I think they are going to be struggling and I think they made a big mistake of not embracing this because they will be the underrepresented group soon. I think women's athletics is in very good

hands - we have created this monster. The young women today are not afraid to say it can't happen. They have grown up with the lifestyle that says yes, you can do this.

The "yes, you can do this" mentality is a paradigm that Smith believes is the goal of women's athletics and why it is so important to keep the law intact. Women's athletics provides an invaluable educational experience for women:

This is a real simple thing. Women should participate in sports and what I hope the end result to be - is to create a society of women that is confident, that has high self-esteem, that can make decisions, that is quick on her feet, and feel good about who they are and how they contributed. In the end, as they go into business, or politics, or education, as they become parents and good community people they are armed with the resources necessary to lead us as a society in this country.

I want women to have those types of skills and those kinds of attributes and I think more than anything else that women do, playing and participating in sports provides them with that initial confidence level to get outside yourself to establish and build relationships and feel good about themselves. So, for me, that is what it is about - a celebration. That is why the women's Final Four is so great, it is a celebration, that we provided these opportunities for women, and people acknowledge it. But beyond the championships, it is about developing a culture and society of women that is confident, has high self-esteem, and can make decisions and can take on roles in politics, business, education, and health care, and all the rest of it.

The leadership skills they take away as student-athletes from my perspective are an invaluable contribution that you can make to higher education and society.

That is what I hope to create, that we can provide more opportunities for women to be

in leadership positions. I think that is what higher education is all about. I think athletics is a great example of driving the leadership component for women in higher education.

With the potential legislative changes and the value that women's athletics has had on women, it is important for SWAs to remain vigilant as watchdogs. They serve as role models for women and need to be prepared to carry on the connections and exposure for women's athletics.

SWAs must develop a common ground. Magnuson reasons that a training program for SWAs would help unite this group. NACWAA already has created successful NACWAA/Hers training program (founded by NACWAA and HERS-Mid America) that has graduated more than 300 female administrators. Would Magnuson's recommendation of a yearly certification exam or program be a possible solution?

It is not something that has to be earth shattering - even coaches take a certification exam every year. So really, I don't know why there couldn't be something to test your knowledge - Title IX and gender equity and all the hot topics that are going on. I would like to see something like that. Even the coaching exam, I don't remember every rule and this is a good refresher, I study for it - it forces me to do that. You constantly have to test yourself. I don't how you would do that because the job descriptions are so different but there is a common theme.

The next chapter will delve into possible solutions to these issues. The SWA has a prominent role in the future of women's athletics. Whether it is the voice of reason or voice of change, she has a definite place, but will she need that SWA title to ensure that place in the future or will the need dissolve?

## Summary

SWAs have made a significant impact on women's athletics to date. As the role has emerged and as society has evolved, the need to redefine and regroup has arisen because the whole is stronger than the parts. After 30 years of Title IX, it is ludicrous that individuals still question the importance and interest of women in sport. The ratio of women participating in athletics has grown from 1:27 to 1:2.5 since the enactment of the law. The women in the trenches know the importance of participation and understand the roadblocks they had to endure. These women would not endure what they had if they did not believe in its importance. It is about opportunity. With more women entering the realm of intercollegiate athletics, the community of SWAs has expanded and it will take additional education, training, and planning to unite them as a group and move forward with a common voice.

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

### Introduction

Although the participants and their viewpoints were diverse based upon their age and years of experience, all pointed to the same types of issues that impacted the effectiveness of the SWA's roles and responsibilities. Feminist theory captures the essence of the paradox of the SWA due to the nature of the necessity of the SWA distinction and the double-binding issues she encounters. Smith's (1987) statement, "as women we had been living in an intellectual, cultural, and political world, from whose making we had been almost entirely excluded and in which we had been recognized as no more than marginal voices" (p. 1) is ever-apparent in this study. This perspective is solidified by the women's stories and experiences they have both endured and cherished.

The results of this study lead to the following conclusions:

- The SWA definition is broad and unclear.
- The title should be revamped to include a standard level of authority, access, and flexibility to perform her role effectively and to contribute to the organizational, foundational, and philosophical standards of the department.
- SWAs are prone to limited access and the pigeonholing which limits their ability as an advocate and as a valued member of the administrative team.
- Approach and appearance are noted as potential barriers to success and approach varied by generation.
- The SWA's relationship with the athletic director, president, and networking across campus, conference, and national fronts are important navigational tools.

- Her relationship among other women, tendency to create a community of difference, and homophobic stereotypes in athletics are contributing factors to the divide-and-conquer technique that groups in power have utilized against SWAs.
- A common occurrence of being the only woman or the nature of working in a male-dominated field leads to the importance of consensus building and proving oneself to gain power and voice within the department.
- In order to continue to strengthen the SWA and the title, she must cross-train, obtain an advanced degree, learn about business and areas that produce revenue streams, and network at the campus, conference, and national levels.
- Finally, SWAs need to find a common ground and a common voice. They must start speaking the same language to tackle issues and unite as a group with a similar level of authority and ability to impact outcomes in their respective departments and for women as a group nationally.

The final chapter is divided into five categories and builds upon these conclusions.

The first section addresses each research question and documents the summary of findings and its connection to theory. Next, the implications of the study are examined.

Recommendations for further study are provided and the summary concludes the study.

#### Connection to Theory and Summary of Findings

Strati's (1992) definition of an organizational culture explains intercollegiate athletics' deeply-rooted beliefs. "An organizational culture consists of the symbols, beliefs and patterns of behavior learned, produced, and created by the people who devote their energies and labor to the life an organization" (p. 578). Under the NCAA structure, and by society at large, the behavior learned, produced, and created is from the male perspective. As echoed in feminist



theory research, everything in intercollegiate athletics was created for the male athlete, coach, or administrator.

Since women have not always been considered in organizations, gender issues have not been reflected in these structures (Jensen, 1994; Morgan, 1986). According to many of the participants in this study, not only were females not considered when creating this athletics system, the opinions and experiences of the pioneering SWAs were not accepted or valued by men when departments merged into one system. Therefore, as described by Acker (1992) the production of gender divisions, hierarchies, interactions, and opportunities emerged within the organization. In other words, since males and females were folded into one intercollegiate athletics structure, the organization assigned, intentional or not, various tasks and responsibilities that were considered appropriate for each gender. Although there are some women who have begun to take on roles across all divisions, women have been pigeonholed into typical roles and have been excluded from high-exposure areas and future advancement. Although not as blatant, many believe they are not as accepted or valued now.

This patterning leads to Gherardi's (1995) theory stating that, "if an organizational culture expresses a gender regime which systematically devalues everything connected with the female, the organization can never become democratic" (p. 9). The participants made reference of trying to make decisions that were gender neutral, that the decision should be based on what was best for the student-athlete regardless if they were male or female. However, according to Gherardi's theory, until the male student-athletes, coaches, or administrators value or desire what their female counterparts have, it can never become democratic. Since athletic departments value similarity rather than diversity (Fink, Pastore, & Reimer, 2001) this organizational structure has been slow to change because there remains a marked difference between the male and female student-athlete, coach, or administrative

experience. The resistance to include, embrace, and value women has caused double-bind situations for the SWA because she exists in an environment that is contradictory in nature and makes her role more difficult to perform.

Smith and Berg (1987) define double-bind theory as a type of "stuckness" or "impossible situation" a group can find itself within a social situation: "Stuckness is a consequence of the contradictory meanings and of the injunctions for simultaneous contradictory behaviors emanating from two or more contexts in which the entity's actions are embedded" (p. 56). The participants made several references to this "stuckness". Most notably was the paradox between what is stated versus what is done or valued. In a politically-charged environment, gender equity has become a sensitive topic and administrators are conscious of their public stance on these gender-equity issues. However, despite the athletic director's or president's public or written stance on gender equity, these philosophies are rarely enforced and the department is ultimately measured on financial gains in revenue-producing sports like football and men's basketball.

