

Stanley D. Brunn *Editor*

Geography of Time, Place, Movement and Networks, Volume 5

Mapping Women and Family Journeys

 Springer

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*For those discovering that learning
journeys bring multiple inspirations,
beginnings and no endings.*

Preface

The genesis for this volume probably emerged in the last half of last century when I was constantly interested in interdisciplinary and international worlds at personal, local, national and global scales. As someone always comfortable learning other languages, traveling in more than 100 countries and teaching in more than 20 on all continents in the past 60 years, assembling these travel memories of known and unknown places and kindred friendships, personal and virtual, seemed to coalesce around the themes in the book's title. Being and feeling comfortable in conversations and committees with youth and seniors in the sciences and humanities inspired some new and creative ways of exploring the "known and unknown" human and environmental worlds. Perhaps these science/arts intersections emerged from reading books in youthful years about explorers and their adventures, writing missionaries and pen pals long before the internet, learning other languages and collecting stamps especially with maps. Whatever these experiences were, they seem to focus on "porous" knowledge bases that went far beyond traditional discipline-boundary thinking. The discipline of geography emerged as a field I felt most comfortable because it provided opportunities to investigate the "whys, wheres and so whats" of ideas, themes and topics in the natural and social sciences as well as the arts and humanities at all scales, from personal to global.

Acknowledging the emerging and still evolving place and environmental worlds came from both synchronous and asynchronous worlds. I grew up as a cosmopolitan Middle Westerner who lived in rural areas, attended one room country and small town schools and high schools in different six states. My father was a Presbyterian minister with German and Swiss roots and my mother had an Irish-Quaker heritage. In pre-college years, I wrote missionaries, regularly visited county seat libraries and collected stamps. As an undergraduate student at Eastern Illinois University, I deliberately sought out roommates from different countries and majored in geography with minors in Spanish and Biology. My MA years at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and PhD years at Ohio State University further expanded my friendships with faculty and students from other countries. I always enjoyed taking classes and seminars with those from other disciplines and countries. My first

teaching job at the University of Florida in the late 1960s provided the first opportunity to travel outside the United States. The university provided a three-month research grant to visit more than a dozen Caribbean capital cities in the summer of 1967. The move to Michigan State University in 1969 further opened doors for more contacts with international students and internationally oriented faculty. Moving to the University of Kentucky in Fall 1980 provided still more professional opportunities. These included establishing international networks with peers in the AAG (American Association of Geographers) and around the world, serving as editors of AAG journals, expanding professional friendships with scholars in other disciplines on college and university committees, teaching in China, Australia, South Africa, traveling internationally on a regular basis for conferences, volunteer-teaching opportunities in Central and Southeast Europe and Central Asia, serving as an election observer in Kazakhstan and Tajikistan and as a cruise lecturer in Central America, the Caribbean and Southern Cone.

In the past several decades, more opportunities opened up for short-term teaching abroad and attending regional and international geography and interdisciplinary conferences focusing on boundaries, islands, internet worlds, environmental worlds and geopolitics. All were not only mind-expanding opportunities, but venues for travel, establishing new friendships and exploring opportunities for some collaborative cutting-edge research.

The ever-increasing number of international friendships, travels in other countries (now exceeding 100) and co-authoring articles and chapters and editing books with global themes and authors changed my research foci from mostly studying US topics to studying human/environmental worlds in Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. These expanding friendship and networks stimulated interests in studying topics and themes that were interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary and international. These efforts were behind books I have edited and co-edited in the past five decades on geography and technology, world cities and urbanization, mega-engineering projects, languages, religion, maps and mapping, COVID-19, LGBTQ communities and this volume on time journeys.

