

THE BROOKINGS INSTITUTION

THE TIES THAT BIND: FAITH, FEMINISM, AND THE FAMILY

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Introduction:

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Panel #1: Religion, Fertility, Relationship Quality, and Domestic Violence: What Have We Learned?

LAURE DeROSE, Adjunct Lecturer, Department of Sociology,
Georgetown University
Director of Research, World Family Map Project,
Maryland Population Research Center

CHRISTINE EMBA, Columnist, The Washington Post

CONRAD HACKETT, Associate Director of Research, Pew Research Center

SPENCER JAMES, Associate Professor, Department of Family Life
Brigham Young University

Panel #2: Faith, Feminism, and the Contemporary Family:

JASON S. CARROLL, Professor of Marriage and Family Studies
Brigham Young University

HANNA ROSIN, Co-Host, "Invisibilia," NPR

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P R O C E E D I N G S

MS. SAWHILL: Good morning everybody. Welcome to Brookings and to a what I think will be a fascinating discussion on faith, feminism and the family. The three F's so it's easy to remember. I'm Bell Sawhill and I'm a senior fellow here but I am really representing the Center on Children and Families this morning. My colleague, Richard Reeves, who was involved in this report as a co-author, I can't remember now whether he's in Las Vegas or London or Paris. I only know he was scheduled to be in all three places in a single week. And so, my hat is off to him, he does a lot. But he's very interested in these issues as well as is the other co-director of the Center on Family and Children, Ron Haskins.

So, my own interest goes back a long way. My very first book was on the family and I wrote another one a couple years ago called "Generation Unbound: Drifting into Sex and Parenthood without Marriage." And so, I continue to follow the work of the group that's with us today. I want to say in the interest of full transparency that I consider myself a feminist, that I consider myself someone who believes that families, especially married, stable families have good effects on children, written a lot about that. And on the faith front, I really believe faith is an important element in many people's lives although it's not a big element in my own life.

I was interested in looking at the data in the report that one of the most common categorizations when you ask people what their religion is was SBNR. And when I first looked at that I thought what the hell, I shouldn't use what the hell in this group, right. But what in the world is SBNR? And it's Spiritual but No Religion, so that's interesting.

Now, the credit for organizing this event goes entirely to my friend, Brad Wilcox. He's a towering figure in this field and I have huge respect for him even though he and I don't always agree on everything. And I want to thank him and his various collaborators who you're going to be hearing from including the Family Studies Institute or Institute for Family Studies and the Wheatly Institution and various other partners that they had in their work. As you know or you will learn, this has been a multi-country study. So,

the data that they used are very extensive and interesting.

So with that, let me invite the first panel to come up here to the stage. The first panel is going to be Laurie DeRose. She's in the Department of Sociology at Georgetown. Also, Spencer James, Associate Professor, Department of Family Life, Brigham Young University. And Conrad Hackett, Associate Director of Research, Pew Research Center and last but not least, Christine Emba who's a columnist with *The Washington Post*. So, I'll turn it all over to you now, thanks.

MS. DEROSE: So, the report that I've seen copies, I hadn't seen a hard copy until this morning that you have is the Ties that Bind and there are three main chapters. So, I'm first going to tell you about the first one which is faith and fertility in the 21st century. Then Spencer will talk more about relationship quality and then I'll talk about negative aspects of relationship quality, namely domestic violence and infidelity, but let's start with fertility.

Okay so basically the question in our first chapter is, is religion still pronatalist. And to some people it might be like yeah, of course it is, but it's actually an important question. When the highly religious United States has reached an all-time low in terms of its total fertility rate. CDC just produced those statistics this week and that's one of the things that's supposed to be keeping our fertility higher than other developed countries was that we were a more religious country. And in general, women in more developed countries average 1.6 children.

But there's a pronounced fertility fork with countries clustering around 1.9 and around 1.3. It looks like this. If you look back in the 1980's, there's a bunch of countries at all sorts of different levels. But as you go forward in time, there aren't that many in the middle any more. And the question is what's different about the countries that have a higher, more sustainable fertility and those countries that are clustering around a lowest low fertility.

And what Rinfus, the author who published the piece that I just showed you

the graphic from says that it is generally easier to combine work and motherhood in the countries at the high end of the fertility fork. And they emphasize very much that there's more than one way to do that. Fathers are more involved in the United States than in some other countries. Policy is better in some other countries than in the United States. There's more than one way to do it but essentially that that's sort of the key to higher fertility as a compatibility between work and motherhood.

And this fits with the rhetoric that says that gender equity is the new natalism. That if you provide for women to be workers and if men are more involved in the family, that's how you're going to get closer to replacement fertility than in a lowest to low 1.3 kind of setting. So, gender equity is hypothesized to be the new natalism and the question we asked is whether the new natalism has replaced religion. In terms of can you actually still have religion fostering fertility when it also fosters traditional gender role attitudes. That's at odds with the idea that women can be workers and mothers together. Not completely at odds but nonetheless, there's a tension. And we asked the question whether it's becoming less relevant for fertility in a world where the persistence of traditional gender roles is associated with lower fertility, so think Italy that has a very low fertility.

Okay so this is the first of the graphics from the report that I want to highlight here and basically this is just individual level data showing that at the individual level, faith still matters for fertility. Everybody who attends religious services has more kids than those who never or practically never attend. This is data from the sixth wave of the World Value Survey. Also, looked over time and this pattern is more or less the same in all of the last four waves of the World Value Survey. This is the oldest one here with highest attendance rates at the bottom going to the light blue of lower attendance rates and lower fertility. And if you skip to the top, you see something very similar. In the middle, it's close to the same pattern although admittedly not exactly.

So, basically religiosity has a very similar relationship with child bearing over time. Then we asked the question, why hasn't it become less relevant. An important

answer is sitting right in front of you in frequent religious attendance does in fact predicts more traditional gender role attitudes. So, the assumption that religious people are more gender traditional is, in fact, right.

The next piece of the assumption is that that gender traditionalism is an obstacle to fertility and that's the piece that's wrong. Individuals with progressive gender role ideology actually have fewer children. Now this doesn't mean that countries with progressive gender role ideology have fewer children on a lower total fertility rate but individuals do. And we interrogated that a little bit further to say, okay what's going on there. Why does this individual level result that says traditional folks have more kids essentially contradict the fact that Sweden has more kids than Italy and Spain. What's going on with the individual level story versus the country level story.

And one explanation is marriage. We used attitudinal item from the World Value Survey. Those who agreed that men should be favored when jobs were scarce. The item was, I think it's do you think that men should be favored when jobs are scarce. And the people who disagreed are the ones we say have progressive gender role attitudes. And the ones that agree that men should have priority in the job markets when they're tight or that aren't sure, we put them in a more traditional category.

Those who agreed with favoring men when jobs were scarce were 23 percent more likely to be married than those who disagreed. So, that traditional gender role attitude was correlating very heavily with marriage. And not surprisingly, married people averaged more than three-quarters of a child, more than their unmarried peers. So, this suggests but doesn't prove that religion retains its pronatalist influence by being pro-marriage. I say doesn't prove because people tend to bring their kids to church and get married when they have kids. There can be some reverse causation in there where the presence of children is both sparking religion and sparking marriage.

