



THE EQUALITY STANDARD

September, 2009

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

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Our Vision
That 50% of
leaders are
women
Our Mission
To transform
the culture
within which
we live to one
that **naturally**
includes
women on an
equal basis in
the selection
of leaders

Visit our website,
www.5050Leadership.org or give
us a call at
818.243.2322

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IN THE NEWS

🌀 On Wednesday, August 26th – Women's Equality Day, the **White House Council on Women and Girls** launched its website. Follow the link and take a look and then send a note with your suggestions on what they need to be doing – the more they hear from us, the stronger they will be. [Click here for White House Council on Women](#)

🌀 **Pamela Constable** reported in the Washington Post on Sunday that many women stayed away from the polls in Afghanistan, because of fear, tradition and apathy which reversed a more hopeful trend. Five years ago, with the country at peace, traditional taboos easing and Western donors pushing for women to participate in democracy, millions of Afghan women eagerly registered and then voted for a presidential candidate. In a few districts, female turnout was even higher than male turnout. [Read the article](#)

🌀 **Euna Lee** and **Laura Ling**, two journalists freed and returned home with the help of former President Bill Clinton in August brought to the surface once again the underlying thinking about women: Al Gore, Gotham Chopra and David Gergen all referred to Ms Ling and Ms Lee, these two women who had just returned from 140 days in jail in North Korea, as "girls" in their public remarks on CNN and Huffington Post. These *women* are 32 and 36, respectively, and they get called "girls" in public? Is this par for the course, or are we supposed to sit back and agree with others who say this was "just a sweet way to refer to two dear women who went through hell for 140 days?"

🌀 **Justice Sonia Sotomayor** was confirmed by the U.S. Senate with 68-31 votes on August 6th as the 111th justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. The first Hispanic member of the Supreme Court and the 3rd woman. Adding a little perspective, that means that 110 have been other than Hispanic, and 108 have been men. It was September 25th, 1981 that Sandra Day O'Connor was sworn in as the first woman justice of the U.S. Supreme Court

🌀 Winning a Nobel Prize doesn't seem to mean much to some people. Remember the harassment of Nobel Prize Winner **Shirin Ebadi** in Iran? A couple of weeks ago, Myanmar's military junta extended Nobel Peace laureate and pro-democracy leader **Daw Aung San Suu Kyi's** imprisonment by 18 months after finding her guilty of violating the terms of her house arrest - a way to keep her out of the running during next year's presidential elections.



FUN-4-5050



This month's **Fun-4-5050** event is an evening of bringing out the creative in the most un-creative of us (like me!) and making cards that will wow your friends and family when you send for give them. Reader and Intuitive Mary Ann Feeney told us about Karen Bagnard (www.morethanmermaids.com)



who is a creative genius and helps the most unimaginative of us to become instant artists! She supplies *all* the materials and all we have to do is pick and paste! And voila! Beautiful, hand-made cards. And we can make as many as we want. So come relax and have some fun – and help 5050Leadership too. **[Jump to details below](#)**

What is Fun-4-5050? Rather than looking at having a fundraiser – which many cannot afford and which takes hundreds of hours of work to put on, we are going to combine **FUN** with building the coffers of Fifty-Fifty Leadership, and its program, Leadership Circles.

With so many people out of work, business revenues down, and others just not willing to take a risk for fear of what might be coming, we have come up with a way to have fun and keep it inexpensive.

Each month we will highlight one or more events that will be part of **FUN-4-5050**. At these events, One person who has agreed to will collect \$5 from each person attending the event with her or him. Then the money collected will be sent in to Fifty-Fifty Leadership – through pay pal, by credit card, or a check. Anyone who wishes a receipt need only ask and we will be happy to email one (send request to info@5050leadership.org).

What kind of events? In August we did a trial run with two events: Going to the movies to see Julie & Julia, and attending the NWPC screening of Iron Jawed Angels on Women's Equality Day.

As there were 4 of us attending the movie, and 3 attending the NWPC screening, that meant that an extra \$35 was donated to Fifty-Fifty Leadership. It adds up quickly!

How do I pay? On arrival at the event, give \$5 cash or check to the person who invited you. If you forget or don't have change, you can go online and donate the \$5. (Cash is preferred, however, because we have to pay a fee out of that \$5 for an online payment)

You will be helping bring Leadership Circles to women who want to become leaders or who are leaders and want to hone their skills.

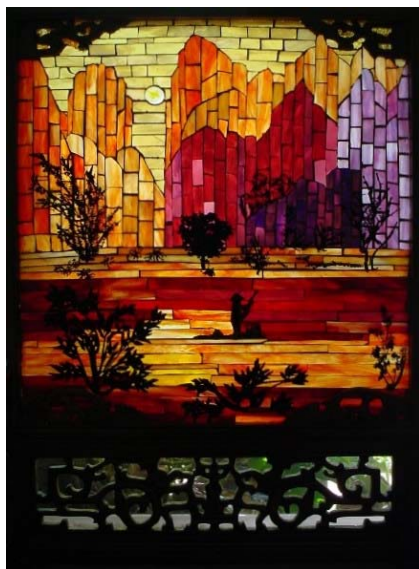
If there is a particular event or type of event you are interested in, I would like to hear about it. If you live in another part of town or another part of the country – as many of you do – consider doing this as a way to raise money to help a Leadership Circle, finance completion of our database of conferences for women, and more.