Therefore the SWA is charged with enforcing and policing policies and agendas that are backed by lip service rather than substance. Smith and Berg (1987) define this paradox as, "a statement or set of statements that are self-referential and contradictory and that trigger a vicious circle" (p. 12). The vicious circle is fueled by these contradictory behaviors because the SWA title is mandated and she is informed that she is meant to be an important figure in the organization, yet reality dictates that she is not. Furthermore, this is demonstrated through Acosta and Carpenter's (2000) study that revealed that Division I athletics averaged 1.32 female administrators per department and 1.04 across all divisions. This demonstrates a phenomenon where minimums become maximums and creates a no-win situation for the

SWA because she is in an environment where she is the only female administrator and she has to prove that she was hired because of her abilities and not solely based on her gender.

Organizational double-bind theory, as described by Wendt (2001) is, "a no-win situation initiated by a paradoxical statement or injunction that leaves the listener in a state of powerlessness, disorientation, and frustration" (p. 15). This sense of powerlessness and frustration stems from the above-mentioned contradictions because the perception is that the SWA is either misinformed, is talking but no one is listening, or because no real action takes place. As Musburger explained, this may be caused because the SWA is pigeonholed or isolated in a silo and unable to see the big picture of the organization. The SWA needs to work to un-silo herself and should be actively mentored up the ladder by the athletic director. Therefore, the double-bind situations or organizational culture may not solely rest in the fact that the SWA is female, but because she is both female and working under pretenses that are based upon partial knowledge. The organizational culture that impacts the structure and values of the organization that fails to incorporate women is correlated with the double-bind situations because without knowledge and access, the SWA will continue to be part of the vicious circle.

These organizational and double-bind theories are woven into the summary findings that is divided by each of the six research questions. The results of the study are recounted, related to the various theories presented in the review of literature, and discussed to draw conclusions and question current happenings. For each section, the emerging major themes from the interviews that relate for each research question are provided.

#### What is a SWA and Why is She Needed in Collegiate Athletics?

The NCAA's definition of the SWA is, "the highest ranking female administrator involved in the conduct of a member institution's intercollegiate program" (NCAA

Constitution, 4.02.4, 2002). Each participant attested that the SWA was much more than the definition and the position is essential for collegiate athletics. Alarming many athletic directors simply appointed a woman to that role because it was mandated by the NCAA; without regard to the intent of the position. If her current role is not structured for her to be effective, it creates a double-bind situation where she cannot enforce what she has been appointed to do.

The SWA role is meant to supplement her position in the athletic department administrative structure. The updated SWA brochure (2002) provides more direction and examples than the 1996 version. It outlines the purpose of the SWA, the benefits of having a SWA, and typical roles and responsibilities she should be involved in and assigned. This literature is another step toward creating a stronger definition and educating SWAs and others about the position. This alone cannot undo the social and organizational culture of athletes, but it attempts to create more unity to the community of difference.

The primary functions of the SWA are to serve as an advocate, act as a gender-equity watchdog, represent the women's voice in the administrative structure, and be a point person for the NCAA and conference to provide information. The position was designed to be more than the rubber stamp and token position that it has become at one level or another for many women. If she is not in a position to carry out any of these functions, the title becomes just a tag with no real backing or power behind it.

A primary reason for the lack of effectiveness in the areas of advocacy, gender equity, and other areas afforded to the SWA has been the lack of interest by the dominant culture in intercollegiate athletics. Although some institutions have embraced these concepts, terms like gender equity have become empty political buzzwords or seen as a drain on resources for

many departments. This research leads me to believe that most departments do not seek to exclude women. The question for many is not "How can I exclude women?" but "How can I afford to include women?"

Homeister provided an example to refute this line of thinking. If a family with one child has a second, the family must learn to redistribute their resources to care for both children. The parents do not tell the second child that they spent all their resources on the oldest child and therefore they have nothing to give. Although this is a simplistic example, it puts into perspective the values and culture of an organization. According to Strati (1992), "An organizational structure consists of the symbols, beliefs and patterns of behavior learned, produced and created by the people who devote their energies and labor to the life of an organization" (p. 578). Women's athletics was not part of the NCAA's structure until 1983 and plays the role of the younger sibling. The patterns of behavior and systems passed down have been the same male-dominated structures. The life of the department and symbols are football stadiums, revenue streams, and men's revenue sports. The law that has been enacted to protect the underrepresented gender has not been well received by certain groups and the manner in which Title IX has been enforced remains under attack.

University presidents should shoulder some blame. The majority of athletic departments have been forced to become self-sustainable and are expected to produce winning teams. If coaches do not win, they are fired; if athletic departments do not meet their budgets, they are criticized. It becomes a vicious cycle. Departments feel the only way to produce, sustain, or increase revenue is to invest in a competitive football or men's basketball program. Especially at the Division I-A level, fans and alumni donate to the department's donor groups to have the right to purchase season tickets and obtain premium seating and parking. Excessive salaries and recruiting budgets attract elite-level coaches and athletes.

Departments find themselves in a race to one-up each other and no one can back out of the competition because the stakes are too high and they would be at a competitive disadvantage, lose resources, and go over budget. However, if the teams are competitive and an increased cash flow exists due to bowl games, television contracts, and other additional funding for the department, more money can then be earmarked to improve budgets and facilities for women's and men's non-revenue sports if the departments so choose. Donna Lopiano, executive director of the Women's Sports Foundation responds to a question regarding running intercollegiate athletics as a business:

Any non-profit is a "business." The only difference between commercial for-profit entities and non-profit entities is that profits accrue to owners and shareholders in the former and reinvested to the benefit of the educational enterprise in the case of the latter. Too often, Division I programs act like commercial entities in that profits line the pockets of football coaches and ADs as if they were owners and there is no sense or responsibility to the larger educational enterprise. Men and women should be committed to getting Division I programs - men's and women's sports - back in line with what they are - non-profit entities part of a larger educational institution. Gender equity must be a goal within that educational philosophy...you can't think of it as men's athletics living under a commerce structure and women's athletics under an education non-profit structure...both have to exist in the latter position and there must be gender equity in that structure. SWAs are not going to fix this: this is a major reform agenda that must be embraced by college presidents.

It is unlikely that departments will volunteer to take a step back and bow out of the competition. As Johnson stated if she became an athletic director and moved her program in this direction, she would not be there very long. What is being asked of departments and

what they are implicitly expected to do are incompatible. Moreover, the autonomy of institutions will be hindered if the NCAA or a stronger entity steps in and forces the change. As long as fans are willing to pay to support their teams, the arms race trend will continue. Many of the participants of the study and critics of the excesses of intercollegiate athletics point to an impending backlash that eventually will reverse this trend.

The SWA has to recognize these concerns of athletic excesses. As the watchdog and advocate, she needs to find a way to keep women on the radar screen and work to influence a structure that values women instead of treating them as an afterthought or a group that is a drain on resources. One day there may not be a need for the SWA, but until these trends dissipate and the organizational structure evolves, the role and her responsibilities will be needed. This is evident in Davis' recounting of her recent experience that some departments continue to misuse the SWA role:

For a long time I struggled because I didn't know what it meant to be the SWA. I got into this position that I knew nothing about and trusted that my AD was being honest about what it was. But, he told me what he thought I wanted to hear. I wonder sometimes if I was hired to be the token female administrator, one who doesn't make waves and just sort of does what he needs me to do.

