Skimpy Coverage: Sports Illustrated and the Shaping of the Female Athlete

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Recommended Citation
DOI: https://doi.org/10.62915/0038-3686.2047
Available at: https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln/vol71/iss4/4

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century, especially recent decades, and include quotations from still-living educators who participated directly or indirectly in the civil rights struggle of the 1950s through the 1970s. It is nice to note there are at least two chapters covering librarians, the most informative being “Cynthia Plair Roddey: Carolina Activist and Teacher in the Movement” by Alexis M. Johnson, Danielle Wingfield, and Derrick P. Aldridge (Roddey had a more extensive career as a teacher but did work as a degree librarian as an early educator). The historical period of educator activism is represented in “W.E.B. Du Bois and the University of Berlin: The Transnational Path to Educational Activism” during the activist/scholar’s time as a graduate student in 1890s Germany learning about social science analytical methods for investigating race in the United States. Glen Bowman’s chapter “Planning, Persistence, and Pedagogy: How Elizabeth City State Colored Normal School Survived North Carolina’s White Supremacy Campaign, 1898-1905” is a fascinating account of this African American teacher training school adopting an “industrial education” curriculum rather than one of teacher training, thus avoiding being completely shut down by white supremacists who saw the more academic education of African Americans as a threat.

Like others who engaged in civil rights work, teachers/educators sometimes paid a high price for their activism. A particularly telling example concerns Willa Cofield Johnson, who taught at an all-Black high school in Enfield, North Carolina during the early 1960s. Despite warnings from the school’s African American principal (who felt under pressure from the local white school board and superintendent), Johnson persisted in civil rights work in and outside the classroom and, consequently, was fired in 1964 as described by Crystal R. Sanders in the chapter “In the Face of her Splendid Record: Willa Cofield Johnson and Teacher Dismissal in the Civil Rights Era.” Fortunately, her story ultimately had a fairly happy ending with the U.S. Supreme Court decision in 1967 affirming Johnson’s constitutional right to protest. However, other African American teachers lost their jobs for their participation in the civil rights movement as inadvertent casualties of school desegregation in the South. Alexander Hyres in “Dedication to the Highest of Callings: Florence Coleman Bryant, School Desegregation, and the Black Freedom Struggle in Postwar Virginia, 1946-2004” observes, “As school desegregation took hold, Black teachers and educators across the South lost their jobs at a staggering rate” (p. 157).

_Schooling the Movement_ illuminates a little-known aspect of the civil rights movement. African American educators have not often been recognized for their contributions to the struggle for freedom and equality, but chapter contributors make a very good case for including these dedicated and often unrecognized or underappreciated participants. They may not have made as many news headlines and, often, their contributions were of a quieter albeit more sustained nature than those made by activists, lawyers, and more prominent heroes of the civil rights movement. This book suggests there are many more stories that need telling concerning African American educators as activists in the struggle for freedom from the Reconstruction era through the civil rights era (and beyond).

Complete with detailed endnotes, a bibliography of primary and secondary sources, and a useful index, _Schooling the Movement_ will appeal most to an academic readership; however, this well-edited work is accessible to interested lay readers as well. Academic and large public libraries collecting in the areas of African American and civil rights history will find this book to be a good addition to their collections, as will those collecting in the subject of the history of education, especially in the South.

Tim Dodge, Auburn University

**Skimpy Coverage: Sports Illustrated and the Shaping of the Female Athlete**

Bonnie M. Hagerman
Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2023
ISBN: 9780813949239
338 p. $34.50 (Pbk)

_Skimpy Coverage: Sports Illustrated and the Shaping of the Female Athlete_ provides a longitudinal study of women athletes through the eyes of mass media, focusing specifically on the leading magazine for
sports, *Sports Illustrated (SI)*. In the first book-length study of its kind, Bonnie Hagerman explores how media coverage represents, influences, perpetuates, and creates archetypes and stereotypes of women, as illustrated through reporting on sportswomen who have often “used sports and the platform it offered to push for empowerment, freedom, equality, and acceptance in ways that have complemented, inspired, and challenged broader feminist agendas” (p. 4). Through deep study into *Sports Illustrated*'s reporting over time, the book explores the topics that were reported on repeatedly, revealing perspectives beyond the sportswomen themselves and into broader culture. Working through this history thematically, the book features chapters on femininity, sexuality, Title IX, the frailty myth, Olympic athletes, women’s leagues, and *SI* covers. Intersectional perspectives on the female athlete experience are explored in every chapter, noting how the phenomenon discussed is often racialized as well, amplifying the effects on women of color.

The book begins with a foundational exploration of the concept of femininity as it has been applied to sportswomen throughout the years by *SI*'s discussions of their presentation, their bodies, and their emotions. Through these discussions, the book investigates how portrayals of femininity, whiteness, and race have changed over time. The book then makes the connection in the second chapter to the lesbian stigma applied to women when they fail to reach the feminine goals expected of sportswomen in society. The following study of sexuality in this chapter investigates how homophobia was used to marginalize and diminish women in sports and amplified focus on “real women.” This focus reinforced a narrow view of gender and identity and maintained patriarchal order, as seen through examples of women’s stories from the 1920s to the current issues trans women are facing in sports today. The subsequent chapter, “An Odd Way to Even Things Up,” covers Title IX, its implementation and coverage, and the pursuit for gender equity, acknowledging that with the pursuit of gender equity, there was not racial equity.