Send me an [EMail](#) with your ideas and questions



WOMEN IN BUSINESS

🌀 **Are you a coach?** Do you have a specialty working with women and/or girls? If so, you may be interested in Coach4Women, a new venture being put together to promote and showcase coaches. If you would like more information and wish to be considered, please [hit reply](#) and send a profile/bio of your experience, your commitment, a link to your website and your target market. We will be launching soon.



🌀 I am including this again because I just don't want people to miss reading about Leigh!

Glass is an art medium that is being used more and more these days – all the lovely jewelry, in hotels, restaurants and more. Leigh Adams is a true creative master in glass and mosaic – which can also be glass.

She has been invited to work in many countries throughout the world, and she loves to work with children.

Leigh is as multi-faceted as her mosaics. I could fill these whole pages with all the types of art she does, but let me just give you a few of her words:

I am a glass and mosaic artist seeking commissions that create a world of color and ambience for my clients. I delight in designing original pieces of work that both inspire and enliven, creating ambience and atmosphere. You can see my work at the LA County Arboretum where I am Artist in Residence as well as at local institutions and private homes and gardens. Please take a look at my website, [Click here](#) or call me at 626 797 3728.

Begin seeing your dreams in the spaces most important to you!



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

🌀 Do you like live theater? Are you accessible to Westwood, Los Angeles? As you probably know from these pages, Fifty-Fifty Leadership has been a part of the CREATE program at the **Geffen Theater** in Westwood for several years. In order to receive the free tickets which we provide for our members, we must attend an evening meeting at the theater approximately every 6 -8 weeks. We provide them feedback from our members who have used the tickets, and we learn about the upcoming show. There are at least 20 other non-profits represented, so it is also good and fun networking too – and they even feed us a **free dinner**.

If you would be willing to attend these meetings on behalf of Fifty-Fifty Leadership, you will have the opportunity to have two **free tickets** to each show for which you have attended the meeting.

Interested? Call Pauline Field at 818-243-2322 or email her at pfield@5050leadership.org

🌀 **The 2nd Annual Women of the World Awards will take place on March 13th, 2010** and we hope **YOU** will join us to help make this year's awards even better.



**Sunday, September 13
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.
– Planning Meeting**

La Pintoresca Branch Library, 1355 N. Raymond, Pasadena, CA
91103

Last year's event was a huge success and we expect next year's to be even bigger! We already have one of our honorees and are considering the other two. This is a fun and dedicated group of volunteers – come join us! It's FREE, we serve light refreshments, and all we ask is that you come ready to take on a piece of the project that best suits your talents, time and interests.

RSVP would be great – but if you don't you can show up anyway!
info@5050leadership.org or call **818-243-2322**



WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP – THE LIE OF THE “GLASS CEILING”

Thanks to Wired Woman Publisher, Monica Hubbard for this:

A recent article in the Harvard Business Review by Alice H. Eagly and Linda L. Carli asks us to put an end to the myth of the Glass Ceiling. In their article they point to why this metaphor does not do justice to the travesty that is the lack of women in leadership positions.

For one thing, it assumes that the only barrier is at the top. Wrong. Women face barriers each step of the way. A more powerful metaphor, they espouse, would be that of a labyrinth. Women who aspire to powerful, leadership positions face a “complex journey toward a goal worth striving for.” “Passage through a labyrinth is not simple or direct, but requires persistence, awareness of one's progress, and a careful analysis of the puzzles that lie ahead.”

The article continues with an exploration of some of the obstacles women face. If you are interested in leadership, the article is worth reading.

[Read the Article](#)



WRITING FELLOWSHIPS

Thanks to Kelly Hayes-Raitt, Author and herself a recipient of writing fellowships for letting us know about these:

2009 Culinary Writing Fellowship ~ deadline 9/10/09

The Duncan Eat-Write Fellowship will be awarded to an author writing a cookbook or work of fiction or nonfiction that involves a love of food or healthful eating. This Fellowship provides a residency in the Writers' Colony Culinary Suite equipped with full test kitchen. The Culinary Suite and test kitchen were designed, sponsored by and featured in Renovation Home Magazine.

The Duncan Eat-Write Fellowship is a two-week fellowship entitling the recipient to free residency at the Writers' Colony at Dairy Hollow in the historic arts village of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Each resident has a private suite with writing space, private bath, wireless and/or cable hook-up, uninterrupted writing time, dinner prepared five nights a week and served in our community dining room, the camaraderie of other professional writers when you want it, and a fully stocked community kitchen for breakfast and lunch.

Residencies may be scheduled through December 10, 2009 only, and may be split into two separate stays. Fellows may elect to stay additional time at the reduced rate of \$315 a week.

Please note: This Fellowship will be awarded on a rolling entry basis, so applicants are encouraged to apply early. Final application date for entry to be postmarked is September 10. Fellowship applications must be accompanied by a non-refundable \$35 application fee. The Fellowship will be awarded no later than September 30, for fellowships to be scheduled through December 10, 2009.

For more info and to apply, please visit: <http://www.writerscolony.org/fellowships/>



2. 2009 Imaginative Writing Fellowship: Sci-fi, historical works, fantasy, horror, etc.

