



# Ruth Bader Ginsburg



BY LYNN GILBERT

WOMEN OF WISDOM SERIES:  
PORTRAITS AND STORIES  
OF TRAILBLAZERS WHO  
TRANSFORMED OUR WORLD

Women of Wisdom  
Ruth Bader  
Ginsburg

*By*  
LYNN GILBERT

Excerpted from *Particular Passions: Talks With Women Who Have Shaped Our Times*

# Women of Wisdom

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# Ruth Bader Ginsburg

B. 1933, New York City – D. 2020, Washington, D.C.

*Ruth Bader Ginsburg was a lawyer, brilliant legal scholar, and professor, and in 1993, she became only the second woman to become a judge on the U.S. Supreme Court. She fought to bring equality into the lives of women and all marginalized groups.*

*Born to Jewish parents in Brooklyn, her father was an immigrant from Ukraine who worked in the garment industry. Ginsburg's mother, whose education was cut short at 15 so her parents could afford her brother's studies, was the driving influence on Ginsburg's education. Ginsburg was first in her class at Cornell University, Harvard Law School, and Columbia Law School, she was the first woman to serve on both the Columbia Law Review and the Harvard Law Review.*

*One of only nine women among more than 500 men, Ginsburg was asked by the dean of Harvard Law in 1956 why she felt entitled to take the "place of a man." In the workplace, she faced the same handicap, and was forced to take less prestigious jobs, was paid less, and was demoted for becoming pregnant.*

*Ginsburg was hired as a federal district court clerk only after one of her professors threatened to never send the judge another law clerk if he didn't hire her. However, she didn't fully recognize the barriers in her own life until she started researching the sex discrimination cases that trickled in when she became a professor at Rutgers Law School in 1963. From then on, the fight for gender equality became her focus.*

*Her marriage to her college sweetheart following graduation was a partnership that played a vital role in both of their lives. While they were in law school, her husband got a rare cancer, and she supported him by attending his classes, taking notes, and caring for their baby while doing her own work. Later, her husband,*

*a top tax law lawyer in the U.S., lobbied for her nomination on the Supreme Court. Throughout their lives, they provided each other with unwavering support.*

*For decades, she fought to bring equality into the lives of women and all marginalized groups, including the LGBTQ+ community and the poor.*

*Ginsburg's fight to end inequality inspired a nation and transformed the American landscape. Her dissents and majority opinions are crucial texts in the ongoing struggle for civil rights in the United States. She became a pop icon, known as The Notorious RBG.*

I WAS TEACHING LAW at Rutgers University in the late '60s when sex discrimination complaints began trickling into the New Jersey affiliate of the American Civil Liberties Union. Those complaints were referred to me because, well, sex discrimination was regarded as a woman's job. At the same time, my students wanted to put on a Law Day program about sex discrimination and the law, a subject I had not studied in a disciplined way at the time [1968–69]. I repaired to the library and spent the better part of a month reading every article written and every published federal case in the area since the nation's start. That was not an awesome task by any means. There was so little; it was amazing how little. In all that time, there wasn't as much as is produced in one year nowadays.

In the process, my own consciousness was awakened. I began to wonder, How have people been putting up with such arbitrary distinctions? How have I been putting up with them? I can't claim I suddenly saw a bright light one morning. It was a gradual process. Both the ACLU and my students prodded me to take an active part in the effort to eliminate senseless gender lines in the law. Once I became involved, I found the legal work fascinating and had high hopes for significant change in the next decade.

The turning-point Supreme Court decision came in November 1971 in *Reed v. Reed*. I was a principal author of the brief, but did not argue the case. *Reed* was a unanimous decision overturning a law that preferred men over women for appointments as administrators of decedents' estates. It was the first time the Supreme Court ever overturned a law in response to a woman's complaint of unfair sex-based discrimination. The ACLU was heartened and, to build on the *Reed* victory, its board voted to establish a Women's Rights Project.

The project's goal was to get decision makers to understand what sex stereotyping is, and how the notion that men are this way—frogs, snails, puppy dogs' tails—and women are that way—sugar, spice, everything nice—ends up hurting both sexes. Our idea was to try to find the right cases, bring them before the most sympathetic tribunals, and help develop Constitutional law in the gender classification area, step by step. It didn't work out exactly as planned, but on the whole, I think it worked out well.

