

Women in Sport Leadership: Navigating the Labyrinth of Challenges



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Tucker Center Distinguished Lecture

Background

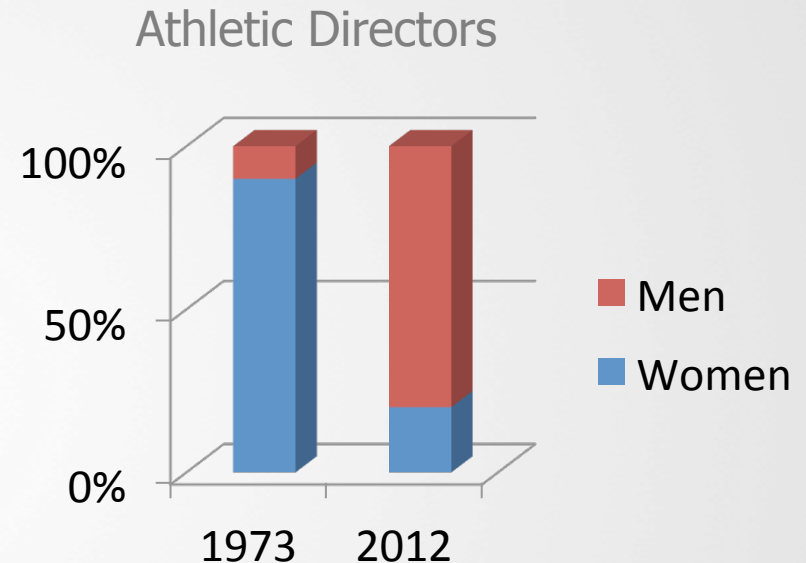
- Since 1981 women comprised 50% of college graduates
 - In 2010, 57% of college students were women
 - In 2011, women comprised 47% of overall workforce and 59% of entry level, college educated workforce
 - Only 12 women leading Fortune 500 companies in 2012
 - Women still earn only 77 cents to every man's dollar

(Spar, 2012)