The "Another World" Writing Fellowship will be awarded to an author writing a work of fiction, nonfiction or poetry that imagines a world different from today: Sci-fi, historical works, fantasy, horror, mystery set in another era, etc.

The Fellowship entitles the recipient to two weeks free residency at the Writers' Colony at Dairy Hollow in beautiful and charming Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Each resident has a private suite with bedroom, writing space, private bath, private entrance, wireless and/or cable hook-up, uninterrupted writing time, dinner prepared five nights a week and served in our community dining room, the camaraderie of other professional writers when wanted, and a fully stocked community kitchen for breakfast and lunch.

Residencies may be scheduled through December 10, 2009 only, and may be split into two separate stays. Fellows may elect to stay additional time.

For more info (including deadline) and to apply, please visit: <http://www.writerscolony.org/fellowships/>



3. Childrens and Young Adult Writing Fellowship

The Kid Lit! Fellowship will be awarded to an author writing a work of fiction or non-fiction for children or young adults. It provides a two-week fellowship entitling the recipient to free residency at the Writers' Colony at Dairy Hollow in the historic arts village of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Each resident has a private suite with writing space, private bath, wifi and/or cable hook-up, uninterrupted writing time, dinner prepared five nights a week and served in our community dining room, the camaraderie of other professional writers when wanted, and a fully stocked community kitchen for breakfast and lunch.

Residencies may be scheduled from March 10, 2010 to December 10, 2010, and may be split into two separate stays. Fellows may elect to stay additional time.

Fellowship applications and a non-refundable \$35 application fee are due January 20, 2010, with winners announced February 20, 2010, for fellowships to be scheduled March 10 - December 10, 2010.

For more info and to apply, please visit: <http://www.writerscolony.org/fellowships/>



4. Crystal Bridges Architecture & Design Writing Fellowship

A four week residency with travel stipend.

The Writers' Colony is pleased to offer the 2010 Architecture & Design Fellowship sponsored by Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art. With an emphasis on the fields of American architecture, landscape architecture, crafts and furnishings, this Fellowship is designed to support qualified arts professionals and arts commentators. The Fellowship is open to a range of architecture & design writing genre, criticism, history, regionalism, globalism, public art, museum practice, and biography; as well as to artists compiling a presentation on a body of work.

A Fellowship entitles the recipient to free residency at the Writers' Colony at Dairy Hollow, in the historic arts village of Eureka Springs, Arkansas. Each resident has a private suite with writing space, private bath, wifi and/or cable hook up, uninterrupted writing time, dinner prepared five nights a week and served in our community dining room, the camaraderie of other professional writers when wanted, and a fully stocked community kitchen for breakfast and lunch.


Recipients will be asked to donate their time (usually half a day) to two outreach events. One off-campus outreach will take the Fellow into underserved rural communities and schools in the region. The second outreach will be a presentation at Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art.

Deadline for submissions is February 1, 2010. Residency to be scheduled March 10 - December 10, 2010.

For more info and to apply, please visit: <http://www.writerscolony.org/fellowships/>



HEALTH

 The first week in August was world Breastfeeding Week. Cacilia Kim reported in Womens Enews, "In recent years, our understanding of the benefits of breast milk has steadily risen above being mere nourishment to something akin to medicine or even a vaccine. Indeed, the U.S. Transportation Security Administration puts breast milk in the same category as "liquid medications."

The Surgeon General, writing in the American Dietetic Association's Journal has this to say about how breastfeeding is great for prevention, both for child and mother. If you or someone you know is breastfeeding, or wants to, and has to return to work while still breastfeeding, take note of the last paragraph. Talk to your employer about supporting you in this, and if you need extra help in making your case, go to La Leche League's website - [Click here](#). They are the oldest organization promoting breastfeeding and they have resources you can use. They also have support groups online and in person.

"...A good place to focus prevention efforts is with our children. We know that breastfeeding is a safe, time-proven feeding method that helps infants to have a healthful start in life. The American Dietetic Association (ADA) has long recognized the value of breastfeeding.

For most women, breastfeeding is biologically possible. Both babies and mothers gain many benefits from breastfeeding. Breast milk is easy to digest and contains antibodies that can **protect infants** from bacterial and viral infections. Also, research indicates that **women who breastfeed may have lower rates of certain breast and ovarian cancers**.

A common reason cited for not planning to breastfeed is that the mother will be returning to work. Women are a significant part of the work force. One out of three women will return to work within 3 months of giving birth and two out of three women will return to work within 6 months of giving birth. Many mothers will return within 6 weeks or even sooner.

Until recently, when breastfeeding mothers returned to work, they faced the challenge of maintaining an adequate milk supply. But many employers have discovered that accommodating employees who breastfeed is good business. The Office on Women's Health in the US Department of Health and Human Services notes that the health benefits to mother and baby conveyed by breastfeeding translate into reduced costs to employers due to lower health care costs, decreased absenteeism, enhanced productivity, improved employee satisfaction, and a better corporate image." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association - Volume 108, Issue 7 (July 2008)*

☞ **Birth control.** It seems that wherever you are on the "choice" issue, cutting down both on unwanted pregnancies as well as sexually transmitted diseases is something that we should all be able to agree on. As a country we are more than a little uptight about sex, which is as natural as eating and sleeping. Let's help young people have healthy sexual relations without being burdened by getting pregnant or getting an STD. Planned Parenthood of Los Angeles has a program where they go to nightclubs and pass out condoms. So this is a way to have fun and do good. You can join their Street Team and help out on Club Nights!

