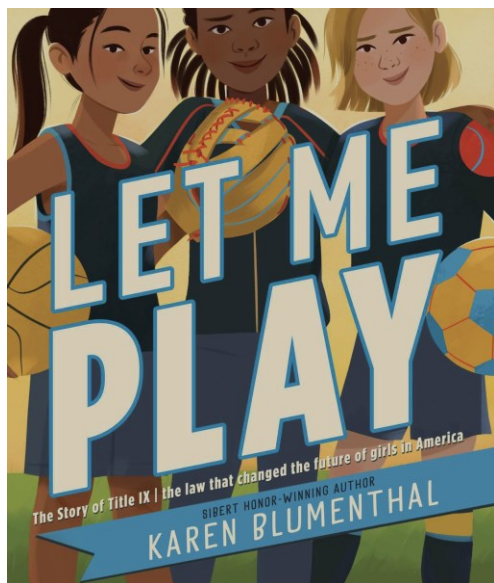


LET ME PLAY



Juvenile

By Karen Blumenthal

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Book Summary:

Details the history of Title IX.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains references to discrimination; alternate gender ideologies; and alternate sexualities.

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Child Guidance
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
7	In the 1960s girls were known as the “weaker” or “fairer” sex, and they were supposed to be dainty, not strong.
9	I have been far oftener discriminated against because I am a woman than because I am Black.”
18	<p>The assistant principal for girls, a white woman, wasn’t impressed. When Shirley’s acceptance was announced to her homeroom, this assistant principal told the class that the young woman was “trying to be too big for her britches” by going to MIT instead of a Black college.</p> <p>...Even her premed adviser tried to talk her out of applying. When she asked him for the required letter of recommendation, he told her she should become a biochemistry teacher. At the time, men who went to graduate school could defer being drafted for the Vietnam War. If Susan went to medical school, the adviser told her, she “would kill some boy.”</p>
23	<p>“Well, was there not a need to have classes for disadvantaged girls?” she asked. She knew for a fact that many girls dropped out of high school too. “Couldn’t you have classes and include both boys and girls?” she wondered.</p> <p>Oh, no, the superintendents said; it was better to have classes just for boys. The boys needed them, they explained, because they “are going to have to be the breadwinners.”</p>
26	The committee finally did consider the bill, but many members just didn’t believe women should be paid the same as men in every job.
30	But like Mrs. Green, she, too, discovered that schools weren’t breaking any laws when they turned down women just for being women.
34	One male representative made fun of the idea, saying that it might have the unintended result of men doing women’s work.
54	<p>In that same vein, female physical education teachers firmly believed that the male style of play was not only unladylike, but also too strenuous for the “weaker sex,” potentially preventing them from bearing children. Friendly games, where everyone could join in, were fine. But intense, high-level competition, they believed, would ruin a woman’s moral and physical health.</p> <p>...They began to compete in gymnastics and track in 1928—over the protests of some American physical educators, who feared that running, in particular, would ruin their femininity and fertility.</p> <p>...For decades after, women were forbidden from running races longer than 1,500 meters for fear their bodies were too fragile.</p>
103	Many science teachers and some math teachers ignored girls in favor of boys. Teachers tended to call on boys more often and help them with reading far more than they helped girls with math. Boys were allowed to yell out answers, whereas girls who spoke out of turn were scolded.
115	<p>“It is impossible to discriminate against a person for being homosexual or transgender without discriminating against that individual based on sex.”</p> <p>...Gavin Grimm’s birth certificate said “female,” but he always knew he was a boy. As a young child, he picked out boys’ clothes, and he was deeply uncomfortable when he had to wear a dress to a family wedding. When his class was divided into groups of boys and girls, he always hoped to be sorted into the boys’ group. By the time he was twelve, he had a traditional male haircut and was wearing only boys’ clothes.</p>

