

THE EQUALITY STANDARD

November 2011

This is the monthly publication on women's issues, local and global, published by 50/50 Leadership, A non-profit organization promoting women's equal leadership

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IN THE NEWS

✧ Virginia Rometty named CEO of IBM – the first woman to hold the position in the history of the company. This makes the number of women heading Fortune 500 companies, 18.

✧ **FOR MORE NEWS, FOLLOW US ON TWITTER @5050LEADERSHIP**

Some recent tweets:

✧ Hundreds of Yemeni women set their full-body veils on fire on Wednesday, protesting a brutal government crackdown on protesters

✧ Miss: Ballot initiative would outlaw some in vitro fertilizations. We need to stop making women's bodies a political ball to toss around

✧ And sometimes there is good news. The FBI has expanded their definition of rape: forced anal, oral, w an object, statutory, male rape



Nominate a Woman of the World!

Deadline: November 15, 2011

4th Annual Women of the World Awards

50/50 Leadership and UNA-USA Pasadena invite you to nominate someone you know who has made a difference in the lives of women and girls in another country.

We are seeking nominations of women of all ages, heritages, countries and professions who are having an impact in the lives of women and girls in other countries. These leaders will be honored at the 4th Annual Women of the World Awards on Sunday, March 11th, 2012.

Submission Deadline: Tuesday, November 15th, 2011

To Submit:

1. The nominee's name, organization, title, email address, phone number and postal address
2. A summary, 250 words or less, of the impact this leader has
3. Your relationship to the nominee, your contact information: name, email address, phone number, and postal address
4. Send your nominations to WOW@5050leadership.org

The Awards: The 4th Annual Women of the World Awards will be held on **Sunday, March 11th, 2012 at the La Canada-Flintridge Country Club.** Save the date!



WHY WE NEED FEMALE LEADERSHIP

Forbes magazine recently published a list of the world's most powerful women. Their choices,

however, far from reflected the enormous power held by hundreds of women around the globe. In response, **Helen Redmond** wrote up her own list of the five women she feels matters the most. If you take the time to read this, I think you will agree that there is a real disconnect between what current leadership – including (or especially) in the media (see At the Movies below) thinks power and leadership is about, vs women who are really making a difference in the world.

[Read the article](#)



FEMALE LEADERSHIP: AS THE BRAIN DOES IT

By Milena Albert

In the past decade much research has been done in trying to understand the differences between male and female sexes. Since the brain is the chief and administrative organ responsible for our overall being, thinking and functioning it is not surprising that the focus of this research often concentrated in this area. It is not my intent to discuss here how women are different or superior to men, instead I would like to focus on why application of the female brain and female thinking style are greatly beneficial in today's leadership.

What makes female leaders a key factor of success in our future?

Of many abilities, skills and competencies required for an effective leader there are five abilities, that in my opinion, form the foundation of such a leader. These abilities are:

See the big picture

Complex thinking in addressing multiple and diverse problems

Build the best teams to move forward, and

Stress and crisis management in order to continue progress forward with a minimum of setbacks that general panic or low morale can create.

Applying some level of empirical generalization, there are always many exceptions, but the exceptions do not invalidate the generalization. Just like there are many women who are taller than an average man and there are many who are shorter than an average woman, nevertheless a statement that an average woman is shorter than an average man is still valid. With that in mind let's look at some key discoveries fully supported by scientific research.

We all know that the brain consists of two separate hemispheres, left and right. While the left hemisphere is responsible for Abstract Mathematics, Structural Analysis, Logical Reasoning, Order and Habit, Ordered Procedures and Sequential Routines, the right hemisphere is responsible for Gestalt, Internal-Imaging, Expressiveness, Imagination, Metaphor, Rhythm and Feeling, Emotional Memories, and Spiritual Experiences. Being able to see the big picture requires mental skills supported by the right hemisphere. With women generally viewed as right hemisphere dominant, it is only logical to conclude that when it comes to seeing the whole picture, in the present or in the future, women feel right at home.

