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practice. She has taught at UCLA and is the cofounder of the Spiritual Alliance to Stop Intimate Violence as well as the Alliance for a Caring Economy. She is also president of the Center for Partnership Studies, dedicated to research and education on the partnership model introduced by her work.

Riane's chapter revolves around this partnership model—and how it is increasingly guiding the way that women (and men) are defining and exercising power. Along the way, she also shows us how this new model calls for further transformation of gender roles and relations as well as for new economic rules that no longer devalue women and stereotypically feminine traits and activities. In so doing, Riane provides us with a platform for reimagining power.

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THE ECONOMICS OF THE ENLIGHTENED USE OF POWER

Riane Eisler

Ours is an exciting and challenging time. It is a turbulent time of major problems but also of major opportunities: a period of rapidly changing consciousness when, for the first time in recorded history, women can be leaders in shaping our future.

Technological and economic changes over the last centuries opened the door for questioning much that was once taken for granted—from the “divinely ordained” right of kings and princes to absolute authority over their “subjects,” to the “divinely ordained” right of men to absolute control over women and children. These challenges to traditions of domination are part of a shift from authoritarian family and social structures to structures that support more democratic and egalitarian relations. And an integral part of this shift has been a view of leadership no longer based on control, coercion, and disempowerment but on inspiration, facilitation, and empowerment.

This chapter examines these two different ways of defining and exercising power from the perspective of two models of social organization: the domination model and the partnership model. It shows that changes in our concepts of leadership are directly related to changes in gender roles and relations. It also shows why the entry of women into positions of leadership is an index of fundamental change in social structures and values—and why raising women’s status and bringing traits and activities stereotypically associated with femininity into the workplace and society at large are fiercely

resisted by those who believe that top-down rankings of domination are natural and moral.

The Domination and Partnership Models

Examining human societies cross-culturally and historically, I became aware that to better understand and more effectively solve our global problems, we have to go beyond conventional conceptual frameworks—as in today’s mantra of “thinking outside the box.” Old social categories, such as right or left, religious or secular, Eastern or Western, and industrial or pre- or postindustrial, do not describe whole social systems. None of them describes the totality of a society’s family, educational, religious, political, and economic institutions and its guiding system of values. And all fail to recognize the enormous impact of gender roles and relations on both women’s and men’s lives, as well as on our beliefs, families, education, religion, economics, and politics.

When I began to examine societies from a perspective that takes all this into account, I saw that underneath the great surface diversity of human societies—transcending differences of time, place, technological development, ethnic origin, and religious orientation—are two underlying configurations. I call them the *domination model* and *partnership model* of social organization.

Societies such as Khomeini’s Iran, Hitler’s Germany, Stalin’s Soviet Union, and the Masai of nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Africa are very different. But they all have striking commonalities. They are characterized by strong-man rule in both the family and the state or tribe, rigid male dominance, and a high degree of institutionalized violence, from child and wife beating to chronic warfare. They are also societies where so-called masculine values, such as toughness, strength, conquest, and domination are given high social and economic priority, as in the emphasis on weapons and wars. So-called feminine values, such as caring, compassion, empathy, and nonviolence, are, along with women, relegated to a secondary, subservient sphere cut off from the “real world” of politics

and economics. These four characteristics—strong-man rule, rigid male dominance, institutionalized violence, and the devaluation of women and the “feminine”—are the core configuration of the domination model.

This model is marked by well-defined in-groups and out-groups. Social differences—beginning with the most fundamental difference in our species, that between women and men—are equated with superiority or inferiority, with dominating or being dominated. In the partnership model, by contrast, difference is valued, as in the ideal of the more pluralistic society now gaining currency.

In partnership-oriented societies, whether in the family, workplace, or society at large, so-called feminine qualities and behaviors are not only held in high esteem but also incorporated into the operational guidance system. There is equal partnership between women and men, a more democratic and egalitarian social structure, and less built-in violence, as it is not needed to maintain rigid rankings of domination.

