

WORKING OVERTIME: THE LIMITATIONS, CHALLENGES
AND OPPORTUNITES FACING WOMEN IN NCAA
BASKETBALL SPORTS INFORMATION

by

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A THESIS

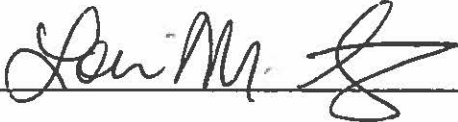
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This research explores why when public relations is a female-dominated profession, sports public relations (i.e., sports information) is a largely male-dominated profession, specifically by looking at NCAA basketball sports information directors (SIDs). The findings suggest that there is a clear gender imbalance in sports information and even greater disparities when it comes to the level of sports women oversee and upward mobility within sports information. Systematic and structural factors within the industry ultimately influence women's decisions to leave the field. With a lack of women in these sports information roles personal interactions and relationships sacrificed.

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Introduction

Public relations is understood as the strategic communication process that builds and manages organizations' -public relationships primarily through a process of conveying messages that reflect a brand and its values, tell a story and uphold its reputation (PRSA, 2012). Public relations practitioners can work for agencies, do in-house work for corporations or work in more specialized industries (e.g., sports). Overall, this is largely known to be a female-dominated industry, a trend that starts at the university level. In the 2008-2009 academic year 4,475 students received bachelor's degrees in public relations. Of those students, 3,606 were female and 869 were male ("PR by the Numbers – 2012," 2016). Public relations is a rapidly growing, with 240,000 jobs in 2014 and a projected 14,900 more jobs by 2024. Public relations practitioners tend to maintain a regular work schedule, work in an office environment and account for 40 hours a week with some overtime ("Public Relations Specialists," 2016).

In the world of sports, such as NCAA athletics, the public relations function is referred to as sports information. Accordingly, sports information directors (SIDs) are responsible for promoting athletic programs and act as liaisons between media and athletic departments (Hardin & McClung, 2002). In contrast to public relations generally, however, sports information positions are almost completely occupied by men; 90.2% of SIDs are male (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Moreover, unlike public relations' growth in other industries, sports information has limited room for growth. Universities are not rapidly expanding the number of athletic teams at their schools, and 99.6% of universities already have a full time SID (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). In most

cases, sports information departments employ four full-time staff members and heavily rely on undergraduate student work (Hardin & McClung, 2002).

The primary job of a SID is to publicize athletics teams and build relationships between a university's athletic programs and key stakeholders. At the collegiate level, SIDs are usually given two to three sports a year, for which they handle media relations, crisis management, press releases, news stories, social media and more (Whiteside & Hardin, 2010). College athletics requires skewed working hours, dictated in large part by late-night games and weekends on the road. In other words, SIDs do not have a typical 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. work day, and their schedules vary season to season based on sport responsibilities. Night games and travel weekends make for an ever-changing office space from the media room, to the team bus and hotel, to courtside press seats.

The gender disparity between public relations generally and sports information specifically is notable. While men only make up one-quarter of public relations practitioners, they make up over three-quarters of the sports information work force (Whiteside & Hardin, 2010). That said, there is little public relations literature that has explored the gendered implications. This study of men's and women's NCAA basketball SIDs therefore examines the gender differences in this profession and if there is anything lost when women are not visible in sports information. These questions were explored through an online survey of 184 SIDs and four phone interviews. Participants had a genuine enthusiasm and interest in this topic, further indicating the gap in academic literature on this subject.

Literature Review

Understanding this issue requires a broader understating of gender in sports information, the socialization of women, basketball history, Title IX, and work-life responsibilities, all of which help clarify women's relationship to sport throughout history and the limitations women have faced in this realm. Societal ideologies are reflected in the gender gap in sports information and the apparent barriers SIDs face when it comes to finding a work-life balance.

Gender in Sports Information

Sports information is a profession tightly guarded by men, and research shows that this gender imbalance plays into the structure of sports information departments when it comes to management and sport assignments (Whiteside & Hardin, 2012b). Women who are working in sports information are often referenced as working on the "fringes" of athletics, promoting the less valued sports or the women's teams (Whiteside & Hardin, 2010). While women's basketball is recognized as the premier women's sport at most universities, it is rarely regarded as highly as the men's basketball and football teams are, and overall women's teams tend to have an inherently lower profile than men's teams. Gender roles play a large part in the organization of sports information, as men occupy managerial roles and sport assignments correlate with gender (Whiteside & Hardin, 2012b).

There is some research done on this topic, but the findings are limited. This indicates a clear void in academic literature because while the gender of sports journalists is routinely studied, the gender of sports information directors is not. Richard

Lapchick's bi-annual study on Associated Press Sports Editors is one of many that has identified the gender imbalance in sports journalism (Lapchick, 2014). Two pairs of researchers, Vivian Acosta and Linda Carpenter, and Erin Whiteside and Marie Hardin, have done the pioneering work on this topic when it comes to sports information. They have laid a foundation that begins to understand this field and the constructs making it a male-centric domain. For example, Acosta and Carpenter's work provides information about women working in intercollegiate sport over thirty-seven years, spanning 1977-2014 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). When looking at SIDs, they unveiled the gender imbalance in sports information, finding that while 99.6% of schools have a full-time SID, only 9.8% those SIDs were female. While sports information has always been a male-dominated field, the number of women in the profession dropped from 13.1% in 1994 to 9.8% in 2012.

This study also found a greater gender imbalance when it came to NCAA Division I, II and III schools. Universities are categorized by Division I, II or III based on university size, how many men's and women's teams they sponsor, program funding, and student-athlete scholarships. Division I schools generally have the largest student bodies, most substantial program funding and provide athletic scholarships (NCAA Division I, 2016). Division II schools are smaller, allocate less funding to athletics and offer partial scholarships (NCAA Division II, 2016). Division III athletics focus on competitive participation, place a high value on academics, and do not offer athletic scholarships (NCAA Division III, 2016). When looking at sports information roles at these levels, Division I has the lowest percent of female SIDs at 3.1%, and Division III has the highest at 14.3% (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Division I athletics has

experienced the most significant decrease in female SIDs in the field. In 1994, 11.5% of Division I SIDs were female, but women make up only 3.1% of Division I SIDs today. While there are women working in sports information, more of them women are often being hired in lower-division programs, known to be less competitive and lower profile (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014).

