

CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS

**THE SHRIVER REPORT:
A WOMAN'S NATION CHANGES EVERYTHING**

**WELCOME:
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**THE PULSE OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE, BY THE NUMBERS –
REACTIONS TO A WOMAN'S NATION:
JOHN HALPIN,
SENIOR FELLOW, CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS**

**KEYNOTE:
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**MONDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2009
3:15 P.M.
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

*Transcript by
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.*

HEATHER BOUSHEY: So I'm here to introduce our fantastic senior fellow here at the Center for American Progress, John Halpin, who did a great deal of the analysis of the poll data that we conducted with Rockefeller and Time Magazine, and co-authored the chapter with a long list of other people, including also Ruy Teixeira, who is also a senior fellow here at CAP.

And John is the co-director and creator of our Progressive Studies program, which is an interdisciplinary project researching the intellectual history, foundational principles and public understanding of progressivism. And we are so thrilled that you and Ruy worked with us on this project. And thank you and we look forward to hearing about the poll.

And one thing – of course we've been flashing up those four questions all morning, so I know people are waiting with bated breath.

JOHN HALPIN: Thank you, Heather. Thanks for having me today. We've got – I hope everybody has their book. I'm going to direct you to look at the polling chapter in the book because we have a minor – had a minor mix-up on the PowerPoint presentation of this.

So starting on page 395 is the chapter with all the polling data, and I'll just reference the charts as they come forward. You don't necessarily have to have them; I can explain them. We only have a few minutes here to go over the poll anyway, so I'll be very brief.

First of all, this was a major study we did in conjunction with the Rockefeller Foundation and Time Magazine. It was a 3,400 sample poll. It's very large. We had big oversamples of African-Americans and Latinos. It's a very large-scale poll about contemporary attitudes on gender relations and the role of women in society.

Just briefly, what we found – and I think you've probably discussed throughout the day – is that the profound shift in women's role in the U.S. economy has not led to a massive conflict between men and women. In fact, the opposite has occurred. We find that both men and women view this change quite favorably, across the board, and you'll see that in a minute.

The lack of acrimony that we find between the sexes in many cases is due to the shared life ambitions, goals, and realities of both men and women today. Their lives are very similar, even though we all know there are differences, but in terms of the way things are structured, the stresses they have, the types of things that they're focusing on and the things they want, there's a lot of alignment there.

Perhaps more importantly, both sexes appear to be converging in their beliefs and attitudes about gender relations and the role of women in society. There are some differences that remain between men and women on some key indicators, and there's clearly some lagging behavioral factors here, where particularly in terms of raising children and taking care of elderly parents, which I know you've discussed a fair amount today as well, but what's actually striking

in this survey is how much alignment there is between men and women. Somewhat counter-intuitive, from many media accounts of how men and women relate to one another, but there's a lot of alignment between people and it's a profound shift in many ways.

The final aspect of this is that it's clear from the American public, both men and women, and I know you've talked about this as well, that businesses and government have not kept up with the changes in the modern family, and we'll see some actual numbers on workplace flexibility, support for child care, other types of things that families today really need in order to juggle their multiple tasks.

So let's just go through this briefly. Again, we don't have a whole of time here. Starting on page 398, which is Figure 1, the animating principle or context of this whole report was the change in the status of women in the workforce. So we ask the basic question: 40 years ago just one-third of all workers were women. Today about one-half of all workers are women. Do you think this change has been positive or negative for American society? We did a split sample with the American economy.

As you'll see here on the pie chart to the left, 77 percent of Americans overwhelmingly view this as a positive change for American society. The number's even higher, slightly higher on the change for the economy. This is something that crosses the board here. You see on your figures to your right of that pie chart, it shows the break-out by demographic groups: 76 percent of men, 80 percent of women; Democrats, liberals, moderates, Independents.

Even more conservative audiences, who you might expect in some cases to be less positive toward some of this, it's nearly seven in 10 of older voters, Republicans and conservatives as well. So the fact that women now constitute half the workforce, it's not only people accepting of it, they view it as a real positive for society. I think this is a very important finding, and again, it's one of the key animating contexts of this entire project.

If you go to page 399, you can start to see why this is the case. What we find is that men and women are in basic alignment about a lot of their life's ambitions and goals. Here we've presented a series of things that people might want in their lives, and what you're seeing in these charts are the percentage of people who say this is very important to them.