Saying that women are right hemisphere dominant does not mean that the left hemisphere is not functioning. As whole and complete human beings women are given access to the other side of their brain as well. In fact, what makes women unique is that they are able to employ both sides of their brain simultaneously. There is no need to alternate between the two, thus women are in a position to discover best solutions by combining different approaches. This thinking process cuts down on the time needed to process the information and come up with successful outcomes. As our world is becoming more complex and rapid, it needs leaders who can apply this thinking style to finding the best ways to advance forward.

When it comes to communications, language plays an important part in its effectiveness, particularly in relationship to leadership. Explaining one's vision

and direction, inspiring people to join in or follow and moving them along takes language mastery. Two sections of the brain responsible for language are found to be larger in women, indicating one reason why women typically excel in language-based subjects and in language-associated thinking. In addition, women process language in both hemispheres which makes it easier for them to not only come up with great ways to resolve problems, but also to communicate their ideas in clear, accessible ways. Hence, women are naturally effective communicators.

Another unique fact about the female brain was discovered as a result of extensive research in the area of evolutionary psychology, investigating the distinct ways women's and men's minds operate. According to the research the female brain is characterized by empathizing tendencies (a term created by Baron-Cohen, Ph.D.) or mentalistic thinking (a term created by Crespi, Ph. D. and Badcock, PhD.).

“Empathizing” is the drive to identify another person's emotions and thoughts, and to respond to them with an appropriate emotion. It occurs when we feel an appropriate emotional reaction in response to the other person's emotions. The purpose of this is to understand another person, to predict his/her behavior, and to connect or resonate with him or her emotionally. Mentalism is about understanding people (folk psychology). This type of thinking makes women great at communicating with others and great as judges of characters, which is extremely important in the identification and selection of appropriate team members and the best utilization of human resources.

Women have their own unique way of processing stress. For instance, instead of having the “fight or flight” response to stress situations it is natural for women to experience “tend and befriend” reactions. Psychologist Shelley E. Taylor created the term “tend and befriend” after recognizing that during the times of stress women take care of themselves and their children and form strong group bonds. The reason for this reaction is largely explained by the hormone oxytocin, a mediator of anti-stress. Production of oxytocin results in calming and nurturing feelings and

is released during the stress in everyone. The difference is that while testosterone reduces the effects of oxytocin, estrogen enhances it resulting in women's ability to create and maintain calm and comfort for others. We live in the times when leaders face stress and crisis on an ongoing basis. The times where peace and war alternated has been replaced by ongoing economical, political, ecological, social and military wars. The "fight or flight" response to stress is no longer the most successful approach to crisis-related solutions, instead "tend and befriend" produces great results by bringing people closer to find joint ways out of the situation.

Considering the information above, it is not surprising that more women are taking on leadership roles and/or are selected to be at the helm of anything from small groups of people working on making a difference, to countries. With so much research in the area of brain development and its discoveries it is not surprising that the corporate glass ceilings have been broken. As more real life examples of successful women leaders get revealed and more women get inspired and step up, the millennia-old beliefs that women are not made to lead is being replaced with a new belief that women are not just natural leaders but are also instrumental in enabling humanity to progressively move forward.

Milena Albert, a member of a 50/50 Leadership Circle, is a Life Coach specializing in identifying individual's natural thinking styles and coaching them on how to use it to reach their full potential while living a joyful life.



WHAT LEADERSHIP LOOKS LIKE

✧ The three women who, last month were named winners of the Nobel Peace Prize:

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia

Ellen Johnson Sirleaf is the president of Liberia, the first woman to be elected to lead a country in modern African history.

She succeeded in securing forgiveness for billions of dollars of Liberian debt and in changing Liberia's brutal

international image. She was broadly perceived as a reformer and peacemaker when she took office in 2006.

Mrs. Johnson Sirleaf was arrested and threatened with death. She later recalled how she defended herself with her most basic strength as soldiers taunted: "You can't do this. Think of your mother."