The partnership configuration also transcends differences of time, place, and level of technological development. It can be found in technologically primitive tribal societies, such as the Teduray of the Philippines; agrarian societies, such as the Minangkabau of Sumatra; and technologically advanced industrial societies, such as the Nordic nations. In the Nordic countries, attempts to create a more equitable economic system resulted not in a dominator form of communism ruled from the top (as found in the former Soviet Union) but rather in a democratic society with a mix of free enterprise and welfare state. Here we also see a strong interest in nonviolent means of conflict resolution, as well as systemic attempts to create a more gender-balanced society—one where women, along with stereotypically feminine values, are not relegated to an inferior status and excluded from the public world.

If we reexamine modern history from this new perspective, we see that underneath its many complex currents and crosscurrents lies a powerful movement toward a partnership social organization, countered by strong resistance. We see that all the modern progressive movements have challenged different forms of domination

backed by force and fear. This challenge is the common thread in the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century rights of man, antislavery, antimonarchist, socialist, pacifist, and feminist movements. The twentieth-century anticolonial, antiwar, participatory democracy, women's rights, and economic justice movements are also not isolated phenomena. They are all part of a much larger movement: the movement to create a world in which principles of partnership rather than domination and submission are primary. And a key aspect of this movement is the transformation of gender roles and relations—and with this shift, a redefinition of power and leadership in more stereotypically feminine ways.

Women, Men, and Power

I want to emphasize that when I say “stereotypically,” I mean just that. There are obvious differences between women and men. But much that is considered masculine and feminine is our heritage from earlier times when women were strictly barred from positions of leadership and power.

Another part of this dominator heritage is the belief that a fear-based, institutionally insensitive, and all too often abusive and dehumanizing leadership and management style is a requisite for social order and economic productivity. The good news is that this leadership and management style is increasingly recognized as an impediment rather than a spur to social order and economic productivity.

Today's management and organizational development literature proposes that, particularly in the postindustrial knowledge economy, a new leadership and management style based on respect, accountability, and empowerment is needed. We are told that effective leaders and managers are not cops or controllers whose commands must be unquestioningly obeyed, but rather are people who facilitate, inspire, and elicit from others their highest productivity and creativity.

Such a leadership and management style models caring rather than coercion. Although some leaders—male and female—have

always recognized the effectiveness of this leadership style, it is becoming more prevalent today because of the rising status of women, and thus of qualities and behaviors associated with femininity, such as nurturance and empathy.

Studies show that precisely because women's socialization was not designed for them to function in the "men's world," women today bring to the workplace some of the very skills needed if it is to be fundamentally transformed. For example, Leonard Greenhalgh conducted a study of women and men in simulated negotiations sessions at the Dartmouth School of Business Administration and found that women tend to be more flexible, more empathic, and more likely to reach agreement.¹ When a man visualizes a negotiating situation, he sees it as a one-shot deal to win or lose, like a sport or game, Greenhalgh states. A woman sees it as part of a long-term relationship. And because most business situations involve long-term relationships, the "female" approach is more productive, he concludes. Or, as John Naisbitt and Patricia Aburdene put it in their book *Re-Inventing the Corporation*, as the manager's role shifts to that of a teacher, mentor, and nurturer of human potential in the information society, there is even more reason for corporations to take advantage of women's managerial abilities, because these people-oriented traits are the ones women are socialized to possess.²

The problem, however, is that if women are forced to operate in domination-style structures, they are under tremendous external and internal pressure to "be more like men." As noted by Alice Sargent and Ronald Stupak, women—particularly as middle managers, but sometimes even when they reach the top—will have to "step into the shoes of men."³

This dynamic too is our heritage from earlier times, when the occasional female leader such as a Queen Elizabeth or Catherine the Great by and large stepped into leadership positions as the widows, daughters, or mothers of men. In business, too, management was a male preserve, with the occasional female top executive figuratively stepping into the shoes of men. In other words, power was

synonymous with characteristics (such as strength, toughness, control, and decisiveness) that are stereotypically considered masculine.