Almost down the line men and women agree on what's most important to them. At the top of the list is being healthy, being self-sufficient, not having to depend on others, being financially secure, having a fulfilling job. Issues of religious faith and marriage, there are slight differences there but there is still basically men and women are in alignment.

If you go to the next page, on page 400, you can also see the types of things that men and women are looking for in their significant others; their "romantic partners" is the phrase we used. They are also very similar. Both men and women look primarily to their significant others for love and affection, to have a family, to make major household decisions. Women are much higher than men on the notion of supporting them financially, although the percentage overall for women is much lower than these other ones.

More importantly, on page 402 you can see at the top here, beyond sort of life's ambitions and goals and things like that, both men and women are clearly stressed in their daily lives. So again, we're trying to build a narrative here of shared experiences. In general, how often do you experience stress in your daily life? Thirty-nine percent of Americans say frequently. And this is basically exactly even for men and women. In the next graph, to the right there you can see that men and women are both negotiating their multiple duties on a daily, you know, if not weekly basis in some cases.

So what else do we know about the alignment of men and women? If you turn to page 404, this is one of the largest charts in the chapter and has a lot of information here, so I'll try and be brief on it. The core of our survey was a series of 31 statements having – where we asked people whether they agreed or disagreed. This doesn't present all of them but it presents a lot of them.

What you see here are all the ones where men and women, at least a majority of both men and women, were in agreement or disagreement about a certain subject. There's amazing alignment of opinion here. On 24 out of the 31 issues we did, which is about a 75 percent agreement rate, a majority of men and women were either in agreement or disagreement about a particular idea.

At the top of the list, and I think this has been brought up before, "You are comfortable with women in households earning more than men." John Podesta, who was on "Meet the Press" yesterday, cited this figure. It's 89 percent of both men and women. It's not an issue today. Moving down the list – compared to previous generations, it's now more acceptable for men to be stay-at-home dads: 85 percent of women, 79 percent of men agree with this idea.

Today's women's movement is a movement that considers the needs of men and families too, not just women. Seventy-three percent of women, lower but still a majority for men at 59 percent. The particular comparisons to earlier generations, we asked women, compared to your mother, you are less dependent on your spouse for financial security. Seventy percent of women agreed with this. Similarly, compared to your father, you are more comfortable having women work outside the home. Seventy percent of men agreed with this.

So all the way down this list here you'll see men and women in basic agreement or disagreement about things, major issues of gender relations and the role of women in society. I believe one of the ones that was asked was, men have lost the battle of the sexes. That's been on the chart all day. Although not as high as some of these other ones, you can see it at the bottom of this chart here, 58 percent of women disagree with this idea, and 62 percent of men disagree with this idea. So again, it's a constant theme that's come up. There really isn't as much acrimony between men and women as many people might anticipate.

Not to paint an exceptionally rosy picture, there are some things that still need to be negotiated, which I know the term negotiation has probably come up multiple times today. We find strong confirmation that there are things remaining that need to be figured out between men and women. If you turn to page 407, this is another one that was on the chart, a question that was up all day.

One of the biggest things is what to do about the kids. We had a question in the mid-1970s, the majority of children grew up in a family with a stay-at-home parent. Today about 30 percent of children grow up in a family with a stay-at-home parent. Do you think that this change has been positive or negative for society? Overwhelmingly, 65 percent of Americans say this has been a negative for society, and you can see the breakdown. There's much more division here between – primarily ideologically there are some big divisions here, but both men and women agree, a majority of men and women agree that the demise in the percentage of children growing up with a stay-at-home parent has been a negative for society.

So one of the things that we find throughout this poll that seems somewhat incongruous, possibly, to say the rise of women in the workforce has been a big positive. We're worried about the concern on children. Does that mean we have to go back to traditional family arrangements? For some people that is the answer. But what we actually found throughout this poll is that because the nature of the modern workplace has not changed because government policy has not changed, it's very difficult for people to find ways to actually have somebody at home at least part-time with their children. It's something that both men and women feel quite strongly about.

Some other areas where you see some differences, if you turn to page 408 here. There are some gender gaps where a majority of men and women were not in agreement or disagreement. Not surprisingly, a lot of this has to do with children and power relations in some capacity. These aren't major differences, but they are instructive.