Mrs. Johnson Sirleaf became active in politics after serving as a vice president of Citibank while working for the bank in Kenya. An outspoken critic of General Doe's corrupt and brutal regime, she was jailed in 1985 for calling government officials "idiots," and again in 1986.

[Read more](#)

Leymah Gbowee, Liberia

Leymah Gbowee's rise in the women's movement began on a dusty football field opposite the fish market in Monrovia. In 2002, this is where she sat every day dressed in white, with thousands of women praying and fasting for peace. Liberia had already endured 14 years of war and the women were tired of fighting and of being raped and watching their men die while their children were stolen to be used as soldiers.

The then dictator Charles Taylor's convoy drove past the field every day, where the women risked their lives by sitting there in the knowledge his men could simply open fire on them.

They grew stronger as more women joined them, making placards and openly protesting against the fighting that was tearing their country apart. "We sat down there every day under the rain and sun," said Bernice Williams, one of Gbowee's colleagues from the Women in Peace Network. Williams is in the same spot this year praying for peace as next week's elections loom. "We sat here together. Today she has won this prize and it is not Leymah alone. All the Liberian women suffered for it," she said. "If you look here, these women here. Some of them, their husbands were killed. Their entire families were killed. They were raped by more than five, 10 men."

Gbowee grew up in Bong County, in central Liberia, and left for the capital when she was 17, just before the war started in 1990. She trained as a trauma counsellor and started working with ex-child soldiers who had fought for Taylor. She then became the spokeswoman for the women's group and led the protest for peace, concluding that: "If any changes were to be made in society it had to be by the mothers.

"I started to cry and to pray. The women kept coming. Market women. Displaced women from the camps. Some of them had been walking for hours," she said in her book, *The President Will See You Now*.

Her strength was evident in 2003 when she led hundreds of women to Monrovia's City Hall, demanding an end to the war. "We the women of Liberia will no more allow ourselves to be raped, abused, misused, maimed and killed," she shouted. "Our children and grandchildren will not be used as killing machines and sex slaves!"

The women protested until Taylor agreed to a meeting. Under Gbowee's leadership, they gave the three warring factions three days to deliver an unconditional ceasefire, an intervention force and for the government and rebels to sit down and talk. They got what they asked for and soon after, the Accra Peace Accord was signed in Ghana.

Thousands of women were involved in the peace movement but Gbowee became its face after her appearance in the documentary *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* was aired across America. Since 2004, she has served on Liberia's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and she is now executive director of the Women in Peace and Security Network, an organisation that works with women in Liberia, Ivory Coast, Nigeria and Sierra Leone to promote peace, literacy and political involvement.

[Read more](#)

Tawakkul Karman, Yemen

Time magazine published an article about this winner:

Sometimes revolutionaries don't look the part. Tawakul Karman, Yemen's most active activist, favors long, loose-fitting gowns and coordinating headscarves. The 32-year-old mother of three looks, well, like a mom. And she acts like one too. Between weekly protests in front of Sana'a University, the chairwoman of Women Journalists Without Chains, an organization that defends human rights and freedom of expression, including the freedom to protest, can often be found trying to get other protesters out of jail. It's a place she is familiar with as well, having been there several times herself. And she is fiercely protective of Yemen's youth, decrying (often at the top of her lungs) a leadership that she says has robbed her generation of not only their future, but also their honor and their dignity.

More than 5 million Yemenis live in poverty, and nearly half are illiterate. Oil is scarce, and water reserves are declining... Yet the government seems unable, or unwilling, to address the fundamental problems of the people, says Karman.

She says she has protested hundreds of times, both in the country's north and the south. But it was the refusal of the government to intervene in the case of the Ja'ashin, a group of 30 families that were expelled from their village when the land was given to a tribal leader close to the President, that launched her on the revolutionary path. "I couldn't see any sort of human rights or corruption report that could shake this regime. They never responded to one of our demands. It made it clear to me that this regime must fall." Tunisia has Mohammed Bouazizi, the man who set himself on fire, and Egypt has Khaled Said, the victim of police brutality. For Yemen, says Karman, it is the Ja'ashin. "Their slogan was 'Ali Abdullah Saleh made me hungry.' They've become icons."

