

CENTER FOR AMERICAN PROGRESS

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

**HAS A MAN'S WORLD BECOME A WOMAN'S NATION?
MEN AND MARRIAGE TODAY**

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HEATHER BOUSHEY: I'll try to entertain you here in the shift from one to the other. Probably won't do a very good job of it but there's lots of chaos going on here. (Off-side conversation.)

So I'd like to direct everybody's attention for just a moment over to the screens on what is my left and what is your right side of the room.

Positive or negative for society? In the mid-1970s, a majority of children grew up in a family with at least one stay-at-home parent. Today, about 30 percent of children grow up in a family with a stay-at-home parent. This is one of the poll questions that we asked in our survey, and you'll be hearing the answer to that at the end of our conference today. I hope that's a big enough incentive for y'all to stay for the whole day if the little reception at the end isn't.

So now that everybody's seated, it's my privilege to introduce the moderator of this panel, Marcia Greenberger. Marcia has been described as, quote, "guiding the battles of the women's rights movement." She's a founder and co-president of the National Women's Law Center, and we are so pleased and happy to have her here today. She's been an inspiration certainly to me and, I know, to many of us in this room for all of her great work.

She's widely regarded as the first full-time women's legal rights advocate here in D.C. And she's been a leader working, I know, with many of you here in this room in developing strategies to secure the successful passage of major legislation and counsel many of the things that helped many of the young people in this room get here today. Things like the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, the Pregnancy Discrimination Act, the Civil Rights Act of 1991.

Thank you so much for being here today, and I leave it to you to introduce the panel.

MARCIA GREENBERGER: Well, thanks very much. I have to say, that was a longer introduction than you were supposed to give because I was told not to give anybody very much introduction so we could facilitate lots more conversation!

Thank you very much, and I can't tell you how happy I am to be here and how excited I am to have these issues given the platform that they have and the public conversation that we are having.

And I must say, I'm hoping that in our panel, we can both get some of the wonderful insights from this fantastic set of people and pick up on the conversation where it just ended in the last panel about how we move from identifying the problem, knowing about the kinds of solutions that we want to see and actually implementing them. That is always the trick, and something that has engaged certainly not just me, but all of you and so many others for many, many years.

Well, let me – and we will also save time for questions at the end. I’m going to start with Michael Kimmel, and I love, Michael, your chapter. And I wanted to just highlight at least a little bit of the beginning, and then ask you to kick us off with just a quick summary of what are the highlights of what your findings have been.

And what Michael sort of started with was – and we are talking here about looking at a man’s perspective – that some men today are lost, others bitter, and still others searching for new forms of masculinity amid what they believe is the excessive feminization of American society and culture – not because of the absence of women in their lives but rather ironically because of their increased presence.

So Michael, tell us, how much is there that bitterness and concern, and how much is there a view of women’s increasing roles in different facets of society as a good thing on the part of men?

MICHAEL KIMMEL: Well, thanks. Okay, let me first thank you for combating the chilly climate for women in this room. (Chuckles.) And turning the heat up.

On the first actual chapter author who wasn’t part of this editing team to speak at this podium, so I want to thank Ann O’Leary and Heather Boushey on behalf of all of us – what an extraordinary, incredible job it was to bring this book to fruition with Maria Shriver.

We are all – you know, many of us write a lot; it’s what we do. And I have to say, this was by far the easiest and most productive editing experience that I have ever have. So could you join me in thanking them? (Applause.)

So with this report, I think we finally know the answer to that question, what women want. Not too much; just the ability to work and love, have jobs and families, with government existence and without government obstacles.

So what I tried to do in my paper was to try to say, well, what’s happening; what is the impact of this on men’s lives? And I start with thinking about a particular text from 1964 written by that great gender theorist James Brown, who sang in 1964, “This is a man’s world.” And how we had gone from this being a man’s world to a woman’s nation.

The evidence, of course, of this transformation in women’s lives is everywhere. But what’s been the impact on men? That was the brief that I was presented with. These changes in our lives have been, in some respects, dizzyingly fast. My father tells me, for example, that when he was in college he and his friends would sit around. And they would pose this question: Will you let your wife work?

And they answered it seriously. They said no. It’s not that I shouldn’t let her – she shouldn’t have to work. I should be able to support this family. I should be a breadwinner. I wouldn’t consider myself a man were I not able to do that. Actually, as a baby boomer, I have to say, when I was in college we asked ourselves the same question but our answer was basically, let?

Like, you know, there's no way I'm going to "let" her do anything. Well, I'm happy to tell you that in two short generations the question to my students today is utterly meaningless. The question itself simply doesn't compute. So these changes have been dizzyingly fast. Now, I found in the work that I have done, that there are basically two responses.

The media has been very eager to portray one side of men's responses to women's greater equality and I'm going to focus a little bit on that. But, of course, also focus on the other side which I think is the less heralded, rather quiet, accommodation on the part of most men to greater equality. And not because of the stick but because, Ellen, the carrot has actually been more effective than we previously thought.

Now, of course, there's a tremendous amount of defensive resistance to equality out there among American men. It's exceedingly noisy. All you have to do is turn on your AM radio or some TV stations and you will hear it. The efforts to turn back the clock to preserve those previous all-male environments that women's entry, actually, is thought to pollute.