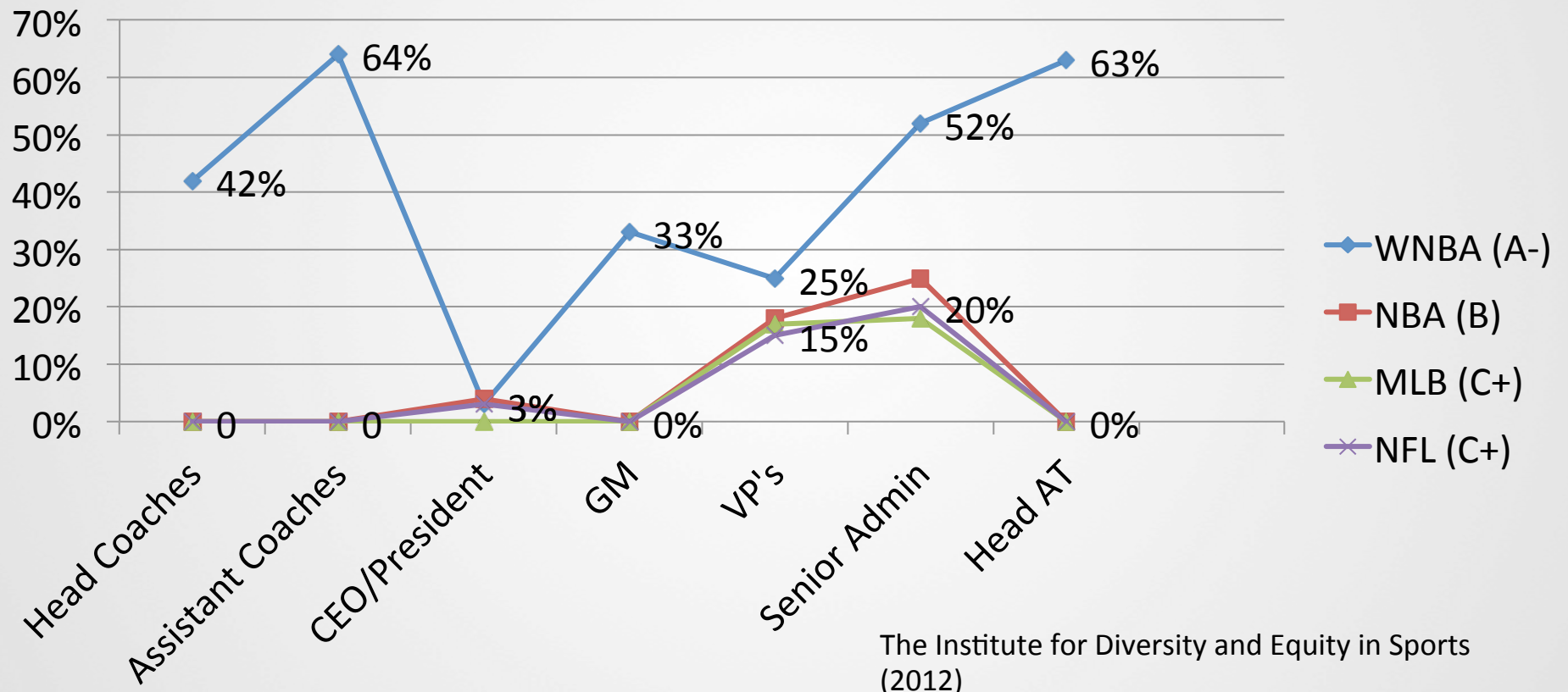


Women and Sport Leadership -- NCAA

- Substantial decrease in female administrators as women's sport programs were appropriated by/ collapsed into existing men's programs.
 - 90% to 20% in 2012
 - Only 4.9% of AD's in FBS schools are female
