

Women in sports

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



In today's society women are not allowed to play baseball with men due to patriarchal myths and misconceptions that have been around since the emergence of baseball in America. All women should be able to play baseball with men and there is no legitimate reason why they shouldn't. Women are physically, mentally, and emotionally capable of playing baseball just as men are. With that being said their biological sex or gender should not and does not affect their ability to play baseball in the company of men. In addition their sex should not deem their athletic ability as inferior in comparison to men.

Since the adoption of baseball as an American pastime, the sport of baseball has been cultivated and altered to amputate women exuding the masculinity of baseball. The emergence of baseball as popular and profitable sport has failed to acknowledge and highlight the athletic abilities women. Instead its conception has affirmed women to be fragile and it has also depicted women to not have the skills or talents to play and compete alongside men. There are numerous individuals who are opposed to fusion of women and men on the baseball field.

These individuals use demeaning stereotypes and beliefs to support their claims. Often these claims are false and are not supported by factual or scientific data. For example these claims say that women are weaker than men, women are not physically capable of playing sports, or a woman's place is in the home rather than on the playing field. These claims have been in existence since the beginning of time and have filtered into the arena of baseball. These claims are used as agencies to enforce the superiority of men and the inferiority of women.

Those who are opposed to the idea of men and women playing baseball together, often defend their argument with the belief that women are not physically capable of participating in sports. In addition they often entice the belief that women are more susceptible to injury than men. This is not a valid reason to exclude women and there is an abundance of research that refutes this claim. In addition to excluding women based on their sex, the sport of baseball is connected to racial segregation. It was believed that baseball was a white man's sport and only men who were white possessed the ability to play the sport.

This ideology has filtered into present society, resulting in a few number of African Americans or people of color who participate in the sport. With that being said race is absolutely a factor in whether or not women can play baseball with men. Women who are not white are seen as inferior and they are not expected to be successful in playing baseball. There are great deal of stereotypes that surround race and a person's athletic ability. These stereotypes have been around since the "Americanization" of baseball and traces of them are still evident today.

Physical size and strength, the possibility of injuries, and the color of one's skin have been used as strong reasons to prohibit women and girls from entering the world of baseball, all of these claims are absurd and false, these issues should not just be associated women due to their biological sex. Women regardless of race are just as capable as men to participate in the sport of baseball. We can alleviate and erase these myths surrounding the inferiority of women and the superiority of men in the arena of sports.

To solve this problem we must start early, we must preparing girls early to have the ability and skill to play baseball amongst their male counterparts. Girls are often shunned away from little league games due to the toughness, manliness, or the possibility of becoming a tomboy. In addition, it is argued that girls would get hurt playing baseball and boys would quit the team. (Ring, 2009, p. 121) The idea that girls and boys don't share the same physical abilities in conjunction with excluding girls for their protection are often used a tools to keep girls from playing boys.

Girls are expected to play the feminine version of baseball, which was constructed to limit the physical capacities of women and girls and to prevent them from acting in a manly or masculine manner. It is commonly believed that boys are better suit for playing sports and girls are not regarding their physical capabilities. There are minimal differences in the physical development of boys and girls. Boys and girls are commonly equal regarding their physical capabilities, except that boys have greater forearm strength and girls have a greater range of flexibility. With the proper training or practice these differences can be reduced.

It is also argued that girls are more susceptible to injury than boys and that their bones are not as strong as boys. The claim is just as false as the others that are used to exclude girls or women from baseball. According to Dr. Joseph Trog, " any age disparity in bone strength was negligible between the ages of ages of eight and twelve, and if anything, girl's bones tend to be more resistant to breakage than boys. "(Ring, 2009, p. 123) If girls are allowed to begin training at an early age there should not be any reason why

girls and women should be prohibited from competing and playing amongst men.

