

*"...a beautifully worked mosaic of true stories..."*

JEANNE RAY, author of *Julie and Romeo*

# DEFYING



# GRAVITY



A CELEBRATION  
of LATE BLOOMING  
WOMEN

P R I L L B O Y L E

**MEDIA KIT**

**For Immediate Release**

## 12 EXTRAORDINARY MOMS PURSUE THEIR DREAMS!

Author Prill Boyle is a Connecticut mom who found her true calling later in life. At age 32 she decided to enroll in college and earned a Bachelor's degree in English from Georgetown University, followed by a Master's degree two years later. At age 47 she left her teaching job to pursue her lifelong dream—becoming a full-time writer.

Prill Boyle's first book, *Defying Gravity: A Celebration of Late-Blooming Women*, chronicles the lives of 12 everyday women who have achieved extraordinary success in midlife. As a late bloomer herself, Boyle interviewed these women to help people understand just what inspires someone to become a medical doctor at age 50, a Peace Corps volunteer at age 65, or a flight attendant at age 71.

These daring women defied the odds and prove that the possibilities are endless at any age! Some endured physical abuse at the hands of their husbands, while others grew up poverty-stricken. One woman was even forced to live in her car with a baby in the winter in Detroit. For years, these women had hopes of a better life and finally decided it was time to take action. Now, by sharing their stories in Prill Boyle's book, they hope to inspire and teach others that it's not too late and you're never too old to follow your dreams!

For more information or to schedule an interview please contact:

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### **DEFYING GRAVITY**

By Prill Boyle

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## BIOGRAPHY

Prill Boyle is a classic late bloomer. Years ago, she dropped out of college, married young, and had two children. She ended up at Harvard—as a secretary, not a student. Twelve years later, divorced, remarried and tired of doing clerical work, she enrolled at Georgetown University and earned both a B.A. and M.A. in English. After graduating at age 38, she became a high school teacher.

Then in January of 2000, Prill read an article in *The New York Times* about a 65-year-old Kentucky woman who had waited 39 years to join the Peace Corps and was leaving that day for Ukraine. Boyle was so inspired by this woman's persistence and courage that she decided to take her own leap of faith. At age 47, she left her teaching job, became a full-time writer, and today is the author of **DEFYING GRAVITY: A CELEBRATION OF LATE-BLOOMING WOMEN.**

Now 52, Prill Boyle and her husband live in Westport, Connecticut where she is working on her second book. A monthly columnist for *Boomer Women's World* and the creator of the *Defying Gravity Workshop*, Boyle has been featured on numerous radio and television programs and has spoken to groups all over the country—including at the United Nations—about the rewards of late blooming.

For more information, log onto: [www.prillboyle.com](http://www.prillboyle.com)

To contact Prill Boyle: 203-222-7121 (home); 203-984-5720 (cell)

## **PRILL BOYLE'S TIPS FOR ASPIRING LATE BLOOMERS--OF ANY AGE!**

Think it's too late to make a change in your life? Think again! Prill Boyle, author of *Defying Gravity: A Celebration of Late-Blooming Women*, has some tips to get started:

1. **BE HONEST WITH YOURSELF.** Take a good look in the mirror and ask yourself: "What am I doing that I want to stop? What am I not doing that I want to begin? Even if you have no idea what your passions and gifts are, undoubtedly you're clear about something in your life. Start there.
2. **TAKE THE FIRST STEP.** Just the thought of going back to school or learning a new skill scares some people. Most of us end up dismissing the idea without even giving it a try. But why not take the first step and see how it feels? That's what Linda Bach did. She dreamed of becoming a doctor, but was overwhelmed by the prospect of going to medical school in her 40's. Her husband wisely counseled her to start with one course. "If you like it, take more," he said. "If you don't, then stop." She graduated from the University of Miami Medical School at age 50 and was elected president of her class!
3. **BE CREATIVE IN OVERCOMING YOUR OBSTACLES.** Don't let anything--even a lack of money or age discrimination--come between you and your dreams. If you're facing a wall that you can't blast through, grab a shovel and dig under it...or borrow a ladder and climb over the top! Better yet, just walk around the side. Take Evelyn Gregory, who became a flight attendant at age 71. After being rejected by three airlines, she accepted a job as a gate agent and let the corporate brass get to know her. Six months later, she was hired by US Air Express and flew for them for the next seven years.
4. **CULTIVATE A SENSE OF HUMOR.** Laugh often--especially at yourself. Researchers at Loma Linda University in California have discovered that laughter not only reduces stress and stimulates the immune system, but also lowers dopamine levels. (Dopamine governs our "fight or flight response.") In other words, a good laugh can ease the anxiety of risk-taking.
5. **ENJOY THE JOURNEY!** Despite all your best efforts, there's no guarantee of success. If you're not enjoying yourself, you might want to take another look at Tip No. 1.