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	<p>In the ninth grade, Gavin told his mom that he was transgender, meaning that his gender identity—his innate sense that he was a boy—did not match the sex he was assigned at birth. Gavin saw a psychologist, who diagnosed him with gender dysphoria. This psychological condition means that the mismatch between the sex on a person’s birth certificate and their gender identity is causing them serious distress and anxiety. For a long time, doctors tried to treat gender dysphoria by urging transgender people to conform with the sex they were assigned at birth. This usually made their pain worse. By the time Gavin came out to his family, though, medical professionals had settled on a new recommendation: people with gender dysphoria should live in a way that is consistent with their gender identity. Depending on the person, this might include changing their name, pronouns, and appearance. Many transgender people also undergo medical treatments to help their body more closely match their identity, such as surgery or hormone therapy.</p> <p>...He would live and be treated as a male in his daily life, and he would start hormone treatment, which would eventually make his voice deeper and give him a more masculine appearance. Before the start of his sophomore year at Gloucester High School in Virginia, his family told the school about his transition. They were supportive and agreed to use his new name and pronouns.</p> <p>At first, the plan was for Gavin to use the restroom in the nurse’s office. After a few weeks, though, he found that going out of his way to get to the nurse’s office was often making him late for class. He also felt anxious and embarrassed about using a different bathroom than all the other students. Instead, Gavin asked if he could use the boys’ restroom, just like all the other boys at school. The administration agreed.</p> <p>...Some of the commenters said they weren’t worried about Gavin himself, but about what would happen if a male student pretended to be transgender in order to get into the girls’ bathroom and harass female students. Other speakers were crueler, calling Gavin a “freak” and comparing him to a dog.</p> <p>Gavin spoke at the meeting too. He said that using the nurse’s restroom was “alienating” and “humiliating,” and that going out of his way to get to it had taken time away from his education. “I, very simply, am not a girl,” he said. “I have never been happier, exercising my right to be who I am. I did not ask to be this way.” He concluded, “I am just a human. I am just a boy.”</p> <p>Nonetheless, the school board decided that students with “gender identity issues” would have to use an alternative, private restroom, separate from the usual girls’ and boys’ rooms.</p>
117	<p>In a 6–3 decision, Justice Neil Gorsuch wrote that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity is discrimination based on sex.</p>
118	<p>Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer students—often identified by the acronym “LGBTQ”—often face harassment and discrimination in school. A 2019 survey of LGBTQ students found that 59% felt unsafe at school because of their sexual orientation or gender expression. A third had missed at least one day of school in the last month because they felt unsafe or uncomfortable, 45% avoided bathrooms at school, 72% avoided extracurricular activities, and 86% reported experiencing harassment or assault.</p> <p>...The Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference had a policy that allowed transgender athletes to compete on the team that matched their gender identity.</p>

