



WOMEN IN THE WILDERNESS

Independent Women's Forum

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Charlotte Hayes | Director of Cultural Programs at the Independent Women's Forum

My name is Charlotte Hayes the director of cultural programs at the Independent Women's Forum. We thank you for coming out, specifically since the weather isn't good. This is an important evening, we are going to talk about something that has to be talked about, otherwise we are going to have a string of disasters from here until eternity. Now I was asked to introduce Christina Hoff Sommers and the good thing about introducing Christina Hoff Sommers is I'm introducing some one who needs no introduction. You all are here because of Christine, Mollie, and Veronique and Sabrina. Christina, as you know, there is no one in the world better in the world to address these issues. Christina is the author of book, "Who Stole Feminism?" we're trying to get it back. She is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, she is also the author of "The War Against Boys", it's coming out in a new edition with new material in it and I urge you to follow Christina on Twitter @CHSommers. So I'm not going to take anymore of this valuable thing. Christina.

Christina Hoff Sommers | Author and Resident Fellow at the American Enterprise Institute

Thank you, Charlotte. Good evening, I am Christina Hoff Sommers from the American Enterprise Institute. And welcome to our Women in Wilderness Summit. The question we are going to consider this evening is where do we go from here. As conservative and libertarian feminists, how do you better explain limited government, the virtues of limited government, economic liberty, and how these benefit women? How do we set a winning agenda for the next four years and beyond? Well I will say a few words about my views on this matter and then turn it over to our stellar panel. Now several years ago I read this list of writing tips a famed editor of the Washington Monthly gave to young writers. When you write he told them, always have a fair maiden; always have somebody the reader is routing for. Someone the reader wants to protect or vindicate. Now of course he didn't literally mean you had to write about a damsel in distress, but journalism is at it's best when journalism has an emotional investment in someone's wellbeing. Well here is the challenge to conservatives in a nutshell. which is that liberals excel at fair maiden narratives and we do not. Fair maidens or not, President Obama was perceived as protecting the poor, immigrants, the working class, most of all women. Liberals have literally embraced the fair maiden. A key theme of the campaign was

protecting her from the aggressive Republican war. If we want to see conservatives survive, we are going to have to change the storyline.

Now I drifted from being a liberal socialist professor to a conservative libertarian – I did so because I came to realize that conservatism and libertarianism – they were protective and compassionate and rationally philosophies. For me, expensive entitlement programs that are going to create crushing debt for our children and grandchildren, or government that burdens the private sector with so much regulation. The hazards that this poses to the economy – it's destructive and harmful policies. Superficially compassionate, but just the opposite. So I rejected much of liberalism because these insights, I especially rejected hard line feminism because of the same sorts of reasons. I came to see how to promoted policies that appeared to help women, but in fact do harm. Now conservative writers, when I say conservative, I mean conservative and libertarian, I'm going to continue to say both. Conservative writers, like Sabrina Schaeffer, Charlotte Hayes, Diana Roth, Kristina Rosen, Carrie Lukas, many, many others. They have focused on exposing the destructive side of feminism and they have done so brilliantly, they focused on the importance of limited government and economic liberty for women. But their message is not getting across. And why is that? And I see two reasons.

One is that we are vastly outnumbered when it comes to women's issues. It's a David and Goliath situation and we don't have a slingshot. Feminist scholars in the women's studies departments, there are thousands of them, as well as in law schools, women's lobbying groups; they have a near monopoly on women's issues. They write the textbooks, they fashion the theories, and they are the ones who teach the classes. When journalists and legislators, when address topics such as the wage gap, women in education, or women's health, they turn to these experts from enlightenment. But too often what they get is propaganda, grievance politics, dressed up as research and in the words of Kristin Rosen, deliberately misleading sisterly sophistries. Now the feminist scholars, they are academically weak, but politically adroit. They represent only a tiny coterie of radical women, but they effectively present themselves as the voice of American womanhood.