We asked the question, is it harder for a mother who works outside the home to establish as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work outside the home? A majority of women disagree with this sentiment and a majority of men agree with it, 56 and 54. Similarly, we asked, all things considered, men continue to have it better in life than women do. Perhaps not surprisingly, 53 percent of men disagree with that, while it's 52 percent of women agree. Men resent women who have more power than they do. Less than half of men agree with this idea, and nearly 70 percent of women agree with it.

So there are some significant differences still remaining, and if you look at the next chart down, when you break it out by ideology and partisanship, you see some massive gaps on some of these same things. You can see 35-, 31-point differences between liberals and conservatives on many of these measures. I'll try and speed things up here.

One of the more significant findings from the poll is how behavior is lagging behind more open attitudes. There might be a better way to describe it, but I think we're starting to see a lot of alignment and open attitudes here. But self-reported behavior has not caught up with what people actually think they should be doing. I think both men and women understand that women still bear most of the responsibilities for child-rearing and elder-care, and that's borne out pretty strongly in our poll.

If you look at this top chart on page 410, we ask people, "In your household, who is mostly responsible for taking care of your children?" Sixty-nine percent of women say they themselves are mostly responsible for taking care of children, compared to 13 percent of men

who said similarly. A plurality of men did seem to think that they were at least doing something with their spouse here. I leave that up for debate whether that's going on in people's homes or not.

But the important thing is that on the attitudinal measures, men and women didn't have a problem with the changing nature of men's participation in the family, wanted them to do more, are fine with women making more money, possibly having more time to do other things besides taking care of the kids. But when we look at self-reported behavior, women are still bearing the burden of child-rearing.

When we go to elder-care, it's the same measure, not quite as strong – 41 percent of women say they are primarily responsible for taking care of elderly parents, compared to 23 percent of men.

On the primary breadwinner measure, again we have attitudes showing that men and women are fine with women earning more, but what we find is that men in particular still believe that they are the primary breadwinner. Seventy percent of men say that they are the primary breadwinner in their household compared to 40 percent of women. Now perhaps women are much more in a line with the data that Heather had earlier, which is actually I think 40 percent around primary breadwinner and co-breadwinner.

This is an interesting one, the one right below it. We asked people, what share of your family's income do you personally earn? Sixty-five percent of men said they earn more than half or almost all the family income, compared to 19 percent of women who said similarly. So even though there have been some shifts here, the perception, the self-reported perception is that men are still bringing in more of the family income and women are still doing more of the child and elder-care responsibilities.

So what do we take away from this? If you go to page 412, and I'm going to stop with the two charts here, we asked people to say, what do you need in order to – which of these things in particular would you need to change in order for working parents to balance evenly their job or business, their marriage and their children requirements? Overwhelmingly both men and women said more flexible work hours and schedules. And when you look at the chart below, you see that the public, both men and women strongly agree that changes in the workplace, particularly on work-life balance are essential.

The percentage supporting some of these measures tops 74 percent in some cases, as high as 80. Businesses that fail to adapt to the needs of modern families risk losing good workers – 84 percent of Americans agree with this. You've got strong majorities of men and women agreeing that businesses need to do more to provide paid family leave, more flexibility, and even more child care benefits. The notion of the government providing more funding for child care is a little more contentious, but we do see majority support here.

So again, just to conclude, in terms of the findings of the poll, the profound shift in the workforce is viewed as an overwhelmingly positive development for society, primarily because

men and women are in agreement on many of the things they want out of life. They agree on many attitudes about gender relations and the role of women in society.

There are still some remaining differences that need to be negotiated, particularly around the issues surrounding children and elder-care, and to top it all off, the modern workplace and governmental policy is not keeping up with these changes. So that's the core story line that we get out of this poll. And I'd be happy to take any questions from people. We don't have a whole lot of time. I know we have another session, so let me start towards – yes?

Q: I can see how these trends would be reported when you ask people, how do you feel about work-life balance, or do you feel that, you know, is the country comfortable with having a woman earn more or whatever, in general terms. But someone earlier, I think it was Michael, said, that's all fine on the general picture, but don't change my situation. Find the man who wants his daughter to make that much money, rather than necessarily he may not want his wife to work, make that much. You see what I'm saying?

So everybody's personal situation may be a little different. It's like theoretically they may say I'm comfortable with women earning more than men, but not in my house.

MR. HALPIN: We don't see any evidence that that is true, except in the self-reported nature that if in fact people are okay with women earning more, it isn't going on because both men and women are reporting that men are still bringing in much more of the family income. So you may be correct that people are open to these changes, it hasn't exactly caught up yet in many cases.

