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In Memory of

Officer Joseph Shinners
09/25/1989–01/05/2019

See pp. 82-83 for a special dedication

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Foreword

I am honored to provide a short foreword to this special edition of *The Journal of Student Leadership*, focusing on the theme of women and leadership. For most of my career, I had not deliberately taken the time to think about gender and leadership. However, in 2005, when I returned to Asia after two decades in the U.S., I was struck by the fact that there was so much new wealth on the continent, but, in many ways, women still lagged behind. This observation, of course, applies to the rest of the world. The higher one goes up the leadership pyramid, the fewer women one finds.

In 2011, I received funding from the Lee Kuan Yew School of Public Policy (National University of Singapore) and from the Rockefeller Foundation to do a study on women and leadership in Asia. This led to a report that was subsequently launched in Shanghai. Entitled "Rising to the Top?" the report argued that more women were needed in leadership roles in Asia for three reasons: 1) women were needed to fill the talent gap—i.e., organizations could not fill job openings because they were not able to tap rising leaders from among the many educated women in Asia; 2) women's perspectives and contributions were necessary to address intractable problems like inequality, environmental degradation, violent conflict, and others, and also to sustain innovation. Research shows that gender and other types of diversity can be a positive factor for problem-solving and organizational health; 3) having more women in leadership is the *right* thing to do—it reflects moral values, especially fairness and inclusion.

To be a woman in leadership is to come to a recognition early on that you ARE capable of the task before you—that you are smart enough, entrepreneurial enough, deserving enough. It means that you are not afraid of your own dreams, strengths, and ambitions. The words of environmental activist and Nobel Laureate, Wangari Maathai, capture these sentiments when she said, "Finally I was able to see that if I had a contribution I wanted to make, I must do it, despite what others said. That I was OK the way I was. That it was all right to be strong."

My moment of seeing this truth came soon after I gave birth to my first child in New York City. I was a young, new mother and found myself standing one day at my kitchen sink (during my maternity leave)—doing dishes with my hands, having a discussion with a colleague over a cordless phone jammed between my shoulder and right ear, and rocking my beautiful, infant daughter, ensconced in her car seat, with my right foot. I thought, "Wow—I can do this?" I had an epiphany about strengths and capabilities that I did not even know I had, and I knew I could carry on both as a mother and a professional.

It is a sad reality that women have not always been treated as equal to men and that many hurdles (often rooted in perception and culture) have discouraged women from pursuing their dreams. The child-bearing years are especially difficult. That's what some researchers call the stage of the "leaking pipeline," when women self-select out of careers or professional leadership. Everyone loses when this happens. The truth is that women's experiences, perspectives, stories, skills, wisdom, and insights are needed in this complex world. Women's voices are not a threat, but a necessary element for a better world. To be a successful woman in leadership is not to be a carbon copy of men, who have traditionally been the leaders. Rather, a successful female leader is one who brings her own authenticity and experience to the table. Her perspective is needed and is as valuable as the perspectives of her male peers.

Women and men need to have honest and difficult conversations about shifting our culture so that all voices are given the amplification and space they deserve. It is especially important for men and women to understand the implications of women's leadership for the family and society. What are the benefits of having more women in leadership? How can duties and responsibilities at home be more evenly shared? How can femininity and masculinity be redefined for a more fair and just society? How can men and women help lift one another so that all have a fair chance to live a full and fulfilling life? How can those already in

senior positions—both men and women—help mentor and champion those who are just starting out on their leadership journeys? How do we raise and educate young girls and boys so that they see one another and treat one another as equals?

I welcome and champion the discussion that *The Journal of Student Leadership* is having about women in leadership. I look forward to being an advocate for our female students, indeed all our students, as Utah Valley University lives out its mission to provide an exceptional culture in which "include, engage, and achieve" are more than just words—they are a lived reality for everyone.

Astrid S. Tuminez, Ph.D.
President
Utah Valley University

Letter from Student Editors

To Our Fellow Readers,

Previous volumes of *The Journal of Student Leadership* (JSL) have focused broadly on the topic of leadership. For this special issue, the JSL core leadership team wanted to give special consideration to submissions connected to women and leadership. We believe this topic to be very relevant due to Dr. Astrid S. Tuminez recently becoming the first woman president of Utah Valley University. Our authors and artists focused on historical inquiry and women's theory to address factors contributing to women's success. We are pleased to share with you their perspectives.

While conducting our own research on women and mentoring, we, MaKayla and Arianna, discovered there are many women leaders who deserve to be recognized for helping aspiring leaders to advance in their fields. Our hope is to see men and women refine their view of leadership and develop into the individuals they want to become. Kimberle Crenshaw, a law professor and social theorist, reminds us that our identities should not be shaped by a singular part of our background. Women are connected by being women, but it is important to remember that all aspects of identity intersect because of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, ability, class, education, experience, and so on (Crenshaw, 1989, p. 161-162). These traits help mold unique perspectives. Women must utilize varying identities strategically in order to achieve greatness.

We wish to acknowledge our staff's devotion and commitment to creating this special issue. Our authors and artists deserve our full congratulations and gratitude for their contributions to the conversation on women and leadership. We appreciate their patience and dedication during the publication process. Their work will contribute to the ideas of inclusive leadership and diversity throughout the community and the world.

MaKayla Bernardo
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Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex: A Black Feminist Critique of Antidiscrimination Doctrine, Feminist Theory and Antiracist Politics. University of Chicago Legal Forum, 139(1), 139-167. Retrieved from https://heinonline.org/

Letter from Senior Editors

For the first time, *The Journal of Student Leadership* has produced a special issue! Considering the great need for more women in leadership, the students and faculty are excited to present an issue focused on Women and Leadership. We want to emphasize that, if our culture wants more excellent women leaders, both women and men should serve as allies and mentors providing enduring support for the advancement of women. Surely there are many factors at play in helping women successfully lead, but the barriers will never be ameliorated without a common emphasis and support mechanisms in place. We hope this issue contributes in a positive way to the conversation and perhaps to advocacy-focused action plans.

One of the primary goals of the JSL is to promote conversations about leadership among students, faculty, and the wider global community, and we believe this special issue continues successfully along that same vein. Conscientious authors and artists have provided our readers with meaningful content covering topics from motherhood, feminism, gender bias, and home-based nurturing to depictions of women in history and art, outdoor recreation, literacy, and empowerment.

We appreciate our dedicated and innovative staff for their many hours carrying out editing, design, and public relations work. We are grateful for the support received from Utah Valley University's new president, Dr. Astrid Tuminez. Consistent support from the University College Dean's Office, as well as colleagues Dr. Chris Goslin and Beth Reid of the Department of Student Leadership and Success Studies have helped carry the journal forward. We sincerely thank them all.

Benjamin A. Johnson, Ph.D.
Senior Editor

Sandra C. Bennett, M.Ed., M.S.
Faculty Advisor and Editor

Parent Leadership: A Historical Look at Literacy in the Home

Julie K. Nelson
Utah Valley University

This article defines leadership beginning with a parent in the home: the first influential figure in a child's life. Good parenting is emblematic of good leadership, and in turn, fosters what kind of leaders their children will become. Historically, the role of parent-educator has been to teach the fundamentals of reading and writing. While public schools have typically shifted the responsibility away from the parent as primary educator, 21st-century homeschooling has reinstated the parent's leadership role as educator. Additionally, schools are recognizing the compelling need to collaborate with their students' parents and follow their lead to leverage scholastic success. The article also summarizes literacy approaches and programs available to today's parents for enhancing reading skills and lifelong learning.

When considering the most influential person in a young adult's life, parents are at the forefront of leadership. Indeed, parents are usually the primary role models during the formative years of a child's life and strongly continue to influence them throughout their lifespan. Urie Bronfenbrenner's Ecological Model (1995) posits that children nest within many social contexts, the first and central context being the home and parental mentoring. In Bronfenbrenner's model, the young child first interacts at home with parents in the *microsystem*. The parents' mentorship in the microsystem enlarges to include other groups that impact a child such as school, church, community, and peers. Each sequential

system has a bi-directional influence on each other. It is notable that the *mesosystem* defines linkages between interactions in the microsystem which may benefit or hinder the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1995).

One of the leadership roles parents have assumed is teacher, particularly in teaching a child to read and continuing to tutor scholastic development throughout the school-aged years. Extant research (Hill & Tyson, 2009) confirms that parental mentoring is positively associated with student achievement. For example, a child benefits scholastically if parents take an active role in attending parent-teacher conferences, assisting with homework, and reading with their child (Trelease, 2013). Therefore, the two settings of home and school in the mesosystem are positively linked. Using the ecological model, parents influence children through their leadership practices because positive effects in families induce considerably favorable outcomes for children as they pass through and are shaped by other institutional groups.

History of Home Literacy Leadership

In Colonial America, the locus of literacy and moral upbringing was the family. New England parents taught reading as a sacred obligation. Many read the Bible daily to instill Christian virtues and to save the child from sin and ignorance. The Puritan father assumed primary responsibility for reading and teaching literacy to his children; the mother supported and assisted when able. In 1642, Massachusetts enacted the first law that required heads of households to teach children and apprentices to read. Once a week, parents were legally bound to teach catechism to family members. George Washington, Patrick Henry, John Quincy Adams, and Mark Twain are among many notable early American figures who were mostly educated at home by their parents (Winters, 2001).

Following the American Revolution, however, formal schooling began to replace informal home education, and educators *in loco parentis* assumed the parent's role as teacher. Colonies not only established schools but also required attendance. Over time, institutions superseded parental authority, most noticeably by 1918 when every state had enacted a statute for compulsory school attendance. Those who failed to attend were deemed truant and parents were punished. In the course of this transfer of power, the traditional leadership role of parent-educator was supplanted

by the common law doctrine of *parens patriae,* which entitled the state to act as parent to all persons and provide for the common good and individual welfare.

Homeschooling: Educational Leadership

In reaction to governmental control, many parents have slowly re-asserted their leadership rights as their child's primary educator. In the last century, the homeschool movement has grown from a fringe institution to more mainstream. Religious parents who choose to homeschool cite the same reasons as Puritan parents: to integrate their beliefs and moral principles into their children's reading curriculum. Safety and social concerns are currently an exigent cause for homeschooling. In 2012, 91 percent of homeschool parents most frequently cited "a concern about environment of other schools" as their reason for educating their children at home (U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Modern homeschooling became intertwined with the 1960s cause for social justice. The landscape of civil rights and counterculture spawned a shift in educational roles. Parents' rights to educational leadership began to be re-enthroned, fueled by religious convictions, critique of state pedagogy, individual adaptations, or geographical isolation. Philosophical heirs of Jean-Jacques Rousseau asserted the natural setting of the home to be the ideal environment for reading and other interests to flourish.

