

# Title 9 college essay



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## **Introduction**

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance (Patricia, 1977, p. 15).

What you have just read above is the Prohibition of Sex Discrimination, also known as Title IX. Title IX has been effective in the realm of education for nearly three decades, but has been a source a controversy in collegiate sports. Since the beginning of time, women were believed to be inferior to men in every way. Women were socialized to bear children and take care of the household when, and only when, the men were out hunting. Through sports, women were able to rise up, challenge the status quo and rewrite the history books. Has Title IX really helped womens collegiate sports? With differences, has it made? I will answer these questions in this paper.

Discussion

Title IX

There are major three areas of regulation in Title IX: Treatment, Accommodation, and Proportionality (Jacob, 1993, p. 27).

Treatment is the university treating men and womens team differently. This includes scholarships, scheduling of games and practices, travel allowances, compensation of coaches, or provisions of facilities. Any unequal treatment in any of these areas would result in a violation of Title IX. This does not include club athletics (Jacob, 1993, p. 27).

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Accommodation is the area of much focus of Title IX. It involves universities giving equal opportunity for both mens and womens athletic interests. An example would be if a university had a baseball team and not a softball team. This would be considered a violation (Jacob, 1993, p. 27).

Proportionality is the participation must be proportionate to the enrollment numbers. This is a major area of controversy. For example, if enrollment is 56% male and 44% female, 44% of athletes must be female and 44% of resources must go toward female sports. The substantial clause gives a ratio of about a 10% range of compliance (Jacob, 1993, p. 28).

Title IX has worked wonders in education. Women outnumber men on many college campuses across the nation. Graduation rates for women have also increased nearly 500% since the implementing of Title IX (Egendorf, 1999, p108). On the downside, because of Tile IX many campuses across the country have cut certain athletic teams on their campuses. Two of the most recent colleges campuses to have felt the negative affects of Title IX, were Brown and Providence. Each university had to cut a mens athletic program of unlimited funding and Title IX. Title IX has also hit close to home. Cal Poly has felt the affects of Title IX. The most devastating being the incident with John Madden donating \$10 million to Cal Poly football. Madden was unable to give his donation just to football. Administration said it would be divided up evenly among all sports. Madden was so upset with this, he severed all ties with the university. This was a huge let down. The money John Madden nearly donated would have been used to rebuild Mustang Stadium and the athletic weight room. All athletic programs at Cal Poly, not to mention the local high school championship games, use both of these facilities. This

money would have benefited Cal Poly as well as the community. Yes, the left over funds were for the football program to help with scholarships and equipment. Other Cal Poly womens sports were allowed to receive donations from alumni, but not football, because of the size of the donation. It is not the football programs fault, they happen to have one of the most famous football icons of all time as alumni. The amount of the donation should have nothing to do with whether or not a team is able to accept a donation.

Title IX presence in a college setting is well known, but women athlete do not have the best opportunities after their collegiate careers to move up into the professional ranks. The only choices women have to play sports on the next level are the WNBA, the Olympics and overseas. My focus will be on the WNBA and its differences with the ever-growing NBA.

### Love & Basketball

The film, Love & Basketball, is the powerful story of two next-door neighbors in Los Angeles who grow up loving basketball and, eventually, each other. Monica (Sanaa Lathan) and Quincy (Omar Epps) have wanted to be basketball stars since they were kids. Monica has had to work hard to establish herself as a presence, while Quincy was born with natural star potential. As the two struggle to reach their goals of playing professionally, they must also deal with their feelings for each other ([www. movies. yahoo. com](http://www.movies.yahoo.com)).

Both Monica and Quincy decided to attend USC on basketball scholarships. It is evident in the film; the USC mens basketball players are treated like gods. I do not remember a scene that ever showed the mens team practicing.

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Their facilities are second to none and crowds are packing into the stadium. There is a scene after they have won when Quincy was hoisted up onto the shoulders of cheering fans, and he loved every minute of it. Even hours after the game, people are congratulating him and asking for autographs. Before the night was over, Quincy would be the main attraction at the parties celebrating the teams win. After one year of playing college basketball, Quincy leaves school and was drafted by the Los Angeles Lakers. The USC womens basketball portrayal was the complete opposite. Most of scenes showed the womens team practicing as if they needed more. They practiced and played games in a much smaller stadium similar to a high school gym. The crowds were a fraction of the size of the mens games. At times, it seemed as though the head coach was louder than the crowd. After a victory, there was no cheering fans rushing the court and picking up players, autograph signings, or big parties. After graduating from college, Monica spends a few years in Europe, playing for Parma’s championship women’s team, but even when they win, the women do not get the adulation and perks that are common for the most lowly NBA teams ([www. movies. yahoo. com](http://www.movies.yahoo.com)). It took about two more years before she made it to the WNBA. It seemed as though Title IX was not in effect, but I do understand this was a movie. Still, those scenes may have been trying to make a statement about the differences among mens and womens athletics, in general.

#### A Brief History of the WNBA

On April 24, 1996 women’s basketball announced “ We Got Next” as the NBA Board of Governors approved the concept of a Women’s National Basketball Association (WNBA) to begin play in June 1997.

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Since that day in 1996 there have been many firsts for the WNBA: Val Ackerman — the first president of the WNBA; Sheryl Swoopes — the first player signed to the WNBA; Cynthia Cooper — the league's first Most Valuable Player; and the Houston Comets - the first (and only) WNBA Champions.

However, the very first for the league was a “ to-do list.” With less than 15 months to tip-off, a league of its own began to unfold for the WNBA as each task was completed. The history of the WNBA follows:

Before a player was signed or a staff member was in place, the league announced its broadcast partnerships with NBC, ESPN, and Lifetime. It was decided that the WNBA season would be played in the summer when the sports calendar was less crowded and the games could be televised live and in prime time on a consistent basis. During a successful inaugural season, more than 50 million viewers watched WNBA games on the three networks.

