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FAMILY INSTABILITY ACROSS GENERATIONS

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**Discussion:**

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## P R O C E E D I N G S

MR. REEVES: Good morning, everybody. Thank you very much for coming. Welcome to those of you in the room, and also welcome to those who are watching by webcast. And then we have a few hundred people who've signed up to watch us live, so you are just as welcome out there, as you are here. Or, perhaps I should say just as welcome, because you've made the effort to physically come here. So, 85 percent as welcome on the screen, as those who've come here.

My name is Richard Reeves. I'm a Senior Fellow here in Economic Studies, and I'm Co-Director of the Center on Children and Families. And I'm delighted just to kick off this event, which is based around the findings of the American Family Survey, it's in its second year. The survey is a joint project of the Deseret News, and Brigham Young University. I'm privileged to be one of the advisors to the project, and I've had a small role in helping to frame the questions, but no role at all in the analysis itself, or the interpretation over the survey.

I am going to invite the introducer to come up to the stage in just a moment. But just so that those of you are watching online as well in the room know what's going to happen. I'm going to step down in a moment. Paul Edwards who is the Editor of Deseret News is going to come up and introduce the main speakers who will present the headline findings of the survey. After that we'll have a panel discussion, and I'll be inviting Diane Whitmore Schanzenbach and Brad Wilcox to join us for that discussion, which will involve Q&A, and also some questions from the audience, both in the room and on line.

The only thing I'll say in light of last night's debate, is to ask all those who are participating whether online or in the room, is if we could avoid describing each others as liars, or as nasty, because it's not as anyone here is running to be President of the United States.

And so with that, I'll hand over to Paul, who is going to introduce our

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main speakers. Paul?

MR. EDWARDS: Thank you very much, Richard. It's a real honor to partner once again with the Brookings Institution. The Deseret News in Salt Lake City is not only a timely trusted source for news and commentary from the Mountain West, but we also over the past several years have tried to be a strong voice nationally, on a few core issues, where we think that we can provide specific context perspective analysis, around issues that matter to America's families.

Several years ago as we were launching into creating a stronger enterprise content for the Deseret News, in our National Context, what we call work in-depth work at Deseret News, we recognize that the work that we were doing on the family was largely reliant on the quantitative work done by terrific organizations around the country, but it wasn't always what met our questions. And so the Editor of our Enterprise Section, Allison Pond, who is right in the front today; Allison, former Survey Researcher at the Pew Research Center, recommended that we come up with our own survey to help us provide the kind of quantitative work that would help us answer our questions, not the questions of other research organizations.

So, Allison, partnered with Jeremy Pope, and with Chris Karpowitz, Co-Directors of the Center for Elections and Democracy at Brigham Young University. And Professors Pope and Karpowitz were very kind to help us start to put together this survey which is now in its second year. And the survey is just released today, and it's available online and we'll be able to provide you with that URL here as we finish up.

But in addition to the kinds of findings that we'll be talking about today, there will be several articles that will appear in the Deseret News, starting today rolling out throughout the week, by Lois Collins who is an Award-Winning Family Journalist who has been frequently recognized by the Council on Contemporary Families as one of the leading family journalists in the country.

So, we are very excited to start to share these results which will inform

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our journalism throughout the year on these issues, but as we get started here, I also just want to note our thanks to an Advisory Panel that's helped us to craft this. Karlyn Bowman, who is seated here from American Enterprise Institute, has helped us; as has Sara McLanahan at Princeton University. We are glad to have Brad Wilcox with us, who will be talking -- There is Brad, over there. He also was on the Advisory Panel, and of course the inimitable, Richard Reeves has been an advisor to this.

And as Richard noted, the Advisory Panel has not been involved in the interpretation, but they have been a great guide as we put this together. So, as we get started here, I'd like to invite Chris Karpowitz, Associate Professor of Political Science at Brigham Young University, a real expert on issues of deliberation.

And Jeremy Pope, who has written extensively about issues of polarization and issues about the American Founding, to come forward and share the top line results from the Second Annual American Family Survey. And we hope that this will be an authoritative resource for all who see the family as a vitally important institution for the health and wellbeing of America's children. So, again, thank you for being able to partner with Brookings today. (Applause)

MR. KARPOWITZ: Thanks, Paul. Let's see. I'm bringing up our presentation. Here we go. All right. My name is Chris Karpowitz, and as Paul indicates, I'm one of the Co-Directors of the Center for the Study of Elections and Democracy. It's really a privilege to be here today to talk about the American Family Survey. And the survey, if I can get it to -- our slides to advance here -- Maybe, maybe not -- There we go, got it.

The survey is a national sample of about 3,000 respondents, it's conducted by YouGov, and so this is an online sample that's been matched back to the censuses, American Community Survey, so it's intended to mirror -- the sample is intended to mirror the U.S. population. Our aim here, with the American Family Survey, is to understand two things, both the lived experiences of ordinary Americans in their

relationship and family lives, and also their attitudes about relationships and families more broadly.

So, how do they see the health of American marriages, or families in the United States today? About half of the sample is married, more older than younger people, married, a few more conservative than liberals, married, liberals tend to be a little -- slightly more likely to be cohabiting relationships, and about a third of the sample is no relationship at all. Almost two-thirds of the samples have at least one child, and the average number of children in the sample is just under 2. So, those are some -- just basic facts about the relationship status of people in the sample.

And today we want to do sort of two things, one is to talk about marriages and families, generally, and what has changed and what seems to be stable across generations, especially. And then we are going to turn to issues of policy and politics, and talk a little bit about the relationship between families in relationships, and politics.

So, one of the things that we noticed right off the bat is a change in relationship in the United States between marriage and parenting. When we look across the age cohorts in our sample, we find that 91 percent of respondents over the age of 65 were married when they had their first child, when they first became a parent. And still majorities of those over 30 were married when they first became a parent. But among those under the age of 30, that number drops to 30 percent.

Now, a majority of those Americans under 30 were -- say they were in a committed relationship when they had their first child, but not married. And so we see this very important generational difference emerging, and I don't think we have the data yet, we need more years of the American Family Survey to truly understand the import of that change. But it is a marked change.

And as we are thinking about that change, one of the things we were interested in was people's experiences as children, so we asked them to tell us about

their parents' relationship status. And we hear our contrasting, people whose mothers were continually married to the same person throughout their childhood, with those whose mothers were not continually married. And we find that that experience as a child is correlated with their experience with relationships as adults.

So, those whose mothers were continuously married are more likely to be married today. They are less likely to say that their relationship is in trouble today, and they are significantly less likely to say that they've experienced a severe economic challenge or crisis in the past 12 months. Jeremy is going to talk a little bit more about that particular measure. But we see this correlation, at least, between childhood family stability, and the economic and relationship stability of people as adults.

We were also -- As we were exploring this, interested in thinking about, well, what is the experience of people as adults with their own children, and with their relationship, their parenting relationships and their partners? And so we asked a variety of questions about the extent to which individuals feel supported by their partners in the task of raising children. And one of the things we find is that cohabiting couples, respondents who are part of the part of the cohabiting couple, feel significantly less support from their partners, in their parenting efforts

And so one of the things that I think bears watching as we move from a situation which most people are having children in marriage, to a situation in which many people are having children outside of a formal marriage is how that's affecting the parenting efforts and the support that partners feel from each other in those parenting efforts.

As I said one of the -- So we are interested in lived experiences, but we are also interested in attitudes about marriage and family, and we find that, in general, many people are quite supportive of the idea of marriage. So, a few Americans, either liberal or conservative think marriage is more of a burden than a benefit. Both liberals and conservatives, majorities of both, although more conservatives than liberals think that

marriage makes families and kids better off financially.

Nothing close to a majority of either liberals or conservatives think that marriage is old-fashioned and out of date, but we do see differences in the extent to which people feel that legal marriage is more important than a sense of personal commitment to one's partner. And so when we look at that, those are -- there are some ideological differences but there are also some age cohort differences, where younger Americans and more liberal Americans, but even the majority of young conservatives believe that personal commitment to one's partner is more important than the legal fact of whether or not one is married to one's partner. So I think that generational difference also bears watching.

