



The Good Girls Revolt: How the Women of Newsweek Sued their Bosses and Changed the Workplace

Lynn Povich

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It was the 1960s—a time of economic boom and social strife. Young women poured into the workplace, but the “Help Wanted” ads were segregated by gender and the “Mad Men” office culture was rife with sexual stereotyping and discrimination.

Lynn Povich was one of the lucky ones, landing a job at *Newsweek*, renowned for its cutting-edge coverage of civil rights and the “Swinging Sixties.” Nora Ephron, Jane Bryant Quinn, Ellen Goodman, and Susan Brownmiller all started there as well. It was a top-notch job—for a girl—at an exciting place.

But it was a dead end. Women researchers sometimes became reporters, rarely writers, and never editors. Any aspiring female journalist was told, “If you want to be a writer, go somewhere else.”

On March 16, 1970, the day *Newsweek* published a cover story on the fledgling feminist movement entitled “Women in Revolt,” forty-six *Newsweek* women charged the magazine with discrimination in hiring and promotion. It was the first female class action lawsuit—the first by women journalists—and it inspired other women in the media to quickly follow suit.

Lynn Povich was one of the ringleaders. In *The Good Girls Revolt*, she evocatively tells the story of this dramatic turning point through the lives of several participants. With warmth, humor, and perspective, she shows how personal experiences and cultural shifts led a group of well-mannered, largely apolitical women, raised in the 1940s and 1950s, to challenge their bosses—and what happened after they did. For many, filing the suit was a radicalizing act that empowered them to “find themselves” and fight back. Others lost their way amid opportunities, pressures, discouragements, and hostilities they weren’t prepared to navigate.

The Good Girls Revolt also explores why changes in the law didn’t solve everything. Through the lives of young female journalists at *Newsweek* today, Lynn Povich shows what has—and hasn’t—changed in the workplace.

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