

BOOK REVIEWS

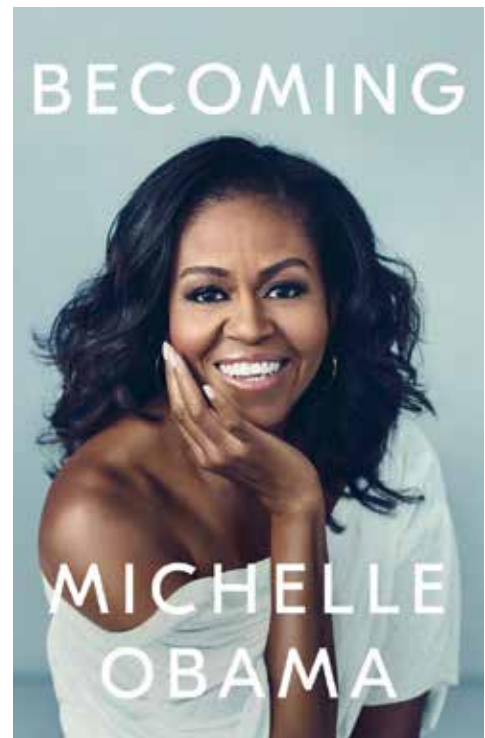
TITLE: BECOMING

AUTHOR: MICHELLE OBAMA

DATE OF PUBLICATION: 13 /11/ 2018

PUBLISHER: CROWN

REVIEWER: BELINDA KYOMUHENDO



I'd been lucky to have parents, teachers, and mentors who'd fed me with a consistent, simple message: You matter. As an adult, I wanted to pass those words to a new generation.

It's not hard to understand why Michelle Obama's *Becoming* became the fastest-selling book of 2018. One page in, and you find yourself wondering how you could feel such a deep connection to the former First Lady without ever being blessed with her presence beyond a TV screen. Or, in this case, a 448-page memoir.

While many of the 45 First Ladies who preceded her were the daughters of wealthy merchants (Edith Roosevelt), bankers (Ida McKinley), judges (Helen Taft) and slaveholders (Martha Washington and Julia Grant), Michelle Obama was a descendant of the very caste of people that some of the previous first ladies had owned. She knew, as she held the Lincoln Bible at her husband's swearing-in, that she would be held to a different standard from that moment forward, her every gesture scrutinised. "If there was a

presumed grace assigned to my white predecessors," she writes, "I knew it was not likely to be the same for me. ... My grace would need to be earned." She adds, "I stood at the foot of the mountain, knowing I'd need to climb my way into favour."

She writes in the confident cadence we have come to recognise from her campaign speeches, looking back at her youth from within the aspiring heart of a daughter of South Side Chicago. Over and over, from high school to the White House, she asks, "Am I good enough?"

In finally telling her story, Obama is doing several things with this book. She is taking the world by the hand on an intimate tour of everyday African-American life and ambition, while recounting her rise from modest origins to the closest this country has to nobility. She writes about the tension women face in a world that speaks of gender equality but in which women still bear the greater burdens of balancing career and family, even with a forward-thinking husband like Barack Obama. And she is reminding

readers that black women, like any other group, experience the heartbreak of infertility, as she describes the challenges she and her husband confronted in order to become parents.

The book is about a woman who ultimately transcended her worries to become one of the most popular First Ladies in history. As a measure of the public's adoration, her memoir sold more than 1.4 million copies in its first week and quickly became the best-selling book of 2018.

Perhaps it's because she details her journey to the White House in such a real, intimate way – teaching us many lessons that we will always carry with us, like the uselessness of asking someone what they want to be when they grow up (we play many roles throughout our lives, which makes it impossible to choose just one thing) and the importance of consistently reminding ourselves that our voices matter.

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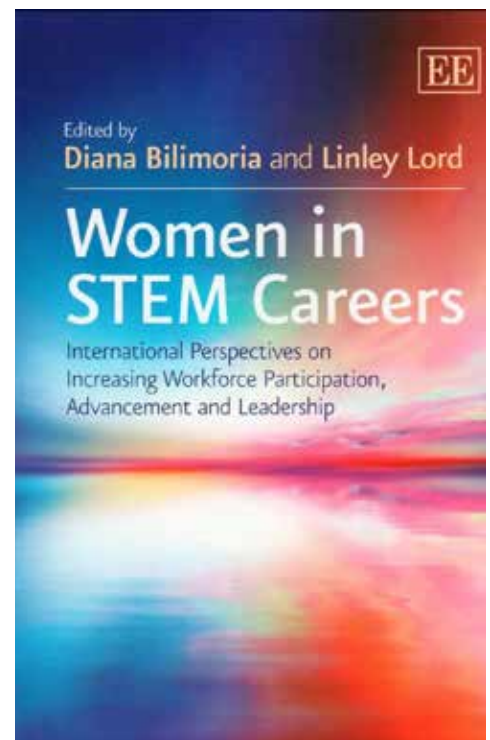
TITLE: WOMEN IN STEM CAREERS

EDITORS: DIANA BILIMORIA &
LINLEY LORD

YEAR : 2014

PUBLISHER: CHELTENHAM &
UK EDWARD ELGAR

REVIEWER: BELINDA KYOMUHENDO



The fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) continually bring innovation and improvement to our daily lives, besides offering the potential for the expansion of business and employment. Science and technology are applied to discover new opportunities and solve problems, and to shape the formation, design and development of new products and innovative production processes. Advanced knowledge and skills in science and technology offer distinct advantages to compete and win in today's fast-paced global business environment.

With this increasing importance of science and technology for global economic competitiveness and growth, considerable attention is being paid to these industries as career choices for women and men. Individuals with STEM expertise have become critical for the success of both the industrial and academic sectors as the expansion

of the capacity for innovation hinges on their talents.

Clearly, the full participation of women and men in STEM workforces is necessary to solidify and grow competitive advantage in the coming years and decades, yielding long-term benefits to the economy.

However, although more women than men now graduate from universities, women continue to face challenges in STEM fields such as engineering, communications, mining and university STEM teaching and research. Though progress is slowly being made, much more needs to be done. Diana Bilimoria and Linley Lord, along with their international contributors, address these concerns using theory and research evidence, and also offer solutions. Organisational managers and government administrators interested in increasing women's participation and advancement in STEM disciplines

need to examine this collection. Adopting an international perspective, this book draws on current research from the United States, Australia and Europe that examine women's participation, advancement and leadership in STEM fields. The book explores the nature of STEM careers across industry and academia, and presents the latest thinking on successful individual, organisational and educational initiatives related to women in STEM. It is an invaluable resource for scholars, practitioners and policy-makers in organisations and government, as well as for women aspiring to or presently working in STEM fields.