



Cult of Power: The Inside Story of the Fight to Open Augusta National Golf Club and How it Exposed the Ingrained Corporate Sexism that Keeps Women Down

Martha Burk

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This book is a digital reprint of *Cult of Power: Sex Discrimination in Corporate America and What Can Be Done About It*, originally published by Scribner in 2005, with a new Preface and subtitle. Even though Augusta National Golf Club admitted two women in 2012, the book is no less important today for its chronicle of the high-profile national controversy, what it stood for, and its stunning expose of how corporate titans at the highest levels still exercise power against women .

IT ALL BEGAN WITH A LETTER . . .

In 2002, Dr. Martha Burk, chair of the National Council of Women's Organizations, wrote to the Augusta National Golf Club, host of the prestigious Masters tournament, expressing concern over the club's all-male membership policy and urging it to change.

The resulting firestorm surrounding the club's secret membership roster of high-ranking corporate executives and its refusal to admit women was never really about golf. It was about much more -- becoming the linchpin of a national dialogue about the role of women in society not seen since the Anita Hill-Clarence Thomas debate. And especially in executive suites and boardrooms, the debate is far from resolved.

Cult of Power is an in-depth account of the broader ramifications stemming from the initial controversy, written by the woman who was its center. Burk lays bare the reasons the closed gates of Augusta National symbolize all the ways women are still barred from the highest echelons of power -- in government, social and religious organizations, and most importantly, in corporate America -- and why we must change the system.

In a stunning rebuttal to the reductionist claim that Augusta National is just about golf or "private association," Burk unveils, for the first time, the extraordinary web of business, government, and philanthropic affiliations of Augusta National members. The list is shocking evidence of the impact and influence the members have and damning proof that there is more going on behind club gates than just a game. It really is a "cult of power."

In dynamic, no-nonsense prose, Burk weaves together anecdotes, documents, and previously undisclosed material and encounters with sponsors, with a discussion of why gender discrimination is still accepted at the highest levels of business and how it affects all working women from the top tier to the rank and file.

Cult of Power is an important contribution to our understanding of how the attitudes, rules, processes, and pastimes of corporate America perpetuate an antiquated and unbalanced system. But it also provides real solutions and concrete examples that clearly show what must be done to end gender discrimination and bring about true parity in the workplace. *Cult of Power* is a rally call for all women -- a clear-sighted prescription for accountability, meaningful action, and real change.

This digital reprint chronicles the events as they happened, and lists members and corporate partners as they were known when the book was originally released by Scribner in 2005. Augusta National members, corporate sponsors, companies and organizations represented in the membership, and corporate officers may have changed since original publication.

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