

## ABSTRACT

Title of Thesis: NO PLACE FOR A GIRL? WOMEN AS SPORTS REPORTERS FROM THE GILDED AGE TO THE ROARING TWENTIES

Carolina Siqueira Paranhos Velloso, Master of Arts,  
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Thesis directed by: Professor, Dr. Linda Steiner  
Philip Merrill College of Journalism

This thesis examines some of the first women to write about sports for print media from 1870 to 1920. It also explains the social, economic and cultural circumstances from which early women sports journalists emerged.

The thesis discusses the evolution of reporting as a profession and shows that the birth of this new occupation increased opportunities for women in the newspaper industry; demonstrates how the rise of organized sports, and changing attitudes towards them, affected women's ability to participate in, be fans of, and write about sports; and introduces three women sportswriters of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – Maria Morgan, Ella Black and Ina Eloise Young – as well as explains the different strategies and mechanisms they used in order to achieve success in a male-dominated field where their presence was very much contested.

NO PLACE FOR A GIRL?  
WOMEN AS SPORTS REPORTERS  
FROM THE GILDED AGE TO THE ROARING TWENTIES

by

Carolina Siqueira Paranhos Velloso

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Advisory Committee:

Dr. Linda Steiner, Chair

Dr. Ira Chinoy

Professor of the Practice Kevin Blackistone

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## Introduction

In February 1901, Edward Bok, editor of the *Ladies Home Journal*, published an editorial entitled “Is the Newspaper Office the Place for a Girl?” He had asked readers, mostly women, to write in explaining why they would or would not allow their daughters to be “newspaper women.” Most of the answers expressed worry about the “votaries of sin” they would inevitably encounter while in the field. One editor affirmed that he would “rather see [his] daughter starve than that she should have ever heard or seen what the women on [his] staff have been compelled to hear and see.” Whether for or against women entering the newspaper business, the respondents emphasized the need for women to maintain their “sense of refinement, gentleness and womanliness” in the face of the nature of the journalistic profession.<sup>1</sup>

After the birth of the modern newspaper industry in the 1830s, the sentiment that the profession was not dignified for women permeated throughout the nineteenth century. In addition to being work outside of the home, chasing news would often involve coming into contact with morbid or scandalous topics. This was seen as inappropriate for women. The perceived intellectual inferiority of women also largely kept them from police, courts and political beats, and instead working in the style sections or Sunday morning editions. Women, thus, comprised a very small percentage of the people working in print media in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Their numbers grew as the decades wore on, but women were still anomalies in most newsrooms. According to U.S. census data,

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<sup>1</sup> Bok, Edward. “Is the Newspaper Office the Place for a Girl?” *Ladies Home Journal*. February 1901; Lutes, Jean Marie. *Front-page Girls: Women Journalists in American Culture and Fiction, 1880-1930*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007.

women made up 4 percent of reporters and editors in 1890, 7.3 percent in 1900, and 12.6 percent in 1910.<sup>2</sup>

The 1920s are considered to be the decade in which women reporters, although still in the minority, broke out in more substantial ways. By 1930, the number of women journalists had more than doubled, from 5,370 to 11,924.<sup>3</sup> Several factors conspired in the second decade of the twentieth century to make this growth possible. They include more opportunities for work outside the home due to World War I and the suffrage movement and a greater interest in celebrity figures, creating more topics about which women were deemed qualified to write.<sup>4</sup> Nevertheless, there is evidence of many early women reporters who achieved success and fame (or notoriety) in the nineteenth century and the first two decades of the twentieth century. Nellie Bly, Margaret Fuller and Jane Grey Swisshelm are but some examples. The careers of these women have been amply studied, and they have taken their place in the annals of journalism history.

There was a small but important group of women working in the early days of the newspaper industry that has received little scholarly attention because of the sub-field in which they worked – sports. Not much is known about the handful of women who managed to sustain spots in sports pages in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. However, these intrepid women were among the first to attempt a job in this sub-field, and their names and careers deserve to be resurrected. Equally as critical to reviving the careers of these women is understanding the social, economic and cultural

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<sup>2</sup> Kaszuba, David. *They Are Women, Hear them Roar: Female Sportswriters of the Roaring Twenties*. PhD diss. The Pennsylvania State University, 2003. ProQuest Theses and Dissertations (3200210), 31-32.

<sup>3</sup> Kaszuba, *They Are Women, Hear them Roar*, 32.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

circumstances at play when the first women sports reporters first began to grace the pages of newspapers.

This thesis provides a contextual look at those social, economic and cultural forces, and then introduces three pioneering women sports reporters of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – Maria “Midy” Morgan, who covered horseracing in New York beginning in 1870; Ella Black, who covered baseball in Pittsburgh in 1890; and Ina Eloise Young, who covered baseball in Colorado and California in the early twentieth century. The first chapter discusses the evolution of reporting as a profession and shows that the birth of this new occupation increased opportunities for women in the newspaper industry. The second chapter demonstrates how the rise of organized sports, and changing attitudes towards them, affected women’s ability to participate in, be fans of, and write about sports. The third chapter reconstructs the careers of three early women sports reporters and explains the different strategies and mechanisms they used in order to achieve success in a male-dominated field where their presence was very much contested.

## Chapter 1: A brief history of reporting as a profession

For the first 150 years of American newspapers, there was no conception of newsgathering and newswriting as separate professions. The editors of newspapers assumed almost all of the roles in the process of putting out a paper – they owned, printed, and sold them, and frequently wrote for them. They also often served other roles in their towns. Andrew Bradford is a prominent example: the editor of the *American Weekly Mercury* in Philadelphia, he was also the city’s postmaster. The masthead of the first issue, on December 22, 1719, prominently displayed under the nameplate that the paper was “printed and sold by Andrew Bradford.”<sup>5</sup>

Reporting as a profession emerged with the penny papers in the 1830s, but was solidified in earnest in the last two decades of the nineteenth century, when newspapers were reaching new heights of popularity, profitability and circulation. An increase in demand for news by public caused the size of the newsrooms of daily newspapers to expand, creating a need for content to fill their pages. Stiff competition between newspapers in major cities also led editors to hire people to cover many assignments concurrently. Thus, when editors began to delegate writing tasks to these employees, reporting detached from editing and became its own, separate occupation.<sup>6</sup>

This chapter will show how reporting became a separate, unique job within the larger print media industry. It will provide a survey of how the content found in

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<sup>5</sup>*American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), December 22, 1719: [2]. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*.

<https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2:10380B67EBBF3BE8@EANX-105E3D4EBA3100DB@2349267-105E3D4EF39DC48C@1-105E3D4F4769EA38@>.

<sup>6</sup> Douglas, George H. *The Golden Age of the American Newspaper*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1999, 17.



newspapers transitioned from being written by their editors and by citizens who sent in stories to people who were hired specifically to write news articles, and where women fit into this new profession. The expansion of newsrooms beginning in 1830, but especially in the late nineteenth century, created opportunities for women to step into this new role and write some of the content. The earliest women reporters wrote on topics such as human interest stories, society and style pieces and travel impressions. As sports became popular in the late nineteenth century and provided a logical topic for newspapers to cover, a few women also dared to break into that beat, as well. The expansion of roles within print media with the establishment of reporting as its own distinct profession created an opportunity, albeit limited, for women to get their foot in the door as writers in the newspaper business. Understanding how reporting became a separate occupation contextualizes the circumstances from which early women sports journalists emerged.<sup>7</sup>

### **Newspapers before 1830**

Before the newspaper revolution of the early nineteenth century, newspapers operated in vastly different ways than contemporary ones. Editors assumed almost all of the tasks associated with putting out a paper, including frequently writing for them. Members of the public also provided content in colonial and revolutionary period newspapers. Local readers would submit summaries of newsworthy events, essays and letters to the printer. The editor, then, did little actual “editing,” as the job is presently conceived of. They did not usually look to alter the contents of what was sent in, but

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<sup>7</sup>Marzolf, Marion. *Up from the Footnote: A History of Women Journalists*. New York: Hastings House, 1977, 19; Creedon, Pamela J., ed. *Women, Media, and Sport: Challenging Gender Values*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publ., 2000, 69.

rather arrange them on the pages. Thus, before 1830, there was no understanding of a person whose responsibility it was to write the news, much less whose job it was, and even less who was paid to write the news as a professional. Newspapers came together through a collection of submissions from “learned and ingenious gentlemen of the community,” which were assembled by an editor. The editor was also a postmaster, an officeholder, a bookseller and a printer.<sup>8</sup>

The editors of the early papers also rose in prominence and power, for they had the ability, as sole arbiters of the content that would appear in their paper for their readers, to influence public opinion on matters of interest. Newspapers essentially served as vessels for the political views of their owners and editors. Newspapers tended to express – indeed, were expected to express – partisan viewpoints. As a consequence, one defining characteristic of eighteenth and early nineteenth century newspapers is that they were not expected to be “objective” ; in fact, this journalistic principle of objectivity was not conceived of as a best practice of journalism until the late nineteenth century.<sup>9</sup>

The printing work has been in existence in the United States since the colonial period, with the first printing press arriving in 1638. Incidentally, this first press was also the first to be owned by a woman. Joseph Glover, a Puritan minister, intended to found his own printing press in the new colonies. He died on the voyage over, and his wife, Elizabeth, assumed control of the press (though she did not print – the Glovers’ indentured servant, Stephen Day, thus became the first colonial printer). Elizabeth soon remarried to the first president of Harvard College, Henry Dunster. The college, then two

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<sup>8</sup> Jones, Robert William. *Journalism in the United States*. New York: Dutton, 1947, 67-68.

<sup>9</sup> Schudson, Michael. *Discovering the News: A Social History of American Newspapers*. New York: Basic Books, 2011, 4.

years old, assumed control of the press.<sup>10</sup> This and other early presses, however, had little to do with what is modernly considered journalism. At first, printing presses were used to print religious texts, such as copies of the Bible, and informational materials, such as almanacs and shipping lists. Broadsides, or single-page prints, also flourished in the second half of the seventeenth century, though they mostly contained propaganda and advertisements.<sup>11</sup> It was after the first press arrived that the first multi-page print attempting to relay news was printed in 1690. This was “Publick Occurrences Both Foreign and Domestic,” published by Benjamin Harris in Boston.

There would be no second edition, however, as the colonial government shut down the newspaper four days after the first edition was published. The concept of freedom of the press was as yet nonexistent – colonial governors had the authority to suppress any printing materials. The royal instructions from the Board of Trade, the English agency that oversaw the colonies, told governors that no “book pamphlet or other matter whatsoever [could] be printed without your especial leave and license first obtained.” Using this authority, the governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, Simon Bradstreet, issued a proclamation expressing his “high resentment and disallowance of the paper’s “doubtful and uncertain” content, and ordered that “the same be suppressed and called in.” Despite his paper’s short run, Harris recognized the importance of being informed about recent events and was the first to endeavor to disseminate them in print.<sup>12</sup>

Although newspapers were limited in scope, the colonists were realizing the pivotal role that disseminating news and information played in the ability to effectively

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<sup>10</sup> Kimber, Sidney A. *The Story of an Old Press*. Cambridge, MA: University Press, 1937, 10-11.

<sup>11</sup> Jones, *Journalism in the United States*, 14.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*

conduct their state of affairs. During the first half of the eighteenth century, other papers began to spring up in the colonies' sizeable cities, such as Boston, Philadelphia, New York and Charleston. In addition to the *American Weekly Mercury*, these included the New England *Courant*, the South Carolina *Gazette* and the New York *Gazette*. On the outset of the American Revolution, New York alone had a dozen newspapers.<sup>13</sup> The reach of newspapers, however, was not ubiquitous. Eighteenth-century newspapers faced a slew of obstacles that prevented wide circulation for most of them: a high illiteracy rate, inadequate transportation to quickly communicate news and then to distribute newspapers, slow and labor-intensive printing equipment, and low-quality printing ink, among others.