During the 1980s, a parent-led grassroots network worked to establish legal rights for homeschooling at the state level. The modern homeschool movement began with about 60,000 to 125,000 children, which reflects a significant number of adults taking back the role of academic leadership (Winters, 2001). This mobilization and organization, along with the expansion of the internet to energize the growing movement, created prodigious growth in homeschooling.

> In 2012, there were an estimated 1.8 million homeschooled students in the United States, which is an increase from 850,000 in 1999, when estimates were first reported. In addition, the estimated percentage of the school-age population that was homeschooled increased from 1.7 percent in 1999 to 3.4 percent in 2012 (U.S. Department of Education, 2016, "Homeschooling").

Parent-led education became even more widespread and diverse and an important component for early literacy in America.

Reading and Brain Development in the Early Years

The contemporary home is the context in which children first develop early literacy skills. Parents become nascent mentors as they sing to their infant at birth, repeat rhymes and activity verses, and engage in playful book-related strategies designed for babies. A 2014 policy statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) posits that reading daily at home in the early years is essential for optimal brain development and robust language acquisition (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2014). Early brain synapse development is use-dependent (Tierney & Nelson, 2009). "However, since infant and toddler children are entirely dependent upon parents and older siblings for their experiences, the fate of the child's brain development…rests with a parent" (Trelease, 1995, p. 62). Literacy grows as infants' brains make neural connections in response to repeated sounds and the parent-child emotional bonding. These sounds form word banks that store information necessary for eventual decoding of text and comprehension of meaning. Story reading activates the left hemisphere of the brain, responsible for sound and visual stimuli that promotes imagination and creativity.

Reading aloud with young children fosters a richer vocabulary, phonological awareness, and more complex syntax than child-directed speech. The strength of a child's vocabulary is determined not by the basic lexicon found in everyday conversation but rather by the rare words gained through reading. Regular conversations with preschoolers include about nine rare words per thousand; a children's book contains almost 31 rare words per thousand (Trelease, 2013). As a result of listening to the unique language found in books, children can retrieve stored words to use in their own verbal and written productions.

Trelease (2013) urges parents to be a role model by reading aloud to their child, thereby conditioning their child's brain to associate reading with pleasure, create background knowledge, and increase size of vocabulary. Companionship reading for pleasure and personal enhancement are two of the greatest factors in raising an emergent reader. Bedtime is an optimal time of day to use book reading to connect emotionally and to transition

a child to sleep. Parents today compete with and often relinquish control to technology that delivers books in electronic format. However, the personal and nourishing one-on-one experience of a parent-child interaction cannot be replaced by solitary, passive screen-related entertainment. Leadership, whether in or out of the home, fundamentally succeeds based on the degree of interpersonal relationships.

Parents as Readers and Leaders

Literacy leadership in the home depends upon parents as readers themselves. Parental models for recreational reading have a positive impact on their children (Stevens, 2015). They read a wide variety of electronic and print material such as newspapers, magazines, books, and instructional manuals and share their enthusiasm for knowledge acquisition with family members. As conscientious parents interact with everyday print, they point out the efficacy of environmental print to their children.

Cognitive development contributes to learning as well as social development and is a key predictor of educational success, socio-emotional wellbeing, and economic productivity (Center on the Developing Child, 2012). Parents foster cognitive development when they begin teaching basic reading skills to their children and "include repeated practice of skills over time by setting up opportunities for children to learn" through their modeling and reinforcement productivity (Center on the Developing Child, 2012, para. 4).

Although the school setting is often considered the primary environment to teach children to read, educators have long argued that a teacher cannot replace the parent as the most significant influence in a child's overall educational development. According to the U.S. Department of Education, parent leadership in the home predicts "that a student will receive a high-quality education" (Morrison, 2009, p. 188). Conversely, if parents are poor leaders in the home, external educators will have difficulty reversing the negative effects. Snyder (2011) found that "at the beginning of the school year, if parents are extremely harsh, punitive, and insensitive, even highly supportive teachers cannot counterbalance or repair the damage of harmful parental influences on children's competence" (p. 329). Snyder's study underscores the irreplaceable value of at least one supportive parent in the home reading to and with their child throughout the formative years.

The National Education Association (NEA) supports parental involvement in the school system to maximize student achievement. A "how-to" book written by Bob Chase, former NEA president, and Bob Katz (2002) informs parents in selecting quality teachers for their children, evaluating teacher performance, leading parent-teacher conferences, understanding school testing and learning differences, advocating school safety, and accommodating children with special needs. Other authors such as Walsh (2016) promote parents in taking a larger leadership role in school reform, speaking out on parent choice in student school placement, and ensuring public schools are accountable to the tax-paying public.

Effects of Home Literacy Leadership

Regular reading to children from birth through five years old is strongly linked to kindergarten readiness (Morrow, 2015). Furthermore, reading proficiency by 3rd-grade is the most important predictor of graduation from high school and career success. To that end, the U.S. Federal Government's No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires that parents participate in a two-way symbiotic relationship with the schools to reinstate them in "full partnership" (Morrison, 2009, p. 192). Indeed, parents' early priority of reading to children will determine future scholastic success. Trelease (2013) reported "clear positive gains" for preschoolers in phonemic awareness, language growth, and beginning reading skills—when the household engaged in frequent parent-child reading. These gains continued throughout elementary and secondary school achievement rankings by a 15–40 percent increase of vocabulary acquisition, a 35-point advantage in 4th-grade school assessments, and high school reading scores that correlated with frequency of parents reading to their child in the early years, regardless of income level (Trelease, 2013).

In another study, the breakdown of minutes read at home correlated with academic status. On standardized reading tests, students who were read to for two minutes a day outside of school scored in the 30th percentile; those who were read to for five minutes a day scored in the 50th percentile; those who were read to for ten minutes a day scored in the 70th percentile; and those who were read to for 20 minutes a day scored in the 90th percentile (Morrow, 2015). In sum, test scores dramatically increase in relation to the time a parent reads to their

child. Reading to children for 20 minutes a day has been the tipping point for most at-home reading programs.

Literacy Approaches and Programs

Parents guide developing readers by identifying their preferred genre and reading these "high-interest books" to their children (Stevens, 2015). Furthermore, reading to a child is only part of the experience; discussing the plot, characters, conflicts and resolutions, and other contextual themes support involvement beyond the text. Dialogic reading is a literacy approach with a parent asking questions to their young reader and reinforcing comprehension as they read a book together. It enables the parent and child to have an interactive experience to thereby increase interpretive and evaluative abilities.

Literacy programs abound that promote parent-child reading. Public libraries typically offer summer home reading programs with rewards for reaching goals as well as year-round story time and book clubs for parents and children. Free access to print material is especially crucial for at-risk families who tend to be less involved in teaching literacy skills. Lack of parental involvement increases reading deficiencies in children (Hazzard, 2016). A 2011-2012 National Survey of Child's Health found that of U.S. children ages birth to five years old who were read to daily, 60 percent came from families with incomes 400 percent of the federal poverty threshold or greater and 34 percent came from families with incomes below 100 percent of the poverty threshold (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2014). To address this deficiency, the AAP has promoted Reach Out and Read (ROR), an evidence-based nonprofit organization serving four million children and their families annually since 1989. It has proven effective in increasing the rate at which at-risk parents read more often to their children, in strengthening school readiness, and promoting a positive attitude toward literacy (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2014).

Head Start is a federally funded program created to address the achievement gap between high-functioning and at-risk families. From its inception, Head Start acknowledged the integral part parents play in their child's educational success. It offers resources to parents with many critical issues, including adult literacy programs. Parents learn how to teach better socialization and reading skills to their children, show them stronger

emotional support, and discipline their children more appropriately. Home visits are a staple of the Head Start program. They reinforce the conviction of those invested in the success of children that school is an extension of the home and a teacher is secondary to the parent-educator. Studies have evaluated the treatment effects of Head Start on parents' behavior and report more frequent parent-child reading and cognitive stimulation (Ansari, Purtell, & Gershoff, 2016).

Leading as Children Grow

Research yields consistent results regarding rates of reading as children grow. Common Sense Media (2014) published a meta-analysis profiling how parents continue to lead with literacy throughout their child's life. Unfortunately, rates of reading for pleasure drop as children leave elementary school. "Scholastic's survey of youth (2013) found that the percent of children who report reading for fun five to seven times a week drops from 48% among 6- to 8-year-olds to 39% among 9- to 11-year-olds, 28% among 12- to 14-year-olds, and 24% among 15- to 17-year-olds" (Rideout, 2014, p. 12).

Parent involvement reduces dramatically as the child moves to secondary school. Other than helping their teen complete homework, parents often do not continue in a leadership role in daily reading for pleasure with their adolescent (Rideout, 2014). Although outside interests, such as peers and school, seem to eclipse the parental role, the parent remains an influential person during these years. Reading together and discussing themes within books solidifies that kinship bond essential for transmitting values and behaviors.

Fostering a love of reading is essential for a teen's socio-emotional health at a period of identity formation. Books open an understanding of self through others' lived experiences. They give a teen a belief he can, like the characters in a book, make a significant contribution to the world. Fantasy novels offer the promise that "If you have courage and if you persist, you can overcome any obstacle, conquer any foe" (Trelease, 1995, p. 77). Adolescents benefit when their parents take time to discuss complex plots and real-life application to help them develop critical thinking skills, empathy, and problem-solving strategies that will be necessary for their role as future leaders.

Conclusion

The impact of early mentors to children cannot be overstated. School, home, and other primary contexts find interaction in the mesosystem and are centralized in the parent-child relationship. After decades of public schools ruling the scholastic arena, many modern parents have taken back academic leadership through homeschooling. School systems today operationalize the vital role of parents by forming collaborative partnerships with them. Research is replete with the positive impact parents can have on their child's success in school and in life. One of the single most effective practices is for parents to read frequently and consistently with and to their children, and many programs incentivize parents to do so. Parent-leaders recognize their role in fostering the kind of leaders their children will be one day. These life-long behaviors and skills are built in the home: the laboratory of learning and socializing.

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Gretta and Zoie

Sarah J. Lyle
Pencil

Sometimes leaders aren't the picture-perfect models
that we see in the movies.
Sometimes they are the people that make up
our day-to-day lives.
They are the people that are there for us
when we go through our darkest times.

Mothers Matter

Tracie Whitlock
Utah Valley University

Women, who were once solely relegated to roles of nurturing and homemaking, now excel in all areas of society. They are leaders in education, science, medicine, business, and politics. Their accomplishments are rightly lauded as they climb corporate ladders and break glass ceilings. However, their contributions as leaders in the home are too often demeaned and discredited. It is time for society to recognize that to fully give women the credit they are due, it must include rather than discount the influential role of the mothers who lead, inspire, and encourage the rising generation.