A major problem was the impossibility of organizing a step-by-step litigation campaign immune from disturbance by others bringing up weak cases in the wrong order and at the wrong time. The ACLU doesn't control the civil rights litigation world, or even a small part of it. In the old days, when school desegregation law was in its infancy, Thurgood Marshall, then chief lawyer for the NAACP Legal Defense Fund, was able to manage the development of the litigation, building block by building block. The NAACP was then the only show in town. If you wanted representation in a school segregation case, you went to them. That's no longer true of Black civil rights cases, and it has never been true for women's rights cases. Since the women's rights litigation started, there were always lawyers somewhere who would take sex discrimination cases without thinking how they fit into a larger pattern. The courts needed to be educated. That requires patience; it may mean holding back a case until the way has been paved for it.

A good example of this education process is *Duren v. Missouri*, a case the Supreme Court decided in 1979. *Duren* involved automatic exemption of every woman from jury service. The court held the exemption unconstitutional. If *Duren* had been brought to the Supreme Court in 1972, the year after *Reed v. Reed*, it would have been a loser. Steps had to be taken in between.

One of these in-between steps was *Weinberger v. Wiesenfeld*, a case decided by the Supreme Court in 1975. The case involved a woman, Paula Wiesenfeld, who happened to be the principal wage earner in her family. She died in childbirth. Her husband, Stephen, wanted to take care of the baby and not work full-time until his son reached school age. If Stephen had been a widowed mother, then unquestionably he would have gotten Social Security benefits. Because he was a widowed father, the law provided no benefits for him. Yet Paula had paid the same Social Security tax as a man pays. The justices were able to see clearly in that case what sex stereotyping is.

*Wiesenfeld* set the stage for harder cases. One such case was *Califano v. Goldfarb*, decided by the Supreme Court in 1977. The issue was survivors' benefits for an elderly gentleman whose wage-earning wife had died. Mr. Goldfarb wanted to collect Social Security benefits under his wife's account because he was not independently covered by Social Security. His case was less sympathetic than Stephen Wiesenfeld's because there was no child in the picture.

But once you explained that the woman worker should get the same protection for her family as the male worker gets for his family, the courts could see the point. The Wiesenfeld and Goldfarb cases were brought by widowers, but the discrimination started with the women workers. In effect, Paula Wiesenfeld and Hannah Goldfarb were not getting paid what a man would be paid. They were not getting the same fringe benefits for their families. The Social Security Act, as passed in the 1930s, ranked women as dependents. The law protected a woman as an appendage of a man, but did not give her a full count when she was self-standing. If she was working, she was treated as a pin-money earner, not as a real breadwinner.

The very same preconception is reflected in the notion that women do not have to pay alimony. If the Supreme Court had gotten the alimony case *Orr v. Orr* in the early 1970s, the justices never would have understood it. By 1979, they did.

There are still some loose ends, confusion, and untidiness in sex discrimination law. The Equal Rights Amendment would help get us past the confusion, but the amendment is encountering a hard time. One reason is a lack of understanding—all the scare stories about what the ERA would do.

Any human rights guarantee that is phrased in grand, general terms is vulnerable to a scare campaign. That is what's happening to the Equal Rights Amendment. The Equal Rights Amendment is not comparable to the amendment that says eighteen-year-olds can vote. That amendment plainly means eighteen and not seventeen. Because the ERA reads, "Equality under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any state on account of sex," people can distort its meaning. They can say, well, the ERA means you can't have single-sex bathrooms; they can say all manner of similarly outlandish things. In its generality, the ERA resembles the Bill of Rights' guarantees of freedom of speech and religion. Think of the fear tactics that could be employed if the freedom of speech and religion provisions were before the public today. As to free speech, well, what about crying fire in a crowded theater when there is no flame? Freedom of religion? Does that mean we have to allow far-out sects to handle poisonous snakes at religious ceremonies, endangering children as well as adults in attendance?

Without the ERA, the controversy will drag on as case by case is reviewed, ideally by legislators, but if they default, then by judges. It will take a long time, but I am confident the equality advocates will emerge as the winners.

We believe in racial equality; we believe in free speech. We have recorded those beliefs in the Constitution, our fundamental instrument of government. We are advancing toward the belief that men and women should be seen as equal before the law. We should record that basic principle in the Constitution. We should do that in preference to reading the principle into Constitutional provisions drafted in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

We know the Founding Fathers in the eighteenth century did not think men and women were or should be equal before the law. During the nineteenth century, after the Civil War, there were still tremendous differences in the law's treatment of men and women. It was accepted that men should vote and women shouldn't vote. It's hard to read into provisions written over a century ago our modern concept that men and women should have equal opportunities, so far as government action is concerned. Yet the Supreme Court justices have been doing just that. They have done so because our Constitution is meant to survive through the ages; there must be some adaptation to changing times and conditions.