Nevertheless, newspaper printing continued to prosper. There were about thirty-seven newspapers in the colonies at the time of the Revolutionary War.<sup>14</sup> Although women were the exception rather than the norm, they also served as printers. There were at least 14 women printers during the colonial period. Most came from printing families and received training in the family business, and they inherited printing duties of the newspaper when their husbands, fathers or sons died or were otherwise incapacitated.<sup>15</sup> Among the most famous were Anna Zenger, wife of John Peter Zenger, who was tried and acquitted for libel in 1735, making him the forbearer of freedom of the press. Anna printed the *New-York Weekly Journal* for several months while his case was tried.<sup>16</sup> Anne Franklin, wife of James Franklin, older brother of the famous Benjamin, published both

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<sup>13</sup> Jones, *Journalism in the United States*, 1947. 49-63.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.* 139.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.* 172.

<sup>16</sup> Ritchie, Donald A. *American Journalists: Getting the Story*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1997, 11-13.

the Rhode Island *Gazette* and the Newport *Mercury* after her husband and son died, respectively.<sup>17</sup>

Leading up to, and during, the Revolutionary War, newspapers played a major role in advocating for loyalty to, or independence from, Great Britain. In a 1773 issue of the Boston *Gazette*, Samuel Adams wrote that “a congress of American states be assembled as soon as possible.”<sup>18</sup> The Massachusetts *Spy*, edited by the Whig Isaiah Thomas, at first started with the goal of being “open to all parties, influenced by none.” As the conflict grew, however, Thomas found it increasingly difficult to keep his objections to policies and behaviors of the Crown out of his paper. In 1772, he declared that “should the liberty of the press be once destroyed, farewell the remainder of our invaluable rights and privileges! We may next expect padlocks on our lips, fetters on our legs...or – fight our way to constitutional freedom.” Soon, the paper had a new motto: “Undaunted by tyrants, we will die or be free.”<sup>19</sup> Although they were fewer in number, there were also Loyalist newspapers in the colonies, such as such as Hugh Gaine’s New York *Gazette*. Gaine, a Tory, printed Royalist propaganda until the British evacuated New York and he suspended his paper.<sup>20</sup>

The colonial women printers also made editorial decisions about the political leanings of their papers. On one side were Sarah and Mary Katherine Goddard, a mother-daughter pair who together ran the Providence *Gazette and Country Journal* in Rhode Island. Sarah was a patriot and was the first to print John Dickinson’s “Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania to the Inhabitants of the British Colonies” in 1767. These letters

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<sup>17</sup> Marzolf, *Up from the Footnote*, 2-3.

<sup>18</sup> Jones, *Journalism in the United States*, 128.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.* 135-136; 138.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.* 133-134.

rallied the colonists against the Townshend Acts, which established indirect taxes on goods such as glass, paper and tea, and with the overlying objective of affirming Britain's right to tax the colonies. The negative response led to the Boston Massacre, in which an armed confrontation between colonists and British soldiers resulted in five deaths.<sup>21</sup> In Virginia, Clementina Rind made waves for being an outspoken proponent of independence. She took over the *Virginia Gazette* after her husband, William, died in 1773. Although she only printed the paper for two years until her own death in 1775, Rind amassed a reputation of being an informed and intelligent arbiter of political affairs.<sup>22</sup> The most famous woman loyalist printer was perhaps Margaret Draper, who published the *Massachusetts Gazette and Boston Weekly*, which at the time was the colony's oldest continuously published newspaper. The *Gazette* denounced the perpetrators of the Boston Tea Party, defended the Intolerable Acts, criticized boycotts of British goods and predicted failure for the Continental Congress. After the British lost control of Boston during the war, Draper fled to Canada, then England, and never returned.<sup>23</sup>

After the colonies gained their independence, the number of newspapers in the newly-formed United States continued to grow. With the introduction of political parties and partisan politics at the turn of the nineteenth century, newspaper editors served in tandem with the party of their choice to instruct their readers on whether a strong federal government was ideal, the merits or flaws of certain policies and the strengths and weaknesses of politicians.<sup>24</sup> The question of how to most effectively rule the new nation

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<sup>21</sup>Allison, Robert J. *The Boston Massacre*. Beverly, MA: Commonwealth Editions, 2006, Foreword.

<sup>22</sup>Marzolf, *Up from the Footnote*, 6.

<sup>23</sup>Ritchie, *American Journalists: Getting the Story*, 26-29.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.* 149-150.

divided the former Whigs. The Federalists favored a strong central government; the Democratic-Republicans wanted more power to the individual states. The most famous examples of these partisan newspapers were John Fenno's Federalist *Gazette of the United States* and Philip Freneau's Democratic-Republican *National Gazette*.<sup>25</sup> As the United States worked through setting up a functioning system of government and body of laws over the next three decades, newspaper editors assumed a position of political leadership as mouthpieces for legislation through their newspapers.<sup>26</sup>

### **A New Age of Journalism**

Perhaps the single biggest development in journalism history occurred in the 1830s and 1840s, when the modern newspaper industry was born. In this case, the term "modern" refers to the beginning of the use of standards and best practices that are largely recognizable in contemporary journalism. A confluence of factors conspired to usher its birth. The "commercial revolution" of newspapers ran parallel to a larger democratization of American society. The inauguration of Andrew Jackson in 1829 interrupted the patrician style of governance characteristic of the country's earliest decades and replaced it with a wave of populist feeling. Jackson brought with him a desire to make the government more accessible to "the plain people" (he opened the White House to the public for the first time) and put more of it in their power.

Thus, the 1830s saw an upheaval of social norms and behaviors. Newspapers reflected this massive change: the new newspapers sought to free themselves of the partisan strongholds of their predecessors and serve all of the public. They believed "that

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<sup>25</sup> Ritchie, *American Journalists: Getting the Story*, 30; 36.

<sup>26</sup> Jones, *Journalism in the United States*, 185.

to be free, [a newspaper] must be unfettered, and that it cannot “be dependant [sic] upon a government and free at the same time.” They saw themselves, as one penny paper put it, as “stewards of the public” whose “business it is, apart from all party tone or coloring, to place the account before their readers, in truth and in justice, having the sacred principle of right in view, the pole star of their compass, from which, woe be to them, if they swerve one point upon any consideration.” Thus, the new newspapers were the first to articulate the concept of objectivity and nonpartisanship as a journalistic ideal.<sup>27</sup>

The result of this new philosophy was a change in the role of the newspaper editor. Editors still had considerable power and enjoyed a certain level of fame, but they sought to inject less of their personal ideology into their papers and serve as wide a readership as possible. The practice of hiring people for the sole purpose of writing stories for the paper became more common. Also invented in the 1830s was the telegraph, which revolutionized the sharing of information by enabling long-distance communication within a relatively short period of time. The news soon began to take advantage of this technology to share local news through the wire. In 1848, an official wire service, the Associated Press, was founded by a group of New York newspapers. Not only were editors contracting people to cover news around their cities, but were also pulling in stories from other parts of the country. A newspaper in the 1830s was thus radically different its partisan predecessors in that, in any one issue, a variety of content and voices were represented.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Douglas, *The Golden Age of the American Newspaper*, 1-3; “The Stewards of the Public.” *Morning herald*. (New York [N.Y.]), 21 Nov. 1837. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>28</sup> Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 4.



In order to serve a more democratic purpose, newspapers also needed to fundamentally change the way they were printed, sold and consumed. Before 1830, since most American newspapers were political in function, they came out once weekly with a roundup of political news.<sup>29</sup> With a greater emphasis placed on delivering hard news in a timely manner, the new newspapers were printed once daily. Newspaper printing also shifted to a new business model in order to adjust to their purpose and objectives: they sought their funding mainly through advertising and street sales. Partisan newspapers had relied almost entirely on annual subscriptions as their sources of revenue. Subscriptions usually cost 8 to 10 dollars a year. “All persons that are willing to encourage so useful an undertaking,” said Andrew Bradford in the inaugural issue of the *American Weekly Mercury* in 1719, “at the moderate rate of ten shillings a year...are desired to send their names and places of abode.”<sup>30</sup> That rate, however, was a substantial sum in the early eighteenth century. Subscriptions had thus been out of reach for many citizens, and reading news was reserved mostly for the elite. The new newspapers derived almost all of their revenue from the selling of single copies, and they cost as little as a penny. Newsstands on street corners and hawking newsboys were thus born from the “penny press.”

The new newspapers also more democratic in their advertising decisions. The highly partisan newspapers of the early eighteenth century had a narrow readership and did not rely on advertising for revenue. Additionally, they often made advertisement

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<sup>29</sup> There were a few that were printed more often, but they were mostly commercial in nature.

<sup>30</sup> *American Weekly Mercury* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania), December 22, 1719: [2]. *Readex: America's Historical Newspapers*.  
<https://infoweb.newsbank.com/apps/readex/doc?p=EANX&docref=image/v2:10380B67EBBF3BE8@EANX-105E3D4EBA3100DB@2349267-105E3D4EF39DC48C@1-105E3D4F4769EA38@>.

decisions based on moral or political ideology, thus refusing to print ads for certain products or services. The penny papers were to be consumed by a general public, and used this extensive readership as a selling point to attract potential advertisers. They viewed advertising as a strict economic transaction and did not generally discriminate based on advertiser.<sup>31</sup> Declared one penny paper:

The proprietor of a paper has no subscribers...It is subservient to none of its readers – under personal obligation to none of its readers – known to none of its readers – and entirely ignorant who are its readers and who are not. Elevated above the reach of those who might otherwise dictate to it, it assumes a free and independent character which nothing else could give to it. It stands above the reach of all, for good or for evil – and whatever may be said of it, it can but be said that it was free.<sup>32</sup>

A couple of early attempts at cheaply produced papers were made in Boston (the *Daily Evening Transcript*) and Philadelphia (fittingly, *The Cent*) in 1830. The first true and enduring penny paper, however, was founded by Benjamin H. Day in New York in 1833 and called the New York *Sun*. “The object of this paper,” wrote Day in the *Sun*’s first issue on September 3, “is to lay before the public, at a price within the means of every one, all the news of the day, and at the same time afford an advantageous medium for advertising.”<sup>33</sup> At the end of its first year, the *Sun* was selling four thousand papers a day; two years after that, it was 15,000. By 1836, two more penny papers had been established in New York – the *Evening Transcript* and the *Herald* – and the three had a combined circulation of 44,000 daily. The resounding success of these papers demonstrated the popular reception of this new business model, and of the enthusiasm of

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<sup>31</sup> Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 13; Douglas 3.

<sup>32</sup>” The Stewards of the Public.” *Morning herald*. (New York [N.Y.]), 21 Nov. 1837. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>33</sup> Jones, *Journalism in the United States*, 229.

people in large metropolitan areas for accessible, affordable news. Soon, penny papers sprang up in other population centers like Boston, Philadelphia and Baltimore.<sup>34</sup>

The penny papers were the first to hire people to write news stories for pay, moving away from the practice of the partisan papers to rely on readers and personal acquaintances of the editor to submit news for their pages. Many penny papers took direct aim at the practices of the partisan newspapers, describing them as “a corps of mere ‘letter writers’ whose vocation is not to report with fidelity and accuracy, but to misrepresent, abuse and calumniate the opponents of the party in whose service their Billingsgate and blackguardism are enlisted.” The penny papers believed that this practice would make their news coverage “more free from errors of all kind, more faithful, [and] more generally satisfactory.”<sup>35</sup>

Even though the penny papers began the practice of hiring and paying writers to cover news and purported to hold them to a standard of accuracy, these standards were not yet comparable to the ones held by contemporary reporters. The penny papers often faced charges of sensationalism, from the partisan papers especially, and indeed, there was much fiction disguised as news on their pages. The “great moon hoax” of 1835, in which a purported astronomer caused a public frenzy through a six-part series in the *New York Sun* claiming that a civilization had been discovered on the moon, is a famous example.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 18; Jones, *Journalism in the United States*, 227-228.

