

## CLASH!

### 8 CULTURAL CONFLICTS THAT MAKE US WHO WE ARE

By Hazel Rose Markus and Alana Conner

Hudson Street, \$25.95



The world may be flat, but cultural psychologists Markus and Conner see impassible rifts everywhere. “With new technologies bringing our outsize populations together, we more often interact with people whose ways of being don’t jibe with our own, and who therefore leave us baffled.” For people trying to negotiate the new landscape—and for businesses in particular—it’s crucial that they know the territory.

Markus and Conner see many of our fundamental conflicts—East vs. West, rich vs. poor, coasts vs. heartland,

etc.—as a clash between people being independent and interdependent. This framework can help readers understand why seemingly intractable conflicts in business and society, across geographic and cultural lines, and bridge them. Step one, the authors argue, is acknowledging the gaps: “calls for culture-blindness are naïve.”

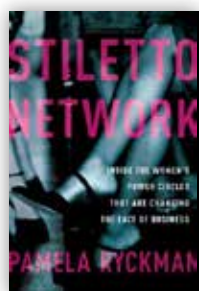
*Clash!* is remarkably readable, written in dynamic prose that’s all too rare in this type of book, and the authors resist going too far into the realm of pop psychology and self-help. It’s a genuinely substantial work.

## STILETTO NETWORK

### INSIDE THE WOMEN’S POWER CIRCLES THAT ARE CHANGING THE FACE OF BUSINESS

By Pamela Ryckman

AMACOM, \$22.95



Journalist Ryckman chronicles the rise of groups, formal and informal, that offer ambitious women support, encouragement, and networking opportunities. “This book is about groups that make women big, bold, and brave,” she writes, noting that “when you put a bunch of motivated ladies in the same room, exciting things happen.”

The difference between Stiletto Networks and the traditional old boys’ network is that, in Ryckman’s telling, these aim to be both professional and personal: “The next decade

will see an explosion of female wealth and power. But it’s not about the money, women say. It’s about the love. There’s a massive money trail, but the relationships themselves are not transactional; they’re true friendships based in loyalty, care, and respect.” And she recounts any number of success stories from women “furiously networking with other women.”

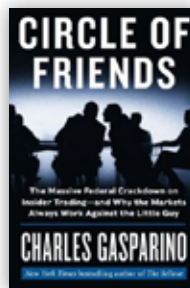
On the (high) heels of Hanna Rosin’s warnings of “the end of men and the rise of women” and recent news of the rise of female breadwinners, some will no doubt see this trend as ominous. But it seems only fair play after the decades of men-only social clubs and golf games. One can even forgive the idea of naming these networks after painful, unstable footwear that exists primarily for the visual pleasure of men.

## CIRCLE OF FRIENDS

### THE MASSIVE FEDERAL CRACKDOWN ON INSIDER TRADING—AND WHY THE MARKETS ALWAYS WORK AGAINST THE LITTLE GUY

By Charles Gasparino

HarperBusiness, \$28.99



In his Fox News spots, Gasparino is unfortunately prone to belligerent, reflexively right-wing blurts that taint solid reportage and analysis.

His books are marginally less contentious, but they’re undeniably credible, adding fly-on-the-wall color to established narratives, challenging existing interpretations, and taking readers inside boardrooms and prosecution meetings. *Circle of Friends*, “less a polemic than a crime story,” takes a hard look at prosecutors’ tendency—for political and résumé-buffing reasons—to go after insider trading rather than murkier kinds of financial trickery, even though, he insists, current prosecutions have done nothing to shore up the confidence of smaller investors.

Gasparino doesn’t exactly defend insider trading, but he brusquely questions both its importance to the investment community and the public funds spent prosecuting it. Ultimately, this book, loaded with narrative and detail, will further convince Wall Streeters who already fear overzealous investigators. Other readers will likely shrug: The problem isn’t too many agents going after trading violations—it’s too few going after every other kind of violation, as well as too much dubious behavior not being classified as violations in the first place. —MATTHEW BUDMAN