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# In Their Shoes: Extraordinary Women Describe Their Amazing Careers (English Edition)

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Par Deborah Reber

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## intheirshoes



extraordinary women describe  
their amazing careers

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Par Deborah Reber : **In Their Shoes: Extraordinary Women Describe Their Amazing Careers (English Edition)** before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised In Their Shoes: Extraordinary Women Describe Their Amazing Careers (English Edition):

DEBORAH REBER

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### Description :

Prsentation de l'diteur FOLLOW IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF AMAZING WOMEN WHO HAVE THE JOBS OF YOUR DREAMS! Find out what you really want to know about your career choices: What will I do every day? Will I wear Prada or Old Navy? Play with kids on the playground, or with bigwigs in the boardroom? Power lunch at the Ivy, or bag lunch at my desk? What kind of education do I need? This book

is packed full of answers. "Day in the life" profiles will inspire you, while a ton of sidebars, lists, and helpful tips will get you started right away on finding the career that's right for you. Discover words of wisdom from women in the workforce, including: Shonda Rhimes, creator and executive producer of Grey's Anatomy, who thinks her job is like running a small country -- PAGE 2 Susan Schulz, editor in chief of CosmoGIRL!, who compares her life to both a chess game and the prom -- PAGE 289 U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer, who says that if you're passionate about an issue, you can turn it into a career -- PAGE 283 Browse through the profiles to find the job that's right for you, or use the career chooser to narrow your search. Packed with informative and inspirational advice from women at every stage of their careers, In Their Shoes is a must-have reference for every aspiring working girl!

**Extrait**In Their Shoes SHONDA RHIMES TV Show Creator Shonda Rhimes, Creator Executive Producer, Greys Anatomy and Scandal The Facts WHAT?Television show creators dream up TV show ideas from sitcoms to dramas to reality shows and convince a network to buy, produce, and broadcast their show. WHERE?Most TV show creators work out of L.A. or New York City, since these are television industry hot spots, although they can write and develop their ideas anywhere. HOW?TV show creators need to be amazing writers and have supersmart ideas that fit in with the current television climate. On top of that, they need an agent to set up meetings with television executives so they can pitch their idea. If the execs love the pitch, then the real fun begins in production. \$\$\$:Ranges dramatically depending on the show and the network... DRESS CODE?Creative and cool... or whatever you like STRESS FACTOR:On a scale of 1 to 10, an 8 she's one of the hottest show creators in Hollywood, and I was thrilled to finagle an interview with Shonda Rhimes, the woman behind Greys Anatomy and Scandal, for this book. I spoke with Shonda about how she got her start, what it's like to create a hit TV show, and how she gets it all done. Here's our conversation: ME: What did you want to do when you were a teenage girl? SHONDA: I actually thought that I would be a novelist. I read a lot and I also watched a lot of television and old movies. But I really somehow thought that I would be a novelist. I thought that real writing was sitting in a garret somewhere, cold, starving, and pounding out the great American novel. I loved literature and I majored in English lit in college, but really, when it came down to it, I'm more of a pop culture girl. That's what excites me and the stuff that I sit down to write. ME: So how did you decide that you'd rather be writing screenplays instead of novels? SHONDA: When I got out of school, I was working as an assistant at an ad agency. In my spare time I sat down to put pen to paper, and what came out felt much more like a screenplay than a novel. It was mostly dialogue, and that was the stuff that was really exciting to me, so I went to USC film school. ME: And look at you now... you not only created Greys Anatomy and Scandal, but you're also an executive producer of both series. Using Greys Anatomy as an example, can you tell us what you do as a creator and executive producer? SHONDA: Well, I came up with the idea for the television series, and thus created the series. I wrote the script, I helped pick the director, and we shot the pilot, which is the first episode of a show. When your show is chosen by a network to become one of their shows, you become an executive producer, which means that I oversee the writing on all the scripts, the hiring of all the cast members, and all the editing and postproduction. In an interesting way, it's like running a small country.... Greys Anatomy is a small country and I have to run it. ME: That's a good analogy. It sounds like an amazing job. Is it? SHONDA: There are parts that are glamorous. I spend a certain amount of time doing interviews and walking down the red carpet and having hair and makeup done for those events. And you know, you do get to hang out with actors and be part of that really great creative process. But the reality of the situation is that most of my time is spent hunched over a computer trying to come up with more ideas for the show, which if you're at all a writer, you find to be extremely fun and liberating. ME: Was Greys Anatomy the first television show you created? SHONDA: It was the second television show I pitched and sold, and it's the first television show that was picked up and made. ME: Wow, that's amazing. I'm sure you know that teens are really into it. SHONDA: Yes... and it's really exciting because for me, a little bit of what I love about Greys Anatomy is that it's high school in a hospital. YOU ASKED... What do you tell yourself that helps you be successful? ALEX, AGE 14 SHONDA ANSWERED... My father always said to me, The only limit to your life is your own imagination. The only thing that's going to stop you from doing whatever it is you want to do is your ability to envision doing it. When I was a teenager and he'd say that, I always felt like, Oh, come on. But now it makes so much sense to me. If I come up with the idea, I'm pretty sure I can make it happen. ME: Yeah, totally... that's why I'm hooked! So, what are the hours like? What's a typical day like for you? SHONDA: I try to get in between eight o'clock and eight thirty a.m., because it's so quiet around here. I do a little writing, answer e-mails, and do phone calls. Everybody else sort of bustles in at about nine and the days are spent doing whatever's necessary at the time. You know, I'll spend a couple

