



murray hill institute

women transforming culture

Fall 2011 Newsletter  
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**Towards Ethical Leadership: A Message  
from the MHI President, Teresa Carale**

Ungoliant, a fictional character in J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Silmarillion*, was an evil spirit in the form of giant spider. She devoured things in her path, even her own offspring. In the end, having nothing left to devour, she devoured herself. A tragic story.

Many people claim that the financial and economic crisis that the world is experiencing was caused by greed, the insatiable desire to possess and consume, akin to the character of Ungoliant. Be this true or not, the situation does give us pause. Can the world ever be a better place? Can people work towards and sustain a more just world, where each person is truly respected and valued?

We would like to think that this is possible. Our motto, *Women Transforming Culture*, is a testament to this optimism, to the hope that a culture of greed and selfishness can be transformed into a culture of giving and service. And this culture of giving and service can coexist with meeting performance goals. An atmosphere of mutual respect and shared values, for instance, creates a happy workforce and prevents wasted energy and dissipation resulting from unnecessary conflict. The overall effect is a more productive workforce and good business results.

How can this transformation occur? By cultivating strong and ethical leadership. Ethics is not simply the avoidance of what is not legal or what is not licit. The ethics that Murray Hill Institute promotes is not driven by compliance. In order to transform the world, the great problems of mankind

must be faced with an ethics that moves leaders to work towards the good of all persons and of each and every person. The social impact of such transformative leadership is wide-reaching and long lasting.

When the crisis is overcome, will there be room for ethics? Will there be a place for Murray Hill Institute? We trust that many will agree that the answer is yes. There is no limit to the good that can be done. We can always make the world a better place.

We invite everyone to share our mission and begin by letting ethics guide one's decisions, big and small.

**FEATURE ARTICLE**

Mentoring with Murray Hill Institute  
By Alice Trimmer

Since its founding over 10 years ago, Murray Hill Institute has had at the heart of its mission women helping women to be proactive in bringing their unique qualities to the workplace. Central to carrying out this mission is the capability that MHI has, because of its outreach to all professions, of putting women who are just beginning their professions in touch with more experienced women who have assumed positions of leadership. Up until now, this help has been provided primarily in group settings such as the Evenings of Conversation for Young Professional Women and seven conferences covering a wide range of topics. Individual mentoring has also taken place on an as-needed basis. In September 2011, Murray Hill Institute launched a new and completely re-vamped program that will partner young professional women with experienced women who exemplify the

Murray Hill Institute mission. Each program year will run from October to June. The first group of mentors and mentees met at a kick-off event on September 23.

The curriculum for the new program was developed by MHI Board members Grace Perry, Corito Sevilla, and Karen Wagner. All three of these women have had extensive experience with mentoring programs in a variety of corporate settings. They have marshaled the experience, resources, and materials needed to bring best-practice mentoring to the MHI population.

As one who spent many years in a large corporate setting, I remember with gratitude sympathetic managers who helped me develop the requisite management skills to supervise large projects, and also to channel my creative energies in a way that best helped meet corporate goals. In addition, I was lucky enough to have co-workers who were always eager to share impressions of what strategies would work best to meet our deadlines and facilitate smooth personal interactions between large teams of bright, energetic, but often somewhat nervous, people in the face of demanding deadlines. But sympathetic and discreet peers and managers are not always on hand. In addition, workplace dynamics can make it awkward to discuss interpersonal challenges or a possible career move.

The Murray Hill Institute mentoring program provides a confidential setting to discuss any aspects of one's current work life without the concern for revealing one's vulnerabilities. Mentors and mentees will be sent written materials to facilitate discussions, and in addition, the mentors will bring their own experiences to the encounter. The program also entitles the mentee to complimentary admission to midterm and end-of-program mentor-mentee networking receptions, as well as leadership seminars and other MHI programs during the course of the mentoring year.

The curriculum for the mentoring program is centered on 10 basic skills that are needed to excel in any workplace setting. Mentors and mentees will meet 10 times, each time to discuss one aspect of the

program. The first meeting will be face to face, but after that each pair will develop their own routine for meeting in person, or by phone, email, or Skype. The 10 topics are:

- Managing up
- Career development, to include resume review
- Goal setting to ensure you are getting what you want
- Self-promotion: make sure you have an elevator pitch
- Managing conflict
- Working with peers
- Leadership development
- Effective communication
- Benefits of networking
- Work-life balance: aiming to be the well-rounded woman, to include community development and other outreach programs.

The sessions will help mentees to become more pro-active in developing skills that transfer easily from one corporate culture to another and that span a wide variety of job functions. Each mentee will also be helped to become more aware of her own strengths and areas that need improvement. Such skills and insights are especially important today, with so much uncertainty still present in the job market. Women interested in becoming MHI mentors and mentees are invited to apply [on-line](http://www.murrayhillinstitute.org/mentoring.html) at [www.murrayhillinstitute.org/mentoring.html](http://www.murrayhillinstitute.org/mentoring.html).