Contact their Outreach Coordinator: (323) 388-6483 or email ppla-volunteers@pp-la.org

☞ **Alternative Group Therapy and Healing For CANCER**

Worry too much about your future? Have difficulty getting a full night's sleep?
Live with anxiety and stress that stops you from enjoying life?
That doesn't work for beating cancer!!

Discover self-hypnosis and become your own best therapist. Heal your inner fears and wounds, learn how to let go, and live your true self ...

The goal of this group is to make your experience in dealing with cancer easier, create a healing space, and allow you to communicate and express your deepest fears and desires.

- * Get re-acquainted with your body, accept yourself and where you are at.
- * Learn how to relax and calm yourself easily and effortlessly.
- * Achieve a deeper mind-body connection and fuel your inner healer.

Uncover and resolve old beliefs, thoughts and actions that make it hard for your bodily systems to work properly. Let's change these attitudes, patterns of thoughts and behaviors.

We help you find your way to dealing with your difficult emotional issues in a supportive, caring and open group setting with other women who are going through the same as you.

This session may become a time and a place for women to express some of their deepest thoughts and feelings. There may be some tears, but more importantly, there will be laughter, feelings of joy and a true connection - all in a loving, nurturing and supportive environment.

Come join us on and open yourself to new possibilities.

When: Wednesday, September 2

Where: InnerSite Building, 208 S. Louise St. . Glendale, CA 91205

Time: 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Cost: \$15.00 pp

Contact : Liza at 818.551.1501 for more information.

Must be registered to participate. RSVP is required. Space is limited.

Light refreshments will be served!

🌀 **Senator Patty Murray of Washington State had the following in her August newsletter:**

I told the stories of two Washington residents who lost their jobs, lost their health care, and ultimately lost their lives. Janet in Seattle and Kelly in Puyallup both felt that something was wrong, but put off going to the doctor because they no longer had insurance. By the time they finally decided to go in, it was too late - Janet had stage four throat cancer, and Kelly died of an ovarian cyst the morning of her appointment.

From Senator Murray's floor speech:

"I think the fact that these stories are possible in the greatest and richest country in the world is simply shameful. So when I hear some of my colleagues from across the aisle saying that we should slow down, saying that we should take more time, or that we are trying to reform health care too fast, I think of Kelly, and I think of Janet. We cannot continue to play politics with the most important thing to our nation's families - the health of their loved ones."

🌀 **In case you missed this last month. Please print it out and keep this important information, or give it to people who might need it, or email it to them:**

Los Angeles County now offers **free test kits** for women to find out if they have Chlamydia or gonorrhea, two sexually transmitted diseases. Go to DontThinkKnow.org for details on how to get your kit.

🌀 **No health insurance? Here's a list of resources:**

HealthyCity.org has created a database of hundreds of organizations providing free and low-cost care for the uninsured

The Partnership for Prescription Assistance program can help find reduced-cost or even free programs specific to a patient's locale and condition Go to HelpingPatients.org or call (888)477-2669

In Los Angeles County:

The county Department of Health website gives you information on its hospitals and clinic programs UCLA's Clinical Dental Center provides services at about 50% of going rates. Click here: UCLA or call (310)206-3904

Department of Mental Health has a 24-hour help line at (800)854-7771 and can give information on no-or-low cost services

Orange County:

Click here for the [OC Health Website](#) and click on “Clinics and Hospital locations.”

Riverside County:

[Riverside County Medical website](#)

San Bernardino County:

The county hospital is in Arrowhead and has several outpatient clinics-

[Medical Center](#)

Ventura County:

The medical center is the hub of the public medical service system-

[Medical Center](#)



BOOKS

Rather than having book reviews this month, instead, what about the book that YOU want to write? Are you writing a book? Thinking about writing a book? Have written a book and thinking of what to do with it now? Well, perhaps you want to consider taking some action, and joining a writing group. Below isn't just another group. This one will really help you get moving and hone your writing skills. Ellen Snortland, one of our founding Board members is a published author, columnist and a brilliant coach. Here's information about her classes and her private coaching:

Writers' Workout

Three Tuesday **or** Wednesday evenings each month,
led by “Beauty Bites Beast” author, journalist, and Pulitzer prize nominated playwright, Ellen Snortland at her home in Altadena, CA.

OK, you have an inner writer locked in you. What are you doing to release him/her? Talking about it? Do you have a novelist in there? Do you have a murder-mystery writer screaming to emerge? Do you have the next best selling non-fiction author trapped inside, with no apparent “how to” get the book done in sight?

Perhaps you need to make a commitment to work out your “writerly” self. Maybe you need to put some money where your mouth is. Like physical fitness, writing fitness requires strength, time and discipline. Some people can work out on their own. Most of us need support, something like “Writers' Workout,” the gym for writers.

Tuition is \$100 per month for the first year; \$75 per month thereafter.