**To learn more about Prill Boyle and the women mentioned above, visit**

**[www.prillboyle.com](http://www.prillboyle.com)**

To contact Prill Boyle: 203.222.7121 (home); 203.984.5720 (cell); prill@prillboyle.com

## THE TWELVE WOMEN OF *DEFYING GRAVITY*

To reach these women, contact Prill Boyle: 203.222.7121 (home); 203.984.5720 (cell); [prill@prillboyle.com](mailto:prill@prillboyle.com)



Fulfilling a lifelong dream, **LINDA BACH** became a doctor at age 50. Elected president of her class, she graduated from medical school the same year her daughter graduated from college. She is now in private practice in Miami Shores, Florida



A shy housewife until widowed at age 52, **IRMA ELDER** today is the CEO of Elder Automotive Group, one of the ten-largest Hispanic-owned companies in the nation.



Pregnant at age 17 and marrying a man who turned out to be an abusive drug addict, **JEAN KELLEY** abandoned her dream of going to college and spent two years on welfare. At age 49, she earned a Ph.D. in higher education administration.



Formerly a stay-at-home mom, **JO FUCHS LUSCOMBE** was in her early 40's before she ventured into local politics. At age 48 she won a seat in the CT House of Representatives. Eight years later she became Republican Minority whip.



**PATRICIA SYMONDS** earned a high school diploma in her 40's and a Ph.D. in anthropology in her 50's. Now a professor at Brown University, she spent two years in her mid-50's living in a bamboo house studying the Hmong people of Thailand.



At age 71, **EVELYN GREGORY** fulfilled her childhood dream and became a flight attendant. She's been flying for US Air Express out of Charlotte, North Carolina for the past five years.



Tired of being a medical transcriptionist, **MARY ORLANDO** at age 62 bought the historic home she'd lived in as a child and turned it into a successful bed and breakfast.



**MAUREEN HORKAN** spent her 20's working at a series of low-rung jobs. Deciding she'd had enough, she embarked on a five-year quest to attend Smith College. Admitted at age 30, she graduated Phi Beta Kappa and enrolled in law school. Today she is prosecutor in Florida.



At 46, single mother and breast cancer survivor **JEAN KAROTKIN** began to dream of publishing a book of photographs of other cancer survivors--even though she'd never taken a professional photograph before. Her book *Body & Soul* was published in July of 2004.



Widowed at age 48, **JANE WORK** earned a B.A. at 50 and a Ph.D. in psychology 7 years later. She opened up a private practice at age 63. At age 87, she still holds workshops.



After working 20 years at Michigan Blue Cross and facing dyslexia, homelessness and depression, **RAINELLE BURTON** published her first novel *The Root Worker* at age 52. She is currently a writer-in-residence at Wayne State University.



Kentucky native and single mom **WINI YUNKER** was devastated when the Peace Corps rejected her at age 26. She waited almost four decades before reapplying. At 65, she finally fulfilled her dream and left the States for a two-year assignment in Ukraine.

To contact Prill Boyle: 203.222.7121 (home); 203.984.5720 (cell); prill@prillboyle.com

## **SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS**

### **What made you decide to write about late bloomers?**

Five years ago I came across a *New York Times* article about a 65-year old Kentucky woman who had waited 39 years to fulfill her dream of joining the Peace Corp. Reading her story, I was so inspired that I decided then and there to write a book about late bloomers—people who, no matter what their age, haven't given up on themselves and their dreams. And even though I'd never written anything for publication before, that's what I did. I interviewed over 100 women and chose 12 from all walks of life, with a variety of obstacles to overcome, who accomplished extraordinary things in their 40's, 50's 60's, even 70's. One woman became a flight attendant at 71. Another didn't even have a high school diploma in her 40's and became a professor of anthropology at Brown University at age 60. Twelve phenomenal everyday women.

