

Book Review: *More than Title IX: How Equity in Education has Shaped the Nation*

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Have you ever thought to yourself, “I wonder what it was like to be there...what was it like to be that person?” *More than Title IX: How Equity in Education has Shaped the Nation* by Katherine Hanson offers opportunities to glimpse at the past. Hanson identified key leaders in a variety of areas affected by Title IX and interviewed them. They provide thoughtful recollections and reflections. This book explores several different areas of Title IX impact including the “discovery” of inequality; gender bias in the classroom; access to and support in higher education; women in the workplace, athletics, and politics; and reflections on gender equality. Each area of Title IX explored in this book is full of inferences from statistics that were taken from the time period under discussion, which are compared to today’s statistics. This allows the reader to compare today’s context with the time periods explained throughout the book.

Allow me to start with a caveat: I am no expert on gender equality. Outside of the several scattered articles I read throughout graduate school, the closest I have come to understanding the meaning of Title IX has been by benefitting from all of the advances the pioneers and champions moved into place. Their dedication and fight to rectify injustices allow me to freely access academics, athletics, and careers. I read this book with fresh eyes and an open mind.

Rewind to a time when women were encouraged to make homemaking their one and only career, life skill, and sport. Each chapter of this book opens with a historical overview of the time period, and by using numbers, illustrates the inequality women faced. Hanson creates a picture by comparing statistics from each era to the climate that exists in the United States today. Following the historical context, the narratives provided by the interviewees allow the reader to view the world in which they lived. Through these narratives, the reader is able to understand the difficulty or ease of the challenges and triumphs the women faced. The first narrative of this book will stick with me forever. Bernice “Bunny” Sandler tells her story of the small campaign that turned into a historic class-action complaint against all U.S. colleges and universities. While guiding the reader through the critical points of her journey, Sandler describes her relatable story with modesty. As a young, female professional, I was able to relate to some of the memories she shared about her experience with sex discrimination in and out of the workplace. These stories were unfamiliar to me; however, each one is a different kind of educational, empowering, and moving message. The most beneficial part of this book is the memories that these leaders provide.

The effects of Title IX have become so commonplace in our culture that it is hard to imagine what hurdles it took to put each piece of the document in place. It is more difficult to imagine if you were not present while the conversations were happening on a national level. The narratives provide a picture to understand those challenges. While reading this book, I envisioned the image of Title IX as a circle with each subject covered by the interviewed contributors as a ray shooting out from the center, creating a bright star, shining light on their goals of equality. These thoughtful narratives lead an open mind to many a-ha moments and help one who is unfamiliar with Title IX to understand the scope of its impact.

I would recommend this book to a scholar who is interested in researching Title IX and is looking for the perspective of what life was like for the challengers of the status quo of gender inequality. If you are interested in the topic of gender equality and Title IX, this text would be a great to add to your shelf as it is an easy and enjoyable read. Additionally, this can be helpful for fraternity and sorority advisors if the reader is unfamiliar with the great amount of effort that was exerted to put Title IX into place. The impact

that Title IX has had on higher education, and thus the fraternity and sorority community, is illustrated by describing the strenuous road to gender equality, and approaches a hot topic of today, sexual assault. However, this is not the dictionary or comprehensive history book of Title IX. If you are looking for additional societal touch points to provide more historical context than personal narratives, you would be best served to look through the bibliography of this book to find a more complete reference.

While reading this book, you are guaranteed to read the story of someone with a personal background that will spike your interest and hook you into their journey. Perhaps you will be inspired to look up more about the person! *More than Title IX: How Equity in Education has Shaped the Nation* paints a vibrant picture of what it was like when discussions about women's equality were just whispers and allows the reader to discover the achievements that this movement has created.

References

Hanson, K., Guilfoy, V., & Pillai, S. (2009). *More than Title IX: How equity in education has shaped the nation*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.