

editor's note



WHEN SHE WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL, ONE OF MY DAUGHTER, JULIA'S, FAVORITE SHOWS WAS *DEGRASSI*, A SHOW ABOUT URBAN TEENAGE ANGST. Forty years earlier, one of my favorite shows was *Room 222*, which also focused on urban teenage angst.

The shows dealt with remarkably similar themes, from sexual orientation harassment to race relations to drugs. But as similar as the themes were, the way the stories were presented was radically different. The earlier show focused on the teachers while the contemporary drama set its sights on the students. If a viewer was magically transported from 1970 to today, they'd be shocked by everything from the way the *Degrassi* students dressed to the casual level of violence. But today's view of 1970s television is almost as jarring—and not just because of the low-resolution broadcasts. One simple example: the term “negro” was still common in 1970.

Watching old television shows and marveling at how the world has changed and attitudes have progressed is fascinating. Sometimes, though, I'm reminded that not everyone is living in the present.

A few weeks ago I was thumbing through a copy of an issue of *Structural Engineer* magazine (in which AISC had run an advertisement) and my jaw dropped. Much to my chagrin, the article opposite our ad was (I think) trying to make the point that solving America's infrastructure issues is difficult. But they made their point by telling an old, old joke about how difficult it is to understand how a woman thinks. What? What?!

This is the same publisher that just a few years earlier ran an editorial suggesting the magazine's owner wouldn't advise his daughter to become a structural engineer because it was just too hard. Sure, being a structural engineer is challenging. But is it really tougher than working in a factory, designing circuits or teaching a class to pubescent teenagers? What job worth doing is easy?

It's really hard for me to even comprehend that article, especially as I sit in my office typing this. AISC employs around 32 structural engineers, about a dozen of whom are female. At the director level, six of AISC's 12 directors are women.

Whether you're looking for someone to design a building, advance the state of design or lecture on advances in design and construction, gender should not be a consideration. Duane Miller may be the standard by whom all other speakers at NASCC: The Steel Conference are measured, but Carol Drucker is certainly a must-see speaker. Want to make your own comparison? Visit www.aisc.org/2014nasconline and watch Duane's lecture on “Weld Inspection” and then stop by www.aisc.org/2015nasconline and watch Carol's talk on “Follow the Load Path.” Or even better, at next year's conference in Orlando from April 13-15, you can hear Carol talk about “From Complex Problems to Simple Solutions” and Duane explain how to improve fracture-critical resistance in cold-temperature applications.

My daughter is studying to be a middle school English and social studies teacher. Could she have been an engineer? Yes, her math and analytical skills are outstanding. Was her decision not to be an engineer some incomprehensible female enigma? No. She followed a path that she loves. And if that's not understandable, perhaps it's not that women are confusing but rather that some people can't seem to understand how the world has progressed.


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