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### Women can deal with men as colleagues and professionals

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# University of Montana

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## MEDIA RELEASE

vining/mmm  
5/11/82  
dailies

### WOMEN CAN DEAL WITH MEN AS COLLEAGUES AND PROFESSIONALS

MISSOULA--

Women must be more assertive and work toward a gender-free society if they are to take advantage of opportunities that society offers, Professor Margaret "Peggy" Fenn said Friday at the University of Montana.

Fenn is a professor in the University of Washington Graduate School of Business and the author of two books, "Making It in Management" and "Women in a Changing Environment." She spoke at a workshop titled "Women in Management: Challenges and Successes" sponsored by the UM Department of Home Economics and the School of Business Administration. About 150 women and five men attended the free conference.

According to Fenn, "Society is experiencing a revolution in the re-definition of maleness and femaleness; a re-definition of roles in society that have been gender-bound for so long."

Fenn said the roles have been based on myths created by society.

"We have made some assumptions about differences based on gender alone," she said, "and then we've built a whole host of practices and belief systems based on those assumptions. We assume that because a man has to work, he is going to work hard, invest heavily and be a success," she said. "He can afford to reach out, to experiment, to take risks, to win as well as to fail occasionally and still survive as an organizational member.

"Because it is assumed that women do not have to work, it is also assumed that

(over)

WOMEN CAN DEAL WITH MEN-- add one

women are going to be short-termers, or that women are going to pick up their ball and run home, or that women are not going to have the time or the energy or willingness to make a heavy investment in competency in order to perform effectively for an organization."

According to Fenn, women do not actively seek promotions, but "let their work speak for itself," and as women try to prove their worth by perfecting their work, they also limit their career opportunities.

"The goals of females are similar to the goals that males set for themselves," she said. "Women are beginning to discover that they can deal with one another in a collegial sense rather than on the basis of sexuality. By dealing as colleagues and professionals in organizational relationships we can begin to maximize individual potential--the contribution that can come from all people."

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