The gender imbalance in this field is further reflected in SID titles and sport assignments. Only 11.9% of head sports information directors are female; therefore, the majority of these top-level SID positions are occupied by males (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). When it comes to job responsibility, most women at 38.58% reported their title as assistant sports information directors, while the majority of men at 54.20% reported that they were an assistant athletic director or head SID (Whiteside & Hardin, 2010). Reflective of these titles, most women reported working on women's sports only, which are often lower responsibility roles, and most men (88%) reported that that they were responsible for football and men's basketball (Whiteside & Hardin, 2010).

Whiteside and Hardin also examined women's experiences working in sports information and the presence of "the glass ceiling." This term became popular in the 1980s and is understood as the "artificial barriers based on attitudinal or organizational bias that prevent qualified individuals from advancing upward in their organization into management-level positions" (Whiteside & Hardin, 2012b). Whiteside and Hardin found that while women were aware of the glass ceiling, they were hesitant to blatantly admit its existence. Overall, women noted that they were less focused on moving up in the profession and more dedicated to succeeding in their current position. The women who participated in this survey did not think that the gender of sports information

directors influences the promotion of a sport. These findings indicated that women working in sports information are aware of the glass ceiling under which they operate, and that maternal pressures and sexist comments are two factors that greatly increase women leaving the profession (Whiteside & Hardin, 2012b).

Socialization of Women

Women were underrepresented in sport for centuries because women's participation was seen as unladylike, a detriment to women's health, and an invasion of a male domain. Women were not allowed to participate in intercollegiate sports until the formation of women's colleges in the 1870s, meaning that women have had access to athletics for only the last 150 years (Ware, 2011). Men literally banned women from participating in sports before the formation of women's colleges by restricting funding and the use of sports facilities. Men firmly believed that "sports were male territory and women were too weak and fragile to participate" (Coakley, 2015). Because the legacy of sport is undeniably male, women's sports have to be explicitly identified as the "Women's Final Four" or "Women's World Cup," while the World Series, Masters and Super Bowl are not prefaced with "Men's" (Coakley, 2015). Sports in our society "reinforce appropriate notions of masculinity", making women who participate in sports considered outsiders (Whiteside & Hardin, 2010). Women's participation in sports like gymnastics and figure skating were accepted in the early twentieth century because they were seen as "grace and beauty sports," emphasizing females' bodies and coordination, accepted feminine traits (Coakley, 2015). Individual sports such as golf and tennis quickly followed suit because of the privilege and feminine attitudes they were associated with.

While women are historically at a social disadvantage when it comes to sport, feminine qualities are perceived to be advantageous in communication fields. Qualities such as listening, empathy, thoughtfulness, and the ability to work well with others are greatly valued communication positions, but they are also marked as feminine (Whiteside & Hardin, 2012a). Men are perceived to lack these feminine qualities, and women vice versa. Women's communication tactics can be great assets for women entering the field, but may pose some obstacles for women's advancement. Historically, management roles have required a masculine "command-and control" skill set and, therefore, have been occupied by males. Recently, feminine leadership and communication have become more valued, known as "the female advantage" (Whiteside & Hardin, 2012a). While feminine qualities are greatly valued in communication fields, the "female advantage" can hinder leadership potential within organizations. The nature of women to be empathetic, caring, and thoughtful can be seen as mothering intersecting with the workplace (Whiteside & Hardin, 2012a). This dynamic may be ultimately a lose-lose for women. They are faced with the decision to either continue to embrace their feminine nature and excel in their current communication roles or exhibit masculine traits being competitive and assertive but face backlash.

The socialization of women comes from ideologies engrained in our society. These ideas transcend through sport being a male domain and communication being a female realm. This makes sense in our society because people have accepted these historical ideologies and use them to make sense of the world (Coakley, 2015).

Socialization of women reinforces these gender binaries when it comes to sports and communications fields.

History of Basketball

Basketball is at the center of the conversation when talking about women and sport because it has been the most popular women's varsity sport since the beginning of intercollegiate athletics for women. It was of the first team sports that girls were given the opportunity to play and was offered in 90.4% of schools by 1978, with volleyball being the next closest at 80.1% (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Today, women's basketball still has the highest percentage of participation across intercollegiate athletics with 98.8% of athletic programs offering women's basketball.

Modern-day basketball went through many changes before it became what we know it as today. The game was invented by YMCA instructor James Naismith in 1891, when his supervisor asked him to create a game that could be played inside during the winter. A year later, men's college basketball teams were forming around the country, two of the first at Geneva and Vanderbilt (Jarrett, 1990). The men's game was played five-on-five and with two 15-minute halves and a five-minute halftime. Aside from some minor technicalities, the rules for the men's game looked very similar in 1891 as they do today. They had umpires that tallied fouls, kept track of possessions, called out of bounds, counted baskets, and named the team with the most points at the end of the game the winner (Jarrett, 1990).

Because sports were seen as unladylike, Senda Berenson created a separate set of rules for the women's game, which were implemented in 1892. Berenson's rules divided the court into three sections, had six players on each team and confined two

players on each team to a specific area. These rules created a sense of structure and purpose for the women's game, but it limited how far the players would run and lessened the possibility of physical contact. This foundation did allow the sport to grow, with the first women's intercollegiate game taking place in 1896 and teams forming rapidly across the nation. The growth of the sport led to the Women's Basketball Rules Committee and an Officials Committee, leading to the formation of modern-day rules for the women's game. In 1938, the three-section court was divided into two; in 1949 the double dribble was introduced; in 1971 women played a full-court game with five players, and in 1988 the three-point shot was adopted (Miller, 2012). The women's game took more than 75 years to resemble its modern-day structure.

Women's intercollegiate sport began from intramural and club sports with physical education instructors acting as coaches (Bell, 2008). These educators were aware of the gap in men's and women's intercollegiate athletics and were determined to expand competitive opportunities for women. Women's basketball, introduced by Senda Berenson, was the first intercollegiate sport that women were allowed to participate in. In 1966, the Commission on Intercollegiate Sports for Women (CISW) was founded to assist women's competition in intercollegiate sport, which was replaced by the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) in 1971. The AIAW governed women's intercollegiate sport until 1982, when the NCAA decided to introduce women's intercollegiate championships and swallowed it (Bell, 2008). In 1982, the NCAA-sponsored the first Division I championship tournament with a 32-team bracket, which has since expanded to 64 teams (Miller, 2012).