Editing these volumes with contributions from several hundred authors from around the world has provided many benefits. Three are worthy of comment. First is that they clearly demonstrate the need in scholarly worlds to think “outside our comfort zones” to discover others who can “educate” us while we can likewise also help educate them about places, spatial processes and patterns. Second, the emerging “research frontiers” are clearly in transdisciplinary and interdisciplinary sphere where “much blurriness” exists and where we will discover, with some humility, some valuable new dimensions and “lucana worlds” to map, describe, analyze and seek to interpret. In a current context, we are learning, sometimes slowly, that COVID-19 is more than a health issue, that climate change impacts are more than better weather forecasts and that human welfare is more than about heritage, cultural, psychological or security issues. Third is that many of the advances in our thinking about or interpreting a problem come from those outside the Global North worlds. In all these cases, it is being recognized, perhaps by youth more than strictly disciplined trained senior professionals, that studying a topic or issue in an interdisciplinary

context may provide perspectives not recognized or valued previously. Observing this “new perspective” is noted by those in medical, engineering, spiritual and diplomatic fields with “insular” backgrounds in the social and natural sciences or fine arts and humanities. More than one professional will likely, and quietly, admit that the training social workers, lawyers, visual media technocrats, sustainability and global warming experts need to consider gender, spiritual, word, music, art and image worlds of those too often excluded our knowledge bases of studying children and adults, youth and elders, techno-nerds and low/no tech worlds.

It is the third point mentioned above that led to assembling and editing this book. In working on multiple research projects over the past couple decades with senior and junior colleagues from many different disciplines and countries around the world, I have noted that we seem to share more common interests in addressing questions about human welfare, human/environmental worlds, conflict resolution and community networking than a decade earlier. Seeking efforts to ensure some of these evolving worlds become real spurred me to investigate worlds through the concept of *time journeys*. It was a concept that I believed was a novel and innovative term that would be useful to explore what is happening on the planet, viz., its human and environmental worlds.

That thinking led to a prospectus I submitted to Springer in late 2021. It laid out my wishes and ambitions for a volume that would include scholars from the social and environmental sciences and the humanities. As in previous edited books, I specifically wanted prospective authors from around the world to think how the concept might be applied to current research topics such as migration, heritage interpretations, architecture and human welfare, but also to new and emerging fields of study such as gender empowerment, visualization, community networking, tourism, spiritual worlds and sameness. In early 2022, I contacted potential authors around the world, some who were friends who thought and would think creatively about a possible chapter topic and others who were recommended by friends of friends. All contributors were to explore the meaning of this concept in some original way. As the manuscripts were submitted, it was interesting to observe how the topic, the theoretical/conceptual frameworks, the methods, interpretations and use of graphics, especially maps, were woven into the contributors’ discussions. All chapters went through at least two revisions following specific or generic suggestions from me and/or reviewers familiar with the subject matter. Because of deadlines set by the publisher and me, not all potential authors were able to submit their chapter. I was and am very pleased with the number of chapters submitted and the contributions they make to a better understanding of the topic. There is no question, but that the time journey concept merits further discussion by many scholarly communities. That topic is addressed further in the book’s Introduction.

Any edited volume represents not only the efforts of the editor, but other invisible contributors to the reader. More than 1500 emails were exchanged with the publisher, authors, friends and reviewers around the world. I specifically wish to identify those who played important and valuable roles from beginning to end. The first is Evelien Bakker from Springer who has always been supportive of innovative proposals to advance disciplinary and interdisciplinary thinking. Also to her assistant,

Bernadette Deelen-Mans, and to Prasad Gurunadham and Corina van der Giessen who professionally shepherded the project through the production stages in recent months. I also wish to acknowledge the support of my University of Kentucky colleagues, especially Patricia Ehrkamp, former chair, and Matt Wilson, present chair, who let me retain my office. To the silent reviewers around the world who provided invaluable suggestions to improve a manuscript, I am grateful. Finally, I wish to thank Natalya Tyutenkova, my wife, for her support on this and other major editorial projects. She was always supportive of the time and effort required to ensure this product was deserving of importance to those in various disciplines. Also, I want to thank Richard Gilbreath for his high-quality cartographic skills to ensure the graphics were clear, readable and easy to interpret. And, finally, I want to thank Donna Gilbreath for her highly professional editorial and proof-reading skills which were evident in handling manuscript submissions, page layout, organization and patience with authors throughout the entire process. Her talents, geographical background, technical knowledge and humane professional experiences are behind every graphic, paragraph and reference in this volume as in previous books I have edited.