But there is a second vexing problem, not only that we are outnumbered, but also we have some problematic allies. Conservative leaders and funders, they don't take women issues seriously. They tend to treat women's groups as the ladies auxiliary and women's issues as kind of a distracting sideshow. Well today, women's issues are at the center of American politics, and by the way the left can turn every issue into a women's issue. And sometimes they are right to do so. Take something like Social Security; if you try to reform it, you are going to run into an army of gender lawyers, feminist critics will declare that this is part of the war on women. Well how is trying to reform Social Security part of the war on women? Well because, men on average, die earlier than women and more women depend on it. Well women aren't exactly victims here, the men are dead, but that doesn't stop the media from depicting them as victims of this situation, but never mind that, so yes, in a way, women do have a greater stake in preserving Social Security, But instead of being clueless about the issues, conservatives should try to make the case that trying to

save a program essential to women is important and that's what they are trying to do rather than liberals who are driving it into insolvency.

Well I'm not sure what's worse, conservatives ignoring women's issues or conservatives addressing them. I mean, is there anyone more tongue-tied than a Republican official trying to talk about women? During the election, Kimberly Strossel at the Wall Street Journal, she wrote the quote "To say that the Republican Party remains dominated by fossilized male dinosaurs who don't know how to talk about modern women well that would be mean, it would also be close to the truth." I would say it is the truth and here's what Karen Hughes former advisor to President Bush had to say, "If any Republican man has anything to say about rape other than it's a horrific violent crime, I want to cut out his tongue." She frustrated, miserable at the time. She went on. "The college-age daughters of many of my friends voted for Obama because they were completely turned off by the Neanderthal comments like the suggestion of legitimate rape." Well memo to conservative men: women's life circumstances are different from those of men in important respects. Women's concerns need to be addressed by leaders who recognize and respect these differences and one other thing; women are 53% of the electorate.

Now, to get out the wilderness, we are going to have to change the narrative. We need the stronger research base, we need a stronger women's conservative lobby. If I were a billionaire committed to preserving the American dream I would give 10 million dollars- 100 million dollars to the Independent Women's Forum to develop a women's research center and a legal foundation. And even if it were to happen, we would still be vastly outnumbered, but good scholarship would give us a powerful slingshot. Now we also need powerful messengers. I mean some more female legislators that would be good, and younger male legislators who know how to talk to modern women. Then, and only then, we will be in a position to take back the fair maiden. So this evening you are going to here from four distinguished women on our panel. This evening our speakers are Karlyn Bowman, public opinion polling analyst at the American Enterprise Institute, Veronique de Rugy is a senior fellow at the Mercatus Research Center and an expert in budget and taxation issues, Mollie Hemingway is editor at Ricochet.com and media critic at GetReligion.com, and finally Sabrina Schaeffer executive director of the Independent Women's Forum and author of the excellent book, Liberty is No War on Women. We will begin with Karlyn and they will speak in turn.

Karlyn Bowman | Senior Fellow and public opinion and polling analyst at the American Enterprise Institute

Good evening, I'm very pleased to be with you tonight and pleased to see this extraordinary turnout. IWF is back and we can thank Sabrina and the wonderful staff for that. Very excited about that. I've been at AEI for a very long time and this is a confession, I actually wrote one of the first pieces on the gender gap in 1982. So tonight, I'm going to stick to electoral politics and numbers and talk a little about what we learned in the 2000 election. I want to start with the GOP retreat in Williamsburg, A presentation that is being given right now titled "What Happened and Where We Are Now." I'm not entitled to what the pollsters might say in that

presentation, but I'm guessing they might be modestly optimistic about the future, modestly optimistic about 2014, mostly because 2012 was a wake up call to all of us to Republicans and conservatives because of a couple of factors. Let me just touch on a few of those. My first reason for modest optimism about 2014 is that electorates in off year elections are very different from electorates in presidential elections years. New voters and young voters who did so much to put Obama over the top just aren't as committed to the process and don't turn out in high numbers like they do in presidential elections years. Let me just give you some figures. In 2010, voters like many of us in this room, under 30, made up 11% of the vote. Two years early in Obama's first election, they made up 18% of all voters, that's a very big difference. In 2010, they backed Democrats by 16% percentage points. In 2008, they backed Obama by 32% percentage points. Extraordinary difference. Unmarried women, who Stan Greenberg calls the largest progressive voting block in the country, are also less reliable voters. Some key Democratic pollsters believe that their inability to turn out in big numbers spell Democratic defeat in 2010. Also looking ahead to 2014, especially in the Senate, the Democrats have far more seats at risk than do the Republicans. Twenty of the 2014 seats are held by Democrats and only 13 by Republicans. Most of the Republican seats are in the South and are pretty safe seats overall. Far more Republican governors will face the voters than Democrats, the numbers are 22 to 13, but I'm not worried either because this is where Republicans have been so successful in the recent past.

