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Inaugural Issue **1** Fall 2000

The Woodhull Institute for Ethical Leadership



The Woodhull Institute for Ethical Leadership

**“TEACHERS OPEN THE DOOR, BUT YOU MUST ENTER BY YOURSELF.”**

*CHINESE PROVERB*

**“A REAL LEADER FACES THE MUSIC, EVEN WHEN SHE DOESN'T LIKE THE TUNE.”**

*ANON*

**“YOU MUST DO THE THINGS YOU THINK YOU CANNOT DO.”**

*ELEANOR ROOSEVELT*

**“WHEN ONE DOOR OF HAPPINESS CLOSES, ANOTHER OPENS; BUT OFTEN WE LOOK SO LONG AT THE CLOSED DOOR THAT WE DO NOT SEE THE ONE WHICH HAS OPENED FOR US.”**

*HELEN KELLER*

**“THE ONLY MISTAKE IS THE ONE FROM WHICH WE LEARN NOTHING.”**

*JOHN POWELL*

**“PROGRESS LIES NOT IN ENHANCING WHAT IS, BUT IN ADVANCING TOWARD WHAT WILL BE.”**

*KAHLIL GIBRAN*

**“OUR GREATEST GLORY IS NOT IN NEVER FALLING, BUT IN RISING EVERY TIME WE FALL.”**

*CONFUCIUS*

**W**elcome to Woodhull's new logo concept. Simple and elegant, the logo represents several key aspects of Woodhull's education and organization. The 'W,' framed by a window, symbolizes the 'windows' of opportunity opened by Woodhull's ethical leadership education. The shape of the 'W' also reveals an important concept of Woodhull's ethical leadership training. The 'W' is formed by both sharp, angled lines and flowing, circular ones, reflecting Woodhull's belief that effective ethical leadership requires the partnership of bold power and gentle compassion. To represent the personal and professional development of our graduates, which is both initiated and sustained by Woodhull, the 'W' intentionally flows beyond the window acting as a metaphor for growth. The extension of the 'W' beyond the frame of the window also reflects Woodhull's respect for variety and difference. Woodhull believes that women cannot be defined by one self-contained, monolithic identity, and as such, the 'W' pushes out beyond the confines of the structure of the frame. The position of the 'W' both inside and outside of the window also symbolizes our dual focus on 'inner' and 'outer' skill development in our programming goals. This simple logo represents The Woodhull Institute's philosophy perfectly!

***Wear the Woodhull Logo Proudly! Light weight, 100% cotton, white, V-neck T-shirts, with Woodhull's logo (in blue), can now be purchased! Available in S, M, L, XL. Send \$12.00 plus \$1.50 shipping and handling to Woodhull office. Logo, which includes Woodhull's full name, is on top left of T-shirt.***

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# Message from the President and Board of Woodhull



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Experiencing our Woodhull dream turn into an actual reality, complete with a neocolonial style retreat center on 368 acres of rolling hills, wetlands, hiking trails, barns, an apple orchard and stretches and stretches of fields, has been absolutely joyous for the Woodhull team! Our vision of a women's ethical leadership retreat center, where women can come together to mentor one another, teach and study important ethical leadership skills, and create a think tank where needed dialogue on ethical issues and concerns can begin and grow, has, with the gifts, support, inspiration and creativity of many generous donors, program partners, Woodhull graduates, Staff and Friends, come true! Victoria Woodhull would have been proud of our bold achievements!

Over the course of this stunning year, with Jan Leonard as Woodhull's Executive Director extraordinaire, Woodhull has delivered two three-day intensive ethical leadership retreats for young women; hosted a sunny alumnae reunion picnic at Central Park; led a literally electrifying alumnae labor day weekend of advanced programming in stormy weather in Ancramdale; moderated two alumnae quarterly meetings; held several Thursday 'Group Gatherings' of snacks and updates with Jan and Gretchen; set up alumnae group listserves and a delegate network; and moderated a new and illuminating alumnae spiritual listserve! And to continue to meet the great demand for ethical leadership programming, we will be extending our programming goals to include women beyond the twenty age group! Watch for this program development on our ever changing and updated website at [www.woodhull.org](http://www.woodhull.org).

It has also been an amazing year of growth for the Woodhull organization. We have selected a new Woodhull board member who will be officially joining us on November 1, 2000. Monica Santana, currently the Executive Director of Management Leadership for Tomorrow (MLT), a nonprofit organization, offering guidance and MBA mentors to undergraduate students of color nationwide, brings to Woodhull not only her breadth of knowledge and understanding in the world of mentorship, community service and diversity, but also a warm and engaging spirit which is exuberantly welcomed by the Woodhull group! Also welcomed to Woodhull are all of our new Fellows, Leadership Council members and partners.