Lexington, KY, USA
February 2024

Stanley D. Brunn

Introduction to an Emerging World of Time Journeys: No End to Studying or Mapping Them

The inspiration for this volume on *Time Journeys* in early 2022 has four major sources: growing up as a cosmopolitan Middle Westerner with no home state, developing interdisciplinary interests in the sciences and humanities along with collecting stamps and writing missionaries around the world, traveling in more than 100 countries on all continents in the past 60 years and teaching in a couple dozen, and developing close professional and person relationships that led to exploring important and interesting topics about people, landscapes and places.

What became clear in the experiences just mentioned was a need to explore concepts, issues and topics that included more than in a strict disciplinary framework. While geography is a discipline recognized for its inquiries into the worlds of an individual as well as at global scales, that focus merits more than a casual look at places, cultures, economies, networks, societies and environments. What is called for are some new and novel ways of looking at the worlds we observe, experience and seek to understand. Those inquiries are best explored in transdisciplinary, interdisciplinary and international contexts with authors coming from different disciplinary training and world regions. I recognize that conducting ongoing research inquiries is important and desirable in scholarly worlds, a perspective that is often not easy for those brought up or trained in what I term “silo worlds.” Perpetuating a “silo teaching, research, and mentality” yields more “siloeing” and ignores subject content and research methods used in other fields, or new fields, of cross-disciplinary study. Some scholars might term these new scholarly worlds as “musili worlds” which explore unimaginable and unthinkable relationships never considered or conceived.

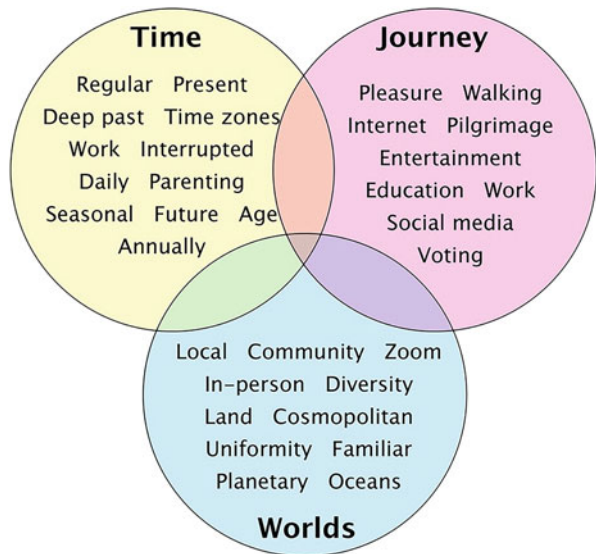
This “renaissance” thinking has become center stage in the past few years in the public eye with the challenges facing governments and citizen organizations as well as research challenges facing and funding instructional, research and policy arenas for many of the sciences and humanities. Four specific examples of these “new worlds” of thinking that are seeking better understandings (yes, plural) are COVID-19, climate change, media/technology worlds and gender relationships. COVID-19 is more than a health issue. Climate change is more than advanced meteorology.

Media is than word information, and gender is more a set of biological worlds. Intersecting all these research fields, and others, are the importance of politics (local and global boundaries), technology (machine, green, diffusion and more), psychology, media (print, visual, images), sociology and anthropology (heritage and communities). Geography can and should play a leading role in the transboundary worlds as it is an approach or a “way of looking at the world.” In this context, it is like history which is “a way of looking at time.” Geographers use maps as ways to look at places, spaces, environments, systems, networks, nodes, hierarchies and landscapes. Those concepts can be and are being used to explore or re-explore a wide variety of topics, themes and subjects studied by those in the social and natural sciences and the humanities.

The basic conceptual framework for this volume is “time journey,” which is a concept that can be explored in many different contexts. These can be topics, themes, theories, processes, subjects and issues studied by psychologists, anthropologists, archaeologists, sociologists, geologists, meteorologists, land and marine botanists, and zoologists, economists and those studying specific topics that cross disciplines, including COVID 19, climate change, social media and gender worlds. Included in these inquiries may also be efforts to answer “why, where and so what” questions through the use of geographic concepts or maps (personal, local, a continent or ocean, or global). A geographic perspective looking at issues or a phenomenon provides useful and valuable insights into questions that both disciplinary and interdisciplinary scholars find valuable. Equally useful in inquiries by those in the sciences and humanities are efforts to present data or information in some cartographic framework.

