

## Lecturer sparks feminist conversation

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Author Debora Spar speaks about women living in the post-feminist era to a full room in the Lavin-Bernick Center on the Tulane University uptown campus on Monday (March 9). (Photo by Cheryl Gerber)

Debora Spar, president of Barnard University and author of several books on business and feminism, addressed a full audience Monday (March 9) during a talk titled "Wonder Women: Sex, Power and the Quest for Perfection."

Spar, who has a [book by the same title](#) as her lecture, focused heavily on the "post-feminist era" image of women as perfect, do-it-all working mothers.

"Today, we're telling girls that you can be an astrophysicist, a neuroscientist, or a Supreme Court justice, plus be pretty and cook dinner and take care of the kids," said Spar. "Today we're doubling the standard."

Spar did not always identify as feminist.

"I was one of those women who went through life ignoring the fact that I was female," she said.

While teaching at Harvard Business School she first became aware of what her male colleagues called, "the women problem."

She said, "they would call me into their office, lower their voice, and say "Deb, we need you to fix the women problem.""

The problem, as Spar explained, is that the percentage of female leadership maxes out at around 16 percent in the professional sector. Spar believes the underlying issues that build this statistic are created by looking at the evolution of the feminist movement toward this idea of the perfectly balanced woman.

Spar's visit to campus was part of the [Alberto-Culver Lecture Series](#), which invites distinguished, nationally recognized professional women to campus to meet with students and discuss pertinent topics about women in business. The series is sponsored by the Newcomb College Institute.

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