For example, during the 1990s and the VMI and Citadel cases – which I served as an expert for the Justice Department during those cases – the superintendent of cadets at VMI said that women's entry would be, quote, "A toxic kind of virus that would destroy the very precious bonding among American men." It's very media-genic to have father rights advocates dressed up as Batman climbing on buildings.

I was on a TV talk show opposite four very angry white men a few years ago. I think this is important and instructive in terms of this defensive resistance. This talk show, these guys were all – they claimed – the victims, the new victims of reverse discrimination, which you hear sometimes that kind of howl of rage and anguish among large numbers of men, especially, as I said, in the media.

And the title of this show – these four men were victims, they were qualified for jobs, qualified for promotions – they said that they didn't get them. And they were really angry about it. And a quote from one of the men actually framed the entire show; it was the title of this particular episode of the show. And the phrase was, "A black woman stole my job."

So these four guys all told their stories; as I said, that was a quote. And then it was my turn to speak and so the host says to me, well what do you think? And I said, I have just one question for these guys about the title of the show, "A Black Woman Stole my Job." Actually it's about one word in the title. I want to know about the word "my." Where did you get the idea it was your job? Why isn't the title of the show "A black woman got the job" or "A black woman got a job?" because I think in some ways, that unless we begin to confront men's sense of entitlement, we will never be able to make the case that gender equality is actually in everyone's interest.

The media has been more focused on, as I said, the more media-genic, the men bonding in the woods, the evangelical promise-keepers filling sports stadiums and, of course, some of the more – the policy advocates for father rights. What I found, actually, is that there's another story

– far quieter and that is, most men are accommodating themselves to women’s greater equality in the home and in the workplace.

Their wives work – that means this is not their fathers’ recession – one of the major differences, I think, between this recession and previous ones. Men’s participation in family life is increasing. Yes, it’s true, we still have two phrases that define what we do: We help out, we pitch in. But, in fact, that helping out and pitching in has, in fact, increased. A study from 2008 from the Family and Work Institute found that men’s share of housework and child care had gone from two to three hours a day between 1977 and 2007. Now, women is about 3.8 hours a day.

Among Millennials, that is to say, those with the youngest children the numbers have increased for both. Millennial men spent 4.3 hours per day with household and family chores and women, about five. Now, there is something else that – so making the case then to men, is not simply some kind of imposition of an ideological agenda. But rather, taking men where they say they want to be. Most men say they want to be good fathers. Most young men say they want to be much better fathers than their own fathers were.

And making the case that it is, in fact, in men’s interest to do this – that it is not a zero-sum game. Findings by some sociologists, for example, found the following: that when men share housework and childcare, their children do better in school. Their children have a wider friendship network. They actually have higher rates of achievement, lower rates of absenteeism, lower rates of being diagnosed with ADHD, lower rates of seeing child therapists, being put on prescription medication. So maybe that’s not enough of a motivation for men.

When men share housework and childcare, their wives are happier. Duh. (Laughter.) Their wives are also healthier. They work out more, because they probably have more time. But not only that, their wives report higher levels of marital satisfaction. Their wives see therapists less often, are diagnosed with depression less often, take prescription medication less often. So when men share housework and childcare their wives are happier and healthier.

MS. BRAVO: Michael?

MR. KIMMEL: Well, maybe that’s not enough motivation for men.

MS. BRAVO: I’m going to stop you right after we heard all this very good news. I was waiting for the good part as well as the –

MR. KIMMEL: Wait it gets even better.

MS. BRAVO: Okay.

MR. KIMMEL: It gets better. Just –

(Cross talk.)

MR. KIMMEL: You got to let me get to the best part.

MS. BRAVO: Okay. I'm going to ask you to get to the absolute best part –

MR. KIMMEL: I'm going to!

MS. BRAVO: – and we'll move on and get back to it.

MR. KIMMEL: Here it is. This is the very end. I'm getting there. Third, when men share housework and childcare, they themselves are happier and healthier. They work out more; they smoke less; they drink less; they take recreational drugs less often; they take prescription drugs less often; they see therapists less often; they report higher levels of marital satisfaction. Maybe that's not enough of a motivation.

So here's the news. When men share housework and childcare they have more sex. (Laughter.) Now, guess which one of these four findings Men's Health magazine blasted on its cover – "Housework Makes Her Horny", it said. Not, when she does it, I suspect. Let me caution the men in the audience, this is aggregate data over a long period of time so I don't want anybody running home thinking, okay honey, I'm washing the dishes tonight.

What I'm suggesting to you and here's my conclusion. That men – that this part of this book that my chapter contributes to – is called let the conversation begin. Men can be part of this conversation. We need to be part of this conversation. We are part of this conversation whether we like it or not and the truth is, most men want to be part of this conversation. These are not only women's issues – the issues of family friendly workplaces, for example, but their parents' issues. And men need to come out in the workforce as parents to say, we ourselves want these to live the lives that we say we want to live. Thank you.

MS. BRAVO: Excellent, thank you. (Applause.) So Stephanie Coontz, expert in relationships, marriages, do men know about all these positive aspects of sharing? Or is it news to them? What is it that both men and women and those in relationships think themselves and what is your data over wonderful research that you have done show?

STEPHANIE COONTZ: Well, I think that men do get all this media stuff about how after if women work they don't have time for sex. They're always too tired. Actually, that's not true. Women who work are not any more likely to be fatigued. They're less likely to be depressed. They're more likely to feel, if their husbands help out as Michael said, marital intimacy and also more sexual attraction. And, in fact, one study in 2006 found that the happier a wife was with the division of housework, the happier the man was with his sex life. So I'd like to support that finding.

