

Women Who Dared: To Break All the Rules

Jeremy Scott

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Women have always done courageous, daring, and creative things, but their contributions have too long remained hidden. Jeremy Scott's *Women Who Dared* helps remedy this situation with brief biographies of six women who rebelled against social conventions and the stifling traditions of their times to create lasting change.

Charismatic, psychic, and beautiful, Victoria Woodhull rose up from a childhood of abject poverty and social ostracism to run for president of the United States; this was in 1870, when women had not yet won the vote. Called a "prostitute," a "shameless charlatan," and more, the presidential nominee was also recognized as a pioneer suffragist, banker, politician, and publisher—quite an achievement for someone who'd had a bare three years of schooling.

Less flamboyant but no less dedicated to her cause, Mary Wollstonecraft called for female independence and equality with her manifesto, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*. Ahead of her time, she was mocked and reviled for her ideas and doubtless would be grieved to know that, even today, men still make most of the rules.

Scott also features America's first female preacher, Aimee Semple McPherson, whose emotion-filled meetings gathered people in the tens of thousands; Edwina Mountbatten, a narcissistic social climber whose epiphany during the Blitz of London moved her to save countless lives; Margaret Argyll, whose rebellion against tradition paved the way for the attitudes of the 1960s; and Coco Chanel, who came from nothing yet built and ruled a fashion empire that affected not just what women wore but how they saw themselves and their roles in the world.

Bold, raunchy, and colorful, Scott's book reveals what the history books leave out, including intimate details of the hidden and public scandals that marked the lives of these outspoken women, and honors them for their courage, determination, and commitment to change.

KRISTINE MORRIS (March/April 2019)

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