 - Average of only 1.4 female administrators per administration
 - 411 fewer females in administrative positions since 2008
 - 57.1% of women's teams coached by women
 - 2% of men's teams coached by women
- (Acosta & Carpenter, 2012)



Women in Sport Leadership – Professional Sport



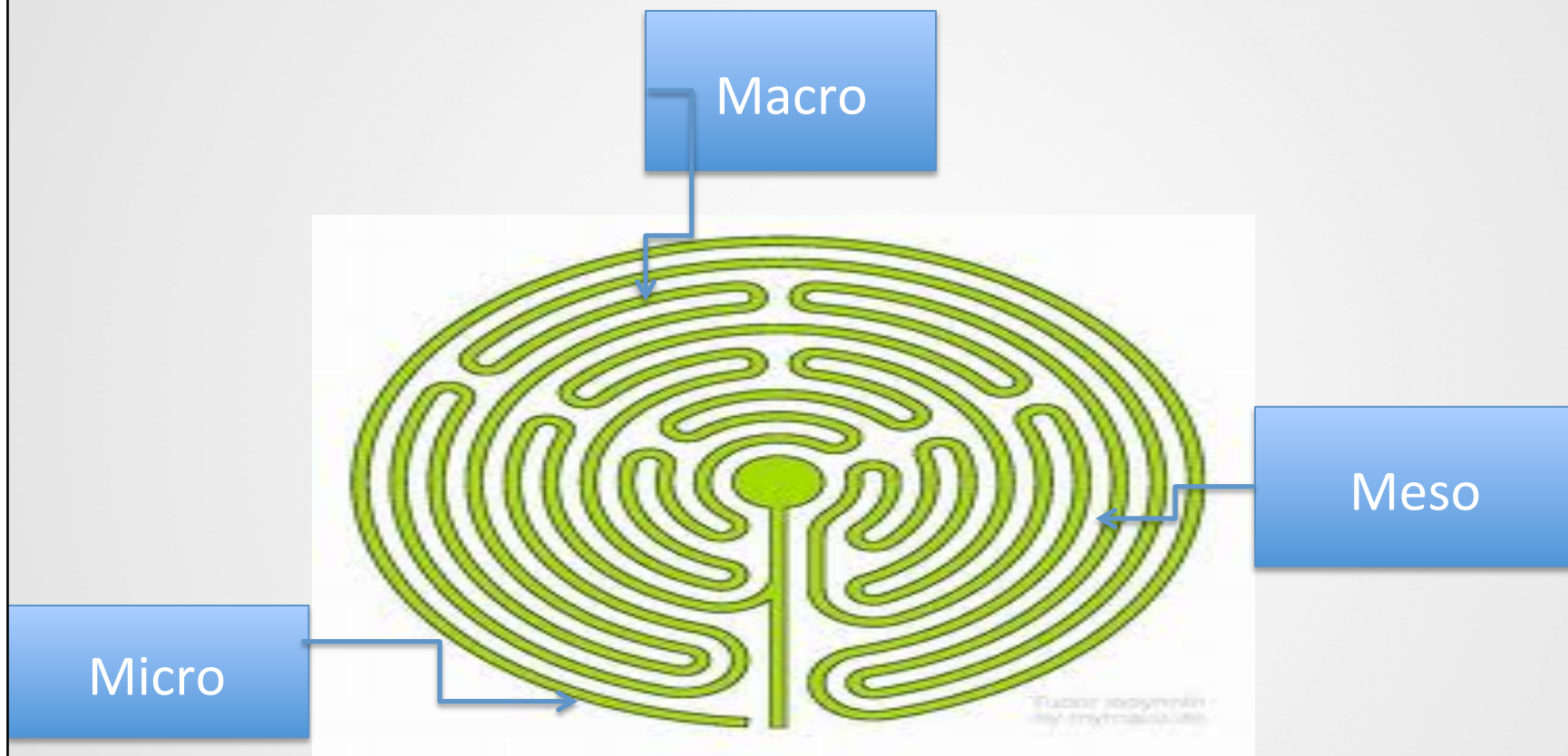
Glass Ceiling?