<sup>35</sup> “Reporting in Congress – The Recent Scenes.” *New York Herald* (New York, NY) 1 Feb. 1844. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>36</sup> Huber, Stacey. “The Sun and the Moon: The Remarkable True Account of Hoaxers, Showmen, Dueling Journalists, and Lunar Man-Bats in Nineteenth-Century New York.” *New York History* 93, no. 3 (Summer 2012), 252.

The penny papers, however, revolutionized the definition of what constituted “news.” While the partisan papers overwhelmingly printed information pertaining to politics and policy, the penny papers sought out the happenings of everyday life, including crime, fashion and societal gossip, which the traditional papers saw as immoral to print.<sup>37</sup> They recognized the types of stories the general public, and not just a small number of politicians and businessmen, wanted to read about. Said Bennett in a *Herald* editorial in 1835:

“The small...papers around us were solely directed to mere police reports, melancholy accidents, or curious extracts. They indicated no mind, no intelligence, no knowledge of society at large. The larger were many of them without talent and without interest. There was plenty of room, therefore, for a cheap paper managed on our plan, calculated to circulate among all ranks and conditions; to interest the merchant and man of learning, as well as the mechanic and the man of labor.”<sup>38</sup>

James Gordon Bennett and Horace Greeley, editors of the New York *Herald* and *Tribune*, respectively, led the way in the hiring of reporters. By the late 1830s, Bennett had the largest contingent of reporters in the country.<sup>39</sup> There were also a few women among them. Greeley, also determined to build a corps of reporters with diverse voices for his paper, hired one of the first women to work as a reporter, Margaret Fuller, in 1844. She was certainly an unconventional choice – she had, until then, been the editor of the monthly literary magazine, *The Dial*. She was also outspoken about her conviction that women should be self-reliant and not financially dependent on any man.<sup>40</sup> Nevertheless, she was described as “a woman of more vigorous intellect and comprehensive thought than any other among the writers of this country,” and her essays in *The Dial* caught

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<sup>37</sup> Schudson, *Discovering the News*, 28.

<sup>38</sup> Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper*, 29.

<sup>39</sup> Ritchie, *American Journalists: Getting the Story*, 59.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 67.

Greeley's eye. During her tenure at the *Tribune*, which lasted until her death in 1850, she wrote about 250 articles.<sup>41</sup>

Although paid reporters had existed since the 1830s, the profession of reporter was firmly established in the 1880s, when a new shift occurred in the newspaper industry. Growing competition among newspapers for the attention of readers and advertisers would create journalism that dove deeper into the realms of the absurd. The last three decades of the nineteenth century oversaw the birth of big businesses, large corporations, investment banking and ambitious transportation projects. The rise of big industry during the Gilded Age brought a steep increase in urban population. America's cities grew rapidly from both formerly rural workers and a massive influx of immigrants. New York City had 312,000 inhabitants in 1840, and by 1860 it had 813,000. By 1900, about 33 percent of America's population resided in cities. The newspapers saw an ever-increasing demand for news, and big businesses saw valuable opportunities for advertising.<sup>42</sup>

Consequently, the quantity and breadth of newspapers dramatically increased during this period. Aided by the development of ultra-high-speed presses, which could print 48,000 twelve-page papers in an hour, there were multiple dailies with large circulations in every major city in America. The aggregate circulation of dailies increased 222 percent between 1870 and 1890 despite the population only increasing by 63 percent over the same period. Two of the papers born from this capitalist boom would forever alter the landscape of journalism: Joseph Pulitzer's New York *World* and William Randolph Hearst's New York *Journal*. The legendary competition between them took

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<sup>41</sup> Ritchie, *American Journalists: Getting the Story*, 67.

<sup>42</sup> Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper*, 81-82.

journalism to new highs – and lows – and established the news environment into which woman reporters would step.<sup>43</sup>

The last two decades of the nineteenth century pried the door slightly more open for women looking for opportunities to write for newspapers. Ishbel Ross estimated that there were about 300 woman reporters by 1910.<sup>44</sup> The “yellow journalism” practiced by Hearst and Pulitzer placed a heavier emphasis on style than substance for the stories that filled their papers. They focused more on sensational stories about scandals, sex and crime, as well as lighter entertainment, than did the penny papers, which endeavored to cover the news of the day in a more measured fashion. Coupled with an interest in drawing in more women readers, the yellow papers hired a number of women to write stories with flamboyance and style. Women’s columns, style sections and society notes also flourished.<sup>45</sup>

The result was that although there were several women writing for newspapers starting in the mid-nineteenth century, they were nevertheless limited by societal conventions about what they could write. At the time, women were expected to exert duties in the household as a wife and mother. It was still quite scandalous when a woman procured outside employment, especially in a career seen as morally questionable, like journalism was. Ishbel Ross remarked that a woman “has everything against her at the start. She may write quite well...But the most delicate test a reporter meets is in marshaling facts and assembling a big news story in perfect proportion, under pressure.

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<sup>43</sup> Douglas, *The Golden Age of the Newspaper*, 82.

<sup>44</sup> Marzolf, *Up from the Footnote*, 26;32.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.* 20-21.

This calls for lucid thinking, good judgement, and absolute clarity of style... The woman reporter rarely gets the chance to try it.”<sup>46</sup>

Women reporters during this period essentially had two options: cover topics seen as “women’s issues” or perform stunts of shock value in order to stand out as curiosities. They were not, however, generally seen as capable of handling the more significant of a newspaper’s beats. “Whenever possible, [women] are steered into the quieter by-waters of the newspaper plant, away from the main current of life, news, excitement, curses and ticket machines,” said Ishbel Ross. “They are segregated where their voices will not be heard too audibly in the clatter.”<sup>47</sup> Fuller, perhaps the most accomplished woman reporter of her time, still only wrote about a limited number of subjects. Greeley contracted her to write three articles a week for the *Tribune*, two literary pieces and one on social customs. Though she received much public praise for her intellect, and her stories frequently and prominently featured in one of the most popular newspapers in the country, Fuller nevertheless was restricted in the types of stories she could write, as they had to conform to concurrent standards of appropriateness and to the perceived scope of a woman’s expertise.<sup>48</sup>

The newspaper revolution of the 1830s brought a fundamental shift in the purpose newspapers served in daily life, as well as ushered in a new profession, that of reporter. While colonial and early American newspapers consisted mostly of citizen content sent into editors, who assembled, printed and sold newspapers practically by themselves, the new newspaper featured content written by people who were paid to chase down and

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<sup>46</sup> Ross, Ishbel. *Ladies of the Press: The Story of Women in Journalism by an Insider*. New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1936, 5.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>48</sup> Marzolf, *Up from the Footnote*, 13-14.

write about newsworthy events. Women naturally wanted to participate in this new profession, but the few who managed to find jobs as reporters were constrained in what they could write about. Viewed as innately intellectually inferior to men, women could not be trusted with “hard news,” and were thus relegated to the style sections, Sunday morning editions or stunt journalism. A select number of women also tried to break through a genre entirely dominated by men: sports.



## Chapter 2: Sports, Leisure and Society

It is no coincidence that the birth of the modern newspaper industry and the rise of organized sports emerged at the same time. The popularity of sports beginning in the early nineteenth century provided an ideal subject with which newspapers could fill their pages. Women, however, were almost entirely excluded. Sports were considered beyond a woman's capacity to understand or appreciate. As spectators, women were treated as anomalies at best.<sup>49</sup>

A cultural shift in attitudes toward sport and leisure helped bring about the popularity of organized sport. The commercial nature of the late nineteenth-century capitalist economy also spurred sports teams to find many avenues through which to make revenue, including diversifying their fan bases. Baseball, in particular, made a strong effort to increase its popularity with women. The sport's leaders, for example, attempted to reform its reputation as inviting of debaucherous behavior to one that represented wholesome, family fun. It also began holding and promoting "ladies' nights," in which women received discounted admission to the game. This chapter will outline the changes in societal attitudes towards sports in general into which women sports writers stepped into at the end of the nineteenth century, helping provide a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural circumstances at play when women reporters entered the sports journalism realm.<sup>50</sup>

The emergence of sports reporters corresponded with shifting attitudes in American society about the role of sports in everyday life. In the first three decades of the

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<sup>49</sup>Ardell, Jean Hastings. *Breaking into Baseball: Women and the National Pastime*. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 2005, 191.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid., 190-192.

nineteenth century, prevailing Puritan ideals discouraged the practice of organized sports. Partaking in such activities was considered wasteful, since that time could be spent doing actual labor. Puritans were not averse to downtime away from work, but recreational sports were thought to be stimulating rather than relaxing. The physical activity would heighten feelings of pleasure in men and women and cause them to seek that out instead of self-discipline and work ethic. Thus, sports were seen as an economic threat due to their potential to reduce labor output.<sup>51</sup> Foreign travelers often commented about Americans' ideological distinctions of work and sport. Alexis de Tocqueville, commenting that when one "covets wealth much less than pleasure and excitement...the energy which his neighbor devotes to gain, turns with him to a passionate love of sports," articulated the prevailing sentiment that labor equaled economic growth while sports equaled idleness.<sup>52</sup>

Beginning around the fourth decade of the nineteenth century, however, broad societal changes led to a shift in the relationship between work and leisure. The industrialization and urbanization that occurred beginning in the mid-nineteenth century fundamentally changed the way most Americans performed work. Agricultural and artisan labor that was largely local and individual gave way to mass production at factories. Work no longer brought the same self-realizing satisfaction, and the long hours and poor conditions in an assembly line or on the factory floor, in fact, took a tremendous toll on the psyche and health of workers. Leisure time thus came to be seen as a necessary activity to maintaining one's physical and spiritual condition. Other concurrent and

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<sup>51</sup> Furst, R. Terry. *Early Professional Baseball and the Sporting Press: Shaping the Image of the Game*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Publishers, 2014, 10-12.

<sup>52</sup> De Tocqueville, Alexis. "Democracy in America." Book One, Chapter XVIII. <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/815/815-h/815-h.htm>.

complimentary phenomena, such as waning Puritan influence, rising intellectual schools of thought and advancements in medicine also contributed to the newly-drawn link between exercise, diet and nutrition and good overall health and avoidance of diseases.<sup>53</sup>

Magazines and periodicals helped disseminate the notion of sport and recreation as beneficial in daily life. Titles such as the *American Journal of Education*, the *Annals of Education and Instruction*, *American Farmer*, *Godey's Ladies' Book* and *Harper's Bazaar* all published on the importance of practicing sports as a component of a healthy life. Sports bring about the "general development of strength in every part of the body," said a woman writer in *Harper's Bazaar*. "The special exercise of any one part of the body brings a rush of new material immediately to that part and consequently hastens its upbuilding."<sup>54</sup> Newspapers of all sizes also popularized this idea. "There is nothing more invigorating and healthful than out-door exercise," affirmed a West Virginia paper.<sup>55</sup> Sports, said the New York *Herald*, "has kept many...in health and made them abler to perform the duties of life."<sup>56</sup>

Sport and exercise also came to be associated with character-strengthening values like discipline, effort, sportsmanship, teamwork and humility. The shift in attitudes toward labor as the central aspect of people's lives that accompanied the rise of the factory system and urbanization resulted in a greater emphasis placed on activities practiced outside of work. An intellectual reawakening taking place in Europe and North America beginning in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century had much to do with this shift. Newer liberal

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<sup>53</sup> Furst, *Early Professional Baseball and the Sporting Press*, 13-17.

<sup>54</sup> Cutler, Martha. "Daily Exercise for the Normal Woman." *Harper's Bazaar* (1867-1912); Sep 1908; 42, 9; 89. American Periodicals.