Women's basketball has made enormous strides since its beginnings in 1892. It remains the most popular women's NCAA sport based on women's participation (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014) and is the most frequently sponsored women's sport ("NCAA participation rates going up," 2011). But although women's basketball is the most popular intercollegiate sport for women, game attendance and TV ratings are flat or declining (Longman, 2013), while the 2016 men's Final Four set records for attendance, cable viewership and streaming records (Durham, 2016).

Title IX

When people hear the phrase Title IX, the first thing that comes to mind is usually women's athletics. This is part of it, and women's participation in athletics has increased tremendously since the law, is a civil rights law that prohibits sex-based discrimination in federally funded educational programs, was passed in 1972.

Title IX began to change the cultural conversation. And just one year later, in 1973, tennis star Billie Jean King, a trailblazer for women athletes, beat Bobby Riggs in the "Battle of the Sexes." King was a part of the transitional generation for women in sports. This moment in history connected sports to the larger feminist and women's liberation movements at the time (Ware, 2011). A generation later, The 1996 Olympics were often referred to as "The Title IX Olympics" because the female athletes competing were the daughters of Title IX's pioneers, growing up through the women's movement (Brennan, 1996). The U.S. "established itself as the most powerful nation in women's sports" in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics, taking home gold medals in the major team sports: basketball, soccer, gymnastics, and softball (Shipley, 2000). Three years later, the 1999 U.S. women's soccer team made another mark in history for women's

sports by defeating China in the World Cup on July 10, 1999 (Ware, 2011). The attention given to the game, however, was as notable, if not more so, than the U.S. win, as more than 90,000 people watched in person, and more than 40 million watched around the world (Ware, 2011).

With the passage of Title IX and the successes of these female athletes, the number of girls participating in sports naturally increased. Female participation in college athletics also increased during this period, increasing from 30,000 female athletes before 1972 to 190,000 in 2012 according to the NCAA (Sabo & Snyder, 2013). Women's basketball has played a large role in female intercollegiate athletic participation, with the highest participation rates since 1987 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The University of Connecticut's women's basketball program has been an NCAA powerhouse for over a decade; with an undefeated 38-0 record in 2016, the Huskies won their fourth straight national championship, marking the 11th overall for head coach Geno Auriemma (Creme, 2016). Breanna Stewart, the number one WNBA draft pick in 2016, along with her teammates Moriah Jefferson and Morgan Tuck became the only players, men or women, to win four national championships (Creme, 2016).

While Title IX has provided female athletes opportunities to play at the collegiate level, this has not translated to the number of women working in intercollegiate athletics; it has actually hurt these numbers. Before Title IX was passed, over 90% of all head coaching jobs in women's sports were held by women. Today this is a mere 43%. The decrease is even more dramatic in upper-level management. Before Title IX, more than 90 percent of Division I athletic directors were women; today, this is 4% (Kane, 2012).

In the early years of women's athletics, a reason for the decline of women working intercollegiate sports was because of the rapid growth of teams around the country. Teams coached by females dropped from 90% in 1972 to 58.2% in 1978 because the number of women's teams doubled (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). Also, before Title IX was passed in 1972, coaching positions were often voluntary and usually filled by previous players or academic staff. When Title IX passed, these positions were paid and, therefore, more desirable, so men applied for the positions.

In the early years of women's intercollegiate sport, the teams did not worry about public relations or have sports-information directors. But once those positions were needed and created, the number of women in the role – as in coaches and upper-level management -- has dropped. In 1994, 13.1% of SIDs were women, while in 2012, only 9.8% of women held these positions. These numbers are even more drastic in Division I athletics, dropping from 11.5% in 1994 to 3.1% in 2012 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). The decline in female SIDs may be due to the growing number of schools with full-time SIDs, which increased from 78.3% in 1994 to 99.6% in 2012 (Acosta & Carpenter, 2014). While Title IX has been beneficial for female athletes, the number of women pursuing careers supporting these athletes are not having the same success.

Work-Life Balance

In 1989, Arlie Hochschild published a book called *The Second Shift* that looked at how working women and mothers were dealing balancing their workplace duties with the duties women had traditionally performed at home (Schulte, 2014). Hochschild discovered that even when both husbands and wives worked full-time, the wives did the

vast majority of the household work – i.e., they were working a “second shift” of child care, cooking and laundry when their husbands were not. Hochschild found that despite the increase of women in the workforce, the majority of men did not contribute the workload at home, most were even resistant to help (Hochschild, 1989). Overall, women took on the household work as well because they felt more responsible for the home and the family. This is one of the leading factors that influences women leaving the sports information profession because of late night games, long competitive seasons and weekends on the road. While women in the work force have been steadily increasing, this has led to a greater number of working women with families, thus meaning a growing number of second shifts in the day. Although society is progressing and women now make up almost half of the work force, it has not progressed as quickly at home. Household duties still predominantly fall on women. This has led to women working an additional 15 hours a week because of second shift duties (“Facts Over Time: Women in the Labor Force,” 2012)

A 2007 study looking at career planning and decision-making processes for women in female-dominated and gender-neutral careers found that women in female-dominated careers received encouragement in their careers from their families and spouses, while women in gender-neutral careers had co-workers, bosses, teachers and various mentors who encouraged them in their careers. Role models and mentors seemed to be more crucial in gender-neutral professions (Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers & Wentworth, 2007). In this study, both groups of women noted that they came home to a second shift. Several women in female-dominated careers had been discouraged from pursuing gender-neutral careers because their families believed

they could not be successful managing work and home responsibilities. The study also found that women in gender-neutral fields made personal compromises more frequently (Whitmarsh, Brown, Cooper, Hawkins-Rodgers & Wentworth, 2007).

A 2014 study by the National Athletic Trainers Association found that turnover among female Division I athletic trainers – another group that must work late nights and weekends and travels frequently -- is often due to motherhood (Eason, Mazerolle & Goodman, 2014). Role models and mentors had a significant impact on whether women stayed in the field after motherhood. Women who had female role models or mentors were more likely to stay in the field because they saw women balancing both roles successfully (Eason, Mazerolle & Goodman, 2014). Given that domestic work often falls on women, it is difficult for women to work the hours that sports information demands.

The role of management is a crucial factor that influences communications practitioners' ability to seek a work-life balance. Research has shown that support from a supervisor helps public relations practitioners alleviate conflicts when it comes to seeking a work and personal balance (Jiang & Shen, 2013).