When we ask people to think about their own marriages, we find that people feel pretty positively, both in 2015 and in 2016. People generally say their marriages are either getting stronger or are about the same as they were previously in the past year or two years. Very few people say their marriages or relationships are getting weaker.

But when we ask people to think about marriage as the institution of marriage, or the health of marriage in the United States, people have a great deal of concern. And interestingly enough, conservatives are much more concerned than liberals about this, although everyone expresses some concern. The most optimistic group about the future and health of marriage are young, more liberal Americans, which is interesting.

Then, finally, we are interested in how people actually live their lives. So we do see these differences between liberals and conservatives, in attitudes about marriage. A different sense of the social meaning of marriage, and the social importance of marriage, in some respects at least, between liberals and conservatives, but when we ask them about their family -- the specifics of their family lives, how often they eat dinner together, how often they do chores together, we find very few differences between

liberals and conservatives.

So, though liberals and conservatives differ in their attitudes about the social meaning of marriage their lived experience with marriage and relationships and family life is very similar. The one which they are different is their worship practices, where conservatives are much more likely to make worship a regular part of their family life.

When we ask them about their parenting practices and the rules that they set for their children, we find almost no differences, so liberals and conservatives, younger Americans and older Americans seem to be parenting and living family life in similar ways even as they see the meaning of marriage and family in social terms in somewhat different ways.

And with that, I'll turn to Jeremy to talk about public policy.

MR. POPE: I want to talk about challenges that the families face, and then how they want to deal with those challenges on a public policy level. This is a slide that lists what people said were the most important issues facing marriages and families, and we divided them, I should say they didn't see this in the survey, we didn't tell them this is an economic issue, this is a cultural issue. We divided them into issues of economics, culture, and family structure instability.

And by and large things don't change between 2015 and 2016, but you will notice there is one interesting difference that economics has gotten more salient for people, at least with respect to marriages and families. Culture maybe has attenuated a little bit, but the thing that faces -- the issue that faces most families today say will be important, tends to be economics, but of course with one exception that I want to point out now for Richard, which is the thing that comes up the most is parents not teaching or disciplining their children sufficiently.

I don't think very many of these people were running for president but they are willing to criticize one another in their parenting practices. They may have



violated your rule, but they didn't know about your rule, so let's excuse them. One of the things that we wanted to measure on this survey, was whether or not people that experienced a particularly kind of economic crisis. And so we take this set of things that we thought would capture some of them, and then we asked them, did you experience this crisis in the last year?

Things like not paying the full amount of a bill, or needing financial aid from friends, not going to the doctor, and so on and so forth, you can read the full list there. As you can see, most people don't experience each of these crises, and if you just looked at the right-hand column there where most people see them, they say no, they haven't had most of these things happen to them. But let me point out the people who say none of the above, in other words, the people who haven't experienced any of these, it's only 62 percent, that means about 4 in 10 Americans have had one of these things occur to them. That's a substantial number, and the consistent finding throughout this survey is that having an economic crisis is related to a lot of interesting things.

Having that experience matters a great deal. It is connected to family structure. As you can see in this slide, people that are cohabiting or in a relationship are more likely to have experienced an economic crisis, as opposed to people who are married or single, they tend not to have experienced this. And we did just want to point out along the way, single mothers tend to have experienced these crises more, but this particular table on your right, there, breaks it just by income.

So mothers that were making less than \$30,000 a year, the percentage of those who were single mothers was, you know, 63 percent, as opposed to only 29 and 10 in those higher categories. So, there is family structure -- the family structure is related to economic distress.

Now, Chris also mentioned, and we want to talk a bit about public policy, one of the things we did, we asked people, how much support do you have for these programs, and how do you think that they help families? The three programs there, and

it's in pretty small font, but maybe we should have made it bigger; food stamps, housing assistants and Medicaid and insurance. Now I've divided it so that the red bars are for people who have experience in economic crisis, and the soothing sea-green bars are for people who have not experienced an economic crisis.

But the darker bar in each shade, are people who have benefited from the program. And again it highlights the importance of experience. People who have actually benefitted from food stamps, or have benefited from housing assistance, they rate these programs significantly higher. I will point out that everyone tends to think these programs benefit families. It's not that -- Well, not everyone, but on average, people do. It's not the case that people are negative about these programs, but you need to have had the experience of benefitting from these programs.

Two more programs that we've looked at that are slightly different, but the earned income tax credit, and minimum wage. And here we found, substantially, more support for minimum wage -- sorry, for the earned income tax credit than for minimum wage. Although that's something we want to look at in future data, we want to see: Are people dissatisfied with the minimum wage because it's too low or too high? That's something that, you know, we are going to have to focus on in future research.

Again, though, having benefitted from the program, is very, very important for structuring people's attitudes. One of the other variables we looked at was how reliant upon yourself you are. And it turns out that people in the lowest income category, are the people who tend to rely mostly on themselves. They don't tend to reach out to churches, they don't tend to reach out to community organizations, or have as much help from their neighbors, or their community, instead they are slightly more likely, somewhat more likely to rely only on themselves.

We also, and there's a lot in the report that we aren't able to cover today, and so we are trying to go quickly, we look carefully at family leave. And family leave tends to be quite popular although there's a bit less certainty about how it should be paid

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for. You can see in this graph though that that is broken out by ideology, so if you are a liberal in the blue bars, you definitely want family leave and you want it to be paid for by the government or by the corporation that you work for.

Whereas, fewer people, who are conservative, feel that strongly about that. And there's a fairly substantial amount of conservatives who don't think the annual leave is terribly important. But it tends to be a pretty popular program, for helping people out.

We are political scientists, so we want to hit the election just a little bit. There are some interesting differences in some places where there are differences between Clinton and Trump voters. I should say, this survey was done a number of months ago, so this is not a flash pole from last night's debate. But it does give you a sense of how, there were some differences in the bases of support.

Unsurprisingly Hillary Clinton does better in this poll. She does better with essentially most of the different family structure groups you can see, she does better with those who are living with a partner or in a relationship.

Trump essentially ties her with people that are married, or people who have children. And this is something we've seen consistently in our research, that these characteristics tend to be associated with conservatism. I couldn't say that they are causal, but it's important to understand that being married and having kids changes the way that you approach these things.

Now, one of the other variables we looked at, was how authoritarian you are, and there's been a lot political science interest in this. It's a battery of questions which you can read about in the survey, which talk about how your parenting practices, how authoritarian you want to be as a parent. And it turns out that there is a pretty big difference there. The least authoritarian people definitely prefer Hillary Clinton, and the more authoritarian people strongly prefer Donald Trump. There is also a point about economic crisis again, people who have experience in economic crisis, definitely tend to

prefer Hillary Clinton.

And as Chris already mention --I'm going to skip that social connections point -- People who are worried about marriages, generally tend to support Donald Trump.

Let me show you one more political graph. This is the percentage of Trump voters minus the percentage of Clinton voters, and so having a higher score on this graph means that you tended to prefer Trump. And it's broken out by gender, and by whether you experience a crisis or no crisis. As you can see there is a fairly strong impact of being a male who has experienced no crisis. This is the group who likes Donald Trump. And the group who is less enamored with Donald Trump and his set of policies are men who have experienced and economic crisis, and essentially all women who were not terribly influenced by that particular variable.

Now, I need to say a work to conclude, about some big-picture lessons. Chris and I come from a discipline, political science, that in our judgment doesn't quite take family seriously enough for politics and policy in some respects. And so that's part of why we are interested in doing this. One of the things that we've learned and maybe it should have been obvious to us beforehand is the importance of experience. What you experience in life matters a great deal. In our own discipline we are obsessed these days with causal effects and experiments and A/B tests and what you can do to prove that some sort of policy or program has an effect.

I don't want to sound negative about those things, I think it's very good and it's useful that political scientists care about this. But I will say that there a lot of context variables, and we can't manipulate, we can't go and change whether or not you live with your mother, or your mother lived with her partner continuously, or how many kids you have, though I know political scientists would love to assign that as a treatment to people just to find out what would happen.

Probably other people, that's right. Even though we can't do that, it

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doesn't mean that these variables aren't of paramount importance. And so one of the hopes that we have with this particular study, and one of the things we are going to try to accomplish going forward, is to get people to take these context variables even more seriously than they do, because we think it has a great deal of impact on people's lives, politically, socially, in their families in any numbers of ways. Thanks very much for listening to us today. We appreciate it, and we look forward to hearing the comments.