<sup>55</sup> *Wheeling register* (Wheeling, W. Va.), 21 Nov. 1878. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>56</sup> "Polo." *New York Herald* (New York, NY) 7 Aug. 1878. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

schools of thought, such as German idealism, French utopianism, Protestant Unitarianism, and transcendentalism all pushed back against the conservative condemnation of idleness associated with recreational activities.<sup>57</sup>

The concept of “Muscular Christianity,” popularized at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, also helped associate sport with those desirable, character-building values. The Young Men’s Christian Association, or Y.M.C.A., was also born of Muscular Christianity. Founded by George Williams in 1841 and brought stateside in 1850, the Y.M.C.A. blended the concepts of recreation and Christian morals. By 1870, two gymnasiums had been built, one in New York and the other in San Francisco. Muscular Christianity helped introduce the systematic and infrastructural practice of sport activities in the United States. The concept was instrumental in broadening the positive association of sport with taking care of one’s body and mind.<sup>58</sup>

Eventually, these ideals were applied to women, too. “It seems to us that the people who are always harping on the dangers of innocent sport, to the virtue of young girls, are dangerously near the forbidden line themselves,” wrote a sports editor in Idaho.<sup>59</sup> Although women’s organized sports were not as prevalent as men’s, the idea of women practicing sports was seeping into the public consciousness at the turn of the twentieth century. “Unconventional, such tastes [practicing sports] may be in women, I grant you; but unwomanly they are not,” Dorothy Lundt said in an issue of *Godey’s Lady’s Book*. “Properly exercised, such sport brings a strength of muscle and a power of nerve, which women, as well as men, need sorely enough in the hard places of their lives!

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<sup>57</sup> Furst, *Early Professional Baseball and the Sporting Press*, 9-15.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 15-17.

<sup>59</sup> *Elmore Bulletin* (Elmore County, Idaho). 24 June 1896. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

And I think that women who use every means in their power to make healthy their bodies for healthy minds to dwell in should be helped, and not laughed at.”<sup>60</sup> Moreover, daily exercise became as much associated with beauty as eating properly and sleeping well. Women, then, viewed exercise as “a voluntary daily sacrifice to health and beauty undertaken from a sense of duty, if not for pleasure.”<sup>61</sup> Exercise, the values of which were extolled as both internal and external, became but one component of a well-rounded woman. Magazines of the day thus encouraged women to “pay particular attention to exercises which will increase her lung power, strengthen the back and abdomen, and give her grace of carriage.”<sup>62</sup>

It was during this period of significant changes in the prevailing attitudes toward sport and leisure that sports journalism emerged as its own, separate faction of the journalistic profession. Sport and journalism enjoyed (and, in fact, still enjoy) a symbiotic, concurrent relationship – an increased interest in sport led the press to cover it more seriously, generating great advertisement revenue from their coverage; in turn, the sports press helped popularize and nationalize sports.<sup>63</sup> While the large daily newspapers covered sports sporadically in the first three decades of the nineteenth century, it was magazines that took the lead in developing a niche for specialized sports coverage.

Perhaps the first magazine to feature a section dedicated solely to sport was John Stuart Skinner’s *American Farmer*, founded in 1819, which began publishing a section

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<sup>60</sup> Godey’s *Lady’s Book* Vol 1010 (1880), 473.

<sup>61</sup> Cutler, Martha. “Daily Exercise for the Normal Woman.” *Harper’s Bazaar* (1867-1912); Sep 1908; 42, 9; 895. *American Periodicals*.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>63</sup> McChesney, Robert W. “Media Made Sport: A History of Sports Coverage in the United States.” In *Media, Sport, & Society*, 49-70. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications, 1989, 49.

called “Sporting Ohio” in 1825.<sup>64</sup> By the mid-1830s, seven magazines exclusively covering sports had been founded, with two surviving to dominate the market: Skinner’s *American Turf Register* and William Trotter Porter’s *Spirit of the Times*. The growing interest in, and demand for, sports coverage caused the *Times*’ circulation to swell to over 100,000 by the 1850s.<sup>65</sup> Soon, another magazine arose in New York to rival the *Times*: Frank Queen’s *New York Clipper*. Founded in 1853, it quickly became the top sporting magazine in the country and employed the country’s first bona-fide sportswriter, Henry Chadwick.<sup>66</sup> Issues of the *Clipper* contained “records of fastest time and best performances in all departments of sport...reviews of baseball, cricket, trotting, athletics, aquatics, turf, billiards...sporting chronologies [and] portraits of leading sporting men.” Magazines thus provided a nearly comprehensive overview of the time’s major sports, rendering them “indispensable to all sporting men.”<sup>67</sup>

Newspapers were slower to establish their own separate sports section, but by the end of the nineteenth century, they too were devoting more and more space and resources to covering sports. By the 1880s, newspapers were the main source of sporting news for audiences, though magazines did not suffer a noticeable decline in readership and continued to thrive well into the twentieth century – there were 48 sports magazines in the 1890s, while there were only nine in the 1860s.<sup>68</sup> Large, daily newspapers in major metropolitan areas led the way in establishing daily sports coverage in the last two

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<sup>64</sup> Peterson, Scott D. *Reporting Baseball’s Sensational Season of 1890: The Brotherhood War and the Rise of Modern Sports Journalism*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland & Company, Publishers, 2015, 18-19.

<sup>65</sup> McChesney, *Media Made Sport*, 50-51.

<sup>66</sup> Peterson, *Reporting Baseball’s Sensational Season of 1890*, 20; McChesney, *Media Made Sport*, 51.

<sup>67</sup> “Indispensable and Invaluable.” *New York Clipper* (New York, NY) 2 Feb. 1893. Illinois Digital Newspaper Collections; The *Clipper* was also a periodical of one of the other main forms of entertainment of the time, theater.

<sup>68</sup> McChesney, *Media Made Sport*, 53.

decades of the nineteenth century. Smaller, local newspapers would begin offering their own sports pages over the first two decades of the twentieth century, truly nationalizing the practice of sports journalism in the lead-up to the “Golden Age of Sports.” About four percent of the editorial coverage of an average newspaper was devoted to sports in 1900, but that increased to nearly 20 percent by 1920.<sup>69</sup>

The penny papers initiated the practice of daily coverage of sports. James Gordon Bennett’s New York *Herald* and Horace Greeley’s New York *Tribune* reported on sports such as prizefighting, cockfighting and horseracing. This coverage, however, was characteristically intermittent. Because most sports had not been structured or standardized on a national scale in the first half of the nineteenth century, they were mostly practiced by loosely organized groups, and many sports, such as yachting, were reserved for the well-to-do strata of American society.<sup>70</sup>

Horseracing was one of the first sports the press took on in a more consistent fashion. It was particularly burgeoning in the middle third of the nineteenth century. It was also one of the first sports to receive some sort of standardization, in that general codes were established and meets were organized. In 1830, approximately 56 races occurred, and by mid-century, that number had nearly tripled. The daily papers explained the rules, reported on the races and detailed the individual horses. Up until then, though, horse racing had largely been reserved for the upper classes, as breeding and buying thoroughbreds, entering them in races and joining prestigious jockey clubs required a certain amount of capital. “Horse racing is pursued by certain classes as the only pleasure

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<sup>69</sup> McChesney, *Media Made Sport*, 53; 57.

<sup>70</sup> Davies, Richard O. *Sports in American Life: A History*. Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell, 2017, 24.

worth living for,” said an article in the *Herald*.<sup>71</sup> Beginning in 1850, a more democratic form of horse racing supplanted thoroughbred racing as the most popular among sports fans. This was harness racing, or trotting, in which horses raced pulling a two-wheeled cart. Unlike its elite predecessor, which required employing a jockey, anyone with a horse and buggy could participate in harness racing.<sup>72</sup> “The substitution of trotting for racing has been productive of such beneficial results that there are very few, even among sporting characters, who would desire to re-establish the old order of things in this respect,” the *Herald* reported in 1853.<sup>73</sup> From horse racing, one of the first known women sports reporters emerged: Maria “Middy” Morgan, who began covering the sport for the *New York Times* in 1869.

The penny paper covered sports, though, with a certain trepidation. An 1842 article in the *Tribune* contained the sentiment that “Sporting topics...do not yet attract much attention...They have as yet little affinity.”<sup>74</sup> As they had not yet solidified into a distinct, popular and marketable subject to cover, sports were still seen as being on the outskirts of mainstream American society, and many newspapers initially regretted giving them coverage.<sup>75</sup> This was especially true of sports seen as particularly brutal, such as prize fighting. The *Herald* described the scene at prize fights as “expeditions of bands of ruffians to scenes dedicated to the barbarous sport of mauling humanity.”<sup>76</sup> One

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<sup>71</sup>“The Horse Trade of New York. *New York Herald* (New York, NY). 25 April 1853. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>72</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 32-33.

<sup>73</sup> “The Horse Trade of New York. *New York Herald* (New York, NY). 25 April 1853. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>74</sup> “Sporting Scenes and Sunday Sketches.” *New York Daily Tribune* (New York, NY). 28 September 1842. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>75</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 51.

<sup>76</sup> “Good for Jourdan.” *New York Herald* (New York, NY). 29 April 1870. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.



strategy employed by the penny papers which were less inclined to sensationalism than their yellow successors, to combat this was a descriptive style in their sports coverage. Reports on boxing matches emphasized “points that so clearly involve intellectual operations” such as “quickness of combat eye and the lightning-like rapidity of delivery and defence turns” so as to “raise the combat from its brutal character.”<sup>77</sup>

Beginning around 1860, the rapidly developing advancements in transportation and communication allowed for sports to organize on a larger scale. Thousands of miles of canals and railroads made it easier for teams within leagues to play each other, while the telegram allowed for newspaper correspondents to relay information about the results of games to papers much faster. Consequently, organized sports became a large part of American life, and newspapers realized this. Sports coverage expanded considerably after the Civil War, and sports journalism grew into its own distinct genre.<sup>78</sup> In 1883, Joseph Pulitzer’s *New York World* created the first sport department and frequently put sports stories on his paper’s front page, signaling the sports story’s heightened commercial value. In fact, the paper’s evening edition started putting out a “sporting extra” around 1887, which was filled mainly with sports stories. In 1895, twelve years after the country’s first sports department, William Randolph Hearst established the first separate sports page in a newspaper in his *New York Journal*.<sup>79</sup> Commonly titled “Current Sporting Events” or “In the World of Sports,” the sports page usually appeared on page 10 of the 12-page *Journal*.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> “The Great Prize Fight.” *New York Herald* (New York, NY). 11 May 1870. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>78</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 24.

<sup>79</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 24

<sup>80</sup> *New York Journal and Related Titles, 1896 to 1899*. Library of Congress.