Method

I conducted an online survey and follow-up interviews to analyze the gender gap in NCAA basketball sports information. The survey and interviews looked into the structure of sports information, promotion of basketball, personal responsibilities, and overall gender imbalance in this profession.

RQ1: What are the key factors that contribute to the lack of women working as NCAA basketball SIDs?

RQ2: Does the lack of women affect promotion of NCAA basketball teams, and if so, how?

RQ3: How are women's basketball teams promoted, when compared to men's basketball teams, and what factors contribute to the ways in which respective teams are promoted?

Sample

I selected sports information directors (SIDs) from men's and women's NCAA basketball teams to participate in an online survey. These SIDs were chosen based on the teams and conferences that competed in the 2015 NCAA post-season tournament. This SID media list included the 64 SIDs for the 2014-2015 teams that appeared in the men's and women's tournaments and all of the teams in their conferences, for a total of 658 SIDs across 32 conferences. This compilation of this information was a manual process, found from each university's athletic department website. An email outlining my research and including the survey was sent out to the 658 men's and women's

basketball SIDs through Qualtrics. This list comprised 19.4% women and 80.6% men. In an effort to remind these SIDs to take the survey and increase response rate, two follow-up emails were sent through Qualtrics, which only sent reminders emails to SIDs who had not completed the survey. The survey was available for three weeks, and 222 SIDs responded for a 33.7% response rate. Only 184 of the 222 responses were used, which resulted in a 28% response rate. Responses were eliminated if the respondents were not men's or women's basketball SIDs, if they did not complete quantitative survey questions or if they stopped answering the questions. Of the survey responses used, 73.9% of participants were men and 20.1% were women. Keeping in mind that fewer women were surveyed because of the gender imbalance in the industry, it is significant to know that 28.03% of women and 24.8% of men who received the survey completed it. These percentages correlate with their overall surveyed gender pool. Survey responses were analyzed by running frequencies, cross-tabulations and chi squares using SPSS Statistics.

Pilot Study

The content for the survey was driven largely by a pilot study conducted in May 2015 at the Association for Women in Sports Media's (AWSM) annual conference in Denver, Colorado. I distributed two informal paper surveys, one for students and one for professionals. This allowed me to collect some preliminary data from students and professionals across the country, so that I could get an idea of where to start my research and what questions I should be asking. I received 57 completed surveys, 23 by professionals and 34 by students.

Of the completed professional questionnaires, I found that 82% of the women report to a male and 69% have been in their positions for less than two years. From this initial data collection, I started to see that women may not receive the same opportunities for advancement in sports media. Of the students, 29% noted that being a woman in the field has made them “work harder” to prove themselves, and five wrote that people question if they are in this industry “for the right reasons.” The completed questionnaires helped me focus the formal survey I distributed.

Survey

The survey was divided into five sections: job background, public relations duties, industry observations, personal thoughts about the industry, and demographic information (Appendix 1). This sequencing allowed participants to start the survey with questions specific to their careers and then asked them to provide their personal insights regarding the sports information industry. The survey was structured to collect quantitative and qualitative information, so participants could answer basic yes or no questions and then expand on their experiences depending on whether they answered yes or no. The questions were designed to assess why there are fewer women working in sports information and if this gender imbalance affects the promotion of university teams.

Interviews

Following my analysis of the survey results, I asked survey respondents if they would be interested in participating in one-on-one interviews after my survey data analysis. Fifteen respondents were contacted based on differing SID titles and

conference power rankings, and four of these SIDs agreed to the phone interviews, a 26.6% response rate. These participants helped provide an in-depth look of women SIDs at varying stages of their careers from a range of competitive conferences. These SIDs all remain de-identified here. Each interview took approximately 45 minutes, using a semi-structured interview guide, which included a core list of questions but allowed for flexibility depending on individual interview trajectory (Appendix 3). Each interview was then transcribed and analyzed to help conclude why sports information is a male-dominated field and if the lack of women matters.

Findings

These findings indicate a clear gender imbalance when it comes to the field of sports information and an even greater gender disparity in SIDs when it comes to publicizing men's and women's teams. Women often find themselves in charge of sports information for lower profile sports and in assistant level SID positions. These women perceive that they do not have the same opportunity for promotion as their male counterparts due to barriers within the institutions where they work. Historical, systematic and structural factors often influence women leaving the field, largely because of the decision to start a family. Female SIDs perceive that personal interactions and relationships are lost in the field due to the lack of women in sports information roles.

Gender and Sport

The data collected reinforced the gender disparity in NCAA basketball sports information. The media list of SIDs from the 2015 NCAA tournament bracket found that that out of 683 men's and women's NCAA basketball teams, only 18.5% of these teams had a female SID. They are more likely to oversee women's basketball than men's basketball, with 29.9% of women overseeing women's basketball teams and 8.1% of women overseeing men's basketball teams. While female SIDs more often oversee the promotion of women's basketball, men are still SIDs for 70.1% of these teams because of their overall gender dominance in the field.

The gender gap in relationship to sport was also reflected in the survey results, finding that 84 males were head SIDs for men's basketball, while only five female SIDs

were in the same position. Women generally oversee the women’s teams or lower profile sports, with 31 of 37 women indicating they were the SID for women’s basketball. SIDs who participated in interviews all recognized this divide as well. One SID said, “There is still that divide or gap with those quote-unquote big sports, the football, the men’s basketball, the revenue sports.” SIDs interviewed noted that they generally see women overseeing women’s basketball and lower profile sports.

		Gender:			Total
		Male	Female	Other	
Men’s or	MBB	84	5	1	90
Women’s	WBB	48	31	0	79
Basketball	Both	4	1	0	5
SID					
Total		136	37	1	174

Table 1: Gender of men’s basketball and women’s basketball SIDs

The interview findings echoed the survey results and provided additional context. For example, women were asked, “Why do you think sports information is such a male-dominated field?” Three of the four women interviewed answered, “It’s sport.” They each discussed how generally men are more interested in sports than women, how men are more naturally drawn to sport as an occupation, and how the sports world is already male-centric with a greater focus on male athletes and teams.

While the gender imbalance in sports information is evident, some women see the disparity as an advantage. One SID interviewed expressed, “For the most part, I

really like it the way that it is. I really like this male-dominated industry. I really like being one of the few girls in it.”

