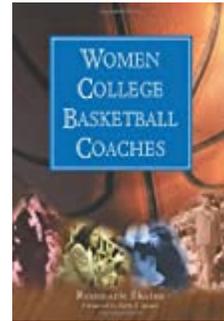




**Rosemarie Skaine.** *Women College Basketball Coaches.* Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland & Company, 2001. ix + 197 pp. \$28.50 (paper), ISBN 978-0-7864-0920-4.



**Reviewed by** Lisa A. Ennis (Ina Dillard Russell Library, Georgia College & State University)

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## **Working From the Bench: Highlighting College Basketball's Women Coaches**

Working From the Bench: Highlighting College Basketball's Women Coaches

The popularity of women's basketball has grown in leap and bounds over the past several years. Players and coaches like Pat Summitt, Geno Auriemma, Jennifer Azzi, Chamique Holdsclaw, Sue Bird, and many more are household names. As a result of the sport's increasing popularity, scholars from a variety of fields have turned their attention to the women's game. In *Women College Basketball Coaches* Rosemarie Skaine has compiled a concise and straightforward history of women's basketball and compiled profiles of a variety of the major contributors to the women's game. Skaine, the author of a number of books on gender and women's issues, holds an M.A. in sociology and is an independent researcher and author.

*Women College Basketball Coaches* is divided into six chapters. The first three chapters outline the history of women's basketball, chapters 4 and 5 contain profiles, and the final chapter, only two pages long, looks at the future of the women's game. Taken together, the first three chapters present the reader with an historical overview

of women's basketball. Chapter 1, "History through the 1960s," briefly mentions Senda Berenson's introduction of the game to her students at Smith College in 1892. Skaine also discusses early game rules and gender role expectations placed on players. Skaine does not offer much analysis, of the early game or the people involved, in this brief chapter.

While chapter 1 was only six pages long, the thirty-three-page-long chapter 2, "The Era of Title IX," relays the impact of legislation on the women's game. In this chapter Skaine does a good job of outlining the various laws affecting women's basketball. One of the main focuses of this chapter is the discrepancy in salaries of male and female coaches. Here Skaine uses a number of NCAA surveys to emphasize the differences in salaries. It is important to note that the author does not really offer an analysis of Title IX or other laws but a fairly thorough description of the positive aspects of the laws mentioned.

The third chapter attempts to summarize the major events in women's basketball from 1970 to 1999. Included in this chapter are brief descriptions of various organizations in women's basketball such as the Association of In-

tercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW), the American Basketball League (ABL), the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA), and the Women's Sports Foundation.

The bulk of the work, however, is the many biographical profiles in chapters 4 and 5. Chapter 4 focuses on athletic administrators and "other professionals" that have contributed to the game while chapter 5 concentrates on female coaches and is encyclopedic in nature. The profiles on the coaches are a generally thorough biographical narrative of each person. The profiles of the contributors in chapter 4 are less biographical, tending toward a description of the person's role in women's basketball along with their accomplishments and philosophy. These profiles provide the reader with a useful reference tool and good starting point for learning about a favorite coach.

The main weakness and my complaint with the work is that the title does not fit the book. The work is peppered throughout with examples and history of topics not associated with college ball. For instance, in-

cluded in chapter 3, "History, 1970-1999," is discussion of the WNBA and the ABL that is not tied to college coaches. Another problem with the title is that it is unclear whether Skaine intends to examine college coaches who are women or coaches of women's college teams. While chapter 5, "Women Coaches: Selected Profiles," is a compilation of female coaches' biographies, she also includes a chapter entitled "Contributors to the Game: Selected Profiles." If the book is supposed to focus on coaches, why have this chapter at all? Further, lumped into the "contributors" chapter are male coaches of women's teams like Geno Auremma and Leon Barmore. Overall, the book is titled badly and poorly organized, which is a shame because it contains good information.

*Women College Basketball Coaches* would best be used as a reference source. Skaine does provide thorough notes and a good bibliography, which enhances the work's value as a reference source. This work is not recommended for college courses but for general audiences.

If there is additional discussion of this review, you may access it through the network, at:

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