We are working hard to forge strong working partnerships with high quality organizations such as The Susie Tompkins Buell Foundation, Patrina Foundation, Ford Foundation, Save The Children and Flatiron Partners as well as with corporations and businesses.

Our gracious thanks to all of you who have contributed your time, energy, boundless knowledge, vision and inspiring ethical leadership to our Woodhull community!

Sincerely,

Naomi Wolf, Margot Magowan, Melissa Bradley, Nicola Miner, Gina Amaro, Robin Stern, Monica Santana



*"Have the courage of your convictions; don't mind what the world says; don't try to be popular...do your duty."*

(Victoria Woodhull)

# Woodhull's Inner Edge



This column, written by Robin Stern, psychologist, Director of New Media Research and Development at The Center for Social and Emotional Education, psychotherapist and psychological consultant in education and industry is also a faculty member of Teachers College, Columbia University and a Woodhull Board Member. The column will be dedicated to providing women with 'inner' skill development, an essential tool for effective, ethical leadership.

*Come to the edge  
She said. They said: We are afraid.*

*Come to the edge  
She said. They came.*

*She pushed them, and*

*They flew... (Gender adaptation of Guillaume Apollinaire)*

**M**en ask women out all the time, risking rejection. Men casually try out for sports teams, risking rejection. Men negotiate for higher salaries, risking rejection. Why do men take personal and professional risks that women would never dream of taking? Simply put, it's expected of them and so they do more of it. From childhood, young boys are encouraged to get out onto the playground and sports fields, to compete with other boys. They are expected to take tumbles, to lose games, and also to pick themselves up and to win games. If they fail at something, many boys brush themselves off and forge ahead.

Young girls, on the other hand, are typically treated as delicate and dependent. When young girls fall, parents scoop them up and soothe their tears. Instead of picking themselves up, their parents do the lifting. Girls are conditioned to avoid competition, scrapes, and tumbles out of the fear that their skin and bones are somehow more fragile than that of little boys. Not surprisingly, these childhood gender differences manifest in the lives of adult men and women. Men ask for raises; buy high-risk stocks; and initiate dates. Women wait to be given raises; buy no stocks or safe stocks; and wait patiently by the phone. For women, the possibility of failure seems psychologically daunting. To avoid failure, they avoid risks. Failure, to men, is just a natural part of life. Since men typically take more risks, they ultimately experience more failures—large and small. This familiarity with failure ends up being a huge bonus for men since it makes the act of failing relatively pain free. For risk phobia women, failure tends to devastate and paralyze them.

Many psychoanalytic theorists consider risk-taking an important developmental step in achieving a healthy separation from one's family in the process of creating a sense of individuality. We learn about who we are by trying new things and by seeing whether or not they appeal to us. Dan Goleman, author of *Working with Emotional Intelligence*, advises that good risk taking can provide energy, enthusiasm, and motivation. Instead of feeling demoralized and immobilized by set backs, he suggests restructuring failures into challenges. If Rosa Parks didn't take a risk by standing up against racism, where would women of color be today? Women need to catch up in the adventures and rewards of risk taking. Although dreaded failure may seem imminent, taking risks promotes maturation and development; it can open up your world. Enter the world of risk-taking wisely; risk taking does not mean risky behavior. Good risk involves putting yourself out just so far that you may get nicked, but not so far that you risk being seriously hurt.

## Ethical Dilemma Corner

*Each Woodhull Way Newsletter will feature an ethical dilemma submitted by a Woodhull graduate or friend. Submit your ethical dilemma to: Ethical Dilemma Corner, 61 East 8th Street, Ste. 130, New York, New York, 10003.*

Dear Woodhull,

I am a twenty-three year old woman who just moved to NYC from a small town. I am also practicing Buddhism, and making an effort to serve my community by giving to others. I am, however, overwhelmed by the number of panhandlers throughout the city. Several times daily I am approached by those wanting money, and at first, I readily gave what I could. After months, I feel resentful of this constant intrusion, and guilty that I am not giving each time. As a Buddhist, I know that I should try to feel like I am being served by serving others, but right now, all I feel is harassed and ethically confused.