But I just think it's so interesting when we look at marriage and relationships because this report, the Shriver Report, comes out 46 years after the publication of the first report of the President's Commission on the Status of Women. And things have changed so much from there. That same year, Betty Friedan made this astounding prediction in her book "The Feminine Mystique", that if women could find meaningful work their kids would be better and their

marriages would be happier. And everybody though, on both sides – people who supported her and didn't – thought that that was probably crazy.

And, in fact, the divorce rate rose for the next 10 or 15 years. Actually, women's time with their kids fell back. But a really funny thing has happened in the last 25 years. Friedan, it turns out, was right. And men are recognizing this too. Right now, the highest marital quality is reported by men and women who share housework and breadwinning. Women are spending more – women who work outside the home now spend more time with their kids than homemakers did back in 1963 and men spend much more time. That's good for the kids. It's good for the marriage.

There are a few things to work out here. One of the problems is that as we've increased our tremendous expectations of relations, men and women – although they report fewer marital problems – they are having trouble finding alone time for themselves. So that's a flag that we've got to look at. Both as a society, in terms of what we can do to alleviate this pressure and as couples what we can do to remember that, yes, we are getting tremendous fun out of our work lives and to continue on the theme of sex that Michael introduced, the people who report the highest satisfaction are actually the busiest people.

The people who have the rewarding jobs and put in the most housework – it's, sort of, like you can work hard and you can play hard. But at a certain point, that does cut into couple time. It does increase stress and multi-tasking and this is where both families and government have to step in, I think, and provide us some relief, some breathing room.

MS. BRAVO: So Courtney as someone who has been thinking about the issues and not as long – fortunately for you – as at least I have been. And is now in a different place and a different time about what young people are thinking about in terms of what they're going to be pressing for, what they're after than when I started in the beginning years of working on issues involving women and families – which we, I have to say, despite the media hype that women were all about themselves and it was all a very selfish movement, I don't think that ever, in fact, was the truth, regardless of, as we say, the line was.

Where do you see the issues affecting younger people today and most important, the ways of appealing and engaging that population of younger people to get involved in making this, in practice, a world that facilitates the kinds of relationships both Michael and Stephanie were talking about, without the struggle that each person has to invent him or herself.

MS. MARTIN: That's a lot – a lot of questions. I'll start with saying that I think – to put things in perspective, I was born the last day of the last year of the '70s, because I know people are sitting there going, well, how old is she? So I'm 29. And I think that for a lot of young women and young men in my generation, there really is this sense of ownership over this issue.

There is this idea that we want fulfilling work lives. We also want fulfilling family lives, that this kind of work/life language doesn't even make sense because we want our work to be part of our lives; we want our lives to work in our partnerships with both men and women.

I think sort of the big elephants in the room for me are some of the sort of cultural psycho-social issues. So a lot of young women were raised by supermoms, who I like to say told us we could be anything and we heard, I have to be everything because we watched our mothers juggle everything that could possibly be juggled.

We still watched our fathers for the most part, even those of us who had, like I did, a very feminist-identified father, sort of, you know, come home and take his shoes off, and as soon as my mom was done with the dishes say, oh, honey, can I help out with that? (Laughter.)

So I think there is this gap between aspiration and implementation that a lot of us are interested in seeing how, in very social, nitty-gritty, everyday ways are those things going to be negotiated.

I'm reminded of Maria in the first panel making the comment about, you know, arranging the play dates from across the country, and I think that is really at the heart of some of what this generation is wondering about and struggling with is this very difficult to kind of pin down psychological stuff.

As far as young men go, I think there is a really interesting struggle right now for young men to own this issue. It's so long been thought of as a feminist issue, a women's issue, and I know a lot of incredible young men who are really interested in it but don't have the language to own it, don't have a way to kind of make it their own and organize around it.

And so I think one of the big struggles is going to be for young women to figure out, in what ways do we need to kind of step back and motivate, or maybe not motivate, young men to take this issue on as their own? Is there some sort of coalition with young women and young men that we can create, because the feminist language is alienating for young men.

And so, you know, as long as we're sort of taking the issue on as our own I think we're not giving enough room for them to really step up and own the work that they could do around it.

MS. BRAVO: Okay, so that gets, at least for me, to the heart of the question that you raised: motivating both men and women to see these as issues in their own self-interest to address for themselves, for the sake of the people that they love in their families, for the sake of the future of the country, how are we motivating? What is the language? What is it? Are there issues? Is there language? Is there ways of – are there ways of motivating both men and women, young or at different stages in their lives, to demand that our policies, our programs, our carrots, our sticks all work in concert to address these issues?

MS. COONTZ: If I could just jump in.

MS. BRAVO: Stephanie, yeah.

MS. COONTZ: It seems to me one thing we really need to do is to change the terms of the debate, to reframe it the way Ann was talking about in the previous panel. For example, we get all of these debates about whether a woman should opt out. Now, Heather has done amazing

research to show that, first of all, it's empirically wrong that educated women are not opting out of the workforce.

But you go online and you see these mommy wars – you know, supposed mommy wars with some people saying, oh, you should stay home with your kids, and, no, you should do that. And we argue, I think, and are encouraged to argue by the media – to argue as though these are just women's choices. And when that happens, as you said, Courtney, we are leaving men out of it and we're leaving kids' best interests out of it too.