Career Mobility

The results from the survey show that women who pursue careers in sports information often do not advance past being an Assistant SID. Thirty-one women responded that they were Assistant SIDs, while only three had reached the Associate SID level and one the Head SID level. In comparison, 24 men responded that they were Associate SIDs, and six said they are Head SIDs.

		Gender:			Total
		Male	Female	Other	
What positions do you most often see women holding?	Head SID	6	1	0	7
	Associate SID	24	3	0	27
	Assistant SID	99	31	1	131
	Intern	0	1	0	1
	Student	2	1	0	3
	Other	3	0	0	3
Total		134	37	1	172

Table 2: SIDs titles and gender

The fact that most females are in an Assistant SID level positions may correlate with the opportunities available to women for promotion within the field. Overall, women indicated that they do not have an equal opportunity for promotion. When asked, “In your experience, do you see female SIDs receiving the same opportunities for promotion as male SIDs?” 48% answered “no” and 24% answered “sometimes.” While women identified a gender-based disadvantage when it comes to promotional

opportunities, the majority of men believe that women have the same shot at promotion, with 69% of them answering “yes.”

Following this question, participants were asked, “If no, what are the barriers to promotion?” The 40 participants who responded to this question noted one of the most common barriers to promotion for female SIDs is “coaching preference.” They said coaches often prefer to work with male SIDs and that the top men’s sports are usually covered by men. Other common responses were the old boys club, glass ceiling and leadership in athletic departments.

		Gender:			Total
		Male	Female	Other	
Do women have the same opportunity for promotion?	Yes	93	10	1	104
	No	16	18	0	34
	Sometimes	24	9	0	33
Total		133	37	1	171

Table 3: Equal opportunities for promotion for female SIDs

The interviews provided additional insight regarding mobility (or the lack thereof). Participants were asked, for example, “How do you perceive your potential mobility within the organization? Are there opportunities open to you?” Two of four female SIDs stated that there is nowhere for them to advance in their athletic department. As a result, these SIDs are either seeking higher education options or looking for other jobs to advance in the field. In contrast, the other female SIDs interviewed expressed that they do foresee opportunities for them to advance within

their athletic departments. These SIDs have both had been promoted and had the opportunity to pursue graduate school at their universities.

While these four SIDs had different experiences when it came to mobility within their organization, they all recognized when presented with my survey findings that most women do get stuck at the assistant SID level. Asked if they had any ideas on why this is, they drew three conclusions: that SIDs in higher level positions are content in their roles and have no desire to move, that women doubt themselves and don't go for the higher jobs, and that the second shift and having a family makes women leave the profession. One woman expressed that she feels SIDs tend to get comfortable and complacent in their roles, shooting to oversee men's basketball or football with no desire to be an athletic director or in a managerial role. This lack of upper level movement limits the opportunities for assistant level SIDs to move up. Another SID interviewed expressed that self-doubt is a large reason that the majority of women are Assistant SIDs. She said, "It could be just putting ourselves down and not even going for the higher jobs. It seems like a cultural thing." The third conclusion has to do with having families and starting a new chapter in their lives. All of the women interviewed talked about how most women leave the industry after getting married and having children.

Second Shift

The results of the survey show that the majority of women respondents have been in their current position for three to four years. Given that most people who participated in this survey indicated that they most often see women in an Assistant SID role, this appears to be where they are getting stuck.

		Gender:			Total
		Male	Female	Other	
Time current position:	Less than one year	7	1	0	8
	1-2 years	22	9	0	31
	3-4 years	38	13	0	51
	5-6 years	14	4	1	19
	7-8 years	12	1	0	13
	9+ years	43	9	0	52
Total		136	37	1	174

Table 4: Time in current position and gender

When survey participants were asked, “In your experience, do women sports information directors stay in the field as long as men?” 79% answered “no.” This question was followed with a short response question: “What are your perceptions of why female SIDs leave the field?” An overwhelming majority of 74% indicated “family” as the primary reason. A SID interviewed noted, “The time that women start having babies is right around the time they could be promoted.” This data indicates that many women must decide to advance in their careers or start a family. It seems like women can’t have both, a promotion and family. One SID said, “It is totally a double standard, too, because most of those men that would judge you have wives at home with their babies.”

Female SIDs expressed that the female SIDs who are able to have a family and continue their careers in sports information have bosses who are supportive of their decision and confident in their abilities. In an interview, one female SID explained:

I do totally think that it is possible to work and have your babies, but unfortunately, it depends on the people you work with. You can be the toughest, hardest working and smartest girl, but if you work with a guy who doesn't think you can do it or thinks that you aren't putting the university first, then you aren't going to get the promotion.

This struggle to balance work and family life is not unique to women, with 78% of women expressing that they struggle balancing their personal and family commitments and 82% of men feeling the same. But this appears to more often influence female SIDs' longevity in the field.

	Gender:			Total
	Male	Female	Other	
Struggle to balance work and family: Yes	112	29	0	141
No	24	8	1	33
Total	136	37	1	174

Table 5: Balancing work and family as an SID

Of those respondents who stated that they do struggle to balance work and family responsibilities, 114 SIDs responded to the follow-up question asking them to specify the challenges they deal with on a routine basis. Of those responses, 68% noted that they struggle with the schedule, travel and time demands of the job, and 57% expressed that it is challenging to find time for family and friends.

The Role of Management

The results of the survey indicated that women generally feel management interacts with them differently than their male counterparts. When asked, "In your

experience, do you see a difference in how management interacts with male and female Sports Information Directors (SIDs)?" the majority of men, 80%, did not see a difference. But 61% of women identified differences in how management interacts with them, answering "yes" or "sometimes."

		Gender:			Total
		Male	Female	Other	
Differences in how management interacts with male vs. female SIDs?	Yes	12	14	0	26
	No	110	14	1	125
	Sometimes	14	9	0	23
Total		136	37	1	174

Table 6: Differences in how management interacts with male and female SIDs

Following this question, participants were asked, "If yes, what differences do you see in how management interacts with male and female SIDs?" Twenty-two survey participants responded to this question and indicated that female SIDs receive less respect, and are often not included and are not taken as seriously in comparison to their male counterparts by management.

