

African Americans all reinforced “white solidarity” and the exclusion of blacks.

Those familiar with David Nasaw’s *Going Out: The Rise and Fall of Public Amusements* have heard this argument, but Wiltse reveals the impact of this change in the playful crowd in an amazing and chilling account of how often black kids were physically excluded from pools in the early twentieth century. Moreover, while postwar efforts to integrate public pools gradually were successful, the result was that whites abandoned public pools in large numbers in the 1950s and 1960s, constructing private pool clubs with often hefty membership fees or building private backyard pools. Meanwhile, the grand pools of the interwar years were often neglected and closed by authorities. This is a sad and an important story, suggesting part of the explanation of the decline in public space that perhaps has led to a decline in commitment to community in our time. It also suggests the continuing negative influence of social/racial division in playful (especially sexually charged) crowds.

This book is a subtle and engaged treatment that should find a large audience. Some readers might wish for more on the tantalizing questions of changes in the use of and play in pools over time and the role of lifeguards and other authorities in controlling pool play. Some might question whether gender integration and the author’s other arguments fully explain racial segregation. But this was easily the most enjoyable and insightful book that I have had the pleasure of reviewing in some years. Read it and look for more from Professor Wiltse.

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—Gary Cross, *Pennsylvania State University, State College, PA*

### **When the Girls Came Out to Play: The Birth of American Sportswear**

*Patricia Campbell Warner*

Amherst and Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2006. Preface, illustrations, bibliography and notes, index. 292 pp. \$24.95 paper. ISBN: 1558495495.

Twenty years after she began her work on the development of women’s sportswear in the United States, Patricia Campbell Warner has completed a compelling and insightful book that poses the question, “Which came first, the sportswear or the female athlete?” As she explains in her introduction, Warner’s first interest has always been in the struggles of those women who wished to wear clothing that made sense. Since American sportswear has become the world’s default clothing style in the past fifty years, she uses this book to explain how and why comfortable clothing for women came to be accepted as both appropriate dress for working out in private but also acceptable for exercising publicly in the presence of men. According to Warner, the establishment and growth of women’s colleges in the United States during the nineteenth century is directly linked to the development of styles of dress more suited to the increased physicality of educated women. This, along with the discovery of new materials and the introduction of the sewing machine, allowed designers and individual sewers the opportunity to craft costumes both useful, and eventually, beautiful.

Warner begins with a definition of American sportswear, whose pieces she says, “have lasted with very little fundamental change since the late 1920s: sweaters, pants, shirts, skirts, blazers.” She argues

that as women were allowed to wear trousers and other sports-specific costumes, they experienced a freedom in their dress and in their persons that had been unknown to women in the past. And she asserts that it was their participation in sports that forced women and men to rethink the clothing needed for those activities.

Following many historians of sports, Warner identifies two main threads for analysis. The first concerns the types of clothing that women wore out-of-doors while playing sports such as croquet and tennis in the presence of, and often with, men. The other concerns the clothing that women in same-sex Eastern colleges turned to when they came to play basketball and other sports indoors in the presence only of other women. As she explains, women apparently wanted to be fashionable when outdoors with men, and comfortable when indoors with other women. The genius of American sportswear then was to bring together the desire for both fashion and comfort in a singular style.

While primarily interested in the styles themselves, Warner also makes clear that the changes in women's clothing during the nineteenth century were quite dependent on technological developments. With the introduction of vulcanized rubbers, tennis balls had a new bounce and made the game more interesting for participants. Likewise, vulcanized rubber allowed for the development of athletic shoes that provided better traction than women's footwear had historically done. Sportswear designers then responded by creating costumes that were more appropriate to the more kinetic and active games women were playing.

One of the strengths of this book lies

in Warner's ability to distinguish the forces driving the development of some clothing styles from others. In her chapter on swimwear, she argues for two new categories of analysis. One is the clothing women might wear for "bathing," which needed to be attractive and fashionable. The other is the clothing that women wore for "swimming," which ultimately needed to be functional. As she says, although women began "bathing" in the ocean alongside men early on, it was not until the 1920s that they finally had swimsuits that were less likely to drown them than to keep them afloat. This mattered, especially in the early years of women's participation in the Olympic movement, because it was not until their clothing allowed it that women were able to effectively compete in the pool. As Warner puts it, sports for women ultimately depended upon the creation of costumes that did not physically hamper their movement and did not hamper their participation because of concerns about modesty.

*When the Girls Came Out to Play* is amply illustrated with drawings and photographs detailing the changes over time in sportswear for women. These are especially strong when tracing the shifts in uniforms worn by various crews at Wellesley College, for example. However, Warner's emphasis on what "fashion" required and her focus on developments at women's colleges limit her ability to tell us what working-class women might have worn during their leisure and sporting time. Nevertheless, this fine book should be read by anyone interested in the history of women and sports in the nineteenth century.

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—Wanda Wakefield, *State University of New York–Brockport, NY*