[https://www.loc.gov/collections/new-york-journal/?fa=partof\\_title:the+journal+%28new+york+%5Bn.y.%5D%29+1895-1896](https://www.loc.gov/collections/new-york-journal/?fa=partof_title:the+journal+%28new+york+%5Bn.y.%5D%29+1895-1896)

Sports were also, above all, entertaining, and this entertainment value fit in seamlessly with the yellow papers' quest to attract large droves of readers. Prize fighting, which was often criticized by the penny papers as unnecessarily violent and reflective of man's worst instincts, regained its appeal in a newspaper landscape that valued gore and sensation. The sport had experienced a decline in popularity around the time of the Civil War due to a pushback against its encouragement of disorderly conduct, alcohol consumption, gambling and other amoral behaviors. Beginning in the 1870s, however, prize fighting made a comeback as a structured sport in which participants "spared" instead of "fought" using padded gloves and with several rules against moves such as hitting below the belt, holding and eye gouging. Though still undeniably brutal, it was greatly appealing to newspapers, which pushed the sport through a narrative of manly, self-preserving combat. As opposed to how many penny papers covered prize fighting with disgust several decades before, the yellow papers borrowed from the language of sport as character-building exercise of the day and framed boxing as "of inestimable value as a means of training, development and discipline of boys and young men. Every faculty of the body is brought into play and the mind is naturally strengthened and invigorated by improving its physical environment."<sup>81</sup> Boxing also created some of the first celebrity athletes, such as John L. Sullivan, considered the first heavyweight champion of gloved boxing. The sport also became intertwined with the history of women in sports journalism through Nellie Bly, the intrepid reporter who broke many barriers for her successors. In 1919, in the twilight of her career and the dawning of

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<sup>81</sup> "The Ethics of Slugging." *The New York World* (New York, NY). 21 December 1887. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

sports journalism's Golden Age, she became the first woman to cover a championship boxing match from ringside. She also gained an exclusive interview with the victor, world heavyweight champion Jack Dempsey, the day after his defeat of Jess Willard.<sup>82</sup>

The sport that was truly responsible for propelling the nationalization of sports journalism, however, was baseball. The origins of baseball have been disputed by scholars and fans for generations. The most accepted belief is that it descended from a British game called "rounders," which contained many of the rules recognized in modern baseball. Three missed strokes, for instance, was an out for a batter, and the field was shaped like a diamond. A famous myth about the origin of baseball, however, found its way into the imaginations of baseball fans and has persisted. This is that the game of baseball originated wholly in the United States, and its creator was Abner Doubleday, a soldier in the Union army. He is supposed to have presented the rules of "base-ball," his newly-created game, to a group of friends in Cooperstown, New York in 1839. Albert Spalding, a former player and sporting goods merchant, established a commission in 1907 to determine the origins of baseball and concluded that Doubleday had created it. The commission's intentions, however, were duplicitous: it was specifically looking to determine that baseball originated in the United States, and it used as its main source of evidence a letter from a childhood friend of Doubleday's recalling the supposed events, written 68 years after the fact. Ever since, baseball has held the distinction of being "America's game" or the "national pastime" despite its ambiguous beginnings.<sup>83</sup>

Organized baseball in its earliest form was characterized by excessive rowdiness from the players and fans alike, rampant subversion of rules on the field, and widespread

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<sup>82</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 76-77; Sowell 55.

<sup>83</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 53-54.

gambling on game results. Spectators regularly attempted to influence the results of the game by shouting incorrect play calls at the players, hoping to distract the opposing team. Because many early baseball venues did not have proper spectator seating, or even a clear separation of the playing field from the rest of the grounds, spectators also often directly interfered with balls in play. At a game, one writer observed “in pushing the crowd aside to get the ball, [the fielder] was kicked at by a scoundrel who had previously tried to kick the ball further off.”<sup>84</sup> The building of fenced ballparks not only helped improve the decorum of games, but also facilitated ticket sales – in 1868, the country’s top eight teams accrued over \$100,000 in ticket sales revenue.<sup>85</sup> Players themselves also contributed to the reputation of the low moral character of baseball. They employed various tactics that undermined the spirit of competitive and fair play of the pre-professional, community baseball game, including using shoes with sharp spikes to pierce other players, sliding hard into basemen, intentionally throwing at batters and getting into physical altercations with other players, umpires, and even spectators.<sup>86</sup>

Arguably the biggest problem that plagued early professional baseball, and many other nineteenth-century organized sports, was gambling. Nearly all parties gambled on games in some way – teams would lose games to lengthen series and increase their ticket revenue, while spectators gambled on the outcomes of games. Albert Spalding commented “that not an important game was played on any grounds where pools on sale were not sold...a few players, too, had become so corrupt that nobody could be certain as to whether the issue of any game in which these players participated would be determined

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<sup>84</sup> Quoted in Furst, *Early Professional Baseball and the Sporting Press*, 89.

<sup>85</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 87-89; 59.

<sup>86</sup> *Ibid.* 61.

on its merits.<sup>87</sup> By the end of the 1860, baseball journalists and enthusiasts recognized that baseball had a major reputation problem. “Betting on baseball games,” said an article in the *New York Tribune*, “was...common in the pool-rooms throughout the United States. Then the admirers of baseball seldom knew whether a game had been honestly won or lost, and disgraceful stories were ever on the tongues of the gossips of the ball-field.”<sup>88</sup>

Starting in the mid-1870s, baseball made a serious effort to reform its image as inviting of insalubrious behavior by the players and spectators. The attempts to reduce on-field skirmishes and elevate player and spectator behavior exemplify baseball’s efforts to broaden its appeal to the middle and upper classes during latter half of the nineteenth century. Rather than be associated with cheating, gambling and general debauchery, baseball wished to instead extol “abstinence from liquors and tobacco; regular and early hours; steady practice and severe labor; self-restraint in good fortune or defeat; patience, hopefulness, courage, fortitude; courtesy toward opponents; submission to authority [and] fair play.”<sup>89</sup> The leaders of the two most successful – and still enduring – major leagues played pivotal roles in the crusade to re-establish baseball as a game built on Victorian morals. William Hulbert, one of the founders of the National League, the nation’s first major league, which formed in 1876, sought to ban the sale of beer from the league, which caused problems with revenue-minded team owners. Ban Johnson, founder of the American League, which he established in 1901, shared his rival’s concern about the

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<sup>87</sup> Quoted in Furst, *Early Professional Baseball and the Sporting Press*, 104.

<sup>88</sup> “The National Game.” *New York Daily Tribune* (New York, NY). 31 July 1887. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>89</sup> “Base-Ball Virtues.” *The true northerner*. (Paw Paw, Mich.), 01 July 1886. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

game's prestige. From the idea that more women in the stands would provide a calming effect on the behavior of the men, Johnson conceived of "ladies' nights," in which women would be admitted at a reduced price. Among the changes he also spearheaded were the suppression of umpire abuse by players and fans and sweeping anti-gambling campaigns. Although, ultimately, they were not successful in completely eliminating the vices that plagued baseball, the game's leadership established a stable and orderly professional baseball association that made it the country's leading sport for the next 50 years.<sup>90</sup>

The team sport that served as baseball's main competition was college football, which rose to prominence with high-profile matchups between Ivy-League schools in the second half of the nineteenth century (the professional leagues of what would become the three other members of the "big four" in American sports – hockey, football and basketball – were founded in 1917, 1920 and 1946, respectively).<sup>91</sup> College football experienced a period of tremendous growth between 1890 and 1915, with its westward expansion, thus entering national consciousness only near the second decade of the twentieth century. However, central to the identity of college football was its necessary physicality and brutality. It deliberately encouraged spectators to view the opposing sides as "armies" going into "battle." A sports columnist for Connecticut's *Journal and Courier*, reflecting upon the atmosphere at a recent Yale football game, explained: college football "sharpens the appetite for the quality of gore which a football game dispenses. It must be fiercer in character to satisfy, just as in the summer season the

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<sup>90</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 124-129.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.* 103-108.

emotions respond less profoundly to acts of similar skill.”<sup>92</sup> As a result, baseball was a likely sport for women sports journalists working before 1920 to cover if only due to its prevalence.

Due to the reciprocal nature of the sport-media relationship, the press also took up the cause of reforming baseball’s image and legitimizing it, and sports in general, as a “cultural institution.”<sup>93</sup> The *Richmond Times-Dispatch* writer E.J. Griffith affirmed that the “hoodlumism” that occurred during a Virginia Lawmakers game the day before “should not be repeated” because “not too many years ago a lady dared not attend a baseball game any more than she would attend a prizefight, because one was as bad as the other.”<sup>94</sup> James A. “Jim” Hart, a pioneering baseball manager and president of the Chicago National League Ball Club instituted codes of conduct for his players, including no foul language or inciting fights, and publicly chided members of opposing teams when they engaged in such actions. “We make it a point to so conduct our grounds that the most fastidious can attend without fear of insult or shame,” Hart explained, “and no player or member of the Chicago team ever is permitted to repeat an act that reflects upon the game of baseball or the Chicago League Ball club.”<sup>95</sup>

Women also helped grow baseball’s popularity while simultaneously helping reform its image. Significant efforts were made to get more women into the stands. Teams looking to boost revenue saw women as a relatively untapped group that they could loyalize into coming consistently to games and consuming food and beverages and

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<sup>92</sup> “Outdoor Reflections.” *The morning journal-courier*. (New Haven, Conn.), 18 Dec. 1907. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>93</sup> McChesney, *Media Made Sport*, 52.

<sup>94</sup> “Rector Proves His Ability to Beat Fleetest.” *The Times Dispatch* (Richmond, VA). 8 June 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>95</sup> “Hart is Right.” *Kansas agitator*. (Garnett, Kan.), 11 Sept. 1896. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

purchasing merchandise.<sup>96</sup> Team officials also thought that more women, especially those unescorted, would increase the number of men coming to games and drive up overall attendance. Finally, the presence of women was thought to decrease the rowdy behavior of the men in the crowd, which included heavy drinking, the use of curse words and pervasive gambling.<sup>97</sup>

It is difficult to know exactly how many women considered themselves baseball fans and attended games due to a lack of statistically significant gender-based attendance figures for early baseball games. However, there were enough of them at games to cause notice by team officials and male crowd members. One account of a baseball game in Louisiana in 1887 counted 1200 men and 800 women in attendance.<sup>98</sup> Teams thus began to more heavily court women to their games.” “Ladies’ Days” or “Nights,” whereby women would be admitted at reduced charge, became commonplace. The New York Giants are generally credited with hosting the first Ladies Day in 1883, and by the next decade, the practice was customary among teams in several leagues. Many opposed the practice, including the famed early sportswriter Henry Chadwick, but the policy also attracted supporters. A reader wrote into *Baseball* magazine in 1908: “Admission of women would tend to...make the game cleaner in every way. I say, let the women in free of charge!”<sup>99</sup>

Although their presence was important to baseball’s success, women were not widely recognized as being true fans of the game. They were seen as inherently incapable of understanding the finer points of the game, even if they expressed interest in learning

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<sup>96</sup> Ardell, *Breaking into Baseball*, 31.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-31.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-33; Quoted in 32.



its fundamentals. Women were often portrayed as knowing (and caring) little about what happened on the field of play. It was not uncommon for newspapers to characterize women's interest in the game as an interest in looks and outfits of the players: "They have a warm side for all the boys, but their particular favorites among the local men are Sunday, because he is so nice and good; Carroll, because he is so fine-looking and shapely; Staley, because he is so handsome."<sup>100</sup> Women, due to their perceived inherent ignorance of the game, were also excluded from many places of congregation where baseball was discussed, such as cigar stores and hotels. "The [women] enthusiasts are envious of their male friends who, while the clubs are away, can stand around...and get the latest gossip," observed Ella Black, an early woman baseball writer.<sup>101</sup> It would be a few more decades until women would receive more recognition as knowledgeable fans and critics of sport.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Black, Ella. "A Woman's View." *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 5 March 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

<sup>101</sup> Black, Ella. "A Little Gossip." *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 10 May 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.  
10 May 1890.