Dear Ethically Confused,

While it is depressing to contemplate, it is hard to deny that at any one time, there are an infinite number of people that could use some of our help. However, it is equally undeniable that each of us has only a limited amount of resources to apply to helping people. These limited resources include time, money and personal energy. Because of these constraints, the problem becomes one of prioritization. You need to make decisions about who to help and how. You need to consider possible goals, perhaps maximizing the number of people helped, or the degree of help provided to any one person, or the closeness of our association with the people being helped. While we would like to avoid being paralyzed into inaction by the overwhelming array of possibilities, we nevertheless should consider some choices however imperfect those choices may be. Beyond these somewhat utilitarian considerations, you have already acknowledged that there is an essential component of spiritual fulfillment involved in helping people. In the end, you need to consider this aspect of personal fulfillment when making these kinds of choices. This feeling of fulfillment will not only benefit you, but will allow you to continue to productively help others into the future, without exhausting your feelings of generosity. If you feel incapable of achieving this fulfillment by giving to panhandlers, then you need to recognize the reality of this feeling and consider whether other avenues of helping people may be more meaningful to you.

## Knowledge Portals

Compiled by Suzanne Heller, WI Intern

### My Sisters' Words Bookstore

<http://mysisterswords.booksense.com>

This is the largest feminist bookstore in New York State; this site provides listings of store event information, weekly meetings, their newsletter, bestsellers, and general feminist research material in all subject areas.

### Women's Liberation Research Network

[www.duke.edu/~ginnyd/wlrn.html](http://www.duke.edu/~ginnyd/wlrn.html)

This website for the WLRN contains a directory and other related information on and for the purpose to assist in research, study, and awareness of the Women's Liberation Movement. Within the site, you may find others doing research related to your interests; libraries and archives with collections that you can use; and ideas for research.

### The Feminist Theory Website

[www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/enin.html](http://www.cddc.vt.edu/feminism/enin.html)

This website provides research materials and information for students, activists, and scholars interested in women's conditions and struggles around the world. The website provides a wide range of research into feminist theory, and encourages dialogue between women and men.

### The Women of Color Website

[www.hsph.harvard.edu/grhf/WoC](http://www.hsph.harvard.edu/grhf/WoC)

This website provides access on various issues and topics that focus on women of color. It focuses on sexuality, feminisms, reproductive health and rights. In addition, the site links you to other sites and organizations that address the concerns of women of color.

# Woodhull Women



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**This column will feature notable women from the past and present--women who have embraced challenges with compassion and fortitude; and have become the role models, leaders and mentors, who all women can look to for inspiration, courage, wisdom and ethical leadership.**

"My Heroine" By Leeat Granek, W2

**A**t 47 years old, my mom, with spiked blond hair, vivacious blue eyes, and contagious laughter is my heroine and unequivocal choice for the Woodhull Women's column. A Swedish proverb once said that "those who wish to sing, always find a song." I cannot think of a better image to describe my mother. Living through a lifetime of health obstacles, she still remains an icon of optimism that is virtually unshakeable.

A year after giving birth to a beautiful baby boy, Irit Granek was first diagnosed with breast cancer. At the early age of 34, she immediately went through a lumpectomy followed by more intense surgeries to ensure that no cancer had spread beyond the breast. After seven months of painful chemotherapy, vomiting, hair loss, and many sleepless nights, my mom emerged triumphant. Throughout that year, she managed to hold herself together, to raise her three young children, and to keep the cheerful ambience in the house. A year to the day of the first operation, my mom discovered another lump. Mom changed doctors. She says that "this time I was really angry! I marched into the doctor's office and demanded some answers. Often women are scared to leave their doctors. Cancer is a horrible disease, and patients often feel fearful that if they leave, something bad will happen to them. We only have one life to live, and we need to take responsibility for our own needs. To doctors, we are just patients. You have to do the maximum for yourself, no one else will do it for you."

Three years later, my mom thought everything was fine; however, at a routine six-month check up, the new doctor found that cancer had spread to her lymph nodes. More treatment took place. The saga continued, but this time with streptococcus, the flesh-eating bacteria challenging my mom, a disease so rare, that it affects only one out of tens of thousands of people, although the vicious bacteria attacked my mom twice, she survived this health challenge. My mom says that "what kept me going was thinking ahead, I had just gotten a new car and couldn't wait to get out and drive it. I really didn't have much choice; I made the best of every situation. I read a lot, talked on the phone, ran my household from the hospital room, and entertained my guests....We celebrated quite a few holidays in that hospital. One time, we were almost kicked out due to all the noise, and for lighting Chanukah candles in the patient lounge!"

Several years later, another lump was found; a mastectomy was scheduled, and seven days after the operation, there was my mom, back to her usual smiling self, dressed and ready to go out as she did every Thursday night with my dad. My mom says that "I was on such a high, I couldn't even figure out why I was in such a good mood after the operation. I was so happy to be alive, just to be a part of the universe."