Promotion of Basketball

The data collected indicated that there is a difference specifically regarding how men's and women's basketball are promoted. In the online survey, participants were asked an open-ended question stating, "In your experience, do you see differences in how men and women SIDs promote basketball?" While this question was intended to identify whether current SIDs feel that the gender of the SID makes a difference in how

the sport is promoted, it was interpreted as “are men’s and women’s basketball promoted differently?” Despite the misinterpretation of the question, the findings are instructive. Overall, SIDs noted that men’s basketball gets more media coverage, there are more people behind the scenes, and it needs less of a media push than women’s. On the other hand, SIDs commented that women’s basketball usually takes a more personal approach when it comes to publicizing. Women’s teams do this through feature stories that share athletes’ stories with fans, a relatable social media presence that incorporates multimedia and personality into posts, and finding unique ways to publicize games.

The phrasing of this question was adjusted in the follow-up interviews to further understand the perceived differences in promotion of women’s and men’s basketball. The SIDs interviewed agreed that the teams at their universities are promoted differently. They expressed that in their experiences, women’s teams are more creative when it comes to promotion, incorporating video and graphic content into social media, using radio broadcast or online streaming for games, and sending players out on campus to pass out flyers before a game. On the other hand, they expressed that there is often more of an internal and external push to get things out about the men’s teams, and traditional media often picks up these stories. One SID noted that while she does not feel teams are not promoted differently internally at their university, the student section, campus clubs and other organizations promote the teams differently. The SID expanded on this point, saying:

Opinion leaders on campus will promote men’s basketball more than women’s basketball. I don’t know if women’s basketball will ever be as prominent as men’s basketball at any university. I would say that if there

is an imbalance it is not intentional, which might be just as crappy as when it is.

Promotion of men's and women's teams varies from university to university, and these differences can come from within the athletic department or from its supporting organizations. Overall, there are clearly some disparities when it comes to the promotion of these teams. This is evident from the survey results, in which 39% of SIDs answered either "yes" or "sometimes" when asked if men's and women's basketball are promoted differently.

In interviews, women were asked, "Do you think anything is lost because of the gender imbalance in sports information?" Three of the four female SIDs interviewed expressed that they believe personal interactions and connections with teams and student-athletes is often lost with male SIDs. One woman interviewed expanded on this noting:

I think that being a female SID is a huge asset. I think that we relate, we interact with people differently than men do. I think there is a little extra care and concern that a woman brings to the position. I think being a woman you can definitely relate differently and better.

The three women who expressed the importance of these genuine interactions truly value the connections they have made with their teams and student-athletes. One SID said that her head coach views her as a part of the staff, which has helped her gain greater respect from the players. This SID tells her student-athletes to put her down as a job reference.

In the cases of these female SIDs there is clear communication, care and concern for the staff and student-athletes. The female SIDs interviewed perceive that these interactions are often lost between male SIDs and the teams they oversee.

Discussion

There is no doubt that there is a gender imbalance in the field of sports information, with an even greater disparity when it comes to SID sport assignments and titles. Women perceive that they do not have the same opportunities for promotion as their male counterparts because of institutional and cultural barriers. Many of these factors contribute to women leaving the profession. This gender imbalance is unfortunate, given that women deeply invest in their teams and athletes, which ultimately better the promotion of teams. This research has built off the findings of the trailblazers for sports information research, Whiteside and Hardin, and provides additional data to support their conclusions.

This study resulted in three main findings: there remains a significant gender imbalance in sports information, there is limited mobility for female SIDs, and there may be merit in the different ways women promote sports that could benefit college athletics but is often overlooked. My first research question asked what key factors contribute to the lack of women working in sports information. My findings indicated that three factors contribute – historically male dominated, lack of upward mobility, and women’s family role outside of work. My second research question asked, does the lack of women affect the promotion of NCAA basketball teams, and if so, how. This finding suggests that a better presence of women in basketball could potentially benefit NCAA promotion because of their focus on relationships, which may ultimately better the promotion of their teams. My final research question asked how women’s basketball teams are promoted, when compared to men’s basketball teams, and what factors contribute to the ways in which respective teams are promoted. My research indicated

that men's teams are generally promoted in a more traditional manner, with more extensive game notes and greater media coverage, while women's teams often take a more personal approach to promotion, with feature stories, relatable social media content and flyer distribution before games. While these promotional disparities often stem from athletic departments, fans, opinion leaders, student groups, and coaches perpetuate promotional differences as well.

Acknowledgement of the Gender Gap

The gender gap in sports information is evident and acknowledged by those in the field. The divide is blatantly apparent given that over 90% of SIDs are male. This imbalance permeates through sport assignments and SID titles, reflected in the survey results with only 8.1% of women overseeing men's basketball and three women in associate or head SID roles. Interviews with SIDs showed that these gendered sports assignments are almost expected, with higher profile men's sports being reserved for male SIDs, which also generally also correlate with SID titles.

The relationships between sport assignments and SID titles have clear relationships to gender roles, which is acknowledged by both male and female SIDs. This is rooted in the socialization of women. Sport is a historically male domain with limited access for women, and this ideology still permeates the sports world today. This has created a culture where sport being male-centric is accepted. While women dominate the communications field as a whole, they choose to stray from sports information because of ingrained societal ideologies. Women who do work in sports information have accepted the male sphere and many embrace it. One female SID interviewed said, "I really like this male dominated industry. I really like being one of

the few girls in it.” It is important to notice that the SID interviewed used the word “girls” to reference women in the industry. Male SIDs are never referred to as “boys.” This language is telling, and reveals that women in sports information have internalized that fact that it is not “normal” to see women working in sports. These ideas are ingrained in our society, influencing how women are socialized growing up, and ultimately leads to the lack of women in the field. One female SID talked about self-doubt factoring into the lack of female advancement in the industry saying, “It could be just putting ourselves down and not even going for the higher jobs. It seems like a cultural thing.” Even the women who decide to work in sports are influenced by societal roles and norms, leading them to question their abilities in sports information.

Second Shift Solutions

The primary reason that women leave the field of sports information is because of families (i.e., getting married, having children). The nature of working in sports comes with long weekends away, night games and an obscure work schedule, making finding a work-life balance with family difficult. Today, women make up almost half of the work force, meaning more working women with families and a growing number of second shifts in the day. Therefore, this work-life balance is becoming harder for men and women in many cases, with 78% of female and 82% of male SIDs expressing they struggle with this. While both men and women find this balance difficult, research shows that the majority of household and family duties still fall on women, leading them to work an additional 15 hours a week from second shift duties (“Facts Over Time: Women in the Labor Force” 2012). There is no reason to believe that these numbers are not the same in sports information. These facts unveil a clear double

standard. Women in sports information are usually faced with the decision at one point in their career, to have a family or to stay in the field, not men. This is a clear reflection of traditional gender roles and ideologies surrounding motherhood in our society despite the growing numbers of women in the workforce. Even though women make up half of the workforce, the workplace has been slow to progress. Since Arlie Hochschild wrote her book in 1989, there is still not a universal standard for flex time, paid parental leave, paid medical leave, and subsidized childcare, which she believes would greatly benefit families (Schulte, 2014). These support systems would make it realistic for women to find a work-life balance while raising a family.