Writing wimps need not apply. It takes courage to write! (3 month minimum commitment.)
3 evenings per month, from 7:30- 9:30p.m.

First Time Non-Fiction Book Writers!

Are you serious about writing a book? Do you keep thinking that “tomorrow” or “some day” will be the magic time for you to start? Did you already start your book but are “stuck”? Or have you finished the first draft but are clueless about the “what's next” part? Ellen Snortland can help you move to the next phase of your book with fun, grace and ease!

Maybe you need to make an investment in your own work. People often become more serious about their art when they put money behind their commitments. Ellen Snortland, author of “Beauty Bites Beast,” Pasadena Weekly columnist and playwright does private coaching with her consulting business “My First Book Coach.”

Rates are:

\$125 per hour with a 3 hour minimum commitment. Free 1/2 hour consultation. Do you live in another

time zone? No problem! I SKYPE all over the world!
(Rates negotiable in customized "packages.")



Losing My Religion for Equality

by Former President Jimmy Carter
Tuesday, July 21, 2009

This is a very powerful article – particularly coming from a former U.S. President. I recommend you read the whole article – it is empowering.

Women and girls have been discriminated against for too long in a twisted interpretation of the word of God.

I have been a practicing Christian all my life and a deacon and Bible teacher for many years. My faith is a source of strength and comfort to me, as religious beliefs are to hundreds of millions of people around the world. So my decision to sever my ties with the Southern Baptist Convention, after six decades, was painful and difficult. It was, however, an unavoidable decision when the convention's leaders, quoting a few carefully selected Bible verses and claiming that Eve was created second to Adam and was responsible for original sin, ordained that women must be "subservient" to their husbands and prohibited from serving as deacons, pastors or chaplains in the military service.

[Read the rest of the article](#)



WOMEN OF NOTE



Eunice Kennedy Shriver was credited with playing a major role in changing the perception of mental retardation. When she began her work in the field half a century ago, it was common for mentally disabled people to be placed in institutions that did little more than warehouse them. Through her programs and hands-on efforts, she demonstrated that with appropriate help, most developmentally disabled people can lead productive and useful lives.

She founded the movement that became Special Olympics, the largest movement for acceptance and inclusion for people with intellectual disabilities in the history of the world. Her work transformed the lives of hundreds of millions of people across the globe, and they in turn are her living legacy.

In the 1950s, as executive vice president of the Joseph P. Kennedy Jr. Foundation she published fitness standards and tests for people with intellectual disabilities that became widely used.

"Like diabetes, deafness, polio, or any other misfortune, mental retardation can happen in any family," Shriver wrote. It was different from mental illness, she said, and there were no grounds for the belief, widely held at the time, that people with the condition were belligerent or unmanageable.

"The truth is that 75 to 85 percent of the retarded are capable of becoming useful citizens with the help of special education and rehabilitation," Shriver wrote. "Another 10 percent can learn to make small contributions, not involving book learning, such as mowing a lawn or washing dishes."

Shriver organized the Special Olympics in 1968. The first competition, a two-day affair at Soldier Field in Chicago, attracted 1,000 contestants from 26 states and Canada. Although a number of famous athletes heeded her request to attend, the spectator turnout was minuscule, and most of the media declined to cover it.

The Special Olympics have become the world's largest year-round sports program for mentally disabled children and adults. More than 2.5 million athletes in 180 countries take part in competitions each year.

In 1982, Shriver founded the Community of Caring, a program designed to prevent teenage pregnancy and reduce the relatively high incidence of intellectual disabilities among children of teenage mothers. The program emphasizes values and remaining in school, and it involves parents and teachers as well as children. It also works to combat drug and alcohol abuse.

Shriver's honors included the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian award, which was conferred on her in 1984 by President Ronald Reagan.

Shriver, a pencil-thin woman with a big, toothy smile, was well known for her willingness to get close to those she was trying to help -- joining children in their games, listening to and encouraging them, talking to their parents.

"I think that really the only way you change people's attitudes or behavior is to work with them," she told an interviewer. "Not write papers or serve on committees. Who's going to work with the child to change him -- with the juvenile delinquent and the retarded? Who's going to teach them to swim? To catch a ball? You have to work with the person. It's quite simple, actually."

Eunice Mary Kennedy was born July 10, 1921, at the Kennedy residence in Brookline, Mass. She grew up there and in the Bronx and Bronxville, N.Y. She was educated at Catholic schools, and at one time the family thought she might become a nun.

She graduated in 1943 from Stanford University with a Bachelor of Science degree in sociology. She was executive secretary of the National Conference on Prevention and Control of Juvenile Delinquency in the Justice Department. Having gained control of a \$1 million trust fund at 21, she accepted a salary of \$1 a year. She worked as a social worker at the federal penitentiary for women in Alderson, W.Va., in Chicago at the House of the Good Shepherd, a youth shelter, and with the city's juvenile court system.

Eunice Kennedy Shriver died August 11th. She was 88.



Bruce Mitchell, Feminist, recently sent the link to Forbes Magazine's list of the **100 Most Powerful Women**. When I looked at the list, I was appalled – by placement of some people – such as Hillary Rodham Clinton # 36 instead of in the top ten, and the absence of others, such as the Honorable Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, President of Liberia. There are several pages of readers' comments – which were very interesting – often naming women, particularly from Africa and Asia, who were left out of the list.