So, it doesn't necessarily mean that marriage is the driving force but it's pretty suggestive. I mean, even if the force is going both direction, three-quarters of a child is a big

difference. So, we think that the reason why more traditional people have more kids is because they're more likely to be married.

What about the U.S. The U.S. is on the higher end of the fertility fork, I showed you at the beginning despite a duress of policy supporting combining work and motherhood. I'm sure many people in this room are familiar with how paltry U.S. policy is in terms of federal supports for combining work and motherhood. And one of the explanations is, is that it has a highly religious population so that's why it ends up on the higher end even with policy that doesn't help. But again, fertility has hit a new all-time low. So, I'm asking this question again, has religion become less important for fertility in this time of a focus on the United States.

Religious people in the United States do, in fact, have increasingly distinct fertility. In all three of these waves, why don't I have wave, there's a 2006 wave, oh it didn't have children in it. So, wave five was missing, no it couldn't have been children. There was some variable that was missing that I had to leave out wave five. This isn't selective data. So, wave three is at the bottom, 1995 for the U.S., wave six at the top, 2011. And all those places, you see that the never attenders have the lowest fertility, that the infrequent attenders have intermediate fertility and that the frequent attenders have the highest fertility.

What I want you to focus on is the gap. Just because the pattern is the same doesn't mean that the pattern is of the same magnitude. If you look at 2001 and these are children at the time of the survey. So, these people who have 1.1 child who are, you know, never go to religious services are going to have more than that lifetime. But, you know, this is a cross sectional at the survey. So, they have just over one child where the frequent attenders have in excess of 1.7 children. That is a bigger gap than back in 1995 where it was more like 1.3 versus 1.8.

So, the gap, fertility is becoming increasingly determined by religion in the U.S. over time or I should say associated with religion in the U.S. over time. And frequent attenders in the U.S. are, in fact, more gender traditional. Just like in the world, frequent

attenders are more gender traditional. But in the U.S., there are no differentials by gender role ideology. If you remember when I showed this slide for the whole sample, the agree column was statistically significant in terms of if you agreed that men should be favored, you know, I think may labels might be wrong here but it almost doesn't matter because there are no important differences. The reason all those three bars are the same color is because these differences are statistically insignificant. Meaning in the U.S., we don't see the traditional folks have more children.

We do see in the U.S. less attendance over time. Especially if you focus on the green bars, you see a growing proportion of those that never attend religious services. So, the retreat from religion is apparent in the U.S. data, at least as measured by attendance. The spiritual but not religious category that Bell mentioned, would not be picked up by that particular variable.

So, back to the question. Gender egalitarianism is supposed to make having children more practical because it saves women from carrying the second shift alone. That's basically the idea of why gender equity should be the new natalism is that women doing everything doesn't work. That if a woman needs to be a full-time worker and an intensive mother, that she is more likely to act out than to have to kids. That that's just too heavy a burden and there's a sociologist that refers to it as a Liz Estrada rebellion. I'm not taking the traditional gender roles so I'm not going to get married and have kids at all because the gender bargain is one I do not want. Which, quite frankly sort of makes sense to me even though I love children and I love marriage, the idea of doing it all, I mean, I get tired doing supported second shift. Imagine an unsupported second shift, the second shift, the work you do at home after you finished your job at work.

My husband and I have joked about which shift are we on now, are we both on our third shift? Anyway, the idea that I've just put forward, that gender egalitarianism is the new natalism because the old patterns just simply don't work in women's lives isn't supported in the individual data from the World Value Survey. Traditional folks are still

having more children at the individual level.

So, the summary for what's going on in the U.S. is that there are bigger differences between the most and the least religious over time but that the share that's highly religious has retreated. On gender equity is not the new natalism but neither does a higher fertility of the religious support a higher overall fertility. If you think of it in terms of composition it's like yeah, religion is becoming more important in terms of its affect but it's having an effect on a smaller number of people. So, neither of those answers seem supported by the U.S. data.

The story across other low fertility countries is a little bit different, not hugely different but nonetheless, I think there's an important contrast. Religion is linked to traditional gender role attitudes across our multi-country sample just as it was in the U.S. but it is still pronatalist. Traditional gender role attitudes predict slightly higher fertility, not lower fertility. So, that opt-out story isn't an important one in terms of the aggregate picture. And religion is still associated with much higher rates of marriage. And I didn't include this in the presentation but the influence of marriage is growing over time too. That the gap in marriage between the least religious and the most religious is growing over time.

So, the conclusion across the countries that we looked at, all low fertility countries, Europe, in the America's, East Asia, is that people of faith contribute towards sustainable fertility in modern low fertility societies. Even though I can't say that as strongly for the U.S., that's still the overall conclusion that people of faith contribute to sustainable fertility.

MR. JAMES: Okay. Good morning everyone, my name is Spencer James and I'm an Associate Professor at Brigham Young University in the School of Family Life. And I'm going to be presenting to you this morning, the second chapter of this report which we've entitled faith, feminism and marriage. We're going to talk about institutions, norms and relationship quality.

But I wanted to begin by talking about why we should care about long term

committed relationships. I suspect the fact that you're in this room probably means I don't have to convince you of that. But nonetheless, there are three, among others, really important reasons to worry about this.

First, is the fact that family change over the last 50 to 70 years has dramatic implications and fuels poverty insecurity and inequality. It is not the only thing that fuels those but it is certainly a key driver of them. And one reason for that is related to number two which is the fact that committed relationships, most often marriage, are strongly associated with employment patterns, the cessation from criminality, health and happiness. And finally, a lot of academic literature shows that children born to and raised by committed, often married parents, tend to fair better than children in other various situations.

Now, this is of course, the ideal case. There's plenty of room for wiggle room and deservedly so. But it is the case that on the population level, marriage and long term committed relationships like cohabitation very much matter.

But, of course, it's not just about family structure, the quality of these relationships matter. And as we wrote in the report, to the extent that marriage is able to act as a scaffold for building high quality relationships, it will remain an important and valued societal institution. But to the degree that it is not, it will decline as a valued societal institution.

So, the question then becomes what social institutions do we have as well as norms that can help sustain the economic, political, social, et cetera conditions where strong and stable relationships can flourish. And the institution that we're focusing on today in this report is religion. Now, despite trends towards secularism that are well established across much of the developed world and beginning to happen in the developing world. It is still the case that a majority of couples in the developed and a very large majority of couples in developing countries worldwide reported at least some religious activity. And a sizeable minority report pretty high levels of religious devotion.

And the reason why this matters is the fact that religion in relationships are linked. In

a long and enduring academic literature that demonstrates that on average religious people tend to report higher levels of relationship quality. Certainly, there is some selection there. There are always selection effects but there does appear to be a persistent link.

But much of this research is focused on the United States. And so, we wanted to test whether this link between religion and relationships persists throughout countries in North and South America, Europe and Australia. Now related to this, we also wanted to know if this has something to do with the actual effect of religion. Is it about doing religion or is it merely about being on the same page. And the sense that you may get the exact same benefits if as a couple, you both are religious or you're both not religious. Is there something about the tension between the two or is this a true religious effect.