I think that's one area we need to be concerned about moving Republican and conservative women ahead. The second term for any president is very difficult. You have hostages in Algeria and all sorts of hostages that arise. This what we call in the 6th year of president, the 6 six year itch. Where people tire of an incumbent president, they are dissatisfied in general and a lot of incumbents are defeated. So there is some reason to be modestly optimistic about what we might see in 2014, but there are no shortcuts and we have certainly learned in 2012. We have an enormous number of challenges and they were evident and I'm going to talk about these there things – the vote totals in 2012, the demographics and finally, the voter attitudes the fabled sources of the gender gap. On Election Day, 55% of women voted for Obama and 44% voted for Romney, the men's vote was a mirror image and that of course is the familiar gender gap. But women turned out in significantly greater numbers than did men. Kristina mentioned that 53% of voters were women and 47% men. In 2012 slightly more than 129 million people voted, what that means is 8 million more women than men voted on election day.

If women are voting disproportionately for Democrats on the presidential level and casting their ballots in greater numbers, we have a very significant problem going forward. In every Senate and gubernatorial race which we have exit poll data from 2012 women were a larger part of the electorate than men. Sadly there was no exit poll data in the one Senate race where the GOP at a pick up in Deb Fischer's race in Nebraska. We have exit poll data that allows us to look at women and men, unmarried women and married women and I should say exit pollsters use the category not married when you check that box on the exit poll ballot, and that's problematic category because it includes women that have never been married, women that are separated and divorced and so it's very hard to break out that

category, but the biggest portion of that category is the unmarried, the group that the Democrats are counting on in the future.

In every election since 1982 when we had full exit poll data, women have been more Democratic than men. Even in the Republican sweep of 1994 and again in 2010, women have been more Democratic than men. In 1994 both men and women voted for GOP House candidates, but once again more men than women voted for them. In 2010 women voted narrowly for the Democratic candidate by 49 to 47 percent, but of course men for a much more significant percentage. In every one of these elections, women have been a larger share of the electorate. In every election since 1982, where we have data on the married and not married group, unmarried voters have been more Democratic than married voters. In every election since 1982 married and unmarried women have been more Democratic than their male counterparts. Again, a significant electoral hump to overcome. Even before we began to see substantial changes in the country's demography in 1990, 2000, and the 2010 censuses, gender differences were appearing in our elections. And what's interesting we haven't learned anything new about the gender gap since the early 90s and 1980s.

Women and men differ on the use of force, this includes questions about sending troops to Syria and it includes questions about gun control. In a new poll this morning by CNN, 44% of men, but 65% of women said they wanted stricter gun control laws. Gun control however, is not a top priority for the public. Women are more risk averse than men. Polls after the Fukushima nuclear disaster showed a huge gender divide on the use of nuclear power. CBS asked a question about whether you would like to ride on the space shuttle if given the opportunity, there is a gender chasm on that question. Women are also less confident about the country's economic future than are men. We can hold age constant, income constant, women in all groups are less confident. I'm going to spend some time looking. As to whether younger women, like many in this room, are better prepared in terms of education and moving into the workforce, will share that same greater pessimism about the economy.