So we have to reframe the debate in the media and in the politics as this not being a woman's issue but being – and not even being a family issue in the sense that we think of a co-residential family living together. Everybody has these issues.

You know, if you actually look at the research on who spends the most time doing not just child care but helping people who are dependents, staying with elders, for example, single individuals spend more time than married couples.

I know in my family, dealing with an Alzheimer's mom, I had a teenage kid, and sometimes the symptoms seemed very similar to me – (laughter) – and it was my single sister who had to spend more time caring for my mom even though my son and I would go out there as well.

So these are issues that no individual should be excluded from. It's not just a question of families, of married couples, of women, and somehow we've got to make it clear in the public discussion and also to employers and government that these are not special favors, these are not niche issues; these are for everyone.

MS. BRAVO: Okay, Michael, so you're our guy. (Laughter.)

MS. COONTZ: Our token guy.

MS. BRAVO: The decision-makers we all already know are mostly men, whether they're in government, running institutions, have control of the money and the power and the media. How we – changing the conversation and appealing to men that this is not a set of women's issue on the side?

MR. KIMMEL: I think frequently when we try to engage men, we try to engage them as men. And I think that there we have carrots, we have sticks, we have the ethical imperative: It's right, it's fair, it's just. But may I point out that these men are also often husbands, they are also fathers, and these are also ways to engage them.

One of the things that I have found consistently when I've worked with corporations is that the senior executives, the CEOs of corporations, suddenly get feminism when their grown daughter is experiencing workplace discrimination. Suddenly, oh, this really has to change. Or suddenly I talk to fathers who, when their teenage daughter is suddenly being looked at by boys

they way they were taught to look at girls, this has to change and it has to change right this moment.

So part of it is I think not appealing to them as men but, that is, appealing to them in the other positions that they also occupy. For example, administrators of organizations know that they want their workforce, everyone who works for them, to be productive workers, and absenteeism, job turnover, et cetera, these are enormous costs for companies, for businesses.

So it seems to me that making a business case has always been part of this process. So appealing to them not as men necessarily but in all of the other positions that they occupy might be one way to bring this together.

Now, let me just say one other thing. You know, I presented a fairly rosy picture and I don't want to be entirely Pollyanna about this. One of the things that is happening in many families is that what you find – when I say that men's participation in family life has increased – you know, we social scientists, we study housework and child care as if it were a unit, but in men's practices, what's been happening in recent years has been these have been separating out.

Men's housework contribution is significantly less than their child-care contribution, which is significantly more, which leads to a danger, which is that Dad is becoming the fun parent. Dad takes the kid to the park and plays soccer while mom does the laundry, cleans the house. Then the kids come home and they say, wow, we had such a great time with dad; he's such a good parent. So it is important in our practices to bring these two together somewhat.

MS. BRAVO: So Courtney, let me ask you this: You ended your comments with the observation that feminist language can turn off younger men. What's your sense of what is the language that empowers and encourages both young men and young women to tackle these issues?

MS. MARTIN: I wish I knew the answer to that. I mean, one of the things I'm really interested in lately in my work is when is it time to step back and be silent? And in a certain way I think this is a moment for young women to make enough room for young men to own that language for themselves.

I will say that the shared language that I think works in my sort of circles is about having a fulfilling life, right? Young men, my brother, my guy friends, they've watched how fulfilling their mothers lives are, to have deep relationships with your kids, to have artistic lives outside of work, to be activists in your community, that that is the stuff of a deeply fulfilling life, and that their fathers, who were really focused on work.

And, you know, my father, for example, now retired going, who am I? That is not the model that a lot of young men want to adopt. They actually are looking to their moms as models in a lot of ways, and I think that's about this deep sense of fulfillment, about relationships and joy and all of this, like, really profound stuff.

So if we can figure out a way to kind of harness that in a political sense – I mean, I’m thinking about some of the activism I’ve seen around the health-care issue. There is a group called the Invincibles, for example, that’s a bunch of young kids who have done video testimony about thinking that they’re invincible and not having health insurance and then coming up against the issue.

You know, if we can figure out sort of cross-gender ways to create some of that political sort of public, authentic work, I think we could actually shift from just these sort of cultural ideas to making some real change.

MS. COONTZ: Can I add one quick thing?

MS. BRAVO: Sure.

MS. COONTZ: Actually two quick things – sneaking them in.

First of all, I think there are both personal ways and political ways that we can involve men better. Personally, we women sometimes I think not only talk in feminist terms that they don’t relate to, but we also try to have it coming and going. You know, we say we want you to help out but then we engage in what sociologists call gate-keeping.

You know, we restack the dishwasher or we say, well, that’s not quite right because, you know, we’re going through this momentous change that this report is driving home to us. Never in 10,000 years have we tried to do things so equally and not on the basis of such rigid gender roles. So we’re all adjusting. And it’s hard for women to give up our expertise as the domestic people, so I think that’s very important.

A way that we can, I think, engage men on a political level – what you said, referring to them in their family roles, but I just want to emphasize their role as sons, not only being inspired but also because they’re doing the care-giving increasingly in this generation.

You know, it is just an absolute myth that it is women who do all the elder care-giving. Men are doing this increasingly too and they’re the ones who are going to have to face it. They’re going to have to look forward to it. And that’s a political goal that they have and share with women, regardless of their gender.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah.