I can't speak directly to the notion of what, you know, particular – on the micro level about what everybody is saying, but it wouldn't be surprising that there would be some differences there. But the overall patterns are pretty strong that that's not true. So it's difficult to assess because we're looking at sort of aggregate numbers here.

But there is no evidence in this data to suggest that people actually are saying one thing that sounds what they think is PC or positive and then they're behaving in another way. What we do actually see is differences in reported behaviors. That's all I can get you there.

Yes?

Q: Chao Chen (ph), freelance correspondent. You said that business and government behind the times. What's the way to get them catch up to time? Thank you?

MR. HALPIN: Well, I'm sure my policy friends can give you more direct advice on that. What we assessed in the public opinion poll was workplace flexibility. I mean, actually negotiating workplace schedules and hours and the types of structure of the workplace. We had direct evidence that people want more paid family leave, the businesses providing this. We also have evidence about more direct benefits from employers on child care arrangements and benefits. So those types of things we do have.

I'll leave it to Heather to speak to how exactly we might get to some of those things, but it's pretty clear that both I think on the governmental side – you know, the government itself could become, I think as John said yesterday, a model employer itself. The federal government could change some of these things and start to be a leading indicator on this. And then businesses I think have to work some of it out.

Yes?

Q: Good afternoon. My name is Yi Yang (ph). I think the whole day we are talking about really – it's not really workforce. Probably it's more like labor participation and attitude and so on. I would like to know, is there any study, and what's your opinion to be? They say negative productivity, that including the discrimination that is including abuse and waste of their positions and salary and so on.

Our GNP does not really reflect our productivity. Maybe you have that is public abuse and waste. So how much is waste and abuse in terms of health and loss of life, and in terms of position?

MR. HALPIN: We didn't assess those measures in our poll, and I will defer to others to speak about productivity measures and discrimination and other areas. I have seen other studies that suggest that issues like childhood poverty do reduce overall productivity down the line, so it would not surprise me if discrimination, other types of things in the workplace diminish productivity. I'm sure that's supported in many studies. I would have a hard time imagining that's not the case. But we didn't assess that directly, so I'll defer to others on that.

Anybody else in the back? I think we only had about 12 minutes to do the poll, so why don't we make this one the last question here.

Q: I would encourage you, as my colleague back here said – and I know that you do this; I've done statistics forever – to make sure that you're looking at the responses, to make sure that you've gathered the context in which they were answered because if the respondent was thinking about, well, this is true for my company, or, this should be true for my company, you get a very different conclusion from that than if they were saying, this should be true for everybody; I would support legislation that fostered equality according to gender, or flexibility in the workplace.

It is a different answer for whether they're saying it for, you know, yes, I support this and I want to make sure that this is there for my daughter, but it's not going to be in my house. I want to bring in more money than my wife brings in. So –

MR. HALPIN: Again, all the measures, all the attitudinal measures, if you look again on page 404, all of these are directed to people personally. So it says, "You are comfortable with women in households earning more than men." So it's not directed in the abstract. We asked people personally, are you comfortable with this? And I know, I understand there are all sorts of reporting issues on socially desirable, you know, impacts and responses and things like that.

But if you look across the bulk of the data here, the message is pretty similar, that at least in terms of reported attitudes, men and women, and particularly men, have gotten more open in their attitudes in some ways. Now, it doesn't mean, and I think we see it in the self-reported behavior – that that's caught up. But I don't think there's any evidence to suggest that there's – you know, it's one set of standards for myself than for somebody else. We asked people to apply it to their own lives.

And what's interesting is that if you take the issue of the traditional family, we might see some differences there. What's actually happened is that both men and women are in agreement that the traditional family structure is something they want for their daughters. So you know, it's not a great number, but I think the idea that it would apply to one and not the other, we do see some – I think some agreement of opinion there. But I take your point well.

I think that's all the time we have. Thanks for all the questions, and I'm not sure what's coming up next but I appreciate your time.

ANN O'LEARY: Thank you, John. That was terrific. I think the poll was not only an amazing complement but it was also an amazing feat by John and Ruy who did this in quite a short timeline, so thanks to both of them.

We're ending the day on a really positive note and I'm really excited that we have Acting Chairman Stuart Ishimaru with us here today. Let me tell you a little story before I introduce him, which is that we have spent much of the day talking about what the government hasn't been able to do in the last 40 years. Well, we're here to talk a little bit about what the government has done in the last 40 years.