MR. REEVES: Thank you. And thank you, Paul, for the introduction. And to Jeremy and Chris for doing that so quickly and crisply, that was genuinely a master class and had to get a lot of information across to the audience. So we are now going to move to our respondents, and then to the moderated discussion, and then to the Q&A.

So we invite Brad Wilcox. Brad is an Advisor to the project, as Paul said, but he is also Director of the National Marriage Project, and a Professor of Sociology at the University of Virginia. So, Brad has decided that he is going to be out-power-pointed by the guys from BYU, so he has just given us some slides.

So, rather than inviting the whole panel up, I'm going to let Brad come up to his presentation, then Diane, if you want to come up and do yours. And as you didn't bring slides you get extra time, as a kind of bonus, as a no-power-point bonus. But anyway, Brad Wilcox?

MR. WILCOX: Thanks, Richard, for having us here today, and to the Deseret News and BYU for an excellent survey. Now, actually the session today is entitled, Like Father, Like Son, but I had a chance to look at the data in the survey and kind of break it out by gender, and as you can see in a few minutes, I think this brings in a story here for moms and for daughters as well in today's survey.

But I want to begin by just pointing out that there's been an increasing focus in research, primarily by economists on the way in which in family is stability is affecting boys. One example of this is a recent report by David Autor and Melanie

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Wasserman, called Wayward Sons, looking at the impact of family and stability particularly on boys and men.

And when it comes to incarceration, schooling and employment, what we are seeing is, it looks like boys are affected more by family and stability, by the retreat from marriage, than our girls. These are obviously some pretty important outcomes today. So just to kind of give you an example of this kind of research, we are seeing for instance in David Autor's work in Florida, is that there is a gender gap between boys and girls in Florida schools. And what's interesting is that this gender gap is bigger on things like school absences, school suspensions, and high school dropout rates for boys from father-absent homes, here in the middle of the blue figure, compared to boys from married-parent homes.

So just in some important way, boys are affected, at least when it comes to school, more by family instability, more by the absence of marriage than are girls. And at least looking at this issue with his colleagues by comparing siblings, so it's a nice, I think, design. And then we kind of extend our gaze to employment we see is that young men from single-parent homes are doing worse in terms of employment than young men from married-parent homes. This is from new work by Raj Chetty by colleagues this year.

And if you kind of just compare the blue triangles for young men on the right and the left of which you can see obviously is that these guys are from single-parent homes are less likely to be (inaudible) than their peers from married-parent homes. And this pattern extends across the sort of income spectrum, and that is where they are coming from. So, again, suggest that when it comes to education and employment, boys and men are affected more by families' instability in respect to marriage.

And in speculating about what's happening here, Autor has kind of pointed to two different theories, one is that boys may be especially vulnerable to externalizing, they don't have a stable two-parent household with the time, attention and

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income that brings. And then also to the maybe to the male role model effect, where boys are growing up without a same-sex parent, who, you know, isn't providing them with kind of modeling connection to family, connection to lay market, would be more likely than to flounder in school, and later the labor force, because they don't have that kind of male role model present to them.

So this brings us to today's survey from BYU and he Deseret News, and what's interesting here is that the story kind of flips, so when you kind of look at these outcomes that were talked about a little bit earlier today, intuitive, is your current relationship in trouble? And what we see is that women in the survey are more likely to report that outcome when they are coming from an unstable family, compared to men.

So it might be, if this survey is representative of the pattern more generally, on kind of the relationship front, family instability affects men more than women, so I personally want to see this pattern replicated in different dates, but certainly I think interesting. And then even the economic crisis outcome measured in this survey, we also see, again, that women who are coming from unstable families, are more likely to report that they are currently in some kind of a crisis, compared to men. And this is also, I think potentially -- and we can look at with different datasets to see if it's replicated.

Now why would it be that on these two outcomes we are more likely to see women being affected than men? Well, I think two possibilities are as follows: The first is that young women benefit from having a kind of female role model in navigating relationships, and if they've had a stable marriage in their background that might, you know, help them pick a better mate. But consciously without that role model they more likely to pick a less than ideal mate and to experience both family instability and other problems in their relationship,

It's also of course the case that young men from (inaudible) families may be more likely to have single mothers, and incur both a bigger motherhood penalty as a consequence of this, and especially less time and support from, you know, obviously

from a spouse or coming from a partner.

So to conclude, I think that there are two takeaways from today's survey and from our discussion. So the first is that I think the survey's results reinforce the idea that policy and research, and economic mobility, income and equality and poverty, need to factor in family structure. That even reports on these topics that don't do this should be discounted.

But the second thing is that, I think -- you know, although the idea that marriage matters when it comes to the social and economic welfare of men, women and children, it's still a matter of intellectual debate among the elites today. It's not a matter of debate for them in practice. Okay? Overwhelmingly, as this figure from Albert Putnam's recent book suggests, our elites get and stay married, and make sure that their kids enjoy the benefit of a stable marriage.

And they generally live and move in neighborhood schools, soccer leagues and social networks that are dominated by married families. And I think there's a reason for that. At some practical level, I think many elites understand that they and their kids are more likely to flourish socially and economically, if they manage to get and stay married. So I think one of the challenges facing all of us, who are concerned about mobility, inequality and poverty; is figuring out how to extend this marriage and ethos to our fellow citizens. Thank you. (Applause)

MR. REEVES: Thank you, Brad. We are going to have plenty to discuss I think. So, our next respondent is Diane Schanzenbach. How was that?

MS. SCHANZENBACH: It was good.

MR. REEVES: Very good. It's a game, so I can actually pronounce Diane's name correctly. So, I'm pleased I managed it. So, Diane you get to give your response, and then once you've done that, we'll move to some Q&A as I said before.

Diane is the Director of the Hamilton Project, here at Brookings, working in her own case, in particular on issues around economic inequality, but with a strong



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interest in family policy, and is also a Professor at Northwestern when she's not at Brookings, she is out there. So, Diane over to you.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Thank you so much, Richard. This was -- I recommend this survey and the results to you very strongly. There's so much in here, that we are only going to be able to scratch, you know, the smallest amount of the survey. And I think the big headline takeaway really is that Americans like marriage, they love marriage. Yeah, we think that it's in trouble, but even people who aren't married support marriage. I would like to say I'm such a fan of marriage that I voluntarily took on the last name Schanzenbach in celebration of it. So I share that.

SPEAKER: A great old (crosstalk).

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Exactly, that's exactly right. But of course, I guess, one thing that I think really stands out in this survey today is the importance of the economy in the background here. And I think that the professors mentioned it -- all the professors mentioned actually, and it's correct that we should be talking much more about economics, and the dramatic changes in economics that we are seeing right now, is affecting the family.

So, something that was not as surprising to me because I'm deeper into this research, but nearly 40 percent of people reported experiencing an economic crisis in the last year. Not being able to pay a bill, trouble paying for food, not able to go to the doctor because they can't afford it. And that is reality, it's not a reality just among people in poverty anymore, but it's creeping up and up the income distribution in a way that I'm not sure that we know what to do with.

And so we need to be talking, I think, quite a bit about is this going to mean for the American family. And important thing that's running around in the background, and if I would have known about slides, I brought a slide that showed this, but men are dropping out of the labor force in a way that we have not ever seen before. You know, as recently as 50 years ago 98 percent of prime age men were in the labor

force. Much of our society is built on men, prime age men working and that has changed dramatically. Today, about 15 percent of prime age men, between age 25 and 54, have dropped out of the labor force and are not working.

And Larry Summers projects that up to a quarter of men will not be in the labor force by the year 2050. Some of that is due to, you know, shifts in what jobs are available, automation, you know, the machines are coming and they are going to take a lot of people's jobs with them. But what we need to think about much more in social science is, what is this going to mean for families.

And I think there are two important strands of research that I wanted to call your attention to around this. The first is a different set of papers by David Autor which looks carefully at vocal areas that experienced economic depressions, negative shocks, in large part due to kind of shifts in where jobs are available in large part because of increasing trade with China.

