

Tucker Center for Research on Girls & Women in Sport

Tucker Center News

University of Minnesota

Fall 2002

LETTER FROM THE DIRECTOR

This summer marked the 30th anniversary of Title IX, federal legislation designed to prohibit sex discrimination in educational settings. As a result of Title IX, we have much to be thankful for because it has opened doors that were once closed to girls and women throughout the sports world. According to the Women's Sports Foundation, only one in 27 girls participated in high-school sports prior to Title IX. Today, one in three participate nationwide. In the wake of Title IX, females are involved in more sporting events than ever before, receiving more media coverage (although it is still not proportional to their participation levels), and attaining higher levels of athletic achievement than ever before thought possible. Title IX "built us a ballfield" and we have come—and succeeded—in overwhelming numbers.

Such an amazing track record is not confined to the ball fields and court yards. Indeed, studies have shown that lessons learned on the playing fields have translated into better physical and mental health for a variety of girls and women. One noted author—and accomplished sportswoman—who makes this point is Mariah Burton Nelson. Tucker Center enthusiasts may remember Burton Nelson from her appearance here in 1996 when she entertained (and educated) a sold-out crowd while discussing her controversial and ground-breaking book, *The Stronger Women Get, The More Men Love Football*. Back by popular demand, she will be this Fall's featured speaker in our Distinguished Lecture Series. During her presentation she will highlight her most recent book—*We Are All Athletes*—and focus on the topic of "Life Lessons from the Playing Fields: How Sports Are Transforming Women, Girls, and Society." Burton Nelson will use sport stories, current events, audience participation, and lots of her trademark humor to explore the five most important ways that sports are changing women, why coaches, administrators and legislators are still fighting over who gets to play, and why all of us should think of ourselves as athletes. Join Mariah and the "Tucker Team" on

Wednesday evening, October 16th, at the Humphrey Institute on the West Bank campus. The lecture is free and open to the public. For more information, call the Tucker Center at (612) 625-7327 or visit our website at www.tuckercenter.org.



Mary Jo Kane

In the "Learning Our Legacy" column, we take an in depth look at the life of Jean Freeman, head coach of the University of Minnesota's Women's Swimming and Diving Team. During her tenure she has coached two back-to-back Big Ten Championship teams, been named Big Ten Coach of the Year, and is the only female recipient of the National Collegiate and Scholastic Swimming Trophy. To learn more about this amazing coach and mentor, turn to page 4.

We also take an in depth look at Professor Bonnie Parkhouse who has donated much of her time, energy, and resources to the Tucker Center. As a Professor of Sport Management at Temple University, and avid athlete herself, Dr. Parkhouse uses every opportunity she gets to teach others about the benefits of sports participation for girls and women. A graduate of the University of Minnesota, Dr. Parkhouse comes from a long line of athletes, including her grandfather who was an Olympic skier, cousin George Brett who played for the Kansas City Royals, and a nephew who competes on the PGA tour. With such a distinguished family background, it is easy to see why Dr. Parkhouse promotes women's participation in sports wherever she goes.

As always, thank you for your continued support of the Tucker Center and our mission. It is important that we remember our past, appreciate our present, and look forward to the future as we continue our work for—and celebration of—girls and women in sport.

DONOR PROFILE: BONNIE PARKHOUSE

To say “thank you” would not be enough to show our gratitude for the support that Bonnie Parkhouse has given to the Tucker Center over the past several years. She has provided generous monetary support, as well as donated her time and energy to various Tucker Center projects. Parkhouse, who received her Ph.D. from the University of Minnesota under the guidance of her mentor, Eloise Jaeger, is no stranger to the topic of girls and women in sport. She is currently a Professor of Sport and Recreation Management at Temple University, and the author of numerous books and articles related to women’s involvement in sport and physical activity. Professor Parkhouse is also an avid sports participant. She competed nationally in track and field events during her high-school years, played basketball and field hockey during her college years, and continues to remain active today.

The road which led to Dr. Parkhouse’s involvement with the Tucker Center began in her childhood. Even though she grew up as an athlete in the pre-Title IX era, she was given an opportunity that most other girls did not have—to participate on a track and field team sponsored by her friend’s parents: “I felt very fortunate to have that opportunity. We did not have a girls’ track and field team at our high school.” Coming from a long line of gifted athletes and sport enthusiasts, Parkhouse understood early on the importance of participating in sports. “Athletics is the microcosm of life. It teaches us leadership and discipline.”

Such an attitude about the benefits and qualities of sport is what brought Parkhouse to graduate school at the University of Minnesota where, as mentioned, she studied under Dr. Eloise Jaeger, a pioneer in promoting women in sport at the University and around the nation. In the Spring of 2001, the Tucker Center held a luncheon to honor Dr. Jaeger and present awards to the first recipients of the Eloise Jaeger scholarship.



The first person we asked to help us celebrate Dr. Jaeger’s legacy was none other than Bonnie Parkhouse. In addition to contributing to the scholarship fund, Parkhouse returned to Minnesota and spoke first hand about what Dr. Jaeger has meant to her as a student and educator in the field. As she took the group down memory lane, Parkhouse eloquently described her experiences and thoughts about a woman in whose footsteps she has so closely followed.