This view of power as a male's power to control people, be it for ill or good, is appropriate for a dominator social organization, which orders human relations primarily in terms of rigid rankings—man over man, man over woman, nation over nation, and man over nature. Economic relations in this model of society also follow this pattern. Just as women's and children's labor was by law and custom the property of the male head of household, the labor of slaves (and later of serfs) was said to be due their owners or lords. Even later, in the early stages of the Industrial Revolution, with the shift from a primarily agrarian to a manufacturing economy, the relations of workers and bosses tended to follow this mold. Sweatshops, where women, men, and children worked from dawn to dusk in unsafe and oppressive conditions, were accepted as "just the way things are." The use of force by industrialists against those who sought to organize workers was often condoned, and at times supported by government leaders.

As we move toward the partnership end of the partnership-domination continuum, these practices are no longer acceptable. But old habits and beliefs linger on—particularly when it comes to the roles and relations of women and men. Indeed, the movement toward partnership has been resisted every inch of the way. And this resistance is particularly fierce when it comes to "women's issues."

Those trying to push us back to the "good old days" when most men and all women still "knew their place" in rigid rankings of domination recognize the social importance of gender roles and relations. Be it Khomeini in Iran, the Taliban in Afghanistan, or the rightist-fundamentalist alliance in the United States, these people give top priority to "getting women back into their traditional place"—a code word for a subordinate place.

Yet many people who want democracy and equality still view "women's issues" as secondary—failing to recognize that gender

equity is a core element of the shift to a more humane, productive, and prosperous way of life for all.

Raising Women's Status

A study using data compiled by the United Nations and other international agencies from eighty-nine countries compared measures of the status of women with quality-of-life measures such as infant mortality, human rights ratings, and percentage of the population with access to health care. This study, conducted by my colleagues and me for the Center for Partnership Studies, found that the status of women can be a better predictor of quality of life than gross domestic product (GDP), the conventional measure of a nation's economic development.⁴

For example, Kuwait and France had almost identical GDPs, but infant mortality, one of the most basic measures of quality of life, was *twice* as high in Kuwait. Similarly, the GDP of Finland and Singapore were almost identical. But the maternal mortality rate in Singapore, where the status of women is much lower than in Finland, was more than double that of Finland, a society where, as in other Nordic nations, women have made strong gains.

This study, "Men, Women, and the Global Quality of Life," statistically verifies that there is a strong correlation between, on the one hand, such indicators of gender inequity as a substantially lower literacy rate for females than for males, high maternal mortality, and low female participation in government and, on the other, indicators of a generally lower quality of life for all, such as high infant mortality, a high number of refugees fleeing the country, and a high ratio of GDP going to the wealthiest as opposed to the poorest 20 percent of the population.

This study illustrates the value of gender-specific research. It shows that economics cannot be understood, or effectively changed, without attention to other core cultural components—and that a

central cultural component is the social construction of gender roles and relations.

Nordic nations such as Finland, Sweden, and Norway are particularly interesting in connection with what happens as women make strong gains. In a very short time during the twentieth century these nations changed from poor, famine-ridden countries to prosperous, creative economies.⁵ Why? Because their policies give value and fiscal support to the stereotypically feminine work of caregiving. Such measures as universal health care, child-care allowances, elder care, and paid parental leave helped produce the higher-quality human capital that transformed them into prosperous nations. These nations always rank on the top of the U.N. *Human Development Reports*. Even beyond that, Finland was ahead of the much wealthier United States in the 2004 Global Competitiveness ratings.⁶ And of course women in the Nordic nations occupy a far higher percentage of political leadership positions than anywhere else in the world: they make up approximately 40 percent of legislators.

These nations also pioneered the first peace studies courses. They pioneered laws against physical punishment of children in families. They pioneered a strong men's movement to disentangle male identity from violence. They also pioneered what we today call industrial democracy: using teamwork in factories rather than turning human beings into mere cogs in the industrial machine.