Finally, women favor a stronger role for government than do men. This is true almost across the board and this is one of the things we are going to have confront. One of the things that has been consistent since the 1980s is women are less likely to be informed on the national issues, they pay less attention. They pay a lot more attention to issues of the state, particularly at the local, so again we have another challenge at the national level. On social issues we have an interesting pattern. On abortion, we are marking the 40th anniversary of Roe v. Wade, men and women have never differed in the polls, their attitudes are remarkably similar. But women are much more supportive of gay marriage than men and if you look at something like gay adoption, where we saw the attitudes move significantly before we saw the issues move on gay marriage, again women are much more supportive of gay adoption than are men.

The question for me is whether these differences are hardwired or if a new gender of women who expect to work and have families, who have gotten more education

than their male counterparts, are open to arguments that conservatives and the GOP are making. Now what can conservatives do going forward, I agree with the things that Christina suggested, but let me just add a few more as someone who watches the electoral process. First of all, we have to do a lot better at recruitment at the state legislative level because we need a farm team, we need people who can move up and that's extremely important. Patty Murray was chairman of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign committee and she announced very early that she would recruit female candidates to run in the Senate races in 2012 and she was very successful in that effort. We can never again allow the Democratic party, as happened to in Missouri, to be a part of the selection of conservatives, our candidates, so that's something we have to think about. I'd like to glue Cathy McMorris-Rodgers to John Boehner, I want her there everyday or someone like her everyday, because I think it's very important, optics matter.

I want us to develop binders full of women. I want to get women into DAS positions in government; I think that's extremely important at the lower level. I would suggest someone like Carly Fiorina who had just enormous contacts in the corporate and other world who can start providing farm team for DAS positions which many of you might want to take moving forward because we need women who will be able to move up. My AEI colleague and I, Jennifer Marsico, who is here tonight, have been working on a study looking at how women have voted in Senatorial and gubernatorial races since 1980. Surprisingly, no one has done this before and it's pretty depressing, but one of the things that Jennifer noticed in the research is the difference in the advertising in the Obama campaign and the Romney campaign did for women. For example, if you went to the Romney campaign's site, you would find all sorts of bumper strips and sorts of things "Moms for Mitt". But Obama had a completely different approach and was interested in reaching a younger demographic, it just didn't seem like Republicans were interested in that as the Democrats.

Another AEI colleague of ours, Henry Olson, made another point, that because of the changing demography of the electorate, the electorate was 90% white in 1972, it was 74% white in 1982, it will probably be about 74% white in 2012 just because of the changing electorate in 2014. But Henry Olson made the important point that we need to change some of our rhetoric to reflect reality. When conservatives appeal to Judeo-Christian values, they are cutting out a large swath of new voters, so we need to change the way we talk about these issues. And again, I'd like to focus on a lot more women in broadcasting more Laura Ingrahams, more Sabrinas, and more Laura Ingraham, less Rush Limbaugh. Kim Strossel could not have said to better and I'm delighted to note on the Republican's platform again tomorrow, she's on the panel to tell Republican's what to expect in the future. So I'll stop there and one final thing, the kind of generational change we are seeing in the polling community and electoral community, I'm very impressed by the work that has been done by the Reason Foundation in terms of public opinion about the electorate with significant generational change that I think is going to pay extraordinary dividends to come. So I think we have significant challenges, I think we'll have some short-term gains in 2014 and perhaps if we address these challenges some significant long term gains.

Veronique de Rugy | Senior Research Fellow at Mercatus Center and expert on taxation and budget issues

Well thank you for coming. It's a pleasure to be here. I think the title of this event is a good one. I think being in the wilderness is how it feels, being a libertarian, conservative, someone who actually believes in freedom. And those who know me, my pursuit of shrinking the size of government, I focus on the economics and I focus on the social issues, but it's more than an academic pursuit, I moved here 13 years I never imagined I would end up back in France, minus the stinky cheese and wine. That being said, I will say that I am very unconvinced that the path forward for freedom lovers is Republicans, I am absolutely not convinced it's Democrats either. I think they have both failed us and I think this is the good news, if you love freedom; we haven't lost on the ballot, because freedom wasn't on the ballot. We had the choice, I mean minus Gary Johnson, but he wasn't even represented in every state, we had the choice between big government and bigger government and which one won, it's not really clear, maybe bigger government or big government, it depends on how you look at it. So I think that's the good news, I think we haven't lost the battle for freedom.

