

# Title Page & Abstract

An Interview with Marian Kneer

Part of the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library  
*Women's Basketball in IL* Oral History project

Interview # DGB-V-D-2004-007

Marian Kneer, a supporter and promoter of women's athletics, was interviewed on the date listed below as part of Ellyn Bartges' Masters Capstone project for the Western Illinois University entitled *What about the character of the girls?: Girls and Women's Basketball in Illinois 1968-1977*, and donated to the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library.

Interview dates & location:

Date: Oct 24, 2004      Location: Plainfield, IL

Interview Format: Digital video

Interviewer: Ellyn L. Bartges, Masters Capstone project at Western Illinois University<sup>1</sup>  
and Ph. D dissertation materials, University of Illinois Urbana Champaign.<sup>2</sup>

Technical Support (cameraman, etc): Ellyn Bartges

Transcription by: Nina Weldon, professional transcriber, Boston, Virginia

Edited by: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Pages: 87      Total Time: 1:13 / 1.22 hrs

Interview being  
processed

Accessioned into the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library Archives on March 13, 2013.

The interview is archived at the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library in Springfield,  
Illinois.

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<sup>1</sup> 2005

<sup>2</sup> 2013

# Abstract

Marian Kneer, *Women's Basketball in IL*, DGB-V-D-2004-007

**Biographical Information Overview of Interview:** Marian Kneer was born in 1924 in Peoria, Illinois. She is a lifetime supporter and promoter for women's athletics. Kneer graduated from Woodruff High School in Peoria, Illinois in 1942. During high school and in college she participated in many sports. Kneer played in Industrial Basketball Leagues. She also played America Softball Association fast pitch softball for many teams, but the most well known of these was the Caterpillar Dieselettes. She also played intramural field hockey, basketball, volleyball, and softball. In the 1940s, Kneer was considered the "world's greatest softball catcher." She earned her bachelor's and master's degrees from Illinois State University in physical education and her Ph.D. from the University of Michigan also in physical education in 1968.

After graduation, Kneer taught at East Peoria High School from 1949 to 1968 where she was an advocate for girls' sports. She served on the first National Sports Institute Committee during the 1960s and she was also a long time member of the Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance. Kneer also helped form the Illinois Sports Day Committee. Kneer was a professor and member of the athletic board at the University of Illinois at Chicago prior to her retirement in the 1980s. Many consider Kneer to be a pioneer in getting athletics for girls. She continues to be proud when she passes a softball field or attends a sporting event where she gets to see female athletes enjoying their sports.

**Subject Headings/Key Words:** Illinois Association for Health, Physical Education, Recreation, and Dance (IAHPERD); Illinois High School Association (IHSA); Amateur Athletic Union (AAU); Girls' Athletic Association (GAA); American Softball Association (ASA); Postal Tournament, Industrial League, Title IX; Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW); The Division of Girl's and Women's Sports (DGWS); National Association for Girl's and Women in Sport (NAGWS); National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE); National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA); Woodruff High School; Illinois State University, University of Michigan; East Peoria High School

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