And so he's got a nice series of papers that looks at, you know, what happens to wages, what happens to, you know, permanent claimant, things like that, and it's all very devastating. You know, people lose jobs, and by and large aren't able to find them again. But in his newest work he's turning to, well, what does this mean for kids, what's happening to children, what's happening to families. And it will not be surprising to anyone on this panel for sure, that that means that children are less likely to have two-parent families, when jobs go away.

It seems to be mostly that people are not getting married in the first place, it doesn't seem to cause a spike in divorces, but what it does cause is for people not to get married in the first place. There's a lot of research that seems to point to that same direction. I was mentioning this to some other economists, and they were scratching their heads, well, why, why not? It so much cheaper when you share a home with someone, you should get married, you know, even if you don't have money. But Americans don't, and I think we need to understand that.

Another strand of literature that I think is going to be very important going forward, as the economy continues to change, because I cannot underscore enough, it is going to change, you know, in the next 20 to 30 years. Is work by Marion Bertrand and Jessica Pan, on how families negotiate wives' incomes and husbands' incomes together. So their takeaway, their top finding there is that men really don't like to be married to women who make more money than they do.

So that's shifted -- and many, many more women are making more money than men. So that's explaining part of the reason for the decline in original marriage. You know, first marriage rates, and this is going to continue to come, and I think to the extent that in future years we could understand, you know, how do we think about the relationship between gender roles and earning potential, and will be very, very important.

The last point that I'll make, although I have a lot of other points to make, on two things. The first is, there's great agreement that the safety net is important, it's not surprising to me, like Americans are a generous people, and that we have -- after welfare reform we have safety net programs that are very well functioning between the Food Stamp Program, and the Medicaid Program. It is not surprising then that people that have experienced the support from those, are even more supportive.

But, I just wanted to highlight that the majority of respondents had a favorable view of this. A problem here, and that correlates with this issue of economic crisis is there are a lot of families who are just out of reach of these programs, that does not suggest that then we have to expand the programs, but we do have to think about the people who are out of reach of social programs like food stamps, but are still experiencing economic crises.

The final thing was -- I think one of the most surprising statistics that I read in this, was they asked people whether marriage makes families and children better off across the divided dimensions, but one of them is financially, and I think that there is

undisputable evidence that, yes, marriage makes children and families better off financially, but only 23 percent of Americans agree with that statement, and that is a surprise to me. That is easily refuted by real social science, but I don't know why people don't understand that. So I think that's where I'll leave it.

MR. REEVES: Thank you. Thank you, Diane. Thank you to all the speakers for presenting your thoughts so crisply. So, I just want to amplify a couple of points, and then perhaps push on a couple of the questions that will come up. The first point I want to make as the David Autor paper has been mentioned, and that Diana was good enough not to say this, but actually it was a multi-authored paper by a number of Northwestern economists.

The real advantage of David Autor seems to develop just to have a surname that begins with A, and to work in a profession where the standard is to go in alphabetical order. So, Diane sacrificed in taking the name Schanzenbach, it should be seen even greater, she should have married someone called Aaron or Aardvark.

I wanted to amplify Brad's point about -- and I think we all agree that one of the most interesting areas of research is the differential impact on boys and girls, over lots of economic and social trends. You've already mentioned some of the work by Chetty, at an event here early this year, we delved a bit further into this, and you can see the same from the impact of place.

So, for example, a boy who grows up in Baltimore City, controlling for everything else you could conceivably think of, and it's 26 percent less as a result of growing up in Baltimore City, but there's almost no effect on girls. And so you see again, there's this kind of really interesting differential around boys and girls, and then psychology people used to talk about dandelions and orchids, I don't know if that's known to everyone here. But the idea is dandelions pretty much survive whatever you do, and orchids to be carefully looked after. Well it looks from the evidence as if it's the boys who are the orchids in many places. And I think that has, potentially, quite the implications for

policy.

So I just want to push on a couple of things to the panel, and maybe kind of pick up one of Diane's points, although it's been reflected by all of you, which is, to put this very crudely, when we think about family instability, we think about the change in American family life. Some will emphasize shifts in moral factors, and different views about the morality of children outside marriage, or children before marriage, and someone who have divorced.

And others will emphasize the material factors that lie behind it, which sense that I'm not financially secure enough or it's difficult to have a stable family life, if you are in an insecure job and so on. So it's simplified, just for the purpose of the conversations, to the extent that we explain what's happening to the American family largely through changes in the moral codes, or through material circumstances.

I would just like to invite the panel to kind of comment on that, and maybe it will make sense to start with Jeremy and Chris, in terms of looking at the two surveys. What makes the economic practice is strong? What's your interpretation of the survey? Or just generally, of the literature in terms of the weight of those two factors?

MR. POPE: I think the most important problem in America is that people don't discipline their children as much as they should -- Working back to that, Richard. But I'll just say one quick thing about that, I don't understand why it can't be all of the above, and I think that that is reflected in the data. It is true that self-identified liberals tend to focus more on economics, and self-identified conservatives tend to focus more on, as you put it, morals. But it's, just as a point of reality, there's no reason it can't be all of the above. And I think those realities do exist out there for lots of different people on the survey, for example.

MR. REEVES: Okay. Brad?

MR. WILCOX: I would also echo that idea, that it's built in, but I think it's important to further extend that idea by bringing up a point that William Julius Wilson

made, you know, a number of years ago in his writings, and that is that, I think from his perspective and also from mine, kind of the cultural shifts of the '60s and '70s, made our commitment to sort of stable marriage for the sake of our kids, much more fragile and contingent, and in the context where that commitment is much more fragile and contingent, economic factors become more salient, you know, for couples and for families.

And so, you know, as I mentioned before and I think Belle Sawhill was mentioning this idea as well, you know, there is no increase in family instability to speak of, you know, single parenthood, what not, and the great depression. Tremendous economic dislocation, tremendous suffering, poverty, et cetera, but there was a norm, there was an ethic, there were civic institutions which supported, rather than force, you know, stable marriage. Those institutions, those norms become much weaker and so it's for that reason that these sort of economic factors help, in part, to explain the growing family divide we see in America today.

MR. REEVES: Thanks. Diane, you don't have anything else to add.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: No.

MR. REEVES: No. Okay. I was going to ask this question even before I noticed that Belle Sawhill was in the room. I promised but it's about unintended pregnancy. One of the things that strikes me when I look at some of your results, and in particular I was looking at the question on how parents rated each other as parents, which probably made all of us grateful where we didn't have to do this survey with our own partners.

And you pointed to the differences between cohabiting and married parents in terms of the way that they evaluated their co-parent. But I wonder whether there's something else going on there, which is that the parents who are cohabiting are more likely to have had the child as a result of an unintended pregnancy, than those who are married. I think very often what's actually happening there is that you are seeing the

categorization of marriage and cohabiting, expressing a difference in the way that the child came into the world, which is either kind of deliberately or unintendedly.

In fact, Bill Putnam's work shows very strong what happens there is that kids kind of come along, semi-accidentally -- it's a degree of ambiguity, right. So even if the child wasn't totally unplanned, they certainly weren't totally planned. There's a grey area here. So, I wonder if that's what -- I wonder if this is pick out at, which is, I didn't pick this person to be the co-parent anyway, and if that's the case, then you are almost never to be getting it right, and the difference is if I deliberately chose to have a child with this person.

So in that sense it's nothing to do with the fact of co-habitational marriage in itself, and instead you just, all you are doing is expressing what we can't get at directly, which is, did you mean to have this child with this person? Any thoughts on that?

MR. KARPOWITZ: Yeah. I think that -- I mean, I certainly think that could be part of it, and it strikes me we could try to get at some of this next time around in ways that might address this more directly. One of the things that we didn't talk about today, but I think is fascinating. Is that when we sort of drill down on these cohabiting parents and why they are feeling less support for -- or who is feeling less support from their partners, it's the people who are cohabiting parents -- cohabiting with a partner and who are cohabiting -- who are parenting children from multiple relationships.

And that's more common in cohabiting relationships than in married relationships, and it's those parents who are feeling the least amount of support from their partners, and so I think that's interesting.

MR. REEVES: So they may not be the parent of the child, but you are judging them against?

MR. KARPOWITZ: Exactly. Exactly.