To fight, we still have to hold these guys' feet to the fire and I really truly, truly believe we can do it, but we have to be really tough on them and be willing to say that the political alliance that we believe so deeply in economic freedom. If you think your allies are the Republicans, you have to be more than willing to connect and then again, it's tough because your alternative isn't great for freedom either. That's the good news that freedom wasn't on the ballot, because that means it could be in the future. The bad news is that things are not really looking up, if you are looking at just coming out of the fiscal cliff deal, taxes are going up on top income earners. While there is a vibrant academic debate that concludes that increasing top marginal rates on top income earners doesn't matter because the rest won't budge.

There is a lot of evidence that this fiscal deal has brought onto us that the ability of young people in the future to become wealthy is actually highly diminished. Higher marginal rates today on current rich people, that it changes the decisions, the educational decisions that tomorrow's young people are going to make and as such we're all losing. Another thing coming out of this fiscal cliff, you have to estimate, for women, the previous tax, marriage penalty, missed it in the tax code. If you are a woman, and you file jointly and you make much less than your husband does, and for the top earners, if you make over 70%, then you taxed at the rate your husband is taxed. Well that's been made worse with the fiscal cliff deal; this is bad news. On the spending side, things are not looking up; we are at a very high level of spending. This is a very little known fact, we are spending less in 2012 than we are in 2011 and frankly because we have been complaining about there hasn't been a budget passed, but that's been good news in some ways.

But on the other hand, spending has been so high, a little tiny incremental reduction are now where they need to be. Debt as a share of GDP is over 100%. And this is a way to understand our spending problem and in fact this is the why I think we got downgraded in 2011. Looking forward to looks really grim, when you see

something, when you measure it this way. Why does it matter? We know that spending is the disease and debt is only the symptom of this. Because there is a point where debt becomes the problem and there has been research that debt can become so big, that the economy of a country starts collapsing. How much? Oh average, when debt reaches 90% of GDP then the economy shrinks by 10%. It seems like a lot, but in fairness, we have reached this point. This is the battle, the battle is right now, when you actually want to explain to people why we need to reduce spending, and this is something women should be extremely concerned about. Seventy percent of Social Security recipients are women and the left may say see look, this is how the government is helping women, but the reserve is true. Of course there is some great things they could have done had they not been taxed on this money and forced to put it in this crappy, crappy investment. But also once the trust fund dries out, dramatically benefits are cut 25%, so it means if women are the ones benefitting now, they are the ones that would benefit the most from reforming the system.

Now, the good news, that while politics sucks, government is big, regulations are awful, and we still have this horrible tax code that as women gives us incentives to work or not work, gives us disincentives to pursue a career and raise our children, but when you look outside the realm of politics things are actually stunningly good for women. Especially compared to other countries. Compared to France, American women are very liberated. I mean, French men were very reluctant to give the vote to women. There is really nothing we cannot do today. I mean, 40% of privately held businesses are held by women. I mean, who ever think, in very rare cases, that I am a woman. I think when you look outside of everything outside of the realm of politics and government; things are looking up for us. This is the message we have to say. When left to our own device, things are looking good for women. There is less discrimination, there are a lot of opportunities, there are a lot of opportunities for money to be made and it when the government comes in, things get really dicey. And that's the fight we need to have. That's it.

Mollie Hemingway | Editor at Ricochet.com and media critic at GetReligion.org

Great, well I'm going to agree in part and disagree in part of what Veronique has said. I think it's really important to remember as we are doing all of this soul searching and agonizing, that the ideas that we care about, liberty and freedom were not really well represented this year. I want to remind you that in 2010, which was one of the best years for the liberty movement, Mitt Romney, the big issue that everyone cared about was Obamacare and there was this huge outpouring at the polls and a big, big win for candidate that opposed that issue. And in 2012, the Republican party in all its wisdom ran a candidate that called himself the godfather of this plan. So when we are talking about the ideas of liberty and freedom and government failing, we should remember, again, as Veronique says, it's not something that's shared often or altogether that frequently by the Republican Party. We need to keep this in mind, particularly when we hear this really depressing numbers about the gender gap. It sounds horrific, and in many ways it is, it's also true that you don't need to win every single vote in that gap to have electoral success, so