Leadership provided by mothers within their own homes often goes unnoticed but does indeed matter, in spite of societal disregard or diminution of motherhood. Though "literature on family leadership is limited," as Galbraith and Schvaneveldt (2005) asserted, "Good leadership is not only needed within organizational settings, it is needed within families" (p. 220-221). After providing a contextual setting for the argument, this essay will look at some examples demonstrating parental leadership's significance both to children and society, that it can be learned and developed, and that mothers play a significant role in the leadership of families, as well as in their professional pursuits.

According to government reports from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2015 marked the year in which a higher percentage of women possessed a bachelor's degree than men. The educational attainment of the younger

female generation began trending in this direction in 1996 (Baumin & Ryan, 2015), and now among those from twenty-five to thirty-four years old, 37.5% of women have a bachelor's degree or higher, while only 29.5% of men do (Feeney, 2015, para. 4). This is quite an accomplishment considering that historically, a woman's opportunity for higher education has been extremely limited. With greater academic access and advancement, women who once were solely relegated to roles of nurturing and homemaking now excel in all areas of society. They are leaders in science, medicine, business, and politics—all professions that were previously dominated by men. Women serve in the nation's highest court, in the halls of Congress, and in boardrooms across the country. Their accomplishments are rightly lauded as they climb corporate ladders and break glass ceilings.

Much of this progress in the U.S. can be attributed to the feminist protests of the 1960s and 1970s, commonly referred to as second-wave feminism. This movement necessarily "challenged and changed the political and cultural landscape" (Roth, 2006, p. 1). It holistically considered the experience of women in areas such as sexuality, politics, work, and family (Burkett, 2019). Second-wave feminists viewed the idealized domesticity that permeated the media following World War II (Knuttila & Magnan, 2008) as stifling and advocated for women's reproductive rights and for the rights of women to work outside the home.

Unfortunately, one of the negative consequences of the second-wave feminist movement is the continuation of what Fraser and Gordon called "the occlusion and devaluation of women's unwaged domestic and parenting labour" (as cited in Marks, Little, Gaucher, & Noddings, 2016, p. 773). While the African American and Chicana women's movements honored the roles of women *within* the family and viewed them with a sense of pride, the mainstream feminists identified stay-at-home motherhood as a considerable source of women's oppression (Marks et al., 2016). Responding to this, in 1987 Polly Toynbee said, "Feminism is the most revolutionary idea there has ever been. Equality for women demands a change.… It means valuing parenthood as much as we value banking" (as cited in Heath, 2013, p. 22). Over thirty years later, however, it is difficult to make the argument that our society has achieved this type of equality. Feminists have been effective in focusing on the benefits of

economic independence through participation in the paid labor force as the primary means of improving women's lives (Marks et al., 2016). As a result, our nation has made great strides in the advancement of women in the workforce. Women have more opportunities than ever before and are recognized alongside their male counterparts as capable leaders and contributors in many disciplines. However, our society now seems to dictate that women demonstrate their worth in a setting outside of domesticity. In this sense, the feminist movement may have inadvertently colluded to diminish the value of something that has always uniquely belonged to women: motherhood. Too often, society views leadership within the home as irrelevant.

It is not surprising that even highly educated women who have consciously made the choice to prioritize motherhood often feel like their work as mothers is discounted by society. Rubin and Wooten (2007) conducted a qualitative study of ten women who chose to leave their successful careers to devote themselves full-time to the raising of their children. All the women had at least a masters-level degree of education; four were JDs and two were MDs. The study found that each woman made the decision to stay home with her respective children based on an emotional desire to spend more quality time with them. For these women, the choice to stay home and focus on mothering was, and continues to be, influenced by perceived benefits to themselves and their families. However, even while recognizing the value and importance of their newly chosen vocation, they do not feel validated by society. As one mother put it, motherhood is a "position in society [that] isn't…considered…real work" (Rubin & Wooten, 2007, p. 341). At times, it has made them question the worth of what they were doing and wonder if they were living up to their potential. Some have felt embarrassed that they were not working and contributing knowledge and skills to the whole of society. Rubin and Wooten reported that to assuage "their discomfort with being 'just a mom,'" many of the women "let others know that they were professionals rather than identifying themselves as simply stay-at-home mothers" (p. 341). The mothers spoke of feeling discounted and treated as if they were invisible by working professionals "until they found out they had a certain degree behind their name" (pp. 342-343), suggesting that the work of parenting is somehow viewed as less valuable because "any woman can be a mother…and one

does not need an education [to do so]" (p. 343). This is consistent with Zimmerman's (2000) findings that stay-at-home parents feel their work is not respected, appreciated, or supported by society (p. 343).

One wonders if the devaluation of motherhood is indicative of the value our society places on monetary wealth and material accumulation, as if the size of one's paycheck is the best measure of one's societal contribution. However, it is difficult to believe that the peers of these stay-at-home mothers would have discounted their work if they had been engaged in philanthropic endeavors away from home. Society would likely find it commendable if women were donating their time and energy—using their skills and education—to organize charity work in underdeveloped nations, even if they received little to no monetary compensation for doing so. They would likely be lauded for leading efforts to provide food, water, and other basic needs to indigent families in developing countries. One would expect them to be equally praised for spearheading efforts to improve literacy or to mentor young people in inner cities closer to home. In fact, the subjects in the Rubin and Wooten study (2007) expressed that while they felt disregarded in their work of mothering, they did find validation when engaging in community service (p. 342). It seems it is only when work is performed *within* the home that it is deemed societally insignificant.

In addition to the antagonistic mantras led by some branches of feminism, there are also other popular trends implying that, beyond their genetics, parents do not matter much at all. In *The Nurture Assumption: Why Children Turn Out the Way They Do*, Judith Rich Harris (1998) asserts that the behavior of children is more strongly influenced by teachers and peers than by parents, suggesting that parents are not the primary socializers as much of social science has indicated for so many years. Additionally, her research indicates intelligence and personality formation are a result of nature (DNA) rather than nurture. The conclusion the reader is to draw from her book is that parenting is somewhat inconsequential. A popular buzz line from this reasoning is "Parents matter; Parenting does not." This implies that a child needs a good sperm and egg donor, but beyond that, his or her parents are irrelevant. This line of thinking further suggests, "Step aside, Mom and Dad. Society will take care of the rest." This does little to affirm the work of motherhood. However,

while social science may do well to consider issues of heredity in its own assumptions when considering correlational evidence, it seems research by behavioral geneticists does more to help us understand developmental differences within a family than to account for all differences *between* families (Mekertichian & Bowes, 1996). There is plenty of research and anecdotal evidence indicating that the quality of parental leadership in the home can, indeed, have a positive effect on the welfare and development of the child, which in turn impacts society in positive ways.

Developmental psychologist Diana Baumrind conducted extensive research on various parenting styles and the effects they have on children (Biscontini, 2017). She found that an authoritative style of parenting is correlated to many positive outcomes, whereas permissive and authoritarian parenting are not, suggesting that parental leadership style matters. According to Baumrind, authoritative parents effectively incorporate a reasonable balance of "nurturance, discipline, and respect" (Heath, 2013, p. 29) into their parenting practice. They offer love, warmth, acceptance, and support when they respond to their children's needs, but they also have high expectations for their children. Authoritative parents demand responsible behavior and provide structure by setting limits and rules while still explaining the reasons for them, rather than expecting unquestioning obedience. Their interactions with their children are guided by mutual respect, and they recognize and encourage their children's unique personalities and individual interests (Heath, 2013). Citing an abundance of research, Heath indicates that the children of authoritative parents enjoy several advantages and positive outcomes: high levels of familial interaction and family cohesiveness, high levels of academic achievement, higher levels of conscientiousness, higher self-esteem, improved cooperation with peers, as well as higher levels of psychosocial maturity, resourcefulness, reasoning ability, empathy, and altruism. While these are certainly advantages for the individual children, qualities of empathy, altruism, and resourcefulness must also be recognized as great benefits to larger society as well. Interestingly, Heath also cites a 2003 study by Bednar and Fisher, stating that contrary to the assertions made by Harris, "…parents who use authoritative parenting patterns have more influence with their children and adolescents than do peers." In fact, "adolescents whose parents were authoritative were

more likely to refer to their parents when making moral choices and also were more inclined to rely on their parents for information on which to base their decisions" (Heath, 2013, p. 30). It would appear, then, that what parents do and how they parent may matter after all.

It must be understood that worldwide, more than 90% of children are raised in non-Western places, where there are different notions of what is optimal in development. The anthropological work of Robert Levine, an anthropologist and emeritus professor of education and human development at Harvard, and his wife Sarah, a former research fellow at Harvard, suggests that on a global scale there may not be one "best practice" approach to parental leadership. He asserts, "Parents in every culture at a given moment think they are doing the optimal thing for their kids. But their concept of what is optimal is extremely different from another culture and even from another generation in their own culture" (as cited in Friedman, 2016, para. 8). One style of parenting may be better suited toward successful child development in one culture than it is in another. For example, authoritarian parenting, which tends to favor "…punitive, forceful measures to curb […] children's willful nature[s]" (Heath, 2013, p. 31), is correlated to negative outcomes (such as lower psychosocial maturity, lower achievement, and an increased risk for delinquency, substance abuse, and crime) in Western societies. However, in non-Western traditional families, a similar strict parenting style is associated with many more positive outcomes because the parenting is also balanced by greater closeness and responsiveness (pp. 42-44). Because of this, Levine wants parents to understand that while everything they do may not become a part of their child's psychology, "parents matter in a different way—that parents are sponsors of their children's development" (as cited in Friedman, 2016, para. 30) regardless of their culture.

One way parents become sponsors of their children's development is by becoming actively involved in their academic environment. Lest one assume that parental success or failure is written in one's genetic code, predestining them to be a good or bad leader in their home, research indicates parenting skills can be learned and applied in families just as leadership competency can be practiced and improved in other settings. One study by Cunningham, Kreider, and Ocon (2012) evaluated

whether parents' leadership capacity and practice would be improved after participating in a parent leadership program. The program in question, Parent Services Project's Vision and Voice Family Leadership Institute (VVFLI), relied on principles common to community organizing and family support such as recognition of strengths, shared power, equity, and mutual respect. Participants were instructed in topics such as leadership qualities, goal setting, and family support principles and strategies. Recognizing that "Decades of research point to the many benefits of family engagement in children's learning on student academic achievement" (Cunningham, Kreider, & Ocon, 2012, p. 111), parents received training in how to become more effectively engaged. The study indicates that the parental training was, indeed, effective, having positively influenced "…parents' leadership capacity in terms of their identity as a leader, their general leadership and communication skills, and their skills specific to school- and community-based settings" (Cunningham et al., p.121), which help to enable them to be better advocates for their children and facilitate their academic success. By learning and implementing these leadership skills and increasing their family engagement, these families can expect reduced rates of alcohol use, violence, and antisocial behavior among their children (National PTA, 1998, as cited by Cunningham et al, 2012). Clearly, it seems that parenting matters.