But it would be so much cleaner if the Constitution were amended to state the sex equality principle expressly. A case-by-case approach could achieve the same end, but not as solidly or securely. The same issue would have to be fought out again and again and again, in several states and up court ladders. It is a tedious, wearing process. I would much prefer that the society register its commitment to the equality of men and women before the law up front—that we say, where every nation can see it, right in our Constitution: Government shall not deny people equal rights on account of their sex.

When I graduated from law school in 1959, it was not possible to move legislators or judges toward recognition of a sex-equality principle. The idea was unfamiliar and therefore unacceptable.

I did not go into law with the purpose of becoming an advocate of equal rights. I became a lawyer for personal, selfish reasons. I thought I could do a lawyer's job better than any other. I have no talent in the arts, but I do write fairly well and analyze problems clearly. At Cornell, where I was an undergraduate, I was influenced particularly by a government professor, professor Robert Cushman. I studied with him and worked as his research assistant. That was in the mid-1950s, an interesting time, the heyday of McCarthyism. Cushman was a defender of our deep-seated national values: freedom of thought, speech, and press. He wasn't outspoken about it. He was a very gentle man. His own credentials were impeccable. But he could not tolerate threats to our American way, whether they came from the Left or from the Right. The McCarthy era was a time when courageous lawyers were using their legal training in support of the right to think and speak freely. That a lawyer could do something that was personally satisfying and at the same time work to preserve the values that have made this country great was an exciting prospect for me.

I didn't have difficulty being accepted at Harvard Law School, nor was I treated as a person of lesser worth, but my experience in law school may have been deceptive in that it didn't prepare me for the job market as it then was.

I started law school in 1956, one of nine women in an entering class of over five hundred. We wondered why there were only nine, and asked a faculty member; he was a good friend, his wife was a lawyer. "Is it discrimination?" we inquired. "Certainly not," he said. "From the large gray middle of the applicant pile, we try to take people who have something unusual, something different about them. If you are a bull fiddle player, for example, you would get a plus, and if you're a woman, you would get a plus." If that suggested there was no discrimination in admission, it also suggested that women in the law were strange, unusual.

The small number of women in law school in the 1950s was largely a result of self-selection; women knew that opportunities to make a living as lawyers were limited for them. So many places were closed to women in those days. The most prestigious clerkships with judges were not open to women. Some of our most distinguished jurists simply refused to interview a female. No U.S. Attorney's office would hire a woman as a

prosecutor. U.S. Attorneys were beginning to hire women for civil litigation, but not for criminal cases. That seemed to me ironic. The excuse was women are too soft, they can't handle hardened criminal types. If you looked at the other side of the street to see who was defending indigent defendants, it was Legal Aid. Legal Aid was full of women. The relationship between the defendant and the defense lawyer is much closer than that between the prosecutor and the accused. So, it wasn't women's inability to deal with hardened criminals. Women did just that in Legal Aid, where lawyers tend to be paid less than they are in other legal jobs.

Why were there so few women in law school a generation ago? It was the sense that, well, I can go through three years of law school and then what? Who will hire me and how will I support myself?

I was aware of the limited opportunities to some extent when I entered law school. I was already married and had a child, and the response of my own family at the time was: Now she can do whatever she wants because she's got her man, so she will never starve. It was the tail end of the Korean War, and my husband went into the service after his first year of law school. I was with him in the military for two years. Our daughter was born during that time.

It wasn't as hard to go to law school, being married and with a child, as people think. I thought it would be an overwhelming burden, and when I became pregnant, I began to think I would never earn a law degree. Early on, my father-in-law said to me that if I decided not to go to law school because of this baby, that would be fine; no one would think the less of me for making that decision. But if I really wanted to be a lawyer, having a baby wouldn't stand in my way. I realized he was absolutely right, and I think he gave me sound advice for most things in life. If you want to do something badly enough, you find a way; somehow you manage.

In Cambridge, we found a New England grandmother type to be a babysitter for my daughter. She came in the morning, when I left for class, and stayed till four p.m. My husband and I have always shared the household chores, and he has always outrun me in the kitchen. He's a super chef and I'm, at best, a low pass as a cook.

