
Gender in Televised Sports: 1989, 1993 and 1999

The Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles

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The Amateur Athletic Foundation of Los Angeles is the private, nonprofit institution created to manage Southern California's endowment from the 1984 Olympic Games. The AAF awards grants to youth sports organizations, initiates regional sports programs and operates the Paul Ziffren Sports Resource Center, a state-of-the-art learning center designed to increase knowledge of sports and its impact on people's lives.

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I. Introduction

In 1989 the Amateur Athletic Foundation commissioned a pioneering study analyzing the quantity and quality of television coverage of women's sports. The study, titled *Gender Stereotyping in Televised Sport*, concluded that women's sport was underreported, and that what little coverage there was often presented women in ways that were demeaning. The AAF commissioned a follow-up study in 1993. It showed that progress had been made on a number of fronts, particularly in the use of language, but that gross inequities remained.

Our new study, *Gender in Televised Sports: 1989, 1993 and 1999*, reports on data collected in 1999, and compares 1999 results to the earlier data. The report, in other words, charts the progress and the lack of progress over the past decade. Unfortunately, despite improvements in key areas such as the technical quality of televised women's sports events, there continue to be vast differences in the coverage of men's and women's sport.

Perhaps the most distressing finding of *Gender in Televised Sports* is the continuing failure of sports news shows to adequately cover women's sports. The percentage of stories and airtime devoted to women's sports on local news programs remains almost as low as it was a decade ago. What coverage does exist still too often treats women not as athletes, but as sex objects. In this new study, we report for the first time on a national sports news program, ESPN's "SportsCenter." Proportionally, women's sports receive even less coverage on "SportsCenter" than they do locally.

During the decade following the AAF's first report on sports television and women, we have seen American television networks attract record ratings with Olympic programming featuring women athletes. We have witnessed the popularity of the United States women's national soccer team, much to the surprise of the male-dominated sports media. The WNBA, a professional women's basketball league, achieved an average per game attendance of 10,000 in just its third year of play, a standard that the NBA took 29 years to reach. And, girls and women's sports programs have grown and thrived at the community, high school and college levels. We used to be told by print and electronic journalists that they should not be expected to cover women's sports because no one cared. That excuse simply does not hold water any more.

There is a name for a pattern of behavior that ignores and belittles women's accomplishments. It is sexism, plain and simple. It was unacceptable when the AAF published its first study a decade ago and it remains unacceptable today. Advocates of women's sports must continue to work for change until the sports media fulfill their professional obligation to properly report women's sport.

Anita L. DeFrantz
President
Amateur Athletic Foundation

II. Summary of Findings

Televised Sports News and ESPN's "SportsCenter"

- Women's sports were underreported in the six weeks of early evening and late-night television sports news on three Los Angeles network affiliates sampled in the study. Men's sports received 88.2% of the airtime, women's sports 8.7%, and gender neutral topics 3.1%. These numbers indicated a very slight and probably insignificant change, compared with the 1989 and 1993 studies, when women's sports received 5% and 5.1% of the coverage, respectively.
- On ESPN's nationally-televised program "SportsCenter," the proportion of stories and airtime devoted to women's sports was even lower than on the local Los Angeles sports news shows. Whereas on Los Angeles news, men's sports reports outnumbered women's sports stories by a 6:1 ratio, "SportsCenter's" male-to-female sports stories ratio was a whopping 15:1. The percentage of time devoted to women's sports was also lower on "SportsCenter" (2.2%) compared with network affiliate news reports (8.7%)
- The sheer number of local news stories on men's sports (918) far eclipsed the number of stories on women's sports (160). This disparity was consistent with the two earlier studies. However, the proportion of stories on women's sports that were accompanied by an interview with a woman athlete or coach (21%) came close to matching the proportions in men's coverage (25%). This is an improvement over 1993, when women's sports stories were accompanied by interviews only 7% of the time.
- A mere 3% of the 251 local news programs featured a lead story about women's sports. Not a single "SportsCenter" program led with a women's story. Lead stories, especially those on "SportsCenter," tend also to be the longest stories of the broadcast, containing the highest production values (often including multiple interviews, game footage, musical montages, graphic statistics, etc.).
- In 1993, we noted that there was almost no local network affiliate news coverage of women's sports on weekdays. We found the 1999 pattern to be similar, but not as extreme. Again, news reports on women's sports were significantly condensed into expanded-format weekend shows (nearly half of the stories on women's sports [78 of 160] appeared on Saturdays or Sundays, and 45% of the total airtime given to coverage of women's sports during the week appeared on Saturdays or Sundays). Nevertheless, the amount of weekday coverage of women's sports in 1999 represented a noticeable increase over 1993, when there was almost none.
- Despite a small number of examples of fair and equitable treatment of women's sports, just as in the 1989 and 1993 studies, most of the few 1999 local news reports on serious women's sports (like basketball, tennis, golf or soccer) were fairly brief.

By contrast, the longer, more detailed women's sports stories tended to be gag features (e.g., nude bungee jumping) or stories on marginal, but visually entertaining pseudosport (e.g., professional women's wrestling).

- Several sports news commentators seemed to believe that an important part of the entertainment of their shows was the opportunity they present for viewers to engage in sexual voyeurism and to share commentators' joking comments about scantily-clad women (e.g., the "wrestling porn" of Sable, the Laker Girls cheerleaders "sexing it up," various bikini-clad women spectators at baseball games, jokes about soccer champion Brandi Chastain's "stripping" down to her "sports bra," and leering jokes about tennis player Anna Kournikova's physical appearance).

Technical Production of Women's and Men's NCAA, and NBA/WNBA Basketball

- ESPN's production of the NCAA women's Final Four basketball tournament evidenced a substantial improvement over the women's games analyzed in the 1989 and 1993 studies. Still, the technical quality of the ESPN broadcasts fell short of the CBS's higher quality production of the men's Final Four.
- The postgame shows after the women's and men's NCAA basketball semifinal and Championship games were notably different. CBS's men's postgame shows were substantially longer, and offered in-depth analysis and dramatic recaps that left the viewer feeling that they had just watched an exciting, important and dramatic event. ESPN's short and hurried postgame shows squandered the considerable talents of its expert commentators, by instead quickly folding into its "SportsCenter" format, leaving women's basketball fans feeling that perhaps ESPN was in a hurry to get someplace else.
- The technical production of the two WNBA games broadcast on NBC was similar in quality to NBC's NBA broadcasts. However, the one WNBA game broadcast by Lifetime was of much lower technical quality.

Verbal Commentary in Tennis and Basketball

- Tennis commentators were three times as likely to refer to a woman athlete by her first name only, continuing a pattern found in earlier studies. Men tennis players were more than twice as likely to be referred to by their last name only. By contrast, commentary in college and professional basketball evidenced no differences between the naming of women and men athletes.
- Commentors "gender marked" the women's NCAA basketball games and players (e.g., "the women's championship game,") at the very high rate of 52.7 times per game, while nearly always referring to the men's contests in gender-neutral terms. By contrast, tennis commentary was characterized by high rates of symmetrical gender marking, and WNBA and NBA commentary was characterized by extremely low levels of gender marking.

- Commentators in basketball and tennis often spoke of the importance of “emotions” in the success or failure of athletes, but they tended to discuss emotions in very different ways for women and men athletes. Men players were said to achieve victory through controlled, but passionate aggression against the opponent. By contrast, women players were said to achieve victory through individual compassion (often for an injured or recently deceased teammate or relative) that eventually bonds the team into a “family.”

Racial/Ethnic and Sex Composition of Sports Commentators

- The racial/ethnic composition of commentators on sports news and “SportsCenter” showed some diversity (61% in the sample were white; 39% were people of color). However, 96.8% of the sports news and highlights anchorpeople were men, suggesting that this is still a highly sex-segregated occupation.
- At first glance, basketball and tennis commentary appears to be a reasonably diverse occupation, along lines of race and sex (62% in the sample were men; 73% were white). However, when we count only the play-by-play and “color” commentators “in the booth,” we find (especially in basketball) that white males are still the dominant “voices of authority,” while most women and people of color are used for more peripheral on-court commentary, or as in-studio experts for pregame, halftime, or postgame commentary.

III. Policy Recommendations Implied By Findings

- Televised sports news and highlights shows should provide more coverage of existing women's sports, and the vast majority of this expanded coverage should be devoted to respectful, in-depth reporting on serious, established women's sports.
- Producers and commentators of televised sports events and sports news programs should make a serious attempt to include more than token coverage of women's sports in every broadcast.
- Producers and commentators of televised sports events and sports news programs should educate themselves concerning the ways that humorously sexualized put-downs of women—especially when set against a backdrop of silence concerning women athletes—contributes to a climate of disrespect for women athletes (and for women in general).
- Announcers should consciously adopt a standard usage of first and last names and it should be applied equally to men and women athletes of all races.
- When gender marking is necessary for clarity, it should be done in ways that are symmetrical and equivalent for women's and men's events. If announcers use such phrases as "women's game," or if on-screen or on-court graphics refer to the "women's national championship," then verbal and graphic descriptions of men's contests should be equally gender marked (e.g., "the men's national championship game").
- Television networks should continue their movement toward equal technical quality of coverage of women's athletic events. The amount of resources and the production quality should be equivalent in the coverage of women's and men's events. This equity should extend to pregame and postgame shows.
- Televised sports news, "SportsCenter", and live sports producers should commit themselves to further desegregating the broadcast booth, to include more women and people of color, especially in the central roles of news anchors, play-by-play and "color" commentators.

IV. Description of Study: Sample and Methods

The study addressed both quantitative and qualitative aspects of televised coverage of women's and men's sports. As with the 1989 and 1993 studies, the major questions concerned the quality of actual coverage of women's versus men's athletic events. Therefore, we examined televised sports programs in which men's and women's coverage could be analyzed comparatively.