There are barely any developmental differences between young boys or girls and if there are they can be easily overcome with proper training. " The real difference in sizes and strength show up by the middle of high school, when boys and girls are fifteen or sixteen years old. " (Ring, 2009, p. 149) This refutes the belief that young girls and boys cannot play sports together due to the so called differences in their physical capabilities. If individuals who are opposed actually did research instead relying on false claims they would see that there is no legitimate reason to separate boys and girls regarding differences in physicality.

Instead of playing baseball girls and women are expected to play softball, which is seen as inferior with respect to baseball. The association of women and softball was thought to alleviate the issue of women playing baseball with men, " It served the purpose, so much on the minds of turn-of-the-century health and education experts, of providing women with a safe, nonviolent way to get exercise, and it removed the threat to baseball of contamination by female participation. "(Ring, 2009, p. 60) This exhibited the fear of men regarding women playing baseball along with them.

It wasn't that women were not physically capable of sharing the field with men, they were afraid of women taking the spotlight. With that being said, we need to start modeling our young girls into the wonderful and talented baseball players that they can be, instead of allowing them to settle for sport that was developed to limit their physical capabilities. I am not by any means

suggesting that girls should not play softball because some women may be comfortable playing amongst the ranks of men.

I am saying that would limit those who are interesting in playing baseball. Once a woman has surpassed the collegiate level of softball, she is not able to pursue a higher level of success in softball. The only option is the major or minor leagues which solely based of baseball. It would be extremely difficult for softball players to revert to playing baseball. The sport of softball requires just as much skill and dedication as baseball and sadly they are segregated by gender with one being superior and the other inferior.

Physical size and strength are not factors in the whether or not a woman is capable of playing baseball among men. Women of any size and strength who has the proper training and dedication for the sport of baseball are just as able as any man to play the sport. Individuals opposed to women sharing the field often use the excuses that women are not as strong as men and smaller them as well. They often associate women with weakness with women, as said before with the proper training and skill women are just able as men to play baseball.

With that being said women can participate in the same training programs as men and receive the same results in strength gains. According to the National Strength and Conditioning Association, a women's absolute strength is less than that of a men's, but if strength is expressed relative to fat free mass or muscle cross sectional area the difference is greatly reduced or nonexistent. (Kramer, 2004) Although there are many myths circulating that men are significantly stronger than women, scientific studies repudiate those myths.

<https://assignbuster.com/women-in-sports/>

Training programs need not to be different or toned down to perpetuate the notion that women are weaker than men and that they should play separately, and train according to different guidelines. According to Robert Conatser who is a certified athletic trainer and certified strength and conditioning specialist with a master's degree in athletic training believes that training and experience would make it possible for some women to succeed at the integrated game. Ring, 2006, p 148) In addition, critics of baseball often claim that a woman's naturally small stature in comparison to most men will inhibit their success in baseball. Individuals often associate a woman's size with weakness and this feeds this belief that women are not capable of playing with men. Women who are smaller than men are just as capable if not more of performing well in the sport. In the case of baseball, size is not a factor nor is gender or sex. The performance standards of baseball should solely be based on performance and technique.

On average, males are 10 to 15 percent larger in physical stature than women. (Ring, 2009, p. 149) In my opinion this is not a substantial difference between the two and therefore size should not be a factor in baseball performance. The occurrences of injuries are negatively associated with women and are used as excuses to exclude women from playing baseball alongside men. According to Robert Conaster, " Part of the resistance to letting women play with men is injury prevention. " (Ring, 2009, p. 48) It is obvious that most women are smaller than men, and if injury occurs due to a collision the woman is going to be more susceptible to an injury, but that is a risk taken. I feel as though the occurrence of an injury is possible with any sport regardless of gender or size, no one is safe from any injury. Critics