To help us answer these questions, we used a new survey that we collected last year. In total, we interviewed 16,474 people across these 11 countries and again, these countries span North and South America, Europe and Australia. One quick methodology note is that our sample for the United States is a little bit stronger than for the others although these are national samples for all of these. Because we focused on couples, we selected out the 9,566 individuals who reported being either married or cohabiting aged 18 to 50 and heterosexual relationships. And we had about a two-thirds, one-thirds split married to cohabiting.

Now when it comes to measuring religiosity, we had two pieces of information. The first was how often the respondent attended church. We broke that down by never, at least once a month and then at least two to three times per month. And then we also knew whether the respondent's partner, be it a spouse or a cohabiting partner was more, less or about the same religiosity as they were. And so, we coded this to put people into shared secular couples, less or mixed religious couples and highly religious couples.

So, for respondents who never attended church and whose partner was as or less religious than they were, were put into the shared secular group. In the case of respondents who never attended church but whose partner were more religious, we put these folks in the

less or mixed religious group. For respondents who attended once a month or less, sort of regardless, we put them in the less or mixed religious group because these are not clearly secular couples but they're also clearly not both on the highly religious end of the spectrum. And a similar pattern was followed for respondents who attended church at least two to three times a month. If their partner was less religious, we put them in the less or mixed category. But for those who attended church two to three times a month and whose partner was as or perhaps more religious than they were, these were our highly religious couples.

In terms of our relationship quality measures, we have three. I'm only going to talk about two today but I'm certainly happy to talk about that third one. The first is the relationship quality and this is an index meaning we are combining four distinct questions on relationship quality, namely satisfaction, emotional closeness, as well as perceived stability. And then we have sexual satisfaction where we asked how happy or satisfied these people were with their sexual relationship with their partner and then finally have joint decision making which asks whether major household decisions were made jointly between both members of the couple or whether one or the other makes most major household decisions.

So, here we have our results. As you can probably tell at this point, there's a lot of methodological details that we could, you know, get down and dirty in. I'm happy to do that in the Q&A but for now, I mostly to use perhaps a poor metaphor, this is water skiing not scuba diving. I'm just going to kind of roll through. So, here we have our main results with the relationship quality index. And we have these sorted out by highly religious couples, less or mixed religious couples and then the shared secular couples. Note that all of these analyses control for a slew of different variables.

What you see first and foremost here is that the highly religious couples report the highest levels of relationship quality. Whether it's for the men there in blue or the women in red compared to their shared secular or less or mixed religious counterparts. And these differences are statistically significant for the highly religious. We see a similar pattern in terms of sexual satisfaction. Here what we're doing is we're predicting the probability that

somebody said that they agreed that they're satisfied or very satisfied with the sexual relationship that they have with their partner. Again, we have the highly religious reporting the highest levels. When compared to their shared secular or less or mixed religious, note that in this case it's actually the highly religious women who are reporting the highest levels or to be more precise, who have the highest probability of being satisfied.

Now, we next sought to nuance this just a little bit because we wondered whether some of this has to do with gender attitudes, that is gender ideology. And so, what we did is we took a question that asked whether they agreed with the statement that it is often better for the man to work outside the home and for the woman to focus more on in home type of tasks. It's a good but definitely still heteronormative approach to measuring gender ideology. And what we found was interesting.

Particularly among the women, we found what we're calling a J curve. That is when you sort out gender traditionalists who reported that yes, we think it may be better for this sort of specialization approach compared to the progressives who said no, it's not always better or it's not typically better for women to be working in the home and for the man to work outside of it. When we split it out, we find that a large reason why these shared secular couples reported lower relationship quality in those previous slides was largely because the secular couples who hold gender traditional attitudes report pretty low levels of relationship quality. And in this case, the progressives actually pop up a little bit.

Now, this isn't a U curve in the sense that the shared secular gender progressive couples report similar levels of relationship quality than their religious counterparts. It is still among the women, the case that the highly religious women, particularly the highly religious gender traditional couples report the highest levels of relationship quality. But nonetheless, the shared seculars report higher levels than those in the less or mixed religious groups.

I then replicated the same analyses for gender ideology and sexual satisfaction and here we didn't find that same J curve. Rather, what we once again found

was that the highly religious gender traditional women were the most likely. Although most of the other categories were not significantly different from each other. So, a little bit messier of a finding there.

Next, we sought to examine whether this was the case for the United States, specifically because as we saw, this is an 11-country survey. We wanted to know what was happening in the United States itself. And here once again, we found that same J curve among the women. Wherein, the shared secular gender progressive women reported relatively high levels of relationship quality compared to those in the secular traditional group or in the less or mixed religious group. But once again, with the highly religious reporting the highest levels of relationship quality especially among the gender traditionalists.

So, to conclude what does this mean. Well first, we want to emphasize we cannot address causality, these are cross sectional data. So, we make no claims about causality. We would need to spend a lot more time and frankly a few million more dollars before we've got that. But it does appear that religion is consistently linked to better relationships across Europe, North and South America and Australia. Men and women in highly religious couples enjoy significantly higher levels of relationship quality and sexual satisfaction. Also, women in shared secular progressive relationships enjoy comparatively high levels of relationship quality while women in the ideological in religious middle report the lowest levels. With highly religious couples, particularly among traditionalist women reporting the highest levels.

So, then the question becomes well if we're seeing this what appears to be a very religious bump, the question is why. How might religion foster better relationships. Well first, we know that religion fosters norms such as marital permanence, fidelity, it also teaches about love, kindness, patience, the importance of forgiveness. That in principle, should lead to better relationships and better outcomes. Second of all, it also fosters or creates or at least allows access to an entire community of co-believers that can reinforce these norms. Now, of course, that doesn't always work. Social networks don't always have

their intended effects but on average, we would expect this to be the case. Third, we know that religion encourages shared activities and behaviors, that is rituals, that endow life with a greater sense of meaning, power and also connection to something greater than one's self. Which a long line of psychological research has shown to be very important for personal wellbeing as well as for our relationships.

The takeaway point then is quite simple. Happy and successful families come in a variety of forms and religion is one of our key societal institutions that can often help us build better and stronger relationships. Thank you very much.

MS. DEROSE: So, Spencer just talked about positive aspects of relationship quality. It's more depressing to talk about negative relationship behaviors, intimate partner violence and infidelity are not fun things to talk about. But they're an important thing to consider in the overall picture of how faith, family and gender ideology interact.

So, when it comes to religion and negative relationship behaviors, religiously prescribed gender roles could put women at higher risk. This is a very well publicized idea that religious men may feel entitled to dominate their partners and less likely but still possible is that they may view their position as household head as license to cheat. So, basically if you have a doctrine that says that the man is the head of the household, it could have some very negative outcomes associated with it.