MS. BRAVO: You know, Michael, I just wanted to pick up on a point you made about appealing to men not as men but in the roles that they play in life, and I know, having worked a lot on Title IX issues, especially women in athletics, that most particularly in the early years, our cases came from dads who both were familiar with what an athletic program ought to look like as opposed to the moms who had never had a chance to play athletics in school.

So they were just thrilled there was any team for their daughters to play on at all. They didn’t have the expertise to figure out they were getting horrible coaching and all of the other

second-class treatment. And the dads, who were thrilled with their daughters being able to play but angry enough either to want to bring lawsuits, or Dads and Daughters and other organizations to really be strong advocates as we've had to continue to fight to keep Title IX strong over the years, which we have had to do, including up until this very day.

Do you see men as looking at these primarily as issues that are something for them to deal with on a personal level, or do they see it also as something that the government has a responsibility to inject itself in and help by putting the laws, putting the policies, putting the incentives into play to help these changes along?

MR. KIMMEL: Yeah, that's a really good question. I think the answer is no. I think the answer is that most men have experienced these changes in a rather quiet, domestic way in the context of their families and their relationships with their children, with their parents, with their partners, but they haven't politicized it.

And the noisy side of what I described earlier has most assuredly politicized it because it's the father rights advocates, for example, who are making the biggest inroads into family policies through legislative actions or through legal means.

So it does seem to me that that's – that's why I said earlier that it seems to me that one of the things that needs to happen is for men to come out in their workplaces as parents, saying as a parent these are the kind of workplace policies I need; these are the kind of government initiatives I need in order to be the kind of partner parent or child that I need to be, that I want to be. So we're taking men at their word that this is the life they want but politicizing that.

It does seem to me – and I do want to make one quick comment about Stephanie's point because I think there is a parallel dynamic going on. And Stephanie said that, you know – and also Courtney said this thing about being gatekeepers, saying, you know, reloading the dishwasher.

I hear this from men all the time: You know, I tried it once. I tried vacuuming the living room and my wife came in and she said, you call that clean, and she re-vacuumed it. So why should I do it? And they opt out. The men are opting out.

Now, I think if you – if Stephanie and I were writing a brief together and she criticized a paragraph that I wrote, would I then say, okay, you do it all, right? Of course not. Men don't do housework because they don't have to.

And the argument that women need to, you know, not reload the dishwasher is part of it. You know, the house might be a little dirty if men did half of it. But the truth is also men allow themselves to opt out of it precisely because they give themselves permission to.

MS. COONTZ: But let's remember the good things. (Laughter.) For example, today 30 percent of women say that their husbands do half, if not more, of all the housework. So that's worth remembering.

MR. KIMMEL: Yeah.

MS. BRAVO: So tell us, Courtney, do you think that your guy friends and the people in your circle that you have experience with primarily see these issues as personal issues that they need to come to grips with rather than political issues where the government has an obligation and a responsibility that it hasn't been shouldering?

MS. MARTIN: I think – I was thinking while Michael was talking – I think in terms of men coming out publicly as parents, and I think as authentically sort of feminist as I would put it but they might not use those terms, men who want to have, you know, authentic, equal lives, that there really does need to be the sort of politicization of something that is seen as kind of a private struggle at this point.

I think a lot of guys who don't have a male model that actually fits what they want – as I was saying, kind of identifying with the mother model – suffer in silence about what they're supposed to do about work, what they're supposed to do about finding a partner that they can believe in and create a family that they want.

And I think we need some sort of – you know, for lack of a less sort of antiquated idea, like a consciousness raising among young men who can get in rooms and who can really talk about these things in a public political way. And that's where I'm wondering, sort of, what is the role of young women?

And maybe young women don't need to be in those rooms, and maybe having young women in those rooms to some extent, at least initially, take some of the ownership that we really need to cede to young men in order to get this issue truly in an egalitarian place.

I think the dishes are a good metaphor for a lot of what young women are doing politically, where we're taking on sexual violence and work/life issues and all these sort of unfinished business as our own and not acknowledging the ways in which young men really need to be equal partners at the table.

MS. COONTZ: But sometimes the young women aren't doing it in a really political way – sense, in the sense that they see the positive role that government can play. I mean, you know, when you look at this tremendous recession that we – here, and compare it to when we were coming out of the Great Depression, people came out of the Great Depression I think with a sense that, you know, people are all in the same boat or at least subject to the same tides, and these are not problems that you can solve individually one-on-one negotiation or even just by a little self-help group.

And I think that for the past 20 years all we've heard is the negative about the government. And I see this in my students, female as well as male, a sense that they're just going to circle the wagons and find a way out of this themselves, and that somehow we need to rebuild the confidence that government can do some things right.

I'm old enough to have been brought up to see the government intervene in World War II, what it was able to do for my parents during the Depression, what Eisenhower was able to do when they couldn't stop the riots in Little Rock. You know, these are big things that government can do and should do right again, and I think we have to remind young people that they are not just on their own.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah, and I think this administration is the first one that, you know, young people are really, truly excited about. I mean, I hadn't voted for a president who won in my lifetime until this election. So I mean, I think there is a sense among young people that –

MS. COONTZ: I haven't had that many experiences myself.

(Laughter.)

MS. MARTIN: Yeah, you really earned your cynicism. (Laughter.)