*Alice Trimmer is the Director of the Rosedale Center and is a member of the MHI Board.*

#### **WOMEN TRANSFORMING CULTURE:**

##### **How They Do it**

*A Smile Can Make a Difference!*

By Susan Reyes

Working as a nurse in a cancer hospital, I deal with a lot of patients who are very anxious. In addition to the usual pressures of life, they have been diagnosed with a life-changing illness.

One of the challenges of my work is trying to alleviate the level of stress they are going

through. This shows in their facial expression and demeanor when I meet them for their appointment. I realized that greeting them with a friendly smile is all it takes to help them calm down and start feeling at ease. As soon as they feel at ease, they become more accepting and cooperative with the treatment and care that is given to them. I noticed that it affects not only the patients and their families but also my co-workers.

We all get bogged down by the work we have to do, so we can easily forget the people around us. The stresses of the work itself can make it more difficult to smile, and this can create a snowball effect on our dealings with others. So when I am caught up in a busy day, I try to remind myself of a quotation from St. Josemaria Escriva “Sometimes, a smile can be the best mortification.” I noticed that no matter how difficult things are, a simple smile does lift the burden off our shoulders at least for that moment.

*Susan Reyes is a clinical nurse in Radiation Oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center, New York City.*

*Do you have an experience you would like to share about changing the culture in your workplace? Email us at [info@murrayhillinstitute.org](mailto:info@murrayhillinstitute.org)*

## **CULTURAL CORNER**

*Of Gods and Men, a Film Critique*  
By Martha Swanzey

Set in 1995 Algeria, *Of Gods and Men*, a 2010 French film and winner of Grand Prix honors at the Cannes Film Festival, recounts the difficulties and eventual tragedy of a small group of Cistercian French Trappist monks. The monks live an austere life, beautifully captured by the cinematographer, music editor and performances of the actors. The monks, a remnant perhaps of the French legacy in Algeria, live a precarious balance of their vows, their unique commitment of service to a non-Christian community, and the looming threat of Muslim terrorists. Their presence in a potentially dangerous environment is illustrated by their adoption of civilian clothing whenever their medical

or charitable duties take them beyond the temporary safety of their monastic home.

The basic tension of the film involves the question of whether to stay or to go. The atmosphere becomes increasingly more hostile. The government seems unwilling or unable to assure the safety of the monks. The brothers are forced into an examination of their choices, including their original choice to follow the monastic vocation. As an audience, we are required, along with the brothers, to weigh the relative importance of virtues not routinely thought to be in opposition. In serious conclave, conducted with democratic formality, the monks discuss their faith, the love that has brought them to this place, their hope in the good will of their neighbors, and the fortitude they must show if they stay. But against these, there are prudence, temperance and the obligation not to expend their lives in foolish opposition to reality.

Criticism of the film has centered on the length of these debates, their often inconclusive nature, and the overall slow pace of the exposition of character, setting, and situation. Brief scenes of violence and the threat of violence interrupt an essentially quiet film—perhaps to be expected when involving Trappists. The actors are uniformly marvelous, especially Michael Lonsdale as the doctor monk and Lambert Wilson as the young, deeply spiritual leader of the small group. The film is at its best in portraying the routine of monastic life—prayer and labor. The regime is seen as a source of strength in the face of external threat and internal weakness.

Your impulse as a filmgoer watching the monks deliberate, knowing the horrors that terrorism born of fanaticism can bring, is to urge them to get out before they are all murdered. But you know the inevitable denouement. They put their fears aside, stay and (except for two survivors) endure an unmodern experience—martyrdom.

Outside the main reading room of New York City's Fifth Avenue library is a series of murals depicting the history of literature. One of them shows a group of medieval monks, amidst a burning cloister and attacking barbarians, desperately trying to

save their treasured manuscripts—an age-old story of the battle between the life of the spirit and the forces of destruction. Despite its aforementioned shortcomings, *Of Gods and Men* should be seen for its celebration of faith, love, and the courageous commitment to duty—to God and man.

*Martha Swanzey is a member of the Murray Hill Institute Board.*

## NEWS AND UPCOMING EVENTS

### News from the Board

We are sorry to say good-bye to Karen Wagner, MHI Board member, who relocated to Florida last spring. Karen has worked tirelessly to develop leadership programs for young professionals, including the Evenings of Conversation, the newly revamped MHI Mentoring Program, and past MHI conferences. We will miss her energy and commitment as well as her enthusiastic flute performances at the annual Christmas Musicale.

Last summer the MHI Board appointed Teresita Kruger as Social Media Director and Annette Babione as Program Director. We welcome these two new members to our team as we seek ways to advance our outreach to women in the New York area and beyond.

In September 2011, Murray Hill Institute launched its new mentoring program. The Board of Directors extends its thanks to the architects of this program, Grace Perry, Corito Sevilla, and Karen Wagner. The feature article of the current Newsletter gives more on the background, content, and goals of the program.

