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Down With Stereotypes

By JACKIE KLEIN

SOUTHFIELD
"I am woman, hear me roar," may be the theme song of the lady librarians. But Dr. Patricia Carrigan prefers: "I'm a person, see me perform."

When your job is to break down stereotypes, says the attractive executive, it's important to avoid being a stereotype yourself. And Dr. Carrigan definitely isn't a carbon copy.

She's manager of human resource utilization for Bendix Research Corp. in Southfield, has a BA in education, two masters degrees and a doctorate in psychology.

The first female member of Michigan State University's board of trustees in 15 years, before coming to Bendix in October Dr. Carrigan was director of resources and evaluation for Ann Arbor School District.

The only woman vice manager at Bendix, Dr. Carrigan has duties that are two-fold. She's involved in gearing personnel for high level positions and maximum potential and productivity. The other facet is placement of women and minorities.

"Business and industry haven't made full use of women but are increasingly recognizing that 'person power' requires that every resource be fully tapped."

The problem, says Dr. Carrigan, is motivating women to steer away from traditional employment patterns and to explore new horizons. At Bendix, the focus is on career awareness and identifying women who are capable of moving into professional slots.

She doesn't minimize the importance of secretaries, but believes many have the skills or could be trained to take advantage of better opportunities within the organization. "The important thing is break down the differences between male and female in industry. Many people assume that because I'm a woman I must be a secretary. Others address letters to Mr. P.M. Carrigan, associating management with the male stereotype."

"At Bendix, we talk about skills and then look for women candidates. Jobs aren't created simply for women to fill. Many colleges tend to guide females along certain educational paths. Our whole society casts stereotypes on the job market for women."

"When kids are small, they see dad going to the office. Mom stays in the kitchen or she's a nurse or school teacher. Many well educated women lack specific training in business or industry. At Bendix, we're pushing hard to break down the channels that separate men and women."



'You can call me Mrs., Ms., or Dr. Just don't call me Mr.' --Patricia Carrigan.

Dr. Carrigan believes the women's liberation movement, affirmative action by the federal and state governments, and manual training in high schools have heightened sensitivity and brought many issues to the forefront.

"Many industries are actively engaged in a search for women and minority groups. Previously, minority women lacked a specific category and got lost in the shuffle. But that has changed perceptively in the last five years. Legislation and the black movement have brought social changes. Democracy is fine, but it's a slow process."

"To make a strong, earnest effort and fail doesn't solve the problems. At the university level, some hard questions are raised concerning documentation of effort."

The absence of role models makes it difficult for women to take advantage of certain opportunities in education, says Dr. Carrigan.

"If a woman sees another woman is dean of a college, she's encouraged. If she sees only men in that role, she will regard it as a career not to pursue."

"Women professionals are limited to certain areas and are vastly outnumbered by men in administrative positions. Women look at my position as a line manager and wonder if there is a place for them in a world they never thought of entering."

Opportunities are limited by talent and capabilities, not sex, says Dr. Carrigan. "When I was in public education, I operated under a committee which made slow decisions. Here I'm free to make my own decisions. If

they're bad ones, they reflect on me, not a committee.

"Women must be accepted on the basis of their skills. The initial reaction to a female in industry may be negative, but if you define your responsibilities and carry them out effectively, the negative attitudes change."

Women are generally paid less for equal jobs with equal backgrounds than men, says Dr. Carrigan. But the universities are taking positive steps to correct the discrepancies by publishing salary statistics.

Universities are conducting lifelong education programs to make it a little easier for women in their 40s and 50s to enter new careers. But with technological changes, many older women are out of the labor market because their skills have become rusty.

"There has been increasing pressure to get female representation on various boards of directors, it's easier to get one than two and that's tokenism. In the educational community, the barriers have been broken."

Even with top level positions opening to women, many women are handicapped by constraints such as traveling on the job or the need for manual strength. But there are similar constraints upon men, Dr. Carrigan maintains.

Faced with the existing unemployment picture and the energy crisis, women may be penalized less than men, says Dr. Carrigan. "Business is making a concerted effort to attract women. Companies like Bendix recognize the demands for manpower can't be met if women resources aren't tapped."

"Women have options. If they choose one and examine others, they are expressing themselves as comfortable individuals. Men are handicapped by the sex role differences. Expectations of men can make them uncomfortable. You've got to think of everyone as people."

Dr. Carrigan isn't a militant feminist but has respect for both the women's and minorities' movements.

"You can call me Mrs., Ms., or Dr. Just don't call me Mr."

Lynn Battah Married

Lynn Battah, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Abe Battah of Lynn Avenue, Westland, became the bride of Cpl. Harold A. Poirier in a recent afternoon ceremony at St. Mary Catholic Church in Wayne.

The bridegroom is the son of Mrs. Paul Poirier of Wayne, formerly of Garden City, and the late Mr. Poirier. The Rev. Raymond J. Sayers officiated.

Given in marriage by her father, the bride wore a crystal choker with matching lace trimming the fitted bodice and full skirt. Matching lace fashioned her full-length veil.

Seven attendants wore sheer white gowns in rainbow pastels.

Tana Arnold of Westland was maid of honor, and the bridesmaids were Yolande Battah, the bride's sister, Kim Battah of Garden City; her sister-in-law, Eleanor Poirier of Plymouth, sister of the bridegroom and Pam Straub of Plymouth. Michelle Honretta of Washington, Mich., cousin of the bride,

was junior bridesmaid and the bridegroom's niece, Karen Van Hove of Garden City, was flower girl.

Gary Poirier of Southgate was best man for his brother and two other brothers, Herbert Poirier of Detroit and Paul Poirier of Taylor, were among the ushers. Also seating the guests were Roger Poirier of Plymouth, the bridegroom's brother-in-law, Chuck Staub of Plymouth, and Danny Kraft of Livonia and Roger Van Hove of Garden City, the bridegroom's nephews.

The new Mrs. Poirier graduated from John Glenn High School in 1974 and her husband is a graduate of Garden City East High School.

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Brian Kraft of Livonia was ring bearer.

The newlyweds greeted 150 guests who came to their reception in the immaculate Conception, K. of C. Hall in Garden City.

They will make their home in Westminister, Calif., while the bridegroom is stationed with the U.S. Marine Corps at Seal Beach, Calif.

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MR. AND MRS. OTTO SCHAEFER

60 Years For Schaefers

Mr. and Mrs. Otto Schaefer of Redford Township celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary with a family dinner Thursday, Dec. 27.

Married in Detroit in 1913, they have lived in this area during all their wedded life. Mr. Schaefer, a native of Farmington, Mo., is a retired Ford Motor Co. worker. His wife was born in Detroit.

They have three daughters, Mrs. Noreen Shreve of Redford Township, Mrs. Delores Murray of Milford and Cedar Springs, Fla., and Mrs. Shirley Watts of Farmington. There are seven grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.