Yeah, so I do think that there is a need to sort of create models that feel youthful and feel like they really appeal to this generation that are, you know, deeply invested in government solutions and policy and some of this politicization. That just isn't happening.

MR. KIMMEL: Right.

MS. BRAVO: So are there issues that if there were – if we ruled the political and the media world, are there issues that would be the right ones to try to focus around and try to get people to think about that would be something that would be government's responsibility that would appeal both to men and women in a way that it might begin to click, or is it a more holistic kind of an approach that has to happen?

MS. COONTZ: Well, I think there does have to be a lot of holistic, but I know that my students at least react very strongly when we talk about, you know, which of these are private decisions and which ones aren't, when they're thinking about the future of society and the next generation, even if right now they're not planning to have kids, you know?

And in my seminar last year, one of my students I think put it very well. She said, you know, we don't ask individuals to go out and pay separately for every piece of the highway that they think they're going to drive. And maybe as a society we should be investing in the people who are going to be building the roads to the future in the early preschool, in this sort of thing, that really benefits everybody, whether you're going to have kids or not, but which also, for those who do have kids and are in partnerships, takes a lot of the pressure off that partnership.

But I think everybody can understand that that sort of investment in the next generation is good for us all, not only positively in terms of creating healthy kids, but sort of negatively in terms of – they've done research that shows one dollar of investment in preschool saves you \$7 in terms of increased costs because of the reduction in crime, in teen pregnancy, the increase in the likelihood that these kids, all the way up into their 20s, will go to college and will hold down a job.

MR. KIMMEL: I think, with others on this panel, that the current administration gives us the opportunity for the first time to sort of dream bigger than we have in some time. I think it's – you know, it's an international scandal that we don't have paid parental leave, that we are lagging so far behind all of the other industrialized developed world on providing high-quality, well-paid child care for families.

And these are things that – again, men can and will be part of this conversation. And part of that conversation to develop these kinds of policies, to put these on legislative agendas, seems to me to appeal to them again as husbands, partners, fathers, sons, brothers. You know, in other words, to appeal to them in the ways in which they do interact daily with the other people in their lives.

We have this myth in our corporations that the ideal worker is the unencumbered worker, and yet we have made, consistently, a business case that the incumbent worker is actually more profitable for businesses.

So we need to continue to make those kinds of large-scale cases, but I think at the motivational level, appealing to men in the context of their relationships for these sorts of things is exactly the kind of motivational sort of – motivation that they need.

MS. COONTZ: Can I just say one thing, though, because I don't want this to turn into something that sounds like this administration – you know, there's something about Democrats that's more positive than Republicans.

I'm a historian. When I look back at the 1950s under President Eisenhower, they were investing in infrastructure to support our future at a rate three times higher than Democrats or Republicans, either of them, have invested since. So this doesn't have to be a partisan issue. It should be a social future issue.

MS. BRAVO: Well, let me ask one last question then we'll open it up for all of you to ask yours.

I asked about the sense of government having an obligation to make life better. What happens if we've got employers who have paid leave and paternity leave and the ability to ask for flex time or part time and we see that there is a sense that if you are serious – and, granted, we should be so lucky as to have those policies across the board for all workers in this country, but for those who have it, what we also see is a real concern about using it, that if you want to signal to your employer that you are really valued and that you are a comer and that you really are going to care about getting the job done, you do not bring up your child-care problems, male or female.

You try not to have to ask for some of these policies that are in place, and that you keep quiet all of the family responsibilities, whether they come from children or aging parents, because an employer really, regardless of what the policies are, that employer really doesn't want to hear it.

So do we have people –

MS. MARTIN: My generation has a reputation for being very entitled. We've all seen the stereotype. I think this is actually where this is going to come in handy. You know, I kind of – (laughter) – I joke that we're sort of like feminism's Franksteins, like you created us and now you don't know what to do with us because we're walking in and wanting, you know, negotiations and raises too early.

I mean, I think that this generation that I come from does have a lot of aspiration, a lot of ambition, and does feel entitled to pretty balanced lives in a way that's actually sort of pushing up against and challenging some older generation's concepts of what's an appropriate thing to ask for. So I actually think this is where our entitlement is going to come in handy.

MS. COONTZ: And we have to change the culture so that we think that there's something wrong with somebody who is so imbalanced in their life that they don't – you know, if we're right that there is a business case for this, then business should be encouraging people to speak up about their family needs.

MR. KIMMEL: I asked this question – I wrote an article about this a few years ago because at the time only 1 percent of companies offered paid parental leave to men, and in those companies, only 1 percent of men were taking it.

And so my brief at the time was, you know, why should we offer a benefit that nobody seems to want? So I went to those companies that did offer it and I asked men who had recently had children, what did you do? Did you ask for parental leave, et cetera? And here is what I heard:

I heard them say, you know, I knew that we had this policy and that when – you know, and I went to my colleagues and I said, you know, I'm going to take parental leave because, you know, our company offers it. And they said, I guess you're not really committed to your job, are you?

They went to their senior managers or their senior partners of their law firms and they said – and they heard things like, sure, you can take it. We'll put you on the daddy track. You'll never make partner but of course you can take it. So here's my – so what men learned from other men is you dare not do it. The policy may be there, the benefit may be there, but you dare not take it.