None of this is random or coincidental. It is part of the cultural configuration characteristic of the partnership rather than domination model: a configuration in which the higher status of women is central. What happens is that as the status of women rises, so too does the status of traits and activities stereotypically associated with the feminine: soft rather than hard values, empathy, caring, nonviolence—and men then find it more possible to embrace these values without feeling threatened in their status.

In short, how a society structures the relations between women and men is of profound personal, social, and economic significance. It is of key importance in how leadership and power are conceptualized and exercised. It is also an important factor in shifting the

architecture of the workplace from top-down hierarchies of domination to what I call hierarchies of actualization.

From Hierarchies of Domination to Hierarchies of Actualization

Some people think that the new business and social structures should be completely flat. But every organization needs lines of responsibility. The difference between the partnership and domination models is *not* that the domination model is hierarchical and the partnership model is hierarchy-free. The difference is the distinction between *hierarchies of domination* and *hierarchies of actualization*.

Hierarchies of actualization are characteristic of partnership-oriented organizations, where the culture values and rewards relations based on mutual benefit, respect, caring, and accountability rather than relations in which there must be winners and losers. These actualization hierarchies are more flexible, allowing many people to be leaders in different contexts. They empower rather than disempower workers, and encourage rather than discourage creativity. They encourage collegial leadership styles, rather than the command-and-control style of a sole leader at the top making all important decisions. Actualization hierarchies do not rely on one-way orders from above; rather, they have open lines of communication, making it possible for organizations to use everyone's knowledge and input. In these ways, they promote relational practices that result in greater organizational capacity.

In hierarchies of domination, accountability and respect flow only from the bottom up. In hierarchies of actualization, they flow both ways. Hierarchies of domination are imposed and maintained by fear. Hierarchies of actualization are not based on power *over*. They are based on power *to*—creative power, the power to help and to nurture—as well as power *with*—the collective power to accomplish goals together, as in teamwork. And all this is directly related to changes in gender roles and relations.

Because most new jobs created today in the U.S. economy are being filled by women, women have been a major driving force behind corporate innovations such as flextime, day-care programs, elder-care programs, parental leave, and other workplace policies that, as Naisbitt and Aburdene observe, are forcing the humanization of the workplace.⁷

However, although women can make a special contribution to the creation of a more productive, creative, and humane workplace, this in no way means that men do not also have a very important role to play in the process. The domination model has been disempowering to both women and men. And it will require women and men working in full and equal partnership to transform that model.

Today, many men, even CEOs of major corporations, are rejecting dominator approaches and moving toward a more “feminine” or nurturing way of managing and organizing business. But, as noted earlier, if men are finding it possible to adopt such values and behaviors, it is because the status of women—and with this, the status of traits and activities stereotypically associated with women—has been rising. Another example of men rejecting the dominator role is the current trend among men of redefining the role of fathering to include some of the nurturing behaviors stereotypically associated with mothering.

As Susan G. Butruille writes in “Corporate Caretaking,” the trends we are seeing today in the workplace go along with important trends in people’s personal and family lives, particularly the trend toward shared roles by women and men in both work and the family. Butruille reports that, thanks largely to the massive entry of women into the workforce and the rise in dual-career couples, women and men are increasingly concerned about similar issues. In other words, as both work and family relations shift more to partnership, we are seeing a blurring of stereotypical gender-linked attitudes and roles. And we are also seeing the gradual emergence of what Butruille calls an ethos of corporate caretaking.⁸

An ethos of caretaking shared by both women and men is a key element in the transformation from a dominator to a partnership

business culture. But this ethos of caretaking cannot take full root unless the status of women rises worldwide.

Toward a Partnership Economics

Business cultures are part of larger economic systems. And economic systems in turn are part of larger social systems—which, as we have seen, are radically different depending on the degree to which they orient to the domination model or the partnership model.