Carol Smith's realization that some SWAs are not educated about their role and responsibilities is another reason to believe that SWAs have not yet met their potential collectively and that education for women and athletic directors is critical. "They have no idea what SWAs do in other institutions. They have no idea they have a voice or should have a voice. They have a title and a title is that, a title, unless you have the responsibility and an authority that goes along with that title." The next section addresses how the title can be become more effective.

### How Can the SWA Title be More Effective?

Four major themes emerged from the study that could result in a more effective SWA. Improving access, improving the definition, having a title to reflect seniority, and narrowing the scope of the SWA were provided by the participants.

In order to be more effective, the SWA must have a seat at the table, to be part of the decision-making process. If the SWA is part of the operational, functional, and philosophical aspects of the department, she is able to assess the big picture and focus on the department, what its priorities are, and how she can impact its programming. If she is only included in or notified of specific gender equity or women's issues it creates a double-bind situation for her. An organizational double bind as defined by Wendt (2001) is, "a no-win situation initiated by a paradoxical statement or injunction that leaves the listener in a state of powerlessness, disorientation, and frustration" (p. 15). The SWA is put into these no-win situations because the overarching decisions and seemingly non-women's issues are often the very decisions that impact women. Just because the topic at hand is not gender specific does not mean it does not affect both genders. Johnson described her approach as striving to be gender neutral, if it was good enough for one gender then it was good enough for the other.

Being gender neutral, and at the same being an advocate for women, could be considered two different charges because how can one be gender neutral if one is also fighting for the underrepresented gender? The term "underrepresented gender" is the key term because gender neutrality assumes an equal playing field. Therefore, the SWA continually has to attempt to advance the status of the underrepresented gender, currently women, in the organizational culture in order to attain neutrality. The question then becomes what if the roles were reversed, would either gender not want what the other has? So, if the



SWA is utilized only for "women's issues" as defined by a male in most cases, then she is put into "a state of powerlessness and frustration" because she is not part of the decision-making process that affects everyone.

In order to have access to this knowledge and have a meaningful role in the department's structure, the definition of the SWA should be revisited. The purpose in implementing the SWA was to create meaningful female leadership positions. The definition was designed to be flexible and provide institutions autonomy and to create a usage for the SWA based on the needs of the department. However, without more specific guidelines and a mindset that athletic directors were forced to make this assignment, SWAs have become a community of difference due to the myriad of roles and responsibilities.

One could argue that since no two SWAs are alike, how can this group unite and find a common voice? The SWA could range from a coach to an athletic director. One could argue that this diversity could make the SWA community stronger. For example, for conferences that have SWA meetings and initiatives, they could make better-informed decisions because one may be in marketing or compliance or internal operations and together capitalize on each other's knowledge. This would be positive if the group could come together and had the power to make decisions. As Musburger explains, "The range is so vast, even within my own conference the range is so vast. What they do and don't know, what they have access to, what they are empowered to handle, what they are not empowered to handle, it is mind blowing to me."

An effective way to ensure that a group does not have power is to divide them. Little consistency exists among SWAs. Lopiano states, "The SWA is really a POW if the position becomes an excuse for not getting women into real administrative positions. Often, her administrative responsibilities are not substantive...or weak, inexperienced or submissive

women are hired who won't cause trouble." In order to help the SWA and athletic director make this position more effective, the definition should be revamped to develop a more consistent SWA community. As Johnson states, "The definition itself, it doesn't serve the purpose I don't believe, because the purpose is to provide information to someone who is empowered to do something with the information and that is not clearly being done."

The SWA should (1) have a title and salary that accurately reflects decision-making authority. At minimum, she should be at the associate level, or whatever the department defines as the first level administrator. The SWA should (2) be a contributing member of the senior management team, (3) be involved in the budgeting process and other foundational aspects of the department, and (4) have flexibility built into her position to oversee the gender equity concerns of the institution. Because women tend to be pigeonholed or put into silos, the SWA needs to have an oversight position where she is provided the opportunity to be broad-based and given the opportunity to actually perform the functions of the SWA. Finally, she should (5) be a willing and able advocate who is knowledgeable about gender issues and inequities, as well as possessing the personality to speak up on behalf of these issues. A potential SWA title could read:

A female top-tier administrator who is a contributing member of the senior management team with direct access and decision-making authority involved in sport and departmental oversight, budgeting, and foundational aspects of the athletics department. She should be a willing and able advocate for student-athletes, knowledgeable about gender equity issues, and empowered with the authority and flexibility to perform and enforce these functions.

If these standards are in place, it will narrow the experiential gap among SWAs and provide her a platform to be more effective in her position within the department. No one can

be forced to embrace the SWA, the viewpoints she has or the value of gender equity, but over time this should dissipate because women will have occupied positions that enable them to impact the culture of the department. Simply holding a title or having a seat at the table will not solve the problems; she will have to prove her worth. The next section examines the obstacles she will have to be prepared to overcome.

#### What Obstacles Should the SWA be Prepared to Overcome?

The primary obstacles that the SWA should be prepared to overcome pertain to approach, being a woman in a male-dominated field, proving herself, building consensus, and evaluating her appearance. Education and awareness of the occurrence of pigeonholing, tokenism, and divide-and-conquer tactics are the key elements to overcome these obstacles.

These obstacles primarily are based upon the SWA's age and level of experience. Women from the pioneering generation are going to be different from the current generation of SWAs. These approaches are based on political and social structures of the time and their ability to navigate their surroundings to impact outcomes. These SWA's experiences had were simply different and the actions of the pioneering group directly impacted the experiences of the following generations. A woman telling a story at the NACWAA convention remembered how she had to sneak out of the school to play basketball during college. During one of the games, she looked into the stands and eyed her dean, standing there with his arms crossed, waiting to suspend her for playing. These pioneering SWAs had to be generalists because there were not enough resources. They were primarily physical education practitioners and had to rely on themselves to get everything accomplished. This may have enabled them to unite more effectively as a group because they were all experiencing similar battles.

A decade after Title IX was enacted and men and women were eventually under the same NCAA structure, women were legally entitled to equal opportunities, but this was not happening. How the SWAs fought varied, some pushed their way, some found ways around the walls instead of through them, but all had to be aware of their approaches. Call it being political or professional, tap dancing around issues, or stomping the door down, each was perceived on her actions or for the principles for which she stood. Because so few women existed in intercollegiate athletics, the action of one could reflect the views of all women. If one's actions were perceived negatively, it could have a significant impact. Susan Smith recalled the women who carried the day, women who were effective during this time:

They are well thought out, well prepared, and presented great arguments. As opposed to someone on occasion who would approach the microphone and appear to be more complaining. That wasn't it, it was really about organizing your thought processes and not appearing a male basher, but was really about the best interests of all student-athletes. I think it is really important how the message gets communicated. I think it is careful and thoughtful and not offensive, you want to get outside people thinking you are a male basher.

The pioneering group's approach was delicate because they had to convince the group that had the power, control, and influence to share it, even if was a little at a time. Even though a federal law backed gender equity, the social mentality of the time was resistant to this vision. Once the door was unlocked and opened slightly, it has become increasingly ajar over time. The next generation has to ensure that it does not start to close and ultimately work to take it off its hinges altogether.

In order to bring this to fruition the SWA must be able to build consensus. As Magnuson states, "You have to have a very diplomatic approach, I think you have to get

people on board with you and understand that you do things for the right reasons." As a woman in intercollegiate athletics, the SWA will be scrutinized and she continually will have to prove her worth. She must overcome the question of why she is there. Is it just because she is a woman? Due to gender equity, hiring plans, and the SWA-mandated appointment, the culture remains one of the mandated hiring of a woman instead of one desiring to hire a woman. Regardless of why she was hired, she will have to overcome this hurdle.