The intersections of time, journey and world are depicted in Fig. 1. These three themes can be studied separately, as they often are by specific fields in one or more

Fig. 1 Time journey worlds



of the social, natural and environmental sciences and the humanities. A major objective of this volume is to explore the relationships between the sciences and humanities using the “journey” concept. It is in those intersections where there are many opportunities for exploratory, imaginative and creative research. The graphic is constructed to think “outside the box” or “circle” about where times, journeys and worlds present some new research initiatives at all scales: person, community, continental, global and beyond.

If we pause for a moment and reflect on the many worlds, worldviews and subject matter that scholars in the humanities and sciences study, and that they research and teach, we are likely to conclude that there are many interesting, exciting and important worlds to expand our curiosity levels (yes, plural, with all senses) that are worth serious inquiry. Examples of the overlap or intersections are easy to contemplate when we study work, leisure, human/physical environments, human welfare, health and diseases, spiritual and secular worlds, real and virtual worlds, visual worlds, redefining communities as networks not proximity, and politics. All of these and others we can contemplate are best examined and understood in cross-disciplinary and interdisciplinary worlds whether we are studying an individual, a community, a network or a region in some global context. Each can be studied at varying scales: individuals, groups, different kinds of communities and networks, transborder areas and regions.

A further dimension of the time journey worlds is explored in this discussion using maps. Not the kinds and topics we are most familiar with, but innovative maps that present and represent the intersecting worlds associated with times and journeys. That is, not maps of time zones, the evolution of transportation networks, leisure travels, pilgrimages or generational migrations, but the regularities and irregularities associated with work, displacement, human trafficking, seasonal employment, personal security, climate change, diseases and disaster relocation. These and other time journeys can be mapped for children and working age adults, those with disabilities and senior members in a society and culture. Time journeys can be prepared for many different communities, those facing constant discrimination, the homeless, the immigrants from Latin America, African or Asian countries, those in spiritual and secular communities as well as virtual and invisible networked groups of which it seems there is no end. Examples of some of the many time journeys discussed in the volume are presented in Fig. 2.

There are many additional topics and themes related to the time journey concept that can be explored in interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary contexts. These include feminism and laws, pilgrimages, volunteer and forced migration, historical and contemporary transportation networks, sameness and dynamism, disease outbreaks and healing, family trees and settlement histories, synchronous and asynchronous events and journeys, museum displays and histories, climate change experiences through art, and personal histories of scholars. Additional examples are shown in Fig. 3.

The volume was not prepared to be the “last word” when it comes to studying the time journey concept. Rather, it was prepared to think of the many “successive steps” one might use to focus on some feature about the concept or some scale issue

Major Themes	Sections	Time	Careers	Heritage	Transport	Culture	Women	Families	Migration	Health	Spiritual	Tourism	Sameness
Arts & Culture													
Communities													
Gender													
Heritage													
Human Condition													
Laws													
Livelihood													
Mapping													
Media													
Migration													
Nature													
Politics													
Religion													
Rural													
Tourism													
Travel													
Urban													

Fig. 2 Titles of sections and major themes in *Time Journeys*



Fig. 3 Topics and themes related to the time journey concept

(personal and local to continental, oceanic and global. The casual or serious reader is challenged to use her/his interests in the sciences and humanities or as a science fiction reader or reader of the unexplored to think about the countless examples of time journeys that await further thought, reflection, description, analysis and mapping.

To be sure, there is no shortage of topics junior and senior scholars might study in a time journey context. Equally, there are ample topics that merit study in transdisciplinary and international contexts. Finally, there is no end to the ways singular or collaborative scholars can present their findings on maps. The instructional and research worlds of the present are awaiting those with cartographic curiosities to come with some maps about earth histories, presents and futures depicting newfound features about existing and yet-to-come features about places, surfaces, networks, landscapes, environments and surfaces. Two distinguishing features about the time journey concept are certain: there is no end to discovering them or to mapping distinguishing features.

