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### Review of "Women in Veterinary Medicine: Profiles of Success" by Sue Drum and H. Ellen Whiteley

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**Women in Veterinary Medicine: Profiles of Success.** Sue Drum and H. Ellen Whiteley. Ames, IA: Iowa State University Press, 1991. xv + 270 pp. Photos. \$27.95 cloth (ISBN 08138-0668-2).

*Women in Veterinary Medicine* is an enjoyable book composed of short autobiographies of 20 successful women veterinarians. Each autobiography has a photograph and synopsis followed by a life story. Women veterinarians included are Drs. Joan Arnoldi, Maxine Benjamin, Olive Kendrick Britt, Joanne Rick Brown, Ann Schola Clark, W. Jean Dodds, Margaret Gourlay, Elizabeth Atwood Lawrence, Sandra W. McNeel, Linda M. Merry, Janice M. Miller, Patricia O'Connor Halloran, Jessica Porter, Sandra Siwe, Kathleen Smiler, Barbara Soderstrom, Barbara S. Stein, Virginia M. Streets, Susan K. Wells, and H. Ellen Whiteley.

The book accentuates one of the greatest strengths of veterinary medicine: career diversity. Careers described include small animal clinician, feline and equine specialists, zoo veterinarian, researcher, college professor, regulatory medicine, military, wildlife rehabilitator, editor, and author. Each veterinarian describes her particular career and the influences leading to that choice. The reader has a chance to empathize with and critique each veterinarian and her career. One has a chance to agree with or oppose statements

made by each and to fit into each person's life briefly. Each profile portrays characteristics common to male and female veterinarians: a love of animals, environment, discovery, and medicine; goal orientation; and involvement with community and family. The 20 veterinarians portrayed accentuate these qualities.

Sexual discrimination, blatant or hidden, was experienced by most, usually prior to entering school or after graduation. In school, all were greatly outnumbered by male students. Although they were often treated differently from their male counterparts, that treatment was just as often better than worse; for example, "it was like having a bunch of big brothers". The constant discriminatory phrase mentioned by many was "I was told I would be taking the place of a man."

The preface (Whiteley) and introduction (Drum) contained interesting facts: 15 of 20 were firstborn with strong father figures; money is not a primary influence in career choice for women; and most women veterinarians choose to combine career and marriage, but only half opt to have children. The first three women graduates in the USA were from 1903 to 1910. There were 30 women veterinarians in 1936 and 277 by 1963. In 1989, 22% of veterinarians and 60% of students were women. By the turn of the century, a third of US veterinarians will be women.

Negatives include not being sure who wrote what. Did the women veterinarians write their autobiographies or did the authors write biographies? Why was one author included in the autobiographies and the other one was not? Also it would have been easier to read if birth dates and year of graduation were at the start of each profile.

The book should appeal to anyone who likes to read biographies, veterinarians especially women, students thinking about veterinary medicine as a career, and individuals interested in women's and/or sociological issues.

Although easy to read, the reader is stimulated to ask questions. Why is veterinary medicine transforming from a man's profession to one more equally balanced between men and women? Are the characteristics and personalities of these 20 veterinarians similar to those of current women veterinary students? Do women try so hard to prove themselves professionally that their personal lives are changed? If intelligent women (and men)

continue to choose not to have children, what will our population be like in 2020? **Polly Schoning**, *Department of Pathology, College of Veterinary Medicine, Kansas State University.*