Being consistent, fair, honest, and connected were the primary ways the participants built consensus. Because of the initial hesitancy around women in athletics, she should begin building relationships with others in the department, on campus, and in the community. As Homeister points out, "You have to build your credibility and then you have to back it up. That is the job. If you do that, it takes time, but I think overall if you think it is a good thing for student-athletes, gender is not an issue." As the SWA builds consensus, she will be sought out for guidance and assistance because she has proven to be reliable. Whether it is being a confidant, sounding board, leader, policy maker, or advocate she will understand the pulse of the department and campus community because people know they can confide in her. In essence, the trust barrier that she needs to overcome, while time consuming and frustrating, inevitably can develop her as a stronger and more well-rounded administrator because she reached out to prove herself.

Even if she adheres to these qualities, she will not make decisions that will please everyone. The role of the SWA as an advocate will naturally put her in conflict with others. According to Silliman, "You're on a fence. You know what happens, you fall off a fence and it hurts - either side." Even though she has to pick a side and is an advocate, it does not mean the approach she takes does not have to be honest, fair, or consistent. She should hold true to those values, but that will not change the fact that she will be in disagreement or conflict with

others on many occasions. The SWA has to determine what battles need fighting and how she is going to approach them. She enters a no-win situation because everything cannot become a battle. On the other hand, she cannot undermine her principles in order to not cause waves in fear of losing her ability to build consensus. As Silliman explains the paradox, "If you are not outspoken enough you are one of the boys, and on the other hand you need to be one of the boys to make a difference." The SWA must understand this obstacle because she needs to be aware that the nature of the position is a continual balance of building consensus and breaking down barriers. The function of the SWA is designed to create change and change can create friction.

Another obstacle for women in intercollegiate athletics is appearance. Smith's statements in the last chapter referred to social norms and what is considered professional. Whether it is fair or not, a professional appearance is critical and a reality. Women have an additional layer than other professionals do because of the social pressures placed on her appearance. Additionally, because she is in athletics she is also expected to be in shape. If the SWA is battling to earn respect in the department, a high level of professionalism and professional appearance will make her harder to scrutinize. One's appearance should not be an indicator of one's worth or value, but society places these extra burdens on women. In athletics, it becomes more difficult due to homophobia and the double standards placed on women. Johnson states:

There is no question - well first you are judged on your looks. If you look a little bit male, as a female athletic administrator, you are immediately labeled. If you are single, you can be labeled gay, but you can also be labeled a whore because in order to get where you are you had to sleep with a bunch of men.

SWAs have to walk a fine line. They have to be aware of their presence, dress, and overall professionalism. Ideally, these would not be factors, but SWAs need to understand how others may interpret them or how their appearance may hinder their effectiveness.

The key element encapsulating the first three questions is awareness and education. Understanding when they are being pigeonholed into an area, are becoming the token female, or are being divided and conquered is half the battle. Sex discrimination remains present but it may come in forms that make it more illusive for younger SWAs to detect because they do not have the background or experience more seasoned SWAs possess. The nature of the SWA position and the demands placed on her, force her to juggle many tasks at once making it difficult to take a step back and evaluate where she is and where she is headed. Through consensus building, networking, and creating alliances the SWA and other women need to look out for one another, communicate, and take time to re-evaluate so as to not isolate themselves. The next section addresses what support should be in place for the SWA.

#### What Support Should be in Place for the SWA to Create and Ensure Power and Voice Within the Athletic Department?

The ability to impact outcomes and having her input sought after and valued are strong indicators that the SWA possesses power within the department. Collecting, seeking, and assimilating knowledge and information affords her this power. With this power comes the responsibility and ability to voice her opinion and represent the women's voice in the department. In order to have voice, one must have power. Simply talking is technically speaking or voicing an opinion, but voice encompasses more than words. Voice has more meaning and it represents a group or concept that affects the group. In this case, it is the

women's voice, her set of experiences, triumphs, frustrations, aspirations, and goals. If her input is not sought after, listened to, or valued, how can she have voice?

In order to gain power and voice she has to work on the department, campus, conference, and national levels. Each level coincides with each other and through networking and through consensus building she can increase her overall value. Her relationships with the athletic director, president, university personnel, and other women are integrated because they will dictate her power and voice on campus and make her external experiences more valuable because she can develop the decision-making authority necessary to be more effective at other levels.

The SWA's relationship with the athletic director is pivotal and ultimately will dictate her effectiveness and ability to be successful. The success of this relationship must come from both individuals. The director has to create an environment that mentors and cultivates women up the ladder, demonstrates a commitment to gender-equity, exposes the SWA to information, access, and voice at the table, and utilizes the SWA in a way that is central to the mission of the department. On the other hand, the SWA has to articulate what department functions and responsibilities she can administer, oversee and improve to assist the director, demonstrate her ability to communicate in a non-threatening manner, and exhibit confidentiality and loyalty to build and ensure a trust system.

Communication is imperative to the success of the relationship. Both parties need to be aware of the verbal and non-verbal cues that communicate these actions to the other. Saying one thing and doing another will deteriorate that trust system. The president, athletic director, SWA, and faculty athlete representative all have a vote and hold position meetings at the conference and national levels. It only makes sense for the SWA to have access to all knowledge and have the ability to speak intelligently about and work for the best interest of



her institution. Having a positive working relationship with the athletic director will enhance this effort.

The SWA's relationship with the president and other university personnel is central because the athletic department's relationship with the university can dictate the levels of support. Whether the support is through funding, campus initiatives, gender-equity goals, or student-athlete welfare the SWA may be effective in reaching out to these groups. Because the SWA needs to interact with so many groups and consensus-build, networking with campus personnel can create that link between the two entities that are prone to be separate from each other. Being the contact person increases her departmental value because she understands how the university system works and has earned a reputation for being honest and fair. Therefore when issues arise, she will be sought out for information and advice. In turn, these actions increase her stock in the department.

University presidents are accountable for the future of intercollegiate athletics. They need to have a stronger grasp on gender-equity issues and other concerns. The SWA should assist in keeping their president current on recent trends. Ideally, the SWA should have access to the president and attend meetings with the president or the individual directly overseeing athletics and the athletic director. The decisions and policies that result in these meetings will impact women and the department's gender-equity initiatives. If she has the opportunity provide input and gain information it can create fewer problems in the future.

The SWA's relationships with other women in the department, campus, and national levels are critical to increase education, awareness, and unity among this community. Each participant cited the issue of women not supporting each other as a deterrent to this goal. Understandably because the SWA's time is over-extended already, it is difficult to take more time to explain, educate, and mentor but this time will pay dividends later because it expands

voice; more importantly an educated voice. This does not mean everyone must be in agreement about everything, but it can at least it can open everyone's eyes to the issues and work toward a solution.

The nature of the type of relationships women tend to expect from each other can deter the SWA from mentoring more women. If women do not care about "the whistle" and expect more, the SWA has to address that need to balance her time with the other women so they are educated and at the same time more understanding of her limited availability. Whether it is individually or through women's groups, the SWA has the responsibility to share information and create a forum for other concerns or questions other women may have. If the SWA is fortunate to have access to information and have power and voice, that does not mean the other women do and they could be enduring their own no-win situations, feeling marginalized in the department. The SWA can help un-silo women in the department and provide them access to other areas and increase their job satisfaction and future professional marketability.

