

July 01, 2007

Women, sport, and human rights: where is the connection?

Mary A. Hums
University of Louisville

Eli A. Wolff
Northeastern University

Recommended Citation

Hums, Mary A. and Wolff, Eli A., "Women, sport, and human rights: where is the connection?" (2007). *CSSS Staff Presentations*. Paper 29. <http://hdl.handle.net/2047/d10009577>



WOMEN, SPORT, AND HUMAN RIGHTS: WHERE IS THE CONNECTION?

Mary A. Hums
University of Louisville
Louisville, Kentucky, USA

Eli A. Wolff
Northeastern University
Boston, Massachusetts, USA



Center for the Study of Sport in Society

ABSTRACT

Sport organizations and human rights organizations are beginning to address the intersection of sport and human rights. The United Nations has produced several documents mentioning the role of sport, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), and the Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Rights and Dignity of Persons With Disabilities (in progress). The International Olympic Committee and the International Paralympic Committee both created policy statements related to sport as a human right. What is the status of women in this dialogue? This paper provides examples of how sport organizations address sport as a human right as it relates to women in sport, including increasing opportunities for women to participate and take active leadership roles. Sport organizations which have taken steps to increase women's sport opportunities include the International Olympic Committee's Women in Sport Commission and the International Paralympic Committee's Women in Sport Commission. Advocacy organizations such as the Women's Sport Foundation and the National Association for Girls and Women in Sport continue their work in the United States. Recently the National Collegiate Athletic Association formed the Office for Diversity and Inclusion. Finally, international organizations such as Right to Play and Sport for All are working on initiatives to increase opportunities for girls and women around the world. Overviews of these organizations' best practices will be discussed and implications for other sport organizations to promote human rights for women will be presented.

UNITED NATIONS DOCUMENTS

UNITED NATIONS CONVENTION ON THE ELIMINATION OF ALL FORMS OF DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN

ARTICLE 10

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in order to ensure to them equal rights with men in the field of education and in particular to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women:

(g) The same Opportunities to participate actively in sports and physical education;

ARTICLE 13

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in other areas of economic and social life in order to ensure, on a basis of equality of men and women, the same rights, in particular:

(c) The right to participate in recreational activities, sports and all aspects of cultural life.

INTERNATIONAL SPORT ORGANIZATIONS

INTERNATIONAL OLYMPIC COMMITTEE

IOC Olympic Charter

Article 4. The practice of sport is a human right. Every individual must have the possibility of practicing sport, without discrimination of any kind and in the Olympic spirit, which requires mutual understanding with a spirit of friendship, solidarity and fair play.

Article 5. Any form of discrimination with regard to a country or a person on ground of race, religion, politics, gender or otherwise is incompatible with belonging to the Olympic Movement

IOC Women and Sport Commission

Women and Sport Commission was established in 1995 by the IOC President to advise the IOC Executive Board on suitable policies to be developed in this field.

IOC Sport for All

Sport for All is a movement promoting the Olympic ideal that sport is a human right for all individuals regardless of race, social class and sex. The movement encourages sports activities that can be exercised by people of all ages, both sexes & different social and economic conditions.

INTERNATIONAL PARALYMPIC COMMITTEE

IPC Women in Sport Committee

The role of the Women in Sport Committee (WISC) is to advocate for the full inclusion of girls and women at all levels of Paralympic sport, identify barriers that restrict participation, recommend policies and initiatives that address these barriers and oversee the implementation of initiatives to increase participation

SPORT ADVOCACY ORGANIZATIONS

RIGHT TO PLAY

Right To Play's main programming principles across all projects includes Inclusion, where each project shall include children who may be marginalized for reasons of gender, religion, ability, ethnicity, disability or social background.

INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WOMEN IN SPORT

The IWG is an independent coordinating body consisting of representatives of key non-governmental organizations from different regions of the world. Its over-arching objectives are promoting and facilitating the development of opportunities for girls and women in sport and physical activity throughout the world.

WOMEN'S SPORTS FOUNDATION

The Women's Sports Foundation is a national nonprofit, educational, member-based organization dedicated to promoting the lifelong participation of all girls and women in sports and fitness. The Foundation seeks to create an educated public that encourages females' participation and supports gender equality in sport.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR SPORT AND PHYSICAL EDUCATION FOR GIRLS AND WOMEN

IASPEGW aims to Bring together women of many countries working in the field of physical education and sport; Represent and promote the interests of girls and women at all levels and in all areas of physical education and sport; Strengthen international contacts and networks; Afford opportunities for the discussion of mutual concerns and to share good practice; Promote activity in such fields as the exchange of persons and ideas among member countries and research on physical education and sport for girls and women

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR GIRLS & WOMEN IN SPORT

NAGWS aims to develop and deliver equitable and quality sport opportunities for ALL girls and women through relevant research, advocacy, leadership development, educational strategies, and programming in a manner that promotes social justice and change