

Invisible Seasons: Title IX and the Fight for Equity in College Sports (Sports and Entertainment):

In 1979, a group of women athletes at Michigan State University, their civil rights attorney, the institutions Title IX coordinator, and a close circle of college students used the law to confront a powerful institution—their own university. By the mid-1970s, opposition from the NCAA had made intercollegiate athletics the most controversial part of Title IX, the 1972 federal law prohibiting discrimination in all federally funded education programs and activities. At the same time, some of the most motivated, highly skilled women athletes in colleges and universities could no longer tolerate the long-standing differences between men's and women's separate but obviously unequal sports programs. In *Invisible Seasons*, Belanger recalls the remarkable story of how the MSU women athletes helped change the landscape of higher education athletics. They learned the hard way that even groundbreaking civil rights laws are not self-executing. This behind-the-scenes look at a university sports program challenges us all to think about what it really means to put equality into practice, especially in the money-driven world of college sports.

A fascinating and well-told story, written in a smooth and engaging style. The subtle rhetorical analysis woven into the story allows the work to blur the boundaries of sport history and communication; it is an exemplar of how the two fields should be interconnected. (Sarah K. Fields University of Colorado, Denver) The author skillfully uses excellent scholarship about the history, implementation, and consequences of Title IX, both generally and through the lens of a specific institution, as the landscape on which to effectively discuss the impact of rhetorical choices. (Linda Jean Carpenter Professor Emerita, Brooklyn College, City University of New York) In this richly detailed, deeply sourced, inspirational—and challenging—book, Kelly Belanger takes a clear-eyed look at the history of Title IX, from its passage in 1972 through its many ups and down to the present. Her keen rhetorical analysis shows what a pivotal role language played in crafting Title IX and then in (re)interpreting it. A member of the Michigan State women's team from 1982-86, Belanger brings her own experiences to bear in this history; and her page-turning account of the 1978-79 season at Michigan State, when the men's team (with Magic Johnson) took top honors, the women (who had an equally stellar record in this "invisible season"), were fighting for basic rights. These Title IX stories are ones we have not heard before, told with piercing insight and integrity. (Andrea Abernethy Lunsford professor emerita, Stanford University) An intricate tapestry made of threads pulled from court records, case notes, oral histories, personal interviews, basketball schedules, and social movement rhetoric. Part social history/part rhetorical study/part personal journey, *Invisible Seasons* reveals one sports story we rarely hear though it is one that has been crucial in an ongoing battle to level the playing field. (Diana George professor emerita, Virginia Tech) About the Author Kelly Belanger is a professor in the English Department at Valparaiso University. She is the coauthor of *Second Shift: Teaching Writing to Working Adults*.