Maria Bartiromo and Erin Burnett on *Meet the Press*

Looking Smart

A blogger on one of the sites that dissect TV journalism quipped that CNBC stands for "Chicks, Nothing But Chicks!" But this year's roster of emerging stars suggests a more specific interpretation—perhaps "Cute Nubile Brunette Company." The rise of Erin Burnett and her chestnut- to raven-haired colleagues Margaret Brennan, Rebecca Jarvis, Trish Regan, Melissa Lee, and, at the Fox Business Channel, Alexis Glick has to do with more than sharing a common, sober hair color: They have what might be called unthreatening attractiveness. They look like they may have played field hockey or lacrosse in college (Burnett, at Williams, did both), drink beer from a bottle, and might not dance so well. Their beauty is understated. Such subtleties didn't matter when WorldCom was trading at $90 and every cabdriver had a hot stock tip, but when bankers are driving the cabs, restraint is a safer bet. This should in no way impugn this crop of newswomen, most of whom are smart and talented. "There is an element of TV that is visual. You can't deny that," Burnett told *The New York Times*. "But you're not going to be able to move to the next level without the passion, the contacts, the journalistic drive."

CNBC reporter Margaret Brennan

The Apprentice's Rebecca Jarvis, now on CNBC

Alexis Glick from the Fox Business Channel

Today's financial adviser Jean Chatzky