

LET ME IN Endorsements

I felt like I was reading my own story. I loved the way Elaine's attitude and perspective came through: face a challenge and figure out how to conquer it; positive attitude and good humor solve a lot of problems.

Ruth Kimmelshue

Corporate Senior Vice President, Business Operations and Supply Chain; Sustainability
Member of Cargill's nine-person executive leadership team reporting to the CEO

In 1976 as the women's movement started to gain traction Elaine Koyama, a recent Stanford graduate from a Montana farm, entered the work world in what we called a "non-traditional" position. She was an ag (feed) sales person on the fast track into management. "Let Me In" follows Elaine through the funny, absurd and confusing times for women who were vanguards on this path. With hard work and help from family and friends she succeeded (maybe I should say endured) where many men and women failed.

This a must read for those of us that lived it as well as those that want to understand what really happened when you were one of the first women in a Fortune 500 company to blaze a path for those that followed.

Ruth Bokelman Conn

Ag Sales 1976-2019

Chevron Chemical

Cargill Seed

DuPont Crop Protection

Syngenta Crop Protection

Recently an Asian comedienne joked how her major in ethnic studies was not a study destined to yield an income. Unfortunately, the comment rings true for there are few if any books that talk about how women, especially minority women, survive and thrive in a male dominated traditionally White workplace. LET ME IN fills a much needed space.

LET ME IN is a frank, honest and engaging account of how one woman, a Japanese American woman, grew up on a farm in rural Montana, embarked on a nontraditional field for a woman in a major company, raised a family, and handled the unexpected hits of life.

LET ME IN is an enlightening book that makes clear the challenges in being a woman and a minority in a traditionally White male part of the workforce While there are no easy answers, the book is thought provoking and inspirational for anyone hoping to succeed, especially in a nontraditional field.

Carolyn S. Nayematsu, Ph.D

Retired Executive Director, Asian Pacific Islander Resource Center

University of Minnesota

An interesting read of the first 20 years of a non-traditional woman in a changing business environment.

Jerry Rohlfen, Retired Cargill Vice President

Elaine Koyama has lived the quintessential American Dream: She built upon the opportunities her parents and grandparents created and made and remade herself as further opportunities presented themselves. Elaine pursued a college education, just as expectations for women shifted and a new generation's dreams could be realized. LET ME IN details Elaine's early life—her growing up in Montana, college years in California, and her break into the business of sales when women were just entering the world of work in larger numbers. Among the first women to blaze trails through America's boys' club of business, Elaine's story is our American story as well as the modern history of American business.

Ann Swanson, PhD, International Baccalaureate consultant

Elaine Koyama is a pioneer, who moved east from her childhood home in Montana to Minneapolis to explore the frontier that women faced breaking into leadership in Corporate America. Her story is one of navigating the unknown, the inner-strength to tackle insurmountable obstacles, and a triumph of the spirit. Her perseverance, courage, and humanity will be of interest to both men and women with aspirations for corporate leadership.

Dr. Stefanie Ann Lenway
University of St. Thomas Dean and Opus Distinguished Chair
Opus College of Business

An artful narrative! Navigating the roadblocks along the path to her goals by a woman born too soon.
Anna Rohlfen, Cargill executive spouse

Engaging, insightful, this book resonates across culture, ethnicity and gender. An often humorous look into managing a career.

Stephanie Keire, Retired Executive Vice President Wells Fargo Bank