I am the lead author on this chapter but I didn't write this sentence so I'm allowed to say that's it one of my favorite sentences in the whole chapter since I didn't write it. By proof texting, that is selectively using the scripture from "patriarchal passages of those scriptures religions can provide frames that lead men to see intimate partner violence as divinely sanctioned expression of their patriarch authority. And women to except abusive relationships as divinely ordained trials to be endured rather than problematic situations from which to flee." It's terrible but we're asking how true is it because we want to know how true it is.

There is also the possibility that religion is what we call a double edge sword. That even if as bad as that last slide indicates it could be, that that's going to be offset by norms, networks and nomos of religious communities that encourage positive family functioning. What are those, they're messages in understanding about the importance of good marriages and families, instruction and how to achieve good marriages and stable families, emotional support and accountability. I think I don't want to gloss over that one too fast.

There's a difference between knowing what's right and having someone who knows you know whether you're doing it or not, that embeddedness in community creates accountability. If your prayer partner knows you're beating your wife, there's going to be a lot of pressure on you to change that behavior. And also, marriages can be in viewed with spiritual character and significance. There's a psychologist that refers to this as the sanctification of marriage and again, I don't want to brush over it. Because if your family is viewed as part of who you are as a person of faith it has a different significance than it's just part of who you are as an individual.

So, all of these positive possibilities can matter more for religious couples than for religious individuals. I assume the logic behind that is fairly transparent than if you're both embedded in a community that provides accountability. That if you both share the same norms that whatever positive influences come from norms, networks and nomos, that they're more enforcing of relationship quality if they're shared.

So, this brings us to our analytic approach which is exactly the same as you saw in the last chapter so I don't have to explain it as thoroughly. We use couple religiosity. So, it's not are you as a man of faith more likely to beat your partner but are you as someone in a highly religious relationship more likely to beat your partner than someone in a shared secular relationship or in one of those mixed less religious relationships. So, we're comparing men and women according to couple spirituality and we specifically test whether belief in male headship matters and again. A piece of the chapter three that I didn't write but makes it into the slides because I liked it so much.

Beliefs are often inferred with we suspect a healthy dose of measurement error from measures of religious affiliation. Translated, we assume that if you go to a conservative Presbyterian church that doesn't allow women in the pulpit, you must be one of those patriarchal folks. Or a Catholic church where women aren't allowed in the priesthood, or fill in your example. The idea is that your affiliation predicts your doctrine with respect to whether the man is the head of the household or not. But we suspected a healthy dose of measurement error on that. So, for the global family faith and gender survey, what we did was actually ask people. Do you believe that the man is head of the household.

So, first I'm going to show you results without a headship variable, so just across those three categories of couple religiosity and then I'm going to show you results with the headship variable. So, for victimization I don't even have a graphic because there are no differences among couple types. I could have showed that but I tried to keep it short and sweet. For perpetration, okay so victimization is women. Our women in each of those three couple types distinctly different with respect to their chance of being a victim of intimate partner violence and the answer is no. And with respect to perpetration, the question is are men in each of those three religious couple types more likely to perpetrate intimate partner violence and again, the answer is no.

So, completely statistically insignificant there. When it comes to infidelity and I will actually show you this but I'll give you the summary before the graph. The infidelity in both shared and secular religious couples, between those two ends of the spectrum that it doesn't differ but that there's more cheating in the middle group. And this is what it looks like that especially for men, those that are in less or mixed religious relationships and by the way, most of those are less. 87 percent of our less and mixed were less where both partners attend religious services somewhere between once a year and once a month. And only 13 percent of them are mixed where one partner has a distinct pattern of attendance from the others. So, most of those have the advantage of being on the same page and we did actually test whether those two were different and they weren't which is why we left them

rolled together.

But in that middle group, the less and mixed religious relationships, the predicted probability of men cheating was .18. So, men were more likely to cheat and you see that the shared secular men cheated at half that rate, .09 was the predicted probability. So, there's a distinct advantage to having a shared secular, shared ethos compared to a middling shared ethos. There's also a distinct advantage to being highly religious. And for the men, there's no difference between the shared secular estimate and the highly religious estimate but you can see that the point estimate is actually a little bit favors the shared secular men. Don't make anything of that tiny difference but they're both advantage.

For the women, the shared secular women don't cheat at lower rates than the women in the middle. That .11 and .10 are not statistically different but the highly religious women actually do cheat on their partners at a lower level than ones in the middle. But not at a lower level than the shared seculars. So, the big contrast that I'm drawing here is with the middle rather than between the ends.

Okay so this is where it gets interesting for me. Not that that wasn't interesting but what about this idea that the doctrine of male headship is the real problem. Let's find out whether it is. So, looking at these same three outcomes, first victimization. Shared secular women who do not view men as household heads are less likely to be victims. That's the only difference. Other than that, we see exactly the same thing and this is what it looks like. Well not exactly the same thing because you don't see, well yeah, I'm sorry. Yes, the same thing because most of these differences are still statistically insignificant. I didn't show you a graph for victimization before because it was boring. I said all three bars are the same height, I'm not even going to show it to you. Now I'm showing you all six bars, they're almost all the same height. The one difference is between the folks in the middle that hold patriarchal attitudes, yes, the man is the household head, and the folks in shared secular couples that hold egalitarian attitudes, no the man is not the household head or I don't agree with the statement that he is.

What I think comes out there is that headship does matter but minimally. It's if you aren't in a religious relationship, your belief can have an influence on the probability of being a victim of intimate partner violence. But it's a little bit surprising that that was the only significant result.

Moving on to perpetration, again, you don't get to see it because it was too boring. Same across all six categories. Before it was the same across all three categories. Without headship we had headship is still the same. Finally, infidelity. There are lower rates of cheating among men in shared secular relationships. You saw that before but those pertain only among the egalitarians. So, headship does matter a little bit. I'll read this last part and then show it to you because it's easier to look at the graphic. And the lower rates of cheating among men and women and highly religious couples become statistically insignificant.

So, this is what it looks like. You no longer have less cheating among the highly religious when you separate the egalitarians from the patriarchals. I think some of that is just simply sample size because there's still an advantage and they're not that different from each other. I mean, .11 and .12 and .06 and .06, those categories aren't very different from each other. On the highly religious end of the spectrum, the gender role ideology doesn't matter that much. Nonetheless, adding the gender role ideology makes the cheating advantage among the highly religious go away.

For men, the shared secular men have an advantage over the men in the middle if and only if they are egalitarian. So, it's the secular men that do not view themselves as the household heads who have a lower rate of cheating than the folks in the middle. So, those that believe more in gender equality in shared secular relationships have an advantage over either the egalitarians or the patriarchal folks in the middle.

Okay so the summary is that the belief in male headship and these are my words, this isn't in the chapter, is overrated as a risk factor. That that when we actually measure that instead of inferring it, we don't see a lot of evidence. It does differentiate

shared secular couples importantly. I thought this was worth noting is that it didn't differentiate religious couples but it did differentiate shared secular couples.

So, if you're in a religious couple whether you believe the man is the head of the household or not doesn't matter all that much or doesn't matter at all. For intimate partner violence, perpetration, victimization, or fidelity for men or women. If you are in a shared secular relationship, the advantages associated with that over the folks in the middle are only among the egalitarians. And this should remind you of the J curve where you saw that advantage among the shared secular egalitarians but not so much among the secular traditionalists. So, I think this is very consistent with the J curve.