The 70 chapters are organized in 5 volumes, each with 11 to 16 chapters. All chapters within sections are in alphabetical order by the authors' last name. Each section has authors from different countries; some are young professionals engaged in truly pioneering research projects. Others are senior in rank and respected internationally for their research accomplishments and roles in advancing geography on many fronts. Some authors I know personally from previous edited volumes; others were recommended by friends or friends of friends. They come from 20 countries and all continents, except Antarctica, and various disciplines in the social and environmental sciences as well as the humanities. The total number of authors is 105, of which more than one-third are women. One of my goals from the outset was to include examples of cutting-edge or emerging topics from early-career scholars as well as senior scholars. That objective was met.

I envision the book being used in advanced level classes and seminars with a strong disciplinary focus or interdisciplinary degree programs and seminars which train professionals for government programs, NGO agendas and national and international field research. Individual chapters or sections could also be used for workshops, thematic mini-conference foci and citizen–government programs focusing on environmental, gender, empowerment and local–global initiatives. Perhaps the creative maps, photos and images will inspire not only those in the social, policy and natural science communities, but also creative artists, poets, photographers, storytellers, community volunteers and translators who are caring and empowering professionals.

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Feminism as Action: Title IX, Time Journeys, and a League of Their Own



Karen Falconer Al-Hindi and Tammie M. Kennedy

“Somewhere behind the athlete you’ve become and the hours of practice and the coaches who have pushed you is a little girl who fell in love with the game and never looked back. . . play for her.” —Mia Hamm, professional soccer player.

(Hamm, 2018)

Introduction

Feminist scholar bell hooks critiqued mainstream identity-based feminism in her 1984 essay “Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression.” hooks argued persuasively that a feminism based in “imperialist, white supremacist, heteropatriarchy” that permits anyone to assert “I *am* a feminist” alienates women of multiple affinity group memberships and also creates an illusion of solidarity among female gendered bodies that does not account for intersectional oppressions. Furthermore, linking an identity to a social movement or philosophy assumes that calling oneself a “feminist” equals a form of collective social action that benefits all women’s marginalization and strategies for disruption and dismantling gendered practices. She also argues that identity-based feminism alienates those who seek system level changes and political action deployed to eradicate marginalized systems (hooks, 1984: 55). In other words, “feminist” functions like a transient identity badge of being rather than contributing to the sort of sustained political and social action that made, for example, Title IX possible. This distinction between identity-based feminism and activism is apparent in both *A League of Their Own* series and from the data collected from the 10 woman-identified academics interviewed at the 2019 national Feminisms and Rhetorics conference at James Madison University in

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Harrisonburg, VA. Drawing on both, we argue that feminist identities are highly complex, develop through personal and collective time journeys, and that some women act within sports to assert feminist activism more than to embody a feminist identity.

Historically, women's relationships to athleticism and fitness could be thought of as a time journey beginning from struggle, moving through constraint, and resulting in empowerment (cf. Coen et al., 2020). On the one hand, struggle relates access to sports and fitness as denoted by Title IX legislation and regulation and how women participate in sports within and against oppressive systems of power. Similarly, constraint might be viewed as equitable salaries (e.g., US Women's Soccer) and how fitness circulates the disciplining of women's bodies within a patriarchal, capitalistic, white supremacist environment that reifies normative standards of women's bodies, beauty, and health. Empowerment is linked to feminist action and how sustained activism across time and space accumulate incremental gains in equity and access.

Since its 1972 adoption, Title IX has conditioned the possibilities for women's sports and participation in athletic activities in the United States. More than 50 years ago, generations of girls' lives changed when feminists led the charge to pass Title IX of the Education Amendments into law, which was an update to the Civil Rights Act passed 8 years earlier. Its passage was a sweeping effort to address existing limits and biases against female students, particularly in law school and medical school admissions, graduate degree programs, STEM majors, and athletic departments (Bell, 2008).