MR. REEVES: (Crosstalk) and that's kind of -- Okay. I don't know, Diane

or Brad did you want to comment on that? If not, I'll move on to one more question, and then we'll throw this open; which is the policy question around family leave. These are very, very difficult questions to get at, and I think you've been honest about that in the way you presented it, and you show very strong support for family leave, you show much higher support as you'd expect, from liberals and from self-described conservatives, especially when it comes to where they are paid,

This is obviously quite a live policy issue, and could become one as we go into the next year, given their support for family leave across the aisle although in different forms. My slight concern about this is the nature of these questions might tend towards a more positive answer, partly because people aren't really getting any of the cost. So, if you say, would it be a good idea for us to have some time off without kids, and by the way, wouldn't it be great if I were paid. I'm caricaturing the question -- But, oh, yeah, that sounds amazing.

And then if you say, oh, but by the way, you are going to have to pay an extra X-hundred dollars a year in social insurance tax, or something else, but would you get a different answer. So, to some extent, I guess I'm kind of asking, how do you interpret your own results around that? Because on the face of it, it will be like, everybody in Congress should immediately rush to support a bipartisan bill to do this. And I'm just not quite sure whether their support is as deep as you imply.

MR. KARPOWITZ: Yeah. I think there is -- I think there's broad support for the general idea as you describe, Richard, and for fairly generous maternity leave especially, right. The average is over three months.

MR. REEVES: That's three months paid, right?

MR. KARPOWITZ: Paid, yeah. So, there's a lot of support for that. There's more support among people who have access to family leave currently than those who don't, so it seems again, that experience matters. But then when we try to drill down, you know, there are a number of follow-up questions, there the don't-knows just



explode.

So I do think that there's a sense that, yeah, this would be a nice thing, but people have not thought deeply about it. They've not thought about who exactly should pay for this, how should it be paid for, there, I think we just see much greater level of uncertainty.

MR. REEVES: Okay. Thank you. Do you want to add something Jeremy?

MR. POPE: I was just going to add -- I was just going to add one quick thing. Chris already made the point I was going to make, but I will amplify one thing that where people do not want the government to get involved, intriguingly, is the state. People for whatever reason, in our political discourse don't think the states really have any role, but for them the question is, should it be paid for by a large employer, or a small business, or the Federal government. And I think that's kind of interesting because in a lot of ways people, you know, do want states --

MR. REEVES: Is that in the survey?

MR. POPE: That is in the survey, even though we didn't highlight it.

MR. REEVES: So you asked the level of which you'll be supported?

MR. POPE: We did ask the level and states didn't come up as being important, it was just the federal government. And just on a personal note, I'm not sure why we should necessarily limit ourselves in that way.

MR. REEVES: Right. Okay. Good. Brad?

MR. WILCOX: On the issue of paid leave, one thing we need to think about as you move forward on this issue is, you know, if we are going to push this policy, which I think has merits, how do we make sure it's not one more policy that ends at benefiting the elites, and you've been writing about this a lot Richard, but if you look at the data from California, it looks like the take up is all well in concert among insensitive people who least need access to the policy.

So, again, if you think about, you know, the intention with so much of what happens in D.C. is noble, but in practice, does it end up benefiting the families that, you know, kind of need the most help in navigating, you know, working family challenges and economic challenges.

MR. REEVES: Why do you think that is, and how could you design the policy to avoid that? If you have anything.

MR. WILCOX: I'll be thinking about that in the next months.

MR. REEVES: Yeah. Okay. Diane, anything on that? Or can we go on?

MS. SCHANZENBACH: You know, just that we've really changed, right. Twenty years ago when President Clinton signed the Family Medical Leave Act which is unpaid, that people thought that the world was going to come to an end, and then to have both sides of the aisle this time saying, we think that there should be some sort of paid family leave, I think is just a huge shift. You know, we are very far behind every other nation in the world, and almost every other nation in the world on this, and so I do think that it's not surprising to see that there is great agreement on this. One thing I wanted to bring up, or there a few other things I want to bring up.

MR. REEVES: Sure, go ahead.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: But this is the one, that I'll start with, is Richard made much of the -- in his blog post yesterday about the difference between people who say I want to get married because -- Do you want to describe it -- the commitments -- the commitment is more important --

MR. REEVES: Let's see if we agree -- Let's see if we agree on what you say.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Okay. Well, the commitment is more important or the institution of marriage is more important. And I've been puzzled; I would like to see that cut by whether someone reports that they are married. I'm not sure that I know what

that means, and I'm not sure how I would have answered it myself. I think we are in a cultural moment where a lot of very highly visible who are married, have been treating their marital vows very poorly, to say the least.

Under those circumstances, I know that this came -- you know, the survey came before that, but under the circumstances, I might be tempted to say, you know, the marriage is just piece of paper that you cannot -- you don't necessarily have to respect, is less important to me, than your personal commitment to me. I want to have both, but when forced to say which one is more important I would like to be, you know, treated with fidelity.

MR. REEVES: Right. Okay.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: So I just don't know what those mean.

MR. REEVES: Yeah. Well, I think it will be very helpful to get brief comments from the panel on this, but I'll sort of use my position to respond, as you've kindly mentioned that blog post. I think it was probably clear that that I was still figuring out what I thought too. My position is that in the U.S. anyway, marriage is different to Europe, where I come from. I am, as of this week, a U.S. Citizen. And I think your chart from Putnam, and more generally, the fact that college-educated Americans are married, getting married, staying married, trying not to get divorced, et cetera.

And that doesn't matter, it doesn't matter how liberal or conservative they are, you know. As somebody comes to the U.S. it's got extraordinary that, you know, your most liberal colleagues or neighbors, it wouldn't occur to them not to be married. It's literally not even a kind of question, it doesn't have a --

MS. SCHANZENBACH: But then how do they answer that question?

MR. REEVES: So I think, the liberals will answer as they did in the survey, they'll answer, oh, the commitment is what matters. The conservatives are more likely to coil themselves institutional, though I was struck by the fact that 6 in 10 under 30s, you know, conservatives also said it's more important. Actually I think the more you

think about the question it's actually quite hard to say that the institution is more important than the commitment.

I think nobody would say, say you've got a cohabiting committed couple, there aren't that many who stay together through their lives for what it's worth. If you have natural parents who are committed to their kids and stay together throughout the child's life, those kids are similar to those who are married kids, because they basically look like a married couple, right.

The problem is, most cohabiting couples, although I don't know if my data is up to date, break up before the kid turns 5. So it's the instability that's associated with the cohabitation. So my position is that, at least in the U.S., marriage serves as a commitment device. It doesn't substitute for the commitment, and it doesn't really express the commitment, it is a way that couples who are committed to raising their kids together, make that social contract, and here I think kind of Polak and Lumberg's work had been very influential, and you are, kind of sure, I think for a lot of Americans.

And I think that's particularly true for highly educated and high-income Americans. So I think to understand what's happening to a marriage in America, we have to understand that the most powerful women, economically at least, in the history of the world, with the possible exception of Amazonia a long time ago, i.e. college-educated American women are the most likely to get and stay married. That is very -- Not what you might have expected in the 1970s, you know, I don't know if that's the right, I mean, I don't know if that's it but it's like -- So you've said, Americans love marriage, but boy do college-educated liberal are highly-educated, they love, love, love marriage.

So I think that's what we need to understand, so that's where I think we end up, which is it's neither -- just an expression, know of the thing that -- Would you rather have someone who is married -- Would you rather have a mother that was married four times during your childhood? As I think J.D. Vance's mother was. Or would you rather have a cohabiting couple that stayed together, or even a single parent that stayed

with you, and didn't have this kind of revolving door of partnerships?

I think we all know the answer to that question, so we all know at some level, that it's not just the institution. The question is, does the institution help support the commitment? If it's the commitment we want, does the marriage help? So anybody -- Any other responses? Yes.

MR. POPE: I have one. I will resist the urge to spend a lot of time talking about how to measure ideology, which is something I do when I'm not doing stuff like this. But I will say that the single question measure that we use is great, but it does have the following limitation, in that when we talk about liberals and conservatives it's important to keep in mind, there are a lot of people in the United States who say they are a conservative, and they sit for lifestyle reasons.