Committee work at the national level is another way the SWA can bring national attention to her department, increase networking, and broaden her experiences. Hosting a conference, regional, or national event increases prestige for the university, helps attract recruits, and creates meaningful experiences for others in the department. Whether she works on a sport-specific committee or another NCAA committee, the first-hand access to new policy, pending decisions, and future trends will impact her institution. Her ability to take part in discussions, share insights to potential outcomes, and air concerns can be valuable because of the potential outcomes for institutions that often materialize from these meetings.

Therefore, the relationships and interactions that the SWA has internally and externally directly influence her effectiveness, in both a positive or negative manner. If she

cannot successfully navigate these relationships she will not be effective. Although her primary concern is her relationship with the athletic director, she has to expand her circle to gain exposure and increase her network.

#### What Experiences Should the SWA have to Succeed in her Position?

The major types of helpful experiences stressed by the participants were education, cross-training, business and access to revenue streams, networking, coaching, and career planning. These categories tend to interrelate and create an optimal set of experiences for the SWA. The focus is education; the more she knows, the better prepared she is, increasing her chance of success. If the SWA ideally should be positioned within the top tier of administrators, she should have some background or working knowledge in as many of the different areas of the department as she can.

Understanding the business side of athletics is essential because funding is scarce. Coupled with the national trend of decreasing state appropriations being earmarked for higher education, many athletic departments are forced to do more or all on their own without institutional support. This experience will enable her to be a contributor to budget building and monitoring, marketing, development, and fundraising efforts. These arms of the department drive and sustain everything else. The type of experience and needs of the student-athletes and coaches are ultimately central to intercollegiate athletics. The SWA is the conscience of the department and her advocacy role is vital. Therefore, the type of person in the SWA role has to understand the personnel and personal side and having been a student-athlete or coach herself provides her that instant credibility of having been in their shoes. This does not mean that to be an effective SWA one has to have been a student-athlete or coach. But, in a generation where both fewer generalists and more specialized

administrators exists, her background as a coach or athlete provides her another perspective that enables her to overcome some of the initial barriers.

If coaching is not realistic and she does not have an advanced or business degree, cross-training can provide the SWA opportunities to "un-silo" herself and become more marketable. Because the SWA has to or feels she has to be faster, smarter, and stronger than the next person, she is prone to isolating herself into one area and shielding her talents from others. More importantly, learning from different perspectives, honing critical thinking skills, and formulating one's own opinion will make her a more effective administrator through these learning experiences. If she is only exposed to one way of thinking or doing, that becomes the only way. Davis' experiences as a new SWA captures this concept:

I was naïve at the beginning, so naïve that I believed everything my AD told me was the real deal. It was his perception. I was sort of his disciple. What he said, that was it. It has taken me three years to realize that the bullshit detector is going off. I don't agree with everything he does. Before I believed unquestionably. Now, I've gained enough knowledge to know better and enough confidence to say so.

The next level of cross-training is unique to each SWA or future SWA based upon her level of experience. It can come at the national level with involvement in educational and networking groups such as NACWAA, NACWAA/Hers, NADCA, or group specific to her specialty such as marketing, compliance, or student services. Whether it is networking and getting involved at the conference level or branching into other areas of her own department, she must realize when she is being pigeonholed or getting into a rut and understands the need for exposure. If athletic departments normally hire based upon knowing the person or being connected to someone they know, she needs to be in contact with others either for herself or on behalf of other women she knows to advance.

As the SWA or future SWA advances through her career, each stage should be well planned and researched. Due to all the unique circumstances the SWA must deal with and overcome, she must be confident that the person she will be working for will provide the structure for her to be effective in her role. It becomes more than reaching another level and earning a higher salary due to the potential double-bind issues and barriers to her success. As Susan Smith states, "You have to be assertive and accountable to what happens to you, be responsible for your own destiny."

#### What is the Future of the SWA in Athletics?

The future of the SWA in athletics depends on a variety of factors. SWAs must find a common ground and value what they do. Educating SWAs and others, as well as focusing on the end product produced in intercollegiate athletics, will help drive that goal. Improvements to the definition and placing qualified and educated women into roles who have power and voice will help unite the SWA community and become less prone to the divide-and-conquer and tokenism barriers.

Susan Smith's comments on the end product capture the essence of the multitude of benefits of intercollegiate athletics. "What I hope the end result to be is to create a society of women that is confident, that has high self-esteem, that can make decisions, that is quick on her feet, and feel good about who they are and how they contributed." This result is what many SWAs experience and motivates them to create and ensure for future generations. Since nearly half of all girls and women are now participating in athletics, more women with the opportunity to build these skills are entering the work force, becoming parents, and active members of society, it will continue to change the perceptions of women in athletics. Even

though this cycle has begun, and a new generation of women who participated in athletics is emerging, athletics is not yet at a point where the SWA is not needed.

The Commission on Opportunity in Athletics has been criticized for its appointment of its members and is an example of the fragility of a civil law that protects equal opportunity. "There were no representatives from Division II or III, none from junior colleges and none from high-school athletics programs, even though the commission is charged with reviewing the regulations for all those entities," said Athena Yiamouyiannis, executive director of the National Association for Girls and Women in Sports. "The Department of Education has clearly stacked the deck from the start with individuals representing the wealthier, more powerful institutions, who have a vested interest in weakening the law in order to comply" (*NCAA News*, 2003, p. 1). Although considerable gains made by women in intercollegiate athletics are evident, it is not enough. The actions of the majority of athletic departments that are not in compliance and the experiences of SWAs and other women in athletic administration do not demonstrate a culture that will provide equal opportunities on its own accord at this time.

SWAs and other women in athletics have to increase their communication, education, and acceptance of each other as a group. According to Lopiano, "NACWAA could be a uniting force. It must see the problem and then create a strategic plan to address the issue." NACWAA already has created an intensive educational program for women in athletics called the NACWAA/Hers program and recently have added an executive level program. These initiatives are clearly positive steps toward educating women and SWAs. The program costs \$2,250 and the NCAA has pledged a \$250 scholarship for each participant. More than 300 women have taken advantage of the program and were able to secure the program fee plus travel, but not every institution has been so generous. Davis begged to attend the

program and eventually was forced outside of the department to obtain permission to attend by the university's vice president. Her experience there enlightened her, gave her the tools needed to improve her situation, and in turn aided the department. Every NACWAA/Hers participant I spoke with said the experience changed their life and greatly impacted their outlook.

This program and future educational endeavors that extend and continue educational opportunities for women in athletics are critical to the advancement of women and enable them to unite and gain a collective voice in intercollegiate athletics. Currently, women in athletics and SWAs speak too many languages and as a result are divided by various issues. When a woman becomes an SWA no set of experiences or qualifications she had to have exists to obtain the title. Subsequently no standard training for her to know what to do or how to do it is presented. Therefore, she learns through mentoring or relying on her athletic director. Since each SWA functions differently within each department it creates no-win situations because what is effective in one departmental structure does not translate to another. With a standard training program, either at the national or conference level, departments can be educated to understand her needs and evaluate their internal structures while the SWA gains valuable training and education to increase her likelihood of success.

### Implications

The primary objective of this study was to provide a broad-based understanding of the SWA. The examination of conflicts and barriers to her success coupled with ways to overcome these hurdles provides a springboard for reform and future studies.

Other implications include a better understanding of the SWA definition and the call for improvement of the definition to provide more direction and structure for the SWA and

athletic director. Creating additional programming and increasing the access of educational tools and training for current and future SWAs will help unite SWAs as a community with increased voice and power. Better defining the roles and responsibilities of the SWA will strengthen the group because they can create a common language and vision. This structure will aid new and perspective SWAs by creating a network structure and identifying potential obstacles she may face and tools to navigate them successfully. Identifying these key relationships and partnerships with campus, community, conference, and national levels form a support system to impact future outcomes and grow professionally.

