Friends are like Diamonds

Marilyn L. Grady

University of Nebraska-Lincoln, mgrady1@unl.edu

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There is constant reference to the “Old Boys Network” in the literature about access to administrative roles for women. Two books by Bob Greene capture a “Boys Network” both young and old. Perhaps you have read them? The first is Be True To Your School: A Diary of 1964. It is Bob Greene’s journal of his high school years presented as a book. It chronicles his experiences as a teenager growing up with his friends in Bexley, Ohio.

I have used Be True To Your School as a required reading in classes. It provokes quite a discussion among students. The book reflects high school life in the mid-1960s and precipitates an opportunity to compare high school life then and now. Many embrace the book with enthusiasm and pass it on . . . others are somewhat offended by the frankness of the journal reflections.

In 2006, Bob Greene’s And You Know You Should Be Glad: A True Story of Lifelong Friendship appeared. This book is the story of the same five fellows. It is a revealing portrait of the friendships that have endured in their lives. Families, careers, distance and years have not weakened the bonds of friendship for these five friends. Their commitment to each other in a time of great challenge is memorable and worthy of attention. They remind us how we have lived our friendships.

When I think of the “Old Boys Network,” I think of enduring friendships and what they signify. Greene describes friendship and his network with great clarity. He provides a mirror for each of us as we examine our lives.

We work in a profession that is deep in human interactions and interpersonal relationships. We are blessed by the friendships that have emerged from these associations. We should write the stories of our lives as the stories of our friendships.

References

Registrations for the 20th Annual Women in Educational Leadership Conference are being accepted! The conference will be October 8-9, 2006, in Lincoln, Nebraska. For information about the conference contact Marilyn Grady at mgrady1@unl.edu