



# Playing With the Boys: Why Separate is Not Equal in Sports

*Eileen McDonagh, Laura Pappano*

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**Playing With the Boys: Why Separate is Not Equal in Sports** Eileen McDonagh, Laura Pappano  
Athletic contests help define what we mean in America by "success." By keeping women from "playing with the boys" on the false assumption that they are inherently inferior, society relegates them to second-class citizens. In this forcefully argued book, Eileen McDonagh and Laura Pappano show in vivid detail how women have been unfairly excluded from participating in sports on an equal footing with men. Using dozens of powerful examples--girls and women breaking through in football, ice hockey, wrestling, and baseball, to name just a few--the authors show that sex differences are not sufficient to warrant exclusion in most sports, that success entails more than brute strength, and that sex segregation in sports does not simply reflect sex differences, but actively constructs and reinforces stereotypes about sex differences. For instance, women's bodies give them a physiological advantage in endurance sports, yet many Olympic events have shorter races for women than men, thereby camouflaging rather than revealing women's strengths.

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