And the one conversation that we're yet to talk about here is the conversation between and among men about these issues. We focused naturally on the conversation between, you know, husbands and wives, partners, fathers and children, but we haven't talked about the conversation that needs to be happening among men, and that seems to me, within those organizational cultures, one of the things that holds men back.

MS. COONTZ: Here is the good news, though. Men feel now even more work/family stress than women do.

MR. KIMMEL: Yes.

MS. COONTZ: And that may sound like bad news but in fact it's exactly what is going to motivate them to ask for those entitlements.

(Laughter.)

MR. KIMMEL: Right.

MS. BRAVO: Okay, questions? We'll start over here.

Q: Hi. Carrie Pickett (sp), Washington Times. One thing I was surprised that wasn't mentioned was divorce, in particular, given that you're asking why men may not be very aware. We're talking about a financial commitment that many men are aware that's going into the idea of marriage, of if they get into a divorce, they look at themselves as the ones who are going to be the losers very often, if not just of their own money but of the kids more often than not. How does your book address this issue?

MS. COONTZ: Well, I could maybe just bring you up to speed on some of the new research about divorce. First of all, one thing that's very interesting is that divorce rates – most people don't recognize this – have been falling for the past 15 years. And they've fallen the most for educated couples and couples who have egalitarian views and share egalitarian views.

So that is a real good-news piece of information here. It's come to the point where it used to be that women with resources and high education who could make it on their own were the ones we expected were the ones most likely to get a divorce. It turns out that these are the ones best able to renegotiate relationships so that they don't have to get a divorce, and now they're more likely to be married at age 35 than their less-educated and less-affluent counterparts.

For men, though, I think what they really need to bear in mind is that, first of all, they're less likely to be divorced – as my mother's t-shirt used to read, "If Momma ain't happy, ain't nobody happy" – (laughter) – if they participate in an equal relationship. And if, in the sad chance that a divorce does occur, if they have participated from day one in child care, they're far less likely to be separated from their kids and to lose that kind of contact.

MR. KIMMEL: Right.

MS. COONTZ: So I think that's what we need to teach both women and men.

MS. BRAVO: Next question. Yes, the women behind – over there, yeah.

Q: Yeah, hi. I've enjoyed this. There is one thing that probably hasn't been stressed enough, although obliquely it was mentioned. That is the civic space. We've talked a lot about the interpersonal, the intrapersonal, the views of government, but with the stress on family time, on marital relationships.

One of the casualties is the space to engage in civic behavior with NGOs, with leadership. I'd like people to comment on that. We've all talked about bowling alone, and there has been some positive response to that with more interest in fomenting civic engagement, but that's a casualty in these time constraints and we need to strengthen that.

Having government be active is fine and important, but we need the grass roots, we need the energy, we need the ideas. How can we foster that? I mean, obviously flex time and leave is fine and good, but there needs to be more. What is that more?

MS. MARTIN: Well, I actually – here is another good news about my generation. It's the most civically engaged generation since our grandparents, right? So this is a group of young people who have always been, you know, volunteering and involved in community service and issue-oriented activism.

Q: But you're not married and you don't have families.

MS. MARTIN: Right, so I'm getting there. (Laughter.) So here the issue is, if we frame this as only a work-family issue or about being fathers or about being mothers, then we miss this whole other side of the equation, which is the fulfillment of being involved in your community, being an activist, being civic, as you said. So I think that's where we really need that new framing, but I think if women and men are working together in a more concerted way, we could get that framing.

And I think this is the perfect moment, also – again, this administration has talked so much about civic engagement and volunteerism and I just think it's really ripe for making that part of the bigger picture of this work/life balance issue.

MS. BRAVO: Great. Next question.

MS. MARTIN: The guy over here in the back.

MR. KIMMEL: Way in back.

MS. MARTIN: A young man.

MS. BRAVO: Okay, so there is a guy over there and I see some over here, but, Lisa, did you want to ask something, and then we'll – I think we can go to him next. Oh, okay. Lisa?

Q: Hi. Lisa Guide with the Rockefeller Family Fund. I just wanted to ask if you could talk a little bit more about how, in your minds, we get our elected officials to get energized and engage more in looking at these set of issues as public issues as well as personal issues.

MS. COONTZ: (Chuckles.) That's the \$64,000 question –

MR. KIMMEL: Yeah, really.

MS. MARTIN: Yeah.

MS. COONTZ: – as my generation used to say. One big problem is that politicians tend to need to be goosed. I mean, you can read polls that say that the vast majority of Americans want these changes, but the politicians can continue to ride and ignore what the vast majority want because there are just a few people who don't want them that are putting all the energy into fighting them.

So somehow this comes back to your question about civic engagement. How do we build the pressure that lets people know that it's not just an abstract, oh, this would sure be nice, but that we're outraged that we don't have these kinds of rights and the ability, by the way, to do our obligations? It's not a question of wanting government to do everything for us. We want government to open the way that we can do more for ourselves and for our community.

MR. KIMMEL: Right.

MS. COONTZ: It's a mutual thing. When people feel that they are being ignored, they feel less likely to give back to the community, and it works the other way around as well. So we have a lot of work to do.

MS. MARTIN: Also, in this moment of –

MS. COONTZ: We're counting on your generation.

MS. MARTIN: Uh-oh. Also in this moment of recession I think, you know, there is this real opportunity to talk about this as an economic security issue as opposed to an issue of values or – you know, that this is really about economic security in this country. It's about basic survival. It's not about, you know, I want to go on a fancy vacation.