After receiving her doctorate degree in 1974, Parkhouse went on to teach at the University of Southern California and California State University, Fullerton.

She has over 15 studies published in prestigious academic journals, as well as numerous articles in trade and commercial publications. Throughout her professional career, Parkhouse has been aware of the work of Tucker Center Director, Mary Jo Kane, and did not hesitate to offer her support when she heard about the Tucker Center. “When Mary Jo told me about the center, I had to support it. I believe it is the only center of its kind [in the world].”

As a noted scholar and educator with a long and distinguished career, Dr. Parkhouse has seen many changes—most of them positive—in the field of athletics as it relates to girls and women. However, she also notes that there is still much work to be done: “Female athletes are given tremendous exposure but we still don’t have many women in coaching and administration.” One amazing indicator of her advocacy and commitment is that she has a license plate that reads “Title IX.” With this type of enthusiasm and dedication, it is not surprising that she continues to educate her students and colleagues about the history of girls and women in sport, as well as to promote a positive change for the future. Needless to say, we are all quite fortunate that Bonnie Parkhouse is on our team.

— Tara Cassidy, Graduate Student, Tucker Center

RESEARCH UPDATES & COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Five Year Update of President's Council's Report

In 1997, the Tucker Center, in collaboration with the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports, developed the first ever research report on physical activity and sport in the lives of girls 18 and under. The report, which has been distributed worldwide, takes an interdisciplinary approach to examining how sport and physical activity affect young girls, their families, and communities. It provides a comprehensive review of the most recent research being conducted in the fields of exercise physiology, sport psychology and sport sociology. It also discusses the need for further research, as well as the practical application of current research findings. Due to the overwhelming success of the report—and the demand for more up-to-date information about this important topic—the Tucker Center will be launching a five-year update beginning this semester. We will call on scholars and educators (all experts in their respective fields) from around the world to help us prepare the next report. For a copy of the initial report, visit our website at www.tuckercenter.org or call us at 612-625-7327.

Playing (Un)Fair: Media Images of Female Athletes

We are pleased to announce that the educational video, *Playing (Un)Fair*, produced by the Media Education Foundation at the University of Massachusetts, is now available for distribution nationwide. Based on the research of Tucker Center Director Mary Jo Kane, *Playing (Un)Fair* is the first video to critically examine how athletic females are portrayed throughout mainstream media in such outlets as *Sports Illustrated* and ESPN. Relying on the latest research findings—and providing powerful images from print and broadcast journalism—*Playing (Un)Fair* explores the ways in which female athletes are rewarded for their femininity and physical attractiveness rather than their accomplishments as highly skilled competitors. To view a clip of this video and find out how you can purchase your own copy, please visit the Media Education Foundation website at www.mediaed.org.

Research Collaboration: TAAG Teaming for Girls

Last year, the Tucker Center developed a partnership with the University of Minnesota's Department of Epidemiology in a research project entitled "Trial of Activity for Adolescent Girls" (TAAG). TAAG is a multi-million dollar research study funded by the National Institute of Health in collaboration with the U of M and six other universities across the country. The study highlights a community and school-based intervention program aimed at preventing the decline of—and encouraging participation in—physical activity for middle-school aged girls. As part of a pilot study conducted this past Spring, the Tucker Center and Epidemiology recruited eight U of M students to act as coaches while training and mentoring fifteen 7th and 8th grade girls from Skyview Middle School in Oakdale, MN. The student coaches met with the young girls enrolled in the Run/Walk After School Program two days a week from early March through May. The project culminated with all the participants taking part in the Melpomene 5K run. The weather was great and the young girls had a fantastic time. Most of them had never attended—let alone participated—in a race before, and many commented on how much they were interested in doing it again. Special thanks go out to the U of M student coaches who volunteered their time to mentor these wonderful young girls.

U of M Student Coaches:

Meghan Smith	Elizabeth Lee
Beth Walter	Rachel Allen
Ariane Smith	Melissa Betcher
Mary Lou Klein	Kelly Koester



LEARNING OUR LEGACY: A PROFILE OF JEAN FREEMAN

For many sports fans, college athletics just doesn't seem the same anymore. The incredible growth of Division I sports into big-time entertainment, and recent controversies that have plagued many college teams, have negatively affected fans' perceptions of—and feelings toward—collegiate sports. They remember the days when the story told around town was whether the University's star scholar-athlete would win the regional championship or maybe make it to the Olympic Trials. This individual often had strong ties to the community and was a source of inspiration, not only because of her athletic ability, but because she was kind, giving, and bright—a multi-faceted person who achieved excellence in all areas of her life. Minnesota native Jean Freeman has known many such athletes. In fact, one could easily argue that Freeman is one of the main reasons why the U of M's women's swimming program regularly produces scholar-athletes who are nationally competitive, graduate with honors, and inspire their families and communities. In addition to producing such outstanding athletes, Coach Freeman's philosophy toward (and commitment to) coaching has created the type of athletic program that Division I sports is supposed to be about—namely, a program that challenges and nurtures athletes to develop strength of character, and provides the resources to help athletes achieve their peak performance.