The increasing numbers of women with families in the workforce has created growing opportunities for mentorship, but it is hard for women to advance in the field when they do not have female role models. This is a growing problem in sports information. A study done on Division I athletic trainers found that women who had female role models or mentors were more likely to stay in the field because they saw other women balancing both roles successfully (Eason, Mazerolle & Goodman, 2014). These role models are generally uncommon in sports information, largely due to the lack of women in the field and even fewer women in the field with families. Research has shown that mentors are vital to career success and longevity for women in gender-neutral careers (Whiteside, Hardin & Ash, 2014), so I expect that the importance of these mentors are a great necessity in a gender-segregated career like sports information. These role models can be women or men, as long as they are a source of support and mentorship. As more women choose to stay in sports information and have families, other women may see that achieving this balance is possible. Research has also shown

that the support of management is a crucial factor for communications practitioners' ability to seek a work-life balance (Jiang & Shen, 2013). Management can encourage women that having a sports information career and a family is possible. Of course, university support is also a huge factor that can help women continue working and have a family. Maternity benefits, paid leave, and reduced childcare can all help mothers balance work and family life more easily.

Promotion of Basketball

Men's and women's basketball are promoted differently whether athletic departments or SIDs want to recognize it or not. Some perceptions that participants noted were that there are more people behind the scenes, more extensive game notes and greater media coverage in men's basketball. SIDs generally perceive that women's teams take a more personal route when it comes to promotion, writing heartfelt feature stories, posting relatable social media and having athletes pass out flyers through campus before games. These perceived promotional differences between men's and women's teams are a reflection of sport in society. While women have had increased access and opportunities with sport since Title IX, sport is still historically male. This has become a generally accepted part of the society and culture surrounding sport. Promotional disparities when it comes to men's and women's teams are influenced by society, fans, opinion leaders, student groups, and coaches. These groups often promote men's teams more avidly. Men's basketball is, and some think always will be, more popular. Promotional differences when it comes to men's and women's basketball are rooted in the history of sport as a male domain, and this societal ideology is carried out through sports information departments.

The Importance of Women in Sports Information

Women are at a historical disadvantage when it comes to sport, but have an innate advantage when it comes to communication. While women are often scrutinized for being too emotional, qualities such as listening, empathy, and thoughtfulness are greatly valued in communications, giving women an edge over men in sports information. The SIDs interviewed perceive that women in the field build personal connections with their teams and student-athletes, something they say is lost with their male counterparts. This extra effort allows female SIDs to really know their teams and, therefore, publicize them in a unique and personable ways. Investing time in to build these personal relationships with student-athletes and coaches, allows SIDs to be seen as a part of the teams' support staff and earns the respect of the players. If the perceptions of these female SIDs are fair, females should be highly valued in sports information. The relationships that women build with their teams can ultimately allow them to better promote their teams.

Understanding the cultural and structural limitations in sports information departments reveals ways to decrease disparities among male and female SIDs, while better realizing women's potential contributions that are being lost as a result. Structurally, women do not have the same mobility, because they are unfairly required to make personal decisions that men often do not have to make. Moreover, men, because of centuries' old influence in and control of sport itself, find themselves in leadership positions that further limit women's potential mobility. Perhaps the biggest takeaway, however, is that—in fact—women's perspectives are indeed different, and that's a good and potentially powerful thing for athletic departments. They provide a

unique lens that should benefit college athletics, a perspective that only they can provide, because of their experience with gender disparities, and the cultural and structural limitations they have had to navigate. Likewise, college sports information departments would be smart to acknowledge women's broader leadership in the public relations field, and how different communication styles could provide an edge in the world of college sports, which otherwise is dominated by a limited male perspective.

Conclusion

Sports are a historically male space and careers in sports information have followed suit. Systematic, historical and structural factors in sports information have limited opportunities for women in this field. This has influenced women's chances for upward mobility, opportunities to promote premier sports and fairness when it comes to finding a work-life balance. Women have added hurdles because of societal ideologies – the male legacy that comes with sports and family responsibilities falling largely on women. Regardless of these barriers, athletic departments need to recognize the structural and societal boundaries enforced upon women. Then athletic directors, head SIDs and coaches have the ability to step in by providing women with equitable opportunities in their departments and valuing what their perspective brings to the field and their university teams.

Limitations and Future Research

It would have been helpful to interview more SIDs in order to provide additional context to my survey results and add depth to my research. The four SIDs I was able to interview helped me better understand the industry. In a future study, I would like to explore the perceptions of SIDs when it comes to the communication differences of SIDs and how that affects the promotion of teams. In interviews, female SIDs expressed that they feel communication and care is lost when it comes to male SIDs and the relationships they have with their teams. Women noted that they feel like female SIDs are more involved with the teams to the point of being recognized as a member of the staff and that they spend time developing relationships with coaches and player. Female SIDs perceive that this maternal nature and focus on building personal connections gives them an advantage in the field. First, I want to discover if this perception is valid. Do female SIDs really do take that extra effort to get to know their teams? If this is true, does this influence the promotion of teams? Also, if women do put a higher value on fostering personal relationships with the teams they work with, is this valued by athletic departments?

Social media is another facet that was briefly touched on in this research but could be greatly expanded upon, especially in this growing digital age. In this study, participants expressed that they perceive social media for women's basketball teams compared to men's basketball teams is more personable and fun. SIDs expanded on this by noting graphics, feature stories and fun content are more often used in the promotion of women's teams. I would be interested to see if this perception is a representation of reality. From my experiences engaging with and consuming this media, I also see a

difference in social media content for men's and women's basketball. This could be done by conducting a social media audit of men's and women's basketball teams across the country, looking at use of graphics, images, gifs, stats, feature articles, play by play posts, and more. If there are communication differences on men's and women's social media platforms, what is the purpose? Also, does the gender of the SID factor into these communication differences?

