

Nine for IX Film Discussion Guide: *Pat XO*

Key Concepts:

- Role Model
- Gender Equality
- Sexism
- Title IX
- Gender And Leadership
- Elite Mother-Coaches
- Coach-Athlete Relationship
- Coaching Expertise
- Coaching Science
- Coaching Philosophy

Discussion Questions:

1. Discuss the multiple ways in which Summitt is a pioneer, role model, and an agent of social change? What do you think Pat Summitt's legacy is to women's sport?
2. Would you want to play for Pat Summitt? Why or why not?
3. Women's college basketball is arguably the most popular and visible women's college sport, and NCAA attendance rates have been increasing every year. What role did Pat Summitt play in growing the game of college women's basketball and women's sport in general?
4. What does it mean when in the film it was stated that "Pat made the winner's circle gender-less"? Do you agree or disagree with that statement and why?
5. Pat Summitt was a mother-coach who coached at the highest level of collegiate sport. Based on what you saw in the film did you see Summitt experience work-family conflict or work-life enrichment in her negotiations of being a mother-coach? How might have Summitt's success as a coach challenged or reinforced gender stereotypes about women and leadership? How do you think Summitt would respond to the idea held by many women that it is impossible to coach and have a family?
6. Pat Summitt had a long and successful coaching career at University of Tennessee where she spent nearly her entire 38-year career. Given the climate of big time college athletics, do you think there can or will be another Pat Summitt in terms of a coach who will stay at the same school for his/her entirety? Why or why not?

Questions for Coaches:

7. According to all the individuals interviewed in *Pat XO*, what contributed to making Pat Summitt the winningest coach in all of collegiate basketball? What are some of the foundational components to Pat Summitt's coaching and life philosophy? What is the foundation of your coaching philosophy and how it is different or similar to Summitt's?
8. How did Pat Summitt learn how to coach? How did she develop her coaching expertise? Who influenced Pat's coaching and leadership style? How is coaching education different and similar for college coaches today? What does the literature say about the (re)development of coaching expertise?
9. What does Pat's philosophy "I do not treat everyone the same, I treat you all fair" mean for coaches? What do you think are important facets of a well-functioning coach-athlete relationship? What does the coaching science literature say?
10. Can you think of examples in other sports where the Key Concepts listed at the beginning of this guide are present?

Additional Readings:

Becker, A. J., & Wrisberg, C. A. (2008). Effective Coaching in Action: Observations of Legendary Collegiate Basketball Coach Pat Summitt. *Sport Psychologist*, 22(2), 197-211.

Bruening, J. E., & Dixon, M. A. (2007). Work--Family Conflict in Coaching II: Managing Role Conflict. *Journal Of Sport Management*, 21(4), 471-496.

Côté, J., & Gilbert, W. (2009). An Integrative Definition of Coaching Effectiveness and Expertise. *International Journal Of Sports Science & Coaching*, 4(3), 307-323.

Dixon, M. A., & Bruening, J. E. (2007). Work--Family Conflict in Coaching I: A Top-Down Perspective. *Journal Of Sport Management*, 21(3), 377-406.

Dixon, M. A., & Bruening, J. (2006). How Mothers Shape the Workplace: An Investigation of Work-Family Balance in National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I Coaching Moms. (Abstract). *Research Quarterly For Exercise & Sport*, 77(1 Suppl), A-102.

LaVoi, N.M., & Dutove, J. K. (2012). Barriers and supports for female coaches: An ecological model. *Sports Coaching Review*, 1 (1), 17-37.

Nash, C., & Collins, D. (2006). Tacit Knowledge in Expert Coaching: Science or Art?. *Quest*, 58(4), 465-477.

Petitpas, A. (2014). Coach John Wooden's Pyramid of Success: A Comparison to the Sport Psychology Literature. *International Journal Of Sports Science & Coaching*, 9(1), 109-110.

Schenewark, J. D., & Dixon, M. A. (2012). A Dual Model of Work-Family Conflict and Enrichment in Collegiate Coaches. *Journal Of Issues In Intercollegiate Athletics*, 515-39.

Turner, D., Nelson, L., & Potrac, P. (2012). The Journey Is the Destination: Reconsidering the Expert Sports Coach. *Quest* (00336297), 64(4), 313-325.

Books written by or about Pat Summitt

Sum It Up: 1,098 Victories, A Couple of Irrelevant Losses, and a Life in Perspective (2013)

Reach for the Summitt (1999)

Raise the Roof: The Inspiring Inside Story of the Tennessee Lady Vols' Historic 1997-1998 Threepeat Season (1999)

Additional Activities:

1. Some argue that imitation is the best form of flattery. Go online and examine how many of Pat Summitt's former players went into coaching. What do you think such a strong "coaching tree" says about Summitt's coaching and leadership style? Who has been the most successful coach from Summitt's coaching tree?
2. Go online and read either [Acosta and Carpenter's \(2014\)](#) or [LaVoi's \(2014\)](#) reports on the status of women in college coaching. When Pat Summitt started her coaching career, over 90% of all college female athletes were coached by women...today that number is around 40%. Why do you think there has been a decline in the percentage of women head coaches in collegiate athletics? Read the LaVoi and Dutove (2012) article from above and learn what researchers say about the decline. What do you think can be done to reverse the decline? Visit [The Alliance of Women Coaches](#) and learn more about the organization.
3. Using [John Wooden's pyramid of success](#), compare and contrast Pat Summitt's coaching style to Wooden's model. (See Additional Readings: Petitpas 2014)

4. In April 2014, 23 year-old Tyler Summitt (Pat's son who is featured prominently in the film) was named the head women's basketball coach for Louisiana Tech after only serving as an assistant coach for two years at Marquette. His appointment has generated considerable attention. What are both sides of the argument for those who think he is ready, and for those who don't think he is prepared or deserving? What does Pat Summitt have to say about this issue?

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