Initiation of this training may best be served through each conference office.

Training, certification, and evaluation of SWAs via this structure provide more consistency and control through the conference due to the manageable size, administrative oversight, and current relationship between each school and the conference. Additionally, programming for other women in the department who are not SWAs can assist women in athletics at the grassroots level and assist with their career path and professional goals. These initiatives can then be tied to national forums and programs like NACWAA to provide direction, breadth, and insight to national issues. Compared to the classroom setting, it would be best described as a lecture and recitation format. The lecture period or national forum would have a larger number of students with tenured professionals delivering the material and sharing general concepts and new expanses in the field. The recitation or conference group is a more intimate group that breaks down the material. Time for reflection, questions, and relating to each individual's situation must be provided as a format for clarification and implementation.

These implications can assist SWAs by defining, structuring, and educating them about their roles and responsibilities. Many women are appointed with the title without



knowing how to perform her duties or face the double-binding situations in her path.

Training, certification, and evaluation are ways to unite and strengthen this group.

#### Recommendations for Further Study

Several recommendations for further study emerged. Although I narrowed the scope of the study significantly it continued to expand and several issues should be further examined. A new definition of the SWA, the athletic director's perceptions of the SWA, and a national certification and training program are primary areas for further research and evaluation.

Other pertinent areas for in depth study are the president's perceptions of the SWA, a case study of SWAs by conference and its ability to mentor, train, and evaluate SWAs, a focus on women of color in the SWA role, and the impact of homophobia on the SWA's approach. Comparing NACWAA/Hers participants to non-participants, studying the impact of NACWAA, and measuring trends of SWAs such as background, experience, and age are additional areas for further study. Although this study focused on the Division I level, it magnified and brought to light the roles and responsibilities of the Division I SWA. It is a unique role and a paradox that warrants increased attention and further research.

#### Conclusion

Athletics often has played the role of impacting social change. Through the realm of athletics, women and minorities have crossed social and gender barriers. Sport has had an impact on individuals and communities and it maintains an inherent culture that, even if for a moment, lets people forget about these social restrictions and playing the game becomes the focus. Sport's role is unique. Whether it is the challenge or having to come together as a team

in order to be successful, athletics creates a platform to change individuals for the greater good of the community.

Whether it was Babe Didrikson in the 1930s or the gold medal women's soccer team in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, several firsts in women's athletics have debunked myths about woman athletes and milestones will continue to be reached and new standards will be set. Each generation has seen increased access. My mother and I went to the same high school and she was not afforded the opportunity to participate in athletics. I cannot imagine not having been in athletics. Ever since I can remember, I have been part of a team or playing sports. It never occurred to me that I could not or should not be doing it. I was fortunate to be gifted in a sport at an institution that enabled me to earn an athletic scholarship, that was treated as an upper tier sport with a budget, flew the team to a majority of its matches, stayed in nice hotels, and treated its student-athletes well. My institution had a supportive athletic director and a strong SWA to ensure that my experience was positive. At the time, I recognized the woman who was the SWA but I did not know that was part of her title or what it meant. I did not realize the extent of everything that happened behind the scenes until I became a graduate assistant in the athletic department. I began to see how the pieces fit together. As I researched, became an active listener, and participated in various areas I became aware of how my student-athlete experience was not automatic. Someone argued for it, protected it, and continued to work to improve it.

My experience as a student-athlete taught me numerous life lessons. Obvious lessons in teamwork, time management, goal setting, and discipline abound, but what I believe was the most valuable was the ability to extend one's limits. When I did not think I could do one more, I had to do two more, and after those two I found the will to do a few more. It was

about assessing one's perceived limits and pushing through that barrier and once one level was reached, the focus was to reach the next. So, what seemed like an impossible obstacle at the beginning gradually became approachable and conquerable as time passed.

This concept is translated to the SWA role. In the beginning the goal was to simply have a woman in the athletics structure. The highest-ranking woman could be anyone at any particular level. Now, the push should be to have more women at all levels and an environment that is gender neutral. The purpose of the study was to determine what experiences and initiatives SWAs need in order to have effective voice and power within their respective athletic departments. This study is one of many steps needed to achieve this goal, but it is an important step because it helped to identify the barriers and provided potential ways to overcome them. In order to achieve a goal, one has to assess where one is, analyze the problem, and strategize ways to surmount it. This study examined these areas. Participants captured the voice of the SWA and provided an accurate description of what came before her, where she is now, and what her hopes are in the future.

## APPENDIX A: PARTICIPANT IDENTIFICATION LETTER

Dear [Name]:

My name is Stephanie Dohrn and I am a doctoral candidate in Higher Education at Iowa State University. The purpose of my dissertation is to determine what experiences and initiatives senior women administrators need in order to have effective voice and power within their respective athletic departments.

I currently work in collegiate athletics and have discussed these issues with several of my mentors in the field and feel that this research is both timely and helpful to women who are currently SWAs, those who have been recently appointed this role, and for those women who aspire to become athletic administrators.

This is a qualitative study and I would like to conduct personal interviews with approximately 10 current SWAs at the Division I (A, AA) level or former DI SWAs who are currently athletic directors at D-I (A, AA, AAA) institutions. I am sending you this letter in hopes of obtaining a list of women who you or your organization view as being successful. The definition of successful can vary, but may include appointments on national committees, members of organizations, have help build a solid gender equity foundation at her respective institution, looked up to by her peers, mentor-minded, recognized for achievement, and other similar values.

I am looking to interview women that span a continuum from those women who were generalists or pioneers in the field with several years of experience ranging to young women who are new SWAs. Please list as many as possible as I will need to select women based upon where they will fit on the continuum, region, and accessibility.

Attached is a form for your convenience unless there is another format you would prefer. Once I receive lists from the groups I am sending this letter, I will look for common names to create a final list to contact.

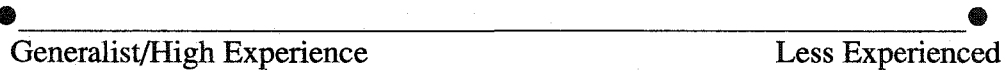
I appreciate your time. I will be more than willing to share my final results with you and assist in any way I can. If you would like to speak more about this project, please feel free to contact me at any time.

Again, your assistance is truly appreciated.

Stephanie Dohrn  
[Contact information]

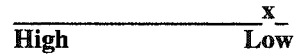
APPENDIX B: PARTICIPATION IDENTIFICATION FORM

Please indicate on the continuum, where you would place them based upon experience and years of service. A separate line will be provided next to each name.



**Example:**  
Stephanie Dohrn

Iowa State University (Ames, IA)



Name	Institution (Location)	Experience Continuum
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low
_____	_____	High _____ Low

(Continue on back) Return to: Stephanie Dohrn [contact info]

## APPENDIX C: LETTER TO PARTICIPANTS

[Potential Participant Name],

My name is Stephanie Dohrn and I am writing to you to ask that you participate in my study on the roles of the senior woman administrator. Your name was given to me [by group] as a successful administrator who could provide great insight. I am trying to interview a range of women in age and experience.

Attached is the consent form and interview questions (which may be adapted a little - it's an emergent qualitative design) just to give you a better idea on the focus and expectations of the study. Please let me know if you are interested and we can make arrangements for the interview that will last approximately one hour.

Thank you for your consideration,

Stephanie Dohrn

## APPENDIX D: CONSENT FORM

**Title of Study:** The roles of the senior woman administrator: A qualitative analysis

**Investigators:** Stephanie Dohrn, principle investigator  
Dr. Daniel Robinson, major professor

**Introduction:** The purpose of this study is to determine what experiences and initiatives senior women administrators need in order to have effective voice and power within their respective athletic departments.