Not only does parenting matter, but specifically, the leadership of mothers within the home matters. A study conducted by Kevin Galbraith and Jay Schvaneveldt (2005) compared the relationship between family leadership styles and family well-being, with 231 two-parent families used in their sample. They found that favorable family outcomes are associated with "leadership that is active, or transformational, in comparison to leadership that is passive" and that the families scoring most positively on the family well-being variable and lowest on the family discordance variable were those that had a mother with a transformational leadership style (Galbraith & Schvaneveldt, 2005, p. 230).

Transformational leadership is characterized by one who serves as a mentor, strengthens relationships, motivates others to work toward their full potential, and provides meaningful service opportunities. Transformational leaders possess idealized attributes and demonstrate

idealized behaviors. They provide inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration as they help others to reach toward their true potential. In the Galbraith and Schvaneveldt study, it was clearly "The mothers in the transformational-mother cluster [who] played an important role in the well-being of the family. It appears as though favorable outcomes were, to large degree, related to the active leadership style of the mothers" (Galbraith & Schvaneveldt, 2005, p. 231).

With the understanding that leadership makes a difference and can be learned, that parenting matters and affects outcomes impacting individuals and societies, and that the leadership of mothers in the home has been specifically identified as a key to the strength of a family, we need not wonder any longer if mothers matter. Clearly, they do. Whether they are single mothers, working mothers, stay-at-home mothers, or otherwise; whether their efforts are recognized and appreciated or not, the work they do within their own homes is at least as significant as the work they do outside of it. As Elizabeth Corey (2013) concludes,

> Modern women are right to think that both the pursuit of excellence and the desire to care for others are part of a fully flourishing life. Excellence in a particular field requires persistence, self-confidence, drive, courage, and initiative. These are eminently admirable qualities. On the other hand, serving or loving another requires the even more admirable qualities of attention, focus, care, patience, and self-sacrifice. The accent we place on them, and the way we put them into practice, is a matter for all of us to figure out for ourselves. (Corey, 2013, p. 51)

A woman should be able to pursue mastery and accomplishment in any area of her choosing. However, it is time for society to recognize that to fully give women the credit they are due, it must include, rather than discount, the influential role of women who choose to be the mothers leading, inspiring, and encouraging the rising generation.

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Tiffany Haddish Portrait

Isabella Simone
Chalk

Tiffany Haddish is a brilliant American comedian that gives inspiration to women all over the world. She went from foster care to having a home on stage. It goes to show that no matter what odds go against you or what cards you have been handed anyone can reach any dream or any goal to which they aspire.

Self Love

Christina Rodgers

I called myself fat yesterday,
I called myself ugly the last two weeks,
I repeated to myself that
I wasn't good enough a month ago.

Today I told myself that I am beautiful.
Today I told myself that I am enough.
Today I told myself that I'm not skinny,
but I'm not fat, I am me.

Today I told myself that even when it's hard
that I am enough.
Today I told myself that I'm not going to
care anymore, not going to let what the world
thinks is beautiful control
who I am and how I feel.

Today I told myself that I don't have to be
a size 2.
Today I told myself that I am amazing.
Today I am confident, today I am me.
Today I love myself.

[Author Addendum: Learning to love yourself is one of the hardest but most rewarding things you can ever do.]

The Impact of Generations of Women

Cameron Bunch
Photography

Women in leadership recognize the impact of the rivers of women that came before them and plan which mountains to carve out next.

Outdoor Recreation Increases Self-Confidence in Women

J.S. Kovach
Utah Valley University

The potential benefits of participating in physical activity in the outdoors are known to be highly therapeutic and empowering. The last two decades have seen an increase in outdoor recreation research focusing on the social, mental, and physical implications for women in particular (Bosteder & Appleby, 2015). Inequities regarding participation in outdoor recreational activities exist between men and women, and women face constraints unique to their gender. These constraints include but are not limited to: societal and behavioral expectations, perceived low body image, self-consciousness, misrepresentation in the media, and a lack of appropriate gear designed for women. However, when women are able to overcome these barriers or even simply dare to step into a canoe in the outdoors (as an example), research has found that positive outdoor recreational experiences dramatically increase a woman's self-valuation, self-confidence, and belief in her ability to lead.

If you have ever followed a dirt trail through a forest of sweet-smelling ponderosa pines or rested at the foot of a chalky aspen tree while listening to the leaves rustle in the wind, you can probably attest to the sense of peace or calm that washed over you. The outdoors can be a therapeutic destination, and outdoor physical activity can lead to positive physical and emotional health benefits (Bosteder & Appleby, 2015).

Many studies have been performed to determine the benefits of outdoor recreation, but the 21st century has seen an increase in directing these studies specifically toward the benefits experienced by women.

Women are typically confronted with more societal constraints than their male counterparts in regard to outdoor recreation, including traditional gender roles, social pressures, and misrepresentation in the media. Overcoming these constraints can lead to increased self-confidence, self-worth, empowerment, and a healthier body image in women (Evans & Anderson, 2016).

Outdoor recreation could be defined as recreation that requires physical and intellectual fortitude, such as whitewater kayaking, rock climbing, skiing, mountaineering, and many other activities. Such activities have been considered marginal sports, as compared to traditional team sports like baseball and football. However, recent events—such as the Olympic Games—have increased their mainstream acceptance (Evans & Anderson, 2015). In addition to these sports, outdoor recreation includes any leisure activity performed outdoors, and studies have determined that at least fifty percent of the population over six years old participates in some kind of outdoor endeavor (Bosteder & Appleby, 2015).

Researchers Lloyd and Little (2005) examined how participation in outdoor-adventure recreation can enhance the quality of life for women. Quality of life, as the researchers noted, can be determined in many ways. Traditionally, the principal determining factors have been objectives, such as household income, employment rates, and the number of possessions. However, because individuals may differ in opinion when it comes to what constitutes their own quality of life, subjective factors must also be considered. Personal skills, abilities, and sense of belonging, as well as balanced mental, physical, social and spiritual health, are significant factors contributing to one's quality of life.

To evaluate the effect outdoor recreation has on quality of life, Lloyd and Little (2005) studied the experiences of participants in an all-female organization designed to encourage outdoor adventures. This organization offered a broad definition of adventure to encourage the women to engage in activities they had previously avoided due to fear or lack of experience, including yoga, dance, yard games, archery, water-based sports, and aviation. The majority of the participants expressed an improvement in their quality of life due to increased access to novel opportunities. Furthermore, this program provided the basic structure of organization necessary to plan and execute outdoor excursions, which encouraged the

women to pursue future adventures on their own (Lloyd & Little, 2005). In another study performed by researchers Libby and Carruthers (2013), participants of an all-female canoe trip expressed an increase of confidence in their ability to learn new and challenging skills. The acquisition of such skills encouraged them to participate in and prepare for future outdoor activities and adventures.

Similarly, researchers Bosteder and Appleby (2015) interviewed participants of an all-female wilderness program and discovered a correlation between the outdoors and an increased interest in exercise and physical health. They found that the women had a greater desire to exercise with clear air and beautiful views than when running on a treadmill in a gym. One participant expressed that working out at a gym is temporary, but exploring the outdoors can be a life-long, sustainable endeavor. As such, the participants expressed that they were inclined to join outdoor activities for mental invigoration and emotional benefit.

Within this wilderness program, the activities were designed to facilitate the needs and skill levels of the women, and an emphasis was on participation instead of expertise or excellence. Due to this method, many women expressed that they had more confidence in themselves and their ability to lead. One participant mentioned how, despite being out of shape, she felt empowered by her accomplishments and was inspired to explore the outdoors in her free time (Bosteder & Appleby, 2015).

As recreating in the outdoors can lead to a desire to increase physical activity due to mental invigoration and a sense of personal achievement, it can be inferred that an individual's perception of body image may also improve. While low body image can initially deter an individual from participating in a physically demanding activity (Lloyd & Little, 2005), studies show that the majority of individuals who engage in outdoor recreation, regardless of their initial level of perceived body image, experience an improvement of self-valuation and positive body image (Hovey, Foland, Foley, Kniffin, & Bailey, 2016).

However, in order to develop a healthier and more positive perception of self, one must first acknowledge any personal inhibitions. Studies have found that self-confidence improves when the individual recognizes

the origins of personal weaknesses or fears and consequently pursues a course of action to overcome said weaknesses or fears (Evans & Anderson, 2016). Persistence in making and pursuing personal goals can influence potential implications for a female participant, including a recognition that her body is strong, that she is capable and competent, and that positive body perception is important (Hovey et al., 2016).

Many participating women expressed that, in addition to the intrinsic motivation to improve self-valuation, their experience in outdoor recreational programs provided the opportunities for them to develop support groups and social connections (Lloyd & Little, 2005). They expressed social satisfaction and a preference for an all-female environment, as they were less inclined to compare themselves to each other and there was no pressure to perform in front of male peers. Most of the women felt more confident in leading an all-female group and found it easier to confide in one another and develop interpersonal relationships (Bosteder & Appleby, 2015).

Despite age differences, the emphasis on participation over performance convinced the women that they were capable of accomplishing the same feats as the younger women, even if it took them longer to do so. This support group and newfound confidence encouraged continued activity, the pursuit of exercise, and the will to develop new skills (Bosteder & Appleby, 2015).

Insofar as outdoor recreation can be extrinsically rewarding, prolonged immersion in the wilderness can engender mental, emotional, and even spiritual benefits. Nature provides a platform to learn new skills, make individual physical goals, and discover and challenge new personal limits, while also encouraging recovery and self-care. As the women in these studies were removed from their daily routines and the busyness of city life, the serenity of the natural environment allowed them to develop a sense of connectedness and renewal of spirit (Libby & Carruthers, 2013). For a group of women who regularly found themselves outside the city limits, nature was an intrinsic part of them. To these women, nature was a sensory experience in which you could experience touch, smell, and feel a power greater than self. Here, the women felt a sense of belonging and purpose (Cosgriff, Little, & Wilson, 2009).

Although it can be inferred that participation in outdoor recreation increases self-confidence in women, there are many factors that discourage women from participating in such recreational activities in the first place. Of these factors, perhaps the most prevalent are social expectations and societal constraints. Many of society's structural components, such as politics and religion, have contributed to institutionalized gender differentiation that normalize typical gender roles. This process began with the government's enactment of gender-specific laws, such as prohibiting the women's right to vote and authorizing lower pay for women, and is continued today by the depiction of women in the media (Evans & Anderson, 2016).