Worst of all, by depicting a single, unvarying obstacle, the glass ceiling fails to incorporate the complexity and variety of challenges that women can face in their leadership journeys. In truth, women are not turned away only as they reach the penultimate stage of a distinguished career. They disappear in various numbers at many points leading up to that stage” (Eagly & Carli, 2007, p. 64).



Cunningham & Sagas (2008)



Micro Level Forces



- Focus on individual females and their attitudes, qualifications, characteristics, etc.
- Attitudes/Beliefs → Self Efficacy
 - Sandberg (2012)
 - Men more likely to attribute success to themselves, women more likely to attribute success to outside forces (e.g., luck, help from others).
 - Furnham (2011)
 - “Men with average to below average intelligence tend to think they are quite clever – and very smart women think their intelligence is low” (Adrian Furnham, quoted in Raymond, 2009, ¶ 4).
 - Greenhill, Ault, Cuskelly, & Hooper (2009)
 - Elite level female coaches will not apply for job unless they have ALL qualifications listed in the job posting.
 - “For some reason, men, it doesn’t bother them that they never played or they don’t know the game, they *think they know*, so they are the ones out there coaching” (Messner, 2009, p. 53).

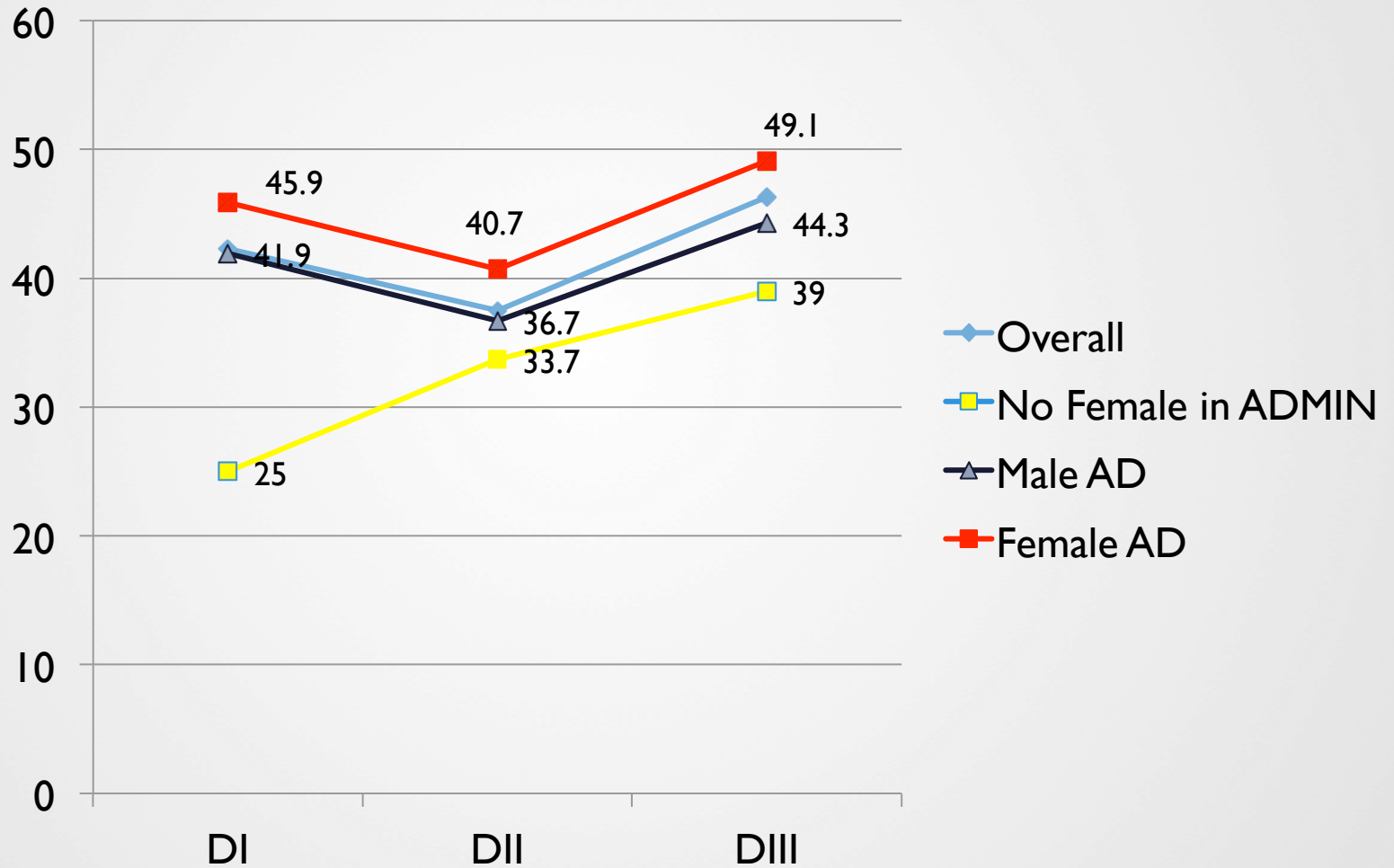
Meso Level Forces

- Focuses on organizational level and the factors that sustain gendered nature of sport
- Simple
 - Female administrators often denied oversight of marquee men's teams → not "qualified" for AD role (Lough and Grappendorf, 2007)
- More Complex
 - Those in control within their organizations tend to sustain their dominance by reproducing themselves based on physical or social characteristics ("Good Ole Boys Club")