In 1963 the president's Commission on the Status of Women, led by John F. Kennedy, came out with the report on the status of women, and I think probably to the surprise of many women and men on that commission, the next year the United States Congress passed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which included Title VII, prohibiting sex-based discrimination in employment.

As many of you know, that was quite a surprise, and one of the reasons it was a surprise is that it was added to the bill by a congressman named Howard Smith, who was a Republican from Virginia, who opposed the Civil Rights Act. So there are two stories that you might tell about Howard Smith. One is that he didn't want this to go forward and thought if he added women to it that it would certainly be the death of the bill. Others say that he was a secret advocate and happy supporter of women's equity, so that he was supporting that.

But the end result was that there's very limited congressional record on what it meant to include the prohibition against sex discrimination in Title VII. So what that has meant is that we have really had to rely on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to promulgate the guidance to help us interpret Title VII, ensure that sex-based discrimination is properly defined and can be really robustly enforced.

So the reason this is a success story is that Title VII has been enforced with regard to sex discrimination, but in particular, as we know for the Pregnancy Discrimination Act was added in 1978, the EEOC both enforces that as part of Title VII, but also in more recent years has really looked at how Title VII can and should be used to prohibit gender discrimination against workers who have care-giving responsibilities.

This is where Stuart Ishimaru comes into the picture. He has been a commissioner since 2003 on the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, and really educated his fellow commissioners and worked very hard to ensure that the EEOC could put forth guidance, really making clear to employers, to employees what it meant to prohibit gender discrimination with regard to care-giving responsibilities. So we really have him to thank for his leadership on this issue.

We're very lucky that not only has he served in that role, but he has been now, thanks to President Obama, he's been the acting chairman of the EEOC since January and really brings with him a wealth of knowledge and experience in working on civil rights issues. He was the deputy assistant attorney general in the civil rights division at the U.S. Department of Justice in 1999-2001. Before that he was on the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, and for many years served on the Hill working on these issues.

So we are just absolutely delighted that he is leading the agency right now and that he knows so much about this issue, and that he's ending our conference to tell you what the government is doing on these issues with some success. So thanks, Stuart.

STUART ISHIMARU: Thank you very much. Always tough being here at the end of a long day. Due to the beauties of modern living and modern technology, I can sit at my desk and watch most of this conference. It was actually fabulous. And it also struck me, sitting there at my desk watching this stream across my desk, of how things have changed and how modern living really brings us in a whole new way of how we work, and women working and where they work, and whether you need to have the usual paradigm that we've grown up with in working.

I'm delighted to be here. This report, the Shriver Report, is an excellent compilation and will be very, very helpful in helping us educate people on why we need to do this. My own experience, you know, I lived this life, like so many of the people in this room. My wife is home today with a sick child. I've been there myself. We juggle. We haven't lost a kid yet but it's just a matter of time.

Yet, you know, we are fortunate that we're able and we have the resources to do the juggling. What is pointed out to me so often is that so many people don't. What has struck me in my work at the EEOC and on this issue is how we can't just limit our thinking to the top of the worker chain. We have to think about it at all the various levels. I know that so much of the talk of this day has talked about people all over the work map, that we have to keep them in mind.

But I'm especially excited because now we're at a situation where we have a leader in the White House and we have a Congress that cares about these issues, that we can ask ourselves from a public policy perspective, what can we do to ease the burden on working families, and

provide people with supporting structures that they need to allow them to successfully accommodate work and family?

Certainly over the years there have been significant advances in legislation like the Family Medical Leave Act, the Equal Pay Act, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act passed the Congress, were signed into law. These were early and important steps into dealing with the issue of work-life bounds. But as the Shriver Report chapter on the government rightly points out, this early legislative work largely bought into the premise that women should be allowed to work, but to work on men's terms.

Take the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, for example. It was obviously important to establish law that prohibited the firing of women on the basis of pregnancy, but courts have construed the PDA in such a way to provide no right to accommodate physical limitations that may accompany pregnancy. For many women with physically demanding jobs, this means effectively that they can still lose their jobs because of pregnancy.

The early legislative gains also fell short in terms of their breadth of coverage. The FMLA has been an important tool in helping people who have care-giving responsibilities to be in a better place and to have the opportunities to provide those care-giving efforts, but the fact is that less than half of all workers are covered by the law, and that for low-income workers who just aren't covered, this is a serious problem.