when you look at that huge chasm, those votes you don't have to overcome. You don't have to win all of them. You do need to win some of them. I think it was Karlyn that shared on the Barack Obama's website, if you wanted to show your affinity for the candidate, you could get a plethora of different things. You could get handbags, you could get funny, witty T-Shirts. And all these people on the other side were making fun of the very specific, funny things that were being offered. And on Mitt Rome's website there were a total of three offerings for women, two of them were focused on mothers, so if you were a single woman you had all of one 'I'm a Lady for Mitt' t-shirt you could buy and there was an apron and a "mom's drive the economy" bumper sticker. Not simply being so hostile to women who want to be a supporter of a given candidate might go a long way. So it's not necessarily the end of the world, although it might be too. What I might be more interested in too, you know I'm not a big Republican Party person, but I care a great deal about ideas of liberty, about limiting the size and scope of government, about market solutions to the problems that face us.

I think that in the last year one of the most interesting books that have come out is Jonathan Haidt's "The Righteous Mind". It sort of went over really well with conservatives, but not so well with liberals. He was kind of writing it as a wake up call for liberals that they needed to do a better job understanding of the conservative moral universe. And he was saying much to your surprise, conservatives have those complex moral approach to all of these issues and what he really showed is that everybody is guided by a morality and it really helps to understand what other people's morality is. And so everyone in this room is probably caring about a lot of these similar issues, we are worried about threats to our freedom, we are worried about how increasing of government makes the things we care about less possible and we are already here in this room. But we know we want to reach out those people who don't share those values at all. He puts it in terms of morality binds you or us are interlopers and that's totally cool too, don't worry about it.

But also morality blinds, it blinds us to the perspective of other people, and so I think it is so right to trash all of the elements that are doing a bad job, it's also good to look internally at what we can do better. We have friends, we might be writers, and we might communicator of some kind. We need you understand the motivation of other people and humble ourselves enough to try and learn from it as well. If people are not naturally attracted to the ideas of freedom, they might be attracted to ideas of fighting oppression, or compassion, or equality of outcome. You can say some of those values are stupid or that if you really cared about that you would be on my team, but really humble ourselves into understanding where they are coming from and learning the value of that moral universe and learning how to communicate in a way that is more amenable to those people. And I think that, one of the other figures I learned from Karlyn is that 81% of people who said they cared about compassion voted for Barack Obama versus 18% who voted for Mitt Romney.

People who cared about do you have a plan for leading the country, Mitt Romney won, all these basic competence issues, Romney won. But if you care about the country, that was a chasm, 81% to 18%. No would you say, you care about freedom

because you want to hurt people, I would hope not, but if you do kindly just depart downstairs. But we rarely talk about it and we frequently find ourselves on the defensive. When people talk about it we want to do this big new government program and our response is, no we don't and there is rarely any competing vision put forward. And it's sort of going to be the natural state of things, because the people we aren't seeking government solutions are always going to be the ones saying no all the time. But I think it is also important to put out an alternative solution, People who believe in limited government, believe in limited government because they believe there is a much better model for serving the community and that is the hard message I wanted to share. I believe there can be many gains made in the short term simply by not being stupid and making different ways to improve the messaging.

But the actual difficulty is that there is a huge issue in the culture, the gender gap is 18 points, but the marriage gap is 41 points. As you know, no one is getting married any more these days, that's something our grandparents did, I guess. But there is a 41-point gap and it's going to get bigger. In the 2020 census, Karlyn was saying, 47 percent of women will not be married. Now there is sort of a different vision, a non-big government vision that people's needs can be met at the individual level through family formation and in the community at local houses of worship, local community organizations. These are the most flexible and agile, they can respond to the needs of the local community, they really are compared to the large impersonal federal government that doesn't know how to run a program effectively if its life depended on it. And the alternative vision that we have is when you have less government, you have stronger institutions. And I think people who don't have the same views on freedom and liberty have been really effective in running rough shod over those institutions whether it's academia, the family, throughout this country's entire history there has always been an assault on religious freedom – it's been kind of stepped up in recent years – and it's one of those things where if you want to create an alternate vision, one where people's needs are taken care of, where there is security – and comes back to that question of women not wanting to fly on the space shuttle what are they thinking. Security, being a big issue, compassion being a big issue, we need to present an alternate vision of what that would look like versus a big government solution for all of those things.