<sup>102</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 127; Black, Ella. "A Woman's View." *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 5 March 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

### Chapter 3 – Pioneering Women Sports Reporters

“Women are more intelligent on average than men. Of that I am convinced,” remarked the shortstop Cornelius “Neal” Ball at a banquet in Cleveland in 1910. Ball played seven years in Major League baseball and turned the sport’s first unassisted triple play, in which a defensive player records all three outs in an inning on a single play. “Why won’t women, then, learn to understand baseball? I have never succeeded in making clear to one woman the difference between an unassisted triple play and a foul fly. So with the ladies I adopt a light, facetious tone in baseball matters.”<sup>103</sup>

Though Neal might never have met a woman who sufficiently understood the game to his liking, he was certainly wrong on the larger point – during the end of the nineteenth century and beginning of the twentieth century, many of women not only understood the game, but were fans of it and, in some cases, ventured to make a living writing about it. It was certainly difficult for women to write with any kind of authority on a sports topic.<sup>104</sup> Nevertheless, some women chose to challenge the time’s prevailing notions. Although there are no precise estimates as to how many women were working as sports reporters before 1920, there is evidence that a handful of them were covering sporting events regularly for newspapers and magazines. They were few and far between, but these broke a significant barrier for women to carve their place in sports journalism, where they could be found in greater numbers beginning in the 1920s.<sup>105</sup>

Because they dared enter a journalism sub-field that was populated overwhelmingly by men and which their capacity to understand was routinely in doubt,

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<sup>103</sup> *The Butler weekly times*. (Butler, Mo.), 26 May 1910. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>104</sup> Ardell, *Breaking into Baseball*, 191.

<sup>105</sup> Kaszuba, *They Are Women, Hear them Roar*, 31-32.

the first women sports journalists employed various strategies to overcome their disadvantage, such as using pen names, writing from a “woman’s angle,” and refraining from voicing support for women’s rights efforts. This chapter will introduce several of the earliest women to cover sporting events for print media and will highlight the impressive accomplishments they achieved in their unprecedented careers, but it will also show the limitations imposed upon them.<sup>106</sup>

**Maria Morgan, *The New York Times*,**

One of the earliest documented cases of a woman regularly reporting on sporting topics for a print medium is that of Maria “Midy” (sometimes “Middy” or “Middie”) Morgan. She worked for the *New York Times* for 23 years, starting in 1869 and right up to her death in 1892. An expert on horses, she wrote extensively about local and national horse races, becoming “New York’s one woman livestock reporter.” Ishbel Ross also called her “one of the most extraordinary figures that ever strode through a newspaper office.”<sup>107</sup>

Morgan was born in 1828 in Cork, Ireland. Her father, Anthony Morgan, owned a large estate with plenty of horses, so Maria became well-versed in them from a young age. When her father died in 1865, Morgan, her mother and her sister moved to Italy, where Morgan’s knowledge of horses caught the attention of Prime Minister Bettino Ricasoli. He arranged for Morgan to meet the King, Victor Emmanuel II, who was also impressed and commissioned Morgan to travel to Ireland to purchase some mares. Satisfied with the six she brought back, Victor Emmanuel presented Morgan with a

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<sup>106</sup> Ardell, *Breaking into Baseball*, 193.

<sup>107</sup> Ross, *Ladies of the Press*, 145

“double-case hunting watch with his initials encrusted in diamonds.” When Morgan emigrated to the United States, she kept the watch in a safe deposit vault.<sup>108</sup>

Morgan arrived in the U.S. in June 1869, looking to land a newspaper job in New York. She had references for Henry J. Raymond, editor of the *Times*, and Horace Greeley, editor of the *Tribune*. However, Raymond had recently died and her meeting with Greeley did not go well. As a newspaper later described, the “office of the Tribune was assailed, one fine morning, by what appeared very much like a wild Irish girl. She applied to Mr. Greeley for a position on the staff of the Tribune. She talked horses to him; she amazed him by the scope of her equine knowledge but ‘t was a no go. He didn’t want a horse-editress.”<sup>109</sup> So, Morgan next tried her luck at Charles Dana’s *Sun*, but was met with a negative response there, too. She finally got a chance with Manton Marble’s *World*, if only because the editor thought her a “comical figure.” He sent her to cover a horse race in Saratoga as a special correspondent in July.<sup>110</sup>

The stories were a “thundering blast,” particularly the one that focused on the poor condition of the hotel accommodations in Saratoga. Armed with evidence of her good work, she went back to the *Times*, now edited by John Bigelow. Their first introduction, as was later described, occurred when Bigelow “looked up from his desk to see a hugh [sic] apparition bearing down upon him. The apparition was six feet two inches tall, garbed in rough Irish tweeds, and shod in thick-sole brogues. A deep, melodious voice with an Irish lilt said, ‘I am Maria Morgan. I want a job.’” Fatefully, the

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<sup>108</sup> Ross, *Ladies of the Press*, 146-147.

<sup>109</sup> “A Female Reporter.” *The New York World* (New York, NY). 31 March 1872. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid; Ross, *Ladies of the Press*, 147.

only opening the *Times* had was that of livestock reporter. “I can fill it,” Morgan replied, and thus began her two-decade long tenure at the paper.<sup>111</sup>

Morgan gained the respect of almost all newspapermen she encountered. Because her position was so novel at the time, she was met with heavy skepticism at first, even from her editors. “What have you done?” asked some sub-editors at the *Times* to Bigelow. “Oh! she’ll not hold the place a week,” he replied.<sup>112</sup> She also caused quite a stir wherever she went on assignment not only on account of her gender, but also her physical appearance. Her unusual height, combined with her rough tweed outfits, her “high-laced boots for ordinary jobs and hip-length rubber waders on stormy days” and her hair bunched-up hair, drew attention.<sup>113</sup> She was met with resistance from the other livestock reporters, who “tried to put her down and throw her out, jeering her to her face.”<sup>114</sup> Her skill and work ethic, however, soon changed their minds. When her colleagues realized that she “was as intelligent as honest, and as indomitable and persevering as a New York reporter needs to be; that she was a lady who would report the exact condition of the cattle, sheep, hog and horse markets...they began to respect her, and in a short time made her paths among them as pleasant as possible.”<sup>115</sup>

Certainly the greatest driving factor of her relatively long career was Morgan’s unmatched knowledge of her subjects and minute attention to accuracy in her pieces. Nevertheless, it is possible that her long career was also facilitated by her eccentric

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<sup>111</sup> “A Female Reporter.” *The New York World* (New York, NY). 31 March 1872. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress; quoted in Creedon, *Women, Media and Sport*, 69-70.

<sup>112</sup> “A Lady Stock Reporter.” *Indiana State sentinel*. (Indianapolis, Ind.), 20 Oct. 1874. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>113</sup> Ross, *Ladies of the Press*, 145.

<sup>114</sup> “Bazoo Gossip.” *The Sedalia weekly bazoo*. (Sedalia, Mo.), 21 June 1892. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>115</sup> “A Lady Stock Reporter.” *Indiana State sentinel*. (Indianapolis, Ind.), 20 Oct. 1874. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

demeanor and untraditional life choices. She was a “huge, awkward girl who went about chewing straws” and “stamped through the city room like a tornado.” Her colleagues imagined that she must have “lived in the cattle yards. They could not imagine her in a home.” In this way, Morgan’s presence might have been more acceptable because she showed she could tough out the sometimes rough conditions of horse races and cattle yards. It is also unclear whether she ever married or had children, which would have broken with the traditional expectations for women at the time.

Despite Morgan consistently proving that “a competent woman can fill even those positions on a daily paper which have been supposed to belong exclusively to men,” and her rugged physicality that did not reflect the image of a proper ladylike woman of the time, Morgan’s gender was a constant source of interest to newspapers. They made constant efforts to feminize her – one newspaper said she was “not what is usually called strong-minded,” though her work ethic would seem to contradict that. Another made sure to note that she, “although a giantess in form, has a most amiable and pleasing face” and “is always so thoroughly good-natured.” Emphasizing Morgan’s complaisant features in the same breath as acknowledging her technical expertise was a way of reminding readers that Morgan was in a separate class simply by virtue of being a woman.<sup>116</sup>

When Morgan died in 1892, her obituary was widely run. The previous year, she was at a stockyard in Jersey City when she slipped on ice and injured herself. After suffering from edema for some time due to the fall, she decided to have surgery to alleviate some of the symptoms, but had complications. Her death was considered “a

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<sup>116</sup> “Midy Morgan.” *The Cecil Whig*. (Elkton, Md.), 5 Feb. 1870. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress; “Female Editors.” *The weekly clarion*. (Jackson, Miss.), 21 Nov. 1872. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

great surprise, as she was not considered to be in immediate danger, and was reported to be doing nicely.”<sup>117</sup> Although much of what she wrote would not today be identified as sports journalism, Morgan was an important precursor to the women journalists who would cover baseball beginning in the last decade of the nineteenth century. She stepped into a role that was overwhelmingly male, covering a subject that seemed beyond a woman’s ability to comprehend, and exercised her profession with such tact that she gained widespread recognition. Nevertheless, Morgan’s gender made her a curiosity throughout her career. She created “quite a sensation wherever she appeared” simply because she was a woman.<sup>118</sup> In the end, her singular accomplishments were not enough. More than four decades after Morgan’s death, Ishbel Ross remarked that she was “so little remembered in New York newspaper circles that her name falls on the ear with unfamiliarity.”<sup>119</sup>

### **Ella Black, *The Sporting Life*, 1890**

Ella Black was perhaps the first baseball writer to be nationally distributed. She covered the 1890 baseball season for the weekly magazine *Sporting Life*, serving as a correspondent from Pittsburgh. Her byline appeared for the first time in *Sporting Life* on March 5, 1890, and suddenly disappeared entirely from the magazine – and, it seems, from journalism in general – after her last byline on November 22. In all, she wrote about 38 weekly reports for the magazine. For one glorious season, Black made quite a

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<sup>117</sup> “Miss Midy Morgan Dead.” *The morning call*. (San Francisco [Calif.]), 2 June 1892. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>118</sup> *The Bolivar bulletin*. (Bolivar, Tenn.), 6 March 1873. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress; Peterson, *Reporting Baseball’s Sensational Season of 1890*, 37.

<sup>119</sup> Ross, *Ladies of the Press*, 149.

sensation on the sports journalism scene and undoubtedly accomplished her mission to prove that women could understand and write about baseball.<sup>120</sup>

Black's sudden emergence, and equally as sudden departure, from the newspaper pages came at a crucial time in the history of baseball. In 1890, the National League was the premier established professional baseball league (a smaller one, the American Association, operated for ten seasons before it folded in 1891). Thus, the National League had essentially unchecked power to set the terms of its labor practices. The Brotherhood of Professional Baseball Players, the sport's first players' union, grew tired of negotiating changes to those practices. These included a salary cap, which set the maximum yearly amount a player could earn at \$2,000, and the reserve clause, which gave a team nearly unlimited power to control the salaries, promotions, demotions, and trades involving any of their players.<sup>121</sup> Some of the best players in the National League, led by John Montgomery Ward, defected and formed their own, dubbed the Players' League.<sup>122</sup> The 1890 season thus brought a heated rivalry between the National League, which considered this new organization a nuisance that needed to be defeated, and the upstart Players' League, which poached many of the NL's best players. Many major cities now had two teams from different leagues competing for the attention of fans. The excitement behind this rivalry created a unique atmosphere into which a woman sports reporter could step. Like Black, the Players' League's tenure lasted just for the 1890 season, but it became one of the most memorable in the sport's history.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>120</sup> Ardell, *Breaking into Baseball*, 192.

<sup>121</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 71.

<sup>122</sup> Peterson, *Reporting Baseball's Sensational Season of 1890*, 1.

<sup>123</sup> Davies, *Sports in American Life: A History*, 69-71.