My husband is my biggest supporter. That was certainly true my first year in law school. Like all first-year law students, I had concerns about how I was doing in relation to all those brilliant people. My husband told his classmates and mine, “My wife is going to be on the [Harvard] Law Review.” Colleagues told me later they thought he lacked judgment, saying such a thing about a woman who didn’t look particularly impressive. But that’s the way he was, in law school and in most stages of our life after that.

The women in law school were more conspicuous than the men. If you were a male law student, you could blend into the crowd, and if you weren’t so well prepared, you could hide from the professor’s view on a back bench. But if you were one of two women in a section, you felt—and this was not paranoia—that you were in plain view, not only in the eye of the instructor, but also in full vision of your classmates. You were on your guard in a way that women law students today are not when there are over a hundred in each class. It wasn’t harassment as much as it was fun and games: Let’s call on the woman for comic relief. Most of the professors didn’t do that, but some of them did, and they did it pointedly.

There were other petty annoyances. At that time, Harvard kept one room in the Lamont Library closed to women. It was symbolic of the old days, but it happened to be the old periodical room, and I had to check a reference in an old periodical for the Law Review. I went over there rather late at night. The man at the door barred my way. I said, “Well, I’ll stand at the door and you bring me the magazine and I’ll check the reference.” He wouldn’t do it. I had to call back the Law Review and say, “You have to send a man for this job.” It was a trivial thing, as were other encounters of a similar kind at law school. There was no outrageous discrimination, but an accumulation of small instances.

I transferred to Columbia Law School at the end of my second year. I graduated in 1959, tied for first in my class. I signed up for all the law firm interviews I could get, but no one offered me a job. I think a combination of factors contributed to this. In the ’50s, the traditional law firms were just beginning to turn around on hiring Jews. In the ’40s, it was very difficult for a Jew to be hired in one of the well-established law firms. They had just gotten over that form of discrimination. But to be a woman, a Jew, and a mother to boot, that combination was a bit much. Probably motherhood was the major impediment. The fear was I would not be able to devote my full mind and time to a law job.

I ended up clerking for a distinguished federal district court judge, a man I deeply admire, whose friendship I cherish to this day. Another very dear friend, then a teacher of mine, told me years later that he had spent quite some time persuading the judge to hire me, assuring him that I wouldn't be calling or running home constantly to attend to my then-four-year-old child. At the time, my reaction was to prove that motherhood posed no problem at all. I worked probably harder than any other law clerk in the building, stayed late whenever it was necessary, sometimes when it wasn't necessary, came in Saturdays, and brought work home.

After the clerkship, and based on a high recommendation from the judge, I got a number of law firm invitations.

But instead, I came to Columbia and worked on the International Procedure Project for the next two years. I did that for a few reasons, some clear to me then, others probably locked in my subconscious. One reason was the opportunity to write a book. The idea that I would have something of my own between hard covers was tremendously appealing. Another attractive feature was going off to a foreign land I knew nothing about and being wholly on my own. The book was about the Swedish judicial system. I was tutored in Swedish for several months, then went abroad for two separate stays—the first, four months, and the second, two months. For the first stay, I departed alone. My daughter, who was turning seven, joined me a few weeks later at the close of first grade, and my husband joined us for his vacation. The next year, I waited until my child finished the school year and we traveled to Sweden together. Lund University, where I did much of my work, had a fine daycare center for children of students and faculty, just an excellent place. That kind of all-day center was just about unknown in the United States then.

After the Columbia project, I started teaching at Rutgers. A teacher of procedure at Rutgers was leaving to become dean of the Howard Law School. He was a Black man. Not only did Rutgers have a Black man on the faculty, it also had a woman, and she had smoothed the path for me by the excellence of her performance. That was in 1963. It was extraordinary for a law school then to have even one woman as a full-time teacher.

Women did not begin to appear in law school in numbers until the late 1960s. The law schools were concerned that with the heightened Vietnam War draft calls, a considerable number of men might not show up. They began to accept more women and to make it known that women were genuinely welcome at law school. The big change came in 1970, when enrollment by women took off. Across the country, women are now over one-fourth of all law students, and the percentage is higher at some schools. Cardozo Law School in New York, which is part of Yeshiva University, has close to fifty percent women; NYU, close to forty percent; Columbia, about a third.