hours writing, I'll spend a couple of hours in editing, and I spend a lot of time sitting in a room with the rest of the writing staff coming up with more ideas. Sometimes we'll sit down with the cast and read the script out loud, and that gives me more ideas, and we'll have more notes to go back and keep writing. Now that the show's more popular, it feels like I spend an hour a day doing interviews. I grab lunch if I remember, I try to get home between seven and eight every night, which is not always possible, but I try really hard. And then I spend time with my family, write for a while longer after my family has gone to bed, and then go to bed and get up the next day and it starts all over again.

ME: That's a packed day. Do you have a life on the weekends?

SHONDA: On the days that I take off, absolutely... no question. I definitely always take off Sundays. That's my constant. I do not work Sundays mostly because I want at least one full day that I can spend with my family, giving them my full time, my full attention. Sometimes I'll work a little bit in the morning on Saturdays, sometimes I'll work a little in the afternoon. But sometimes I don't do any work at all.

ME: So tell me, is working in Hollywood as cutthroat as some movies and shows portray it?

SHONDA: On my shows, we were not very cutthroat. I mean, I think we were fairly relaxed. I think the fact that everybody here really loves their jobs and we were really focused on what we do keeps us from being cutthroat, because there's a lot of work to be done and we don't have time to worry about other people on other shows.

WHY WAIT? Read articles about television show creators and find out how they did it. Come up with your own characters and write, write, write about them. Follow the trends in TV and watch the highest-rated shows so you can see what makes a hit.

ME: Do you feel like a pioneer in television?

SHONDA: I don't feel like a pioneer. It was a surprising statistic when it was quoted to me that I was probably the first black woman to have her own show on one of the big four networks. But I don't feel like a pioneer so much as I feel like I'm busy still learning and I'm having a really good time while doing it. I'm trying to keep my head down and do a good job.

ME: After reading your blog, it came through loud and clear that you love your job.

SHONDA: I spend my days with the doctors of Seattle Grace Hospital, and that is not a bad thing by any stretch of the imagination. You know, whether they're in my head or I'm going to the stage to talk to the actors, it's a very pleasant way to pass the time. And when you have a job like that, that's the thing you're meant to do because it doesn't feel like work.

ME: What's the most difficult part of your job?

SHONDA: The pace. The pace in television is lightning fast. Which means that every eight days we need a new script to shoot, every eight days I need to have a new script edited, and every eight days I need to have something ready to go on the air. So the pace is really, really exhausting and you have to keep up. I think it was David Mamet who said that writing a movie is like running a marathon, and writing in television is running a marathon until you die.

ME: That's a great quote.

SHONDA: Yeah. And that's what it feels like. It's a constant never-ending pace. That's the hardest part. That and not getting to spend as much time at home as I like.

ME: What's it been like watching your shows not only survive on the schedule, but become breakout hits?

SHONDA: It's been pretty shocking. It feels really surprising to me that the stuff I come up with in my head at home while wearing my pajamas is stuff that people want to watch. The stuff that the ten writers and I sit around and brainstorm is stuff that people are really interested in. It's always amazing when you feel like people out there can look at something you've created and say, I see myself in that. They look at one of the characters and they think, That person's a little like me. That's an amazing feeling.

