



Bettie Cadou

(1936 - 2002)

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Sources:

- Indianapolis News, accessed Newspapers.com.
- Price, Nelson, "Bettie Cadou," Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame, 2006.
- Price, Nelson, "A Woman at the Brickyard: Bettie Cadou and the Indianapolis Motor Speedway," *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History* (Indianapolis: Indiana Historical Society, Spring 2007): 4-9.

In 1971, Indianapolis News journalist and photographer Bettie Cadou made history when she shattered a 62-year-old barrier prohibiting women from entering the garage and pit areas at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway. Cadou was born Elizabeth Ann Stickler in Bainbridge, Indiana, in 1936. She graduated from Indiana University and wrote for a variety of local and national publications throughout her career.

On May 28, 1971, Cadou, along with Mari McCloskey, assistant editor of *Woman's World Magazine*, became the first women to obtain silver-badge credentials, granting them official access to Gasoline Alley at the Motor Speedway. Speedway management lifted the ban on women in this area after McCloskey sued to obtain a restraining order against the policy. Though Cadou had been covering news at the track for five years, her new access to the garages and pits was met with hostility. Writing in the *News*, she stated: "I didn't expect to be welcomed with open arms, but I also didn't anticipate hostile cart drivers. . . The men standing around me moved back as though I was carrier of the plague." Cadou pushed onward in her work despite the discrimination she faced and became a pioneer in sports journalism, both at the track and later in her coverage of the Indianapolis Colts.

She covered a wide array of topics in addition to sports, including the Ku Klux Klan, the Indiana General Assembly, and medical and health issues. In August 1971, she and a photographer posed as migrant workers in Frankfort and her subsequent "Children of the Field" series led to changes in state laws that improved sanitary and working conditions in migrant camps. Cadou received the CASPER award for her work, one of many accolades she won as a result of her publications. Later in her career, she taught journalism at IUPUI and Butler University. She died in 2002 and was inducted into the Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame in 2006.



Photo Courtesy: Indiana Journalism Hall of Fame