Studies have shown that women are more likely to claim that familial responsibilities restrict them from participating in outdoor recreation (Evans & Anderson, 2016). Some women feel that participating in outdoor recreation would remove them from their duties at home and to their family and that doing so would be selfish (Lloyd & Little, 2005).

Gender and society's perception of gender roles directly affects a person's social interactions. According to these studies, people are more apt to judge each other simply due to age, gender, or race. Men are typically associated with traits relating to power, competence, strength, and being proactive, while women are typically associated with ostensibly negative traits such as being over-reactive, emotional, and less competent (Evans & Anderson, 2016).

Other factors that discourage women from participating in outdoor recreation include feelings of incompetence and negative body image, as well as a disbelief in the relevance or usefulness of outdoor recreation (Lloyd & Little, 2005). A concern for personal safety can deter women from venturing out alone or in a group of male participants due to fear of being marginalized, harassed, or worse, which can unfortunately pervade society (Kilgour, 2007).

In the United States of America, the national lands are advertised as belonging to all Americans, but the actual visiting demographic varies dramatically depending on socioeconomic status, race, and gender. While the number of female visitors is increasing, males still make up the majority. Factors contributing to this disparity include women's concerns

for safety, perceived competence and comparability in skill, and ability to retain their femininity as a participant in outdoor activities (McNiel, Harris, & Fondren, 2012).

In some cultures, nature has been affectionately termed Mother Earth, implying its nurturing, productive, self-healing traits as the mother of all living things. Nature was feminine and powerful. However, due to modern technological and industrialized advancements, nature has since been conceptualized as insentient and subordinate to man. Even though women were once believed to be kin with a wild earth, women have been displaced in this more masculinized nature (Cosgriff et al., 2009).

Consequently, outdoor recreation participation has historically been male-dominated and activities tailored to women have been modified to accommodate their presumed weaker builds (Cosgriff et al., 2009). Customarily, the definition of femininity has conformed with gender norms, and deviation from such can result in social sanctions and stigmas. The desire to conform and be accepted can deter women from engaging in outdoor recreation—or can hinder their full participation in such (McNiel et al., 2012).

These societal expectations can directly influence women and their propensity to engage in outdoor activities. While many traditional organizations have focused on fathers and sons, traditional organizations for females have altered their methods to align with societal expectations. The Girl Scouts of America was initially founded to provide unique outdoor opportunities for girls but eventually changed its approach to better prepare girls to be homemakers, focusing on domestic skills and self-improvement (Evans & Anderson, 2016).

This early indoctrination limits the opportunities young girls have to develop practical outdoor skills, causing them to fall behind their male counterparts and discouraging them from risking outdoor endeavors in the future. Recently, the Girl Scouts of America has reintroduced wilderness exploration requirements, but the organization has significantly fewer participants and is less promoted than the Boy Scouts of America (Evans & Anderson, 2016).

In a study examining the discrepancies between the representation of men and women in the media and advertisements, researchers discovered that the culturally accepted definitions of masculinity and femininity determined the portrayal of the featured men and women (McNiel et al., 2012). Men are typically portrayed as adventurers or risk takers, often venturing out alone, while the women are portrayed as passive participants and are typically found in group settings. Women were consistently pictured with clean faces and kempt hair, indicating a short-term activity or an inaccurate depiction to maintain so-called femininity (McNiel et al., 2012). Ultimately, this study determined that the constant exposure to and indoctrination of women having a passive role in outdoor recreation could, subconsciously or otherwise, discourage women from taking risks and pushing their physical and mental limits (McNiel et al., 2012).

Correspondingly, outdoor gear had been designed specifically and solely for the male body up until about a decade ago. As female participation in outdoor events has been historically discouraged or even prohibited, there was little demand for female-specific gear. When the demand first became apparent, the industry began designing lighter, softer, and pinker products instead of equally tough or high-quality gear such as that which was available for males. Only very recent years have seen the arrival of adventure-worthy female gear (Sanford, 2017).

Gender equality in recreational activity has many facets, some of which we have addressed. Though progressive movements have improved the situation, the pursuit of further action can be deterred by women's reluctance to disrupt the status quo and challenge biases, which has been referred to as feminist fatigue (Gray, 2017). Nevertheless, while there are many factors that may cause women to hesitate before strapping on a pair of snowshoes or throwing on a heavy backpack, these issues are mainly societal blockages that can be ignored or conquered. Women must be bold in demanding presence and relevance in the outdoor industry. By daring to step out of comfort zones and into a canoe, literally or figuratively, working together as a support group, women can overcome their inhibitions and make dramatic changes in legislation, culture, and social expectations.

Indeed, it can be determined that participation in outdoor recreation increases a woman's self-confidence. As a result of this self-confidence, these women develop a belief in their ability to attain and excel in leadership roles. Furthermore, they dare to believe in their ability to succeed in other aspects of life, including aspects that were once their constraints.

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Journey

Doris Hudson de Trujillo, M.F.A.
Dance Performance
http://bit.ly/JourneyPerformance

Scan to watch
video of performance

Journey

Doris Hudson de Trujillo, M.F.A.
Dance Performance

As an artist and educator,
I am interested in creating choreographic works
that evoke personal meaning
for the individual performers
and audiences they are performed for.

The intent of the works I create
have a common thread of exploring
the resiliency of the human spirit.

Journey is an abstract work,
from a women's perspective,
which explores the journey of a community,
with common values and beliefs,
through various aspects of life.

The values and beliefs may
be defined as cultural, social,
or of a spiritual nature
that provides the foundation
of the community connections.

My inspiration for the work
was of a spiritual nature
based on scriptural references.

The poles that are used within
the work are integral to the design
and structure of the work and
symbolic of the belief and values
inherent in the community.

Journey was originally created in 2012
for UVU's Contemporary Dance Ensemble (CDE).
The version submitted to *The Journal of Student Leadership*
is a reconstruction of the work
for the CDE Ricochet Concert in 2019.

http://bit.ly/JourneyPerformance

Strong Like Her

Angelie Rasmussen

17-year-old Joan of Arc led an army to victory
and proved the fiery strength of women
Jane Austen led women to have a voice,
writing her mind when told not to
Susan B. Anthony led a fight for human rights
with visions of a just world
Harriet Tubman led hundreds out of slavery
with a wanted sign on her head
Marie Curie led by being the first woman
to receive a Nobel Peace Prize
Helen Keller led with her determination
to give strength to the disabled
13-year-old Anne Frank led with her words of hope
for light in the darkest hours
Rosa Parks led others off the back of the bus
and toward equality
Mother Teresa led those suffering into warmth and love
through her devotion to charity
Oprah Winfrey led her life from trial and abuse
to immense success and philanthropy
Malala Yousafzai led the fight for women's right to education,
surviving a bullet

Yet
There are women around the world still waiting
for permission to speak
Permission to act
Who are paid less for the same work as their peers
Represented as mere objects in the media
Shamed
Blamed
Abused
Discriminated

Yet
There's something we all can do
We can be Strong like Joan of Arc
Audacious like Jane
Unconventional like Susan
Brave like Harriet
Intelligent like Marie
Resilient like Helen
Optimistic like Anne
Bold like Rosa
Compassionate like Mother Teresa
Ambitious like Oprah
Irrepressible like Malala
To show that We
As men and women
Are Equals
Individuals
Partners
And Leaders alike

Still Fighting

Hailey Allen
Acrylic

I painted this at the start of my healing process from sexual assault. I felt I was trying to hold strong with no water and dark clouds surrounding me, but there was a little sliver of light. This gave me hope, and so I was still fighting.

This was my first painting. It was my first step to healing from sexual trauma and ultimately creating the nonprofit, Helping SAVE (Sexual Assault/Abuse Victims Everywhere), so survivors like me could learn healing skills like art, yoga, and dance.

Lizzie Siddall and the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood

Danielle Carman
Utah Valley University

A mid-nineteenth century artist group known as the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB) are known for their objectification of women in their paintings; portraying them as meek, ill, near-death, and erotic. The women who posed for these artists were often artists or craft-makers themselves. By repainting and revising their male counterparts' works and creating their own, these women took control of their own stories, and of how women could be portrayed in art. They painted the woman's story: women who were leaders; women who were strong, lively, and active—no longer sexualized waifs. These PRB women reclaimed their space in the art world, and in society.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (PRB) were a group of artists in mid-nineteenth century Britain who went against the styles and topics the Royal Academy was producing at the time. The PRB drew inspiration from early Renaissance masters, before Raphael, such as Botticelli and Perugino. Much of their art depicted women very differently than the classical tradition. The so-called "stunners" in the PRB paintings were thin, waif-like figures (as opposed to the curvaceous, sexualized nudes seen in works such as Botticelli's *Birth of Venus*). They were often in scenes of distress, fainting, ill or near death, pale-skinned, and helpless. One woman, in particular, Elizabeth Siddall, can be seen in many of these PRB paintings. She was an artist herself, but much like the other

women in the PRB circle, her artistic abilities were overshadowed and she is remembered more for her idealized beauty and muse-like qualities. Siddall's peers thought she was simply mimicking the men around her and not painting with enough force, passion, or true talent. However, Siddall's works often revolutionized comparable works from the PRB by shifting the focus away from the male gaze and instead showing a woman's story, from a woman's perspective. Siddall's life and art perfectly reflected the societal role of the Victorian woman.

The sexual objectification of women in PRB art can be directly compared to contemporary pop culture's idea of beauty. The modern concept of beauty often idealizes unnaturally thin women, just as the PRB paintings portrayed them. These Victorian paintings often also focused on illness, death, and tragedy, much like the celebrity stories seen in today's tabloids. As scholar Emily Orlando puts it, they have "equat[ed] 'deathlike' with 'beautiful'."[1] Siddall herself suffered from depression and, most likely, anorexia nervosa. She was extremely thin, weak, and pale, described as looking "thinner and more deathlike and more beautiful and more ragged than ever."[2] The most admired qualities of a PRB muse were the passive, gentle woman in the home: "sickly, sexually objectified, broken, bereft, dying, dead—or a combination thereof."[3] Siddall's sickly state allowed for the creation of artworks portraying her as soft and delicate, doing women's work indoors. Christina Rossetti, sister of PRB artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti, wrote that Dante was painting Lizzie as "his model, muse, and eventual wife, not as she is, but as she fills his dream."[4] The PRB women were muses, mistresses, and models; fairy-tale characters more than individuals.