Sabrina Schaeffer | Executive Director, Independent Women's Forum & Co-author of "Liberty is No War on Women"

I just wanted to take a quick moment to thank all of the staff who put this event together. I sauntered in at 4:30 and everything was done. Emily, Hadley, Victoria, Charlotte, Whitney, and Rebecca, our newest member, and for this fantastic turnout tonight. What would be without these events and attention, it makes it much easier to do my job. As everyone around this table has said if we have learned anything from November's election results, it's that the liberty movement and by extension, Republicans, have no idea how to talk to women. So in an attempt to be constructive tonight, I am offering a modest four point plan as to how to bring women out of the

wilderness. Although, I can understand how Veronique feels lost in the wilderness, it can be either way.

Step 1: If you've got it, flaunt it. I am deeply turned off by the idea you should elect a someone just because of their gender and we have had a lot of celebrations lately over the number of women in the Senate. We have 16 are of course Democrats and inevitably vote for higher taxes and bigger government. Still, I think it is time to acknowledge that the Republican Party is not simply a party of old, white men. Republicans have a slate of talented, strong women who are physicians, accountants, business owners, mothers and they are poised to communicate the message of economic liberty, of personal freedom, and the importance of civic institutions and we need to rely on them. Electing Cathy McMorris Rodgers to the chairman of the House Republican Conference was a step in the right direction and I am thrilled to see her there. As Christina mentioned before, we need to see her everyday. We also lost a lot of Republican lawmakers this election IWF's 2012 Woman of Valor, Mary Bono Mack lost her seat, Nan Hayworth of New York lost her seat. And the bottom line is Republicans can't afford to lose any more women. We need women who can explain how progressive policies are bad for women and families and explain how liberty is not war on women. We know need to change the face of Republican, libertarian, and conservative politics.

Step 2 is talking to women, especially single women. Christina mentioned that conservative funders and lawmakers don't take women's issues seriously. And I couldn't agree more. I sometimes go into donor meetings and I see donor's eyes glazing over like why would I care, about women. And I'm thinking, well you are married, you have a daughter, a sister, and an aunt, apparently we live in a vacuum. Women's issues are at the center of everything right now. I just want to add my two cents. Conservatives tend to shy away from playing gender politics. I think this is a good, admirable thing. But in there effort not to pander to women, they seem to have forgotten that women exist at all and the fact is we make up 53% of the voting electorate. So the Obama campaign targeted women and ran what I thought was a completely dishonest campaign about reproductive issues. They ran slogans like "Vote your lady parts" which the media completely ignored, while binders full of women was considered the downfall of Western civilization and the Julia infographic worked and Republicans were seen as harming women in every aspect of life from education to the workplace to entitlements. Sadly, as everyone on the campaign has recognized, Republicans did not have a response, they were always fumbling, he never felt prepared. But recognizing that ganders may have a different way of looking at things is not pandering it's simply understanding some basic rules of communication.

We do need a competing vision. And when we have this unilateral disarmament and actually engage with a part of the public, we can't win. And I'm not actually a party person, I see them as a lesser of two evils, when they actually engage with women we have a problem and we are not going to be able to overcome that. Let me give an example, Obama was able to frame the major issue this election as birth control. If I saw one issue as a woman's issue this year, it was energy policy. Women are the leading consumers of everything, from groceries to electronics, to cars. Moms like

myself, I have three small children, we do the laundry, we pay the bills, we shuttle our children around to and from school. These are all activities that put in the sharp relief the cost of energy. And meanwhile, Mr. Obama was talking about investing more in green energy and he was talking about bankrupting the coal industry, and I was thinking what this meant for my energy bill. But we never once saw Governor Romney address this issue and how it would affect women and families. So there are women in this family who know more about energy policy than I, but this is a key issue for women and Republicans ignored it completely. And I think political science research has show over and over, if you introduce a new message into the conversation, it can change opinion. If you just have this one flow of information, you are going to lose. I think we need to start by actually speaking to women.