The first mention of Ella Black in *Sporting Life* occurred in its February 19, 1890 issue, in which the magazine declares Black's emergence onto the scene. Remarking that "Nellie Bly-ism seems about to invade sporting journalism," *SL* nevertheless affirms Black as "the first lady to enlist to the army of base ball [sic] writers" and that "she has a thorough knowledge of the national game." Black's first column, "A Woman's View," prominently announces her arrival. The subhead described her as a "novelty in base ball literature," an indication that perhaps the magazine was skeptical that a baseball column by a woman writer would endure, but by the beginning of the season in April, *SL* editor Francis Richter had given Black press credentials to games, the first ever given to a woman by the magazine.<sup>124</sup>

Moreover, Black consistently emphasized the crucial role that women fans and supporters played in baseball's success. She remarked that whichever club proved to be more popular in Pittsburgh at season's end "would have to thank the ladies...for having done a great deal to land the victory on its side." This is because, according to Black, "there are more ladies in this city who attend ball games than at any other point where the League has a club located."<sup>125</sup> Black also took up the cause of helping to reform baseball's image and promoting it to the middle and upper classes. She recognized the need that, for teams to be economically successful, they would need to "resonate with...the better class of people, and one that before paid little attention to the sport."<sup>126</sup> She also frequently reprimanded the indelicate behavior she observed from players. When discussing the crushes women fans would develop on players, Black dryly

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<sup>124</sup> Peterson, *Reporting Baseball's Sensational Season of 1890*, 38.

<sup>125</sup> Black, Ella. "A Woman's View." *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 5 March 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation

<sup>126</sup> Quoted in Peterson, *Reporting Baseball's Sensational Season of 1890*, 38.

observed that “if the girls would see some of them off the field, chewing tobacco, using bad grammar, acting tough...it would take some of the romance out of them in very short order and cause them to pull these men from the high pedestal where they had placed them.”<sup>127</sup>

Black presented much of her work from the point-of-view of a woman. It is likely that she chose, or was compelled, to frame her content in this way because, although sports-leaning, it would be in keeping with the types of journalism roles that were considered a woman’s purview. Black’s body of work reflects a desire not to push the status quo too hard, as her mere existence in the sports journalism world was, in itself, a significant break in established norms. Many of her columns included sections that discussed the week’s gossip about the players’ personal lives; discussions on the latest trends and fads, mostly among women fans; and a recurring account of her participation in an all-female baseball fan club, the Young Ladies of the Diamond. The YLD was comprised of about sixteen women, with half supporting the National League’s Alleghenys and half supporting the Players’ League’s Burghers. Black emphasized the economic impact that the group could have on ballgames, especially in light of the rivalry between the teams from the two leagues. Each woman, Black observed, would often bring one or two male escorts to each game they attended (and the group attended about 60 per season). “The war between the magnates and their players has resulted in the formation of a society among the members of my sex in this city which will result in a good many dollars going into the treasury of one of the rival clubs,”<sup>128</sup> she said. By

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<sup>127</sup> Black, Ella. “A Foolish Girl.” *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 12 April 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

<sup>128</sup> Quoted in Peterson, *Reporting Baseball’s Sensational Season of 1890*, 39.

highlighting the positive economic effect that the women's fan club had on the teams, as well as making plain that the members were true fans of the game, Black successfully turned a series of articles about a group of women baseball fans into something that would interest readers.<sup>129</sup>

Black's gender, however, limited her reporting practices – namely, she did not have the same type of direct access to players as her male colleagues did. She nevertheless demonstrated her resourcefulness by finding creative ways to gather and break news. In only her third column, in fact, she obtained a major scoop by overhearing a conversation between two Alleghenys executives on a streetcar in Pittsburgh. She put herself in a favorable position by having knowledge of the movements of the two local teams' leaders, and she was able to hear “some things that I thought very significant.” Black successfully broke the news that the National League was going to reduce in size from a ten teams to eight teams in the upcoming season in order to better compete with the Players' League's schedule. She recalled that, when one of the men cautioned the other not to speak of the plans so loudly, the speaker dismissed him, reasoning that “it makes no difference. She's only a woman and won't understand.”<sup>130</sup>

Despite the preconceived perceptions of the range of her baseball knowledge due to her gender, Black made a point of making known her qualification as a knowledgeable critic of the game. After all, she said, “women are not usually dull of comprehension, and ‘only a woman’ may have an interest in baseball matters.”<sup>131</sup> Early in the season she declared that she believed “in saying plainly what I mean, instead of staying on the fence,

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<sup>129</sup> Peterson, *Reporting Baseball's Sensational Season of 1890*, 38-40.

<sup>130</sup> Black, Ella. “Dayton Dots.” *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 19 March 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*

ready to jump to the winning side.”<sup>132</sup> She did demonstrate a sympathy for the Burghers over the Alleghenys, although she did not let her personal feelings cloud her detailed analyses. She demonstrated, for example, her understanding of pitch types when discussing Burghers pitcher Ed Morris’s return from injury. When his first game back resulted in a loss for his team, she posited that “had he only exercised a little judgement and not persisted in using a slow ball [now called a changeup], the result would have been very different.”<sup>133</sup> Other writers took notice of her expertise, too. In introducing Black as a baseball writer, a column in the *Sporting Life* assured “that [Black] has a thorough knowledge of the game, there can be no doubt.”<sup>134</sup> In the April 2 issue, the *Sporting Life* boasted that the *Pittsburgh Globe* provided a “neat but deserved” compliment of Black, that she was “evidently well posited on the game.”<sup>135</sup>

Black’s extensive knowledge of baseball was so impressive that many journalists began to doubt whether Black was, in fact, a woman, or simply the pseudonym of a male sportswriter. “But, Mr. Editor, are you right sure that ‘Ella Black’ is not the *nom de plume* of some gentlemen correspondent in the Gas City,” posited Joe Pritchard. “However, I congratulate Miss Ella on her good work.” Other questions about Black’s gender arose due to the quality of her writing, namely that it was too analytical to have been composed by a woman. “The letters are too newsy for a lady to compose.”<sup>136</sup> This shows that the quality of being “newsy” – in other words, composing a fair and balanced

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<sup>132</sup> Black, Ella. “A Little Stray Gossip.” *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 5 April 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

<sup>133</sup> Black, Ella. “Morris on Deck Again.” *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 10 May 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

<sup>134</sup> *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 19 February 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

<sup>135</sup> *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 2 April 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

<sup>136</sup> Pritchard, Joe. “Pittsburgh Brotherhood Notes.” *The Sporting Life* (Philadelphia, PA). 19 April 1890. The Sporting Life Collection, LA84 Foundation.

piece in accordance to accepted journalistic norms – was not associated with women journalists at the end of the nineteenth century.

The mystery surrounding Black’s sudden disappearance from *Sporting Life’s* pages is heightened because scholars have not yet been able to determine whether “Ella Black” was the journalist’s given name, or, as is more likely, a pseudonym. Given that many contemporary women journalists used pseudonyms, it is likely that “Ella Black” was one, as well.<sup>137</sup> And if this is, in fact, the case, Ella Black’s true identity has continued to elude scholars, making her life – and, more importantly, the circumstances through which she entered and left the sports journalism profession – nearly impossible to dissect. Any analysis of Black, therefore, must come with the caveat that her stint as a baseball reporter was short-lived and isolated, and thus a study of her career can in no way be representative of women sports journalists of the period as a whole. Nevertheless, Black remains critically important in any work that attempts to reconstruct the earliest women sports journalists of the modern newspaper era. Her regular columns were the first of their kind and established Black as a reliable, knowledgeable imparter of sports information.

### **Ina Eloise Young – *Chronicle-News* (Trinidad, CO)**

Ina Eloise (sometimes Louise) Young was a sports editor and reporter for the Trinidad (Colo.) *Chronicle-News*. Most contemporary newspaper reports place her birth year as 1883 (a blurb on Young in a 1908 paper says she is twenty-four), but some scholars argue that she was, in fact, born in 1881, and lied about her age because of

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<sup>137</sup> Peterson, *Reporting Baseball’s Sensational Season of 1890*, 38.

societal pressures to be young.<sup>138</sup> She was born in Brownwood, Texas and moved with her family to Trinidad in 1889.<sup>139</sup> Young learned about baseball by playing with her brothers during their childhood and became well-versed in the game, learning to keep box scores.<sup>140</sup> She went to the University of Colorado, where she covered the school's football team and also became knowledgeable in that sport.<sup>141</sup> In 1910, Young married General Carleton E. Kelley.<sup>142</sup>

In 1905, Young was working at the *Chronicle-News* as a general reporting apprentice when she was asked to “sub” in covering a baseball game, as “the regular sporting editor left unexpectedly” and “all other available men on the staff were otherwise engaged.”<sup>143</sup> With her first assignment, Young proved that she was knowledgeable about the game and competent at writing about it. In fact, Young asserted that “there was not a man on the paper who could even keep a box score or knew practically anything of the game.”<sup>144</sup> She made such an impression with the *Chronicle-News* editors that “more sporting assignments were handed out to her.”<sup>145</sup> The following year, Young was promoted to editor of the sports page in addition to her reporting duties.<sup>146</sup> Young made “a specialty of writing sports”

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<sup>138</sup> “Woman Writes About Sports.” *Lewiston evening teller*. (Lewiston, Idaho), 6 Feb. 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress; Halper, Donna L. “A Lady Sporting Editor: How Ina Eloise Young Covered Baseball and Made History”. Academia.edu, March 2015, 2.

<sup>139</sup> Halper, “A Lady Sporting Editor,” 3.

<sup>140</sup> “Woman Writes About Sports.” *Lewiston evening teller*. (Lewiston, Idaho), 6 Feb. 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>141</sup> “A Woman Sporting Editor.” *The bee*. (Washington, D.C.), 4 July 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>142</sup> “Colorado Official to Wed Texas Girl.” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* (Fort Worth, TX). 7 Oct. 1910. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>143</sup> “Colorado Official to Wed Texas Girl.” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* (Fort Worth, TX). 7 Oct. 1910. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>144</sup> “A Woman Sporting Editor.” *The bee*. (Washington, D.C.), 4 July 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid*.

<sup>146</sup> Halper, “A Lady Sporting Editor,” 4.

Although one newspaper made the dubious claim that Young was “the only young lady in all newspaperdom who makes a specialty of writing sports,” she did enjoy opportunities that were prestigious even for male sports writers. She covered, for example, the 1908 postseason, including the World Series between the Detroit Tigers and the Chicago White Sox.<sup>147</sup> Young’s assignment was sufficiently extraordinary that another Colorado newspaper thought it important to note her passage through the city “on her way to Chicago, where she expects to witness the championship series...between the winners of the pennant in the National and American League.” The next year, a newspaper in her native Texas also noted when she passed through to visit family members, showing that Young reached at least a local level of celebrity in being, as many papers alleged, “the only woman in newspaperdom who writes sports.”<sup>148</sup>

Young earned praise for her intellect and her knowledgeable and thoughtful baseball coverage. Papers in her native Texas were particularly complimentary. One called her “one of the brightest young women in the profession” and “especially gifted as a newspaper writer,” and that she “handles the games with the facility of a veteran baseball writer.”<sup>149</sup> Another said she had “the requisite knowledge and skill to cover baseball” and did her job so well that “the applications of male candidates for the job are never considered.”<sup>150</sup> In Colorado, she was considered a “stem winder as a baseball

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<sup>147</sup> “She Writes Sporting Page.” *University Missourian*. (Columbia, Mo.), 16 Dec. 1909. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress; Ardell, *Breaking into Baseball*, 194.

