Notes From the Editor

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The editorial team for the *Women in Sport and Physical Activity Journal* (WSPAJ) has been actively working to improve the quality of the journal and continue to address topics with relevance to women and girls in physical activity settings. I would like to highlight three actions that have occurred over the past year and are recognized in this issue.

Special Section on Harassment and Abuse in Sport

While harassment and abuse has long been documented in sport (Donnelly, Kerr, Heron, & DiCarlo, 2016), recent high-profile cases (e.g., Fisher & Anders, 2019), legislative and policy efforts (e.g., *Protecting Young Victims from Sexual Abuse and Safe Sport Authorization Act of 2018*), and broader social movements (#MeToo, 2018) have highlighted the need for action. The call to action is imperative as non-accidental violence (e.g., physical, psychological, and emotional abuse) has many negative consequences that impact all facets of a person's life including physical (e.g., illness), cognitive (e.g., lack of focus), emotional, mental (e.g., depression), behavioral (e.g., dropout), social (e.g., social withdrawal), and economic (Mountjoy et al., 2016). Therefore, the International Olympic Committee, in their consensus statement on non-accidental violence in sport, note that "it is important to stress that athletes of all ages have a right to engage in 'safe sport': an athletic environment that is respectful, equitable and free from all forms of non-accidental violence to athletes" (Mountjoy et al., 2016, p. 1020). To achieve this aim, further research is needed to investigate the prevalence of harassment and abuse, impact of harassment and abuse, and evidence-based prevention strategies. To assist in this endeavor, authors were invited to submit manuscripts to a Special Section of the WSPAJ to address these issues as they are experienced by girls and women in sport settings.

The four articles in this Special Section each provide unique insight into the issues. Johnson, Hanna, Novak, and Giardino (2020) discuss the prevalence of harassment and abuse, the important role the U.S. Center for SafeSport plays as an independent national organization, and the evidence-based prevention and response strategies being utilized by the Center. Kerr, Willson, and Stirling (2020) seek to give voice to elite-level female athletes' experiences with emotional abuse from their coaches. Their research highlights the short- and long-term effects of this emotional abuse and the need to provide psychological support for these athletes as well as seek prevention strategies to reduce

likelihood in the future. Lewis, Roberts, Andrews, and Sawiuk (2020) use the method of creative nonfiction to tell the story of a female coach who experiences gender-based violence during a coach education workshop. The story gives "voice to the voiceless" (p. 73), provides an opportunity to critique hegemonic masculinity as it occurs within the coach education environment, and highlights the need for organizations to alter structures within sport to create a safe environment. Finally, Fisher (2020) guides readers in developing a pedagogical case study informed by feminist theory and a model in social work. By using media portrayals associated with the Nassar case, she demonstrates how coach educators can educate and advocate for change to reduce abuse in sport.

The articles in the Special Section provide insight into harassment and abuse experienced by girls and women in sport. However, as the authors note, there is a need for future research and policy development to provide a safe sport environment for all participants and I encourage researchers to continue addressing these issues.

Sharing Work Focused on Women in Sport and Physical Activity

In an effort to more broadly share work focused on girls and women in sport and physical activity, the editorial team is open to sharing books and conference abstracts within the field. In this issue of the journal we are sharing a book review of the second edition of *Women and Sports in the United States: A Documentary Reader* (Schultz, O'Reilly, & Cahn, 2019) reviewed by Anderson (2020) and the conference abstracts from the 2019 *Women in Sport and Exercise Conference* hosted by the Women in Sport and Exercise Academic Network. We hope the readers find these additional resources helpful in expanding their knowledge of the field.

Honoring Good Works

In 2018, the WSPAJ Editorial Board established two awards to recognize high quality research that challenges current thinking, offers novel insights about a topic, and/or provides relevancy to a timely topic focused on women and girls in physical activity settings. Each award winner will be announced annually in the journal and the article is given open access for a year.

The first award was named in recognition of Dr. Diane Gill, who served as the first Editor-in-Chief when WSPAJ was purchased by the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNCG) in 2010. Through Dr. Gill's leadership, WSPAJ experienced growth and stability, allowing the journal to be an important scholarly outlet for scholarship related to girls, women, sport, and physical activity. The award is given annually to a scholar

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of non-student status who has had an original research article published in WSPAJ during the previous 12 months which makes a significant contribution to the field.

The second award was named in recognition of Dr. Erin Reifsteck. As a graduate student, Dr. Reifsteck served as the first editorial assistant when WSPAJ was purchased by UNCG. She was instrumental in the day-to-day management of the journal and ensured the journal was “set up for success” at the UNCG. This award is given annually to a scholar of student status at the time of submission of an original research article published in WSPAJ during the previous year which significantly contributes to a topic pertinent to the field.

Both awards are reviewed by a subcommittee including the Editor-in-Chief and three members of the Editorial Board. The subcommittee reviewed the manuscripts based on contribution to the field, relevance to the mission of the journal, clarity of research questions, sound methodology, thorough and appropriate data analysis, and clarity of writing.

I am pleased to announce our inaugural award winners for 2019. The 2019 Diane Gill Paper of the Year Award winner is Dr. Vicki Schull for her published article, *Gendered Leadership Expectations in Sport: Constructing Differences in Coaches* (Schull & Kihl, 2019). The 2019 Erin Reifsteck Student Paper of the Year Award winner is Matea Wasend for her published article, *Are Women Coached by Women More Likely to Become Sport Coaches? Head Coach Gender and Female Collegiate Athletes' Entry Into the Coaching Profession* (Wasend & LaVoi, 2019). We congratulate the winners and look forward to another year of exceptional research in WSPAJ.

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