Change leaders need to raise public awareness of the benefits of partnership—and show that the traditional male-superior, female-inferior model of relations is an obstacle to a more generally prosperous, equitable, and peaceful world. The traditional model is a mental map children learn early on for equating difference—beginning with the basic difference between man and woman—with superiority and inferiority, with dominating or being dominated, with being served or serving. This mental map can then be applied on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, or any other difference as the basis for the in-group versus out-group thinking that is the cause of so much suffering, injustice, and violence. And this map directly leads to a fundamentally distorted system of values that is yet another cause of chronic suffering, injustice, and violence worldwide.

Consider that even today the first thing that usually gets cut is government funding for health, education, and welfare—in other words, funding to care for people. The Structural Adjustment Policies of the International Monetary Fund even demanded such cuts, with disastrous human and economic results for debtor nations. But notice that even though we are told we don't have enough money for these purposes, there always is enough money for weapons, wars, and prisons—for controlling, hurting, and killing people, rather than for nurturing, empowering, and caring for people.

This distorted system of priorities is also directly related to the systemic devaluation of women and the work of caregiving. This devaluation has shaped our economic models and rules. And as long

as these rules and models are in place, we women will remain on the periphery.

Already women in the United States are quitting high-paying corporate jobs because of their double burden: the difficulty, indeed almost impossibility, of balancing jobs with caregiving responsibilities at home. But returning to a dependent and subordinate place is *not* the answer. The answer is to develop rules, models, and measures that give visibility and value to the activities that nurture and support life—whether they are performed by women or men.

A first step toward this new partnership economics is to change how we measure productivity. The reason is simple: what is not counted is not considered in making economic policy. Change will not occur without the hard measures of costs and benefits.

Today the GDP counts activities that take life and destroy our natural habitat: coal burning and cleaning up the environmental damage it causes, selling cigarettes and the medical costs and funeral costs of the health damage they cause. These destructive activities are on the positive side of the GDP. But not only do GDP measures put negatives on the positive side: they do *not* include the unpaid caregiving work primarily performed by women in the “informal” economy, be it in their homes or in their communities as volunteers—even though these services contribute most to everyone’s social well-being.

In the formal economy, in the labor market, professions that involve caring—such as child care and primary school teaching, professions until now largely composed of women—are paid significantly less than those that do not involve caregiving—such as plumbing and engineering. Thus people think nothing of paying plumbers, the people to whom we entrust our pipes, \$50 to \$60 per hour. But child-care workers, the people to whom we entrust our children, are paid only \$10 or \$15 an hour—and that’s already considered a high rate. Moreover, we demand that plumbers have some training, but not that all child-care workers have training.

None of this is logical—it is actually pathological. We must change it—and we can change it. But to do so, we have to go

beyond old economic models, whether capitalist or socialist, and develop new economic rules that give visibility and value to the stereotypically feminine work of caregiving.

Economic Inventions That Recognize the Value of Caregiving Work

Just about everything involved in our economic life is a human invention—from stock exchanges and sweatshops to banks and Social Security. We already have a few economic inventions that give monetary value to caring and caregiving, such as parental leave for both mothers and fathers, on-site child care, and flexible work options. But we need many more.

Companies that provide paid parental leave can be supported by public policy through matching local, state, and federal grants. Companies that provide employees with child care or parenting classes can be given tax rebates. These are all sound investments in a high-quality future workforce and a healthier, more secure world.

The issue is simply one of fiscal priorities. That these priorities can be changed is dramatically illustrated by what happened in Ontario, Canada, when government leaders were shown the benefits of investing in caring for children. Based on extensive cost-benefit analyses showing the economic and social benefits of supporting good caregiving during a child's early years—from before birth to age six—the Healthy Babies, Healthy Children program was launched in 1998 by a fiscally conservative government under Premier Mike Harris. This program offers information on parenting and child development to all families with new babies and delivers extra help and support, including home visits, to families who can benefit from it. When researchers compared families who received Healthy Babies, Healthy Children home visiting with similar families who did not receive home visiting, they found better child and family health among home visiting families. Specifically, their 2003 report found that among home visiting families, children scored higher on most infant development measures, including self-help, gross motor

skills, fine motor skills, and language development—all important indicators of a higher level of human capital development, not to speak of prospects for a brighter future for the children receiving the better care supported by the program.⁹

The Canadian program is not alone in recognizing the importance of government investment in caring and caregiving. The French creche programs and the Nordic caregiving programs—which include parenting education in schools—are notable examples that also provide models for forward-thinking leaders.