They say it for the fact that they go to church, the fact that they live what they perceive to be a conservative lifestyle. Like you're saying, lots of liberals sometimes live that conservative lifestyle, but those conservatives also tend to be, many of them, policy liberals. Not all conservatives are like that, but a big chunk of conservatives are actually, secretly in favor -- not secretly, if you ask them they'll be happy to tell you, in favor of a fair amount of government influence, and programs like this. And you see this in the survey.

Those tend to be, they are conservatives, and are like, yeah, we need more family leave, we need a stronger Medicaid, we need that sort of thing. I think that's important to keep in mind when we are talking about the ideology.

MR. REEVES: That's right. We tend to think that people will divide on policy lines, and they'll be consistent with what we think will be policy, but that's not how it turns out.

MR. POPE: Right.

MR. REEVES: Okay, I'm going to open this up. Questions from the audience, but also I think if people can tweet at me, or some way in which questions

appear on this phone, maybe from -- So, if you're watching tweet at me, or tweet @BrookingsCCF, and we will see if the magic happens. But in the meantime we'll take questions from the audience. Yes, the gentleman there?

DR. PFEFFER: Yes. Thank you very much for a wonderful presentation. I, myself, am a child psychiatrist --

MR. REEVES: Please say your name for us?

DR PFEFFER: Bruce Pfeffer.

MR. REEVES: Thank you.

DR. PFEFFETR: And I found that your discussion was very enlightening from a policy point of view. It also does reflect in many ways the literature that's in the child psychiatry literature. However, I was wondering a number of things. One is, in your studies, whether you have investigated the dynamics that are entailed in terms of values, identifications within families, and how much in-depth one actually did go into understanding the dynamics that go on with families. The morals that are taught; and the values that are taught.

The studies about the vulnerabilities of boys is mirrored very much in the child psychiatry literature that most people have thought that girls are much more vulnerable. In the last 10 or 15 years there's been much literature in terms of how males, young boys are much more psychologically more vulnerable. The other question I --

MR. REEVES: So just to clarify a question, are you linking those two things together? Are you asking whether the values and moral codes that are taught have a different impact for boys than girls in families?

DR. PFEFFETR: No. I'm not linking them together; I'm just making a comment.

MR. REEVES: Okay. Okay.

DR. PFEFFETR: That there is -- It goes along with the child psychiatry literature. The other issue is we talk about the value of better economics and how that

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does help. There is another side to that coin, is we live in a very driven society, where there is a drive for economic success on parts of two parents in a marriage, and I've often found myself discussing with parents, how does one raise a child in an affluence environment, which middleclass values?

Meaning, that how do they -- how does the child learn that they have a fire in their own belly to do something with their lives? And I'm wondering what your comments would be on this.

MR. REEVES: so, you are worried about affluent kids being spoiled effectively, or not?

DR. PFEFFETR: I would not use the word spoiled, but don't have drive.

MR. REEVES: Right. No, I have kids, so that's why I used that. I have kids in that (inaudible), that they are very definitely spoiled. Okay. Let's take a couple more for that -- Belle Sawhill? Could you say who you are though, not that we don't know?

MS. SAWHILL: I'm Belle Sawhill, I'm here at Brookings. And I want to go back to what Diane said about the fact that it's very puzzling to many economists, and to just our common sense, that if economics is what lies behind this, and sharing and pooling resources is one of the most efficient and effective ways to improve your household income, and the wellbeing of your children, why is it if people are economically threatened or not doing well, they don't marry.

And I think it probably has something to do with something else she said, which is gender roles, and she mentioned Bertrand and Pan research here, and when I look at the research that you all referenced from Autor or Aardvark and et al. -- A great comment, Richard, about changing your name to begin with A. But I think that what's going on there is something that's similar to what we are seeing with the Donald Trump phenomenon, or his supporters. I'm going to be provocative now, why not.

MR. REEVES: Yes. Well, why not?

MS. SAWHILL: And then, you know, we have all this conversation now about, you know, White working class males, feeling left behind both economically and culturally, I think. Their status is being threatened including by women, and immigrants and minorities, and I think that something similar is going on here with respect to the retreat from marriage, at potentially. So, I just I'd raise that and see if you all want to comment.

MR. REEVES: And we are off. Thank you, Belle. That's where she started though, I know what the comment is about, but let's go in reverse order and start with Belle, and move to kind of, Bruce. Let me amplify because I was going to pick this point up as well, which is the extent to which -- So people have been economically irrational, when it comes to decisions about family formation and marriage.

It turns out that people are not rationally maximizing their own utility, but they haven't read all the papers on income pooling, actually I've written -- But what's wrong with them, right? And so they have a view about marriage, and maybe the view about the roles within marriage of men and women, and the view about what position you need to be in order to get married, that has very little to do with those sort of rational economic kind of calculations, which is a cultural problem.

And then, many of us have been around this kind of discussion before. The question then becomes, are we going to try and get our society and economy back to a position where that old model of marriage works, male breadwinner earning more than the woman, so that everyone feels more comfortable, et cetera, and you know, secure job, et cetera. Or do we have to accept the fact that the world has changed, and renovate our view of marriage, and our view of gender roles within marriage, and it seems to me that we are at an interesting point in terms of that sort of discussion now, because it feels as if the survey reveals to me a gap.

A gap between the world as it is, and a gap between the world as people would need it to be for their model of marriage to work. I don't quite -- and then you could



close that gap in one or two ways, but I'd love to know what the panel thinks of that. We'll come back to Bruce's point, don't worry, but just on a specific point that Belle has raised about what's going on there, around economic rationality.

That's a round. Diane, why don't you go first, since she invoked you?

MS. SCHANZENBACH: As an economist I would be very cautious about ever agreeing with what Richard just said about people being irrational. You know, so I think we don't know why they are not doing it but, you know, I think some things that you can point to in, at least in the literature or in living experiences.

You know, I guess, Kathy Eden has this really interesting finding -- and maybe Belle was the one who told me about it in the first place; that women are very rationally deciding to have children out of wedlock. And they say, oh, I have a baby with that guy but I would never marry him, because what he brings to the relationship is not acceptable. And that's probably some combination of financial and, you know, social. So people are making rational decisions, it is still a puzzle to me why, sort of our notion of marriage hasn't evolved more quickly, but to be sure, these trends are going to continue - - these economic trends are going to continue.

And so to understand what's going to happen to the family in the next 30 years, I guess we need to understand, you know. Are we going to be able to change, you know, the American view of marriage? Or, what's going to happen?

MR. REEVES: Would you agree that Kathy Eden's work is primarily with very, very poor communities.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Yes. That's what -- Right.

MR. REEVES: And so I always feel the need to say this, that we shouldn't extrapolate from that as far as the incomes scale as some of these marital questions and families where it seem to go.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: I agree with that, although, you know, I think that it potentially is going further at the income distribution, you know, today than we used

to think. Now, I absolutely agree that the highly educated women to which I identify, right, are not making these same choices. You know, things are different there.

MR. REEVES: Right. Thanks. Yes, Brad.

MR. WILCOX: Yes. I think, you know, on the sort of -- the point that Belle was mentioning kind of the shifting economic landscape in marriages, and one of the things that we are seeing through my own research is just that infidelity is reported at higher levels among less-educated Americans, than it is among college-educated Americans today. And I think part of that might be an expression, but a kind of economic insecurity, a role insecurity, and infidelity as sort of one outlet for men who feel, you know, like their status is being threatened.

MR. REEVES: Is it high among women as well or just men?

MR. WILCOX: That's a question I don't know, I would have to look into that. But the second piece, in terms of the masculinity piece, Richard, that you've been talking about is -- I would agree with you, we need to think about detaching marriage from the kind of traditional '50s model. But having said that, I don't think that an androgynous kind of ethic or ethos is going to be attracted to a lot of ordinary men, so the question then becomes, is there a way to connect contemporary masculinity to marriage and family life in a way that is, you know, consistent with our new economic climate.

So, for example, I think that I see a lot in my own social context is that there are a lot of guys who are coaching, the coaching boys and girls soccer, you know, boys baseball, girls softball, et cetera. And so they are performing kind of hierarchy, a kind of masculine role as coaches that I think should be acknowledged and in a sense, you know, lifted up. And more generally, I think sort of figure out ways in which men can kind of see themselves as playing an important role in their families and communities. It's not just predicated upon breadwinning.

