



Sex & Power

By Susan Estrich

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Updated with a new introduction by the author.

At the dawn of the 21st century, women in America are richer, more educated, and more powerful than before. So why is it, Estrich asks, that they account for a minuscule percentage of the nation's top executives, politicians, lawyers and professors? A "searing" report (**Rocky Mountain News**), filled with personal stories and startling statistics, Sex & Power dares to tell the truth about men and women, and how power is divided between them.

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Editorial Review

Amazon.com Review

How powerful are American women? To answer that question, Susan Estrich offers two facts: 99.94 percent of the CEOs and 97.3 percent of the top earners in America are men. Concerned about these numbers and the recent rise in women dropping out of the fast lane, or choosing not to enter at all, one of America's most powerful women has written a compelling argument for a restructuring of the workplace and a rallying cry to women to stand together for change. This is not a condemnation of male discrimination, however. Estrich believes that both men and women make unconsciously biased decisions based on socialization. (Most women, after all, are just as wary of ambitious women as men; hence the Hillary phenomenon.) No, Estrich's goal is to inspire. She reminds her readers repeatedly that American women actually have more access to power than any other group of women in the world (after all, they make 83 percent of consumer purchases and comprise 51 percent of the electorate)--but they need to *choose* to use it. She cites examples of remarkable things that have happened when only two or three women in positions of power have stood together. Imagine what America might look like if half the nation's leaders were women. Would the schools be better? Would video games be less violent? Would more doors be open to women returning to the workforce?

It is this latter group that Estrich is most concerned about. She uses her insider's perspective as a feminist lawyer, along with her access to presidents, ambassadors, editors, and other powerful people, to give both an objective and a personal history of women's struggles for equal rights. This openly frank discussion ranges from Supreme Court battles and feminists' own conflicting views to the thorny issue of sexual harassment (including the author's own role in the Paula Jones and Anita Hill cases). Estrich concludes that women (and men) don't just need equality, they need change. Mothers cannot compete in the workplace as currently designed, and despite so-called gender rules, the working world is still stacked against women. In a daring move, Estrich declares that "the debate has to move beyond questions of conscious discrimination, of who did what to whom, to the more important challenge of how we include everyone at the table." In other words, antidiscrimination laws should not simply end at intentional discrimination, but should actually encourage inclusion. That indeed will require finishing the feminist revolution, which is Estrich's greatest hope. --*Lesley Reed*

From Publishers Weekly

The lack of women in top political and business spots is emblematic of the unfinished feminist revolution, declares Estrich, presidential campaign manager for Michael Dukakis, a noted law professor (University of Southern California) and newspaper columnist, and author of *Real Rape*. She highlights how much has changed for women who have entered institutions previously closed to them, yet how little has changed in the structures of those institutions. Outlining the legal cases that have promoted women's equality, Estrich observes, "Enforcing equality in an unequal world doesn't produce equal results." Successful women in formerly all-male fields are still extraordinary people, she argues, which means that ordinary women don't succeed where ordinary men do. Facts and stereotypes about motherhood hold back all women, she contends, exhorting women in positions of power to use that power to support other women: "if gender enters into [women's] evaluation, as we know it does, that doesn't change by ignoring it, but by recognizing the reality and acting collectively to respond to it." The corporations that are most women-friendly have become that way through a conscious decision-making process, Estrich points out. Publicity about the woefully low number of women on corporate boards of directors has also led to some increase in those numbers. Estrich's argument will appeal most to those who believe that the kind of social change she proposes will come from the top down. That her message isn't new emphasizes the importance, and perhaps

the truth, of what she has to say. Agent, Amanda Urban, ICM. Author tour. (Oct.)
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Review

"A timely, original, and truly useful contribution...This is a good book-humane, practical, and deeply reasonable. It exhorts us to take our fate into our own hands, reminding us of the unprecedented power that women now have, while still acknowledging the obstacles that face us. Her voice is clear, yet nuanced. If your feminism has been snoozing, this will make it up." —**Washington Monthly**

"Engrossing...an important corrective to the notion that gender no longer matters and that competence is all. **Sex & Power** asks the important questions." —**Boston Sunday Globe**

Users Review

From reader reviews:

John Moore:

Reading a guide tends to be new life style within this era globalization. With examining you can get a lot of information that may give you benefit in your life. Using book everyone in this world can share their idea. Ebooks can also inspire a lot of people. Many author can inspire their own reader with their story as well as their experience. Not only the storyplot that share in the textbooks. But also they write about the information about something that you need example of this. How to get the good score toefl, or how to teach your children, there are many kinds of book that you can get now. The authors on this planet always try to improve their skill in writing, they also doing some study before they write for their book. One of them is this Sex & Power.

Tommy Heckman:

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