I found I liked teaching. I liked the sense of being my own boss. I had the good fortune not only to teach one of the subjects I wanted to teach, but also to write about what interested me. That was different from a law firm where the notion of the hired gun is true to this extent: You have a client, he or she has a problem, and you work on that problem. There's a tremendous luxury in being a law teacher in that you can spend most of your time doing whatever interests you.

In teaching, it's very hard to be a devil's advocate. Sometimes, if I think that the students will have a knee-jerk reaction one way, I will deliberately present the other side as strongly as I can, without saying where I stand personally, then have the students defend their views.

But I don't pretend to be neutral on issues when I am not. I like the students to understand that most of us have a perspective—most thinking people do—but that it's important to disclose one's biases. I'm not trying to brainwash people, but I'm not going to present myself as neutral. I don't think my students have any doubt where I stand on the Bill of Rights.

I'm still involved in the ACLU's Women's Rights Project, now as a kind of grandmother. We have filed a friend-of-the-court brief with the Supreme Court for a case that's going to be decided this term. This case involves a workers' compensation law that provides benefits to a spouse when a man dies on the job, but not when a woman suffers a fatal industrial accident. The same principle is at stake as the one involved in 1973, 1974, 1975, and 1977 cases. It's exciting to be able to use your professional tools to advance a cause you believe in.



# Author's Note

BY LYNN GILBERT

As the author of *Particular Passions*, I am updating what I feel has been overlooked. In 1981, when *Particular Passions* was first published, five years after its conception, it was presented as a book that would inspire. Almost half a century later, I realize this book is much more. It is a historic record of trailblazing women who shaped the American landscape.

A group of pioneering women in multiple disciplines emerged in the mid-1970s.

Some gained recognition and even fame. Others remained in the shadows but had an equal impact. Over time, women moved into the workforce and emerged in significant roles. It was no longer unusual.

We are moving backwards, unfortunately. Women are being stripped of their rights, even by the highest court.

There was no list of women of achievement in the mid-1970s. This book records, for the first time, these pioneers. Listen to their stories, struggles, and achievements in their own words.

Enjoy this Ruth Bader Ginsburg chapter.

*Lynn Gilbert*

APRIL 3, 2024

# Postface

BY LYNN GILBERT

In 1976, when I was asked to photograph Louise Nevelson for the Pace Gallery, I went to her studio to meet her and was dazzled. Her house on Spring Street was very spare but very ordered. One could see the disciplined structure that dictated the way she lives. Surrounded by the amazing work of her own hands, she created her own atmosphere, her own environment. That day, she had an extraordinary outfit on—a Chinese robe over an American couture gown. A silver African necklace around her neck, a black velvet riding hat, those clodhopper space shoes. The effect was bizarre, yet right. Feeling the tremendous energy and focus of her personality, I was deeply moved.

Back home after the session, I said to myself: There are other women like her who have created something extraordinary and enriched life for themselves and others. Who are they? How were they able to develop themselves and make their astonishing contributions to society? The idea of photographing them and doing brief profiles took form in my mind.

My first task was deciding whom I would include. *Who's Who* was the logical place to start, but I found that the entries only provided information on positions held and awards won; it was impossible to assess the real contributions and far-reaching effects of the subjects. I knew I was in for a lot

of research. Plunging in, I used the *Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature* and began reading any and every article on a woman or women I could lay my hands on. When an article mentioned a woman who I thought might be considered, I would follow up on that.

Eventually, I found lists of outstanding women that had been compiled in popular magazines, and realized that the lists themselves were new to arrive on the scene. Only in the early seventies did the almanacs, of which there are many, begin to compile lists of distinguished women. In the mid-1970s, *Fortune* magazine wrote its first full-scale article on women in finance and industry, followed by one in *BusinessWeek*. The most thoroughly researched list to appear in any of the women's magazines was published in 1971 by the *Ladies' Home Journal*. According to the author, the 75 Most Important Women were the “women who had made the greatest impact on our civilization within the last five years and would continue to affect us significantly for the next five years.” The author added that it is a “representative list that speaks highly for the quality of feminine leadership in America.” But it was interesting to see that the positions of a number of women on this list were predicated on their relationships to men of national or international importance. Included were

Rose Mary Woods, “Executive Secretary to President Nixon since he became senator,” Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, “widow of President Kennedy and wife of a Greek near-billionaire—the woman most other women would like to be,” and Rose Kennedy. I wanted my list, in contrast, to include only women whose contributions had come from their own energies and endeavors. My criterion would be women who had done pioneering work in their field that had significantly changed society and/or opened up a new field for women.