Homologous Reproduction – Alive and Well in 2012

Percentage of female head coaches by administrative structure



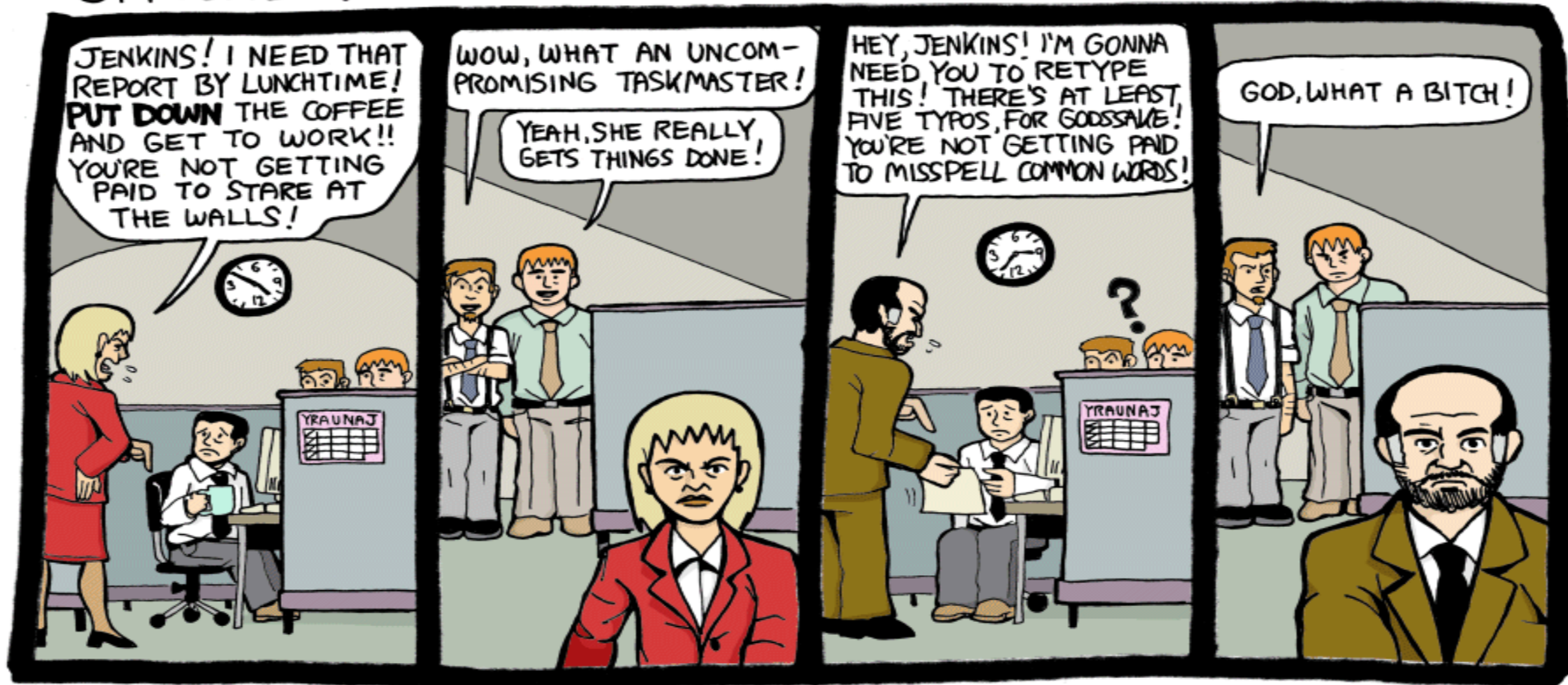
Macro level Forces

- Focus on forces outside of, or surrounding, the organization
 - Most pervasive and most difficult to combat
 - Gender bias in the workplace
 - Valian (1999) Gender Schemas
 - Eagly et al (2000) Social Role Theory
 - Women = Communal
Compassionate
Gentle
Soft Spoken
Kind
 - Men = Agentic
Decisive
Ambitious
Self confident
Forceful
 - Double Bind