Title IX forbids discrimination based on sex in education, not just athletics, purporting to ensure gender equity in all educational programs and activities in schools that receive federal funding. Bonnie J. Morris (2022), an expert in women's athletic history, offers an interesting overview of Title IX. Women from all backgrounds played a role in shepherding Title IX through Congress, championed by former representative Patsy Mink (D-Hawaii), the first woman of color elected to Congress, and Carol Mosely Braun, the first Black female senator, who further advanced the law by pushing for legislation that required schools to report how they comply with Title IX. Its passage was a sweeping effort to address existing limits and biases against female students, particularly in law school and medical school admissions, graduate degree programs, STEM majors, and athletic departments. Although few schools rushed to be fully compliant with the new law, by the end of the 1970s Title IX represented a pathway to equal academic and athletic participation for women and girls (Morris, 2022). The statute itself is just one sentence long, consisting of 37 words:

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. (U.S. Dept of Education, 2021)

Fifty years later, the advancements made possible by Title IX remain important. Yet, new generations cannot take the legal gains for granted, as witnessed by twenty-first century events, such as women fighting to play in Division I football, the American

Women's Soccer League taking on pay inequities, and women now coaching in professional sports like basketball, baseball, and football. Moreover, Title IX has prompted expanded notions of equity such as when the Obama administration argued that transgender students at public schools should be allowed to use the bathroom or locker room that matches their gender identity (rescinded by the Trump administration). It has also served as a foundation to create new Title IX amendments that address sexual harassment and helped to fuel the #MeToo movement activism in the 2020s (Morris, 2022).

Given the political nature of K-12 history and social studies curricula (Goldstein, 2020) and the immensity of state standards that arguably necessitate an only cursory accounting of the discrimination in women's sports, pre-and post-Title IX, the media serve an important function in learning about these issues. In fact, movies function as what Henry Giroux (2001) terms, "public pedagogy," a visual technology that functions as a powerful teaching machine that intentionally tries to influence the production of meaning, subject positions, identities, and experience" (587). In other words, films provide education for the masses who often uncritically absorb mediated history as "real" (580). Therefore, movies and TV series like *A League of Their Own* help to both recover women's histories in sport as well as "remember" the trajectory of the legislation and its impact on and limitations of its effect in women's real lives. In this chapter we examine feminism as action and time journey: what role fitness activity and the spaces in which women are physically active play in the constitution of feminist activism in both *A League of Their Own* film and TV series. We also engage with data from 10 female interlocutors who talked about their experiences in sports and fitness activities and with the representations depicted in the movie and the TV series called *A League of Their Own*. We also investigate rhetorical acts that exert energy within and against oppressive systems of power and the spaces that invite these actions. The movie and series represent an interesting pairing, appearing 30 years apart on the American popular culture scene and 20 and 50 years, respectively, after the passage of Title IX. Furthermore, our narrative data were collected almost three years before the new *League of Their Own* series was launched in 2022.

Among our salient findings are that journeys are central in women's athletic participation; women's sports take space and make spaces for feminists and feminist action and that backlash against feminist activism infuses spaces as well. This chapter demonstrates how feminism as action is highly complex, that women's engagements with sport and fitness spaces change over time, and that some female-identified participants act within their sports and fitness activities to assert themselves as feminists. To demonstrate this complexity, we focus on two themes that analyze *A League of Their Own* movie (Marshall, 1992) and TV series (Graham et al., 2022) as well as the data collected from 10 female interlocutors: Feminism as action (rather than identity) and Journeys.

This chapter unfolds as follows. First, we develop the idea that media representations of women's history function as collective memory helping us to understand why movies and TV series such as *A League of Their Own* deserve our attention. Second, we talk about the data on women's athletic participation and activism that

we collected at a national feminist rhetoric conference. Next, we develop two themes around time journeys and feminist activism in two sections: journeys on-the-ground; and making and taking (back) athletic spaces for women. In conclusion we highlight the differences that emerge from our data, the movie, and the TV series. As *A League of Their Own* emphasizes (and sadly remains the case), there is [still] no crying in baseball. Although the statement is delivered with comedic effect in the film by Manager Jimmy Dugan (Tom Hanks), it points to a more serious reality: baseball remains a gendered, emotion-free space where masculine notions of “toughness” remain the norm for success on and off the field.