often say that a woman's bones are weaker than men making her prone to the occurrence of an injury as the result of a possible collision while playing baseball. That is also used as a form of resistance to suggest that women should not play with men. Even if a woman were smaller than a man, if she is strong or well conditioned her muscles would protect her bones in a collision just as a man's would. " (Ring, 2009, p. 149) This supports my reasoning why women should be allowed to play with men, if they train properly, possess the skills to perform the sport well, and exhibit dedication and passion there should be no liable reasons to deny them the opportunities to playing with men. " Breaking a bone is not a predictable event: it has much to do with specifics of a hit, regardless of whether the player involved is a man or a woman. Ring, 2009, p. 149) It takes skill, talent, passion and sometimes luck to prevent the occurrence of any injury, For example, " The ability of a pitcher to avoid injury from a line driven ball streaming at him or her from sixty feet away is the result of training, reflexes, not gender. (Ring, 2009, 149) There are so many ways to get around the myth that women are incapable of playing with men as result of their gender, but as a culture we have trained to associate men with strength and power and women with weakness and submissiveness.

The success or ability in a specified sport is reflection of dedication, skill, talent, and passion refuting the idea that it's related to one's chromosomes. Baseball is immersed in a great deal of discrimination, in addition to someone being ostracized based on their gender; individuals are marginalized due to the color of their skin. The sport of baseball since its inception as an American pastime has excluded those who were not

white or male. This made it difficult for both women and people of color to participate in the beloved sport.

Although there were separate leagues they did not receive the same praise or respect as players who were white, instead they were seen as inferiors or alternatives. With that being said race affects whether or not women play baseball with men and it has been an issue since its rebirth in America. Race is used another form of exclusion or definitive mark of superiority. Just as woman's biological characteristics were used as weapons of exclusion, race is used as well. These reasons are supported by the cultivation of seasoned stereotypes.

For example African Americans are expected to be fast and only perform well as basketball players or track stars, it is often said that baseball is not suited for African Americans. Currently there is absence of women of color within teams that are only for women, this was also relevant during the Americanization of baseball. African Americans were not allowed to play among white women and they had to form their own teams. African American women and other women of color were hit a double whammy, they were not allowed discriminated against as a result of their gender and their ethnicity as well.

Race is a strong determinant in whether or not a woman participates in baseball. If women were allowed to play baseball among men, there would still be an absence of women of color. Women of color are not socially expected to play baseball and they are not expected to be good at baseball. This results in the limit or absence of women of color in baseball, thus causing disparities regarding race in baseball. Therefore there is a lack of

women of color sharing the field with men and white women. I think white women would be accepted more than women of color if given the opportunity to share the field with men.

Besides, due to the low number of women of color participating baseball will limit the integration of women of color and men. It is widely believed that if women were allowed to play baseball with there would be a shortage of available positions for men. I feel as though women wouldn't affect the opportunities for men to play. Individuals who are capable of performing a particular position as desired should be able to play regardless of their gender and those of the opposite sex should not feel threatened especially if they are on the same team.

An individual's talents or abilities should not be labeled by their gender, especially in the case of women. Men are threatened by a woman who may perform a sport better than them and often use the excuse that women are taking their positions. Would man say to his male counterpart who just happened to be more sufficient for a particular position, I would have to say no. The integration of women and me on the baseball field does not limit the opportunities for men. If a man performs a certain position better than a woman then the man should take the field or vice versa.

Skill and technique should be the only determining factors not one's gender. Women are shunned away from baseball and are provided limited opportunities to share the field with me. Our society has developed many stereotypes and ideals to keep women out of the realm of baseball, these ideals are supported by numerous arguments, most of which are completely false. Since the evolution of baseball in America women have been seen as

<https://assignbuster.com/women-in-sports/>

subordinate species regarding baseball and their abilities. In addition a lot of talented female baseball players have not acknowledged in history.

Their accomplishments have been diminished by feminizing remarks, these women are not respected. It is widely accepted that women and baseball are not compatible especially regarding the integration with men. These stereotypes and beliefs have been lingering around for centuries; it is about time they are erased. Women should no longer be denied to play and be successful at baseball, we as a culture need to uplift and support women who want to play baseball alongside their male counterparts. Women are very capable of playing baseball with men, sciences proves it and the talented women who look to play baseball exhibit it.