Double Bind For Female Leaders

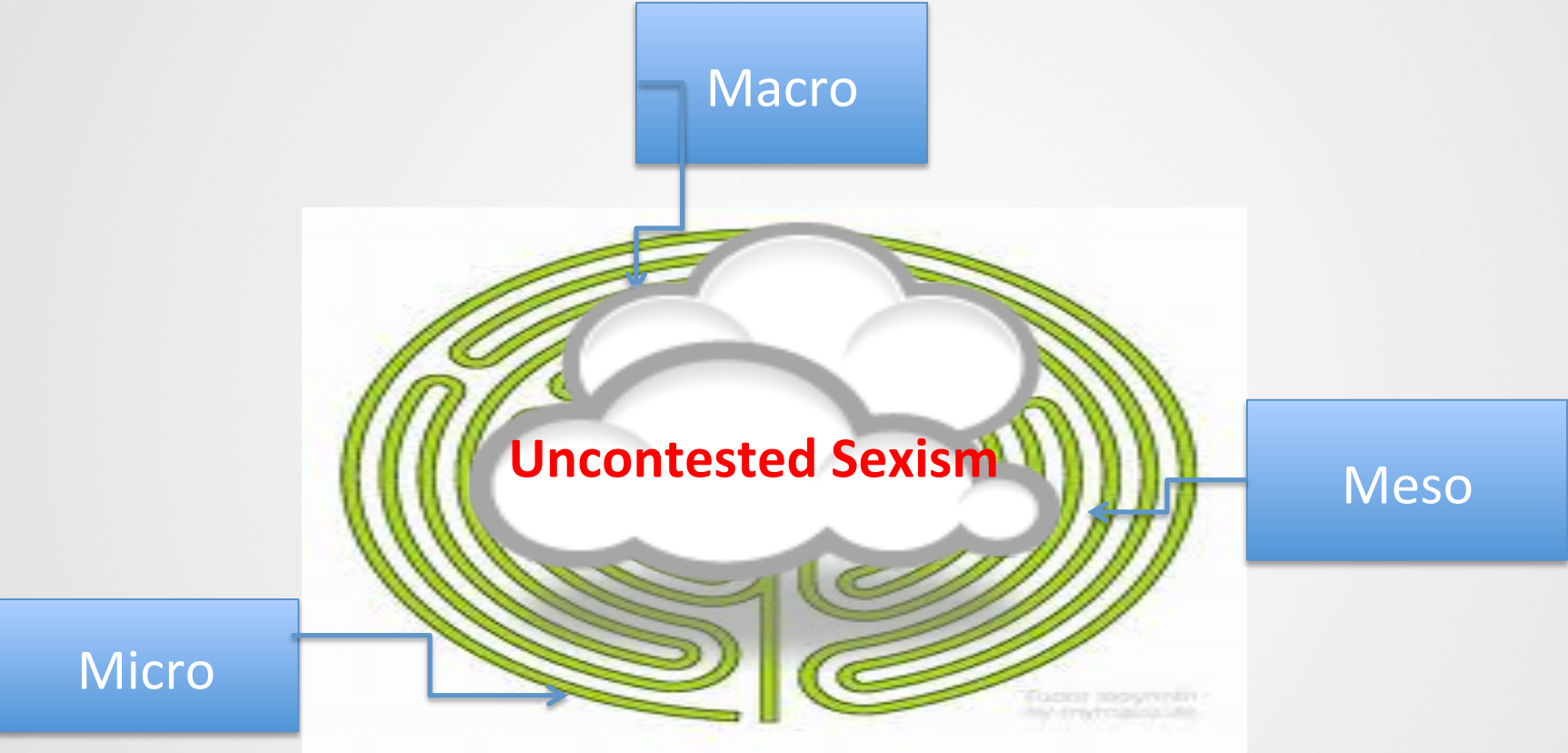
OPPOSITE WORLD



Burton et al (2012)

- Women applying for the AD position were rated significantly less feminine than a female applying for the Life Skills Coordinator position.
- Though judged to have similar skills, participants in the study indicated the male applicants were significantly more likely to be chosen for the Athletic Director's position than the female candidate.

Biggest Impediment



Sexism in Sport



“Go back to the kitchen. Go back there and make me some bacon and eggs, would you?”



“I didn’t want to hire her. Lew (Perkins, then AD at Kansas) would say ‘if you just meet her once, you’re going to love her.’ But I kept saying, ‘I don’t want to hire a woman to be a men’s strength coach, who does that?’”



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Strategies for Change

- Take lessons from others
 - LGBT
 - Research to practice
 - “It takes a team (WSF)” “Changing the Game ”(GLSEN)
 - Incredibly committed activists/advocacy groups
 - National Center for Lesbian Rights Sports Project
 - GLAD
 - Outsports.com
- Ramifications for women beyond sport context
 - Must pressure leaders of sport organizations to acknowledge and remedy these barriers

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has”
(Margaret Mead)



“The next frontier in the long history of achieving rights for women in the US is sports” (McDonagh & Pappano, 2008, p. 7)