So that we might comment on change and continuity over time, we replicated 1989 and 1993 studies: First, we studied three two-week segments (a total of six weeks) of televised sports news coverage on each of three Los Angeles network affiliates: KNBC, KCBS and KABC. Second, we examined the "Final Four" of the women's and men's 1999 NCAA basketball tournaments. And third, we analyzed the women's and men's singles, women's and men's doubles, and mixed doubles matches of the 1999 U.S. Open tennis tournament. In addition, due to recent developments in the sports world (in particular, the creation of the WNBA and the burgeoning popularity of cable television sports highlights shows), we expanded the scope of the study. It included, for the first time, a comparison of televised coverage of the NBA and WNBA, and an analysis of ESPN's "SportsCenter." We also expanded our examination of televised sports news to include early evening broadcasts, in addition to the late-night broadcasts examined in the earlier studies.

Sample

Televised Sports News

We analyzed six weeks of TV sports news (both the 6:00 p.m. evening segments and the 11:00 p.m. late night segments) on the three local network affiliates. As in the 1989 and 1993 studies, in order to sample different time periods when different sports were being played, we analyzed three two-week periods: March 15-28, July 12-25, November 8-21. In all, we examined 251 sports news broadcasts on the three network affiliates, totaling slightly more than 15 hours of airtime. Amounts of airtime and the number of stories devoted to men's versus women's sports were measured. In addition to the quantitative measures, we analyzed the quality of coverage in terms of visuals and verbal commentary.

ESPN "SportsCenter"

We analyzed three weeks of one-hour 11:00 p.m. ESPN "SportsCenter" shows. These three weeks corresponded with the first week of each of the three network news segments: March 15-21, July 12-18, and November 8-14. In all, we examined 21 "SportsCenter" broadcasts, totaling slightly more than 17 hours of airtime. "SportsCenter" was a new addition to the study, so we have no 1989 or 1993 data with which to compare our 1999 findings. We measured the amounts of airtime and number of

stories devoted to men's versus women's sports. In addition to the quantitative measures, we analyzed the quality of coverage in terms of visuals and verbal commentary.

1999 U.S. Open Tennis Tournament

To correspond with the sampling in the 1989 and 1993 studies, we examined one women's singles quarterfinal match, two women's singles semifinal matches, the women's singles final, the women's doubles final, one men's singles quarterfinals match, two men's singles semifinals matches, the men's singles final, and the mixed doubles final. The two quarterfinals matches, the women's doubles final and the mixed doubles final were broadcast on USA Network. The women's and men's singles semifinals and finals were all broadcast on CBS.

NCAA Basketball

As in 1989 and 1993, we analyzed the two semifinal games and the two championship games of both the women's and the men's "Final Four" NCAA basketball tournament. Our analysis included introductions, pregame, halftime and postgame shows, as well as play-by-play coverage. Our analysis included the types and levels of technical production, as well as visual and verbal framing of the contests and the athletes. ESPN broadcast the three women's games; CBS broadcast the three men's games.

1999 WNBA and NBA Championship Series

We analyzed the best-of-three WNBA championship series between the New York Liberty and the Houston Comets. Game one was broadcast on the Lifetime Channel, games two and three on NBC. We also analyzed three games in the NBA championship series between the San Antonio Spurs and the New York Knicks (games one, three, and five, the clincher). All three games were broadcast on NBC. Our analysis included introductions, pregame, halftime and postgame shows, as well as play-by-play coverage. Types and levels of technical production, as well as visual and verbal framing of the contests and the athletes were examined. WNBA and NBA games were a new addition to the 1999 study, so we have no 1989 or 1993 data with which to compare our 1999 findings.

Research Method

The research design and methods of data collection and analysis (both quantitative and qualitative) were identical to those of the 1989 and 1993 studies.

In Stage 1 of the research, the Amateur Athletic Foundation taped all of the sports news segments, the NCAA basketball games, the WNBA and NBA basketball games, and the U.S. Open tennis matches.

In Stage 2, a research assistant viewed all of the tapes and compiled a written preliminary analysis.

In Stage 3, one investigator independently viewed all of the tapes and added her written analysis to that of the research assistant.

In Stage 4, the data were compiled and analyzed for this report by the two investigators, using both sets of written descriptions of the tapes, and by viewing portions of the tapes once again.

In Stage 5, one investigator wrote up the research report.

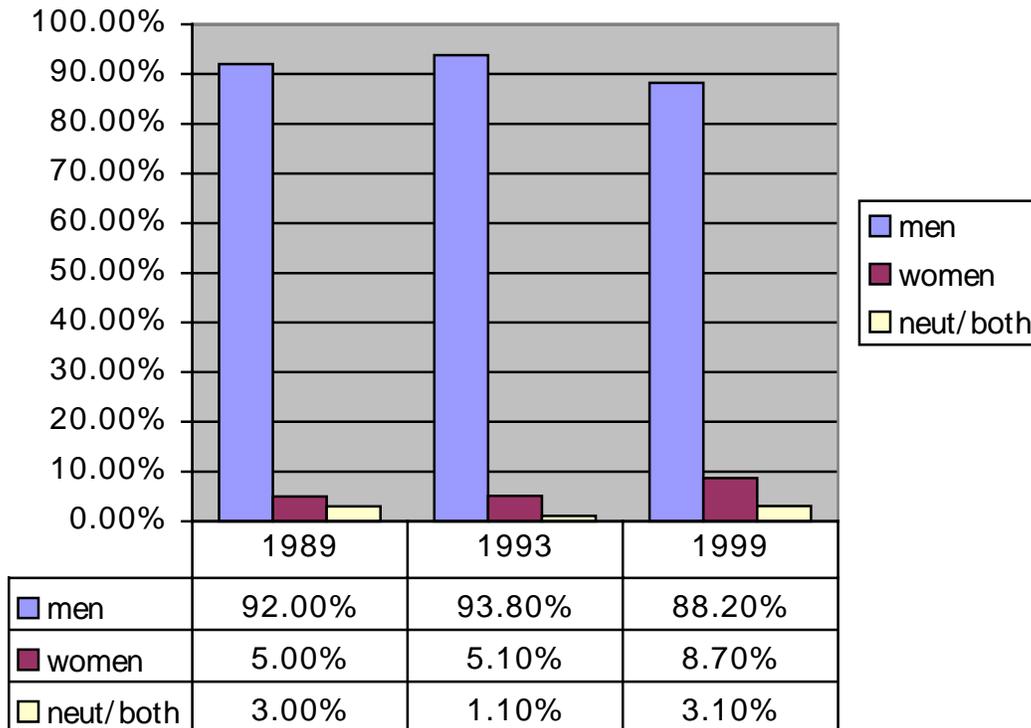
V. Description of Findings

1. Six Weeks of Televised Sports News on Three Los Angeles Network Affiliates

- Unequal reporting of women’s and men’s sports continues:** In the 1989 and 1993 studies, we noted that female athletes rarely received coverage on the televised sports news. The 1999 study reveals only a slight increase in the proportion sports news devoted to coverage of women’s sports and women athletes over the 10-year time period, as indicated in Figure 1.

(Figure 1)

Local Sports News Stories, by sex



In 1999, the three network affiliates showed very similar patterns of coverage, but Table 1 shows that there were also differences among them, with KNBC showing the highest proportion of coverage of women’s sports, and KCBS the lowest.

Table 1			
Percentage of 1999 Sports News, by sex, on Three Local Network Affiliates			
	KNBC	KABC	KCBS
Men's Sports	86.7%	87.1%	91.8%
Women's Sports	10.6%	8.6%	5.8%
Both/Neutral	3.1%	4.1%	2.4%

- Frequent programs with no coverage of women's sports:** There were several occasions where three or four days went by without news commentators uttering a single mention of women's sports. Slightly more than half of the 251 newscasts we examined on the three stations contained no coverage of women's sports whatsoever. However, this represented an improvement over 1993, when 70% of broadcasts contained no women's sports coverage.
- Clustering of coverage of women's sports:** In 1993, we noted that there was almost no coverage of women's sports on weekdays. We found the 1999 pattern to be similar, but not as extreme: again, news reports on women's sports were significantly condensed into expanded-format weekend shows (nearly half of the stories on women's sports [78 of 160] appeared on Saturdays or Sundays, and 45% of the total airtime given to coverage of women's sports during the week appeared on Saturdays or Sundays). Despite the fact that weekday coverage of women's sports remains very thin, the amount of such coverage we observed in 1999 represented a noticeable increase over 1993, when there was almost no weekday coverage of women's sports, especially from Mondays through Wednesdays, and roughly 74% of the total time allotted to the coverage of women's sports was on expanded-format Sunday broadcasts.
- Visual game footage and interviews:** In 1999, as in the two previous studies, the sheer number of network news stories on men's sports (918) far eclipsed the women's stories (160). As Table 2 illustrates, the proportion of stories on women's sports that were accompanied by an interview with a woman athlete or coach, or by visual footage fell only slightly short of the proportions in men's coverage. This is an improvement over 1993, when women's sports stories were accompanied by interviews only 7% of the time.

Table 2			
Total Number of 1999 Stories, Visuals and Interviews			
	# of stories	with visuals	with interviews
Men's Sports	918	800 (87%)	232 (25%)
Women's Sports	160	124 (78%)	34 (21%)

- Seasonal variations:** Dividing the sample into three separate two-week time periods (March 15-28, July 12-25, and November 8-21) allowed us to sample variations in coverage of women's sports by season. Of the total 78.2 minutes of coverage of women's sports, 34.6 occurred in the March sample, 30.4 in the July sample, and only 13.2 in November. This asymmetrical seasonal distribution reflected the general pattern found in the previous studies. (See Appendix A for a list of women's sports that occurred during these three time periods.)
- Early evening and late-night reports:** We included the 6:00 p.m. news reports in the study for the first time in 1999 (along with the 11:00 p.m. reports) because we suspected that perhaps more reportage of women's sports was occurring on this early evening segment. We found little difference between the two time frames. As Table 3 shows, each station presented a larger number of women's sports stories on its 11:00 p.m. broadcasts than on its 6:00 p.m. broadcasts. However, the total time devoted to women's sports at 6:00 p.m. was slightly higher than on the 11:00 p.m. broadcasts. This is because the women's sports segments were likely to be longer on the 6:00 p.m. shows than on the 11:00 p.m. shows. This difference is explained mostly by the more frequent tendency to include short (3-to-12 second) verbal reports on a women's athletic contest in the 11:00 p.m. reports.