When I had exhausted the *Readers’ Guide*, I consulted experts in the fields of art, medicine, science, law, and so forth, and asked them for their recommendations. I finally created a master list of women, with a second column consisting of the writers, editors, and experts who could help me assess the subjects’ contributions. I decided that each subject would need at least three referrals by solid sources in order to be included.

Throughout the selection process, I tried to be receptive to the information I was being given. When I was compiling a list of Black women, for instance, the women who were repeatedly suggested to me were almost exclusively in the field of civil rights. I checked my own impulse to find a Black writer, a Black scientist. Any list is necessarily somewhat arbitrary. But by feeling my way, I tried to be true to the names that continued to emerge with the most insistence. I finally arrived at a list of over fifty women.

Several of the women, among them Marian Anderson, Martha Graham, Susan Sontag, and Susan Langer, who indisputably should have been included in such a book, preferred not to be. There were several others, including Jane Jacobs, the architect and city planner, whom I was not able to reach. Lillian Hellman agreed to be photographed for the book, but not interviewed. I photographed three women—Margaret Mead, Cecelia Payne-Gaposchkin, and Aileen Osborn Webb—who were not interviewed before their deaths. Dorothy Height and Dede Allen could not be included for reasons beyond our control. Therefore, the forty-six women included here do not represent a definitive list, but rather a sampling of the scope and significance of women’s contributions to American society over the last fifty years.

At this point, I envisioned the book as portraits of the women, each accompanied by a brief text. I hoped my photographs could portray each woman with dignity, and hoped to catch a gesture, a glint in the eye, or some small detail that would enable me to go beyond their public and sometimes well-known image and capture an essential inner quality. To put my subjects at ease during the photography sessions, I prepared by reading published interviews and profiles and their own books and articles, and as we talked, many of the women told me stories I had not seen in print. I went home and wrote down everything I could remember, but it was not long before I realized that these stories were more compelling than the primarily visual book

I had planned. I felt that if I could understand these women, how they function in our society, it would not only help me understand my own life, but perhaps help others.

I wanted the text accompanying the photographs to reflect the style of my portraits: to be revealing, yet written with honesty, dignity, and kindness. As the book evolved, I needed a writer who would go back to the women, gain their trust, listen to the stories I had heard, and go beyond. Again, I relied on research—interviews and profiles—to find a journalist with a sensibility compatible with mine.

*Particular Passions* turned into a collaboration when I read an interview of Elsa Peretti by

Gaylen Moore for the *New York Times Magazine*. I said to myself: This is the first writer of profiles who knows what a person is really about. We proceeded slowly and surely, coping with the difficult logistics of interviews, writing, and editing. This idea of mine took five years to fulfill, and with the collaboration of Gaylen Moore, it has resulted in a book far richer than any I could have imagined.

I hope that our book will not only add to the feminist literature of our time, but will inspire women everywhere to pursue their own particular passions.

# Acknowledgments

There are many people I wish to acknowledge for having made this book possible.

Thanks to Arne Glimcher, founder of the Pace Gallery, who entrusted me with photographing Louise Nevelson after I photographed his children. My experience with Nevelson was the pivotal moment that shaped the direction of my life and the inspiration for this book.

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Without the encouragement of my husband, Ronnie, our sons, Paul and George, and my beloved housekeeper, Lessie Freeman, I'm not sure I could have tolerated the endless roadblocks during the five years that it took to complete this book.

My aunt and uncle, Red and Pick Heller, jump-started the book by

arranging my first subjects.

To Gaylen Moore, my writer, I owe my deepest gratitude. After firing the first writer during a search that lasted a year and a half, I interviewed thirty writers before I found the person who would share my vision. I wanted the shared stories to be the basis of my book. Gaylen returned to interview and record their voices, to let you feel as if you were in each person's presence.

The editor, Carol Southern at Clarkson Potter, did a superb job. Her faith, and that of publisher Jane West, enabled me, against all odds, to get this book published. Anne Goldstein, assistant editor, was so moved by the book that it enabled her to leave publishing to follow her own "particular passion."

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and their friend Dick Brickner; Arthur Loeb of the Madison Avenue Bookshop; Harriet Lyons of *Ms.*; and Richard De Combray, who kept the project going when it might have come to a dead end.

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#### WOMEN'S STUDIES

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# Women of Wisdom Series

EXCERPTED FROM

*Particular Passions: Talks With Women Who Have Shaped Our Times*

BY LYNN GILBERT



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