Media Representations of Women’s History

Movies/TV series based on historical fact about women’s lived experiences provide a framework to survey how authenticity or the “real” function in representations of gendered norms in sports and the politics are inherent in producing and correcting cultural memory. In other words, everything is political. Media representations offer a critical space to explore the “real” as it intersects with history and women’s material realities. In fact, Paul Grainge (2003) argues that movies/TV are “central to the mediation of memory” and a “technology able to picture and embody the temporality of the past” reproducing the “entanglements of history and memory” (1–2). Similarly, media, culture, and communications scholar Marita Sturken (1997, 1) contends that movies embody the politics of “cultural memory,” which is socially produced and “bound up in complex political stakes and meanings.” Such a dialogical relationship between past-present relationships is evident in the movie *A League of Their Own* (1992) and the 2022 Amazon series of the same name that draw on history to recover, critique, and/or correct women’s “real” histories and female access to agency and power.

The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League, founded in 1943, existed 30 years before the passage of Title IX and 20 years after the 19th Amendment granted women the right to vote in 1920. As such, although there were women who called themselves “feminists” as part of the first wave, the majority of women in the US did not embrace such an identity, although numerous social advances were gained through women’s political and social actions. In *A League of Their Own* movie and series, none of characters identify as a feminist. However, they “do” feminism by playing baseball and navigating the complexities of oppression in a male-dominated sport, a space where women were previously not allowed. These actions are especially visible when considering how various journeys, which we talk about in more detail below, undergird feminist actions.

The National Baseball Hall of Fame (NBHF, n.d.) website recounts the creation of the Women in Baseball exhibit. On November 5, 1988, The National Baseball Hall of Fame opened a new exhibit on Women in Baseball after years of contemplating such an exhibit but finding limited funding and historical artifacts to create such a showcase. Samantha Carr explains that difficulty when Janice Mall, who was

Fig. 1 Ad for All-American Girls' Baseball League. (*The Palm Beach Post*, 1947)



writing an article on the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGBPL) for the *Los Angeles Times*, called NBHF museum curators and directors, Ted Spencer and Bill Guilfoile about the League; they were inspired to action. Drawing on a pamphlet on the AAGBPL as well as a discussion with Spencer’s former elementary school PE (Physical Education) teacher, Miss Pratt from Quincy, MA, who played for the Rockford Peaches in the 1940s, the exhibit was born (Carr, n.d.; Fig. 1).

Hearing about the opening, actor/director and sports fan, Penny Marshall, asked if she could attend. While there, she interviewed about 150 women from the League over the weekend of the opening in Cooperstown and vowed to produce a film about the topic and the women’s lives. The exhibit opening welcomed more than 1100 visitors (a typical November fifth usually saw 200–300 visitors), and Marshall found her real-life inspirations for characters (e.g., Dottie Hinson based on player Dorothy Kamenshek) and scenes (e.g., Wrigley try-outs) that would be recreated in the film (Carr, n.d.). In 1992, the film opened to box office success, reaching Number 1 in box office sales by its second week of release and grossing more than \$100 M

(History vs Hollywood, 2023). More importantly, the film secured its legacy as a cultural phenomenon beloved by millions of young women athletes and fans after the passing of Title IV, 20 years earlier. It opened the door for more mainstream movies to be produced that feature women athletes as feminist activists.

Twenty years later, according to Hollywood reporter, Lesley Goldberg, actor/writer/producer Abbi Jacobson announced that she would reboot the film as a series for Amazon after gaining approval from both Penny Marshall before her death in 2018 and Geena Davis, who played Dottie Hinson in the movie. Remakes of films based in history offer both a potential replicating and correcting function of cultural memory representations. However, Jacobson and writing partner, Will Graham, hoped to produce a series that drew on more than nostalgia for the 1992 film by intensifying the scope of the narrative to critically comment on issues of race, ethnicity, and sexuality that were whitewashed in the film or hinted at as subtext. Graham and Jacobson decided to expand the topics explored to include racism in the league as well as the stories of queer players. They hired a researcher to gather detailed information about the AAGPBL and to meet with surviving players (Goldberg, 2022).

Marya E. Gates documents how Jacobson and Graham updated the classic film Max's character as an amalgamation of three real-life Black women players from the Negro leagues: Toni Stone, Mamie Johnson, and Connie Morgan (Gates, 2022). In fact, still set in the 1940s, the series replicates some of the key scenes and characters of the 1992 film and draws on their research to reconfigure and reconstruct the lived experiences of AAGPBL players who were not only subject to the gender norms of sports, but also to racism and homophobia. Furthermore, as reported in *Business Wire* (2022), the series launch was accompanied by a powerful marketing strategy in which a stellar group of female athletes and the sports community wrote a letter, composed of over 30,000 baseballs placed on a ball field, with the message of empowerment and support for new generations of female athletes (Fig. 2).