MR. REEVES: It's more in our kids in the middle.

SPEAKER: Can I jump in --

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Can I -- let me really quick?

MR. REEVES: Yes.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Because I'll give it to you. Figure 8 really speaks to this.

MR. REEVES: Yes. This is where I was going.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Okay. I want to make maybe two points on it, one is that there's a large share of both and women who report that both women and women contribute activities around the house. Like cleaning up, like shoveling the kids to different places. Now when I first read this, I chuckled because men think that both contribute to this than women think that they both did it. But there is still, there are high levels on both.

MR. KARPOWITZ: Yes. Yes. So this is what I wanted to talk about. So, I think it is interesting that significant percentages are saying that they are sharing, in terms of gender roles, that they are sharing household activities, doing the chores, paying the bills, all those sorts of things. Women are more likely than men to say that they do it on their own, and don't share that, and then it comes to the response that we share it, men are more likely to say that they share than our women.

So, that strikes me as evidence that there's still a lot of very traditional sort of gender role, division of labor going on within families. And men are doing some, they think they are doing more than their wives think they are doing, or their partners think they are doing.

MR. REEVES: (Crosstalk) complaining?

MS. SCHANZENBACH: But knowing this -- Looking at this, you know, across the generation gap, across education, will all be very interesting. I wonder if, you know, if that's masking some of the older guys who never learned how to empty the dishwasher.

MR. KARPOWITZ: We did look at that and in terms of people who say

they do it themselves, there's no change across generations, and this was surprising to me, in the number -- in the percentage of women who say they do everything themselves.

MR. REEVES: Interesting. Okay. Let's move on -- I'm sorry?

MR. POPE: I can't prove this from the survey, but I think men have lower standards for what they think their contribution counts.

MR. REEVES: That's all right, we are cleaning and catching (crosstalk).

MR. POPE: Yes. Exactly!

MR. KARPOWITZ: Or I consistently fall short, I can tell you.

MR. REEVES: Go ahead.

MR. WILCOX: But in defense of men, too, it's important to acknowledge that when we look at the Pew data, and you sum up for the average married couple with kids, the amount toll hours you devote to paid work and unpaid work it's the same.

SPEAKER: That's right.

MR. WILCOX: So we have remember that there are obviously, we all know their exceptions to that sort of average, but for the average couple we are actually looking at equity in terms of toll hours.

MR. REEVES: I think that's right. And even if they do slightly different things and a kind sense about it; where the difference emerge is actually -- is among younger, so younger men who may be less attached to the labor market, their leisure hours have gone up, and there's recent evidence that they are spending quite a bit of that time playing video games, which is not a moral comment. Video games are awesome.

Let's just talk -- Does anyone gone to Bruce's point on the extent to which kind of moral values are transmitted and then relatedly the issues for the kinds of kids who are raised in more affluent households, and kind of learning the skills that were required for them. Anybody who would want to comment on that?

MR. KARPOWITZ: Well, I'll just comment briefly on -- We didn't push on

this particular issue all that hard, although we did ask one question about whether or not it's important for parents to teach their children their political values. And conservatives agree with that more than liberals do.

MR. REEVES: Political values

MR. KARPOWITZ: Their political values, yes.

MR. REEVES: Diane, do you want to comment on that?

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Yes. I think several questions asked about social connectedness, and I was surprised at how little families report that they have to rely on their neighborhoods to continue -- You know, to basically help teach the moral things. Two more pieces that I gleaned from the survey, one was, you know, in economics we talk a lot about revealed preferences; so, my explanation for -- that everybody behaves the same in family life, because you may say one thing, but the proof is in the pudding of how you'll act.

Something that came up in some of the questions around worship, was a large fraction of people say, religion is very important to them, and a smaller share say that they ever go to houses of worship, which I think is puzzling, it's sort of also a way to think about, you know, how we are transmitting, you know, moral qualities to the next generation. If it doesn't involve actually taking them to worship, I think that that's very puzzling.

The third thing I'll point out is that in Figure 6, looking at this made me laugh out loud when I saw it. They asked the question, is raising children one of life's greatest joys, and they break it up by whether they have -- whether the person has children or not. But what you can very clearly see in the data is people who are most likely to have teenagers are the ones that are saying, maybe not. Yes. I think that

MR. REEVES: This is where I am.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Exactly. Exactly! So I'm still in the sort middle place. So, you know, I wonder -- I think that there's a couple of things, one is sort of the

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lack of community cohesiveness, and the second is just, you know, I imagine that many of the people that you are talking to are struggling with raising teenagers. And I think there's a life course piece to this as well.

MR. REEVES: Yeah. It looks as if the people who think -- or who most strongly feel that raising children is one of life's greatest joys, either don't have kids yet, or the kids have left home. So, it's the under 30s and those 60 and over.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Hopefully it's not every day.

MR. REEVES: It's going to get better, Diane. We are going to be okay.  
Yes?

MR. POPE: One thing you may want to look at, and I think there are copies of the report outside or online as well, Table 12 is not exactly what you are looking for but it gets to what sort of boundaries people place on their kids, and I think that's a reflection of values, it's not a direct measure of values. And what we found there is that, you know, there are some things where lots of people do it, and some things where very few, for instance, not as many people have required reading time, or required music practice. About two-thirds say they have a bedtime -- It gets at some of those differences. And it doesn't vary by how you label yourself ideologically.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: They vary by social class?

MR. REEVES: Does it vary by education, or income, or class?

MR. POPE: It varies a little -- I'm trying to remember exactly what I looked at now. It is not very much by ethnicity or race, and I don't have the education number off the top of my head. I think I looked at it, but I've forgotten it, which probably means it doesn't vary in time.

MR. REEVES: Yes. The basic story is that we are kind of basically the same. Once you get inside the door of the family, you are basically doing some much.

MR. POPE: That's right.

MR. REEVES: Okay. There's a lady there in the back.

MS. FREEMAN: My name is Jill Freeman, I'm a Political Scientist. I've not read all of your family literature, but I want to ask a two-part question. The first part is based on what literature I know, and the second part is based on personal experience. Part one, back when I was in graduate school, many long years ago, I read Jessie Barnard's book on marriage and the family. And she made a point of -- So I can see Belle nodding her head, you know, know exactly what I'm going to say.

She made a point of saying that there were in fact, two marriages in every marriage, his marriage and her marriage. And they were very different. I didn't pick that up from any of what you said. Basically, she said that marriage benefited men more than it benefited women. And that the main benefit to women was the economic factor that men brought, but the main benefit to men was the fact that women took care of them, tended to their psychological and social and personal needs. Now, now that more and more women are going into the labor force, and that economic contribution of men is no longer as important as it was, how has this affected the two marriages, his marriage and her marriage. That's sort of part one.

My more personal question has to do with single parenting. Again, I haven't read the literature, I'm a political scientist, but I am the child of a single mother, and the niece of four other single mothers, and the friend of many single mothers. So, I've had a fair amount of field observation over the years. And what I have learned from that is that being the daughter of a single mother is good for girls. And is good for girls because fathers tend to overprotect their daughters, mothers don't, I can't speak for the sons.

And growing up not overprotected makes you much more capable of taking care of yourself, earning your own living, getting your own education, and generally taking care of yourself, which girls who are overprotected, don't get.

When I looked at the data which you gave us, you didn't distinguish between those single parents who are women, and those single parents who are men,

and I realize they were mostly women, but the question is, can you distinguish it, in order to distinguish between the sons of single fathers versus the daughters of single mothers? And I think that, though, separating out by sex, would come up with some very interesting results, but not be it all consistent.

I also think that what I just said about overprotection may explain why the daughters of single parents, which you did show data on seem to do much better than the sons of single parents.

MR. REEVES: Okay. Thank you.

MS. FREEMAN: Because they are not overprotected.

MR. REEVES: Thank you. Thanks for those two questions. So I missed out Brad, and just along. If you just prefer to choose one of those two, rather both, that's fine, I'm sure we'll cover more between us. But Brad, why don't you kick off on either of those questions, the two marriages and the sense of women tomorrow changing because of the economic shifts and the kind of differential effect of single parents, different gender.