So I think that that's another really good thing about this particular moment that this report is coming out and we can kind of all seize this opportunity.

MR. KIMMEL: We're re-launching the discussion that has happened many times with this publication to get a conversation going. I think that's part of the motivation.

MS. BRAVO: Okay, back in the – the guy that you were about to give the – okay, yes.

Q: My name is Adam Zimmerman (sp). I did the dishes last night. (Laughter.) I wanted to hit back against this notion that feminist language is too strong and that we need to find something a little bit softer to get more young men involved.

We wouldn't be in this room and there would be no Shriver Report because this one statistic that we keep talking about would not be reality if not for the strength of the feminist language that has worked. And it's only because we're in this room that this is all possible.

And so this whole notion of trying to find something softer for young men to get involved and to sort of wrap their teeth around the whole idea strikes me as a relic of the pre-feminist era where women were constantly walking on eggshells and trying to find ways to not offend men's sensibilities.

And to go on Professor Kimmel's turf for a minute, one of the most fundamental areas where we've seen strong language work in terms of getting men involved has been in issues of domestic violence where some of the most effective language on campuses, from Stony Brook and beyond, has been not something soft or easy to hear, but just real men don't rape. And that works and that gets men involved. And so I'd be interested to hear the panel's thoughts on why fix something that's not broken?

MS. MARTIN: I argue it is broken. You are like an anomaly. Every woman in this room just turned and was like, who is that man? (Laughter.) You know, if the feminist language is working – I say this as a self-identified feminist who writes for a feminist blog and absolutely feels indebted to the feminist movement – if it was working, then we would have more men like you standing up and talking about the fact that we're in this room because of feminism.

I think a statement like real men don't rape absolutely is exactly what I'm talking about, the kind of language that we need to grapple for with this work/life stuff. It's not necessarily softer, I don't mean to imply that, but it's something that can be owned and authored by men that comes from the culture that men are already, you know, living in.

Michael wrote an amazing book called "Guyland" that talks about this huge population of young men who are very, very afraid of feminist language.

MS. COONTZ: But also, I think, not so much softer but language that does insist that men have a stake in this. I think the one that you said is a very good formulation. If you look – for example, Barbara Risman did a study recently of North Carolina middle school kids, and they learned that the girls had really changed since '63.

They couldn't imagine that there was anything that used to be thought of as traditional for a man that they couldn't do. But the boys had come far less far and in some ways had slipped back because they could accept girls in a lot of other ways but they couldn't do girly things without being called "gay," without being teased mercilessly by other boys.

So guys have to take charge of that and make that a men's issue in exactly the way that you suggested rather than us women sitting on the sideline and saying, it's for our benefit that you need to change.

MR. KIMMEL: I would just point out that it seems to me that rather than watering it down or repackaging it in a nicer gift wrapping, there are many – what I think we're trying to

suggest is that there are many different entry points for men into the feminist conversation that has been going on in this country for the past 40 or 50 years.

And some of those will be to use, you know, stronger language around issues around rape or violence, as I've worked on in the past. Others will be much more personal, much more psychological, much more in terms of their relationships.

I don't think we want to sacrifice any of those discourses for any other one. I think that people have different entry points. There are different places along that continuum, and different languages will appeal to them depending on different issues.

MS. BRAVO: Okay, I think this is probably going to be our last question. Okay, this woman right there. Yeah, right there.

(Cross talk.)

Q: Not to put a plug in, but to put a plug in because it's very relevant, we have here an author, Julie Shields, who wrote the book called "Mommy Trap" (sic), and in this book she has a whole discussion on negotiating, just what you're talking about; how to speak with your husband or your partner in negotiating.

And it's very relevant because she talks about how, through negotiation and speaking the language that you both speak, how that helps you to be able to have your partner contribute more and feel a stake in it. So I thought that was a very interesting point that was made, and it can be done through negotiation.

MS. BRAVO: Okay, I think – unless – we're at our end point. Well, thank you to a fantastic panel, and I've got some new ways of thinking about this issue. I hope everybody else does as well, and I think this panel helped build on some of the important things that came earlier in the day and I know there's more to come. So thanks again.

MR. KIMMEL: Thank you.

(Applause.)

MS. BOUSHEY: Thank you all so much. You guys can – you guys can go if you like. You guys can get up but you all need to still sit here for a moment.

So I have a couple of announcements before we go on to lunch. First of all, lunch is being served out here in the hallway on your left. And after you get some lunch or before you get some lunch, we really want to encourage you to visit one of the interactive stations with other authors from the report, and so I want to tell you where each of those are.

Here at the front of the room in this room is going to be Kimberly Morgan and Sally Steenland, who are going to be talking about their chapter on faith and faith organizations. At

the back of this room by the glass doors we're going to have Mary Ann Mason, who is going to be talking about her chapter on education.

In the inner lobby, just right outside these glass doors, is going to be Jessica Arons, who is going to be talking about her work on health and health care. And then also out in the lobby is going to be Susan Douglas, who is going to talk about her chapter on media.

So I encourage you all to visit those. I think – are there going to be – is there a poll question? Ah, yeah. And so before – one last thing before you go. So our second poll question of the morning is agree or disagree: You are comfortable with women in households earning more money than men. So think about what you think our poll said on that and we'll see you at 1:20 after lunch.

(END)