These are all sound investments in our future. They are investments in a successful postindustrial information economy—an economy in which high-quality human capital is the most important capital. This economy requires people able to learn, relate, work in teams, and solve problems flexibly and creatively. This high-quality human capital is not just produced in universities or through job training. Findings from psychology, and more recently neurobiology, show that the quality of human capital is, to a much greater extent than has been recognized, shaped by the quality of child care and early childhood education.¹⁰

Meeting Our Global Challenges

The shift into the postindustrial era offers us a window of opportunity to reassess what is and what is not productive work. When it comes to social policies and funding, what matters is *not* money; what matters is what is or is not really valued. We must change current value systems if we are to find solutions to such seemingly intractable problems as poverty, social inequity, and chronic violence. What's generally missing from discussions of social change, however, is the recognition that our problems flow from the social and economic failure to support caring and caregiving. In short, an economic paradigm that hides and devalues the work of caring and caregiving is corrosive to our most basic life-support system.

We can change this paradigm by joining to envision and create a new partnership economics—and by providing the hard data that show how partnership rules, measures, and practices work better

than the old dominator ones. This is why I want to bring together visionary leaders from academia, government, business, and civil society into an Alliance for a Caring Economy to collect information on what is already happening to give economic value to caregiving and provide a forum for new ideas, initiatives, and economic policies.¹¹

Economic rules, measures, and policies that recognize the real value of the essential work of caring for children and the elderly, keeping our families healthy, and maintaining a clean and healthy environment will lead to the higher valuing of caring and caregiving in our homes, schools, and workplaces. These rules, measures, and policies will greatly accelerate the empowerment of women worldwide. And they will greatly benefit men and children of both genders because they will support the more caring economic, environmental, and social policies needed to move toward a more equitable, sustainable, and prosperous future.

Five Levers for Change

The recognition of the pivotal importance of so-called women's issues is urgent, because as long as women are devalued, so also are stereotypically feminine traits and activities, such as empathy, non-violence, and caregiving. These are the traits and activities we need for a better future. Indeed, in our age of nuclear and biological weapons, they are urgently needed if we are to have a future at all.

As more women enter leadership positions, we can use our power to shape the future. As numerous studies have shown, the empowerment of women is key to economic development, to a sustainable global population, and to a less violent society. The challenge is to collectively transform policies to implement these findings into actions.

There are many actions we can take, but we can be most effective by focusing on these five levers for fundamental, systemic change:

1. Demonstrating to policymakers and the public at large the social and economic benefits of empowering women

2. Working to create a partnership economics that no longer devalues women and stereotypically feminine traits and activities, such as caregiving, nonviolence, and empathy
3. Changing economic measurements such as GDP to include the work of caregiving stereotypically relegated to women
4. Developing, supporting, and disseminating partnership economic inventions, such as paid parental leave, that give visibility and value to caregiving—whether it is performed by men or women
5. Forming alliances to work together with one another as well as with men—locally, nationally, and internationally—to bring women’s issues to where they belong: from the back to the front of the political and economic agenda

Largely because of the continuing dislocation of patterns of work and thought caused by massive technological change, ours is a time of enormous opportunity. The shift to the postindustrial society offers an unprecedented chance to forge new economic models, rules, and practices.

We women must take leadership in this historic enterprise. We must do this for ourselves, so that we create economic models, rules, and measures that don’t put us at a disadvantage and don’t put caring men at a disadvantage. We must do this because assuming such a leadership role is really the only way to end the shameful fact that women and children are the mass of the poor and hungry worldwide. And we must do this to build solid foundations for the more sustainable and humane future we want and need—for ourselves, for our male partners and colleagues, and, above all, for our children and generations still to come.

