

Epilogue

Norma Yaeger

I was lucky to be at the forefront of a major cultural revolution in America, and it has been the great joy and exhilaration of my life to help that revolution happen. I want to tell people about my experience with it so that you have an idea of how to be a revolutionary. Not the flashy, poster child kind of revolutionary, but an ordinary person, feet on the ground, getting a job done – a job that everyone thought was impossible.

Fifty years ago, a woman couldn't have her own bank account or investment account. Now women are CEOs of Fortune 500 companies. Women are involved in every facet of the investment industry – trading, analysis, brokerage firms – and they are on TV and radio and in every aspect of our society (except a few throwback exclusive golf clubs). This level of involvement for women really was considered impossible, but some very special men and women made it possible and made it happen. (Earl Rubin was truly very special.)

We need to keep having cultural revolutions. It's important that no one be handicapped for who they are. Everyone should be able to pursue what they are capable of doing. There is always the temptation to give up, or to not even try in the first place. But if you're not happy with what you've got, you have to do something about it.

Never let anyone tell you, "You can't do that." Always ask, why? Or, why not? Change the situation so that they say, "Oh you can do that." Or better yet, "Wow, you just did that." Never take "no" for an answer. If you can't get something done one way, then get it done another way. There is always another way.

If you almost go over a waterfall, get back in the raft and go find the next river. Every time I failed, it made me stronger, more resilient, and ultimately more successful. If you ever start to feel overwhelmed by reality, just think of how much has changed over the last fifty years. The world can – and probably will – change that much again in the next fifty years. Commit to being part of that change, so that you can help create the world you want to live in.

Make sure you vote, and vote carefully. Pay as much attention to Congressional elections as the Presidential elections – maybe more. Specifically vote for candidates who will support the necessary regulations on the financial industry, or else 2008 is going to happen over and over again. JP Morgan Chase's recent loss of billions of dollars proves that. People don't know how to regulate themselves. Give them a finger and they will take an arm! The government must step in and take that responsibility.

Remember as you vote that government is for the people. It exists so that we can help people who need help. I don't mean helping them by just putting checks in their hands, but by giving them jobs. If there aren't enough jobs available, the government must become an employer, and people must empower the government to do that.

Remember also that our country allows us the right to object, and we are so lucky to have that. We don't live in a dictatorship. It is a wonderful thing that the free world is being exposed all over the globe so that more countries are insisting on and fighting to have democracies. So use your basic rights. Help others to see why those rights are worth fighting for.

And most of all, I encourage you to always keep moving, no matter what. That was the secret of my life, and I think it can be the secret of yours, too.