Although the Brotherhood's original goals were centered on being true to nature, this was generally abandoned in favor of painting the overidealized, especially when it came to paintings of historical or literary women. As previously suggested, the PRB tended to enshrine women and eroticize their death. Dante Rossetti's *Beata Beatrix* (Blessed

1. *Emily J. Orlando. "'That I May Not Faint, or Die, or Swoon': Reviving Pre-Raphaelite Women." Women's Studies 38, no. 6 (September 2009): 613.*
2. *Ibid, 613.*
3. *Ibid, 615.*
4. *Ibid, 614.*

Beatrice), which Siddall sat for, is a perfect example of this. Finished after Elizabeth's death by overdose, *Beatrix* was seen as a memorial to her. In the painting, Beatrice sits in a peaceful, prayerful pose as she "transitions from earth to heaven."[5] In other words, it is the scene of her death when, as Rossetti described, she was "suddenly rapt from Earth to Heaven."[6] This work seems to pay homage to a classic sculpture, Bernini's *Ecstasy of St. Teresa*, a work which also combines a moment of spirituality with sexual surrender. By association, *Beatrix* is now even more sexually charged, and the figure of Beatrice made even more sedate. Images of a dove, a sundial, and a white poppy flower surround her, symbolizing her meekness and her impending death. This documentation of women's deaths further objectifies them; they are truly *objets d'art*.[7]

Author Jan Marsh wrote about Siddall's life and how her image has been shaped and changed throughout history. During the late 1800s, she was the sickly, beautiful, dying figure, but in the Freudian craze of the 1920s and 30s, she was more a frigid, unstable creature who caused much strife for her artist-lover Rossetti. Later she is still an antagonist, not a victim: "The legend of Lizzie as the patient, dying, gentle dove which became a tradition, was created by Gabriel [Rossetti] to exploit [a collector's] sympathy; she was in truth willful and course."[8] In the latter half of the twentieth century, she is described as wishy-washy, a PRB groupie, no longer frigid, but not actively sexual either. She was a drug addict and her death by overdose was seen as romantic. Contemporarily, she is viewed, in part, as a victim of masculine oppression and, alternately, a "rediscovered proto-feminist."[9]

Despite her presence mostly as an *objet d'art,* Siddall was also an artist and poet. This is where her reputation as a feminist originates: her retelling of PRB stories from the women's perspective. The women of the PRB circle created art that could revise their place in art history. "Rather than leaving behind pictures of themselves as dead or dying bodies…they bequeathed to us an oeuvre that includes self-portraits of live, politically,

5. Ibid, 622.
6. Ibid, 623.
7. Ibid, 623.
8. Jan Marsh. "Imagining Elizabeth Siddal." History Workshop no. 25 (April 1988): 74.
9. Ibid, 78.

and ideologically conscious, creative beings."[10] The women of the PRB changed their images from that of weak, wan, tired housewife, passive mistress, or damsel in distress, to interesting, powerful, strong, competent women. Art historian Whitney Chadwick observed:

> [I]n taking up brush or pen, chisel or camera, women assert a claim to the representation of women (as opposed to Woman) that Western culture long ago ceded to male genius and patriarchal perspectives, and . . . in turning to the image in the mirror they take another step towards the elaboration of a sexualized subjective female identity.[11]

Elizabeth Siddall's works show an awareness of, and a significant shift from, the disempowering ways herself and her PRB sisters were being portrayed in Victorian art. She saw the pattern of fanaticizing and idealizing women in allegorical artworks of the PRB, such as Millais' *Ophelia* and Rossetti's *Beatrice*. Both were modeled by Siddall and both feature her perfect, pale form, "suddenly rapt." Whether in sexual ecstasy or death it is hard to discern. Siddall was frequently represented at death's door, such as in *The Lady of Shalott*. In the paintings by Waterhouse and his peers, *The Lady of Shalott* is a fantasy of idyllic death and a fallen woman. However, when Siddall painted *The Lady*, she portrayed the character earlier in the story (a poem by Tennyson) when the lady is still alive, an active gazer, who has just caught a glimpse of the man (Sir Lancelot) who will ultimately cause her downfall. The lady sees Lancelot in the mirror and turns to look out the window, towards possibility and opportunity. This is her most assertive act in the poem. Siddall decided to depict her activity, rather than her passivity or death. This scene also portrays a woman involved in a creative process, active and wide-eyed, essentially a metaphorical self-portrait for Siddall's progressive ideas on a woman's place.

The comparison of Siddall's work with those of the PRB suggest, as Orlando wrote:

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10. Orlando, 616.
11. Quoted in Orlando, 617.

> A visual analogue for (1) the way in which Pre-Raphaelite women artists confronted a fixed set of rules governing how, what, and whether or not they might paint and exhibit, and (2) the extent to which their function as *artists* and not models has been dropped out of most art histories.[12]

Most textbooks do not list Siddall or her contemporaries as artists or by name. More often they are simply the nameless figures in the famous paintings.

The degree to which Elizabeth Siddall disappeared into Rossetti's paintings is emphasized even more by the fact that Rossetti changed the spelling of her name, so she is often listed as Siddal. For generations, we have gone through Rossetti to find Siddall, just as he wrote in one of his sonnets: "They that would look on her must come to me."[13] Siddall however, left behind her previously discussed artworks, as well as a stark self-portrait that barely resembles the tragediennes portrayed in the PRB artworks. Her portrait does not look unearthly, she seems wise and conservative. Her facial expression is disenchanted, and the viewer is drawn to her eyes, adding more to her representation of herself as an active gazer rather than a passive beauty. She is not swooning or baring her body to the viewer. Every aspect is discouraging objectification in favor of seeing the real woman.

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood painted in a style that differed from what was popular or Academic. Often their objectification of women was not in style either—it was during a time of suffrage in Britain. They portrayed women as meek and sensual, interior objects. They often eroticized the "fallen woman" or the moment of a woman's death. The women of the PRB circle were artists and crafts-makers who used their voices to revise their image. Siddall and her counterparts painted the woman's story and rewrote their stories within it. They portrayed themselves in action rather than as damsels—alive and well rather than slipping into death.

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12 Ibid, 634.
13 Ibid, 629.

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Anything Worth Doing Always Starts as a Bad Idea

Allie Holden
Colored Pencil on Paper Canvas

This piece of art work illustrates that sometimes it takes many ideas, criticisms, disappointing results and trial and error before reaching the end goal. The journey to success is hard but practice makes perfect and your dreams are always possible when you don't give up!

Mother Mimosa
Amanda Dryer
Reductive Lino-Cut

Mother Mimosa is a piece that shows the quiet confidence of womanhood. She represents strength and femininity. This piece is inspired by the mimosa tree, which, among other things, is a symbol of femininity. Its brilliant yellow flowers have been chosen to represent International Women's Day, a day to celebrate women gaining rights.

Empowering Leadership: Counteracting Gender Bias Through Focus on Individual Strengths

Jenna Hall
Utah Valley University

With the increase of women in leadership positions, steps need to be taken ensuring equal treatment and opportunity are available. Research has shown that gender bias still influences people's perceptions of leaders and social roles. Unconscious bias can prevent qualified individuals from advancing in leadership positions. Drawing on previous research, this article will address the barriers that gender bias creates for women seeking leadership opportunities. Recognizing personal bias is the first step to diminishing the influence of gender stereotypes. Solutions include maintaining an open dialogue about differences and focusing on building individual strengths. Women and men can empower each other to become more effective leaders by stepping away from gender bias and enhancing their valuable leadership traits.

While steady progress has been made for women's rights since the early 1900s, the year 2018 was a monumental leap in the right direction for women in leadership. There have been an unprecedented number of women elected to Congress in the United States, and more women than ever are entering positions of influence. Although women have become increasingly involved in leadership positions, representation and opportunities in business, politics, and education remain nowhere near equal to that of men (Rhode, 2017). The extent of the barriers women face is well documented in other research. While recognizing the complexity of issues contributing to the scarce

number of women in leadership roles, this article will present solutions to counteract the negative effects of gender stereotypes and bias that stifle progress for women's advancement. Proposed solutions endeavor to remove gender stereotypes for both men and women by developing each individual's leadership potential.

Unconscious gender bias left unchecked not only prevents qualified women from advancing in positions of authority but prevents diversity from enhancing the quality of organizations. Gender stereotypes and personal bias place harmful expectations on both women and men to act in accordance with stereotyped social roles, with no regard to whether an individual's personality and valuable characteristics align with those roles. As more women assume leadership roles, it is critical for leaders, as well as those they lead, to intentionally address personal biases and then place their focus on developing and appreciating the traits an individual can contribute to leadership roles. This will support the increase of women in leadership positions and allow diversity to enhance economic, educational, and governmental systems.

Barriers

With recent progressive movements advocating for gender equality, gender stereotypes would presumably decrease and have no influence on workplace cultures or opportunities for advancement. However, a meta-analysis collected by university researchers found that over time there has been no significant decrease in gender stereotypes (Koenig, Eagly, Mitchell, & Ristikari, 2011). These stereotypes influence perceptions and actions, one of which is that men are more likely to be accepted as leaders than women (Rhode, 2017). This may be due to the majority of women in the workforce occupying "domestic" jobs traditionally perceived as feminine, such as receptionists, nurses, teachers, and retail associates (Koenig et al., 2011). Consequently, women who pursue leadership positions are entering an environment that has long been male-dominated. Societal expectations of leaders force women to conform to traditionally masculine approaches. As Patricia Jones, CEO of the Women's Leadership Institute describes, "Our system, our corporate and business environment, is a structure that was built by and for men. Historically, women have had to navigate around that" (P. Jones, personal communication, August 10, 2018).

Some research indicates that gender stereotypes and perceived social roles have been shown to change with the increased presence of female leaders (Koenig et al., 2011). As more women enter leadership positions, stereotypes have slightly weakened (Rhode, 2017). However, even the current unparalleled amount of female representation is not enough to make real change when only 4.8% of CEO positions are held by women (Catalyst, 2018), and 20.6% of representatives serving in Congress are women (CAWP, 2018). This contradiction creates a negative feedback loop—the presence of women leaders diminishes gender stereotypes, yet women are excluded from leadership positions as a result of these suppressive gender biases and stereotypes.

Persisting gender stereotypes specifically affect how leadership traits are viewed. There seems to be a disconnect between what is expected of a leader and what actually makes a leader effective. Leadership has long been associated with masculinity (Koenig et al., 2011), thus requiring successful leaders to be "…aggressive, ambitious, dominant, forceful, independent, self-sufficient, and self-confident" (Zheng, Kark, & Meister, 2018, p. 585). Women are usually expected to show traditionally feminine, also referred to as communal, traits "such as being affectionate, helpful, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, nurturant, and gentle" (Zheng et al., 2018, p. 585). Due to leadership roles being associated with masculinity for so long, those who display feminine traits are not viewed as being leaders (Badura, Grijalva, Newman, Yan, & Jeon, 2018). However, negative reactions occur when women are more assertive or dominant (Rhode, 2017). Thus, a situation is presented where masculine traits are required to excel in leadership roles, yet women must maintain feminine traits to align with their expected social roles. The reality is, some women may have personalities that are in line with traditional social roles, while others may have attributes characterized as masculine. This emphasizes the need to break away from stereotypes to allow women to utilize their individual strengths in leadership positions.