Take a look by clicking here, [Forbes Article](#) and then send us an email with your comments.
[Comment Here](#)



WOMEN AROUND THE WORLD

🌸 **ConversationsForABetterWorld.com** is a new blog that is part of Americans for UNFPA: For the Health & Dignity of Women Everywhere. There are some really interesting comments on this blog that show us again the huge disparity between life in Western countries such as the U.S. and those with

high poverty and cultural values that still treat women as commodities. Below is one of the comments. Do take the time to click on the link and read the others:

The feminization of AIDS and poverty are linked in a cycle that practically ensures the spread of the disease, even if a vaccine were developed.

For the 51 million of girls around the world who were married off as children, marriage is risky sexual behavior. A girl who is married off at 12 or 13-years-old is regarded as a commodity by her family – property to be traded to feed the other children or to repay debts. Or she is property taken in exchange for a dowry.

She has no ability to negotiate condom use with her husband. And as he is likely to be 10 or more years older than his child bride, the chances that he is already infected can be huge.

It is in these societies where the stigma of AIDS tends to remain so great that women breastfeed their children even if they know they are HIV positive rather than risk being ostracized and abandoned.

When this woman who lost her childhood to marriage eventually dies of complications of AIDS, she is likely to leave daughters. In desperation some of them turn to sex work to survive.

We will never get a handle on the spread of HIV unless we put an end to early marriage and keep girls in school. Educated girls marry later and tend to have more economic stability. These are big challenges and they will take time but the alternative is to wait for a vaccine and that will only combat AIDS. The underlying problems will remain.

[Read all the comments](#)

☞ **Mexico's** federal government in 2007 passed a domestic violence law to protect victims, created a national anti-violence commission and appointed a special prosecutor to rein in gender abuse.

Yet, these efforts have been "ineffective," said outgoing federal legislator Maricela Contreras, who heads Congress' gender equality committee, in a recent statement.

More than half of all Mexican states have not yet put the domestic violence law, passed in 2007, into effect. In Juarez, the border city whose unsolved murders of more than 400 women has drawn international notoriety, many of the killers still roam free.



Special prosecutor Guadalupe Morfin (left) said that "murder is not a federal crime" – hard to imagine. Morfin says her office is, "a model that works to empower victims and one where a team of psychologists, social workers and lawyers work in coordination" with investigators.

She acknowledged that the central state of Guerrero has a murder rate of 5 of every 100,000 women. In Mexico State, an area near Mexico City where low-income families migrate to try and find work, since 2005, over 650 women have been brutally murdered, many of them raped and mutilated. The number has increased steadily to 176 cases in 2008 from 26 in 2001.

Few of the criminals have been brought to justice; only 12 percent have been convicted.

Excerpted from Women's ENews. [To read the whole story click here](#)

☞ On August 5, a **Sudanese** court adjourned the case Lubna Ahmed al-Hussein (right), who faces 40 lashes and a fine if found guilty for wearing "indecent" trousers. The case has been adjourned to September 7, at which time it will be determined whether Hussein, a journalist who also works with the United



Nations, has legal immunity. Hussein was charged with public indecency after she was arrested last month, along with 12 other women, who were wearing trousers at a Khartoum restaurant, Agence France-Press reported.

🔗 **Rape in Congo**

Excerpted from an article by [Stephanie McCrummen](#), Washington Post Foreign Service Monday, August 10, 2009; 4:09 PM

LUGUNGU, Congo -- An already staggering epidemic of rape has become markedly worse since the January deployment of tens of thousands of poorly trained, poorly paid Congolese soldiers, with people in front-line villages such as this one saying the soldiers are not so much hunting rebels as hunting women.

"To avoid getting raped, after 6 p.m., women are not allowed to go out of the house," said Maria Bitondo, who said she was among three women attacked by a soldier last month. "With the soldiers here, no woman is safe to go out and walk. We do not even go to the bathroom at night."

"We have to speak out against the impunity of those in positions of authority who either commit these crimes or condone them," said Secretary of State Hillary in Kinshasa.

But highlighting the dismissive attitude toward women and their plight, U.S officials have applauded the operation, calling it an important diplomatic step in mending a destructive relationship between Congo and Rwanda.

The spike in rapes since January is being widely blamed on the army with 60,000 soldiers: in the areas they are deployed, rapes have doubled or tripled. Aid groups said the number of rapes so far this year is probably in the **thousands**.

Though Congolese President Joseph Kabila recently declared a policy of "zero tolerance" for sexual violence, fewer than a dozen soldiers have been convicted of rape this year.

As women here do most mornings, Madelena Ngalya left the village around 9 a.m. one recent day and walked alone along a path through the jungle to her farm. The 56-year-old widow had been planting there for about an hour when she saw a soldier at the edge of the field. He walked toward her.

"I started trembling when I saw him," she said. "I felt unable to cry, even to scream. I said, 'My son, how are you?'" The soldier asked whether she was by herself. "I said, 'I'm alone here,' she said. "He said, 'If you cry, we have many soldiers in the jungle, and when others hear you cry, they will come to you, too.' My body was like dead. Then he did what he wanted to do."