You are being invited to participate in this study because you have been selected by your peers and athletic organizations as being successful in your position as senior woman administrator and is thought to be able to provide valuable insight into the politics of the position that can be passed on to other women in athletics.

**Description of Procedures:** If you agree to participate in this study, your participation will last for a one-month period, consisting of one personal interview and follow-up phone correspondence as needed for clarification. The personal interview will last approximately one hour.

During the study, the interview will be tape-recorded and hand-written notes will be taken. Prior to the interview, I will provide you with a list of interview questions. Additional interview questions may be asked as follow-up, or if the conversation lends itself to additional questioning. You may skip any question that you do not wish to answer or that makes you feel uncomfortable. You may end the interview at any time for any reason.

Interviews will be transcribed and you will be provided with a copy and will have the opportunity to make any clarifications you deem necessary. You also will be provided the chance to review conclusions and summations drawn from your interview to ensure it captures the true meaning of your message or statements. Follow-up correspondences will be utilized when necessary and respectful of your time demands.

**Risks:** There are no foreseeable risks from participating in this study.

**Benefits:** If you decide to participate in this study there may be no direct benefit to you. It is hoped that the information gained in this study will benefit women and athletic departments by educating them on the roles of the senior woman administrator. The goal is to provide valuable information to those women currently in the position, those who have been recently appointed to the position, and future female administrators so they can be successful and understanding of the challenges they will face and arm them with information, advice, and vision.

**Costs and Compensation:** You will not have any costs, besides your time, from participating in this study. You will not be compensated for participating in this study.

**Participation Rights:** Your participation in this study is completely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or leave the study at any time.

**Confidentiality:** Records identifying participants will be kept confidential to the extent permitted by applicable laws and regulations and will not be made publicly available. However, the federal government regulatory agencies and the Institutional Review Board (a committee that reviews and approved human subject research studies) may inspect and/or copy your records for quality assurance and data analysis. These records may contain private information.

To ensure confidentiality to the extent permitted by law, the following measures will be taken. Subjects will be given a fictitious name and institution. The principle investigator will be the only individual with access to the data. The records will be kept in a locked filing cabinet and under password-protected computer files. Once the study and final oral examination have been completed, all materials will be erased or shredded. If the results are published, your identity will remain confidential.

**Questions or Problems:** You are encouraged to ask questions at any time during this study. For further information about the study contact Stephanie Dohrn at 515-268-8120 or [stephdorhn@hotmail.com](mailto:stephdorhn@hotmail.com) or Dr. Daniel Robinson at 515-294-8182 or [dcr@iastate.edu](mailto:dcr@iastate.edu). If you have any questions about the rights of research subjects or research-related injury, please contact the Human Subjects Research Office, 16 Pearson Hall, 515-294-4566; [meldrem@iastate.edu](mailto:meldrem@iastate.edu) or the Research Compliance Officer, Office of Research Compliance, 2810 Beardshear Hall, 515-294-3115; [dament@iastate.edu](mailto:dament@iastate.edu).



**Subject Signature:** Your signature indicates that you voluntarily agree to participate in this study, that the study has been explained to you, that you have been given the time to read the document and that your questions have been satisfactorily answered. You will receive a copy of the signed and dated written informed consent prior to your participation in the study.

Subject's Name (printed) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Subject's signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**Investigator Statement:** I certify that the participant has been given adequate time to read and learn about the study and all of their questions have been answered. It is my opinion that the participant understands the purpose, risks, benefits and the procedures that will be followed in this study and has voluntarily agreed to participate.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of person obtaining informed consent)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)



## APPENDIX E: PERSONAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

In the 1994 NCAA SWA study, 43% of SWAs felt they needed more power, 37% wanted a clear definition of their role as SWA, and 10% claimed they held a token position in their athletic department. The definition of an SWA from the NCAA brochure is “the highest ranking female administrator involved with the conduct of a member institution’s intercollegiate athletics program.” How do you believe this role should be defined, how is that similar or different from this definition? Once defined, what type of person should be in this role and what things need to be in place for this person to be successful?

Should there be a SWA title? Pros and cons, Why? Future.

There appears to be a trend concerning the working background of the SWA from a generalist background to a more one-dimensional background. How do you think this change will affect the SWA’s role? What do the women coming up through the ranks need experience in to make her better prepared to be successful in this role?

There appears to be a paradox for women in athletics. If they speak out, especially on behalf of women, they may be labeled as radical, male bashers, or cannot “run athletics as a business” but if they do not, they are not fulfilling their obligations. Speak about approach and how it may be different along the continuum of experience among SWAs.

The CWA has lobbied for homophobia education noting “homophobia may be a contributing factor to the significant reduction in numbers of women in coaching and athletic administration.” How do stereotypes and homophobia tie into this role and the SWA’s ability to speak out, possible repercussions, dwindling numbers of female administrators as a possible side effect?

I mentioned early the phrase “running athletics as a business”. The male model of athletics has been criticized since the beginning of collegiate athletics. We are told that women and men should be treated equally. Are women trying to create a new model or are they trying to be exactly like the men’s programs? Is it equality or equity? If men’s and women’s programs are different, how do you differentiate the two and how do you explain treating them differently if they are supposed to be the same? What is the vision for women’s athletics and how should the SWA help implement it? What is the university and athletic department’s role?

Hypothetically, an athletic director stated for the record that they support gender equity. But in reality, this means that this person supports it as long as it doesn’t interfere with football and men’s basketball and doesn’t really want to be bothered by the SWA’s reminders and input. What would stop this person from hiring an SWA without very much experience or marginalize her by putting her in a role where she is not part of the decision-making process so as not to interfere with this person’s focus? Why not hire a puppet, someone who didn’t push for change? How can this power change?

Concentrating more of issues of power...an effective way to ensure power is to have the groups of people trying to gain power to fight among themselves and spin their wheels instead of uniting and going after the group with the power. Divide and conquer. Men’s non-

revenue generating sports like wrestling, swimming and track are fighting Title IX. Women groups do not agree and even women within the same athletic department may not see eye-to-eye. SWAs in themselves are a community of difference. How can they unite and form a common voice? What needs to happen?

Younger SWAs growing up and benefiting from Title IX have been able to benefit from the groundwork laid by their predecessors. She may have the opportunities to speak up and be less likely to be criticized by her approach. Do you feel that there is still hidden discrimination based on the pigeonholing of jobs women in administration go and lack of exposure to revenue-producing sports...a glass ceiling, a good old boys network? How are they educated about these barriers and how are they broken?

What advice do you have for women who are aspiring athletic administrators/SWAs or who have recently been appointed to fulfill this role? How can she be successful, eliminate or limit tokenism, have power and voice, and be part of the decision-making process for all things and not just "women's issues"?

If you could start your career over, what would you do the same and what would you do differently? What career path advice do you have for women interested in becoming athletic administrators? If numbers are decreasing, how can this line of work become more appealing?

Should there be a standard training program for SWAs, what would that include?

Where do you see SWAs, Title IX, and women's athletics 10 years from now? What is your ideal?

## APPENDIX F: PARTICIPANT APPROVAL LETTER

[Participant's Name],

I am sending all the participants a draft of chapter 4/results. I have highlighted in RED all passages that I referred to or quoted you (alias name). Your quotes are located on pp: 2-3, 7, 15, 22-23, 31, 35-36, 37, 48, 53, 60, 62, 63-64, and 66-67. You had several great insights!