### **Many people wish they could do something else, but are powerless to make a change. What advice can you offer them?**

1. Mix it up! Ask yourself what you're doing that you want to stop and what you're *not* doing that you want to begin. If you keep doing the same thing the same way, you'll get the same results. Create a little space in your life and see what happens.
2. Take a step and see how it feels. Don't get ahead of yourself. Just because you're signing up for a pre-med class doesn't mean you have to commit to four years of medical school. On the other hand, if you never take a step, you'll never know what you could have done. As the centenarian I quote at the beginning of my book says, "If I had known I would live to be a hundred, I would have taken up the violin at 40. By now I could have been playing for 60 years!"

3. Don't fall into an either/or thinking. If you think the choice is to either keep working at a job you don't love and support yourself or follow your passion and starve, you won't get very far. Say you're a lawyer who secretly wants to be an artist. You don't need to quit your day job in order to draw. After work one night, why not just paint a picture? As I said, take a step and see how it feels. If you like it, paint more. It's that simple. Eventually, you might be able to parlay your passion into a profession; but even if you can't, your life will be richer and more satisfying than if you hadn't painted at all.
4. Persist, persist, persist. Most people give up on their dreams too soon.
5. Turn a deaf ear to self-doubt & naysayers. Everyone gets discouraged and loses confidence from time to time. But it's important to turn a deaf ear to self-doubt and just keep on going. The corollary to this is to also turn a deaf ear to naysayers. Successful late bloomers care deeply about people, but along the way they stop caring what others think of their choices. Ultimately, our lives are ours to live and no one else's.

**Did the women in your book face discrimination in the working world? If so, how did they get around it?**

Many did. Seventy-one year old Evelyn Gregory was turned down by at least five airlines before being hired by Mesa, the parent company of US Air Express. And Irma Elder, who at age 52 became the first women auto dealer in Detroit, faced both age and gender discrimination. These women dealt with it in different ways. The bottom line is that if you're faced with a concrete wall and you want to get to the other side, you've got a few choices. You can either blast through it, walk around it, dig under it, climb over it...or act as if it doesn't exist and walk right through it. The flight attendant found a way around. She became a gate agent and let the corporate brass get to know her. Six months later, she applied again to be a flight attendant, and this time was accepted. The auto dealer ignored the wall. She flaunted her femininity by wearing skirts and high heels and just kept focused on doing the best job she could. Today she's the CEO of one of the ten largest Hispanic-owned companies in the nation.

**How did you find these women?**

I kept my eyes and ears and open to the media, but mostly I relied on word-of-mouth. I didn't want to write about famous women. I wanted to find everyday women that others wouldn't dismiss as having more money, more talent, more connections than the rest of us. Everywhere I went, I told people I was writing

about late bloomers—even before I’d written a word! People would say to me, “Oh, you should interview my mom.” Or, “You’ve got to meet my friend.” And I’d follow through on these tips. There’s an incredible power in making one-on-one connections. It becomes exponential.

**You’re now writing a book about men. Are you seeing any differences between men and women late bloomers?**

There are more similarities than differences, but in general, men’s sense of themselves—even in 2005—comes from their work, the amount of money they make, and how well they’re able to provide for their families. So on that level it’s more difficult for them to make life changes than it is for women, especially before retirement. Even after retirement, many men have been conditioned to think of the later years as a time to play golf and relax; but that model doesn’t work as well as it used to in our present economic climate. It also doesn’t work as well when you consider that people are living longer and longer. If a guy retires at 65 and dies at 70, maybe the golf thing is great. But if he lives 30 more years, that’s a lot of time to fill. By providing role models of men who have gone back to school in their 70’s, or who have successfully transitioned, for instance, from being ophthalmologists to pastry chefs, I want to encourage men think outside the box. One guy I interviewed had been a real estate developer before retirement and went to art school in his 70’s. Now 82, he’s a wonderful painter. Last fall he had a show at a prestigious gallery in San Francisco and sold every one of his paintings!

