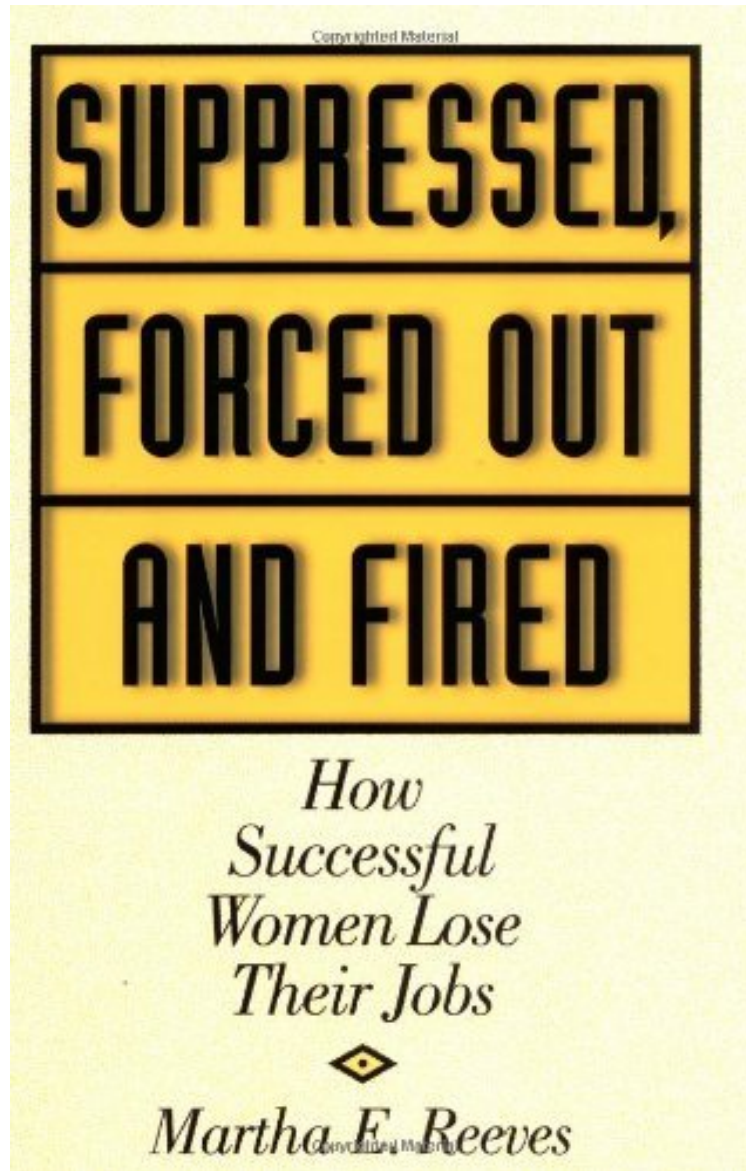


Suppressed, Forced Out and Fired: How Successful Women Lose Their Jobs

Martha Reeves

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Martha Reeves : Suppressed, Forced Out and Fired: How Successful Women Lose Their Jobs before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Suppressed, Forced Out and Fired: How Successful Women Lose Their Jobs:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Why do successful women fail?By A CustomerToo many really

qualified, effective, and successful women I know in business seem to just stop after some point, throw in the towel, get shunted aside or just get fired. Now I know why...Reeves' case studies and her analysis make it clear that it's not just a glass ceiling women are hitting up against, it's more like a trampoline at the top, bouncing back fastest just the women with the greatest momentum... Too many books about women in the work place are pure theory, and there are more than a few that offer advice about how to succeed in the executive suite. This one combines a great grip on solid feminist theory with hard details about individual cases to draw lessons women can apply to work with the system... and to change it!

So entrenched and powerful is the patriarchy within organizations that women have serious difficulty acquiring positions of real importance, even when it is in the organization's best interest to use their talents fully (and reward them equitably). Reeves surveys the structural obstacles to women's advancement and argues that successful women executives threaten their male counterparts and their patriarchal culture, which responds by punishing them. Unlike other studies on the topic, Reeves explains the mechanisms by which gender discrimination operates—the dynamics of discrimination and the processes by which women in business are marginalized, subordinated, and excluded. Her book combines theory with first person case study accounts of 10 women who were suppressed, then fired. The result is a fresh, compelling argument that, despite claims to the contrary, the glass ceiling still exists. The patriarchy has simply devised subtle new ways to circumvent the legal remedies meant to crack through it. Reeves reviews statistics on the role of women in work, patterns of horizontal and vertical segregation, and differences in the experiences of men and women, then turns to an assessment of the theories of women's subordination. She profiles each of her 10 women subjects, explains their education, career trajectory, and accomplishments. Their experiences reveal various mechanisms through which the patriarchy operates to subordinate successful women, such as communication patterns among men that minimize women's contributions, withholding of information, denial of status to women, intimidation tactics, and the double bind that women find themselves in when they seek fair treatment. After analyzing the women's termination in detail, Reeves discusses how each woman's personality played a role in her termination. Reeves ends by drawing conclusions on what the present and future seem to hold for women's progress in organizations, and particularly in publicly held corporations.

"This well-written book covers more than its title implies. Reeves (Univ. of Georgia) relates the stories of ten women to describe the process of terminating middle- or upper-management women and to discuss gender discrimination and reasons for its continuance. Almost all the women profiled are white, English, and worked in the UK. Reeves draws on literature from both the UK and US, and the incidents she relates are recognizable in a US context. The ten careers she describes reveal how successful women are disparaged, relieved of responsibility, harassed, and finally let go. Their experiences also illuminate the careers of other women—those who crack the glass ceiling, leave voluntarily, or plateau. These accounts are relevant to all groups different from the dominant, white male leadership. Of special interest is a chapter explaining differences in female and male careers: patriarchy, human capital, Marxism, and dual systems. Reeves concludes that patriarchy is the underlying principle that explains the exclusion of women from upper-management levels. Apparently, discrimination in the UK has not decreased as much as in the US; a stronger patriarchal culture may be one reason. One may disagree with some of Reeves's analyses, but they are provocative nonetheless. Recommended for upper-division undergraduate through professional labor and women's studies collections."-January 2001

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"A powerful perspective that is helpful to those whose job responsibilities include assisting in the resolution of work place disputes."-Wendy Friede Ombudsperson American Express

About the Author MARTHA E. REEVES teaches marketing and women's studies at The University of Georgia. She has spent more than ten years working in a variety of management and marketing positions in the U.S. and United Kingdom.