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Judi Dench tops poll of celebrities with substance

New research reveals nation's famous female role models....& least favourite... as search is on to find Britain's real women of substance

Acclaimed actresses Judi Dench, Joanna Lumley and Julie Walters are true examples of famous women of substance according to new research revealed today (Monday 13 July 2009).

In a poll of 1,000 UK women aged 18-65 years old, seven out of ten said that Judi Dench was one of the few women in the public eye who had real substance. She was followed by Joanna Lumley (69%) and Julie Walters (64%). Over half of all women also thought author JK Rowling (51%) and round the world yachtswoman McArthur (51%) represented women of real substance followed by HM The Queen with 50%.

The research set out to explore females' views on what it takes to be a woman of substance in 2009 Britain. It is being released to coincide with the launch of a campaign and national awards to champion *real* women of substance living and working in the UK today. The list of the famous people with the most and least substance is as below:

Famous women with most substance	% of women who think they represent a woman of substance
1. Judi Dench	70%
2. Joanna Lumley	69%
3. Julie Walters	64%
4. JK Rowling	51%
Ellen McArthur	51%
5. HM The Queen	50%
6. Dawn French	49%
7. Margaret Thatcher	46%
8. Paula Radcliffe	45%
9. Delia Smith	33%
Doris Lessing (Nobel Prize literature)	
10. Angelina Jolie	20%
Jacqueline Gold (CEO, Ann Summers)	

"It's great to see these acclaimed actresses, sportswomen and The Queen being recognised as strong female role models. These women all have three things in common: strength, character and conviction and they're great examples of women of substance," says Barbara Taylor Bradford.

She adds: "But substance isn't really about wealth, glamour or celebrity. There are still many unsung heroines waiting to be discovered. Today's woman of substance could be a dedicated wife or mother or perhaps someone who has worked tirelessly to help others. As long as she is compassionate, ethical and hard-working and has accomplished something worthwhile that is what it is all about."

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The research went on to explore famous females who **lacked** substance - Paris Hilton topped the poll as the personality with the least substance.

Famous women with least substance	% of women who think they represent a woman of substance
1. Paris Hilton	70%
2. Kerry Katona	63%
3. Katie Price (Jordan)	61%
4. Peaches Geldof	56%
5. Jodie Marsh	54%
6. Victoria Beckham	47%
7. Chantelle Houghton	45%
8. Chanelle Hayes	38%
9. Amy Winehouse	30%
10. Alex Curran	27%

Lack of female role models: Women who took part in the research believe the personalities who they voted had least substance are poor role models for young women and girls. Eighty-six per cent of mothers are especially concerned according to the research. Teenage girls and young women even admit this themselves as 95% of 16-24 year olds say they are concerned about the lack of female role models in their life. This was the highest percentage out of all age groups.

Time to recognise Britain's own women of substance: The research reveals a demand for ordinary women to be recognised for their extraordinary contributions, admirable qualities and achievements (83% of all UK women say it is about time that **real** women of substance are celebrated). As a result, HarperCollins and its world famous bestselling novelist Barbara Taylor Bradford OBE are launching **A Woman of Substance Awards** (www.awosawards.co.uk) to find females who epitomise what it is to be a real woman of substance today, who deserve special recognition and the chance to shine in the spotlight.

Conducted in association with the Debenhams and P&O Cruises, and in support of the charity Target Ovarian Cancer, Barbara is encouraging females across Britain to nominate themselves and/or other women in their personal and professional lives.

The awards are inspired by Barbara Taylor Bradford, the creator of the original woman of substance, Emma Harte, in her worldwide bestselling novel, *A Woman of Substance*. They are being launched to coincide with the 30th anniversary since Barbara's debut book was first published in 1979. It is now one of the top ten bestselling novels of all time with more than 31 million copies sold. It has been published in over 40 languages and in 90 countries.

A Woman of Substance Awards' entry information can be found on www.awosawards.co.uk. Closing date for the Awards is 31 July 2009.

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About Barbara Taylor Bradford

1. Barbara Taylor Bradford was born and raised in Yorkshire. She left school at 15 for the typing pool at the Yorkshire Evening Post. At 18, she became the paper's first woman's editor and, at 20, moved to London and became a columnist and editor on Fleet Street. She published her first novel, *A Woman of Substance*, at the age of 42.
2. Barbara has had 24 books published, all worldwide bestsellers, especially in the UK and America. She is one of HarperCollins bestselling novelists with books sales of over 81 million copies worldwide.
3. Barbara's latest book, *Breaking The Rules*, (her 25th) will be published in the UK on 3 September 2009 (*Breaking The Rules*, HarperCollins, RRP £14.99). *A Woman of Substance* 30th anniversary paperback will also be published with a new foreword by the author (HarperCollins, RRP £7.99).

A Woman of Substance Awards

Barbara Taylor Bradford says: "*A Woman of Substance* is a book that has changed the lives for a lot of women. It empowered them to believe in themselves. It gave them the confidence to overcome a lack of education or great adversity and triumph as a human being. It showed them that with great ambition, discipline and stamina they could really succeed. I'm delighted that now, 30 years later, we are surrounded by real examples of women of substance and I feel it's about time that we recognised and celebrated their achievements!

"It's essential that we don't rest on our laurels. Even today, we need to champion women who do extraordinary things be it in their home and with their family, in the area they live in, in the work that they do given the research show 23 per cent of women in the UK have no female role model in their lives today. It's quite shocking."

- **How to enter:** The nomination form is available online via a specially created website www.awosawards.co.uk, and entry forms can be picked up in a number of libraries across the UK.
- You can nominate yourself or someone else. You can nominate more than once.
- To enter the *A Woman of Substance Awards* describe in your own words (max 500 words) why you or the person you are nominating should be recognised. Please send in a recent photograph (or a colour photocopy of the photograph) of the person being nominated.
- Nominations close on Friday 31 July when the entries will be reviewed and a shortlist created. One winner and four runners up will be chosen by a panel of judges that will include Barbara Taylor Bradford.
- A shortlist of candidates and their guest will be invited to attend the Awards event – personally hosted by Barbara Taylor Bradford OBE and her publisher, HarperCollins - in London in early September.
- Please see the website for Terms and Conditions.
- **Prizes:** The finalists and one friend/or family member will be invited to a special awards' reception in London where one lucky person will be crowned **A Woman of Substance 2009** and also scoop the top prize package including: a luxury cruise for two adults and two children courtesy of P&O Cruises, a full makeover (hair, make-up and manicure) and styling session courtesy of Debenhams Westfield, a £250 Debenhams gift card, a copy of Barbara's latest book, *Breaking The Rules* (due out 3 September 2009), a newly released, luxury bound limited edition of *A Woman of Substance*, plus a DVD package of Barbara Taylor Bradford films.
- The remaining four runner ups will each receive a prize package which will include: full make over: hair, make-up, manicure and styling session by Debenhams personal shopper stylist at Debenhams Westfield plus £250 Debenhams gift card, a certificate of commendation, along with a selection of Barbara Taylor Bradford newly published books and a DVD package of Barbara Taylor Bradford films.

About Target Ovarian Cancer

- **Target Ovarian Cancer** www.targetovarian.org.uk – 020 7923 5470 - is a new, dynamic charity fighting to improve life chances and life quality for women with ovarian cancer, by raising money for campaigning, vital research and education. Change is long overdue – the UK has the lowest survival rate in Europe at 30%, unchanged for 30 years.