Table 3			
1999 Network News: Stories on Women's Sports, by time slot			
	# stories	tot. minutes	ave. seconds/story
3 Stations, 6:00 p.m.	66	40.4	37
3 Stations, 11:00 p.m.	94	37.8	24

Qualitative Gender asymmetries

The quantitative data indicate a continued underreporting of women's sports; a qualitative analysis of the ways that women and men are presented on the sports news

reveals further gender asymmetries. Two themes that persisted from the previous studies were (a) the choice to devote a considerable proportion of the already-thin coverage of women's sports to humorous feature stories on non-serious women's sports; (b) the (often humorous) sexual objectification of athlete and non-athlete women.

- **Gag features take the place of in-depth coverage of serious women's sports:** As in the 1989 and 1993 studies, we noted in 1999 that while most of the few reports on serious women's sports (like basketball, tennis, golf or soccer) were fairly brief, the occasional more in-depth women's sports story was often a gag feature or a story on a marginal, but visually entertaining pseudosport. For instance, on March 17, KCBS did a "last laugh" segment, and KABC spent 39 seconds during each of its two broadcasts featuring a "Nude Bungee Jumping" story. KABC showed a film clip of the nude woman, strategically painted with St. Patrick's Day green shamrocks, leaping from a bridge, as commentator Bill Weir asked, "Do we have to slow that down?" When interviewed, the bungee jumper said, "That was amazing. I will remember it forever," to which Weir replied, "And so will we," as co-anchors laughed along with him. Similarly, both KNBC and KABC offered up March 23 feature stories on the wrestler/model Sable. Sable was aiming to promote WWF wrestling, but reporters emphasized her scanty, dominatrix-style attire and the fact that she had appeared in *Playboy* magazine. KNBC devoted 27 seconds at 6 p.m., and 21 seconds at 11 p.m. to Sable, and reported on no other women's sports during those shows. Sable was shown at a photo shoot (not wrestling), as KNBC's Fred Roggin noted, "As you can see, Sable doesn't keep much behind the scenes herself." KABC's coverage of Sable was even more in-depth. In fact, its 6 p.m. story on Sable was, at 2 minutes, 48 seconds, the longest single news story on women's sports in our 1999 sample (the 11 p.m. story on Sable was trimmed, but still very long, at 1 minute, 15 seconds). KABC's Bill Weir invited viewers into this story by stating, "We're your source for wrestling porn." He then described Sable as a "sexy villainess," and insulted her in an interview by asking if she could count to 10. When, with a disgusted look on her face, she did so, Weir countered, "Ah, yes: beauty and brains." He went on to joke approvingly about Sable's appearance in *Playboy*, and after a film clip of her wrestling (in slow motion in a bikini), Weir concluded by saluting, and saying "Sable, a champion of women's rights. We salute her." Weir managed to squeeze in a 10-second report on women's tennis in to the 11 p.m. show, but the Sable story otherwise represented all coverage of "women's sports" that day.
- **Sexualized humor:** Weir's "wrestling porn" comment about Sable seems to express an unstated assumption at KABC and other network affiliates: part of the entertainment of sports news shows is the opportunity they present for viewers to engage in sexual voyeurism. The producers supply the images, and the commentators supply the locker-room humor. For instance, on March 17, KNBC's Fred Roggin discussed the NFL's decision to once again allow referees to use an instant replay to review on-field decisions. "The problem," Roggin deadpanned as viewers were shown a clip of referees huddled around a monitor, "[is] what will the referees actually be looking at: the play, or as we found out, something else?" Next, viewers got a peek at what the referees were supposedly watching on the monitor: a Victoria's

Secret Fashion show, and a clip of the movie “Eyes Wide Shut,” with Tom Cruise kissing Nicole Kidman, while both appear naked.

- This sort of humorous invitation to engage in sexual voyeurism dovetails thematically with the trivialization of women as athletes. In the mid-July aftermath of the dramatic World Cup Championship by the U.S. soccer team, KCBS and KABC focused less on the accomplishments of the team, and instead continued to re-introduce the story about soccer star Brandy Chastain’s having, at the moment of victory, stripped off her jersey, revealing her sports bra. KCBS’s July 13 report included a remark by Bret Lewis that “Nike plans to market [Chastain’s] sports bra.” Nearly 11 days later, this theme was still familiar enough to fuel a joke in a report on men’s sports. In a humorous feature on the New York Yankees’ David Cone, who had just pitched a perfect game, comedian David Letterman was shown saying that one way to pitch a perfect game is “After each strike you rip off your jersey and run around in a black sports bra.” KABC’s Bill Weir seemed even less able to resist the Chastain sports bra story. Three days in a row, Weir made joking references to this story. On July 15, Weir reported that “Today, the ponytail express stopped in Midtown Manhattan, where it was announced that Nike will exploit Brandi Chastain’s strip tease by fashioning her to a line of sports bras.” The next day, Weir noted that the women soccer players’ “ponytail express” appeared in a golf tournament and that Chastain managed to keep her shirt on but “took off her sweater during warm-ups.” And then on the next day, in a humorous spoof on the film “Eyes Wide Shut,” Weir included a clip of Chastain in her sports bra as part of a collage of half-clothed people. Said Weir, “It seems like Hollywood is really influencing the sports world. Everybody’s getting naked. I’m not complaining. That’s just the way it is.”
- Weir’s penchant for humorous sexual objectification of women athletes was not confined to soccer players. His November 15 story on a tennis match between Mary Pierce and Anna Kournikova focused typically on Kournikova’s image as a sexually attractive young woman. Noting her boyfriend in the crowd, Weir said, “That’s what it takes to date Anna Kournikova: you have to be willing to go watch her play in the afternoon and then fly across the country and play yourself at night....And it’s well worth it, I think most would agree.” He and the anchorperson then shared a knowing laugh.
- If women athletes do not supply enough material for sexual titillation, there is a supporting cast of non-athlete women who are available for humorous voyeurism. Two of the three network affiliates (KNBC twice, KABC five times) continued the time-tested tradition of focusing on shots of young bikini-clad women in the sun-drenched stands of baseball games, often adding their own tongue-in-cheek comments about the women’s attractiveness. For instance, on July 18, KABC’s Rob Fukuzaki enthusiastically said “Helloooooo Pittsburgh!” while viewers were treated to a shot of a woman in the stands. The next day, as viewers saw an image of a blonde woman in a crop-top, Fukuzaki said, “Speaking of perfect, it was a perfect day today in Anaheim.” Sexually humorous stories and references to other women in

supportive non-athlete roles were sprinkled throughout the news reports. KNBC took up nearly three minutes of combined broadcast time on its two July 25 broadcasts reporting on “Laker Girl” (cheerleader) tryouts: among other things, viewers learned that it was the job of these “sizzling beauties” to “Sex it up” on TV. Similarly, on July 16, KABC’s Weir shared a laugh about the “new pit crew” at a Harrah’s Casino-sponsored auto racing show. As two of the Casino’s model/dancers posed as though fixing the car, Weir quipped, “There’s something about showgirls. Who doesn’t love showgirls?” Another anchor chimed in about the car’s driver, “He could just quit driving now,” to which Weir replied, “He could. Yeah. Because why do you drive fast? To get girls. He’s got them. He’s done. He can retire!” The segment ended with shared laughter.

- **Instances of gender symmetry and fairness:** There were some moments of fair and equitable coverage of women’s sports during the six weeks of network news that we examined. And these moments were distributed unevenly across the three network affiliates. While the quantity of KABC’s coverage of women’s sports fell between that of the other two network affiliates, the quality of its coverage tended much more toward trivialization of women athletes and sexualized humor and put-downs of women in general. And while KCBS had the lowest proportional coverage of women’s sports, of the three network affiliates, the quality of their coverage of women’s sports tended to be more respectful, and they engaged in noticeably fewer sexualized putdowns of women in general. KCBS’s Jim Hill, in particular, showed instances (though not a consistent pattern) of high-quality, respectful, coverage of women’s sports. For instance, Hill’s March 15 report on the UCLA women’s basketball game was a straightforward, respectful characterization of the Lady Bruins as a team that “dominates inside and outside.” On July 24 KNBC’s Carlos del Valle gave examples of equitable and inequitable coverage on the 6 p.m. and 11 p.m. broadcasts, respectively. At 6 p.m., del Valle delivered the following sequence of stories: a 1 minute, 52 second-story on men’s major league baseball with visual game footage; 38 seconds on women’s basketball, with visual game footage; 30 seconds on men’s basketball, with visual game footage; 24 seconds on men’s golf, with visual game footage; 28 seconds on women’s tennis, with visual game footage; 25 seconds on men’s cycling, with visual game footage; and finally a 36 second segment on women’s golf, with visual game footage. In the 11:00 p.m. report, however, del Valle offered only a single six-second long story on women’s basketball (with no visual game footage), sandwiched between longer stories on men’s baseball, basketball, cycling, surfing, football, golf, and again baseball.

2. Three Weeks of ESPN “SportsCenter”

The network affiliate sports commentators have only a few minutes of time each night to report on what they decide are the key sports events of the day. By contrast, ESPN’s “SportsCenter” producers have a full hour of programming to work with (minus time devoted to commercials). One might expect, therefore, to find a higher proportion and wider range of coverage of women’s sports on “SportsCenter” shows. As Table 4

illustrates, we actually found the opposite: there was proportionately less coverage of women’s sports on “SportsCenter” than on the local sports news shows. Where on network news, men’s sports reports outnumbered women’s sports stories by a 6:1 ratio, “SportsCenter’s” male-to-female sports stories ratio was a whopping 15:1. The percentage of time devoted to women’s sports was also lower on “SportsCenter” (2.2%) compared with local network affiliate news reports (8.7%)

Table 4		
Minutes and Proportion of Sports News, by sex, on ESPN “SportsCenter”		
	# stories	Tot. minutes (percentage)
Men’s Sports	551	991.8 (96.7%)
Women’s Sports	24	22.1 (2.2%)
Both/Neutral	10	11.9 (1.1%)

- **Visual game footage and interviews:** In addition to offering fewer women’s sports stories, “SportsCenter’s” coverage of women’s sports fell short of the network affiliates’ coverage in other ways. Where 21% of network affiliate women’s sports reports were accompanied by an interview with a woman athlete or coach, only one single interview with a woman (basketball player Lisa Leslie, after winning the MVP award in the WNBA All Star Game) occurred in the “SportsCenter” sample. By contrast, nearly one-fourth of “SportsCenter’s” 551 stories on men’s sports were accompanied by an interview (often, indeed, by multiple interviews) with a male athlete or coach.

