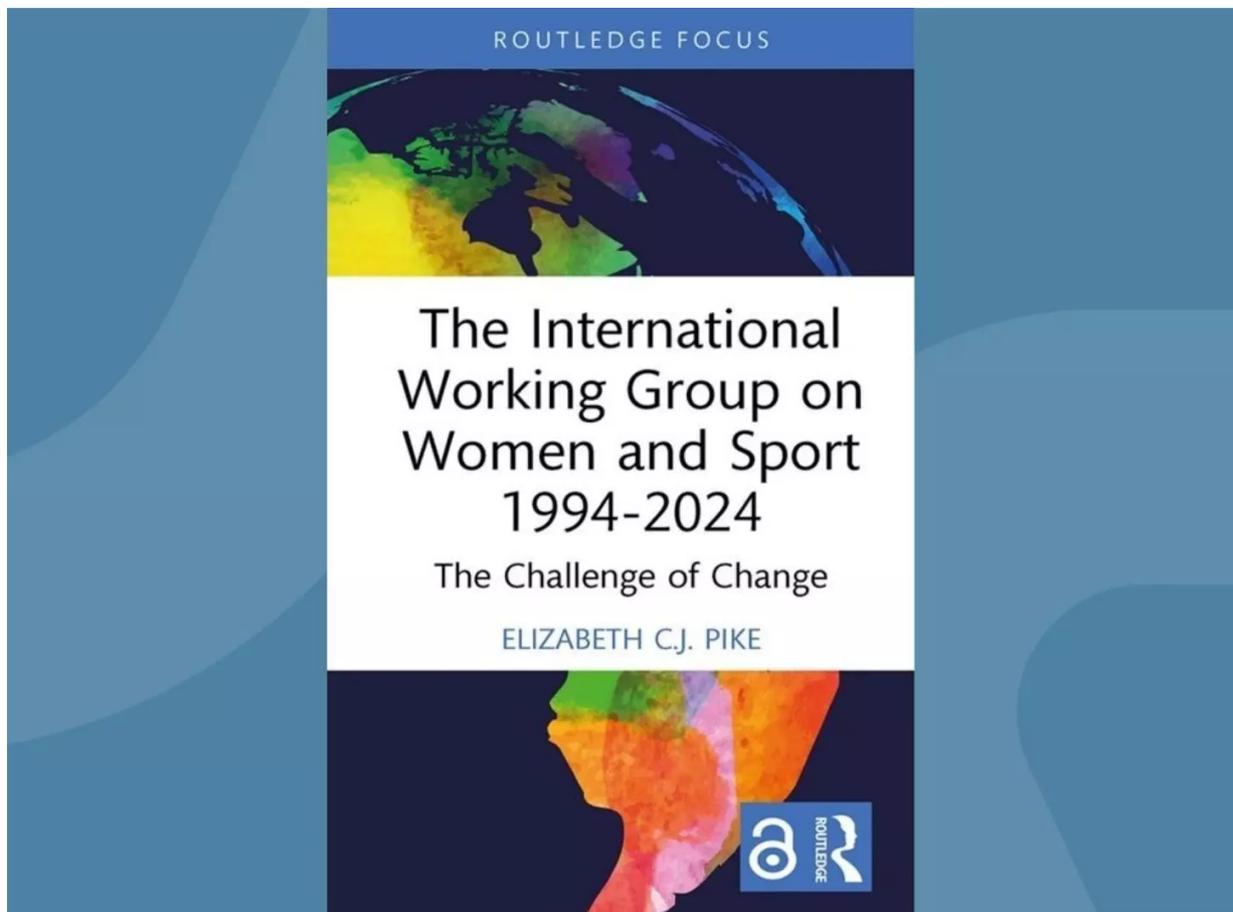


THE INTERNATIONAL WORKING GROUP ON WOMEN AND SPORT 1994–2024

Governance

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Cover of the e-book 'The International Working Group on Women and Sport 1994 - 2024, by Professor Elizabeth Pike



Professor Elizabeth Pike

This book comprehensively evaluates the role of the International Working Group (IWG) on Women and Sport – the world’s largest network dedicated to advancing gender equity and equality in sport, physical education, and physical activity – in influencing global and domestic policy and practice.

The issues addressed by the IWG in its first three decades of activism reflect global socio-political progress, as well as emergent new problems, for women, sport, and human rights. The IWG’s commitment to collaboration with, among others, the International Olympic Committee and the United Nations has provided the foundations for globally accepted frameworks to address gender-based issues in and through sport. The advocacy work of the IWG is told via first-hand interviews with key personnel from each of the IWG Secretariats, from its establishment in 1994 to 2024, providing insight into the most significant issues, achievements, and outcomes for the international social movement for women and sport.

Target audiences

The book is a useful resource for students in the sociology of sport, sport policy, leadership, management, coaching, and gender studies. It is also relevant to sport administrators, practitioners, policymakers, and those working in gender governance.

Context & background

The International Working Group on Women and Sport (IWG) was established in 1994 to advance gender equality, aiming to empower women and girls in and through sport. This book is written to mark the first 30 years of the history of the IWG and its role in wider movements campaigning for women’s rights as human rights. The IWG established an international charter for gender equality (the Brighton Declaration), provides advice and support mechanisms to organisations around the world, and advocates for women and sport at global forums. The three decades in which the IWG has been operating have witnessed significant progress, as well as emergent new challenges for women and sport.

The IWG is self-described as “the world’s largest network dedicated to advancing gender equity and equality in sport, physical education and physical activity” (IWG, 2023). Its main activities include advocating for women and sport, monitoring progress in the international women and sport movement, and holding a quadrennial world conference. This book marks the 30th anniversary since the establishment of the IWG and responds to a claim that “the IWG, its conferences and their legacies have received scant scholarly attention” and events “that have provided opportunities for activism to transform into change have largely been ignored” (Matthews, 2020, p. 2).

Summary of research outcomes

The book outlines how the IWG is illustrative of the ways in which a global movement can be established through a combination of individual activism and organisational policies and processes, through strategic and powerful networking. This networking created the IWG network, which continues to challenge for change.

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