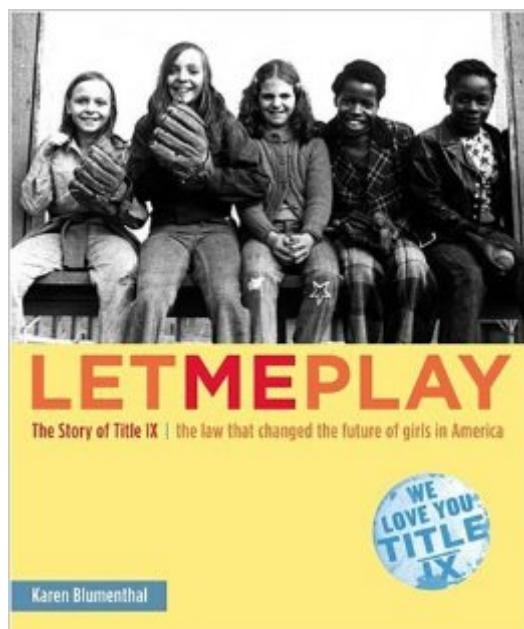


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# Let Me Play: The Story Of Title IX: The Law That Changed The Future Of Girls In America



## **Synopsis**

Can girls play softball? Can girls be school crossing guards? Can girls play basketball or ice hockey or soccer? Can girls become lawyers or doctors or engineers? Of course they can... today. But just a few decades ago, opportunities for girls were far more limited, not because they weren't capable of playing or didn't want to become doctors or lawyers, but because they weren't allowed to. Then quietly, in 1972, something momentous happened: Congress passed a law called "Title IX," forever changing the lives of American girls. Hundreds of determined lawmakers, teachers, parents, and athletes carefully plotted to ensure that the law was passed, protected, and enforced. Time and time again, they were pushed back by fierce opposition. But as a result of their perseverance, millions of American girls can now play sports. Young women make up half of the nation's medical and law students, and star on the best basketball, soccer, and softball teams in the world. This small law made a huge difference. From the Sibert Honor-winning author of *Six Days in October* comes this powerful tale of courage and persistence, the stories of the people who believed that girls could do anything -- and were willing to fight to prove it. A Junior Library Guild Selection

## **Book Information**

Lexile Measure: 1140L (What's this?)

Hardcover: 160 pages

Publisher: Atheneum Books for Young Readers; First Edition edition (July 1, 2005)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0689859570

ISBN-13: 978-0689859571

Product Dimensions: 7.5 x 0.7 x 9 inches

Shipping Weight: 1 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ See all reviewsÂ (12 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #407,900 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #48 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > Law & Crime #279 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Education & Reference > History > United States > 1900s #2442 inÂ Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > Girls & Women

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## **Customer Reviews**

Karen Blumenthal's latest young-readers' book, *LET ME PLAY* is a behind-the-scenes look at how

Title IX changed the cultural landscape for American women. Just because this book is intended for a younger audience does not make it simplistic reading. I consider myself pretty informed about political and social topics, yet I had little idea that Title IX does not just cover equality in sporting opportunities. Title IX, the brainchild of late Congresswoman Edith Green, actually mandates that schools may not limit the educational opportunities of students based on gender--and that includes admissions policies and access to classes. Title IX is the reason that half of all law students and medical students today are women. What a huge change from the early 1960s, the era in which Blumenthal opens the book with a description of swimmer Donna De Verona. The 13-year-old swimmer, long denied opportunities to participate in other sports she loved, finally decided to become a swimmer. Not only did she excel, but she became the most decorated high school swimmer in the United States. She won two Olympic gold medals and the adoration of the press. Then she graduated, and...nothing. No scholarships, no endorsements, no interest. Here was an 18-year-old brimming with talent and she hit a dead end because there simply were no rewards for women athletes. At the time De Verona was facing her bleak future, women all over the country were confounded by colleges that had strict admissions quotas. Many schools refused to enroll women in science and math classes. And legislators could get away with citing the need for "delicate" females to leave educational spaces open for men, who would be the "breadwinners." Things changed, and they changed quickly.

"Female admissions to colleges and graduate programs picked up speed, driven by female ambition, the law, and a growing acceptance that it was simply wrong to reject someone just for being a girl. Between 1971 and 1976 the number of women attending college jumped 40 percent. By the fall of 1976 one in every four law students was a woman, up from fewer than one in ten in 1971; likewise, a quarter of first-year medical students were female, up from about one in seven just five years before." Recently at this year's Book Expo in New York City, I had the pleasure of meeting and conversing with Patricia Macias. At publishing conventions, Patricia is known as the wife of author Ben Saenz. But back home in El Paso, she is more frequently referred to as "Your Honor." As I wandered the exhibition halls at Book Expo, I frequently got the chance to catch up with old friends in the publishing industry. Many of the women I've known for years who are employed by the large publishing houses now have titles like "President & Publisher" or "Vice President and Associate Publisher." They not only have the positions; they have the power that accompanies those titles. I also had the opportunity at Book Expo to chat briefly with my favorite member of the United States Senate. I feel so fortunate to be represented by Barbara Boxer who, like me, grew up in New York

and moved westward. When we first elected Barbara to the US Senate in 1992, having her join Diane Feinstein there in representing California, it was the first time in US history that two women Senators were representing the same state at the same time. Myra Bradwell would have thought that it was long past time. "In 1869, Mrs.

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