3. Asymmetrical Audience-Building on Network News and “SportsCenter”

Sports news and highlights shows make a statement about what they consider “real” sports - or the most important sports - by the amount of time devoted to coverage of various sports, and by the production values committed to coverage of various sports. They also actively build audience interest and anticipation for some sports (and not for others) in two ways: First, during non-sports parts of news shows, and before commercial breaks during “SportsCenter”, they give previews of what they will be covering next; and second, they set the tone for each broadcast by strategically choosing what story will be their lead story.

Previews

Previews serve as “teasers.” They are intended to hold an audience through a commercial break, in anticipation of an exciting or important report. As Table 5 shows,

previews for the sports news segments followed the same general pattern of the proportions of coverage allotted to men’s and women’s sports.

Table 5				
Previews on Network Affiliates and “SportsCenter”, in seconds				
	KNBC	KABC	KCBS	“SportsCenter”
Men’s Sports	739 (88.3%)	934 (85.1%)	828 (93.3%)	3080 (98%)
Women’s Sports	93 (11.1%)	163 (14.8%)	59 (6.7%)	62 (2%)
Both/Neutral	5 (0.6%)	0	0	0

Similar to other categories of coverage, ESPN’s “SportsCenter” once again fell far behind the network affiliates in terms of the proportion of previews (2%) that were devoted to women’s sports. There were also some differences among the network affiliates in terms of how much preview time they allotted to pitching an upcoming women’s sports story, with KABC leading the way with 14.8% of its preview time on women’s sports and KCBS below the average with only 6.7%. However, when we examine the quality of these previews, we see that much of KABC’s previews were not intended to inform the viewer of an upcoming story that reported on a serious women’s sporting event. Instead, a large proportion of these women’s sports previews appear to have been aimed at sexually and humorously titillating the viewer. For instance, during the July sample period, of the total 83 seconds of “women’s sports” previews on KABC, 23 seconds were for an upcoming story on “nude bungee jumping,” and 11 seconds to pitch an upcoming story on the wrestler/model Sable. On this March 23 preview, viewers saw an image of Sable posing in thigh-high high-heeled leather boots, a black silver studded bikini top and black hot pants. KABC’s Bill Weir invited the viewers to stay tuned by stating, “She poses in *Playboy* and wrestles professionally. It’s the woman my mother dreamed about for me, and I’ll talk to her later in sports.” Even when they decided to preview a serious women’s sport, the form was sometimes humorous sexualization. For instance, one of the two KABC previews in the November sample gave new meaning to the term “teaser,” as Bill Weir focused on tennis player Anna Kournikova (an athlete often given disproportionate media coverage not simply for her athletic performances, but because she is seen as sexually attractive): “How’s this for a tease?”, Weir says to viewers, “What it takes to successfully date Anna Kournikova.” The other commentators exclaim, “Ooooooh!” as they cut to a commercial.

Lead Stories

As Table 6 shows, nearly all of the news shows began with a lead story on a men’s sport. Lead stories are significant: they set the tone for each broadcast, they show up-front what is considered to be the most important story. Also - and this is most evident on ESPN -

they are usually the longest stories, containing the highest production values (graphics, an interview, or sometimes even multiple interviews, game footage, musical montage, etc.). July “SportsCenters” usually began with a baseball story, including taped game footage, on the spot coverage from ESPN reporters, interviews, etc. These opening sequences lasted from 6 to 14 minutes. March openers usually included long NBA or men’s NCAA basketball sequences. November openers usually included long NFL or NBA sequences.

Table 6					
1999 Lead Stories					
	KNBC	KABC	KCBS	“SportsCenter”	Total
Men’s Sports	83	80	80	21	264 (97.1%)
Women’s Sports	1	4	3	0	8 (2.9%)

Four of the eight women’s sports lead stories that did appear on the three network affiliates had a local angle: the UCLA women’s basketball team’s progress in the NCAA tournament during the March segment. The other four lead women’s stories appeared during the July segment, and were devoted to following up on the then-recent U.S. Women’s Soccer Team’s World Cup victory. There were no lead stories on women’s sports during the November segment of the sample.

4. NCAA Basketball Women’s and Men’s “Final Fours”

In the 1989 study, we found huge gaps between the very high-quality technical production of the men’s NCAA Final Four and the generally lower-quality technical production of the women’s NCAA Final Four. These differences, which included the use of fewer camera angles, fewer and lower quality graphics and instant replays, periodic mistakes in editing, poor quality sound, and generally shorter and lower quality pregame shows, halftime shows, and post-game shows, were indicators of far lower production values in the women’s broadcasts. By 1993, we observed that while the technical quality of the women’s games still lagged behind that of the men’s, there were notable improvement in most of these aspects of the technical production of the women’s contests.

In 1999, some gender asymmetries persisted. For instance ESPN’s generally good presentation of the women’s Final Four was marred by occasional mistakes or sloppiness in camera work and editing that left commentators momentarily confused or embarrassed, and resulted, and on one occasion, in a blank screen for a few seconds. By contrast, CBS’s production of the men’s Final Four was characterized by the highest quality camera work, consistently smooth-as-silk editing and seamless transitions. Despite ESPN’s less-than-perfect performance, compared with the 1989 and 1993 studies, we

found the technical production of women's NCAA basketball had continued to improve when compared with that of the men's games.

A. Pregame, Halftime and Postgame shows

The quality of pregame, halftime and postgame shows has become more equitable. We noted in the previous studies that the men's pregame shows provided a model for building audience knowledge, excitement, and emotional connection to the upcoming games, while the women's pregame shows tended to be shorter, of lower technical quality, and rife with ambivalent gender stereotypes about women athletes. In 1999, ESPN's women's Final Four pregame shows came far closer in style and quality to the CBS's men's pregame shows, than was the case in the previous studies. The men's and women's pregame shows were of roughly the same length, utilized aerial shots from the Goodyear blimp, built audience interest and emotional connection with pre-taped musical/photo/video montages of the teams, players and coaches, included generally good "up close and personal" taped interviews with coaches and key players, and gave the viewer helpful information on strategies and key player match-ups in the upcoming game. One key difference was that ESPN chose not to show the live player introductions in both of the semifinal games (though they did show them for the championship game). Since player introductions are often a point in the broadcast of important basketball games when crowd excitement is at its pregame peak, it is not clear what ESPN's motivations were in not showing the introductions. During the second semifinal game, the ESPN commentators actually talked over, and thus drowned out, the live player introductions; meanwhile, the camera provided close-ups of the coaches and the crowd, almost as though ESPN had decided to cover up or hide the player introductions. CBS's pregame coverage included the live player introductions for all three men's games.

The halftime shows were also fairly symmetrical in style and substance. We noted in the 1993 study that a slice of each of the women's halftime shows were used to build audience interest and excitement for the upcoming men's Final Four games (e.g., interviews with coaches of the men's games), and that there was no analogous mention of the women's games during the halftime of the men's games. In 1999, this asymmetry mostly disappeared. The major source of cross-referencing was due to the fact that Duke had teams in both the women's and the men's Final Four (and eventually in both Championship games as well). The novel fact that the school had the opportunity to win both the women's and the men's championship in the same year was news, and was mentioned once during one of the men's pregame shows, and discussed at more length (including film clips of the Duke men's semifinal victory) during halftime of the women's championship game.

A more significant asymmetry persisted between the women's and men's postgame shows. The women's postgame shows were far shorter. The very brief (1 minute, 32 seconds) postgame show for the two women's semifinal games was no real "show" at all. Rather, it consisted of some live shots—of the coaches and players congratulating each other, of the crowd, of the teams huddling together, and of the players leaving the court. Then, ESPN cut immediately to "SportsCenter", which did return to the site of the

women's Final Four for an additional brief wrap-up before resuming with the normal "SportsCenter" coverage.

By contrast, CBS's wrap-ups of the men's two semifinal games were considerably longer (9 minutes, 38 seconds). They included shots of on-court congratulations and celebrations, but also interviews with a player and the coach of the winning team, and an interview with the winning coach of the first semifinal game previewing the upcoming championship game. The men's postgame show ended with a return to the studio, as the panel of experts discussed the prospects for an exciting championship game, and invited the audience to join them for "Championship Monday." This postgame show was a clinic in audience-building for the men's championship game. And if this was not enough wrap-up, viewers on the local KCBS network affiliate were immediately treated to over fifteen minutes of highlights, game analysis, and commentary, delivered both from the KCBS studio, and on-site with KCBS's Jim Hill.

The postgame shows for the women's and men's championship games were also of significantly different length and quality. The women's postgame show consisted of 8 minutes, in which viewers saw on-court celebrations and hugs by players, a short on-court interview with the winning coach and a player, some high-quality - but obviously very rushed - postgame analysis by the ESPN panel of Robin Roberts, Mimi Griffen and Rebecca Lobo, and a one-minute music/video montage that was intended to give closure to the tournament. ESPN then followed the same formula that they had used in the semifinals, cutting immediately to "SportsCenter". Within a few minutes, "SportsCenter" did return to Roberts, Griffen and Lobo for a final 2 minute, 55 second wrap-up of the championship game, where viewers were shown a taped shot of the winning coach holding the national championship trophy over her head. But neither the traditional "net cutting" celebration, nor the trophy presentation were shown. By contrast, the men's championship postgame show was longer (18 minutes, 10 seconds, excluding commercials). It included shots of on-court celebrations, interviews with players and coaches, the presentation of the championship trophy, replays of the final moments of the game, and an over-four-minute long taped musical/video "tribute to the tournament" (which included video from the just-concluded game and celebratory "net cutting.") And again, local viewers had an opportunity to feast on far more wrap-up, as KCBS tacked on over half an hour of additional replays, studio analysis, and on-the-spot interviews. All in all, the postgame shows for the men's games left viewers with the feeling that they had just viewed an important, dramatic event. The postgame shows for the women's contests left the viewer feeling that ESPN was in a hurry to get someplace else.

