

from selecting their resources to organising and exploiting them, rather than diminishing the team's power by separations based on functions such as electronic information provision.

On the whole this is not a simple read, as it introduces a lot of management theory, but it offers guidance through a complex area and the author's style is pleasantly readable. There are a few areas detracting from its usefulness. Some of the figures are well explained in the accompanying text, but unfortunately not all. It seems odd that some chapters have a summary or conclusion at the end and others do not utilise this helpful resource. Some parts would benefit from greater use of a checklist, a bullet point approach or recap after explanations. The bibliography has been updated since the first edition and covers a comprehensive group of mainly general change management texts. Omitting the page numbers from citations to journal articles generates unnecessary work for anyone wishing to locate copies, particularly through inter-library loans. For ease of use in relocating some of the practical lists at a later date, greater use could have been made of bold headings or separate boxes for checklists.

It is useful to have an introduction to change management specifically for information services, rather than adapting something from a different environment. However, it is strange not to find greater mention of knowledge management amongst the many other management theories discussed, and the role of professional support lawyers would have helped to make this more relevant for the law firm sector librarians, or could have formed a case study from a different sector to widen readership appeal. This book offers practical advice for managers leading a change process and, in particular, the chapter on processes and models could be kept open on the manager's desk to refer back to at each stage from starting point to creating and implementing a plan.

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MOSSMAN, M. *The First Women Lawyers: a Comparative Study of Gender, Law and the Legal Professions*. Portland, OR: Hart Publishing, 2006. ISBN-13: 978-1-84113-590-8 (pbk.): £25.00. xi, 329 p.

This book discusses the lives, experiences and strategies of the first women to seek admission to the exclusively male dominated legal profession in six jurisdictions of the world: the United States of America, Canada, Britain, New Zealand, India and Europe. A chapter is devoted to each jurisdiction.

In the introductory chapter of the book, Mossman introduces the history of women lawyers and the impact

of gender on their careers, clearly distinguishing and broadly discussing the gender challenges experienced in all six jurisdictions and the strategies applied by the women to overcome their circumstances. She gives an in-depth background history of each of these pioneering women of their times and, in describing their various experiences, she analyses and compares the experiences of women trying to enter other male dominated professions, such as medicine. She provides a comparative analysis of the meaning of the word "lawyer" and the status and nature of their work in all six jurisdictions. Mossman notes that in three of the jurisdictions, women were admitted to the legal profession without having to initiate any legal battle: Eliza Orme (Britain), Ethel Benjamin (New Zealand) and Cornelia Sorabji (India). In these countries, legislation was already in place, although they still faced other challenges.

Chapter One discusses the struggles of women in the United States of America. Women in this jurisdiction were the first to apply for admission to the bar three decades before women in other common law jurisdictions. The chapter expatiates upon and discusses the significance of the *Seneca Falls Declaration of 1848* and the Equity Club, which protested against the unjust exclusion of women from certain professions and trades. It was further noted that legal opinions and arguments from the United States were later adopted in various litigations in other parts of the world.

Canada, in Chapter Two, is described as one of the jurisdictions where women did not begin to study or practice law until almost the end of the nineteenth century, and this occurred without much struggle and opposition when compared to the United States. Mossman identifies one of the reasons for women's entry into the legal profession as the "progressive reform impulse that gripped North America between the years 1880 and 1920", as well as the success of the women's suffrage movement.

In Chapter Three, Mossman describes how "Parliament forced the way open" in Britain to allow women to become solicitors, when the *Sex Discrimination (Removal) Act 1919* was enacted. Prior to this, women were precluded from the interpretation of the word "persons" and so university education and the legal profession were exclusively reserved for men. This Chapter discusses the challenges British women encountered in order to be admitted to the "gentleman's profession". Eliza Orme, described as "England's first and only female lawyer", was a reformist who often criticised government opinion in her writings. She attended University College London and survived with the understanding that a degree was not required to practice law. In Scotland, Margaret Hall challenged the refusal of her application to the Society of Law Agents on the grounds that "persons" were permitted to become law agents under the statute. The courts, however, interpreted the usage of the word to

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customarily mean “male persons”. Similarly Bertha Cave’s application to Gray’s Inn was declined on the grounds that “there was no precedent for ladies being called to the English Bar and the tribunal was unwilling to create such precedent”.

In New Zealand, the circumstances that heralded the admission of women into the legal profession is similar to that of Canada, and statutes were enacted to permit women to practice law two decades before the British Parliament. Laws were enacted in the late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century in New Zealand and most Australian states, to enable women to become members of the legal profession. Chapter Four discusses the gender challenges and experiences of Ethel Benjamin, the first young female and independent lawyer in New Zealand. Benjamin was an assertive woman who had chosen to enter the legal profession in order to achieve economic prosperity. However, she faced obstacles right from the start. At university she was denied access to the Supreme Court Library in Dunedin in 1895, simply because there was “no rule applicable to [her] case”. This was to ensure that women did not have any contact with male students! Benjamin eventually succeeded in gaining admission to the New Zealand bar in 1897 after suffrage was achieved and statutes were passed permitting women to enter the legal profession.

In India, following a court decision in Poona in 1896, the word “persons” was interpreted by the judge to recognize the right of a woman to provide legal representation to others. In Chapter Five, Mossman gives a vivid account of the life story and challenges faced by Cornelia Sorabji, the British-trained Indian woman, who paved the way for female lawyers in that jurisdiction. After completing her BCL studies at Oxford University and months of practical work in Britain, Sorabji returned to India to practice law and chose to represent under-privileged people, such as women in purdah. She went on to pursue an LLB at Bombay University, which she

successfully completed and which made her eligible to be called to the Indian bar. However, Sorabji’s application for formal admission to the bar was rejected by the High Court of Bombay, solely because she was a woman.

In Chapter Six, Mossman discusses the situation in a number of European jurisdictions, including Belgium, France and Italy. Much reference is made to the significant role of Louis Frank, a Belgian lawyer, who challenged the exclusion of women from the bar in several European countries. In a number of them, university courses were open to women, but they were not yet eligible for admission to the bar until the intervention of new legislation changed the process.

The concluding chapter reflects on the relationship between gender and legal professionalism, and compares the various patterns of events in the lives of these pioneering women. Despite the lack of an original assessment of their lives, Mossman concluded that their effort in challenging male exclusivity in the legal profession is “profoundly significant for contemporary women lawyers”.

The book has an extensive and well prepared bibliography and includes portraits of the various women lawyers mentioned and some of their letters. It is essential reading for anyone working on the history of women’s equality and comparative gender studies, but I would also recommend it to foreign, comparative and international librarians. An account of the experiences of women in other jurisdictions of the world will be of interest in a future edition of this work.

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