

"I'd been moored at, like a cow, when I left my desk to pump milk for my youngest child."

The Goldman Years

In her memoir, a former Goldman Sachs financial analyst reckons with her two decades of short-selling stocks and enduring finance bros' sexism

BY JAMIE FIORE HIGGINS

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For years, banker boxes filled with diaries, at least one for each of my 18 years working on Wall Street, sat like ancient relics in my home office. Initially, after I left Goldman Sachs in 2016, I wouldn't read them. My inquisitive seven-year-old twin daughters, however, had no qualms about digging through them. I hadn't realized my journals could become a book until my daughter Beth noted, "Oh, they are like a story of when you worked at Goldman Sachs."

The story began decades ago, when I was hired at age 21, right after graduating from Bryn Mawr College, as a financial analyst in a Goldman Sachs group called Global Securities Services. Part of my role was to help facilitate short selling with hedge funds and institutions. It's a strategy in which investors sell stock or bonds, which they do not own but borrow, with the hope of buying it back later at a lower price. The fees for lending securities were not regulated. In many ways, I didn't realize how that practice takes advantage of clients.

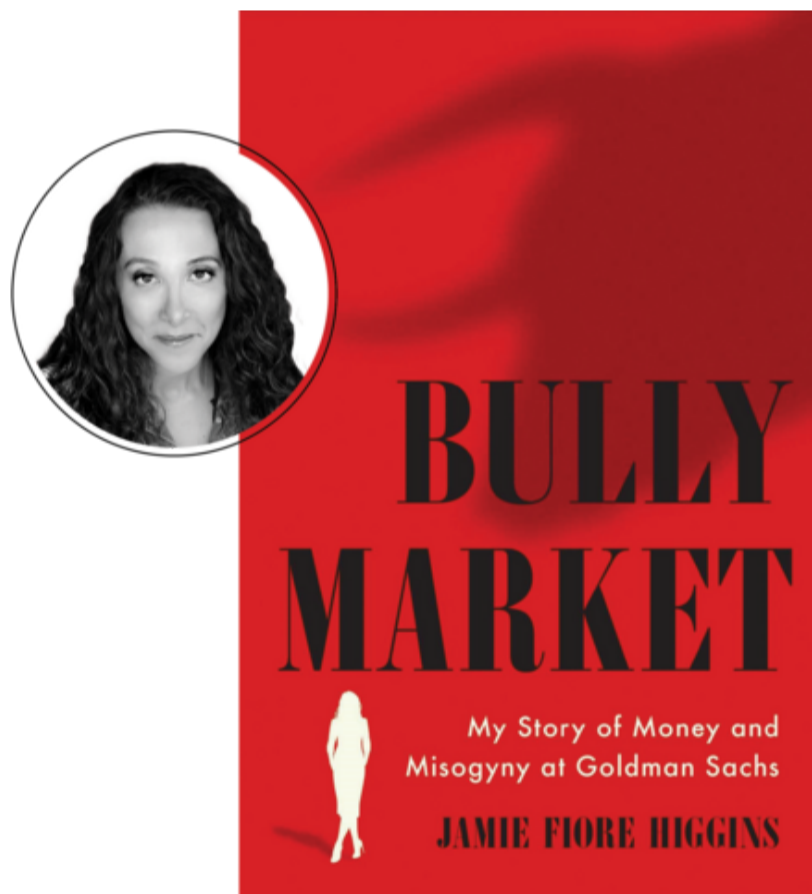
The job also shaped my personal life. As a woman in finance, I had to sideline parenting. I would leave my house at four A.M., before my four children were awake, to drive from Basking Ridge, New Jersey to Wall Street. I'd rush home at seven P.M. or later, while my colleagues worked late hours later, to say good night.

After I left the job, I began sharing anecdotes about my experience. People's incredulous reactions helped me realize how much I had normalized harassment and abuse as appropriate behavior in the workplace. I'll never forget the look on one woman's face when I told her that in 2016 I'd been mooed at, like a cow, by a male colleague when I left my desk to pump milk for my youngest child. Or when I shared that I'd been physically and verbally assaulted by a colleague when I moved him off an account when I learned he was having an affair with one of his employees.

I worked at Goldman in the spring of 2016, well before the #MeToo movement. Once courageous women began telling their stories of sexism and abuse, I started to see my career from a different perspective. Encouraged by the appetite people had for these authentic stories, I used my old journals to start writing my story.

As I brought those scenes to the page, I saw my experiences with a new clarity. I understood why I had not only stayed in the toxic environment but had also participated in it—why I kept quiet when I heard that other women had faced harassment in the office. I was the perfect candidate for the company's warped worldview: I came in without connections, needed to provide for my family, and wanted so desperately to prove I was just as sharp as my colleagues.

Although I was not frivolous with the money I made at Goldman Sachs, I was frivolous with my time. I was successful because of my head for numbers and for my work ethic, but, most of all, for my ability to look the other way at unethical business and workplace practices. For all of my 20s and 30s, I was silent, not advocating for myself or my colleagues. I don't want to be frivolous with my time anymore.



Jamie Fiore Higgins is a former managing director at Goldman Sachs. Her book, [Bully Market: My Story of Money and Misogyny at Goldman Sachs](#), is out now from Simon & Schuster

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