B. Instant Replays

In the 1989 study, we pointed to the somewhat higher use of instant replays in men's games, compared with women's. In 1993, the frequency of instant replays had doubled in both men's and women's contests, though multi-angle replays were still far more common in the men's games. As Table 7 shows, a similar pattern persisted in 1999, with

the women's games using instant replays in roughly the same number as in the men's contests.

Table 7					
Slow Motion Instant Replays, NCAA Final Four Basketball					
(Three Men's games, Three Women's games)					
		1 angle	2 angles	3 angles	Total
1999	Men	66	16	1	83
	Women	67	9	0	76
1993	Men	77	19	1	97
	Women	62	4	0	66
1989	Men	32	11	0	43
	Women	33	3	1	34

The only difference in the use of instant replays in NCAA women's and men's basketball games concerned the use of multi-angle instant replays. Multi-angle replays were used 5.7 times per game in the 1999 men's games, while they were shown only 3 times per game in the women's contests. This difference, though not large, may indicate the persistence of somewhat higher production values in the men's games.

C. Use of Statistics

In the 1989 study, we found that men's NCAA basketball broadcasts were enhanced by a continual flow of statistical information - delivered both verbally and through on-screen graphics - giving viewers in-depth information on players' and teams' past performances (e.g., season free throw shooting percentages), and up-to-the-moment information on the current game (e.g., a player's running points totals or rebounding totals throughout the game). By contrast, the women's games in 1989 supplied viewers with far less of this sort of statistical information. In the 1993 study, we found that this gap had closed, with women's games actually slightly surpassing men's in the use of statistics. In 1999, as Table 8 shows, the reporting of statistics in women's and men's games surged, due mostly to a dramatic increase in the use of on-screen graphic statistics. Unfortunately these statistics were used more than twice as often in the men's games, indicating higher production values. The proportional gap between statistics used in men's and women's games actually was higher in 1999 than in the two previous studies.

Table 8				
Use of Statistics, NCAA Final Four Basketball				
(Three Women's games, Three Men's games)				
		Verbal	Graphic	Total
1999	Men	177	283	460
	Women	107	135	242
1993	Men	101	64	165
	Women	127	61	188
1989	Men	100	73	173
	Women	87	28	115

5. Technical Production of WNBA and NBA Basketball

We analyzed the three-game 1999 WNBA championship series (one broadcast on cable by Lifetime, and the other two on NBC), and three of the NBA championship series games, including the final game that clinched the championship (on NBC). (Since the WNBA did not exist when we conducted the most recent [1993] study, we have no baseline data with which to compare our 1999 analysis of professional basketball).

Though we were alert to differences between coverage of women's and men's games, the most striking differences in the quality of coverage in our sample were not those between the WNBA and the NBA, but rather, between the one clearly low-budget WNBA game broadcast by Lifetime and the other five games broadcast by NBC. The pregame and halftime shows, and the technical production (including often poor sound quality) of the game on Lifetime, was generally of poor quality, and often had an awkward feel to it. Though we found some gender asymmetries between the NBC's WNBA and NBA broadcasts, for the most part, these productions were of consistently high technical quality.

A. Instant Replays

As Table 9 shows, the WNBA playoff game broadcast by Lifetime utilized less than half the number of instant replays than the average number in the two WNBA games broadcast by NBC. And Lifetime used no multi-angle replays. This is a clear indicator of much lower production values on the Lifetime broadcast.

Table 9				
Instant Replays in WNBA and NBA Finals				
	1 angle	2 angles	3 angles	Total
WNBA (Lifetime, one game)	25	0	0	25
WNBA (NBC, two games)	101	4	1	106 (53 pg)
NBA (NBC, three games)	178	8	3	189 (63 pg)

Though NBC's two WNBA games used ten fewer replays per game than in their NBA broadcasts, the significance of this difference disappears when we consider the fact NBA games are longer (four 12-minute quarters, or 48 minutes of playing time) than WNBA games (two 20-minute halves, or 40 minutes of playing time). By this measure, the use of instant replays in the WNBA and NBA games was roughly equivalent.

B. Use of Statistics

As Table 10 shows, again the most striking contrast was between the one Lifetime broadcast and the five on NBC. Lifetime used verbal and graphic statistics to enhance viewer knowledge and interest at a rate about one-third of NBC's use of statistics in the two other WNBA games, and the three NBA games. When we compare NBC's two

Table 10			
Use of Statistics in WNBA and NBA Finals			
	Verbal	Graphic	Total
WNBA (Lifetime, one game)	54	21	75
WNBA (NBC, two games)	245	219	464 (232 pg)
NBA (NBC, three games)	349	352	701 (233.7 pg)

WNBA games with NBC's three NBA games, we see that the use of statistics is nearly identical in number. In fact, when we take into account the shorter length of the WNBA games, we see that statistics were actually used in greater frequency in these two games, compared with the rate in the NBA games.

6. Verbal Commentary in Tennis And Basketball

The ways that play-by-play and “color” commentators describe the action, and refer to athletes, often reveals hidden assumptions and values about gender. In examining the commentary in tennis and basketball, we found some changes and some persistent patterns, when compared with the earlier studies.

A. Gender Marking

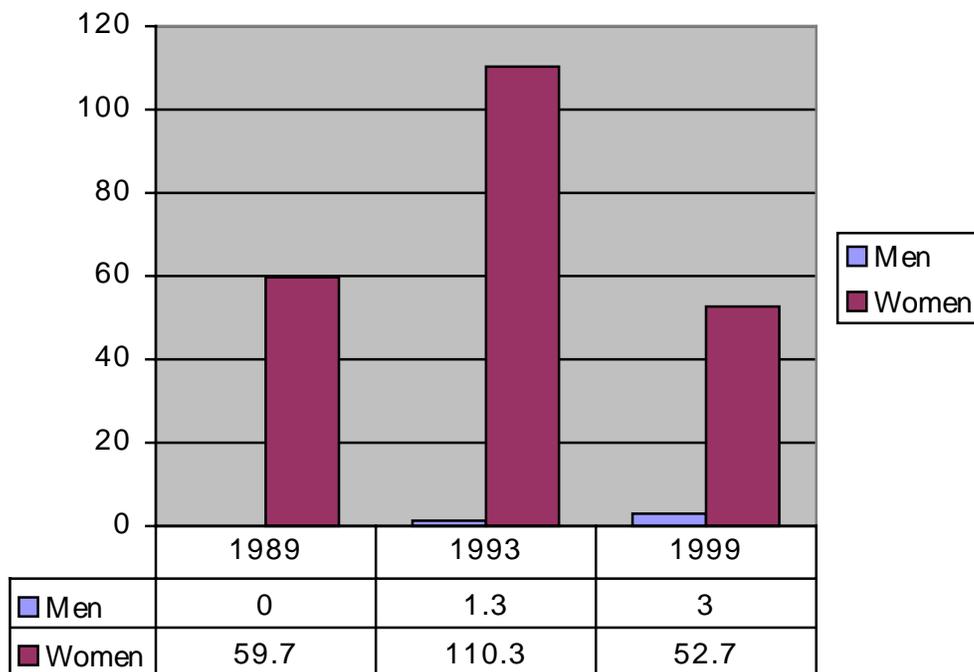
In the 1989 and 1993 studies, we found that the women’s and men’s NCAA “Final Four” basketball coverage tended to verbally and graphically “gender mark” women’s games (e.g., “The Women’s National Championship,” or “the winningest women’s coach all time,” etc.), while presenting the men’s games as a universal norm (e.g., “The National Championship,” or “the winningest coach all time,” etc.). Table 11 breaks down the gender marking in the 1999 coverage. Included in this table is a separate tabulation of the use of gender marked team names (e.g., the Lady Techsters, Lady Vols, and Lady Bulldogs).

Table 11			
Gender Marking, 1999 Women’s and Men’s NCAA Final Four Tournaments			
	Verbal	Graphic	Total
Men	8	1	9 (3 pg)
Men (w/ team names)	8	1	9 (3 pg)
Women	16	128	144 (48 pg)
Women (w/team names)	21	137	158 (52.7 pg)

Of the 137 instances of graphic gender marking in the three women’s games, 46 included on-screen scoreboard displays that appeared after many commercial breaks. The amount of visual gender marking in the women’s games was actually more frequent than these numbers indicate. We chose not to count two almost constant features of the visuals presented to viewers. First, painted on the floor at center court was a “1999 Women’s Final Four” logo. Second, a banner which read “NCAA Women’s Final Four” was also hung at courtside in front of the announcers and scorers’ table. The cameras continually swept by these two signs, giving viewers an almost constant reminder that they were watching a women’s event. By contrast, the court markings for the men’s games were not gender marked. The floor was painted at each end with “Final Four” (not “Men’s Final Four”), and the banner hanging from the announcers’ table carried the names of the competing teams, with no reference to gender.

Figure 2 shows that in NCAA basketball coverage, a dramatic gender asymmetry in gender marking has remained over the course of the 1989, 1993, and 1999 studies. However, there appear to be some subtle shifts since 1989. First, there is a very slight increase in the tendency to verbally gender mark men’s games. There were a few instances of verbal gender marking in each game, including references to the “Men’s Final Four,” the “Men’s National Championship,” and during the championship trophy presentation ceremony, with the introduction of a representative of the “NCAA Men’s Basketball Committee.” The single instance of graphic gender marking came after the final game, during the presentation of the “Men’s NCAA Championship” trophy. Another shift seems to be a marked decline in announcers’ tendency to verbally gender

(Figure 2)
Gender Marking, Basketball
(average per game)



mark women’s games, or women athletes. In both 1989 and 1993, announcers verbally marked the women’s games an average of 16 times per game, while in 1999, verbal gender marking in women’s games dropped to seven times per game. The vast majority of the 1999 gender marking in women’s games was graphic. A notable part of this decline in verbal gender marking is the fact that announcers’ previous tendency to frequently verbally mark women’s successful performances or records (e.g., “the most points ever scored by a woman in school history”) has mostly been replaced by gender neutral language.