1) Please take a look at these and the context in which I used them and please let me know if they accurately reflect what you meant.

2) Please provide feedback - even if it is to say you got it and it looks fine. I want to make sure this is right and will be meaningful. Again, I still need to tighten up a few areas, but I want to make sure what I am working with is accurate.

Thanks again,

Stephanie Dohrn

APPENDIX G: PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECRETARY'S  
COMMISSION ON OPPORTUNITY IN ATHLETICS

NCAA News -- February 17, 2003 by Kay Hawes

(These recommendations are based on materials released to the media at the January 28-29 meetings of the commission and reflect on-site changes read by the commission. This is not necessarily the final wording of the recommendations. That final wording will not be available until the report is given to the Secretary of the Department of Education and released publicly, both of which are expected at the end of February.)

Recommendation 1 -- The Department of Education should reaffirm its strong commitment to equal opportunity and the elimination of discrimination for girls and boys, women and men. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 2 -- Any clarification or policy interpretation should consider the recommendations that are approved by this commission, and substantive adjustments to current enforcement of Title IX should be developed through the normal federal rule-making process. Approved, 12-1.

Recommendation 3 -- The Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights should provide clear, consistent and understandable written guidelines for implementation of Title IX and make every effort to ensure that the guidelines are understood, though a national education effort. The Office for Civil Rights should ensure that enforcement of and education about Title IX is consistent across all regional offices. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 4 -- The Office for Civil Rights should not, directly or indirectly, change current policies in ways that would undermine Title IX enforcement regarding nondiscriminatory treatment in participation, support services and scholarships. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 5 -- The Office for Civil Rights should make clear that cutting teams in order to demonstrate compliance with Title IX is a disfavored practice. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 6 -- The Office for Civil Rights should aggressively enforce Title IX standards, including implementing sanctions for institutions that do not comply. The Department of Education should also explore ways to encourage Title IX compliance rather than merely threatening sanctions. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 7 -- The Department of Education should encourage education leaders and sport leaders to promote male and female programs to encourage student interest in athletics at the high-school level, explore the possibility of a pilot program to encourage participation in physical education and explore ways of encouraging women to walk on to teams. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 8 -- The Department of Education should encourage educational institutions and national athletics governance organizations to address the issue of reducing excessive expenditures in intercollegiate athletics. Possible areas to explore might include an antitrust exemption for college athletics. Approved, 12-1.

Recommendation 9A -- The Department of Education should encourage the redesign of the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act so that it provides the public with a relevant and noncumbersome tool to measure Title IX compliance on campus. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 9B -- The Department of Education should encourage Congress to repeal the Equity in Athletics Disclosure Act report requirement. Defeated, 6-8.

Recommendation 10 -- The Office for Civil Rights should disseminate information on the criteria it uses to help schools determine whether activities they offer qualify as athletics opportunities. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 11A -- The Office for Civil Rights should educate educational institutions about the standards governing private funding of particular sports aimed at preventing those sports from being dropped or to allow specific teams to be added. Approved, 10-3.

Recommendation 11B -- The Office for Civil Rights should reexamine its regulations regarding private funding of particular sports aimed at preventing those sports from being dropped or to allow specific teams to be added. Approved, 10-2.

Recommendation 12 -- The Department of Education should encourage the NCAA to review its scholarships and other guidelines to determine if they adequately promote or hinder athletics participation opportunities. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 13 -- Institutions governed by Title IX standards, as one approach to meeting the standard of proportionality, may allot 50 percent of their participation opportunities for men and 50 percent for women. A variance of 2 to 3 percent in compliance with this standard would then be allowed. Commission tied, 7-7, with Lisa Graham Keegan missing the vote. The chairs ruled that all recommendations receiving a tie vote would be forwarded to the Secretary of Education.

Recommendation 14 -- The first part of the three-part test for demonstrating compliance with Title IX's participation standard should be amended to denote the current measure of proportionality as part "1(a)" and then creating a new test denoted as "1(b)," which would allow colleges and universities to establish compliance if the male/female ratio in their athletics participation is within 3 percent of the male/female ratio of high-school participation within an appropriately defined geographical region. Defeated, 0-14, after Bob Bowsby, whose name appeared with the recommendation, asked to withdraw it.

Recommendation 15A -- The OCR should not use numeric formulas to determine whether an institution is in compliance with Title IX. Defeated, 4-11.

Recommendation 15B -- If substantial proportionality is retained as a way of complying with Title IX, the Office for Civil Rights should clarify the meaning of substantial proportionality and allow for a reasonable variance in the relative ratio of athletics participation of men and women while adhering to the nondiscrimination tenets of Title IX. Approved, 15-0.

Recommendation 16 -- The Office for Civil rights should consider a different way of measuring participation opportunities for purposes of allowing an institution to demonstrate that it has complied with the first part of the three-part test. An institution could establish that it has complied with the first part of the test by showing that the available slots for men and women as demonstrated by the predetermined number of participants for each team offered by the institution, is proportional to the male/female ratio in enrollment. Approved, 10-3, with Lisa Graham Keegan and Rita Simon absent.

Recommendation 17 -- In providing assistance, the Office for Civil rights should advise schools, as necessary, that walk-on opportunities are not limited for schools that can demonstrate compliance with the second or third parts of the three-part test. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 18 -- Any student who is not a recipient of a full or partial scholarship or who is a non-recruited walk-on will be defined as a walk-on or a nonscholarship student-athlete. For the purpose of calculating proportionality with the male/female ratio of enrollment in both scholarships and participation, these ratios will exclude such individuals. Proportionality ratios will be calculated through a comparison of full or partial scholarship recipients and recruited walk-ons. Approved, 8-5, with Lisa Graham Keegan and Rita Simon absent.

Recommendation 19 -- The Office for Civil Rights should explore the possibility of allowing institutions to conduct scientifically based surveys to determine the actual athletics interest of its student body on a continual basis. The number of interested students would then become the measure for determining whether an institution is in compliance with the proportionality requirement of the first part of the three-part test, that is, if 50 percent of interested students are female, 50 percent of athletics participation opportunities would then need to be provided for females. Defeated, 7-8.

Recommendation 20 -- The Office for Civil Rights should allow institutions to conduct continuous interest surveys on a regular basis as a way of demonstrating compliance with Title IX. The Office should specify the criteria necessary for conducting such a survey in a way that is clear and understandable. Approved 10-5.

Recommendation 21 -- The Office for Civil Rights should study the possibility of allowing institutions to demonstrate that they are in compliance with the third part of the three-part test by comparing the ratio of male/female athletics participation at the institution with the demonstrated interests and abilities shown by regional, state or national youth participation rates (including national governing bodies that offer sports outside the school system) or

high-school participation rates or by the interest levels indicated in surveys of prospective or enrolled students at that institution. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 22 -- In demonstrating compliance with the proportionality requirement of the first part of the three-part test, the male/female ratio of athletics participation should be measured against the male/female ratio of an institution's undergraduate population minus nontraditional students. Approved, 9-4.

Recommendation 23 -- The designation of one part of the three-part test as a "safe harbor" should be abandoned in favor of a way of demonstrating compliance with Title IX's participation requirement that treats each part of the test equally. In addition, the evaluation of compliance should include looking at all three parts of the test, in aggregate or in balance, as well as individually. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 24 -- The Office for Civil Rights should be urged to consider reshaping the second part of the three-part test, including by designating a point at which a school can no longer establish compliance through this part. Approved by consensus.

Recommendation 25 -- Additional ways of demonstrating compliance with Title IX beyond the existing three-part test should be explored by the Department of Education. Approved, 12-1, with Lisa Graham Keegan and Rita Simon absent.

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