These perceptions are not only harmful to women but can also adversely affect men who possess traits viewed as feminine. Even though masculine attributes have become the normalized approach to leadership, they are no more beneficial than feminine ones (Rhode, 2017). Interestingly,

a combination of traditionally masculine and feminine traits is found to be most effective when implemented in leadership roles (Rhode, 2017). Researcher Grijalva (2018) states, "Because of this unconscious bias against communal [feminine] traits, organizations may unintentionally select the wrong people for leadership roles, choosing individuals who are loud and confident but lack the ability to support their followers' development and success" (para. 7). If current leaders are not conscious of these biases, the most qualified person may be denied the right leadership position, regardless of gender.

Solutions

Addressing negative gender stereotypes begins with validating the reality of this issue in leadership. With the knowledge that stereotypes still influence perceptions of leaders and followers, it is each individual's responsibility to recognize when their personal bias is present. Traits associated with a specific gender should not be assumed; women can naturally be assertive and men can have a natural tendency to be nurturing. It would be unrealistic to expect immediate change when society has reinforced these deep-rooted gender roles for so long. Rather, practical improvement involves being aware of how personal biases influence the treatment or perception of others. Appreciating the unique personalities of individuals rather than projecting harmful stereotypes will initiate lasting change.

Remove Gender-Specific Labels

One specific action that can be taken to lessen gender bias is consciously striving to remove gender labels from character traits. Zheng and colleagues (2018) illustrate this by replacing masculine and feminine with the terms agentic and communal (Zheng et al., 2018). Although most people don't necessarily use the words masculine and feminine to describe people, these attributes can unconsciously influence how other's actions are viewed. The deliberate effort to use neutral terms when describing character traits encourages awareness of gender bias. This cultivates the idea that any man or woman can develop both agentic and communal styles of leadership.

Gender and leadership scholar Deborah Rhode (2017) lists the top traits that successful leaders display, such as "vision, ethics, interpersonal skills, technical competence, and personal capabilities such as self-awareness

and self-control" (p. 6). An interview with Patricia Jones (personal communication, August 10, 2018) identified additional characteristics contributing to successful leadership. These include communicating effectively, expressing ideas clearly through writing, thinking critically, and problem-solving. Each of these valuable leadership traits can be developed and refined through persistence and proper training, regardless of gender (P. Jones, personal communication, August 10, 2018). By recognizing personal bias and removing gender specificities with character traits, a growth mindset can become more common in leadership positions as individuals are promoted based on their relevant traits.

Develop and strengthen individual leadership traits

Diversity in leadership approaches tends to be more effective than a singular dominating style (Nadolska & Barkema, 2014). Having many personality types, perspectives, and viewpoints can strengthen a company or political board. Women and men can capitalize on these differences by maintaining honest communication about their perspectives. Patricia Jones suggests that having an open dialogue about rules and barriers in the workplace can accomplish this (P. Jones, personal communication, August 10, 2018). Recognizing and building on unique traits will result in new solutions to issues, as well as encouraging more authentic leadership.

Along with opening up the conversation about individual differences, stepping away from gender bias allows women and men to fully embrace their individual leadership abilities. Organizations have the potential to become more collaborative, diverse, and interpersonal as communal traits are more widely accepted within leadership roles (Rhode, 2017). Women can pursue more leadership roles without concern of social expectations, while men will be more comfortable displaying their strengths if they differ from traditional masculine roles. If this became a reality and individuals were allowed to refine their most beneficial traits, leadership would become more effective.

Conclusion

Women have much to contribute to leadership in our society with diverse ways of thinking and approaches to leading others. To allow for this, it is necessary to step away from harmful stereotypes that marginalize

women and prevent them from reaching or maintaining leadership positions. Men also suffer from gender bias dictating their expectations and job performance as leaders. Qualified candidates for leadership positions are withheld from promotions when labeled with traditional stereotypes that do not properly reflect their abilities. Women and men can help each other in this cause by recognizing their personal biases and focusing on building each other's personal leadership traits. As women and men cultivate their strengths in these areas and help each other build them, more focus can be directed towards training individuals for leadership roles in which they can thrive.

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The Power of Persistence

McKenzie Laycock

Photograph

Photo taken by Alexis Quick

To be a great leader, you have to be confident, accept your shortcomings, and never give up.

Leadership is about confidence and love for yourself and the people around you who look up to you.

Who is Your Bias

Elizabeth Nielsen
Utah Valley University

This essay discusses the importance of recognizing and overcoming our social biases in the workplace. Prejudice can hold organizations back from reaching maximum potential. Race, gender, sexual orientation, religion, and other differences should not just be ignored but accepted and utilized as strengths. Studies have shown that we can recognize and overcome our personal biases. The research explored throughout this essay expounds the benefits of overcoming our biases and how this can be achieved.

Verna Myers was on a plane when a woman's voice came over the PA system. Myers was excited to have a female pilot, exclaiming, "Yes, women, we are rocking it. We are now in the stratosphere." Then the plane hit some turbulence and she thought, "I hope she can drive." At that moment she realized a bias she didn't even know she had. We all have biases we are unaware of and Myers's story demonstrates that. She explains, "You know, fast moving planes in the sky, I want a guy. That's my default. Who is your default? Who do you trust? Who are you afraid of? Who do you implicitly feel connected to? Who do you run away from?" (Myers, 2014, 4:24). These questions help us discover our own biases. It is important for us to find them because bias leads to prejudice. In order to have the most effective workplace, we need to overcome our prejudices and open the door for opportunity.

To understand why it is important to overcome biases we need to understand what prejudice is; how it looks, sounds, and feels. Prejudice is bias in motion. Prejudice looks like the single father of four not getting the job he is perfectly qualified for and desperately needs, solely because his skin is the wrong color. It looks like diversity quotas. It looks like a woman being paid 21% less than her male counterpart in a career in which they show equal levels of skill (Gould & Sheth, 2017). Prejudice feels like not knowing if you are in the position you're in because you are actually the best, or there as a placeholder to keep the company from being sued. It feels like the frustration of a female engineering student whose male group members immediately assume her incompetence in completing the project and try to disguise their seizing control as courtesy and chivalry. Prejudice sounds like women being labeled "pushy" twice as often as men (Khazan, 2014). It sounds like mocking, sarcasm, and insults. Prejudice is the unfair treatment of people based on factors that do not matter in their career. Imagine the difference in your work environment if everyone felt accepted. Imagine how you would feel if there was no need to overcome what people think about your religion, skin, sexual orientation, hair, gender, or body type. Imagine the ideas that could be generated and the growth that true acceptance of diversity could bring.

Racial colorblindness is an ideal situation in which skin color and other features don't matter in the slightest. This ideal doesn't fully work because, as Bahiyyah Williams (2015) puts it, "…even though colorblindness isn't a bad ideal considering the negative connotations race has had, it fails to be an adequate ideal for combating racial inequality because it fails to be genuine and it also allows the persistence of racial hierarchies and inequalities" (p. 3). Racial colorblindness is not genuine or effective because it is shallow. The problem is much larger than skin color and skin color goes so much deeper than skin. It is part of who we are but it is not our defining feature. To be "colorblind" is to be ignorant to all the complexities of thought that different backgrounds can bring to the table. To discriminate based on skin color or any other physical or mental attribute is to be ignorant in the same way. Instead of being colorblind in the workplace, I submit that we be colorful. We should overcome our biases so that we can see people for what they can do because of their differences rather than in spite of them.

For us to be able to overcome our biases we must admit we have them. A study was conducted by Patricia G. Devine and colleagues from the psychology department of the University of Wisconsin-Madison on long term reduction of implicit race bias. They found that two major contributing factors to a change in bias were: the individual's awareness of their bias and their desire to change this bias (Devine, Forscher, Austin, & Cox, 2012). It makes sense that if you have no desire to change your bias then you would not. If you are unaware of your bias then you do not have the choice to change in the first place. Take, for example, people who drive in the left lane of traffic. There are two groups of people in this lane: those who hate slow drivers camping out in the left lane and those who have no idea this is a problem. If you don't know the rule of etiquette that slower traffic stays right, then why would you ever change out of the left lane where traffic seems to flow so smoothly? Remaining unaware of our biases is like driving slow in the fast lane. When we sit idly in our ignorance we block the way of improvement. A study was done specifically on modern prejudice and the role of bias awareness and reported:

> When bias is cloaked in a way that people do not recognize, they are likely to continue to perpetuate their biased behaviors and unlikely to reduce their negative attitudes. However, when people become aware of their biases, they often adjust their attitudes and behavior to be more egalitarian (Perry, Murphy, & Dovidio, 2015, p.1).

When we "cloak" or ignore our biases we do not change our behavior. Simply denying the fact that we have a bias does not do anything to fix the problem. Taking an "out of sight, out of mind" approach does not work for bias reduction. We must recognize our biases in order to start the process of overcoming them.

Sometimes we cloak our bias accidentally. Joleen Archibald (2014) states, "In most cases, people's biased perceptions of others are not a result of any malicious intent to inflict harm. Instead, biases in social perception tend to occur because we as perceivers, are imperfect processors of information" (para. 1). Social perception is not inherently bad; the problem occurs when our perception is wrong and we make no effort to fix it. If we are afraid to admit to ourselves that we have biases, then we can never change. No one

is perfect. Everyone has biases. We cannot control that but we can control how we respond to them. We must admit to ourselves that we are, in fact, imperfect processors and then we must act. Think of the driver in the left lane. Once they realize their mistake they now have the choice to change either their speed or their lane. When we admit that we are imperfect processors, we uncloak our biases and have the choice to change our behavior.

A great way to overcome bias is by using anti-bias tactics. The study by Devine et al. (2012), mentioned previously, lists the five tactics taught in their study group that proved to be effective in overcoming bias. The first is *Stereotype Replacement* which involves replacing stereotypical responses with non-stereotypical responses. You recognize a response is based on stereotypes, label the response as stereotypical, reflect on why you responded that way, then decide how to respond differently in the future. The second tactic is *Counter-Stereotypic Imaging.* This involves imagining others who are counter-stereotypic. For example, if you generally view a specific group of people as being less intelligent, then you would imagine people who fit in that category but don't fall under the stereotype of being unintelligent. They can be famous people, people you personally know, or just an abstract idea of a person. The third tactic studied is *Perspective Taking.* This is when you put yourself in someone else's shoes and try to see through their eyes. Fourth is *Individuation*, which focuses on helping you see people for their personal rather than group-based attributes. You can do this by finding specific information about individual group members. The last tactic is *Increasing Opportunities for Contact*. This strategy does not require you to completely immerse yourself in a new culture, but to increase the number of interactions you have with "out-group" members (Devine et al., 2012). These are just five of hundreds of tactics that can be used to overcome bias. It is a simple enough task to find one that works for you and to utilize it.