Just as in the 1989 and 1993 studies, we found that gender marking in U.S. Open Tennis coverage was roughly symmetrical in the men’s matches and the women’s matches. This parity likely reflects a need to equally mark “men’s” and “women’s” events for the sake of clarity, given the fact that the women’s and men’s tennis matches take place in the same venue, and are somewhat overlapping in terms of the timing and sequence of the matches. Though we have no base-line data on NBA and WNBA, our 1999 data revealed very low rates of (and fairly equal) gender marking in men’s and women’s professional basketball coverage. Though we must acknowledge the built-in asymmetry of the explicitly gender marked WNBA (Women’s National Basketball Association) vs. the generic, non-gender-marked NBA, there was a notable absence of gender marking in the verbal commentary.

B. Hierarchies of Naming

In the 1989 study, we reported that in tennis and basketball, women athletes were continually called “girls,” while men athletes were never called “boys.” We also found a strong tendency in tennis, and a somewhat less dramatic tendency in basketball, for commentators to refer to individual women athletes by their first names only, while nearly always using the last name, or first and last name, when referring to men athletes. We referred to this frequent first-naming and use of “girls” as a “hierarchy of naming,” which reduced adult women athletes to an infantilized status. In 1993, we found some significant changes in how commentators referred to women athletes. First, and most dramatically, the practice of calling women athletes “girls” had nearly disappeared. This practice is also absent in the 1999 study. And second, the tendency to call women athletes by their first name only continued in 1993, especially in tennis coverage, but at a less dramatic rate than in 1989. The 1999 study, we found a rough gender parity and very low rates of first-name only usage by commentators in NCAA basketball (where men were first-named 0.7% of the time and women 1.6% of the time) and in NBA and WNBA games (Men 1.3% and women 0.3%). But we found a continued asymmetry in the naming of women and men tennis players, as Table 12 illustrates.

Table 12				
Naming of Athletes, Tennis				
		First name only	First/Last	Last only
1999	Men	14.6%	24.6%	60.9%
	Women	36.3%	27.8%	35.9%
1993	Men	12.0%	29.2%	58.8%
	Women	31.5%	22.3%	46.2%
1989	Men	7.8%	22.4%	69.8%
	Women	52.7%	18.5%	28.8%

In 1999, commentators in the U.S. Open were still three times as likely to refer to women tennis players by their first names only than was the case with men tennis players. By contrast, men tennis players were nearly twice as likely to be called by their last names only. This 1999 tennis data is strikingly similar to the 1993 data. Interestingly, there was a similar pattern of naming in the local sports news and on “SportsCenter”. In the Los Angeles network affiliate sports news, men were referred to 9.2% of the time by their first name only, while women were first-named 23.1% of the time. On “SportsCenter”, men were called by their first name 4.9% of the time, compared with 9.4% of the time for women. By contrast, in the WNBA games and NBA games, women and men were first-named by commentators at the roughly equally low rates of 0.3% and 1.3% respectively.

C. The Gender of Emotions

Commentators in all sports tended to speak of the importance of players’ emotions—either as resources necessary to fuel peak performances in big games or important situations, or as impediments to quality play. Announcers’ descriptions of the key roles of emotions tended to take on a different flavor and focus in women’s games and men’s games.

Men’s Emotions: Commentators often discussed emotions in men’s games or matches in terms of players’ “intensity,” “passion,” “heart” or “fire” for the game. When we examine the situations in which these terms were used, more often than not, these were code words for players’ willingness or ability to respond aggressively to an opponent’s aggressive challenges. Players who responded to challenges by channeling their anger into controlled aggression and intimidation of the opponent were lauded for their “emotional intensity” and “heart.” This kind of gender coding of emotion was most apparent in the NBA broadcasts, where a typical story line was that a given player (e.g., San Antonio’s David Robinson or Tim Duncan) had too little “emotional intensity,” or that a specific player (e.g., New York’s Latrell Sprewell) had too much (uncontrolled) aggression. For instance, in a pregame show interview, Spurs player Mario Elie explained how, at the opening of the season, his team’s lack of “emotion” was an impediment to their being a championship team. “This is the first team [I’ve been on] where after nine games, I think I may have got [only] one chest bump. These guys are really not emotional guys. It seems to puzzle me why you can’t get emotional out there. Guys are talking bad about you, [and you don’t] retaliate.” This sort of emotional deficiency was portrayed as interfering with players’ contribution to the team effort in much the same way that not being able to perform a particular shot might. However, the successful story line goes, as a player “matures,” he overcomes this problem by virtue of his “desire” to succeed, and his ability to control and direct his aggression and energy on the floor. Indeed, the San Antonio Spurs’ championship success was discussed largely in terms of Robinson’s and Duncan’s ability to transcend what was seen as their previous lack of “emotional intensity,” now replaced by “heart” and a “killer instinct.” When a player does emotional labor of this sort, he becomes a more “complete” player, and an asset to his team, as he “dominates” on the court.

Women's Emotions: A typical WNBA emotional story line differs substantially from the NBA stories. WNBA commentators also spoke of the importance of "emotion" as a key resource for a winning team, but in this case, emotions were viewed as a community-building resource that welled up in the individual, and was then put to the service of the team. For instance, a major story line during the championship series was the Houston Comets' loss of teammate Kim Perrot, who had died recently of cancer. Though the Perrot death may be seen as a unique situation that emotionally colored the entire series in an unusual way, there were also other incidents of this sort of emotional framing of the women's game. For instance, during a halftime segment on the New York Liberty's "emotional leader" Teresa Weatherspoon, viewers were told (accompanied by a sad musical backdrop and visuals of Weatherspoon on the bench looking up into the sky) that she had had to deal this season "...with the loss of her nephew Anthony who died in a tragic car accident." Weatherspoon then explained in the interview that her nephew "was my world...I dedicate everything to him." That his death had motivated her to higher levels of play was confirmed next, as viewers were shown a tape of her miraculous game-winning shot from the previous game, with her adding, "We're the last one smiling right now." Generally, this sort of WNBA emotion story began with a player (or a team) sustaining a personal loss when a close friend or family member was badly injured became ill, or died. This loss was first experienced as an "emptiness" that was eventually filled by transforming the dead (or injured) loved one into a memorialized symbol of grief, reverence, and inspiration. With the help of her teammates, and through her own capacity for feeling, the player completed the healing "journey," and in the process the player and team became victorious. The image of the athletic victory was ultimately equated with the image of victory over the loss of a loved one. Symbolic paraphernalia (posters and signs, like "3Peet for Kim") displayed on and off the court echoed this theme during the victory celebration, and the winning coach announced, "this trophy's for Kim [Perrot]."

7. Race and Sex of Sports Commentators

The race and sex composition of the profession of televised sports commentary has become more diverse in recent years. This diversity appears in our data, and though there are differences across genres (from sports news to sports play-by-play, and from women's sports events to men's sports events), it is apparent that white males still tend to dominate the key positions as the main voices of authority in sports commentary.

Sports News and ESPN "SportsCenter"

The sports news shows on the three network affiliates, and ESPN's "SportsCenter" evidenced far greater racial diversity than sexual diversity among the commentators. As Table 13 shows, 61.3% of the programs we studied were anchored or co-anchored by whites, while only 3.2% were anchored or co-anchored by women. The paucity of women commentators in sports news and highlight shows echoes the small proportion of these shows that are devoted to coverage of women's sports.

Table 13								
Race and sex of anchors or co-anchors on sports news and highlights shows								
	WM	BM	LM	AM	WF	BF	LF	AF
KNBC	56		26					
KABC	59			23				
KCBS	23	45					6	
“SportsCenter”	33	10			3			
TOTALS	171	55	26	23	3	0	6	0
	60.2%	19.4%	9.2%	8.1%	1.1%	0%	2.1%	0%

[WM=White Males; BM=Black Males; LM=Latino; AM=Asian-Pacific Male; WF=White Females; BF=Black Females; LF=Latinas; AF=Asian Pacific Females]

Commentary in NCAA, NBA/WNBA basketball and Professional Tennis

As Table 14 shows, with 74% white commentators, NCAA basketball, NBA and WNBA basketball, and professional tennis evidenced a bit less racial diversity than did the commentators on sports news and highlights shows (61.3% White). However, there was significantly more sex diversity among commentators in basketball and tennis (38% female commentators) than was evidenced in the sports news and highlights shows (3.2% female). Women commentators tended to be clustered (27 of 38) in coverage of women’s sports, and played very minor roles, if any, in coverage of men’s events. By contrast, men commentators were liberally distributed across nearly all events, and often played central roles in the commentary in women’s events.

Table 14								
Race and sex of commentators in basketball and tennis								
	WM	BM	LM	AM	WF	BF	LF	AF
NCAA (men)	10	6			4			
NCAA (wmn)	3				9	3	2	
NBA	15	6			3			
WNBA	2	3			7	1		
Tennis (wmn)	8				2		3	
Tennis (men)	8						3	
Tennis (mixd)	1				1			
TOTALS	47	15	0	0	26	4	8	0
	47%	15%			26%	4%	8%	

[NOTE: commentators were counted per game or per match. Thus, the same individuals were often counted more than once, since the same teams of commentators were often assigned to do games or matches that were part of a series.]

However, this race and sex diversity does not extend to all job levels. As Table 15 shows, when we look at the key “voices of authority” in sports commentary—the people who occupy the play-by-play and “color” commentary “in the booth”—we find a striking overrepresentation of whites (84.3%) and men (68.7%)

Table 15								
Race and sex of basketball and tennis play-by-play and color commentators “in the booth”								
	WM	BM	LM	AM	WF	BF	LF	AF
NCAA (men)	6							
NCAA (wmn)	3				3			
NBA	6							
WNBA	2	1			3	1		
Tennis (men)	8				2		3	
Tennis (wmn)	8						3	
Tennis (mxd)	1				1			
TOTALS	34	1	0	0	9	1	6	
	66.7%	2%			17.6%	2%	11.8%	

This pattern was especially striking in the NCAA and professional basketball commentary, where 23 of the 25 commentators “in the booth” were men, and 18 of 25 were white. In fact, with the exception of the single WNBA game broadcast by Lifetime, every basketball broadcast we examined had at least one (often two) white males “in the booth.” Most of the women, and most of the people of color in the basketball broadcasts were used either for occasional “on court” reports, or on a panel of experts (coaches, athletes) during pregame and halftime shows. The play-by-play and color commentary, which dominates the broadcasts, was exclusively delivered by white males in the three NBA games, in the three NCAA men’s games; entirely by whites (a man and a woman) in the three NCAA women’s games, and entirely by whites (a man and a woman) in the two WNBA games broadcast by NBC.