It is stories like this that make the work of Beauty Bites Beast and its leader, Ellen Snortland, so urgently needed. If we can get the word out – through NGOs, through education in all formats, about how girls and women such as Madelena can defend themselves, many will not have to suffer such indignities, such brutality. Ed.

More stories like that of 20-year-old Rosa Musombwa will be heard: Rosa took off so fast she left her flip-flops behind. When the soldier caught her skirt, she twisted out of it and kept on running through the jungle. When he caught her again by her underwear, she ripped them off and kept running, finally jumping into a sandy river. The soldier jumped in after her, but finally gave up.

Until we can change cultures and governments to treat women with equal respect and dignity to men, we have to learn to defend ourselves, to learn how to say no, to know that we as women have the same rights to be here in this world as do men.

Their fiercely patriarchal society is encouraging soldiers to rape. Girls are often forced to marry as young as 13. A kind of ritualized rape is part of a boy's coming of age. Prostitution is common. And in general, women are expected not so much to enjoy their husbands as to service them.

"According to our custom, even though he's your husband, when he needs sex, he doesn't have to ask your permission," said one woman, "In this territory, men take women like an instrument that doesn't have any value."

Sitting outside a house on a hill, the deputy commander of the 52nd brigade, Lt. Col. Padiri Dieu Donne, denied that any of his soldiers had raped women in Lugungu. "We can't say all of us are saints," Donne said. "But the problem of rape doesn't exist in the place where we are."

[Whole story...](#)

World Pulse is an organization that looks at global issues through the eyes of women. In their latest online volume there is an article called, "The new Economic Visionaries." Here's an excerpt from **Wahu Kaara**, a renowned expert on debt, aid, privatization, and human rights, and the Executive Director of the Kenya Debt Relief Network. With Brazil's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva, she launched the Global Call to Action Against Poverty, the single largest global mobilization of citizens against poverty in history:

Atieno, a single mother of three who works in one of the corporate multinational flower farms that dot and pollute Kenya's Lake Naivasha. She lives with her children in a shared single room divided by a curtain. She has no idea of what "Valentines Day" is, yet she works close to 12 hours a day and earns a meager pay to satisfy the emotional passions of the West.

When I read this, it started me thinking of the abundance in my life and what I take for granted. What do I buy that has been produced by someone who has the quality of life of Atieno – or worse? As I hear the loud voices of business men and women, politicians and financial executives who are yelling and screaming that they do not want their applectart overturned – whether it be to hang on to their million dollar compensation packages, or their healthcare – I wonder how our system has become so broken that human kindness, care and concern for others less fortunate does not enter into the equation. How many of them would no longer buy flowers from the company that employs Atieno if they read of the conditions under which she lives?

Read the whole article on Wahu Kaara and the other visionaries - [Click Here](#)

Monica Hubbard of Wired Women let us know about this:

The New York Times Magazine has a special edition out this week called Saving the World's Women.

[Click here for the Magazine](#)

"The liberation of women could help solve many of the world's problems, from poverty to child mortality to terrorism."



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EVENTS

Please let us know of events in YOUR area that we can post here. If you know of conferences, programs that will inform, educate and inspire, we will consider them for publication. Ed.



Wednesday, September 2

5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Alternative Group Therapy and Healing for CANCER

For more information: See above under "Health"

InnerSite Building, 208 S. Louise St. . Glendale, CA 91205

Cost: \$15.00 pp

Contact : Liza at 818.551.1501 for more information.

Must be registered to participate. RSVP is required. Space is limited.

Light refreshments will be served!



Sunday, September 6

4:00 to 7:00 p.m.

*****A Fun-4-5050 Event*****

Specialty Paper Card Workshop

at the home and studio of Karen Bagnard

www.morethanmermaids.com

Thanks to Mary Ann Feeney, Intuitive for letting us know about this event

517 Wapello Street, Altadena

\$30 – all materials provided - Make as many cards as you like

(This includes \$5 for Fifty-Fifty Leadership)

Bring your imagination and sense of play...bring a friend
(or two)... make new friends... create great art... amaze yourself!

Reserve your space now: 626-798-9307



September 10

5:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Salute to Sisterhood Awards Reception

Presented by

Black Women Organized for Political Action (BWOPA)

Special Guest Speaker: Majora Carter, Emcee: Hon. Surlene Grant

Lake Merritt Sailboat House

Inside Lakeside Park

568 Bellevue Avenue

Oakland, CA

Donation: \$35 per person

To RSVP or for more information, email: staff@bwopa.org or call: 510-763-9523, or [Click here](#)



Sunday, September 13

2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

2nd Annual Women of the World Awards – Planning Meeting

La Pintoresca Branch Library

1355 N. Raymond, Pasadena, CA 91103

Last year's event was a huge success and we expect next year's to be even bigger! We already have one of our honorees and are considering the other two. This is a fun and dedicated group of volunteers – come join us! It's FREE, we serve light refreshments, and all we ask is that you come ready to take on a piece of the project that best suits your talents, time and interests.

RSVP would be great – but if you don't you can show up anyway!
WOW@5050leadership.org or call **818-243-2322**



Thursday, September 17

7:00 – 10:00 p.m.

"Removing the Mask: Art and Soul to Shatter the Silence of Sexual Violence"

Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, 135 Grand Ave, Los Angeles.