Freeman's interest in swimming began when she was eight through participation on her Northeast Minneapolis community swim team. Her desire to become a coach developed in sixth grade when she began teaching swimming to younger children at the same community swim program. For Freeman, coaching was both a social outlet—many of her friends were also coaching and teaching—as well as an important exercise in civic responsibility. In middle school and high school, Freeman's interest in becoming a coach was nurtured by the example of her female physical education teachers. Because of their influence, Freeman has been coaching at the U for 30 years. During this time period, she was instrumental in moving the women's swim team from a club sport to a nationally competitive program with some of the best facilities and training programs (not to mention athletes) in the country.

Freeman also credits her PE teachers with influencing her coaching philosophy: "I think of myself as an *educator* who can help athletes achieve their peak performance. This program is not about 'win at all costs' but discovering how many boundaries you can push past. ... Balance alone equals mediocrity. Balance in the pursuit of excellence helps you to actualize the things you are passionate

about!" For Freeman, this means challenging athletes to surpass physical and mental boundaries in all aspects of their lives: "Getting your [college] degree is a priority on this team."

Goal setting is Freeman's most important strategy in getting her athletes to achieve balance and excellence. At the beginning of each year, she works with her athletes to plan for championship meets which include the Big 10, NCAAs, and, in some cases, the Olympic Trials. Such an approach encourages athletes to set high goals, and also provides an opportunity for them to learn how to balance their academic and athletic schedules in ways that maximize success on and off the field. How effective is Coach Freeman in helping her athletes achieve balance in their lives? One clue is in the attitude of the athletes. As Freeman notes: "The wonderful thing about my athletes is that they are high achievers to begin with, and feel like swimming helps them achieve balance with respect to the stresses of their academic work." Freeman has an additional strategy in her coaching repertoire—she sets up structured activities to involve her athletes in the community. Her swimmers volunteer at Franklin Middle School and Northeast Middle School by teaching swimming and collecting swimming equipment for the programs. Freeman believes that the connection her athletes derive from these experiences keeps school and sports in perspective, and encourages her athletes to enjoy the people and places around them.

Jean Freeman has set the standard that reminds us all that Division I sports *can* provide wonderful experiences for athletes—experiences in which goals are achieved, role models are created, and a sense of connection and community spirit are nourished: "I think the Tucker Center accomplishes these objectives too, by creating a venue in the Distinguished Lecture Series for people who are important leaders in the women's sporting community to connect with younger girls and inspire them. ... The Tucker Center gets the educational values of these role models out to the community and that's the point."

Thanks Jean Freeman! We at the Tucker Center hope we do it as well as you do!

— Joah Iannotta, Ph.D. Candidate, Tucker Center



KUDOS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

◆ Nicole (Black) LaVoi, has recently completed her doctoral degree in Kinesiology with an emphasis in Sport Psychology. Dr. LaVoi accepted a position as Research Associate/Director of Coach Education at the Mendelson Center for Sport, Character, and Culture at the University of Notre Dame. The Center is an interdisciplinary research institute that focuses on ways to use sport as an educational vehicle for moral development that is based on psychological and developmental philosophy and theory. LaVoi will be working with Brenda Bredemeier, David Shields, and Clark Power, all leading scholars in the field of moral education.

◆ “Sexual Stories as Resistance Narratives in Women’s Sports: Reconceptualizing Identity Performance,” an article written by Joah Iannotta and Mary Jo Kane, has been accepted for publication in the *Sociology of Sport Journal*. Based on Iannotta’s dissertation research, the article examines strategies used by intercollegiate coaches to create tolerant, non-homophobic team environments.

◆ Mary Jo Kane has just completed the following chapter: “Sociological Aspects of Sport and Physical Activity”. The chapter is part of a forthcoming book by Janet Parks and Jerome Quarterman entitled, *Contemporary Sport Management*. It will be published by Human Kinetics in Champaign, IL.

◆ This summer, Tucker Associate Diane Wiese-Bjornstal obtained the status of “Certified Consultant for the Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology.” She was also named a Fellow of the Association for the Advancement of Applied Sport Psychology. The purpose of the Association is to promote the development of psychological theory, research, and intervention strategies in Sport Psychology.

◆ Maura Rosenthal accepted a position as Assistant Professor of Physical Education at Castleton State College in Vermont. Dr. Rosenthal is a recent graduate in sport sociology from the University of Minnesota and was an important part of the Tucker Team. We wish her the best of luck in her new job!

STAFF UPDATE

Joah Iannotta has returned to the Tucker Center after working as a research associate at the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC for the last two years. “I learned a tremendous amount at the National Academies concerning the way in which research can inform public policy and the deliberations of Congress. One thing became clear to me immediately: The production of scientific research is

rarely enough in itself to have a direct impact on national and local policy, or on the landscape of programs meant to positively affect people’s lives. Research institutions must have a commitment to disseminating the knowledge that they produce. I’m very pleased to return to a vibrant center that incorporates bringing research to the community into its mission!” Iannotta will be finishing her dissertation this year.

Please cut out this card and return with your donation to:

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