The fourth chapter of the book covers the frailty myth, a concept debunked by Collette Dowling in a book of the same name—that women are the weaker sex. In investigating this topic through *SI*'s reporting, the author explores the topics of injury and attacks, mental health, eating disorders, performance drugs, and sexual assault through the stories of women like Monica Seles and Nancy Kerrigan, Ronda Rousey and Simone Biles, Lindsey Vonn, Cathy Rigby and Serena Williams, and many more well-known and lesser-known female athletes over time. In the following chapter, the book examines the Olympic ideal and how athletes—and female athletes in particular—have been used in diplomatic strategy for international teams throughout history, as they were portrayed as both diplomats and national treasures. Through examples spanning the 1960s and racial politics, Cold War competition, indigenous rights, and reconciliation for colonialism, this chapter illustrates how, despite greater visibility in coverage through *SI*, issues of civil rights have been ignored or downplayed by the magazine.

Despite seeing more robust coverage at the Olympics and having legal protections under Title IX, female athletes faced challenges “making the case that they deserved the same kind of respect, compensation, and opportunities their male counterparts enjoyed” (p. 192). In “A League of Their Own,” the book delves into the formation of professional women’s leagues and the fight against the perspective that leagues are publicity stunts and not populated with accomplished athletes. This fight is exemplified in this chapter through the stories of women’s baseball leagues, with early Bloomer Leagues and later in the 1940s; the Red Heads and women’s basketball leagues in the 1970s and beyond; women’s golf conferences; soccer federations and the World Cup competitions; as well as tennis associations. Concluding the book is an examination of *SI* magazine covers that returns the reader to the central questions of how femininity was a requirement of female athletes despite the concept’s evolution over time and how *SI*'s influence on the world of sports has acted to uphold that requirement instead of upend it.

The author of the book, Bonnie M. Hagerman, is an associate professor of women, gender, and sexuality at the University of Virginia. This book is the product of the author’s dissertation work and is reflective of her teaching expertise at the University of Virginia as well.

While scholarship surrounding *Sports Illustrated* and its history abound (see Michael MacCambridge’s *The Franchise: A History of Sports Illustrated Magazine*), as well as scholar-
ship centering feminist research on women in sports, this book brings together sports journalism history and feminist research in a way that is comprehensive and would be beneficial to sports studies, journalism and mass media, and women and gender studies collections. The gender history perspective could be fruitful to expand perspectives of sports studies and journalism students. This book would find its place in academic libraries and public libraries alike for those looking for a comprehensive study of women in sport and the societal perspectives of female athletes over time.

Loren Mixon, Coastal Carolina University

Vaulting Ambition: FDR’s Campaign to Pack the Supreme Court

Michael Nelson
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2023
ISBN: 9780700634125
124 p. $24.95 (Pbk)

Is it possible to gain a mental picture of a president’s attempt to “pack” the Supreme Court through canvassing his closest advisors and enacting legislation to accomplish this goal? Throughout the pages of the book Vaulting Ambition: FDR’s Campaign to Pack the Supreme Court, author Michael Nelson accomplishes this feat effectively. At one point in the book, the author includes seven possible decisions to be made which would help FDR accomplish his goal of packing the Supreme Court. The inclusion of these decisions helps the reader get a better picture of what factors might have contributed to the president’s decision-making process. For instance, was the decision to pack the court based on prior success with getting New Deal legislation passed? Alternatively, was the president’s decision to pack the Supreme Court based on the feeling that overall public opinion would support his decision? One of the main ideas of the book is to show how FDR might have overestimated his ability to get legislation passed to influence the three branches of government during his tenure as president. In this case, FDR tried to remake the Supreme Court by increasing its number with justices who would support any legislation that was proposed or would make it less likely that any opposition would arise in the final analysis.

In this book, the author includes President Franklin Roosevelt’s notion to add a new justice to the Supreme Court every time a justice reaches 70 and does not retire. In the end, the motivation of FDR was to exert influence over the court by electing like-minded individuals to the court who would be more likely to approve his programs or legislation. Conversations between FDR and close advisors like Harold Ickes (secretary of the treasury) or Homer S. Cummings (attorney general) help illustrate President Roosevelt’s reliance on these trusted advisors to help him remake the Supreme Court into an institution that would support his legislation completely. At various times in the book, the author includes these conversations to help the reader understand the political climate happening in the United States during the late 1930s.

The addition of these actual accounts of FDR’s interactions with his advisory staff also contributes to our understanding of why he thought it might be possible to accomplish the court-packing plan during his presidency. Essentially, FDR felt that the initial success of his New Deal programs would make it easier to accomplish his ultimate court plan to increase the size of the Supreme Court with like-minded justices. This book really contributes to the subject of how presidents used their initial success or popularity to push through programs that might suit their political goals. Additionally, including this type of book in academic libraries would help support research into this area of history. The book is also part of a series called Landmark Presidential Decisions. For this reason, students majoring in political science at any university or college would benefit by having the book in their college library for relevant research assignments.

This book is intended as a historical overview of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s campaign through the Judicial Procedures Reform Bill of 1937 to try and “pack” the United States Supreme Court with additional justices who could rule favorably on the constitutionality of New Deal programs. In the end, FDR failed in his effort to increase the size of the Supreme Court. Specific pieces of conversation that President Roosevelt had with his closest advisors lend some added un-