### Fall Fundraiser

The annual Murray Hill Institute fundraiser will be an afternoon seminar on *Personal Elegance and Style*. Two sessions, “What are your clothes saying about you?” and “10 tips to look 10 years younger, 10 pounds lighter and 10 times better!” will be directed by Claudia Fonseca, Fashion Consultant, *Elegance in Style*, and Lula



Kiah, personal branding strategist with The Image Consulting Company. The event will be held at the Fonseca home in Upper Saddle River, New Jersey on Saturday, November 12, 1:30 pm to 5:30 pm. Join us for an enjoyable afternoon of conversation, learning, and fellowship. The fee for the event is \$40 for on-line registration, \$50 at the door. To register, visit the Murray Hill Institute web site at

[www.murrayhillinstitute.org/events.html](http://www.murrayhillinstitute.org/events.html)

### Leadership Seminars

Last fall Murray Hill Institute launched *Bring Out the Leader in You*, a series of seminars for current and aspiring women leaders. The final session of the spring semester, held on April 2, 2011, featured Karen Wagner, Director, Client Credit Group, Corporate and Investment Banking Division at Societe Generale. In Karen’s workshop on “Communicating with Confidence: Negotiating Based on Strengths,” participants explored the steps to successful negotiations and learned tips to bring affirmation and creativity to the negotiations process. Karen also discussed cultural and emotional factors that can play into negotiations.

On September 24, Virginia Hughes led a seminar on “You Can Achieve Work-Life Balance.” Virginia spoke about how to unify all parts of our life into a functioning whole. She presented a three-step cycle to achieve work-life balance: 1. Determine your mission, 2. Prioritize based on mission, and 3. Live in the moment. She stressed the need for frequent evaluation to stay on course for one’s mission. She developed her theme in the context of her own experiences as a wife and mother, a practicing lawyer and member of a professional team, and as a daughter and

sister in a family. Through sharing her own life lessons, she brought home the point that we can all achieve work-life balance if we plan and put our heart and effort into it.

The two remaining seminars in the series will take place in early 2012: “Winning Workplace Dress and Style,” conducted by Paloma Diaz Soloaga, Ph.D. Program Director, Fashion Communication & Management, Villanueva University (Spain), to be held on February 18, and “Strategic Approach to Time Management,” conducted by Teresa Carale, Ph.D., President, Murray Hill Institute, to be held on March 31. For further details, and to register for these seminars, visit the Murray Hill Institute web site at [www.murrayhillinstitute.org/events.html](http://www.murrayhillinstitute.org/events.html)

### The Women’s Business Ethics Forum



This fall Murray Hill Institute began a new study group for women executives and entrepreneurs who are interested in promoting ethical and effective business management, based on the dignity of the human person and the values of truth, freedom, and justice. Each meeting will focus on a case study that presents a specific ethical dilemma and the underlying philosophical points that should be considered in deciding on a correct course of action.

Quarterly meetings are held on Friday evenings. At the first session, held on October 14, 2012, the group discussed the case study: “Advertising and the Consumer.” Future discussions, to be held in the first half of 2012, will cover “Company Culture,” “Scarce Commodities and the Environment,” and “Personal Development of Employees.” To register for any of these events, click here.

### Culture and Core Beliefs Series

Jennifer Bryson, Director of the Islam and Civil Society Program at the Witherspoon Institute, Princeton, NJ, spoke last spring on “Islam: Basics and Beyond.” In this talk, Jennifer gave a basic introduction to Islam, including highlights of history and core values. Interest in the topic was so great that MHI sponsored a follow-up session with Jennifer on October 5th, 2011. The evening focused on a discussion of the film “Of Gods and Men.” After a brief talk on the background of the film, Jennifer opened the floor to questions and discussion. She pointed out that Muslim culture is far more diverse than commonly perceived, and gave valuable insights into reasons why Western culture is often seen as threatening to Islam.

On April 11, 2012 author Maggie Jackson returns to speak on “From Daydreaming to Contemplation: Rediscovering Reflection in a Hurried, Overloaded Age.” Two years ago, Maggie gave a thought-provoking talk based on her book *Distracted: the Erosion of Attention and the Coming Dark Age*, and we look forward to hearing her again.

### Evenings of Conversation

Two evenings of conversation are planned for the current season. On November 2, 2011, Arielsyda C. Mandonado, CRPC, Merrill Lynch Wealth Management Group, will speak on “It’s Your Future: What Young Americans Need to Know about Retirement.” On April 18, 2012, Malena Roqueni will speak on “Create a Welcoming Apartment Look.” For further details, visit the Murray Hill Institute web site at [www.murrayhillinstitute.org/events.html](http://www.murrayhillinstitute.org/events.html)

### Christmas Musicale

The fourth annual Christmas Musicale is scheduled for 7:30 pm on Friday, December 9, 2011, at Alderton House, 117 East 70 Street, New York City. Professional and amateur musicians will present a brief program, followed by caroling and refreshments. Join us for this celebration of music and Christmas cheer.