Appendices

1. Online Survey

Instructions

You are invited to participate in a research project about the gender gap in NCAA Basketball Sports Information Directors. Your participation is completely voluntary and you may refuse to answer any question at any time with no penalty. Your answers to this survey are completely anonymous and there are no anticipated physical or psychological risks to participating. The records of this study will be kept in a locked file and your identity will remain anonymous in any published reports.

Your participation in this study will help expand the research base about sports information and gender as a career and further understand why this is such a male dominated field. It will also gather data about why it is important to have women in these positions.

If you have any questions about this study contact Courtney Mains at cmains@uoregon.edu. If you have any questions about research subjects' rights or experience a research related injury contact Research Compliance Services at researchcompliance@uoregon.edu. You may keep a copy of this consent form for your records.

This survey will take about 15 minutes.

I understand that by completing the survey I consent to participate in this study.

Job Background

What is your job title?

Head Sports Information Director (SID) Associate SID

Assistant SID

Intern

Student

Other (fill in)

Time in current position:

Less than one year

- 1-2 years
- 3-4 years
- 5-6 years
- 7-8 years
- 9+ years

What sports do you oversee? (fill in)

What gender is your direct supervisor?

- Male
- Female
- Other (fill in)

What title does your direct supervisor hold?

- Athletic Director
- Head Sports Information Director (SID) Associate SID
- Assistant SID
- Intern
- Student
- Other (fill in)

PR Questions

What sports information tasks are you performing on a regular basis this season?

(Check all that apply)

- Supervising employees
- Liaison with athletic administration
- Liaison with university administration
- Crisis management
- Arrange media availability
- Edit game notes and/or game recap
- Write game notes and/or game recap
- Run stats crew
- Pass out materials to media during games
- Run social media accounts
- Update player bios on website
- Facilitate news conference
- Edit game program
- Write copy for game program
- Edit media guide
- Write media guide
- Compile statistics for media guide
- Develop promotional campaigns
- Issue media credentials
- Other (fill in)

In your experience, do you see differences in how men and women Sports Information Directors (SIDs) promote basketball?

Yes

No

Sometimes

If yes, what differences do you see in how men and women SIDs promote basketball? (fill in)

In your experience, do you see a difference in how management interacts with male and female Sports Information Directors (SIDs)?

Yes

No

Sometimes

If yes, what differences do you see in how management interacts with male and female SIDs? (fill in)

Observations

What Sports Information positions do you most often see women holding?

Head Sports Information Director (SID)

Associate SID

Assistant SID

Intern

Student

Other (fill in)

In your experience, do you see female SIDs receiving the same opportunities for promotion as male SIDs?

Yes

No

Sometimes

If no, what are the barriers to promotion? (fill in)

In your experience, do women Sports Information Directors stay in the field as long as men do?

Yes

No

What are your perceptions of why female SIDs leave the field? (fill in)

Do you struggle to balance personal and family responsibilities with the travel and work schedule required by this job?

Yes

No

If yes, describe the challenges you deal with on a routine basis. (fill in)

Personal

Why did you pursue a career in sports information? (fill in)

Why do you think sports information is a male dominated field? (fill in)

Demographics

Age:

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55+

Gender:

Male

Female

Other (fill in)

Where do you live? (City, State)

Where do you work? (University)

Education (year and degree)

2. Interview Oral Consent Script

Hi, my name is Courtney Mains. I am a student at the University of Oregon in the Robert D. Clark Honors College and I am doing a research study about sports information directors overseeing NCAA men's and women's basketball for my senior thesis. Before we start the interview, I want to be sure you understand the purpose of the research and how I will use the information. I am studying why public relations is such a female dominated field except in sports public relations where most practitioners are men. Would it be okay with you if I used the information we talk about in my study? This is completely voluntary and you may say no if you do not want this information used in the study. If you agree and we start talking and you decide you no longer want to do this, we can stop at any time.

Is it OK if I audio record this interview? I will not identify you or use any information that would make it possible for anyone to identify you in any presentation or written reports about this study. If it is okay with you, I might want to use direct quotes from you, but these would only be cited as from a person (or if person has a specific label or title, it might be used).

There is no expected risk to you for helping me with this study. Your participation in this study will help expand the research base about sports information and gender as a career and further understand why this is such a male dominated field. The records of this study will be kept in a locked file and your identity will remain anonymous in any published reports.

Do you still want to talk with me?

3. Interview Questions

Describe your path in sports information to your current role.
What is next for you professionally?
What is your ultimate career goal?

How many people work in your department?
How many women work in your department?

What are the biggest opportunities you have received in this job?
Is this unique to you or is this typical?

What are the difficulties that you have in this job on a daily basis?
Is this unique to you or is this typical?

Have you had any role models or mentors in your career?
If yes, who are they?
Do you know them personally?
If yes, who are they?
If yes, how do you know them?
If yes, why do you look up to them?
If yes, what role did they play in your career?
If no, why not?

How do you think women are perceived in the field of sports information?

Do you feel like you are perceived differently than your male colleagues?
If yes, how?

Describe your relationship with management.
Do you feel like there is a difference in how management interacts with you versus your male colleagues?
If so, what are those differences?
If no, what have your experience been?

How do you perceive your potential mobility within the organization?
Are opportunities open to you?

My data shows that most female SIDs are at the assistant level rank. Do you have any ideas why that is?

Have you had opportunities to be promoted?
If yes, what were they?
If no, why not?
Have you ever turned down a promotion?

Describe how the women's basketball team is promoted at your University.
Describe how the men's basketball team is promoted at your University.

These next questions are asked to get a sense of your responsibilities outside of work, to get a bigger sense of context, the big picture in terms of the responsibilities you manage daily.

Do you have a partner/ spouse?
Do you have children?
Do you have care giving responsibilities?
How have you balanced personal and family responsibilities in this job?
Does the travel and work schedule hinder this balance?

If you don't have these responsibilities...
Do you worry that you won't be able to balance family life with the job?

OK – this last set of questions focuses on your thoughts generally regarding the dynamics of gender in the world of sports information.

Why do you think sports information is such a male dominated field?
Do you think anything is lost because of the gender imbalance?

What do you think is the biggest communications need for your department in the next five years?
What is the biggest obstacle keeping your department from that?

Is there anything else you haven't covered that you feel like we should address?

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