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119	<p>But what did it mean by “sex”? Some argued that “sex” only meant biological sex, not sexual orientation or gender identity.</p> <p>...In a 6–3 decision, Justice Gorsuch pointed out that the funeral home was fine with letting an employee wear women’s clothes and use female pronouns if she was assigned female at birth. But it fired Aimee for wanting to do the same things. By treating her differently because of the sex she was assigned at birth, it was clearly discriminating on the basis of sex.</p> <p>“An employer who fires an individual for being homosexual or transgender fires that person for traits or actions it would not have questioned in members of a different sex. Sex plays a necessary and undisguisable role in the decision,” Gorsuch wrote.</p>
120	<p>Unlike them, though, Chelsea and Alanna are cisgender, meaning that their gender identity matches the sex they were assigned at birth. In 2018 and 2019, Chelsea and Alanna regularly found themselves coming in third and fourth in races behind the two transgender athletes. They started to feel that the competition was unfair.</p>
122	<p>In addition, many transgender people undergo medical treatments, such as hormone therapy, that change their bodies, especially if they start before puberty. The NCAA and the International Olympic Committee both have policies that allow transgender athletes to compete on teams consistent with their gender identity once they start hormone therapy.</p> <p>...Still, the question of gender identity and sports remains a flashpoint. In 2020, state legislatures in twenty states introduced bills that would bar transgender athletes from competing in sports.</p>
123	<p>For months during the 1992–93 school year, the boy had rubbed up against the ten-year-old, tried to grab her breasts, and made vulgar comments such as “I want to get in bed with you.”</p> <p>...Aurelia Davis, LaShonda’s mom, tried talking with the teachers and the principal, but no one seemed to take the behavior seriously. LaShonda’s grades dropped, and in the spring her father found a suicide note. Finally, the family went to the sheriff. The boy pleaded guilty to sexual battery in juvenile court.</p>
128	<p>In 2012, she was the first member of the U.S. national soccer team to come out as gay. Still, she was unprepared for the backlash when she decided to kneel during the national anthem in 2016.</p> <p>Megan was following the lead of Colin Kaepernick, a Black NFL quarterback who had started kneeling during the pre-game singing of the national anthem to protest police brutality. “I am not going to stand up to show pride in a flag for a country that oppresses Black people and people of color,” Kaepernick said. “To me, this is bigger than football, and it would be selfish on my part to look the other way.”</p> <p>Megan thought he was right. She decided to join him in the protest.</p> <p>...Like Megan, Sue is a fighter for equal rights and equal pay. For several years, she played part of the year in Russia because she could earn up to ten times her WNBA salary by playing overseas.</p> <p>...They were the first gay couple to be featured in ESPN The Magazine’s “The Body Issue.”</p> <p>Being an openly gay professional athlete was once a career killer: when Billie Jean King was outed as a lesbian in 1981, she lost all her sponsorships within twenty-four hours.</p>
131	<p>Tennis did not always love them back, though. Historically, it was an elite sport played by white players from wealthy families. Some fans and officials did not know what to make</p>

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	<p>of these two Black women from a disadvantaged neighborhood who were dominating the sport—and Serena faced harsh criticism as a result.</p> <p>When Serena argued about a call or was frustrated after a loss, she was caricatured as an “angry Black woman.” Some commentators called her athletic body masculine or animalistic, echoing a long history of racism against Black women’s appearances. And because companies thought that white, blonde players were more “marketable,” Serena regularly earned less in endorsement deals than the players she was beating on the court.</p>
132	<p>Serena Williams overcame these experiences of racism and sexism to be widely regarded as the greatest women’s tennis player of all time.</p>
133	<p>Only a few months before the 2019 World Cup, Megan and twenty-seven other players sued the U.S. Soccer Federation for gender discrimination. At the World Cup tournament in France, fans chanted, “USA! USA! Equal Pay! Equal Pay!” The fight for equality still isn’t over.</p>
134	<p>As these educational doors have opened up, many women still find themselves hitting “glass ceilings” as they try to advance in their careers. Women may make up the majority of new lawyers, but they are still only 27 percent of the country’s judges. Although four out of five health care workers in the United States are women, only one in five hospitals and one in twenty health care companies have a female CEO. And on average, women still earn about eighty-two cents for every dollar men earn, with even larger wage gaps for Black and Latina women.</p> <p>...The opportunities to play are even more limited for girls of color. Because they often attend schools with fewer resources, Black and Latina girls have fewer chances to play sports than white boys or girls and boys of color. A typical school that is 90 percent white has fifty-eight spots on a sports team for every hundred students, whereas a typical school that is 90 percent students of color has only twenty-five spots. And at schools with fewer teams, more of the spots go to boys. Girls of color are also less likely to participate in sports outside of school, making their schools’ lack of opportunities all the more important.</p> <p>Sports can be an unwelcoming place for LGBTQ youth. A survey by the Human Rights Campaign found that while two-thirds of all high school seniors play at least one sport, only a quarter of LGBTQ youth played—and the numbers were even lower for transgender youth. “I was bullied by coaches and attacked by my teammates,” one LGBTQ athlete said. Many transgender athletes are unable to play on teams that match their gender identity, leading them to quit sports altogether. However, when teams are inclusive, they can have real benefits: LGBTQ athletes report feeling safer and less depressed than those who do not play sports.</p>