As you all know, in order to be eligible for leave under the FMLA, a worker has to work for a company with over 50 employees. They have to have been with the company for at least a year, and they have to have worked a requisite number of hours for that company. This eliminates many low-income workers who cobble together short-term and part-time work, often for small companies, in order to make a living. And of course you can't even avail yourself to the FMLA's protections because all you get is unpaid leave, and sometimes workers simply cannot afford to take it.

So we at the EEOC, in thinking about these issues – having served there now, my colleagues primarily have been women, and women who have care-giving responsibilities. When I got there in 2003, appointed by President Bush to a Democratic seat, I thought, how do we deal with these issues, and how do we come to some sort of consensus on what we can do at the EEOC?

I was able to talk to my colleagues, who were all in similar boats, and even harder boats frankly, because frankly, it's harder for women. For men, for me it's easy to get kudos for watching the kids or doing some share of the housework, although it's always pointed out to me that it's not enough, but for women it's hard. For my colleagues on the EEOC, everyone was living this life, and they got it. And we were able on a bipartisan basis to come up with guidance to deal with discrimination against workers with care-giving responsibilities, that's available on our Web site – www.eeoc.gov – and it was the first time that the federal government took a step to lay this out, to lay it out in clear and useable form, and using examples that real businesses use.

You've heard about that from business people here about how this makes good business sense for them. But we were only able to actually talk about this in our context, in our statutory context, in dealing with Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, in dealing with sex discrimination, dealing with race discrimination, and under the Americans with Disabilities Act, to deal with associational types of discrimination. That's our limitation.

That's our limitation, that we can only deal with this very limited piece of the pie. It's not to say, however, that there is not definite benefit to that. And from my conversations with friends around the country, I think that coming out with this guidance when we did had tremendous benefit, and letting people know that these practices that many people took for granted for far too long may in fact violate existing civil rights laws.

And it also had the benefit of compliance. The one thing that I've learned at the EEOC is that employers, many employers, and certainly larger employers, want to comply with the law. They know what it is and they see what the examples are. They say they want to comply, and they over the last 20-plus years have developed infrastructures within their companies to deal with compliance. That's a huge issue out there.

I'm delighted that we were able to come up with this guidance on a bipartisan, unanimous basis. This was not red state versus blue state. This wasn't one party versus another. This was dealing with problems that working people had at all parts of the food chain. And don't underestimate too something that Judy Lichtman talked about earlier about the benefits of Title 9 and of people having relatives – their daughters, their sisters, and others who will benefit from these laws. It's someone in their family, it's someone they know, this is important to them, unlike different areas of the civil rights laws in which I work with. It has a huge impact that's very, very helpful.

But frankly, limiting it just to the civil rights law enforcement framework is limiting, and as we sit here today after you've had this long day with many experts, the question really comes up, how do we go beyond this framework? How do we answer harder questions, harder policy questions that are out there? How do you access affordable, high quality child care? How do you take care of a sick child if you have no paid sick days and can't pay your rent if you miss a day of work?

What do you do when you're faced with a choice of either buying groceries or buying medicine for your ailing mother? What do you do when your boss at your \$10 an hour job wants to keep you at work past the day care center's pick-up time, where it costs you 10 bucks for every five minutes you're late? I've been there and it's not easy, whether you're making a lot of money or a little money. You've got to go pick them up. You've got to do it and you've got to do it now.

Certainly what this report and this conference are calling us to do is to think broadly about what public policy matters that support working families would look like. The president has called for flexible work policies, such as paid sick leave, to allow working men and women to better meet the needs of their families. There's been much discussion about expanding tax

credits for child care to help working families access the assistance they need. These are fine ideas, these are very good ideas.

But I would propose in this environment that we think bigger. What are the broader measures out there that would facilitate success and sanity for working families? What can we learn from other countries who have done this? I know many people in this room know the experiences around the world of how various countries have juggled these issues and come up with a variety of solutions that work.

What sorts of ways can we promote goals through the use of the tax code, for both the employee and incentives for the employer? And how can we do more than what's in the statutory framework that's there? How can we go beyond Title VII, the FMLA, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the Equal Pay Act, to establish a broad and flexible public policy that we won't outgrow 10 years from now?