By deploying an intersectional lens on gender and sport, the series updates and intensifies the historical realities of the AAGPBL as well as critiques how ideologies of gender, race, and sexuality circulate in media-produced cultural memory. The 8-episode series features two narratives. There is the story of Carson Shaw (Jacobson) and her experiences in the League as a married woman who has the opportunity to realize her passion for baseball, the dimensions of her sexuality with another player, Greta Gil (D'Arcy Carden) and witness the real lives of her queer and BiPOC teammates as they all navigate gendered constraints in sports and beyond. The other narrative follows Max Chapman (Chante Adams) who arrives and is promptly rejected from the women's team because she is Black as well as the men's league at work because she is a woman. Racism and homophobia also affect the Latinx players, Lupe (Roberta Colindrez) and Esti (Priscilla Delgado), who were perceived through stereotypes and shaped by white supremacy.

The updated focus on race and sexuality, merely hinted at in the 1992 movie, was met with varied reactions. *Entertainment Weekly* reporter Devan Cogan recounts creator/producer Abbi Jacobson's reaction to the series backlash from some viewers:

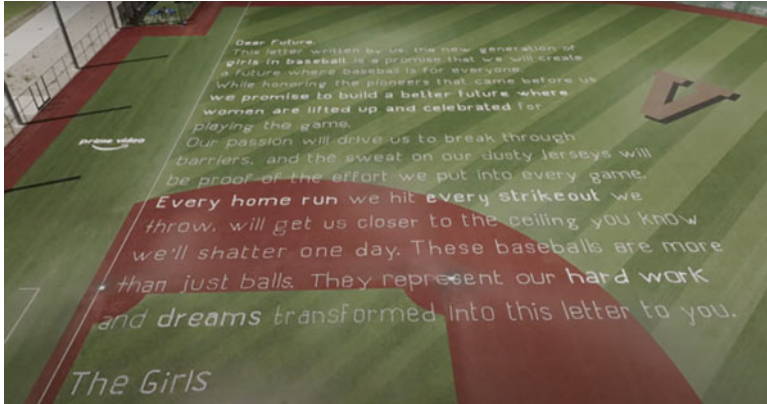


Fig. 2 Prime Video new series, *A League of Their Own*, brings together female athletes and the sports community to write a letter inspiring and forging a new tomorrow for girls in sports everywhere. (Source: adweek <https://www.adweek.com/convergent-tv/prime-video-pitches-a-message-and-thousands-of-balls-in-new-ad-baseball-is-for-all/>)

In a thread posted to the show’s official Twitter account, Jacobson called out critics who are ‘angry and mad’ about how *A League of Their Own* spotlights stories about queer people and people of color. ‘I’ve been pretty blown away by the response this weekend.’

Jacobson wrote on Twitter, ‘I was really changed learning about this generation of women. I feel really proud of this show and to know its resonating with people really means a lot.’ ‘On the flip side,’ she continued, ‘I have seen a lot of people angry and mad at our inclusion of more experiences (POC, QWOC, queer) and that anger (aka fear) has only made me more sure about why this reimagining needed to be made. Why representation matters so much’. (Coggen, 2022)

Despite the success of the series—it scored a 94% on Rotten Tomatoes, one of the best scores for a streaming platform—Asyia Iftikhar reports that the second season has only been greenlighted for four episodes, inspiring several fan-generated efforts to extend the beloved series such as the #Morethanfour media campaign (Iftikhar, 2023).

A Feminist’s Guide to Women’s Social Sports and Fitness: Data Collection

In addition to examining representations of women’s feminist actions in the movie and series *A League of Their Own*, we asked woman- and feminist-identifying academics, at various career stages, to complete a six-question written survey developed in November 2019. Following approval by the University of Nebraska at Omaha Institutional Review Board, the survey was offered in person as part of a workshop at the national Feminisms and Rhetorics conference at James Madison