Overall, highly religious couples, shared secular couples and those in between are all similar in terms of the violence occurring within their intimate partnerships with respect to the rhetoric that says that religious folks are more at risk, especially because the doctrine of headship. Religious couples experience and commit intimate partner violence just as non-religious couples do. And religious participation in itself does not safeguard against intimate partner violence the way that most nomos norms networks rhetoric would say it should safeguard against intimate partner violence. But the other important conclusion is that less and mixed religious couples experience more infidelity than folks at the extremes.

So, the way that we interpret this, I mean, we basically the question that pops out to me with this set of findings is why doesn't religiosity protect against these negative relationship outcomes, especially given that you just heard that it promotes relationship quality. If it promotes relationship quality, shouldn't it be associated with less beating and less cheating. And we have two answers to that question. One is that religion is falling short of its potential as a protective factor. There is very little pastoral training on how to deal with intimate partner violence within congregations. Nancy Nason-Clark has a network of folks that have researched this and her stats on the classes that you get in seminary on intimate partner violence are almost zero in almost all traditions in Canada and

the United States. Now grant it, our data covers more than that but I really don't suspect that Mexican seminaries are a heck of a lot better.

So, one is that the pastors aren't being trained on how to deal with this very important problem that afflicts religious communities just as it afflicts other communities and also that they're suffering in silence. That there is some shame in going to your pastor, your potentially ill-equipped pastor and saying I need help because my husband is beating me. So, the combination of individual level behavior and institutional level behavior can be preventing religion from meeting its potential as a protective factor. And so, that's part of our explanation.

But finally, shared secular egalitarian and highly religious couples have important similarities. Now the word I have up on the slides is homogamy. I actually like Spencer's much better, same page. That being on the same page has its own good effect. I'm discounting that somewhat though because a lot of those people in the middle were on the same page, again 87 percent of them. So, I'm emphasizing the mutual respect part of it. That in a shared secular egalitarian relationship as in highly religious relationships regardless of headship doctrine, there's a lot of shared mutual respect for the other person as a person, as a creation of God that that partner has dignity. And I'm not saying that that's completely absent in the other categories just that it's less reinforced in the other categories and that that may be a very important reason why they're different in relationship quality.

Okay so very briefly is the overall story the same in the U.S., victimization, yes. No differences by religious couple type. Perpetration, yes. No differences by religious couple type. Infidelity, women in the U.S. who are highly religious cheat on their partners less than either those in the middle or shared secular women, no differences for men. So, the story is a little different for the U.S. because there is a religious advantage but for the intimate partner violent outcomes, not difference between the U.S. and overall.

MR. HACKETT: Good morning, I'm Conrad Hackett, Senior Demographer at Pew Research Center. And it's my pleasure this morning to engage with this very

interesting report although I'm going to engage in a narrow part of the richness that's here. The very last thing Lori said in her first presentation is that people of faith can support sustainable fertility levels. And this gets back to some ideas in the first chapter that were fascinating to me. And I want to discuss two questions based on them and then comment on one of the conclusions from the religion and fertility chapter.

So, my first question is should replacement level fertility be a goal for society? The fertility chapter takes the normative position that replacement level fertility of 2.1 children per woman on average should indeed be societies goal. The authors describe this with their term sustainable fertility. I would have liked to know more about this and why they see this as the particular goal that society should strive for. Some people make an economic argument that, in fact, higher fertility is desirable because it could drive economic growth while others would argue that fertility levels below replacement level fertility are desirable because they will minimize the human impact on our planet. But what is the rationale for replacement level fertility and why do we call this sustainable.

My second question is if we grant that low fertility that exists in many advanced countries currently is a problem is religion the answer. According to the analysis you saw here, fertility levels have been declining over a 20-year period across people of all religious commitment levels. Although at any point in time, the more frequently a person attends religious services the more children they have on average. I'd like to highlight three implications of this pattern.

Implication number one. In many advanced economies, even fairly religious young adults may already be on track when they finish their childbearing years to have below replacement fertility. And furthermore, if the highly religious continue to follow the trend of their less religious forebearers, then this trajectory of declining fertility over time that the report shows suggests that fertility of the faithful will merely slow down the move below replacement level fertility that is underway rather than having the potential to reverse course.

Implication number two. An interesting consequence of these fertility

differences, if everyone is having declining fertility but the more religious are having more kids, that means that if everything else were equal over the long term and if children inherit their parent's religion, then the society would become more religious through fertility. Now in countries like the United States, we know that something else is going on. People tend to move away from their parent's religion as they age. But however, globally projections my team at Pew Research Center has done suggests that in the broader world where we have highly religious countries without the kind of secularization we see in the west, if current patterns continue then we could have very large fertility differences between the secularizing west and the rapidly growing rest of the world driving a more religious world overall. Even if there's different dynamics in western countries.

Implication number three. If the fertility of the faithful is not the solution for challenges related to low fertility like the economic burden of supporting aging societies, then it could be that alternate solutions are more feasible such as welcoming immigrants from countries that still have very high fertility rates.

Now finally, I'd like to turn to the conclusion of this paper which claims that "across low fertility countries in the Americas, Europe, East Asia and Oceania, the fertility gap associated with extremes of religiosity increased 15 percent from 0.24 children to 0.27 children across the last two decades". The report contrasts the average number of children ever born to respondents currently age 15 to 49 who attend worship services more than once a week versus those who never attend in various waves of the World Value Survey.

And the highlighted conclusion suggests that the impact of religion has grown between wave three and wave six of the survey. Now at one point, the authors do acknowledge that this difference is "too small to matter statistically". And I'm inclined to agree but since the authors nonetheless give prominence to this difference in the conclusion and introduction. I think it's worth considering that if they had instead compared the results from different waves shown in the report, their method of comparison could have led to a different conclusion that the impact of religion while persistent is waning. For example, if

they compared the data they report for wave four with wave six then we should see a shrinking of the gap by 22 percent from 0.35 children to 0.27 children. I would contend that in fact this data is not really adequate to evaluate whether the gap is growing or shrinking.

In conclusion, I want to affirm that after the educational attainment of women, religion remains one of the most important factors effecting childbearing. But I think we need a little bit more evidence before we can conclude whether the influence of religion is increasing or decreasing. Going back to the question of whether society should aim for a placement fertility, I'm not going to take a position on that but I would love to know what panelists think and what you all think. And to the question of whether if low fertility is a problem can religion be the solution. I must confess that I'm not sure how the fertility of the faithful can be adequate to bring low fertility countries back up to replacement level fertility.

MS. EMBA: Hi, I'm Christine Emba. I'm a columnist at *The Washington Post* and I'm going to provide a generational perspective. And since we've had a lot of discussion on the results of the study already, I will try to keep it brief. So, I'll admit first off that I am a millennial, a part of that much maligned generation. And when we're not busy eating avocado toast and killing paper napkins, diamonds, the restaurant Hooters, we're putting off our relationships and we're wondering how we could ever afford or even if we want children. And yet we're up, it's our time.

