A WOMAN'S PLACE
IS IN THE BOARDROOM
THE ROADMAP

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A WOMAN'S PLACE IS IN THE BOARDROOM

THE ROADMAP

PENINAH THOMSON
AND JACEY GRAHAM

WITH TOM LLOYD

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*For aspiring women directors everywhere, and for all
those who are architects of corporate change*

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Although it did not seem that way at the time, *A Woman's Place is in the Boardroom* wasn't a one-off intervention, but the first step on a journey. This book is the second. Our purpose – to use our ideas and experience to help able women to become credible candidates for positions on corporate boards – remains the same. But in the three years since the first book was published, we have become even more convinced that the general problem we're trying to address, the absence of women from top strategic decision-making bodies, is among the most important problems of our time. We suggested in our Preface to the earlier book that “the problems that face our world are so complex and difficult that we will need all the talent available to solve them.” There can be no doubt that progress has been made since then, in terms of the representation of women on boards, but nor can there be much doubt that the complexity and difficulty of the issues and problems we face have also increased.

Since 2005, we have had the “July bombings” in London and many other acts of terrorism; pressure on world resources has grown; we've all become much more aware of the impact of climate change; the world's financial system has endured the credit crunch, which at the time of writing was still being billed as heralding a potential recession; political, social and economic problems in the Middle East, Asia and Africa have proliferated; and a whole series of natural and man-made disasters in other parts of the world have haunted the headlines.

More women on the boards of our large companies isn't going to solve any of these problems at a stroke, of course, but it will contribute to their solution, by increasing the reservoirs of human ingenuity, imagination, insight and *will* available to address them. We believe that in the final analysis, it's what you *do* with power and influence that matters. In another turbulent age, John Donne (1572–1631) wrote:

No man is an Island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the Continent, a part of the main; if a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less, as well as if a promontory were, as well as if a manor of thy friend's or of thine own were; any man's death diminishes me, because I am involved in Mankind. (Meditation XVII)

If this book can help in a small way to ensure that more women with intelligence of both kinds (both EQ and IQ), who are able, competent, experienced, strong-willed, committed to civil values, possessed of some vision and good judgment, and eager to apply their qualities to solving the problems that we all face, attain positions of authority and influence, it will have been worth writing.

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Donne said: “No man is an island.” No woman is an island either and especially not when writing a book. Or any rate, we were not islands while writing this book. There are far too many people we would like to thank for their contributions and support to mention here, but we want to express our gratitude to some of them.

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We are also grateful for the contributions of many current and former mentees on the program who have helped us to distil our thoughts into what we call the “roadmap,” which provides the structure of this book. Their insights and experience (sometimes positive, sometimes painful) have helped shape what we hope will prove a useful guide for other women.

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