Sexual violence is a silent epidemic that affects us all - **1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be sexually abused before the age of eighteen.**

This year's event promises to be a highlight of the season featuring performance art with special inspirational guest speaker #1 NY Times best selling author Dave Pelzer promoting resilience. The artists' creativity will be spotlighted to create social change and shatter the silence that surrounds sexual violence.

Main Event (Fifth Floor) featuring performance art and International Best Selling Author Dave Pelzer, best known for his memoir A Child Called "It"

Your financial support will assist PAVE to continue to educate to shatter the silence of sexual violence. PAVE's work has been featured on The Today Show, CNN, and in Time Magazine.

This event is supported by:

Los Angeles County Commission for Women
Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Council
Commission on the Status of Women - Glendale

Fifty-Fifty Leadership

SHIELD Women's Self Defense

Costume Designers Guild

aLine Media

Brooks Institute

Lana Fuchs Costume

The Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma (IVAT)

Family Violence and Sexual Assault Institute (FVSAI)

****EARLY TICKETS ONLY \$135!! Purchase today before the price goes up to \$150!**



Wednesday, September 23rd

11:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Escoe Bliss Annual Clothing Drive to benefit Working Wardrobes

www.workingwardrobes.org

Bring donations of your gently worn suits to

Escoe Bliss Headquarters, 16520 Bake Parkway, Suite 155

Irvine, CA 92618

Lunch provided by BJ's Restaurant & Brewhouse

For more information, call: 949-336-6444



Thursday, September 24th

7 to 8:30pm

Learn How To Preserve and Organize Your Memories

Catherine Yesayan, a new grandmother, is having a gathering of sharing stories and learning how to preserve and organize our memories. This fun workshop is conducted by her friend Debra Synott, a Creative Memories consultant. Please join me to learn about making digital or traditional picture albums and how to organize your pictures. Creative Memories has something for everyone and we'll have a lot of fun! Hope you can make it and feel free to bring a friend. Please respond soon so Catherine can save a place for you.

910 Lorinda Dr. Glendale 91206

Catherine: 818 244 3051 | 818 497 0707



October 1, 2009

8:30 am to 4:00 pm

Peace over Violence presents
Policy, Programs and Progress -- Learn about innovative
programs, and policy development in teen dating and
sexual violence prevention.

The California Endowment,
Center for Healthy Communities (Yosemite Room)
1000 N Alameda St, Los Angeles, CA

Who Should Attend:
Youth violence prevention stakeholders, such as youth
advocates, teachers, counselors, law enforcement officers,
domestic and sexual violence prevention specialists.

* \$60 Registration Fee: Includes Breakfast and Lunch

To Register: [Click Here](#)

Questions: Ralph Tabares phone: 213.955.9090 ext.118 email: ralph@peaceoverviolence.org



October 4 and 5

Washington, D.C.

Women, Money, Power Summit

The Feminist Majority Foundation invites you to a summit to ensure women, and women's programs and issues
receive equal dollars and women's votes gain equal power.

Congressional Visit Day, October 6, 2009

The Washington Court Hotel

525 New Jersey Avenue, NW

Washington, DC 20001

[Link to Registration](#)

Or call : 703.522.2214



October 9 & 10

3rd Annual Women of Color Conference

Atlanta, Georgia

The Feminist Majority Foundation is proud to partner with Spelman College, the Spelman Feminist
Majority Leadership Alliance, the Spelman Women's Research and Resource Center, and Bennett
College for Women to bring you this conference.

The 3rd Annual Women of Color Conference will bring together feminist activist leaders from
communities of color around the country. Student leaders will learn about various social justice
issues and come together as women of color and allies to come together to strategize for real
sociopolitical change as part of a larger movement for justice and equality.

By focusing on advocacy and activism to create political change, the 3rd Annual Women of Color
Conference will help to unite all young women to take action in the fight for equality! Topics to be
addressed include women's health, violence against women, health care reform, the economy, global
reproductive rights, media, and much more.

Take advantage of early bird registration discounts BEFORE SEPTEMBER 25th and register today!
After September 25th, the regular registration fee will be \$20 for individuals and \$15 per person in
groups of 5+. To arrange group registration at the discounted rate or for more information, please
contact the Campus Team at campusteam@feminist.org or 866-444-FMLA.



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Want to get word out about your business? Advertising in The Equality Standard will get your information in front of over 2,000 viewers – and more. Our readers are women and men of all ages and varied interests. To learn more and discuss if this indeed would be a good marketing tool for you, please call 818.243.2322 or email us at info@5050Leadership.org



FINAL WORDS

From Joan Hoffman, Marketing Maven, sent on the eve of her 42nd year of "Wedded Bliss":

Let me not to the marriage of true minds
Admit impediments
Love is not love which alters when it
Alteration finds
Or bends with the remover to remove:
O, no! it is an ever fixed mark,
That looks on tempests and is never shaken;
It is the star to every wandering bard,
Whose worth's unknown, although his
Height be taken
Love's not time's fool,
Though rosy lips and cheeks
Within his bending sickle's compass come;
Love alters not with his brief hours
And weeks
But bears it out even to the edge of doom
If this be error, and upon me prov'd
I never writ, nor no man ever
Lov'd

William Shakespeare



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