MR. WILCOX: Yes. I think it's definitely right. I think Jessie brought on the comments about the two marriages is still true, although the qualitative stories are very different today than it would have back when she was writing about marriage in the '70s. But on the other point you made in terms of the outcomes, as my comments today suggest, I think that we are seeing that boys are affected by single parent when it comes it things like delinquency, incarceration, education and employment as Raj Chetty's recent work suggests with his colleagues.

I don't know what (inaudible) through for that research. Let's see, but -- And again, what's interesting about Chetty's research, and it's consistent with your comment, is that the women who are from single parent homes were doing relatively better when it came to their labor force participation. So, that's an interesting outcome for at least that study. But at least today's survey, the American family survey we are talking



about today suggests that women are more likely to be struggling in their current relationships as adults, and they are also more likely to be exposed to some kind of economic crisis.

If they've come from an unstable family background, probably spending, you know, significant share of their lives in a single-parent family context. So, I think on other outcomes, you know, the story would be that girls tend to be more likely to flourish when they have a father present. And we do know for instance that teen pregnancy, a core concern of people in this room, I much less common, both in households with a father present, and even more so in a household where the daughter and the -- the daughter is reporting a higher quality relationship with her father.

So having his love, his attention, his affection, and his sort of oversight, if you will, his protection if you will, is linked to much lower levels of teen pregnancy in the research.

MR. REEVES: Diane?

MS. SCHANZENBACH: I'm still thinking, I'm still thinking.

MR. REEVES: All right. I'll just add a couple of points. One is, in order to think about the changing incentives around marriage, and the two marriages, I wasn't aware of that book, so I'm grateful for the idea of hers and his marriage. It's, why are women marrying at all is almost -- now that women don't marry for economic reasons, why should they marry, is almost the more interesting question.

And I'll just amplify the fact that it looks as if it's the women who economically, at least, least need to marry, who are choosing to marry. And so, Brad? Brad will say -- go out with that. Go on.

MR. WILCOX: I would say that yes, and no, I mean, they are taking a long-term view of things, you know, and that is that they recognize that their own kids are going to be more likely to flourish (crosstalk)

MR. REEVES: Oh. But that's not them, that's their kids, so that's a

different -- that's a completely different reason.

MR. WILCOX: Well, and their home, their neighborhoods, their 401(k), you know, it's all going to be affected by it, you know, so (crosstalk)

MR. REEVES: Yes, I'm not saying it -- I'm not saying it's not economically the right thing to do, but I'm just saying that the idea that what was mostly in it for her was, I need a man because he's going to bring the wages in, and that will help me to survive economically. There are a lot of women who are now pretty powerful in the labor market, who will have a better quality of life.

But that's where I think that the co-parenting thing comes in, and I think that it's as much about as saying we want to raise our kids together, we want to pool our income partly for that reason, and we want a stable family environment to do that, so, hey, let's get married, rather than it being an economic reason. So I think that the -- it's become more about the social familial, all the things you just listed rather than an economic incentive.

That's the only way I can square this out, is the fact that it's the women who least "need marriage" who are choosing it. I think it's become more -- I think it has, again, become more of a social institution than an economic one.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: Good ones and bad ones.

MR. REEVES: Bad ones and -- Let me just skip along the panelists, is there anything else on this specific point from any of our other panelists? Or, Belle, do you want to dive back in? Go on. Go on.

MR. POPE: I'm just going to say quickly, those are great points, and I'm going to go back and look at that book again, which I have looked at before, but the data, even though I don't have a table to point you to, but we have looked at this and are saying, women do like marriage a lot, and if anything I think they may like it more than men do, but they do like it a lot.

MS. FREEMAN: I was going to say that, you know, I buy the Stevenson

and Wolfer's argument here, which is the recent well-educated women and men are still marrying is because they have renegotiated, not just child rearing, but all kinds of other things and they are supporting each other in many, many ways, that go way beyond children, and there's evidence that well-educated men have changed their gender role expectations far more than less educated men.

Less educated men are having difficulty making this transition, psychologically, if you will, in terms of norms and gender roles, and well educated men are having a lot less trouble. So, I don't find it so hard to understand. I mean, think of it as the way that Hannah Rosen talked about it. It's more of a -- almost a partnership, like a business partnership or a roommate situation. I mean, I don't want to say that all of the intimacy things don't matter, but it's not just about children in my view.

MR. REEVES: That's right. And if there's more power, if the economic power gets equalized, then that allows women to move into a stronger negotiation position, so they set the bar higher, and men have to -- if men want to be in a successful marriage they have to clear that bar.

So we are running up on time, and I have one more question and then we'll have to close it. Brad, go on.

MR. WILCOX: I'm just not sure about gender roles, this thing, if you think carefully about Kathy Eden (inaudible) book, their problems were not about who is doing what on the household, it was about kind of responsibility, reliability, fidelity, commitment --

MS. FREEMAN: Yeah, but that (inaudible) explain theory though, Brad.

MR. WILCOX: Well, but I don't think that's a -- I think it's a gender role thing, per se, and it's more about, you know, is there a male responsibility affect that is not (crosstalk).

MR. REEVES: Again, a very small group of very poor people.

MS FREEMAN: Yes. Very small group but I would say that, you know,

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those women are also raising the bar when they say, you know, if we are going to live together, if we are going to make a commitment to each other, I want you to be reliable. And I want you to be faithful.

MR. REEVES: We are going to move to the last question, but if there's anything, you want to take away, but we are right up against time, so this is coming from outside. Unfortunately, it looks like it might be one of my kids, they should be at school. I guess there's a reason why, okay fine -- Which is given the current trends, given the survey evidence and the current trends, I'm paraphrasing it, do we think that 20 years from now, there will be more marriage in America, or less?

Given current trends and what we know, do we think there will be more marriage or less? I don't know we define that, it's kind of put them -- but we could get into a wonky argument. But do we think that marriage is on the up or on the down, over the next, kind of, 20 years? And let's go this way again, so that we can finish with our main presenters. Go on, Brad, up or down?

MR. WILCOX: Definitely down.

MR. REEVES: So there will be less marriage over the next kind of 20 years.

MS. SCHANZENBACH: I agree with that. We were just at a conference marking 20 years since Welfare Reform. And there were four components to Welfare Reform, the decrease in teenage pregnancy, increase in self-sufficiency, I forget what the third one was, but then the fourth was increase in marriage, and basically victor was declared on the first three. Then said, we really failed. Like marriage has gone down, I think it's going to continue to go down, unless there is some sort of social intervention, but I don't know who would be doing that.

MR. REEVES: Okay. It's you?

MR. KARPOWITZ: Well, I think there's a lot of optimism about marriage, about one's own marriage relationships, but more concern about other people's marriage

relationships, right, and I think that's a really interesting finding, that when people get into marriage they seem to like it, and yet they are very worried about the health of it overall.

And the other thing, I guess I'll just go back to where I started the presentation, which is one of the things that we are seeing, is this decoupling of children, first child, inside or outside of marriage. And I just don't know what the effects of that are going to be long-term. I mean we now have a generation in which most people gave birth or became parents for the first time, outside of the context of marriage, and I don't know quite how that will affect how we think about marriage in the future.

MR. REEVES: Okay. Jeremy?

MR. POPE: Just to add to what Chris was saying. This is from last year's report, not this year's report, but one of the really interesting, nifty things that I guess maybe I should have known, but I'm also a political scientist, and I'm new to some of these things. Was that people view marriage was like a capstone kind of thing that you have. Younger people especially feel like, I've got have a good job, I've got to be squared away, and all of these different ways, and older generations were more willing to jump in and just let it roll. The more we make marriage into this status that only be obtained after one has perfected many other things, that's going to contribute to the trend that Chris is talking about.

MR. REEVES: Okay. I'd like to thank our presenters and our panelists, and Deseret News and BYU for bringing out this fascinating survey. And as I think Diane said, there is lots and lots in here. I think there will be more coming out from many of us on this panel, on this survey. I hope that the survey continues, already near two years it's been going, I think established itself as a really valuable resource for those of us working in this field.

So, I'd like to thank you for today's -- for helping us with today's event, but also for the work around the survey. Please join me in thanking the panel and the presenters. (Applause)

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