VI. Analysis and Interpretation of Findings

The beginning of the 21st Century is a time of tremendous opportunity for the growth and development of girls and women's sports in the United States. The close of the 1990's witnessed the introduction of women's professional basketball, and the highly celebrated success of the world champion U.S. women's soccer team. These high profile professional successes are but the tip of a huge iceberg of growth in sport participation among girls and women over the past thirty years (Acosta & Carpenter 1998; Hargreaves 1994; Hall 1996).

The industry of televised sports has been far from a leader in this historic explosion of women's sports. Instead, television has cautiously followed, rather than led or promoted, the growth in girls' and women's sports. At best, televised sports has offered sporadic, token, and marginal coverage of women's sports, while continuing to aggressively build audiences for lavishly produced men's sports (Duncan & Messner 1998; Messner, Duncan & Wachs 1996). At worst, television has simply ignored women's sports and continued to reinforce the myth that sport is an exclusively male realm (Creedon 1998; Kane & Lenskyj 1998; McKay, Messner & Sabo 2000; Sabo & Jansen 1998). This study points to evidence of some improvement in the coverage of women's sports in the decade spanning the three AAF studies (1990, 1994, 2000). But despite some improvements, televised coverage of women's sports is quantitatively still very thin, and qualitatively still suffers generally from lower production values, and from some commentators' negative or ambivalent values about women and athleticism.

News and Highlights Shows: Women Athletes Still Missing in Action

The coverage of women's sports on network affiliate news is still very sparse. Given the size of the sample, the small increase since 1993 in the proportion of news shows devoted to coverage of women's sports is not terribly significant. Moreover, the quality of coverage of women's sports—especially the tendency to spend more time and resources reporting on non-serious, sexualized, and/or humorous women athletes or events, suggests a serious lack of commitment by the Los Angeles network affiliates to any principle of fair and equitable coverage of women's sports. To be sure, there are some minor signs of progress: KCBS' Jim Hill does not engage in the kind of humorous sexual voyeurism or sexualized put-downs of women that some of his colleagues at other local affiliates regularly engage in, and he (and others) occasionally devote some time to a high-quality and respectful story on women's sports. But even Hill's professionalism does not alter the fact of the snail's pace of growth in quantitative coverage of women's sports, and the continued lack of respect for women's sports—and often, for women in general—that is evidenced on all three sports news shows.

ESPN's "SportsCenter" devoted an even lower proportion of time to coverage of women's sports than did the network affiliate news shows. The finding in this study that "SportsCenter" devoted only 2.2% of its airtime to covering women athletes and women's sports was consistent with findings in other recent studies (Eastman & Billings 2000). "SportsCenter's" ironic, often snide humorous style, described by one scholar as

“cool as the other side of the pillow,” (Farred 2000), has successfully set the tone for the growth of other sports highlights shows that also appear to offer up a standard staple of men’s baseball, men’s basketball, men’s football, with occasional smidgens of men’s hockey, auto racing, and some golf and tennis. Women’s sports are rarely included, and if they are, they usually appear as an afterthought. “SportsCenter” offers viewers a consistent, almost seamless vision of sport as an exclusive territory set up by and for men (Messner, Hunt & Dunbar 2000).

One might presume that spending over 88% of the airtime on the local sports news shows, and close to 97% of “SportsCenter” airtime reporting on men’s sports simply reflects the reality that there are far more men’s sports to cover. Indeed, during the three two-week segments of televised news, and three weeks of “SportsCenter” that we examined, there were more men’s sports taking place than women’s sports. This was especially true during the July and November segments, when two men’s professional sports for which there is currently no women’s counterpart—professional baseball and professional football, respectively—dominated the sportscasts. So it should not be surprising to see more coverage of men’s than women’s sports. However, we should consider three additional facts: first, during the July news segment, the WNBA was in season, but the games were almost never mentioned on the news and highlights shows. Second, the July news segment fell in the period of the immediate aftermath of the highly celebrated World Cup victory of the U.S. women’s soccer team. With the exception of a few humorously sexualized follow-up stories on what came to be known as the “Brandi Chastain Sports Bra Story,” there was very little follow-up on this story. And, significantly, there was no noticeable “spillover effect” in terms of increased news or “SportsCenter” coverage of women’s sports in the immediate aftermath of the women’s World Cup championship. In fact, the most striking outcome of this event was how quickly the network affiliates and ESPN “SportsCenter” returned to the business-as-usual coverage of men’s sports. Third, the women’s college basketball was in season during the March sample. Finally, as Appendix A shows, during the three time periods covered in the study, there were many other women’s sports taking place that were not covered in the news.

Clearly, the gatekeepers of televised sports news and highlights have continued to choose to allot a disproportionately high amount of coverage to men’s sports. Although women’s sports are booming as never before, the continued lack of coverage of women’s sports on these news and highlights shows amounts to the continuation of what Gerbner (1978) called the “symbolic annihilation” of women in the media. As we argued in our analysis of the 1989 and 1993 studies, we live in a media-driven society. Women’s athletics are booming as never before. However, if it is not covered in the mass media, we can conclude that in a very real way, it simply did not “happen.”

Against this backdrop of near-silence concerning women’s sports, it is especially important to examine how women are shown and talked about, on the rare occasion that they do come into focus on television news and highlights shows. In 1999, we once again found that women (both athletes and spectators) were quite commonly used by commentators as the brunt of sexualized jokes. That producers chose to focus their few

moments of “in-depth” women’s sports coverage joking about (and at times insulting) the scantily-clad wrestler-model Sable and a female “nude bungee jumper,” highlighting the “Laker Girls” cheerleaders, joking about what one has to do to “date” tennis player Anna Kournikova, rehashing the Brandi Chastain “sports bra” story, and delivering visual moments of sexual voyeurism peppered with locker-room humor, says volumes about the network affiliates’ and ESPN’s assumptions about who their audiences are, and what they want to see. The producers of these shows seem to assume that their viewers are predominantly heterosexual men who (a) do not want to see or hear anything about women’s sports, and (b) find pleasure in sexual voyeurism and sexualized jokes about women (Duncan & Brummett 1989). However, and this is especially true of the local network affiliate news shows, we wonder how this narrow approach to sports news reporting may cause many viewers of these evening and late-night news shows simply to tune out when the sports reports begin. In other words, we suspect that the lack of coverage of women’s sports, along with the often insulting treatment of women in general in these shows leads to a dramatic narrowing of what is otherwise a very diverse audience for televised news shows. We speculate that an increase in professional, respectful and equitable coverage of women’s sports on these shows would actually hold the large, diverse audience that has tuned in to the news shows.

Technical Production of Women’s and Men’s NCAA Basketball

One of the most notable changes since the earlier studies is in the generally higher quality of coverage of the women’s NCAA basketball tournament “Final Four” games. We did observe that the technical quality of ESPN’s production of the women’s games was a bit spotty compared with CBS’s consistently high-quality production of the men’s games. However, compared with the low quality coverage of the 1989 women’s Final Four, and the somewhat improved, but still lower quality 1993 coverage, 1999 coverage evidenced a dramatic closing of the quality gap between the production values in women’s and men’s games.

The place where ESPN’s coverage of the women’s games fell most notably short of CBS’s coverage of the men’s games was in the postgame shows, especially the one following the championship game. CBS’s postgame shows were considerably longer than ESPN’s, and included some wrap-up statistical information, interviews with coaches and players, in-studio analysis by expert commentators, some high-quality audience-building information for the upcoming championship game (after the semifinals), and a very high-quality musical/video montage that gave viewers an emotionally-satisfying sense of closure (after the championship game). By contrast, ESPN closed out its broadcasts in a very rushed manner. Rather than building a satisfying wrap-up show around the highly skilled and professional commentators Robin Roberts, Mimi Griffen, and Rebecca Lobo, ESPN producers were clearly intent on returning viewers, as rapidly as possible, to business-as-usual at ESPN, by quickly folding the postgame wrap-ups into its “SportsCenter” show. And, as we have seen, “SportsCenter” is consistently among the least supportive and friendly televised venues for women’s sports. Thus, despite ESPN’s generally good work in broadcasting the actual Women’s Final Four games, their cutting away from the contests detracted from viewers’ ability to experience an

informative and emotionally satisfying closure to the contests. We can surmise that this shortcoming expresses a continued ambivalence (or fear) among ESPN's producers that covering women's sports fully and adequately might threaten what they assume to be the tastes and desires of their presumably mostly male audience. However, if they hope to expand their audience base to include those who enjoy women's sports, continued expansion and improvement of the coverage of events like the NCAA Women's Final Four (as well as regular season women's college basketball games) will be necessary.

Symmetries and Asymmetries in Sports Commentary

Commentators in college basketball and in the U.S. Open Tennis coverage have noticeably improved since the 1989 study, in terms of gender-biased language. Announcers in 1999 seem increasingly to be willing and able to speak respectfully about women's athletic accomplishments. However, NCAA commentary evidenced a continued tendency to gender mark the women's games and athletes at a very high rate (52.7 times per game), while presenting the men's games in neutral, non-gendered ways, with very low frequencies of gender marking (3 times per game). This sort of asymmetry was mostly absent in NBA and WNBA contests, where (with the exception of the fact that the league-name "WNBA" is a gender marked term) both men's and women's events were gender marked at an extremely low rate. By contrast (and consistent with the previous studies), tennis athletes and events were gender marked at very high rates, but very symmetrically. As we noted in the previous studies, symmetrical gender marking (whether at high rates, such as in tennis, where gender marking is useful for clarity of commentary, or at low rates, such as in WNBA and NBA commentary) is not a problem. However, asymmetrical gender marking (e.g., "The Women's National Championship" vs. "The Championship") is a problem, because it tends to subtly define women athletes and games as second class and derivative, while presenting men athletes and games as an unquestioned universal norm (Eitzen & Baca Zinn 1989). Asymmetrical gender marking, in short, impedes the growing legitimacy of women's sports, by subtly supporting the ideological assumption that sport is naturally men's terrain, and that women athletes must be, at best, interlopers into this terrain.