My generation is at the end of their twenties and in their thirties. We're in the primary position to be buying houses, marrying, yes having children and setting up our adult futures. But we and women especially I speak of here worry not just about cost but about fairness and the toll that relationships and fertility, as we've been calling it, may have on our lives. Will marriage be fair, who wins and who loses in careers, in leisure time and in health. And are we sure that we can count on our partners to be real partners. And, of course, a side question, do we even have partners. Tinder is not helping us all that much here.

Relationships based on or colored by religion, another one of those

institutions and norms that we are bent on destroying as a generation, are often viewed with a particular skepticism. We're paranoid, you see. We may have watched our parents break up, we may have watched the economy crumble and we may have seen many of the same traumas in religion and religious institutions as, I think, everyone in this room can understand.

Yet when we talk about the relationship between well, the relationships and religion, one of the biggest concerns is equity. Which is why in this study, The Ties that Bind, the distinction between patriarchal and egalitarian couples was so interesting.

That said, The Ties that Bind had some counterintuitive takes, at least from my perspective. The first, which we've gone over and so I'll water ski past it as Spencer said, was about J curves. There were a number of different J curves in this study and mainly they showed that being unequally yoked, as it was called in my evangelical Wednesday night classes, or marrying a partner of another faith or belief sect is less than ideal. And this became particularly apparent in discussion of relationship quality.

So, couples who were the same aligned in secularism and in their gender ideology, usually progressive, as well as couples who were aligned on the other end, religious and traditional or patriarchal, were the happiest. They won on measures of satisfaction, attachment, commitment and stability. Of course, for relationship quality, income was the best predictor but I think we could all expect that.

The most intriguing point in found though in this study was this line and I'll actually just read it from the study. Religion may channel gender traditionalism into a family centered form of living that gives partners clear norms for their relationship and family life but does so in ways that are interpreted as solidarity enhancing rather than patriarchal. By contrast, gender traditionalism in more secular or only nominally religious context, may give men a license to treat their partners in more domineering and less considerate ways.

The latter, I think, is what most progressives and progressive millennials fear when it comes to relationships, religion and both of those combined. However, many of

us seem not as clear, we seem not to know that the former may be possible. As the data continues to appear and as we discuss on this panel, I'm interested in seeing whether our opinions begin to change.

MS. SAWHILL: We are a little bit behind on time but let's take a few questions from the audience. Please state who you are and where you're from. Right here.

MR. CHECCO: Larry Checco, senior advisor to Serve USA. Just a little personal background. I've been married to my wife for 40 years. It's been a great monogamous relationship. I would classify us as SBNR's I think it is. But I think the one, I think you could almost exchange the word religion for economic inequality as well. I think a lot of healthy marriages depend on good incomes. And I think a lot of what's going on today in terms of family breakup is financial stress. And I don't think this report covered that at all and I think that, well anyway. My question would be, should you have included economics and income into your report because I think it would sway things a lot.

MS. SAWHILL: I think that's a great question and before you all answer, I'm going to collect a couple of questions given our time limitations. There were a lot of hands in the back, on the aisle there.

MR. GREENSPAN: Yeah, Gabriel Greenspan from the Competitive Enterprise Institute. So, I thought it was interesting examining the idea of mixed couples where couples were one of the people is religious and one of the couples is not religious. I was wondering, did you look at couples where both partners are religious but they're from different faith traditions. One is a devout Christian, one is a devout Jew, for instance. Or one is a devout Jew and one is a devout Muslim. You know, you can pick your examples but what is the effect there if you have two highly religious people from different faith traditions.

MS. SAWHILL: Good. The woman right behind, yes.

MS. SULKOVSKY: My name is Ann Sulkovsky and I used to live and work in the countries of Niger, Senegal and Tunisia. So, this is a question. I'd like to hear more

about Muslim Sub-Saharan Africa. I heard about many other continents.

MS. SAWHILL: One more question here.

MS. SOURS: I'm Beverly Sours. I was formerly tenure at Carnegie Melon but I'm now retired and a choir girl. So, there's the data question. You don't really discriminate about one child versus six in highly religious relationships and how that might skew your data on the number of children. Another one might be is it the network effect of religion or is are there other networks which might serve the same purpose in a secular couple. And then are there safeguards in religion that enable people to get out in ways that maybe there aren't safeguards where you don't have a network or somebody looking after you.

MS. SAWHILL: Okay thank you, these are great questions. I'm going to turn now to the panel and I don't think all of you should answer every question so try to trade off. The first one is about economics. Who wants to take the economics one?

MR. JAMES: Can you hear me?

MS. SAWHILL: You are mic'd I think, yeah.

MR. JAMES: I'm always debating because I teach large classes so I can project if necessary. So, the answer is we did take a good long hard look at the economics. I didn't have time to sort of draw up the graphs although they are available in the report. And what we found is that what we're calling this religious association is similar in size to our finance's variable. Of course, when you're doing a cross country study, you know, you can't just ask straight up about income because income means different things across context. And so, we have a variable that asks roughly how comfortable your finances are, Very comfortable, comfortable, not at all, et cetera. And when we compared the relative effects of that finance variable to these religious variables, they produced similar effect sizes.

Now, I'm 100 percent with you. If I could change one thing in an instant, I would change people's economic outlooks. I think that's ultimately where the money is at. But that doesn't begin to factor religion still has this clear and persistent link across

countries.

MS. SAWHILL: Chris, she wants to get in on this too.

MS. EMBA: Yeah, where the money's at. So, I would hypothesize and I wonder if you guys can tell me if this seems correct that religion in relationships that are perhaps financially troubled or less financially secure might still be helpful in keeping parents together because of what you described as nomos and networks. So, the idea that there is, you know, a faith or a higher cause or a reason that this relationship exists and that one should protect it even though they're outside forces, financial forces putting pressure on it. And also, the idea that there could be social networks, that would help a financially unstable or troubled family stay intact. Whether through church networks, networks of religion online, networks elsewhere where people can reach out either for material or sort of psychological and philosophical assistance. That is what I've seen in my limited experience.

You know, families with children who are undergoing financial instability. You know, reaching out to their churches and asking for donations or seeing if someone is going to take care of their kids or talk to their husband or wife about what to do or help them find a job, et cetera, et cetera. So, I do think that religion can actually have an impact on the economic question.

But then I would say again with this generational perspective, absolutely yes and this was one of the questions that I too had about the report. I was not a contributor to the report, I'm just commenting on it. I think it's very clear and the research has long shown that financial hardship is one of the number one causes of relationship breakup and family breakup and instability.

And also, when we're speaking of fertility, especially in my generation, and younger generations overall. When you ask why people are not getting married or having children or having as many children as they would like, the number one, two and three responses in most surveys tend to be about financial hardship of some kind. Either we can't afford a wedding or we can't afford childcare or we can't afford to have simply another child even

though we would want one. And so, I do think that this economic inequality and economic instability is probably the number one question that we have. But there are many other studies, I think, that do focus on that.

