8F Nicole LaVoi, University of Minnesota
“Let the Data Tell the Story: The Landscape of College Athletics for Women Coaches”

Women sport coaches face multilevel barriers which impact, impede and limit success and career longevity – ranging from athlete allegations of abuse and mistreatment, to marginalization, to unconscious gender bias in the hiring and retention, to fulfilling the role of primary child caretaker in the family. These complex levels of influence are well documented in LaVoi’s (Ed., 2016) recent scholarly book *Women in Sports Coaching*, as well as popular press articles which cite a “College athletics war on women coaches” (Griffin, 2015). Data from the Women College Coaches Report Card, patterns of coach turnover by age and gender, and a recent study on athletes’ gender bias on coach leadership style (Burton, Walker, Wells & LaVoi, 2016) will be presented and placed within the Intersectional Ecological Model of Women in Sports Coaching (LaVoi, 2016). Emphases will be placed on intersectionality identities of women coaches, and the socio-cultural and organizational level barriers of the model that are of most relevance to sport sociology scholars, as well as how this body of work is utilized for public scholarship.

8F Mary Jo Kane, University of Minnesota & Nicole LaVoi, University of Minnesota
“An Examination of Intercollegiate Athletic Directors’ Attributions Regarding the Declining Number of Female Coaches in Women’s Sports”

Two generations removed from Title IX, women have made unprecedented advances in sports ranging from participation rates to fan interest. Yet there remains one key arena where females have not made significant inroads but have witnessed dramatic declines – leadership positions, most notably in coaching: The percentage of female coaches has declined from 90% in the early 1970s, to 40% currently. In the late 1980s, Acosta and Carpenter surveyed athletic directors regarding their attributions for this decline. They found significant gender differences whereby male ADs blamed individual women (e.g., they’re unqualified), while female ADs blamed institutional failure such as success of the “old boys’ network.” The purpose of this investigation was to replicate and extend Acosta and Carpenter. We surveyed a nationwide sample of college ADs in Division I and III to determine their perceptions for the underrepresentation of women head coaches. Results indicated that in Division I, significant gender differences emerged. For example, female ADs rated success of “old boys’ club” and unconscious discrimination as key factors. Key differences between institutional levels were also present: Division III vs. Division I Ads—regardless of gender—attributed the decline to female coaches’ family obligations and conscious discrimination in the hiring process.

8F Don Sabo, D’Youville College; Ellen J. Staurowsky, Drexel University & Phil Veliz, University of Michigan
“Perceptions of Gender Bias Among Coaches of Women’s Collegiate Sports”

This study describes and analyzes gender bias and differential treatment of U.S. coaches in the college sport workplace. Results are based on the responses of nationally representative samples of 2,219 current coaches and 326 former coaches of women’s college teams across the spectrum of sports sponsored by NCAA institutions. Descriptive and analytical statistics were used to test hypothesized differences between subgroups such as female and male coaches. Qualitative content analysis of coaches’ written comments informed interpretations of statistical findings. Findings showed that males dominated hiring practices in athletic departments, (2) many female coaches believe men’s sports receive more resources than men’s sports, (3) majorities of female coaches believed it is easier for men to get top-level jobs, salary increases, promotions, and multiyear contracts upon hiring, (4) many hesitated to raise Title IX concerns with department directors and campus administrators, and (5) male coaches often
claimed reverse discrimination. Analyses revealed intersections between gender, sexual orientation, and race/ethnicity with regard to perceived male advantage. Finally, many female coaches continue to experience gender bias and professional disadvantage in the current workplace of women’s collegiate sports.

8F Janelle Wells, University of South Florida & Elizabeth Taylor, University of Tennessee

“Barriers and Supports of Female Athletic Directors: A Multilevel Perspective”

Despite an increase in participation rates among girls and women across all levels of sport, women are still underrepresented in leadership positions. Less than 10% of National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Division I athletic directors (ADs) are female. Although numerous descriptive studies have been conducted on frequencies and percentages of female coaches and administrators in intercollegiate athletics, little qualitative work has been done looking at supports and barriers experienced by women, especially ADs. The current study examined the supports and barriers of 10 NCAA Division I female ADs using a multilevel framework. Utilizing a three-level framework (i.e., macro, meso, and micro) allows readers to see how factors shape and are shaped by one another. Through semi-structured interviews barriers and supports at each level were revealed. Macro factors included power, hegemonic masculinity, inclusive environments, stakeholder expectations, and institutional gender discrimination. Meso factors included occupational segregation, family-work life, organizational demography and culture. Micro factors included self-efficacy, gender socialization, career intentions, self-limiting behaviors, human and social capital. Overall, three factors emerged as support-only factors: inclusive environments, human and social capital, while seven factors materialized as barrier-only factors. These results have both theoretical and practical application opportunities for individuals, organizations, and society.