

A Woman of Substance **Views from a range of well known personalities**

"It was my grandmother who first suggested that I read Barbara Taylor Bradford's "A Woman of Substance". She had borrowed it from the local library. My grandma was an avid reader – something she passed on to me. To her, Emma Harte was the woman she might have been had she been given the chances that she had made sure were given to me.

By the time I read the book in the early Eighties I was already a barrister and had just married Tony. I was already starting to make my way in my career and had encountered the then prevalent belief that women were not really suited for the Bar particularly if they married and had children. Like Emma I was determined to show that I could "have it all" and like her made a few mistakes along the way.

I remember watching Jenny Seagrove's fantastic performance as Emma in the TV mini series which captured the spirit of the book so well. Years later when I was in No 10 I had the privilege of meeting Barbara herself and we have become firm friends. Barbara's own life is another story of an amazingly tenacious and talented woman who, against the odds, makes it in a man's world. When it came to writing my own autobiography I wanted to try and tell my story, though nonfiction, in the same accessible way that Barbara used to such great effect in charting the story of Emma Harte's journey from humble beginnings to success in the business world. The appeal of the book is timeless because although women in today's man's world do not suffer the overt prejudice and isolation that Emma faced, they still have to deal with the perennial problem of finding their own identity as women in the workplace, while at the same time balancing that with the joys and demands of being a wife and mother too."

Cherie Blair

"I bought *A Woman of Substance* when I was filming in New Zealand. I was looking for something that I could produce for myself and I remember thinking after I had read the back cover - what a great story. no-one will ever cast me as a working class chambermaid, and I think I could surprise them! I'll buy this book and if it's any good, I'll buy the rights. Of course I came back to England and was so busy, the book stayed on the shelf and then a year later, I was filming in France and my agent called. "They want to see you for *A Woman of Substance*. Will you fly over?" I was on the first plane, read the book, loved it, and the rest is history. - Thank heavens Diane Baker had the courage to take the risk with me and that I had a passable resemblance to the wonderful Deborah Kerr.

I loved playing Emma. Barbara has written one of the great inspirational heroines and Lee Langley did a great job in remaining faithful to Barbara's book. I always felt that a part of the reason *AWOS* works so well is that it is in some way semi biographical. I always felt Barbara and her life in the pages. It was a joy to read and a joy to bring to life."

Jenny Seagrove

"There are books we all read that give us characters we will never forget. Scarlett O'Hara from *Gone With the Wind*. Father Ralph and Meggie from *The Thorn Birds*. Elizabeth Bennett from *Pride and Prejudice*. Top of my own list is Emma Harte from *A Woman of Substance*. But a woman who tops them all is the authoress herself, Barbara Taylor Bradford."

Joan Rivers

"I was often told I was a woman of substance. I never truly understood what that meant until I read Barbara Taylor Bradford's book *A Woman of Substance*. I understood then when people said I was like Emma Harte – brave, bold, courageous, with an entrepreneurial drive to succeed. I am proud to have such traits, and it is clear that is why Emma has become an enduring legacy classic for women of all ages and times."

Ivana Trump



"When Emma Harte and *A Woman of Substance* came onto the literary landscape 30 years ago, she helped redefine a truly new generation of women. She was strong, courageous, bold and entrepreneurial, a new breed of woman. When I was asked to create Alexis Carrington on *Dynasty*, I knew I could be bold, fearless, a superb businesswoman, and through Alexis, helped define a new generation of women. Barbara inspired us by creating Emma Harte 30 years ago, that is why the character has endured. Over time, we have all become women of substance!"

Joan Collins

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