MS. SAWHILL: So, the question about different faith backgrounds, do you want to take Laurie or somebody?

MR. HACKETT: So, we looked at that early on but we haven't yet had a chance to dig precisely into that different faith couple combination. We did control for different religious affiliations and didn't find a lot of differences but, of course, those differences are only across the outcomes rather than looking at differences across the couples. But that's a real interesting question, one that we plan to explore in the upcoming months.

MS. DEROSE: And we'll probably run into sample size problems.

MR. JAMES: Yeah, I mean, we'll be limited to the larger affiliations, of course. I mean, there's not that many groups, for example, in our study.

MS. SAWHILL: If I can interject for a moment here. I think this first question about what are the big drivers, you know, you all wanted to focus on the role of religion and gender ideology and that's really interesting. But I kept thinking you've got this massive data set, you've got 11 countries, you've got 11 identified religious affiliations and you did break out the U.S. for some of your analyses. But I kept thinking what are the big drivers here. Did you ever run an analysis that simply looked for what is the, you know, what are the right-hand variables when you put them in there that have the biggest effects. Is it economics, is it something else, is it what Christine is talking about, is it education of women which would be high on my list and I think Conrad mentioned.

MR. JAMES: Well, the answer is yes.

MS. SAWHILL: Yeah, okay.

MR. JAMES: And the three biggest in no particular order were education particularly among women as you just mentioned, finances. Again, we can't get exactly at

income because, you know and then third was religion. In terms of the of the three variables that seemed to separate out along the relationship quality, central satisfaction, joint decision-making variables. Those are sort of the three largest differentiators.

MS. SAWHILL: Okay. Somebody asked about Muslim countries I think and then we had a lot of questions at the end about is there a big distribution of, you know, kids with highly religious and especially the more traditional couples having lots of kids maybe effecting the analysis. Any comments about those last couple of questions?

MS. DEROSE: I'll take them.

MS. SAWHILL: Okay.

MS. DEROSE: We would love to expand the global family and gender survey to more lower income countries. Because the Latin American countries that we included were relatively high-income countries, we don't have Bolivia.

MR. JAMES: For the record, I pushed to include Africa here but I got shot down.

MS. DEROSE: Spencer and I both have an affinity for Africa as you do. We had a South African potential partner that didn't work out and we were bummed. Not that South Africa is Nigeria. It would be interesting --

MR. JAMES: Niger.

MS. DEROSE: Well, Niger, Nigeria and Senegal, didn't you mention?

MS. SALKOWSKI: Niger, Senegal, Tunisia.

MS. DEROSE: Okay sorry. But on the Muslim end to look at Northern Africa as well or countries in the Middle East. So, we would like to have a second round of our survey specifically to pick up lower income countries and Muslim countries. It's not that they are no other countries we could pick up if we were successful in getting funding for a second round, but those are our two big priorities. Is what does this look like in lower income countries and what does this look like in Muslim countries.

And then I'll answer, I did do average fertility. I'll defend that just by saying

that if we're looking at it at a societal level that's the right measure. I understand that distributions get skewed by people that have five or six children or seven or eight. But in terms of the aggregate question, I think the combined measure is the right one.

MR. HACKETT: On the Africa point and Muslims, I just wanted to say that our work at Pew has found as this report found that Muslim fertility tends to be higher than for any other group. That's a general pattern that's true in many countries. And in Africa, the high fertility for both Christians and Muslims is profoundly consequential for the future trajectory of the world. And Christians are increasingly more concentrated in Africa because of high fertility and the high Muslim fertility in Africa and elsewhere is making the world increasingly Muslim.

MS. SAWHILL: I'm going to make an executive decision that because this was such an interesting panel and it really was and you all did a great job, but we did go over our time. So, I'm going to suggest if you need a break, just take it informally and we are going to pull the second panel up right now as soon as we thank this panel. So, join me in thanking this one.

(Recess)

MR. WILCOX: We're going to go ahead with our second session this morning on the new report, The Ties That Bind. And we are talking in the second session about faith, feminism, and family life.

And I am pleased to welcome a distinguished panel to my right here. We have Hanna Rosin from NPR, obviously Belle Sawhill from Brookings here, we have Jason Carroll from the Wheatley Institution and BYI, and then I am from the University of Virginia and the Institute for Family Studies.

And I wanted to kind of begin our conversation by touching on one of the themes that was articulated in the first panel, and that was sort of on the trajectory of fertility that we're seeing both in the United States and in much of the developed world towards less fertility, towards lower fertility. In fact, just last week the CDC announced that we're reaching

a new record -- we've reached a new record of about 1.72 babies per woman on average and a fertility rate here and the United States.

And so I sort of wanted to sort of have people just sort of reflect on the way in which both religion and feminism may be kind of affecting our fertility trends here, based both on this new report and then other kinds of thoughts that they might have.

There's one interesting I think sort of additional point just to highlight here is that a number of scholars and public intellectuals have been kind of talking about feminism is the new natalism, how in some ways, surprisingly, we're kind of seeing comparatively high levels of fertility in countries like Sweden, for instance. And that may be because of the way in which they have more generous work-family policies and norms that encourage men to engage in their families.

So I just want to begin our discussion by sort of reflecting on the way in which faith and feminism may be affecting fertility and, if indeed, sort of having a close to replacement fertility is even an ideal for us.

So maybe, Belle, do you want to jump in on this question at all with this first thing?

MS. SAWHILL: Sure. I guess that I felt like there was a hypothesis in this report that a more egalitarian gender ideology would actually improve fertility and the feminism is pronatalist. And I think I don't agree with that. I think that feminism is going to reduce fertility for the simple reason that once women have lots of choices, more of them are going to choose not to marry and choose either to have fewer children or possibly none at all. And when you add in the extra issues of cost and caring for children and so forth that Christine brought up, and all the other things that are driving fertility that Conrad brought up, I think that the whole idea that feminism is pronatalist is just simply wrong.

Now, I think that religion is probably slowing down the long-term secular -- secular now used in the trend sense -- decline in fertility in more advanced countries. And I think I want to make a more provocative point about that, which is when societies go through

very disruptive changes, and we're seeing a lot of that now, for economic reasons, for demographic reasons, and for other reasons, that's not good for society if the change is too rapid. And, you know, this big populist wave that we're seeing now may be in part related to that.

So at the same time that there are certain forces that are requiring these adjustments and leading to lower fertility, maybe we do need some traditional institutions to both slow the process down a bit and also provide safe harbors for the people caught up in all of the disruptive change.

MR. WILCOX: Hanna, any thoughts on this question?

MS. ROSIN: Yeah. I am so glad Belle said that. That's an interesting frame.

I was thinking more broadly about religion, because you had asked was I surprised by the finding that essentially -- I mean if we do take for a minute the idea that feminism is natalist or that there are places like Sweden where sort of a more feminist ideology has led people to have more children, I wasn't surprised that women in religious marriages were happier or were having more children. That part wasn't surprising to me.