**What common traits do these late bloomers share?**

- 1) A lack of bitterness. They’ve learned from past experiences and mistakes, but aren’t embittered by them. Bitterness is one of those things that weighs us down and keeps us from defying gravity. Rainelle Burton, a dyslexic who wrote a critically-acclaimed first novel in her 50’s, at one point lived in a car with a baby in the winter in Detroit. That’s how poor she was. As I say in the book, she’s been through hell, but has emerged without a trace of soot on her spirit.
- 2) A sense of humor. They don’t take life—or themselves—too seriously. They’re having fun.
- 3) Persistence. I can’t stress this enough. Most people give up on their dreams too soon, sometimes just a hair short of the goal. These people didn’t.

- 4) Openness. Life is full of possibility, but not everyone is open to change. Successful late bloomers embrace the future. Forced to retire at age 78 for medical reasons, one late bloomer said to me, “I’ll find something else to do. Obstacles are just stepping stones to new opportunities.” *That’s* what I mean by openness!

### **Final thoughts?**

We all have more potential than we realize and our lives have more possibilities than we can fathom. Even if you don’t achieve your dream, just going for it is worth the effort. Ultimately, the journey is as important as the destination. The bottom line is that no matter what your age, it’s not too late!

## PRILL BOYLE: PUBLICITY & APPEARANCES

### TELEVISION

ABC Affiliate WJLA-TV | Washington, DC" News Talk" with host Bruce DePuyt  
CBS Affiliate WISH-TV | Indianapolis, IN" Daybreak" with co-anchor Joy Dumandan  
ABC Affiliate WCPO-TV | Cincinnati, OH Interview with Tanya O'Rourke  
Manhattan Cable | New York" A Better World" with host Mitchell Rabin  
ION Media Network | National Affiliates "For the Record" with host Ann Karrick  
Cox Cable | Manchester, CT"Page One" with host Zita Christian  
WMCI-TV | Pittsfield, ME"Featured Artist Series"  
WTSF-TV | Ashland, KY"Your Health with Dr. Ditty

### RADIO HIGHLIGHTS

CNN National Radio | "Leather Bound Edition," with Pat St. Claire  
Westwood One Radio Network | "The Jim Bohannon Show" (heard on over 350 stations)  
NPR-Affiliate KUCI-FM, Orange County, CA | "Writers on Writing with Barbara DeMarco-Barrett"  
Voice of America, Washington, DC (heard worldwide)  
WBZ-AM, Boston, MA | "The Jordan Rich Show" (heard in over 38 states)  
Wisconsin Public Radio | "Conversations with Joy Cardin"  
WGUC-FM, Cincinnati Public Radio | "Brain Brew Radio" with Doug Hall & David Wecker  
Sunny 93.9-FM, Raleigh, NC | "Madison in the Morning" (Clear Channel)  
KFCD-FM, Dallas, TX | "America Tonight," with Kate Delaney (heard on over 200 stations)  
WBNW-AM, Boston, MA | "The Brass Ring," with Gina Ghioldi (syndicated)  
WKCI-FM, New Haven, CT | "Vinnie & Mary in the Morning" (a Clear Channel Top-40 station)  
WRRS-FM, Cincinnati, OH | "Radio Reading Service" with Mark DeWitt  
WIBC-AM, Indianapolis, IN | "Morning News" with Terri Stacy & Jeff Pigeon  
WBZ-AM, Boston, MA | "Women's Watch" with Scott Cooper  
KCDU-FM, Monterey Beach, CA | "The Goddess to Goddess Empower Hour"  
KXIX-AM, Iowa City, IA | "In Iowa Today," with Roy Justis  
KRWN-FM, Seattle, WA | "Inspirational Women," with Kate Daniels  
KTOX-AM, Needles, CA | "Girls Just Want to Have Fun," with Kelly Hayes  
WPFW-FM, Washington, DC | "In Our Voices," with Nkenge Toure  
WTAL-AM, Tallahassee, FL | "Jewels for the Journey," with Amber Grady  
WPLR-FM, Milford, CT | "Chaz & AJ in the Morning"  
KSRR-AM, Orem, Utah | "Healthy, Wealthy, Wow," with Robbie Lawler & Kim Power Stilson  
WMXJ, Miami, FL | "The Rick & Donna Show"  
WTLN-AM, Orlando, FL | "Cross Talk," with John Adams  
WATR-FM, Waterbury, CT | "Talk of the Town," with Ed Flynn  
Magic 98.9, Greenville, SC | "Magic Mornings," with Bo Griffin  
WVXU-FM, Cincinnati, OH | "F.I.T.," with Julie Isphording (X Star Radio Network)  
WDRC-AM, Hartford, CT | "Talk of Connecticut," with Mary Jones  
WICC-AM, Bridgeport, CT | "Drive-Time News Show," with Ann Karrick  
WLPO-AM, Oglesby, IL | "Weekend with Don," with Don Zukowsky  
88.7-FM, New Haven, CT | "The F Files," with Jacquelyn Arsenuk & Pat Spoor  
W-KBAR-FM, Burley, ID | "Positive Momentum Radio Talk Show," with Michael Haynie  
Achieve Radio (broadcast over the Internet) | "Book Marketing with Fran," with Francine Silverman