[Read more](#)



WOMEN AT WORK

🌀 The following article is included because for those readers who are working mothers, the question of day care, its affordability and it being a pre-requisite to being able to work, is of prime concern:

As wages remain stagnant and income inequity continues to grow, more families are coming to the end of the month with big decisions to make — what on their budget will go unpaid to make ends meet?

The problem becomes more drastic as federal and state governments continue to chip away at funding pools for ... child care subsidies for working families with young children.

Those cuts are adding up, especially for mothers heading households that are falling further and further into poverty. Now one of the bigger questions is becoming not “Can we afford more groceries before the end of the month?” but “Do I pay my rent, or do I pay for my child’s daycare?”

Sadly, many kids can (and do) spend their days hungry when groceries can’t be purchased. But to decide between housing and childcare is a whole different story. Without childcare, a parent can’t work. Without work, there’s no ability to pay for everything else. But without paying for housing, you have no safe place for your family to sleep in, be protected at, or be warm to avoid illness, to stay clean, and the other necessities needed to hold a job as well.

Most families facing this conflict are doing the only thing they can really choose — picking low quality childcare in order to save on costs, which hurts children, parents, and even employers. As the [National Women’s Law Center](#) noted in a recent study:

Concerns about the quality of their children’s care affected parents’ productivity at work. A mother who was using unregulated care and had to change her

child care arrangements twice in one year said, “I am distracted at work, due to anxiety and worry.” ...

Parents who managed to pay for good-quality care often did so by making sacrifices, such as finding a second job or cutting back on their food budget, and sometimes were unable to pay their rent or other bills on time.

Quality child care at an affordable cost isn't just about watching children. It's about providing a safe environment with a small enough adult to child ratio to both cut down on accidents and allow the child to have the one on one interaction with a caregiver needed to promote cognitive and emotional development.

[Read more](#)



From the BOOKSHELF /At the MOVIES

❧ “Please promise me that you'll see the Oprah Winfrey Network Documentary club documentary called "**Miss Representation.**" It's the most brilliant amalgam of things that I've been saying for 30 years in about 400 columns but within 90 minutes.”

*Thanks to **Ellen Snortland**, Author, Performer, Feminist for her comment about this documentary.* It will re-air on OWN on November 12th. To find a screening near you and for more information [Click Here](#)

❧ **Alexis Powers** has a new book, always reason for me to sign on to Amazon. Her novels are fun and easy to read, and this is no exception.

In the new book entitled “**Miracles Can Happen,**” criminal defense attorney Amanda Lewis experiences a major upheaval which causes her to question her professional life, as well as her emotional capacity to love anything other than the law. The book opens when homicide detective Danny Kelley uses deadly force to save his partner's life. When he is suspended, he consults with Amanda, a woman he has been attracted to since the last case in which they were involved. Unexpectedly, Amanda is drawn to Danny

and she must take a soul searching look at what her life is about.

The cast of characters continue their intertwining lives, with Willow Buchanan once again coming back into Amanda's world. With razor sharp visions of Los Angeles, the reader will be intrigued by this engaging suspense-romance.

You can read the first few pages of *Miracles Can Happen* on Alexis' website, and if it appeals to you, it is available in paperback or for a Kindle.

<http://www.AlexisPowers.net>

✎ More than a dozen authors, mentors, and nationally known book marketers will offer thousand in bonus gifts focused on the needs of authors when novelist, poet, and book marketer **Carolyn Howard-Johnson** releases the second edition of the first book in her HowToDoItFrugally series of books for writers, *The Frugal Book Promoter*.

Among those supporting Howard-Johnson's book are self-publishing gurus and leading the charge is Amazon and book launch expert Denise Cassino.