And one thing that I didn't hear as I was sitting at my desk today watching all of this was how can the federal government, as the largest employer in the country, take steps to be a model employer to put these things into action? And one of my hopeful thoughts is that one of my colleagues, Christine Griffin, who's our acting vice chair, is going over to the Office of Personnel Management very soon to be the deputy director, and she understands these issues. She's going over there with a team led by John Barry (sp). I think they're going to make this happen, and that's very exciting. That really is leverage.

I was thinking about the federal government as the largest employer in the country. Somebody earlier talked about Wal-Mart having 1.4 million people. The federal government employs – what, 2 million-plus people. You start dealing with some of these issues on that scale, that's a huge, huge deal.

Someone earlier too asked a question about geographic differences that I thought was fascinating. Is it on both coasts only? Is this a red state versus blue state issue? Frankly, I don't think so. And I don't have the scientific evidence like John has, or the polling data, but my guess is, from my travels around the country, is that women are working. Women are working because they want to work or they have to work, and people are juggling these issues no matter where they are in the country. I don't see any divide there. I think this goes on no matter where you are in the country.

Brad Harrington talked earlier about how businesses do flexibility. In this hard economic time, in these times of recession, it's a very, very difficult place to be. Employers certainly tell me consistently, in both good times and bad, that they want to find good workers and they want to keep good workers. And I ask them, well, why not provide for some flexibility? Why not give people the flexibility they need to live modern lives? Frankly, how do you eliminate the stigma that comes up for people when they ask for this? How do you make this a part of the way you do business in a way that's valued so people will feel comfortable doing it? That I think is a real challenge for business.

You've heard examples of how people do it. I think there needs to be more. And again, I think the federal government really could be the model employer here. I'm hoping over the course of the next few years that that transition will happen. But it's hard. It's hard to change the paradigm.

I leave you with this thought because we all have an obligation to live this sort of working life in our own everyday life. Many of us lead organizations, and the question is, "Are you going to do this within your own organization?" It has to start there, and from there it can go out to other places as well. We need to break away from the old assumptions. We need to break away from the constant face time that people think that they need to measure success.

It's been fascinating working with younger people who have a totally different way of working. They may not work in the office. They may not work the same way some of us have grown up working. It's a new day, and how do you grab onto that? How do you use that as we turn into this new century? That's the challenge before us.

So again, let me thank you for the opportunity to be here. It's always tough to come in at the end of the day, but I am delighted to have this opportunity to join you today. Fabulous program, fabulous report. Happy to take a few questions before we go on to the reception.

Yes, ma'am?

(Applause.)

Q: Hi. My name is Mindy Rizer (ph). I'm a sociologist. I've worked in this country and overseas on issues relating to gender and other things. We know that single women have troubles in terms of pay, in terms of access to services and other things, and we know that older people do, and we know that we're going to have more older single women. And we know that age discrimination is a problem.

I'd like to hear what your thoughts are for the baby boomers who are moving up into the 60s and beyond in terms of work opportunities, in terms of the enforcement and promotion that you will make to employers to keep their talents and needs in mind, and what you will do if they don't adhere to your promotions and good words about the talents of older people.

MR. ISHIMARU: Certainly age discrimination is one of those – for lack of a better term – a ticking time bomb. The way we've worked has changed, like I said. And for older people, you know, it used to be you worked, you would gather enough credit to get a comfortable pension and retire. Doesn't exist anymore for too many people. People have to work quite often. People want to work. Work is seen as a good thing, and people choose to do it as well.

My guess is, and if you look at the numbers coming into the EEOC you see an increase in age discrimination cases. I find, frankly, that discrimination generally is under-reported. People have to make that calculus – is it worth my time to come forward and actually complain and go through the process? My guess is that it's severely under-reported.

My guess is, too, going forward is that we are going to be doing a lot more age discrimination work. And one of the challenges for the EEOC is how do you do discrimination work sort of on a wholesale basis? How do you go against policies and practices that keep people out? Because if you do it on a retail basis, it's actually hard to get to because there's just too much of it going on.

But no, it's a huge issue for us. You know, I think the challenges for my new colleagues coming into the EEOC will be, how do we juggle this with all of our other responsibilities as well? We did a hearing for the first time in many years on the problems in age cases a number of months ago. It's a huge and burgeoning issue that we definitely know is out there and need to move on as we go forward.

Q: Good afternoon. My name is Yi Yang. Again, I'm thinking about discrimination in the workforce. When I say workforce, it really means positive, contributing well-being of our society, so it is opposite to negative productivity. And according to – (unintelligible) – Institute, which tried to compile discrimination complaint and EEOC and Department of Justice list as major discriminatory – (unintelligible, off mike).