## PRINT MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS

First For Women Magazine | "Secrets to a Richer Life" (10/4/04)  
Vive Magazine | "Summer Reads" (August 2004)  
Fort Worth Star-Telegram | "What We Like This Week" (6/18/04)  
Courier Journal (Louisville, KY) | "A Dream Fulfilled" (10/5/04)  
Connecticut Post | "Never Too Old To Go For Your Dreams" (5/23/04)  
Westport Minuteman (CT) | "Westporter at United Nations Celebrates Women who Defy Gravity" (front page 6/16/05)  
Mankato Free Press (MI) | "Four Women Linked Through Dreams & Deeds" (front-page--6/29/05)  
San Francisco Books & Travel | "New Voices: Prill Boyle's Defying Gravity" (Spring 2005)  
Saginaw News (MI) | "Never Too Late for a New Path" (7/11/04)  
Clarion Ledger (Jackson, MS) | "Summertime Must-Reads for Women" (07/04/04)  
New Jersey Jewish Standard | "Getting Better with Age" (4/21/06)  
Manchester Journal (NH) | "Boyle to Promote Book" (10/1/04)  
Newtown Bee (CT) | "Author Offers Encouragement to Late-Blooming Women" (10/21/05)  
Noblesville Daily Times (IN) | "Author Will Talk of Late Bloomers at 'Vision' Luncheon" (5/7/06)  
The Enquirer (Cincinnati, OH) | "Shelf Life: Defying Gravity" (3/15/05)  
Average Girl Magazine | "Interview with Prill Boyle" (11/16/04)  
Westport News | "Defying Gravity with Prill Boyle" (5/7/04)  
Westport Magazine | "Defying Gravity" (Jan. 2005)  
Westport Minuteman | "Westporter Does the Impossible with Defying Gravity" (1/13/05)  
The Norwalk Hour | "Celebrating Women" (3/03/06)  
The Norwalk Hour (CT) | "Seminar Series Aims to Empower Women of All Ages" (6/19/06)  
Connecticut Muse | "Prill Boyle" (Autumn 2006)  
Grand Rapids Press (MI) | "Late-Blooming Women Discover Joy of Midlife Achievement" (7/4/04)  
Grand Rapids Press | "Never Too Late" (The newspaper reviewed the book in July 2004 and then ran a contest soliciting stories of late bloomers in Grand Rapids, Michigan. This 8/8/04 article is the follow-up.)

