

career. The men were monolithic in their opposition. No matter what argument she used, all I got back was an absolute no, she says. Not only would they personally stonewall the idea, they assured her no advertiser would touch the feminist tainted subject matter somehow. Shapiro launched a campaign on the show's behalf sending telegrams to the executives, even hanging signs on the men's bathroom door that read "Women's Room." But the men just responded with ratings argument. They said it wouldn't get more than 11 shares. They treated it like its audience was a minority, which seems strange to me. I mean, women are 54 percent of the population. Finally she persuaded the network's executives to run "The Women's Room" simply to set off another show they were very eager to air, a stock sex exploitation number called "Dallas Cowboy Cheerleaders." The network men agreed but instructed her to shrink "The Women's Room" from a miniseries to a one night special, and the network standards and practices division insisted air it only with a disclaimer assuring viewers the show was set in the past, not meant to be relevant to current times. Nevertheless, "The Women's Room" finally aired and it received a huge 45 share, the highest rated movie in TV that week, prompted a raft of positive mail and won an Emmy. Feminist television writers, Barbara Corday (phonetic) and Barbara Avadon (phonetic) got caught in the first waves of the backlash, too. They figured that they had original concept when the first drafted "Cagney & Lacey," two strong maternal fully formed female characters, one single, one married who are partners on a police force. The original script was kind of outrageous boisterous comedy. We even had a ring of male prostitutes. What we were trying to do was turn everybody around to a feminist point of view. But even after Corday (phonetic) toned down the script and brought in her husband's influential producer, Barry Rosenzweig to pitch it, "Cagney & Lacey" took six years to sell. They were turned down everywhere--movie studios, independent production companies and networks. These women aren't soft enough, these women aren't feminine enough. The Hollywood executives were even upset that the women used dirty words. And even though it was nothing more than a few "damns" and "hells," he struck out again and again. The women movement is going to pass me by before the show gets sold. She wasn't far from wrong. CBS executives finally decided to air "Cagney & Lacey" as a television movie in 1981. When it received a smash hit 42 share, the network agreed to produce a series. Rosenzweig casts Meg Foster to play the single woman. After two episodes, CBS executives cancelled the show claiming bad ratings. Rosenzweig convinced them to give