MR. ISHIMARU: Sure. Look, we certainly look at whether there are institutional problems at the EEOC. We look to see whether there are institutional problems at other government agencies. Frankly, you know, one should not have to put up with misconduct at government agencies. There are times when things happen.

We also have challenges in how quickly we can process cases, and we're getting to that as well. We've gotten a budget increase from the Congress. People understand that we've been under-staffed. Those things are changing, but change happens sometimes not as fast as we'd like. But we know that there are issues out there that need to be addressed.

Q: (Off mike.)

MR. ISHIMARU: Well, I think for businesses certainly one way to do it is to share the practices out there. A lot of these practices make good business sense. How does the business work better, and you know, one thing that we tried to do with our guidance was to give examples of how businesses have made this work and how their businesses have worked well doing it, and how this has been a positive for both the business and for their employees. I think by sharing those practices, that helps.

Changing a paradigm, though, is hard. I've been doing civil rights work now for 25-plus years. The civil rights laws in this country have been around for, what, 45 years. Certainly over the course of my doing civil rights work I've seen how the paradigm has shifted. It went from being where people questioned the whole validity of civil rights laws, to now accepting them as the cultural norm. I think that takes some time. But I'm pleased to see it happen.

I think it will happen here as well, but we have an obligation to educate people on successful ways to do it. Businesses, you know, some of them are very much ahead of the curve and I think we should encourage that as well.

One more. There's a woman on back of you, over your left shoulder.

Q: Hi. Thank you for your work, by the way. We've all really appreciated it, even when the times were tougher to do it. A couple of quick things. One is, perhaps we can train HR executives to give them more tools with which to fight this battle in the businesses. But speaking of businesses, we live in a time with a very short attention span. And a lot of what you're talking about and a lot of the change – I lead change in companies, and it takes a while for these results to come to fruition.

We can quote all the statistics, we can say that all these companies do better, blah, blah, blah. But they're worried about this quarter's earnings, and the changes that you want to make require certain costs and have certain immediate impacts, but the positive consequences and outcomes come much further down the road.

How do you suggest we deal with that conundrum to facilitate implementing these changes sooner and more effectively?

MR. ISHIMARU: Well, certainly businesses and organizations don't always think what's happening quarter by quarter. Most people also think about, how do I need to think about things for the long term. What sort of capital investments do I have to make to make my business viable over the long run? I'm fully aware of the short-term time pressures that are out there.

But if you look at the workforce coming up, and if you look at the workforce and how it's changed over time, and will continue to change as you have a differing demographic coming in, you need to figure how do you grasp that going forward? It's going to be over this quarter and this quarter and this quarter. There's going to be payoff, but you have to anticipate for the future. And companies that don't anticipate for the future – as we've seen, right? – no longer.

So I'm fully aware of the short-term pressures on companies, but I also know that people in these companies are thinking about juggling both sides of the equation. Frankly, a lot of these things don't cost me a lot of money. It's a question of how do you change ways of thinking and policies of giving more flexibility to workers, to deal with everyday needs in their lives.

Frankly, employers come to me and they say, on a certain level it's easy to find good workers. The harder thing is keeping them, and keeping them in a very competitive environment. You're right. So how do you do that? You want to do everything you can that's reasonable to try to keep them. Flexibility certainly is one way to do that. I think you'll see more of that as time goes on.

It's been an honor and a privilege to be here. Thanks very much. (Applause.)

MS. O'LEARY: Thank you so much. It's such an inspiration, I think, to end the day that way. One of the things I think we forget sometimes is when we talk about the government, that the government is made up of people. It's made up of people who make decisions every day

about what's going to happen and what their priorities are going to be. I have to say, I for one am really pleased that Stuart is part of our government because those are the type of people who we need there.

I have to say, it's also just lovely that he's a man on top of it all because he's really taken seriously because he lives it every day in his own life. These are really hard issues and we have to figure out how to model them in our family, as employers, as colleagues, as workers. So what a great note to end the day on.

Thank you, everybody, for staying to the very end. You're rewarded by having some food and drink downstairs. There's a reception on the first floor, so take the elevator down to the first floor and turn left.

Just a final note, I say for Heather, for both of us, that we really look forward to working with you for many months and years to come. These issues, as we know, are not going to be solved by one report alone, but we certainly are pleased that you're all here today. So thank you.

(Applause.)

(END)