Collectively, these gurus offer an inestimable value in career boosting bonus gifts to anyone who pays a mere \$9.95 for *The Frugal Book Promoter* in its Kindle iteration (www.budurl.com/FrugalBkProKindle) or \$12.82 (discounted from \$17.95) for the paperback on Amazon (www.budurl.com/FrugalBkPromo).

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HEALTH

✎ Mississippi is on the edge of enacting a law that gets politics and government even more intrusively into our bodies and the decisions over them. The state has an impending vote on granting legal rights to fertilized eggs and fetuses prior to birth. This measure would not only abolish abortion, but could block many fertility treatments – including in vitro fertilization, and possibly ban popular forms of birth control.

What seems to be put aside in the argument for giving “rights” to a fetus is that it is then a separate entity and if the life of the mother is dependent on aborting the fetus, then the mother and the health care provider risks being put in jail. So an already tragic situation puts the life of the mother at risk in two ways, and of course if that woman already has children, they would lose a mother either way. Is this justice?

Allison Korn, a staff attorney at National Advocates for Pregnant Women, explains how passing “personhood” could spread the issue of criminalizing women who miscarried, putting suspicion on her that she may have “murdered” her baby, or could force women to undergo medical interventions against their wills for the “sake of the baby.”

In Washington, D.C., Angela Carder, who was 27 years old and 25 weeks pregnant, became critically ill. She, her family and her attending physicians agreed on treatment designed to keep her alive for as long as possible. Nevertheless, the hospital called an emergency hearing, and based on claims of separate rights for fetuses, ordered cesarean surgery despite the fact that it could kill Carder. The surgery was performed; both the baby and Carder died.

[Read more](#)

Over the course of a lifetime, 1 in 8 women will be diagnosed with **breast cancer**. It continues to be a leading cause of cancer mortality and morbidity for all women regardless of race. The American Cancer Society estimates that there will be 230,430 new cases and 39,520 deaths from invasive breast cancer among women in the United States in 2011.

Kaiser Permanente reports that through their research studies they have learned that women ages 65 to 69 are five times more likely to die within a year than women that same age who do not break a bone.



WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

🌀 The British royal family is joining modernity. Female heirs will be given equality with men in the rules governing succession to the throne, Prime Minister David Cameron announced. The changes to the centuries-old rule were agreed to unanimously by the 16 nations of which Queen Elizabeth II is monarch, and the queen has indicated she supports changing the succession rules. In laymen’s terms, the firstborn child of Prince William and Kate Middleton will become fourth in line to the throne, regardless of gender—something denied to Princess Anne, the queen’s second child, who follows her younger brothers and their children in the line of succession. Cameron said the historic rules were “at odds with the modern countries that we have become.”

[Read more](#)

🌀 Just 17 years ago, civil war in **Rwanda** culminated in a horrific 100-day genocide that killed between 800,000 and 1,000,000 citizens. Today, however, the country is making notable strides towards the United Nation’s Millennium Development Goals, and against all odds has doubled the life expectancy of its citizens. Despite the scars left by decades of violence, Rwanda’s story is changing into one of hope and pragmatic determination at the local and national level.

Through an ambitious set of health reforms, the country is saving the lives of children and mothers. The backbone of Rwanda’s newly-decentralized health system is its vast network of over 45,000 local community health workers. Each village elects three members to serve as trained community health workers — one each for maternal health, child health, and community health.

Because 85 percent of Rwanda’s people live in rural agrarian areas, more than an hour’s walk from the nearest health center, the presence of local health workers is vital, particularly for pregnant women.

[Read more](#)



50/50 LEADERSHIP NEWS

The **Leadership Circle** in Pasadena is well under way and the members are showing their leadership stripes. **Milena Albert**, one of the Circle members is the author of the article above about the brain, a subject she has studied for many years; **Donna Osorio** and **Yolanda Osorio** will be using their presentation skills this month, and last month we took a field trip to Santa Barbara to hear Nobel Laureate **Shirin Ebadi** of Iran speak on women's role in making peace in the Middle East.