Although over an eleven year period, my mom has been diagnosed four separate times with breast cancer and has gotten the strep virus four times, she says, "I've never been happier in my entire life. I'm living to my full potential, working, and volunteering at the cancer hospital, and making a real difference in other people's lives. I'm also writing about my experiences, which I have always been afraid to do, but has always been a dream."

# Support Woodhull

Over the next two years our comprehensive campaign goal is \$2 million for program development, research, scholarships, distance learning, and property upgrades. Please contact Jan Leonard, Executive Director, or any Board member to find out the benefits of giving to Woodhull or to send your gift today.

## Gift Categories

- Friends: \$25 and up
- Sponsors: \$250 and up
- Leaders: \$1,000 and up
- Victoria's Circle: \$5,000 and up

## Calling All Alums! We need your Continued Support

Tell your friends about Woodhull's retreats.

Supply Woodhull with database contacts.

Spread word of our site: [www.woodhull.org](http://www.woodhull.org)

Make donations of your time and money.

Ask people to donate money or services.

Volunteer for mailings and admin. work.

Sign up for an alum committee.

Write about WI in your local newspapers.

Send in updates of your WI triumphs.



Yoga Practice Outside one of Woodhull's Lower Barns

## Message from Jan Leonard, ED

In this inaugural newsletter and at the end of my first year as Woodhull's ED, my message is one of thanks and gratitude to many people as well as excitement of things to come. First, thanks to a stellar President and Board of Directors who never fail to give support to me in the true spirit of partnership and sisterhood--we are a strong team for Woodhull!

Next on my list is our new Program Director, Gretchen Mullin. A very accomplished and talented woman, Gretchen has recently completed a Ph.D. in English literature, specializing in the areas of colonialism, gender and race in the Early Modern period. She has taught at the university level and has developed and created educational programs, curriculum and materials. Gretchen does a beautiful job in the areas of curriculum and program, research, website management, and alumnae relations and all with a superb sense of humor!!

I also want to mention the extraordinary organizations that work with Woodhull including Catholic Big Brothers and Big Sisters, America's Alliance, Bernice Cosey Pulley's Center for Creativity, The Central Harlem Partnership, The Young Women's Work Project, Girls Inc., The Women's Initiative for Self-Employment, The East Harlem Tutorial and Management Leadership for Tomorrow.

And to our alums, whose numbers grow steadily, your positive energy, thoughts, and actions motivate us everyday to work harder for this vision because you are Woodhull!

Sincerely,

JAN

**Woodhull's First Graduating Class!**



**Woodhull Three Members Getting Financially Savvy!**

**Woodhull's Retreat Site and Outdoor Classroom!**



**Woodhull Four Group Shot in Fay Goleman Library**

**Woodhull Two Getting Tips for Stump Speeches**



**Woodhull Reunion Picnic in Central Park, NY**

## Graduate Profile

By Heather A. Cohen, W1



**D**etermined, strong-willed and compassionate are three words that best describe my character and what I believe to be characteristics of many Woodhull graduates. Like many of the graduates, I have personal and professional goals that's success can be fostered through skills that the Woodhull Institute advocates.

Dreams of my success started at an early age. I remember being eleven or twelve years old and fantasizing about running my own business. My desires to become an entrepreneur were so strong that I would impulsively act on them by creating various make-shift businesses. My first make-shift business was selling freshly picked apples on the corner of my street. After that, I developed businesses that incorporated some of my artistic and creative abilities such as making craft items and selling them at stoop sales or baking food items for bake sales. Through my practice of making products and selling them to appreciative customers I felt a great sense of euphoria and excitement.

My strong interest in becoming an entrepreneur carried throughout my high school and college years. I often wrote sample business plans for businesses that I hoped to develop. While I had these entrepreneurial interests, I also began acquiring other interests to incorporate into my personal and professional success. One of these interests is marketing. The aspect I love most about marketing is that it allows me to entice people by implementing creative ideas and also understanding peoples' needs and wants. I enjoy the concept of marketing so much that I took a marketing minor in college and after that pursued a marketing career. My present job marketing professional services is enjoyable, yet I realize that this career choice is short-term. The experience I am gaining will foster my success as an entrepreneur.

Another interest I have acquired is in holistic health. I find it fascinating that people can have so much control over their health, happiness and well being through taking care of their mind, body and soul through natural measures. I strongly believe that taking measures such as eating nutrient rich foods, exercising the body and practicing a form of spirituality adds to ones' quality of life. Furthermore, I believe that, if people cannot take pride in their minds and bodies first then how can they dare be so hypocritical as to take pride in more superficial things. My interests in business and holistic health may seem extremely diverse, but the combination of the two is the long-term career goal that I long for. My ideal career is to implement a holistic health business where I can assist people in achieving optimal health and well being. My ideal business would be much more than a professional accomplishment, it would be a life-long personal fulfillment--made possible through my Woodhull training!

