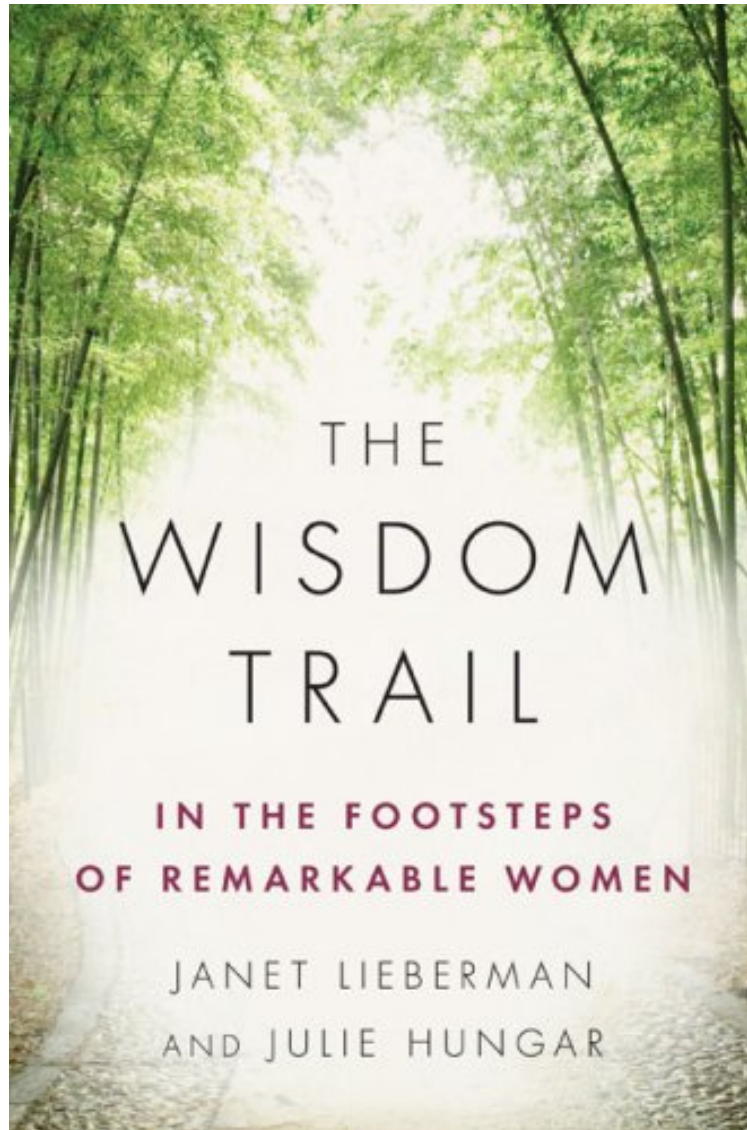


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The Wisdom Trail: In the Footsteps of Remarkable Women

Janet Lieberman, Julie Hungar
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Janet Lieberman, Julie Hungar : The Wisdom Trail: In the Footsteps of Remarkable Women before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Wisdom Trail: In the Footsteps of Remarkable Women:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Walking Along the Wisdom Trail With Other Women By Marjorie G. Ando After hearing a talk by author, Julie Hungar, I picked up "The Wisdom Trail". Julie is co-author of two books written with Janet Lieberman, both of them trail blazers in education who have left their own footprints on the path. Julie became an early woman member of The Rotary Club and is Vice Chancellor Emeritus of Seattle Community

Colleges. Janet Lieberman, has written two books on creating education pathways and is the winner of the Charles A. Dana Award for Innovation in Higher Education. Their insight into the lives of other women now in their 70's and 80's was the main key in being able to thoughtfully interview and write an inspirational interpretation of what the women faced in lives filled with and without husbands and families. The women's life roles have defined their careers as they have faced choices and their commitment to society. Not seeing themselves as exceptional women, they have received recognition for their many endeavors as they grew in wisdom. A few of Julie's favorite women that they interviewed were the following: Jean Ehrlichman, a fine pianist, who used an appreciation of music for the benefit of children, working both Washington, D.C. and Seattle, WA, to inspire children of all backgrounds. The programs are continuing to this day. Elaine Ishikawa Hayes, interred at Tule Lake, California, during WWII, who became a nurse and worked to start all-day care centers in Seattle. Ruth Lubic, still a midwife at age 82, started and continues a birthing center in MacArthur Center in DC. where she works with prenatal education for pregnant women. Dr. Claudia Thomas, who fought for equality for administrative applicants in the Kent, WA schools. She helped to start the City of Lakewood, WA, through her good works. This book serves an inspiration and incentive for women of all ages to reach out to the world around them with their expertise and growing knowledge. 5 of 5 people found the following review helpful. Inspirational Read By M. Brashear The Wisdom Trail is an inspirational read. It tells the story of 22 women born before or during the Great Depression. These women grew up in a time when society had low expectations for women; those who attended college usually went to find husbands. This book details their struggles and how they overcame obstacles to become well-respected, productive, and committed leaders in their communities and/or fields. It certainly puts some of the day to day struggles women face today into perspective.