Do you know a woman leader who is making an impact elsewhere in the world? If so, nominate her for a **Woman of the World Award**. We are taking nominations until November 15th. More information above. Do save the date – Sunday, March 11th for the Awards gala where you will get to meet the honorees and be inspired by the difference they are making in the world.



SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual Subscription: \$15

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Send your check, payable to 50/50 Leadership to:
P.O. Box 11202, Glendale, CA 91226

Questions? Call 818-243-2322



EVENTS

Tell us about events in YOUR area that we can post here.



Tuesday, November 1

7:00 p.m.

Sandra Tsing Loh will be in conversation with Gale Anne Hurd, recipient of the Women at Work Trailblazer Award ceremony at the Crawford Family Forum.

Reception 7 p.m. Program 8p.m.

Free but online reservation required.



Wednesday, November 2

2:30 pm

Women and the Arab Spring: Spotlight on Egypt, Tunisia and Libya
Presented by Senators Boxer and Casey

The hearing will examine the role women have played in the Arab spring, how women can participate in all aspects of these critical transitions to

democracy and how the US can be supportive. CEDAW is expected to be raised as an important tool women in the region are using to advance women's rights and how ratification by the US would signal strong and unequivocal support for their efforts.

Senator Boxer is Chair of the Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Int'l Operations and Organizations, Human Rights, Democracy and Global Women's Issues; Senator Casey is Chair of the Subcommittee on Near Eastern and S Central Asian Affairs

Dirksen Senate Office Bldg, Room 419

Washington, DC

Thanks to Joyce Morrissey, Insurance Agent and Feminist, for this item

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### **Wednesday, November 9**

**5:30 p.m.**

**Lucy Jones**, chief scientist for the USGS Multi Hazard Initiative in southern California is being honored by the YWCA Pasadena-Foothill Valley

Neighborhood Church.

She'll be sharing her personal story and how she became known as the "calm after a disaster."

Tickets are available online at

[www.ywca.org/lucyjones](http://www.ywca.org/lucyjones)

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Sunday, November 13

4-8 pm

Fall Harvest Bunko Bash

ABWA, Verdugo Glen Chapter's fundraiser

All you can eat Italian Dinner

Glendale Elks Lodge, 120 E Colorado, Glendale 91205

\$20 Adults, \$12 Children

Chinese Auction, Prizes and lots of Fun

RSVP to Donna Hempel@msn.com

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### **Thursday, November 24<sup>th</sup>**

**Happy Thanksgiving!**

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FINAL WORDS

This month's quote is a Love Poem for the Women of DailyWorth, a blog on increasing our internal worth and our external. Check it out at DailyWorth.com

Written by Rha Goddess

"You Deserve the Best"

That's why my mother always stuffed

An extra \$5 in my bobbie socks

***For bubble gum, sweet tarts, fire balls and lollie
pops***

Candy coated love turned to

"buy yourself something nice" money to

***"just in case you see something you like" money
to***

*“later for him—he’s acting funny,
Girl-u-betta-get-home-safe” a/k/a—mad money
to
a next level security deposit on “your own pad
honey!” money*

*Ladies, you know...
The Protection.....
That watchful mother hens dole out
When they breed
Survivors
Risk takers
Planetary Movers-Shakers
I’m talking about
Bold Women
Who kick the shards of glass ceilings out from
underneath their stilettos
And hum lullabies to their sons and daughters in
the latest tune
Of Rhiana
I’m talking ‘bout
Courageous Women
Who don’t take “No” for an answer*

*Who keep their eyes on the prize
But never forget they’re on the road less travelled*

*I’m talking—Empowered Women
Who will seize their moment of (r)evolution
Put it all on the line—not just to build a venture
But to spark the next feminine movement*

*To all my women...
Supa-dupa fly women...
Do whatever it takes to make it happen
Right Now! women
On this auspicious DailyWorth occasion
These are my wishes for you*

*May your dollars never outweigh your sense
May you always understand that the endgame is
liberation
And may you forever Know Your Worth
From the inside-out!*