By 1999, WNBA games were broadcast in over 125 countries with 37 broadcasters in 17 languages. New countries for the 1999 season included Germany, Ghana, Haiti, Italy, Lithuania, Uruguay, the United Kingdom and Canada. Canada aired a weekly Friday night game on CTV Sportsnet. Nearly one million viewers per week watched the WNBA on national television during the second and third seasons.

The WNBA delivers an audience unique in sports. In-arena, gender breakdown is approximately 70-30 female-male. The TV audience is about 50-50 female-male, with a strong percentage of non-adult viewers.

## The Players and the Teams ...

The first of the player signings was announced on Oct. 23, 1996 with Sheryl Swoopes and Rebecca Lobo joining the league. The duo were soon followed by Ruthie Bolton-Holifield, Lisa Leslie, Cynthia Cooper, Michele Timms (the first international player) and many more WNBA hopefuls.

Eight teams were announced for the league's inaugural season. The Eastern Conference consisted of the Charlotte Sting, Cleveland Rockers, Houston Comets and New York Liberty while the Western Conference was comprised of the Los Angeles Sparks, Phoenix Mercury, Sacramento Monarchs and Utah Starzz.

On Jan. 16, 1997, the first 16 players were assigned to teams, and on Feb. 27, an Elite Draft added two more players to each team, increasing team rosters to four. The Comets selected Tina Thompson, the Pac-10 Conference's leading scorer, with the first pick of the Inaugural WNBA Draft. Margo Dydek, a 7-2 center from Poland, was selected first in the 1998 Draft by the Starzz, and two-time Associated Press Women's Basketball Player of the Year Chamique Holdsclaw was the Washington Mystics' No. 1 selection in the 1999 Draft.

Since the inaugural season, the WNBA has expanded from eight teams to 16, with the Detroit Shock and Washington Mystics joining the league in 1998, the Minnesota Lynx and Orlando Miracle in 1999, and the Indiana Fever, Miami Sol, Portland Fire, and Seattle Storm in 2000. The 2000 season will see 176 women play professional basketball in 256 regular season WNBA games (schedule history: 32 games in 2000 and 1999, 30 in 1998, 28 in 1997).

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With such tremendous growth, the WNBA and the Women's National Basketball Players Association (WNBPA) announced on April 29, 1999 the league's first collective bargaining agreement — a first of its kind in women's team sports.

### It's a Ball Game

The WNBA game consists of a 30-second clock, a 19-foot, 9-inch three-point line, two 20-minute halves, eleven-player rosters and a collegiate-regulation size ball. The WNBA's signature orange and oatmeal basketball by Spalding is 28.5 inches in circumference and one inch smaller than the NBA's regulation ball ([www.wnba.com](http://www.wnba.com)).

### Differences Between WNBA and NBA

The main differences between the WNBA and NBA are the number of teams and amount of pay. The NBA has 29 teams throughout the United States and 1 team in Canada ([www.nba.com](http://www.nba.com)). The WNBA rosters have 16 teams, all in the United States ([www.wnba.com](http://www.wnba.com)). Having 16 teams is understandable because the league is only six years old. Hopefully, new teams will be formed in the future. The NBA rosters have between 12-14, while WNBA, teams have around 11-13 players ([www.wnba.com](http://www.wnba.com) & [www.nba.com](http://www.nba.com)). This may not seem like a huge difference, but when you multiple 29 by 14 and 16 by 13, the difference is more apparent. The NBA has nearly twice as many players than the WNBA (406 to 208). This shows the opportunity for women basketball players is limited. The most shocking difference is the amount of pay NBA and WNBA players receive. The veteran minimum salary for 2002 is \$40,000, but all 16 first-round draft picks will make more than that, up to



\$57, 500 for the top four picks. The rookie minimum is \$30, 000 for 2002 (www. wnba. com). The average NBA player's salary is almost \$4 million and within the next, few seasons will likely exceed \$5 million (www. nba. com). The minimum is a little under \$2. 0 million dollars per year. That is not including some of the multi-million dollar advertising contracts so many players have. Players such as Allen Iverson and Shaquille O'Neal are making over \$30 million dollars per year just playing basketball. Top players in the WNBA are making only \$80, 000 (www. wnba. com). Though the skill of the NBA players is incredible, the WNBA players are becoming just as skilled and impressive. When the league started, many critics raised the fact that women were unable to dunk, making the games less exciting. Within a few years, women were dunking; silencing the critics. Another point that can be made is you do not see the WNBA players going on strike because the players feel they are not being paid enough.

## Conclusion

Title IX is a landmark in struggle for the equal treatment and opportunity of men and women. Though Title IX is law, it had not always been the most effective in every situation. I understand what Title IX is trying to do, but I feel it needs to be evaluated how to give equal opportunity and support for both mens and womens collegiate sports. I feel the law needs to be revised so no university will ever again have to cut any athletic program mens or womens. Maybe there can be government funding in order for universities in violation of Title IX. Such legislation would be impossible to implement in the professional sports because of the capitalistic and sexist society America is (Messner, McKay, & Sabo, 2000 p173). The only solution is time. Society is

still grounded in the old ideals of early Americans. Sexism is a problem that can distort a persons thought process, young and old. This perception denies the skill, sacrifice, and passion of an athlete based on gender. True today, the female athlete is as celebrated as the male athlete is. And true, female athletes are becoming extremely competitive, but still there is a belief of separate and unequal in the realm of womens sport.

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