

"When Women Take the Reins"

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Mariko Silver was one of four women in leadership roles featured in a *Psychology Today* article, "The View from the Top."

The piece explores and unpacks stereotypical (and often gendered) leadership qualities. On the subject, Silver observed: "I think there are a lot more ways to be a female leader or a male leader than we've allowed for. Empathy and listening are not necessarily gendered traits."

Female leaders have to contend with many such implicit assumptions. When most people imagine an executive, they picture a strong, assertive man. When they think of ideal qualities in a woman, they picture warmth, sociability, and compassion. Such entrenched and often subconscious biases are hard to reconcile in the mind, creating a fundamental incongruence that affects how female leaders are perceived. If they can't contort themselves to match both images at once, they risk being overlooked, disliked, or disrespected.