



London Evening Standard Newspaper:

Stirring Thoughts From a Broad on Wall Street

by Joanna Coles in New York

I WENT to a lively dinner last week, held at the home of the Nobel Prize-winning economist Joe Stiglitz and his wife, Columbia professor Anya Schiffrin. The two hold regular, occasionally terrifying, dinner-salons in their grand 12th-floor apartment, with its spectacular view of the Hudson river.

The other diners are usually a combination of intense New York/Washington intellectuals and guests from the Far East. Halfway through the main course, Schiffrin bangs her fork on a glass and introduces a question that the rest of the table must then debate.

In recent months, obviously, we've argued about Iraq and the rise of China, but last week's dinner took a more discursive tone about the increasing number of women now running businesses in the world. One guest, Robert Friedman, the international editor of Fortune, pointed out that China is streaming female bosses faster than you can say China.com, and that with Anne Lauvergeon at Areva, a French woman now runs one of the world's most influential nuclear-power companies. But when it came to female execs in Britain, there was a lamentable silence. The table could immediately produce only two players, Marjorie Scardino and Rose Marie Bravo, the chief executives of Pearson and Burberry respectively - both of whom, of course, are American.

There's no easier way to understand why than by picking up a fascinating new book to be published next month that should be compulsory reading for all British schoolgirls. *More Than 85 Broads*, edited by Janet Hanson, is the collected testimonies from scores of women who have worked on Wall Street and gone on to greater things. The title is a play on Goldman Sachs's address here - 85 Broads Street - the name of the women's networking group Hanson founded for Wall Street sisters.

Most books about working women are as earnest as they are unreadable. What makes this one work is the sheer pleasure with which these women embrace their jobs and their power. "I was a Wall Street big hitter," roars Hanson at one point and you can almost feel her closing the deal on the page. She also has a Hollywood sense of humour: the book's opening paragraph describes her divorce from her first husband - a Goldman colleague. His response is to date younger women, hers is to start working weekends. Pretty soon she's his boss.

There's no time for hand-wringing. With or without kids, these women target their ambition, remain focused and are too busy having fun as players to feel any guilt. They have big egos, big salaries, big careers, big lives. What better role models could you find?

Joanna Coles is executive editor of US publication More.

To read more about *More Than 85 Broads* and to pre-order, please visit www.morethan85Broads.com.