THEN TO NOW

1991: Graduated from Dartmouth College with a BA in English literature  
1994: Received MFA from USC School of Cinema-Television  
1995: Worked as research director for Tollin-Robbins/Mundy Lane Productions  
1999: Wrote HBO original movie, *Introducing Dorothy Dandridge*  
2002: Wrote screenplay for *Crossroads*, starring Britney Spears  
2004: *Grey's Anatomy* premiered on ABC.  
2007: *Private Practice* premiered on ABC  
2012: *Scandal* premiered on ABC

ME: Are there any misconceptions out there about being a TV show creator? Anything we'd be surprised to know about?

SHONDA: Many people think creating shows is a thing that men do, but more and more women are creating shows. Any time you let someone tell you it's a closed door and you believe them, you're setting yourself up for defeat.

ME: Do you have any advice for girls looking to do what you do?

SHONDA: Go to college. Honestly. And not just go to college, but the best thing you can do to strengthen your writing is to read as much as possible... to have a huge knowledge base of literature in all of its forms. I spent my entire childhood living in books, and I feel like that was the one thing that really helped me.

WHAT IT TAKES

Great writing talent and an endless supply of good ideas  
A ton of persistence and drive  
The ability to inspire others

ME: Is there anything else you want to add?

SHONDA: The women around you can be the people who uplift you. The other girls you meet, the other women you meet who are your peers, can be the people who support you and help push you forward as opposed to being your competition. That to me is the most important thing. Some of the great people who helped me in this town have been other women.

In the Field **FIVE MORE CAREERS WORKING ON A TV SERIES PRODUCTION ASSISTANT** (entry-level position) Production assistants, or PAs, support the work of a producer, director, or other production executive. They do their fair share of fetching coffee and running errands, but they also have an opportunity to prove their commitment while learning on the job. **TV SCRIPT WRITER** TV script writers work together to develop a series arc and story episode ideas, and then work solo or paired with another writer to write individual episodes. They must have a solid understanding of the shows sensibility, as well as the characters in the series, in order to write scripts that will work on the air. **CASTING DIRECTOR** Casting directors work with talent agents to identify potential actors to play the roles in a show, screening a ton of reels and reviewing headshots. After holding auditions, casting directors make their recommendations about who they think should be cast for each role. **LOCATION MANAGER** Location managers handle logistics that arise when shooting at a specific location. For example, if a scene from a TV show needs to be filmed at a baseball stadium, the location manager will work with the stadium personnel to work out any logistical details so the TV show can shoot as needed. **PROP MASTER** Many TV series hire prop masters to figure out what props are needed for each episode and then buy, find, or build them. Prop masters have to be creative and resourceful in figuring out ways to get the necessary props, especially when they're working under tight budgetary constraints or the item isn't readily available. **YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT**

**Scenarios USA** is a nonprofit organization that gives young people ages twelve to twenty-two the chance to write scripts for short films addressing important social issues like peer pressure, HIV/AIDS, self-esteem, and body image. Winners of the **Whats the REAL DEAL?** writing contest work with professional filmmakers to turn their scripts into short films. Find out more at [www.scenariosusa.org](http://www.scenariosusa.org). For more on writing in Hollywood, check out the screenwriter profile on page 267 and the movie studio executive profile on page 65. From *School Library Journal* Starred . Grade 8 Up This fun, accessible book should appeal to teens who are exploring career possibilities. Each chapter contains an interview with its subject, for example, Nancy Pearl, librarian, as well as sidebars and lists on what to do now to prepare, what the person's day is like, and a time line of how her career took shape over the years. Concrete details about the women's current lives and about how they attained their goals are included. The variety of careers is impressive, ranging from forensic scientist and sheriff to social worker and actionista woman who is part motivational speaker, part writer, and part actress. At the end of each chapter there is a list of complementary careers to help readers brainstorm for themselves, as well as at least one Web site for further information. Additionally, a mini-chapter on networking, stress release, and other job-related issues appears between every five chapters. Even though the subjects are all women, the material is not female-focused. A fine addition to any collection. Carol Fazioli, Gwynedd-Mercy College, Gwynedd Valley, PA Copyright Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.