Another place where sports commentary in 1999 evidenced some change, but also some continuity is in the manner that commentators "name" athletes. Consistent with our observation in the 1993 study, there were no infantilizing references in 1999 to women athletes as "girls." However, in tennis commentary, we saw a continued tendency to refer to women athletes by their first name only far more often (36.3% of the time) than for men (14.6% of the time). We saw the same tendency to first-name women athletes at a higher rate than men in network affiliate news shows, and on "SportsCenter" broadcasts. As in the past, we draw on studies by socio-linguists who have pointed out that first-name usage tends subtly to communicate less powerful, subordinate, infantilized status, while last (or first-and-last) name usage tends to communicate a more powerful, superordinate, fully adult status (Messner, Duncan & Jensen 1993). Following the earlier studies, some people in the sports media responded to this observation by suggesting that perhaps women tennis players were more frequently called by their first names only because the women players were considerably younger than the men.

Indeed, the men in the 1999 U.S. Open matches that we examined were, on average, several years older than the women. However, this was not true in 1989 and 1993, when the women tennis players were, on average, slightly older than the men players. This observation lends credence to our speculation that women tennis players—independent of their actual ages—tend to be viewed by commentators as “girls,” while men players tend to be viewed as adult men. Subsequently, the ways they are named in the play-by-play commentary (high levels of first-name-only usage for the women, lower rates for the men) subtly communicates to viewers an infantilized and less powerful status for the women, and a fully adult and superordinate status for the men.

Interestingly, this pattern of higher levels of first-name usage for women athletes did not play out either in college or professional basketball broadcasts, where first-name usage was consistently at very low, and gender-symmetrical rates. Though further research is needed to fully explore this difference, we speculate that the verbal infantilization of women tennis players may be related to their being positioned culturally as icons of heterosexual femininity. By contrast, since basketball is a game that involves more bodily aggression than tennis, players are already less restrained by narrow definitions of femininity (Cahn 1994). Indeed, one scholar of the WNBA has observed that the media’s framing of professional women basketball players is ambivalent: on the one hand, the WNBA has gone out of its way to symbolically position their athletes as heterosexual and feminine (by elevating mothers and attractive models as the league’s icons). On the other hand, WNBA players are often described by sports commentators as “mature” adult women, who are playing a game with “naked female aggression” (Banet-Weiser 1999: 403). It may be, then, that women basketball players are playing a key symbolic role in helping to broaden and re-define the contemporary social meanings of femininity. By contrast, the ways that sports commentators symbolically frame women tennis players tends to reinforce and re-stabilize narrowly traditional notions of femininity.

This is not to say that the verbal framing of the WNBA is precisely the same as that of the NBA, however. As we noted, there was a stark difference in the patterning of the ways that commentators discussed the importance of “emotions” in the women’s and the men’s games. In short, the commentary on emotions seemed to say this: both women and men need to harness emotions into a successful quest for inspired play and ultimate victory. But while men players achieve victory through controlled, but passionate aggression, women players achieve victory through individual compassion that eventually bonds the team into a “family.” Men’s feelings individuate them; women’s feelings unite them. This pattern tends to reinforce traditional ideas about the emotional differences between women and men. It also gives us a window into the racial and gender politics of the media’s portrayals of the NBA and WNBA. Banet-Weiser (1999) observes that in recent years, popular media have played up the “ego problems” of young, mostly black male NBA players from “inner cities.” Though the “bad boy” image of a Dennis Rodman or Latrell Sprewell might “offer an attractive ‘edge’ for youth marketing,” the overall effect of the imagery of troubled, violent, and “rich and spoiled” NBA players tends to reinforce negative racial stereotypes of black males. By contrast, race is not so salient in media images of the WNBA players. Instead, against the backdrop of the negatively racialized NBA, the WNBA is positioned as a “return” to the

“purity of the game.” Banet-Weiser (1999: 410) concludes that although “...the athletes of the WNBA are also predominantly African American, their racial identity is rarely mentioned. Instead, the gender of the players is emphasized; in particular, the way in which women are ‘morally superior’—they are the moral guardians of the game, ready to save the game from the ‘thugs’ of the NBA.” Our observations concerning the different ways that emotions are discussed in the NBA and WNBA commentary is consistent with Banet-Weiser’s thesis.

Gender and Race/Ethnicity of Commentators

Sports commentary remains a world dominated primarily by white males. Sports news and highlights shows, evidence some racial/ethnic diversity, but are dominated by men (96.5 in our sample). These patterns reflect and seem to reinforce what is seen as legitimate “news” for these shows: racially diverse men’s sports.

The college and pro basketball broadcasts were similarly ethnically diverse, but evidenced (on the surface, at least) more sex diversity among the commentators than that seen on sports news or highlights shows. However, on closer examination, we see that the vast majority of the people of color and women commentators in the basketball shows are in peripheral positions, either supplying occasional on-the-floor commentary, or serving as members of expert panels that appear briefly during the pregame, halftime and postgame shows. For the most part, the vast majority of the key play-by-play and “color” commentary “in the booth” was done by white males. Though we criticized Lifetime Channel for the low production values in its single WNBA game in our sample, this was the only network that presented a game without at least one white male “in the booth.”

We can conclude that despite some diversity in some sectors, the profession of televised sports commentary still evidences a clear racial and gender hierarchy, with white males still holding nearly all of the central positions as “voices of authority” in the anchor or broadcast booth positions. Most people of color, and most women doing sports commentary do so in less central positions. This hierarchy tends to reinforce assumptions about knowledge and authority that are based on hopefully outmoded assumptions of men’s and whites’ natural superiority. Further research might explore the extent to which there are connections between the patterns of what sports are deemed worthy of televised coverage, of how women’s and men’s sports are various covered, with who is put in the positions of authority to deliver the commentary. For instance, we observed that the nearly all-male televised sports news and “SportsCenter” anchors tended not only to spend nearly all of their time reporting and commenting on men’s sports; they also reinforced the idea that sports is a man’s world, not only with their presence as men, but also by supplying plenty of locker-room-style humor in the commentary.

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VIII. Appendix A

Selected List of Sports Events in Which Women Competed in 1999:

INTERCOLLEGIATE WOMEN'S SPORTS IN SEASON

January - April	Gymnastics
January - March	Track & Field Indoor
February - May	Softball
February - June	Track & Field Outdoor
August - November	Field Hockey
September - December	Cross Country
September - December	Soccer
September - December	Volleyball
October - June	Golf
October - March	Swimming
October - March	Ice Hockey
November - March	Basketball NCAA Division I

GOLF

March 8 - 21	Standard Register PING, LPGA Tour, Phoenix, Ariz.
March 25 - 28	Nabisco Dinah Shore, LGPA Tour, Rancho Mirage, Calif.
July 15 - 17	Austrian Open (European Tour), Graz
July 15 - 18	JAL Big Apple Classic, LPGA Tour, New Rochelle, N.Y.
July 22 - 25	German Open (European Tour), Hamberg
July 23 - 25	Giant Eagle Classic, LPGA Tour, Warren, Ohio
November 11 - 14	PageNet Championship, LPGA Tour, Las Vegas, Nev.

TENNIS

March 15 - 28	Lipton Championships, WTA Tour, Key Biscayne, Fla.
July 12 - 18	Prokom Polish Open, Sopot
July 12 - 19	Torneo Internazionale, WTA Tour, Palermo, Italy
July 19	USTA Women's Circuit – Challengers, Peachtree City, Ga.
July 24 - 25	Fed Cup, world group semi-finals and group one playoffs, Ancona, Italy
November 8 - 14	Advanta Championships, Philadelphia, Pa.
November 8 - 14	Wismilak International, WTA Tour, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
November 15 - 21	Chase Championships, WTA Tour, New York City, N.Y.
November 15 - 22	Volvo Open, WTA Tour, Pattaya City, Thailand

TRACK & FIELD

March 19	IAAF Grand Prix II All Africa Invitational, Roodeport, South Africa
March 26	IAAF Engen Grand Prix Summer Series, Capetown, South Africa
July 17	IAAF Nikaia '99 (Golden League), Nice, France
July 21	IAAF Meeting in France (Golden League), Paris, France

MULTI-SPORTS EVENTS

July 3 - 13	World University Games, Palma De Mallorca, Spain
July 24 - August 8	Pan American Games, Winnipeg, Canada

OTHER SPORTS

March 8 - 14	Ice Hockey - World Championship, Espoo, Finland
March 14,16,18,20	Soccer - United States Women's National Team exhibition games
March 15 - 28	Snowboarding - U.S. Open Championship, Stratton Mountain, Vt.
March 16 - 25	Skiing - U.S. Alpine Championship, Deer Valley, Utah
March 17 - 24	Skiing, Freestyle - Championship, Deer Valley, Utah
March 19 - 21	Short Track Speed skating - World Short Track Championship, Sofia, Bulgaria
March 21 - 28	Figure Skating - World Championships, Helsinki,Finland
March 27 - 28	Cross country - IAAF World Cross Country Championships, Belfast, Northern Ireland
July 10 - August 21	Basketball - WNBA season
July 12 - 18	Modern Pentathlon World Championships, Budapest, Hungary
July 14	Basketball - WNBA All-Star Game
July 18 - 24	Synchronized swimming - U.S. Open Championships, St. Peters, Mo.
July 19 - 25	Beach Volleyball - World Championships, Marseille, France
July 22 - 29	Archery - World Championship, Riom, France
July 23 - August 1	Swimming - European Championships, Istanbul, Turkey
November 2 - 17	Volleyball - World Cup, Tokyo, Japan
November 10 - 14	Figure Skating – Nations Cup, Gelsenkirchen, Germany
November 12 - 15	Figure Skating - British Championships, Milton Keynes, England
November 18 - 21	Figure Skating – Trophée Lalique, Paris, France
November 20 - 27	Weightlifting - World Championship, Athens, Greece
November 21	Tokyo Marathon, Japan