<sup>148</sup> *La Junta tribune*. (La Junta, Bent County, Colo.), 02 Feb. 1898; “Only Woman Who Writes Sport News.” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* (Fort Worth, TX). 8 Dec. 1909. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>149</sup> “Colorado Official to Wed Texas Girl.” *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* (Fort Worth, TX). 7 Oct. 1910; *Fort Worth Star-Telegram* (Fort Worth, TX). 8 Dec. 1909. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>150</sup> “A Woman Sporting Editor.” *The bee*. (Washington, D.C.), 4 July 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

editor.”<sup>151</sup>

Despite Young’s widely recognized expertise in baseball and skill as a journalist, the public perception of Young was still intricately tied with her gender. A high-profile interview with her published in Pulitzer’s *World* placed great emphasis on her woman-ness. The headline prominently indicates her gender – “Here’s a Woman Who Can Give Points to Fans” – the subhead describes her as “pretty” and the first line of the story refers to her as “the best looking sporting editor in the world.” The first paragraph further said that she is “the only sporting editor in this country who can don a Merry Widow hat, slip a pencil out of her hair and rip off a baseball story, calling the shortstop ‘cute’ and get away with it.”<sup>152</sup>

Moreover, the article’s author, notable sportswriter Bozeman Bulger, praised Young for what he perceives as feminine, submissive qualities. Namely, he said that although “her rather unique calling throws her in constant contact with men, and she has to match wits with some of the best informed writers in the business...she does not care to become a district leader.” Bulger also focused a significant portion of the article on the fact that Young chooses not to vote in elections.<sup>153</sup> In a section titled “Can vote, but doesn’t,” Bulger lauded Young for being a woman who “can roast a ball player if she likes, or can turn an error into a hit and get the fans going, but...doesn’t care to figure in the Government dope at all.” Also telling is a quote of Young’s featured prominently in the section: “I have been thrown with men since I was a child, and I find that they have

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<sup>151</sup> “Some More Local Squibs.” *La Junta tribune*. (La Junta, Bent County, Colo.), 26 Sept. 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>152</sup> Bulger, Bozeman. “Here’s a Woman Who Can Give Points to Fans.” *The evening world*. (New York, N.Y.), 3 Nov. 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>153</sup> In 1893, Colorado passed a state referendum giving women the right to vote, becoming the first U.S. state to do so. Before that, Wyoming, then a U.S. territory, granted women the right to vote in 1869.



arranged things so beautifully in this country of ours that I see no reason why a woman should interfere.”<sup>154</sup>

Young continued as a sports reporter and editor for the *Chronicle News* until 1912, at which point she and her husband moved to Riverside, California. Although she retired from journalism in order to focus on raising her two children, she continued to sporadically write articles on sports and other topics for local newspapers. She wrote several articles a year, for example, for the *Riverside Daily Press*. In 1922, Young would have covered the World Series for the International News Service, William Randolph Hearst’s newswire, but the plan was scrapped when the series became an intra-city battle between the New York Giants and New York Yankees, who won the National and American League pennants, respectively. The *Daily Press* lamented that one of its own would not be going east to cover the big event, as “interest in the World’s series has flagged to the minimum outside the big town, for a city series seldom starts any pulsating glow in baseball fans outside the home town lot.”<sup>155</sup> She also covered sporadic baseball games, such as a matchup between the Chicago White Sox and the minor-league Los Angeles Angels of the Pacific Coast League, as well as other topics, such as a feature on film star and Colorado native Douglas Fairbanks, a tuberculosis crisis in Riverside, and a court case involving the hazardous effects of cement dust released by a local cement company.<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>154</sup>Bulger, Bozeman. “Here’s a Woman Who Can Give Points to Fans.” *The evening world*. (New York, N.Y.), 3 Nov. 1908. *Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers*. Lib. of Congress.

<sup>155</sup> Young Kelley, Ina. “White Sox Win from Angels.” *Riverside Daily Press* (Riverside, CA), Volume XXIX, Number 73. 26 March 1914. California Digital Newspaper Collection. University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research.

<sup>156</sup> Riverside Daily Press archives, California Digital Newspaper Collection. University of California, Riverside Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research.

Despite the *Daily Press*'s admiration for Young, evidenced by its regret at Young not covering the 1922 World Series and her frequent appearance on the paper's pages, it still focalized Young's gender, especially regarding her sports stories. Between the headline for her recap of the White Sox-Angels game and the story's body, the paper inserted an explanatory box with the title "Clever woman writer tells story of game." After giving a brief description of her – "she is the wife of Carleton Kelley" and "a resident of this city" – the text in the box concludes with "Mrs. Kelley knows the game, and she knows how to tell the story of the game." Although the paper extolled Young's singular accomplishments as a woman sports writer (this same box noted that she "a charter member of the National Baseball Writers association, and the only woman in the United States enjoying this honor"), it nevertheless felt the need to reassure its readers that Young was qualified to be writing about baseball. The box, punctuated by the patronizing description of Young as "clever," symbolizes the invisible barrier the earliest woman sports journalists could not break, no matter their knowledge or talent, on account of their gender.

Young died in 1949, having spent most of her remaining life in her adopted California town. Despite the public acclaim Young achieved for her sports writing, no obituaries were found in the *Chronicle-News*, *Daily Press* or other newspapers by this or other researchers. Ultimately, Young worked regularly as a baseball reporter and editor for about four years before the customary expectations for married women caught up to her.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>157</sup> Halper, "A Lady Sporting Editor," 11.

The contributions to sports journalism of the three women featured in this chapter have seldom received scholarly treatment or widespread recognition. One was the forbearer of them all, operating at the limits of what now is considered sports journalism but nevertheless a trailblazer in demonstrating that a woman could master a subject thought to be reserved only to men. The others reported on a more traditional sport, by far the most popular of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. One was a nationally distributed and read correspondent who covered one of the most eventful baseball seasons ever with great success. The other worked for a small and local newspaper, but was nevertheless presented with opportunities previously not made available to women sports journalists, such as covering the World Series.

They were also not the only women working in sports journalism from the late eighteenth century to 1920. Although there were not many of them, there is evidence of a handful of other women covering sports consistently during that time. Sallie van Pelt covered baseball for the *Dubuque Times* in Iowa in the late nineteenth century.<sup>158</sup> There were several women working out of San Francisco – Winifred Black (better known by her pen name “Annie Laurie”) covered prize fights for William Randolph Hearst’s *San Francisco Examiner*. At the *San Francisco Bulletin*, Inez Hayes Irwin and Pauline Jacobson covered prize fights, wrestling and baseball in the early twentieth century.<sup>159</sup> Nan O’Reilly covered golf for several New York newspapers during her three-decade career. She wrote her first golf column for the *New York Evening Post* in 1916, and also covered other sports occasionally. In 1929, she joined *The Evening Post* and remained

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<sup>158</sup> Beasley, Maurine H. “Women in Journalism Education: The Formative Period, 1908-1930.” Association for Education in Journalism and Mass Communication. 3 August 1985.

<sup>159</sup> Creedon, *Women, Media and Sport*, 70.

until her death in 1937. She continued to cover golf for the *Post* and also contributed to magazines such as *The Professional Golfer*. She cheekily referred to herself as “the only woman in captivity who has conducted a daily golf column.”<sup>160</sup>

Collectively, their careers demonstrate that although women sports journalists were publicly recognized as being knowledgeable about sports by their male peers, they were often minimized in their abilities because of their gender. They were respected by their colleagues, but this respect had a limit – namely, they were not perceived as professional equals. Either their gender was made clear in some aspect of the pieces they wrote, or their feminine and submissive qualities were emphasized in pieces about them. Women were able to slip through a slightly cracked door into sports journalism, but not open it much wider.

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<sup>160</sup> Creedon, *Women, Media and Sport*, 74; “Nan O’Reilly Dead; Editor and Author;” *The New York Times* (New York, NY), 1 March 1937. The *New York Times* Archives.

## Conclusion

Beginning in the 1920s, evidence exists of women working in sports journalism in greater numbers. Margaret Goss, who covered women's sports for the *New York Herald Tribune*; Dorothy Bough, who covered a variety of sports for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*; and Jane Dixon, who covered boxing and other sports for the *New York Telegram* are but three examples.<sup>161</sup> Nevertheless, there were a handful of women working in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries who were among the first to take an attempt at this profession. Facing severe restrictions – ranging from the types of articles they could write to the degree of access they had to sources to their mere presence at a sporting event being news itself – women like Maria Morgan, Ella Black and Ina Eloise Young nevertheless made significant contributions to the history of women in journalism. Their careers deserve more scholarly attention.

If the 1920s was the decade in which women working in sports journalism achieved some visibility, then the 1970s was the breakthrough decade for greater opportunities for women in print and broadcast sports reporting.<sup>162</sup> At the beginning of the decade, the Associated Press estimated that there were only about 25 women sports journalists, and five working in broadcast and radio; the number nearly quadrupled by 1975.<sup>163</sup> A number of factors contributed to this, including: an increased academic interest in sports sociology, including the intersection of sports with race and gender; a gain in credibility of feminist study and scholarship; and new, federally mandated equal employment opportunity statutes.<sup>164</sup> Women whose careers as sports journalists launched

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<sup>161</sup>Kaszuba, *They Are Women, Hear them Roar*, iii; Creedon, *Women, Media and Sport*, 75.

<sup>162</sup> Ardell, *Breaking into Baseball*, 201.

<sup>163</sup> Creedon, *Women, Media and Sport*, 99.

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid.*, 84.

during this time include Lesley Visser, Marie Brenner, Alison Gordon and Christine Brennan.<sup>165</sup>

Working conditions were far from perfect, however. Women sports reporters struggled with equal access to clubhouses and locker rooms, which kept them from participating in post-game interviews and, thus, effectively doing their jobs. In 1977, Melissa Ludtke of *Sports Illustrated* sued the New York Yankees, the baseball commissioner's office, the president of the American League and several New York City officials for the right to access the Yankees' locker room, arguing that denying women access was sex discrimination. Although the ruling went in Ludtke's favor, it applied narrowly to the Yankees' locker room; full and equal access for women to team clubhouses across all major sports would take many more years.<sup>166</sup>

Although, in many respects, women have gained equal access and opportunity under the law in the twenty-first century, they still make up a miniscule amount of the total number of sports reporters and editors. According to the Women's Media Center, only 11.5 percent of sports reporters at 75 of the country's most important sports desks in 2017. They comprised 15 percent of sports editors and 30 percent of assistant sports editors.<sup>167</sup> Knowing that there is still much work to be done before women achieve equal representation in sports journalism makes it even more crucial to recognize the careers of the first women who endeavored to participate in the profession and comprehend the cultural and social circumstances that informed the manner in which they worked.

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<sup>165</sup> Creedon, *Women, Media and Sport*, 85-86.

<sup>166</sup> Ardell, *Breaking into Baseball*, 204-205; Creedon, *Women, Media and Sport*, 87-89.

<sup>167</sup> "The Status of Women in the U.S. Media 2019." New York: Women's Media Center, 2019. Accessed April 18, 2019. <https://tools.womensmediacenter.com/page/-/WMCStatusofWomeninUSMedia2019.pdf>

Because of limitations on time, this thesis was not able to fully delve into the career trajectories of the women featured in the third chapter, nor get into several other women that could have been featured. This thesis instead strived to provide a contextual analysis of the broader social, cultural and economic landscape that informed the newspaper industry in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries in order to situate the careers of the early women sports journalists. By understanding the rise of the reporting profession and of the popularity of organized sports, we can better understand why the careers Morgan, Black, Young and others took the paths that they did, the restrictions placed upon these women, and the strategies they used to overcome some of them.

Through the course of this research, several potential topics arose that would make good subjects for further scholarly inquiry. One of particular interest to the author is the life and career of Sadie Kneller Miller. A Maryland native, she was a graduate of Western Maryland College (now McDaniel College), Miller covered the Baltimore Orioles for the *Baltimore Telegram* in 1884. She wrote under the pen name “SKM,” perhaps to conceal her sex from readers. After her short-lived stint in sports journalism, Miller became a writer and photographer for *Leslie’s Weekly* and also reported from abroad.<sup>168</sup> No scholarship of journal or book length has been conducted on her, but her story would undoubtedly enrich the body of work of women in journalism, as well as deepen Maryland’s cultural heritage.

This thesis hopes to fill gaps in the literatures of journalism history, sports history, and women’s history. While it only scratches the surface of a rich subject that warrants deeper mining, the thesis shines a light on early women sports journalists whose largely-

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<sup>168</sup> Creedon, *Women, Media and Sport*, 73.

forgotten careers tell us much about the cultural, social and economic landscapes that informed the state of the newspaper industry and of organized sports in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.



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