Step 3 is don't plan on their field and this is where I'm going to put on the political behavior hat where I was before IWF. Don't plan on their field is lesson that we learned from research we connection on the paycheck gender gap we conducted last June. I'm going to talk about that in a minute. Christina mentioned that conservative women are vastly outnumbered by liberal women's voices in academia and the media. I would say we are not only outnumbered, but also out researched and outspent that I can't even get into it in a forum like this. One of the reason's women's groups on the left are so far ahead of women's groups on the right is that the have been running controlled experiments and get out the vote experiments for years. Groups like Emily's List and Women's Voices, Women's Vote were talking about unmarried women, have figured out exactly hoe to speak to women and how to get those unmarried women to the polls and we are literally a decade behind. Making a tiny effort to catch up, IWF commissioned our own experiment to test messaging on the Paycheck Fairness Act. Those are own your chairs, sorry for those in the back. Respondents were randomly assigned to one of five conditions, in an experiment conditions, four treatments and one control.

Three groups received the progressive message in favor of the Paycheck Fairness Act, it was adapted from the Debby Wasserman-Schultz from an article. And three groups received the IWF message about the PFA, about the economic ramifications, about choices, about how the wage gap doesn't exist. And what we found if 74% of women agree that workplace discrimination is a serious problem. So our side tends to get bogged down discussing if discrimination even exists and this is not a good way to start off on the right foot. We have to realize that even though discrimination exists, that doesn't necessarily translate into people supporting legislation like the Paycheck Fairness Act. And this what I found so fascinating, is when respondents were exposed to both the progressive message in favor of the Paycheck Fairness Act and IWF's message highlighting the economic ramifications of this guide of legislation, respondents dropped support precipitously. In fact, strong support for the bill dropped 35% points to a mere 10%. So when people heard that economic argument, suddenly, they were awakened. But we also had a message that was intended to debunk the wage gap and we learned that was completely ineffective in actually changing people's opinion on the Paycheck Fairness Act. So the bottom line is if we try to Out-Dem the Democrats, if we try to merely try to present a counter argument on their playing field. If we so "oh discrimination is really the problem, it's all choices" and for the record, I use that argument all the time and I'm trying to stop

myself because it's not effective. So I think we need to take a new tact when talking about a lot of the issues. I don't think we need to concede our principles; we do need to embrace the notion that society isn't going to see things our way.

And my final step or solution for our future is it's not fair. And Mollie has touched on this, fairness is a critical lens through which people judge public policy and candidates and part of this research project was to judge how women view fairness. And what we found out, more important than what importance women put on fairness is how they define fairness, equality of outcomes or equality of opportunity. This determines their support for particular policy questions. So if you are evaluating support for the Paycheck Fairness Act, we found that the greater moral weight a woman place on equal outcomes, the more likely she was to support the Paycheck Fairness Act. The more likely than any other factor, than any other demographic, or political party ID, the perception of fairness was the best guide to her support or opposition to this piece of legislation. So the reality is conservatives need to begin by changing women's perception of fairness and compassion, I would lump that together, as it relates to public policy. Because is it compassionate to let Social Security fall of it's own weight? Because is it compassionate to have Washington determining what kind of healthcare you receive? We need to do a better job in explaining how free market policies are in fact fair and compassionate. The only warning its that this worked for progressives but I can't guarantee this will work for conservatives, there needs to be more research, but for the person writing the \$10 million check, we'll get it done.



Independent Women's Forum is a non-partisan, 501(c)(3) research and educational institution dedicated to expanding the conservative coalition, both by increasing the number of women who understand and value the benefits of limited government, personal liberty, and free markets, and by countering those who seek to ever expand government in the name of protecting women.