**Gretchen Jeffries, W3:** Gretchen used her Woodhull advocacy skills to interest a school newspaper to interview her and to publish a glowing report on Woodhull. The results-- Woodhull received great participant applications for the upcoming Woodhull Five retreat! Hurray Gretchen!

**Shirley Serotsky, W3:** "Woodhull is with me on the subway. Woodhull is with me in a smoky East Village bar. And Woodhull is with me when I sit on my fire escape and look out on this crazy city, and feel more significant and able than I did before...Woodhull sticks by us as we make revelations, often startling, sometimes disorienting, about ourselves and about the world. Woodhullees of every class interact daily on several list serves, providing thought and examination that I rarely experience in my day-to-day life. Woodhull leadership takes an active voice in these discussions -- never imposing, always illuminating."

**Stacey Grossman, W4:** "I literally cannot stop thinking about my weekend at Woodhull. Taking a break from the daily grind to spend time with exceptional and inspirational women, and to learn invaluable lessons about how to be a stronger, a more confident and a better person, was without doubt one of the greatest gifts I've ever given myself. Soon after I returned from Woodhull, I was interviewed by a reporter from the New York Times. In preparation for and during the interview, I put many of the skills I learned at Woodhull to use: I spoke with a strong voice, I was sure of myself, and I refused to be modest about my accomplishments."

**Deborah Keitsch, W4:** "Before Woodhull, I went on a job interview and I also went on a job interview a week after Woodhull. The difference in the two interviews was striking to me. Throughout the second one I was so much more conscious of how I was presenting myself- my speech, my posture, my ability to promote myself and to assert my confidence in my abilities. The second interview was for a job that was actually beyond my qualifications and I really don't think I would have even attempted to apply for such a position before going to the Woodhull retreat. I didn't get the job, but, our meeting was so positive that the company contacted me to ask if I was interested in coming on as a contracted assistant until they were able to find a full-time position that I was suited for!"

**Kathryn O'Neal, W2:** Kathryn recently started a new job as the Development Associate at Inwood House, a non-profit pioneer in teen pregnancy prevention. With the help of Woodhull training, she found a position, which in her words, is a "perfect fit!" Congratulations Kathryn!



## WOODHULL CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2000-2001

### **NOVEMBER 16: VIRTUAL MEETING ON [WWW.WOODHULL.ORG](http://WWW.WOODHULL.ORG)**

6-8pm Join our first ever chat room Alumnae virtual meeting moderated by Dr. Robin Stern! Surf to [www.woodhull.org](http://www.woodhull.org) then click on chat room to participate. All Woodhull alumnae welcomed!

### **NOVEMBER 20-22: YOUNG WOMEN'S ETHICAL LEADERSHIP RETREAT IN SAN FRANCISCO, CA**

Participate at our three-day young women's (21-29) ethical leadership retreat held in Green Gulch, CA! Join esprit co-founder Susie Tompkins Buell, Woodhull president Naomi Wolf, radio producer and writer Margot Magowan, psychologist Dr. Robin Stern, and financial expert BHC founder and president Melissa Bradley at an exhilarating weekend of skill training. Learn to develop your voice; give dynamite presentations; advocate for yourself; strategize win-win negotiations; sustain a mentor network; attend to your financial and tech lives; and discover entrepreneurship! Retreat Cost: \$300.

### **DECEMBER 7: CABARET FUNDRAISER HOLIDAY PARTY IN NYC**

7-10pm. Enjoy an evening of piano, song and dance, celebrating women from past and present who have shaken the cabaret world. Wine and Hors d'oeuvres. For tickets call 212-475-5575. Special ticket price for Woodhull Alums: \$50

### **APRIL 26-28: YOUNG WOMEN'S ETHICAL LEADERSHIP RETREAT IN ANCRAMDAL, NY**

Ethical leadership retreat for young women (age 21-29). Retreat Cost: \$300. Download all applications from website.

### **JUNE 9-10: WOODHULL ALUMNAE REUNION, ANCRAMDAL, NY**

All Woodhull Alums welcome! Cost: \$150 for food, accommodations and programming.

**THE WOODHULL WAY: EXECUTIVE EDITOR: JAN LEONARD CO-EDITORS: GRETCHEN MULLIN AND HEATHER COHEN**  
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