An invitation to eavesdrop on a remarkable group of women who in their eighth and ninth decades reflect with candor and insight on the common threads in their well-lived lives The Wisdom Trail follows the life trajectories of extraordinary women, now in their seventies and eighties, who share to a remarkable extent a set of qualities that produced their successful lives. The vital women whose voices are captured in this book look back with well-earned perspective on the crises and opportunities, the decisions and accidents that marked their varied but ultimately satisfying paths. In listening to the lively and candid recollections of these women, Janet Lieberman and Julie Hungar offer stories that have value for women and men alike. From the heyday of Good Housekeeping-the era of the silent majority-to World War II, when the absence of men at home set a new measure of independence for women, through the sexual revolution and the civil rights and women's movements, these women have accumulated powerful stories that address the essential facets of women's lives: family, work, and love. As Lieberman and Hungar lead readers along The Wisdom Trail, they identify a set of characteristics these women share that has relevance for men and women of all generations, and which make them worth pondering and reflecting on today. Flexible pragmatism gave them the ability to maneuver their way around constraints that at the time appeared insurmountable. Deep personal courage enabled them to leap into risky personal career decisions and face down bias at home and in the workplace. All of them displayed the love and care to form and nourish deeply satisfying relationships. Their capstone quality was a lifetime commitment to serving the community and the world beyond. The Wisdom Trail is a journey into a world where women share their triumphs and their tragedies with equal parts generosity and instruction. It is also an examination of the arc of American life-from hardship to boon years-and the effect that has had on the character of women and their families. The value of the lessons contained in The Wisdom Trail is perhaps never more useful than it is today as women continue to struggle with balancing work and home and all Americans face the challenge of doing more with less.

About the Author Janet Lieberman is a psychologist and award-winning educator. Among the numerous awards she has received for her dedication to creating opportunities for the underserved are the Charles A. Dana Award in Higher Education and the McGraw-Hill Prize in Education. She currently teaches at LaGuardia Community College in New York City. Julie Hungar is vice chancellor emeritus of the Seattle community colleges. She is a consultant in strategic planning for higher education and is currently engaged in a study of single-sex education in middle schools. From The Washington Post From The Washington Post's Book World/washingtonpost.com ed by Carolyn See For readers interested in history more than prose style, this book might turn out to be a remarkable experience. But those who care about language and clarity of thought a little will be sent yapping across the room in exasperation. The women you can catch the barest glimpse of behind the authors' grant-babble mush really do seem to be worth close attention. If they'd only been allowed by Janet Lieberman and Julie Hungar to come out and say hello, this book could have been a milestone in the writing about pre-feminists. But sadly, "The Wisdom Trail" is a disappointing reflection on a generation of women that is fast fading from our consciousness. More than 20 women are described here -- you can't say they're profiled -- ranging in age from 73 to 90. They are part of what the authors refer to as the "hinge generation," that group of women who came to young adulthood during World War II and the '50s. These women were still stirring up martinis for their husbands when they came home from work, but once their children were in school, they quietly slid out of the house because they were bored stiff or isolated unto death. They had to get out, and they

did so in myriad, uncharted, innovative ways. But we only learn about that indirectly. "It was important -- it still is, in fact -- for women not to appear too ambitious," the authors write. This sentence clearly marks them as members of the generation they write about, because many, if not most American women in the present day would say, no, women can do anything that a man can do: run a business, go off to war, run for public office, go to law or medical school. And yet . . . and yet . . . women of a certain age know that if you're a female and appear to be "too ambitious," you may succeed, but you'll make yourself a target as tempting and easy-to-hit as a barn door. Example: Hillary Clinton. These "hinge generation" women couldn't imagine doing anything remotely like that. Their world, their *donne*, was marriage and their children. Or, if they were unmarried, respectable spinsterhood. The authors write repeatedly that these women were following "the Wisdom Trail," which -- to this reader at least -- implies that they were using wisdom in what they were doing. But the book's introduction contradicts that hypothesis over and over again: "They do not see themselves as exceptional," the authors write. "They were not conscious of charting a remarkable course as they did it." Or, "Most did not have a vision of what they would do." Or, "Few of them even had a sense that there was another goal for which they could plan." Or, "Few Wisdom Trail women had high expectations." Or, "These women didn't set out to break down barriers, nor did they have a specific alternative to the normal pattern in mind." That sounds a lot less like wisdom to me than instinct, intuition, desperate yearning. But no, according to these authors, it's that old "Wisdom Trail," a phrase used too often here. We are reminded that many of these women couldn't take the chance of displeasing their spouses: "She could have had a successful career if she had chosen to," the authors write of one woman. "But when she began to achieve success she realized that her work was affecting her home life: she also did not want to compete with her husband. She made a conscious decision not to pursue a career." Other women took very low, entry-level jobs so as not to scare their spouses unduly. Still others, as graduate students, endured the admonitions that their studying hogged a place that rightfully belonged to a deserving male student. Sometimes the women heeded that warning, sometimes not. Some women smuggled money from stingy husbands to finance their own charity work. One woman remembers wistfully that she earned a P.H.T degree, for "Push Husband Through." These women worked desperately hard and arguably opened the door for the feminists to come, but they didn't get the credit. (They couldn't usually get a credit card either or buy a home in their own name.) But do you notice the women themselves don't get to do the talking here? It's just the authors blabbing on. It would have been great to hear from the subjects in their own words, but those quotes are very, very few and far between. Instead, these women are summed up in sappy generalities that might have come from a generic letter of recommendation, or some weird grant application, or even Match.com. "Selma has a warm personality and the trace of a Southern accent, which adds to her charm. Her simple manner belies the depth of her intelligence. Although she has known suffering, her spirit of adventure has not dimmed. She is empathetic and has a gift for friendship. These traits make her an ideal source of inspiration for aspiring artists." The whole book is like this. The authors have collected a treasure trove of unheeded, almost-forgotten pre-feminists and managed to add one last insult to injury: talking for them, once again depriving them of any authentic voice. Copyright 2009, The Washington Post. All Rights Reserved.