## INTERNET HIGHLIGHTS

[www.beautyandthebook.com](http://www.beautyandthebook.com) | Bonus Book of the Month  
[www.boomerwomenspeak.com](http://www.boomerwomenspeak.com) | Author of the Month  
[www.queenjawjaw.com](http://www.queenjawjaw.com) | Author of the Month  
[www.balancinglifissues.com](http://www.balancinglifissues.com) | Inspirational Book of the Month  
[www.womenworks.org](http://www.womenworks.org) | Recommended Book  
[www.pamelajunekimmel.com](http://www.pamelajunekimmel.com) | Recommended Book  
[www.simplegiftsbydarla.com](http://www.simplegiftsbydarla.com) | Recommended Book

## SELECTED SPEAKING ENGAGEMENTS

**United Nations, New York City | Keynote for Nat'l Council of Women USA**  
**Cherry Lane Theatre, New York City | Talk-Back**  
**Westport Country Playhouse, Westport, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**Women's Leadership Coalition 50th Anniversary Dinner, Bridgeport, CT | Keynote**  
**Riverview Memorial Foundation: "Women of Vision" Luncheon | Keynote**  
**National Council of Jewish Women, Teaneck, NJ | Keynote**  
**2005 Nat'l Conference on "Women's Images: Inside and Out" | Panelist**

**2006 Conf. on "Women's Images: Explore the Possibilities | Workshop Leader**  
**2006 Pulpwood Queens Girlfriend Weekend, Jefferson, TX | Panel Moderator**  
**Suite Dreams Project: "Hats Off Luncheon," Indianapolis, IN | Keynote Speaker**  
**International Assoc. of Admin. Professionals (IAAP), Cincinnati, OH | Keynote Speaker**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Gender Conference, College of Lake County, Grayslake, IL | Workshop Leader**  
**Indigo Experiences, New York City | Workshop Leader**  
**Creative Spirit Center, Midland, MI | Featured Artist**  
**Greenwich Education Center, Greenwich, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**CT Press Club, Norwalk, CT | Panelist: Fact v. Fiction: The Truth at Risk**  
**Book 'Em 2005, Waynesboro, VA | Guest Speaker**  
**Book 'Em 2006, Lebanon, NH | Guest Speaker**  
**The Passion Project, Fairfield, CT | Featured Speaker & Workshop Leader**  
**Connecticut Writer's Conference, Norwalk, CT | Workshop Leader**  
**Prince Wm. County School Librarians Annual Mtng, Manassas, VA | Featured Speaker**  
**Fairfield County Women's Center, Norwalk, CT | Featured Speaker**  
**Music City Texas, Linden, TX | Featured Speaker**  
**Lifetime Learners' Institute, Norwalk, CT | Featured Speaker (Lunch 'n Learn Series)**  
**Squire Creek Country Club, Choudrant, LA | Luncheon Speaker**  
**Ocean Acres Country Club, Manahawkin, NJ | Guest Speaker (Author's Luncheon)**  
**Curves, Westport, CT | Guest Speaker, Book Club**  
**Enfield Public Library, Enfield, CT | Guest Speaker (Meet the Author series)**  
**Brick Library, Brick, NJ | Guest Speaker**  
**Westport Public Library, Westport, CT | Guest Speaker (Authors @ the Library series)**  
**C.H. Booth Library, Newtown, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**The Junior League of Eastern Fairfield County, Fairfield, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**Norwalk Comm. College Academic Festival, CT | Panelist ("Women in Transition")**  
**The Spa at Split Creek, Wilton, CT | Guest Speaker ("Women's Wisdom & Wellness")**  
**Senior Adult Activity Center, Souderton, PA | Guest Speaker**  
**AARP, Wilton, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**The Conservative Synagogue Sisterhood, Westport, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**Gibbs College, Norwalk, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**Westport Senior Center, Westport, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**The Women's Club, Enfield, CT | Guest Speaker**  
**Barnes & Noble: Mankato, MN; Westport, CT; Midland, MI; Escondido, CA; Cincinnati, OH; Bethesda, MD; and White Plains, NY**  
**Joseph-Beth Booksellers: Cincinnati, OH; and Lexington, KY**  
**Politics & Prose Bookstore, Washington, DC**  
**Amazon Bookstore Cooperative, Minneapolis, MN**  
**University of New Haven Bookstore, New Haven, CT**  
**The Local Hero Bookstore, Ojai, CA**  
**The Northshire Bookstore, Manchester Center, VT**  
**Tower Book Shop, Shreveport, LA**  
**Beauty & the Book, Jefferson, TX**  
**Briggs Carriage Bookstore, Brandon, VT**  
**TenEleven Bookstore, Camden, SC**  
**Ocean County Library: Tom's River, NJ; Manahawkin, NJ**