For anti-bias tactics to be effective, we have to want to change. It is not enough to admit we have a bias; we must see the importance in overcoming it. Sheryl Sandberg, COO of Facebook and founder of Leanin.org and Optionb.org expressed, "I think what has to happen is that businesses have to decide this isn't only the right thing to do but the smart thing to do" ("The Female Quotient," 2019). For a company to reach

ultimate success and efficiency, it needs to have the most effective people in the most effective positions in spite of irrelevant factors. Whether you are in a place of leadership or an unpaid intern, the better you are at realizing you are an imperfect processor and looking past your biases, the more successful you will be. First Round, a venture capital firm, released an article about what they learned in their last ten years of business. The very first statistic listed is that companies with at least one female founder outperformed all-male teams by 63% ("First Round 10 Year Project," 2015). This statistic does not show that women are better than men. It does not say that all female teams outperformed all-male teams, but that teams with *both* men and women outperformed teams with just men. It shows that diversity is better than singularity. Laura Brounstein, special projects director of *Cosmopolitan* and *Seventeen* stated, "When you have greater diversity of thought, innovation happens" ("The Female Quotient," 2019). If we can look past our biases and see people for their strengths and weaknesses we will open whole new levels of innovation.

Some people argue that you cannot change the way you view people. They might feel we are born with our biases and that is just the way it is. Lesley Slaton Brown, Chief Diversity Officer of HP Inc. says, "We're never going to get rid of our own biases but we can look organizationally" ("The Female Quotient," 2019). Even if it is impossible to change the way we feel about people, we can change the way we think. We can look organizationally, find strengths, and put individuals where they are needed. There is evidence that change is possible. The study by Devine and colleagues on long term implicit bias reduction concludes:

> In sum, this study presents the first intervention of its kind, one that, using a randomized controlled design, produces a reduction in implicit race bias that endures for at least two months. Our data provided evidence demonstrating the power of the conscious mind to intentionally deploy strategies to overcome implicit bias. As such, these findings raise the hope of solving a problem that has long vexed social scientists—how to reduce race-based discrimination. By empowering people to break the prejudice habit, this study takes an

> important step toward resolving the paradox of ongoing discrimination in a nation founded on the principle of equality (Devine et al., 2012, p.13-14).

Overcoming our biases is a choice. It may take a lot of effort and discipline, but it can be done by looking organizationally and changing our implicit bias. We can change and we should. Using simple tactics, we can overcome our perception processing imperfections. There is no need to dawdle in the left lane and hold up ourselves and others. Realizing and overcoming our biases puts our foot down on the gas pedal. It is the key step in overcoming prejudice and clearing a path for progression. As we look past appearance, gender, sexual orientation, religion, culture, body type, background, and beliefs, we will find the most effective people for the required position and we will reach levels of ingenuity and success that can be met no other way.

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Turning Steps into Leaps: Women in Leadership

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In the past year, we as a society have made some big steps in gaining gender equality within leadership positions; however, we still have many leaps left to go. Women leaders are still significantly lacking in almost every field, including education, medicine, business, politics, and film. And yet, women have been popularly regarded as just as effective at being leaders as men. Why then do women struggle to get into these high leadership positions? Gender discrimination, unrealistic and unfair expectations for women, and internal doubts are just some of the reasons making it more difficult for women to become powerful leaders. So how do we fix this? By listening, learning, observing, and communicating with one another, both women and men can close the gap standing between women and leadership. Both groups have much to do before gender equality is obtained, but that does not mean it is impossible. The barrier seems large and intimidating, but if recent events have proven anything, it is that the barrier is breakable.

There is no denying that a barrier exists between women and high leadership positions, especially in politics and business. In 2018, there were more women elected into Congress than ever before, which was an amazing feat. However, women make up 50.8% of the U.S. population, but only about 24% of Congress is comprised of women, and it only gets worse from there (Desilver, 2018). According to "The Women's Leadership Gap," written by Judith Warner and Danielle Corey (2017) in *Center for American Progress,* "[women] are only 25 percent of executive- and senior-level officials and managers, hold only 20 percent of board seats, and are only

6 percent of CEOs" (Warner & Corey, 2017, para. 8). It is even more difficult for women of color; according to the Center for American Women and Politics (2018), women of color only take up 4 out of 100 seats in the Senate. Women of color also only occupy "4 percent of top corporate jobs [and] 3 percent of board seats" (Sandberg, 2013, p. 5). In addition, there is a significant lack of female leaders in film, medicine, education, and the list goes on and on (Warner & Corey, 2017). Don't get me wrong, any strides women make in gaining recognition, leadership positions, and equality should not be taken lightly and ought to be celebrated. But now, more than ever, it is important to continuously make our voices heard so these accomplishments become more impressive as time goes on. If we sit idly by, content with just this current leap into leadership positions, then it is very likely we may lose the ground we have gained. This essay will delve into why women are valuable assets in any and all leadership positions, as well as what women and men can and ought to do to help each other succeed.

So, what specifically do women bring to the table? According to the *Pew Research Center* in their article "Women and Leadership 2018" by Horowitz, Igielnik, and Parker (2018), a majority of the public see women as having many benefits within leadership roles. The authors explain that the majority see women and men as equal in creating safe and respectful working environments, valuing diversity, and providing fair pay, fair benefits, and guidance. Furthermore, "In both business and politics, majorities say women are better than men when it comes to being compassionate and empathetic, and substantial shares say women are better at working out compromises" (Horowitz, Igielnik, & Parker, 2018, para. 7). The article describes how most adults see women as better "role models for children" and at being respectful and civil (Horowitz et al., 2018). This is not to say that men are not effective leaders; the same study also states how men are more willing to take risks than women (Horowitz et al., 2018). In fact, 57% of Americans believe that, although women and men may have different leadership styles, neither is necessarily more effective than the other (Horowitz et al., 2018). Both women and men have an abundance of skills and knowledge to utilize, which is the issue at hand; despite women being popularly regarded as just as deserving of leadership as men, they still struggle to get into those positions.

So why exactly are women not in more leadership positions? As Sheryl Sandberg (2013) so candidly put it in her book, *Lean In,* "The blunt truth is that men still run the world" (p. 5), and gender discrimination is still a huge problem in many industries and fields. Sandberg (2013) described her own experiences, specifically as a pregnant woman who realized that no other pregnant women in the company before her understood they were entitled to ask for help and better accommodations. Women who are too afraid to speak up for themselves within their careers are another reason why we are not making any huge strides in gender equality. *Both women and men* have to listen to and communicate with each other, as well as be aware of the struggles the other is facing.

Another issue is that women sometimes feel as if they must prove themselves significantly more within their field than men, which definitely correlates to the problem of gender discrimination (Horowitz et al., 2018). In the article by Horowitz et al. (2018), a majority of Republican women stated that another reason for women not achieving higher positions is because of "Americans not being ready to elect women" (para. 13), which again just means a majority of Americans are discriminating on the basis of gender. However, this idea that Americans are not ready to elect women is interesting considering the article also says "a majority of Americans (59%) say there are too few women in top leadership positions in politics and in business today, with about half saying, ideally, there would be equal numbers of men and women" (Horowitz et al., 2018, para. 18). So perhaps there are some unconscious biases happening in certain areas of our culture.

Another issue is that women leaders can be stuck in a liminal space, where they must appear and act in contradictory ways. *Harvard Business Review* posted an article titled "How Women Manage the Gendered Norms of Leadership," written by Wei Zheng, Ronit Kark, and Alyson Meister (2018) explaining how women leaders have to appear both "warm and nice (what society traditionally expects from women), as well as competent or tough (what society traditionally expects from men and leaders)" (para. 1). The article clearly states how it is unfair that women have this "double-bind," in which they are expected to do two contradictory things at once, and how the system needs to change. It also acknowledges

that, until we can fix the system, women will have to figure out strategies on how to get around this issue (Zheng et al., 2018). The article offers advice for how women can change their behavior in order to be respected more as leaders. Unfortunately, this seems to be a disappointing necessity in today's political and business arenas.

In the past couple of years, discussion of equality between women and men has been brought up more often. The "Me Too" movement raised awareness of sexual assault and encouraged women and men alike to make their voices heard. The first statue of a woman in Parliament Square was created and unveiled in 2018. Even more recently, Gillette created a short film called "We Believe: The Best Men Can Be," which was released January 2019 and shined light onto the idea of toxic masculinity and how we all ought to treat each other with respect and compassion. It is important we keep these conversations going so that changes will be made. As heartbreaking as a comparison this is, we do not want gender equality to fall into the same trap as school shootings, where our country heatedly discusses the tragedy of the shootings and demands changes before losing all steam after about a month of it happening. Thus, school shootings continue with little to no changes being made. Women and men need to continuously and consistently discuss the issues of inequality and the barriers that lie between the two so they are not forgotten so easily.

But how exactly can we do this? It is not a simple feat. However, there is much we can do just as individuals in our day-to-day lives. Earlier, I mentioned how just being willing to listen to and communicate with each other is a small step towards reaching an understanding. When women and men can understand where the other is coming from, it will be significantly easier for us to work together and make the changes necessary to achieve equality. It is important to note that women are far more likely to notice gender-related barriers than men, which means it truly is vital for women speak up about these barriers (Horowitz et al., 2018). An article titled "The Most Undervalued Leadership Traits of Women," which was posted on *Forbes* and written by Glenn Llopis (2014), agrees: "My experiences have taught me that great women make it a point to teach men about women" (para. 4). It's not really a secret that women and men often tend to struggle to understand each other. However, just as it

is necessary for women to speak up, it is just as important for men to pay attention, because there may be cases where a woman is too afraid to speak up due to fear for her personal safety or security within the workplace. Llopis's article describes how he was able to learn from the women in his life, which is an awesome sentiment and is something everyone can learn from. By being open and willing to learn from one another, it will be significantly easier for us to reach gender equality.

The truth of the matter is this: We should certainly be happy and grateful for all the small steps our society is taking towards gender equality, especially when we see how far behind other countries are regarding the same topic. However, just because "things could be worse should not stop us from trying to make them better" (Sandberg, 2013, p. 5). Many leaps are left to make before we can even think of relaxing for a moment. We cannot lose sight of what equality means and how all people are entitled to have it. Just as some men ought to come to the realization that masculinity is not the cruelness of your words nor the strength of your fist, so must some women understand that we are strong, important, and meaningful. We must not let harmful, heartless phrases seep into our minds and scare us away from having aspirations to become powerful people. Don't let others' doubts become your doubts. Support one another and learn from each other. And as for that barrier? Don't worry, it's breakable.

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