I think when I look at America what is more surprising to me is that religion hasn't been able to stem the tide of non-marriage more than it has. Like that seems to be the more forceful thing. Like if you're talking to a woman who is already in a religious marriage, it is not surprising that she's happy because her entire world is kind of reinforcing the choices and decisions she's made. And if you've ever seen a video in Mormon temple or if you've ever listened to James Dobson -- like the path of sort of getting religious men to be active participating husbands has been going on for 40 years now. So I think that's sort of well accepted. But more broadly, I mean if you look at divorce rates and single mother rates, they are prevalent in places where people call themselves Evangelicals or where people define themselves as religious in some way. So that's what's to me more broadly surprising, I show little effect religion had in American on the broader trends.

MR. WILCOX: There's a kind of a story the report kind of lays out in terms of like the difference between kind of like being nominally religious and being sort of more seriously religious. And in that sense we do see across a number of the outcomes in the report, like relationship quality, for instance, that the nominally religious folks -- to kind of pick up on your point, Hanna, are more likely to be doing worse off in their relationships compared to those couples who are shared in their religious practice and their face.

And that speaks in some ways to the sort of the broader ecological point that you're touching on too, and that is that in some of our more religious states, like Arkansas, for instance, or Oklahoma, you see more divorce than you would in much of the U.S. But in states that are more consistently religious, like Utah, for instance, you see more family stability there.

So there is a big distinction in the report at the individual level between those couples who are sort of shared in their faith and those couples who got either a mixed background or who are more nominally religious.

MS. ROSIN: Is there any other state but Utah? Because Utah is unusual because the Mormon Church is so excellent at emphasizing both the role of the father and the role of family. I mean the message is so consistent that it seems exceptional.

MR. WILCOX: Well, we do see actually at the county level, a sort of more consistent relationship between being more conservative -- and I'll take that here as maybe a proxy for religiosity -- and more intact families.

So the states are often quite heterogeneous in some ways when it comes to sort of what's happening at the state level, but once you look at it a more fine grain level, we do see that more sort of conservative counties have both more marriage but also more family stability compared to less conservative counties. And then, of course, at the individual level we're seeing in this report that couples who share a strong faith tend to have higher quality relationships, in other words, they also are more stable.

So, for instance, there's new research showing that people who are regular

religious practice, are engaged in regular religious practice, are about 40 percent less likely to get divorced. But the nominally religious folks are often doing the worst. That kind of speaks to your --

MS. ROSIN: The what? The middle? The nominally religious.

MR. WILCOX: Nominally -- in the middle sort of -- yeah, category.

MS. ROSIN: Yeah, yeah, yeah. Yeah. Can I ask you a question?

(Laughter)

I was reading it and I was thinking well, sort why frame the questions this way? Like what are you trying to get us to think about? Are you trying to get us to think about ways in which kind of the left and -- we call it the left and the right, but the religious and the secular have like overlapping interests or sort of what is the -- or is the idea -- because I felt like I was trying to read between the lines and the message of this report. Is it like, you know, we can't force people to be more religious. Like that feels like -- that's not a government policy that we can have is everybody has to attend church every week. And so what is the message we're thinking about when we learn that people at the U curve, people at the extremes, have the most stable and the happiest marriages?

MR. WILCOX: Well, let me respond quick and then let Jason respond too to sort of give his take on this.

I think part of the thinking here, on my part at least, is I think we live obviously in a very pluralistic milieu today, and one that it is in some ways increasingly pluralistic and of course increasingly polarized. And so I think part of the idea here is to sort of honestly think about ways in which despite the sort of polarization that exist in our country and in our society, you know, are there points of common ground, in this case in family life. And I think one of the sort of interesting pieces here is that it looks like despite the fact that sort of feminists, and at least more conservative religious people, often have serious differences, I think that one thing that they tend to share is an expectation, you know, a code that sort of men are supposed to be engaged pretty seriously in the life of family. And that's

sort of a piece of common ground that's not necessarily recognized and could be more appreciated.

So that's I think one response I would offer to you.

The second response is to think too about -- and we can do this maybe a little bit later on in panel -- is sort are there points of common ground on say family policy that we could identify that might be fruitful for future work when it comes to sort of strengthening families in the U.S. And I've got some ideas about that we can touch on later.

MR. CARROLL: I think one of the things that's easy to do, and it always happens with a report when you're trying to condense and get key ideas, is that a lot of this starts to sound categorical when we actually might have in many cases differences by degree, or we might emphasize and talk about what might be called the secular progressive and then we have this kind of traditional religious. We also had progressive religious, right, and we had traditional secular as well. And so I think those differences of degree start to become interesting contrasts as well.

One of the things I thought for myself that ties into some of this is we paid attention to Pew and others that have also been emphasizing the range and difference of degree that we see around desired work patterns, often for women and mothers during -- particularly with children in the home. And so then this issue of choice and this issue of being able to enact and follow a pattern that someone may choose for family life or particularly for raising up children, there definitely seems to be -- and perhaps in the highly religious in many ways -- a child up, so to speak, mindset of how that's being chose and decided on around that. And so there may be even in some cases a sense that then the sense of choice, the sense of pattern that is available or the options that may be there with being at home full-time for a season or part-time employment or full-time employment. We see a range across that. And I think without getting into those realities it is very hard to know what people would be saying they're satisfied with, that they're striving for. So I think we might -- and we can talk more about it -- I think we might have different pathways to

sense of partnership and to sense of commonality, and one may be through a bit more of sameness or equality, to speak, pattern. The other, though, may very well be a partnership through complementarity and equity. And if there is a sense of desire and a sense of equal kind of commonality towards it, we see these paths moving people towards a sense of feeling valued, a sense of team and partnership that really does let these different pathways lead to common symbols of value and unity and partnership, even though they may seem to start at different place.

And I think that's where the relationship, equality, and fertility elements of that start to get embedded in those nuances that are always very difficult to capture in kind of the quick cuts that a report ends up doing.

MS. ROSIN: Yeah, as you were talking I was thinking like, well, you're probably right that say like Sweden and kind of traditional religious people in America might come up with the -- you know, Sweden says you're home for a year after you give birth to a child. So there are commonalities there, but then if you move one step further, I think that the sort of major difference, or has been traditionally in America, is the family question. Like when you emphasize the family question, what happens is that there is resistance to universal childcare, there's this idea that it has to happen in a particular way. And I think it's -- actually as Swedish women stay home for a year has been damaging for women in the workplace.

So it's this idea that it can't be done by the government, it kind of has to be done by extra government institutions. That's traditionally how conservative religion in America has viewed childcare, and so then you get stuck.

MR. WILCOX: You say you get stuck, you mean in what sense? What's the -- how do you get stuck?

MS. ROSIN: To me the answer is obvious. Like there has been economic shifts in which women are in the workplace, they've been happening for a long time, and no allowance for childcare. And so it's just obvious what's happening in America. Like we just

haven't -- it's an economic problem, it's not a spiritual problem and it's not a cultural problem, it's an economic, structural problem. And it's not going to be -- like when you say that women want to stay home, well, men should be able to stay home for a year. Like the trends are obvious to me, the trends are towards women working more, the trends are towards more equality. There are exceptions to those trends, but those are the trends. And those are the trends in many, many countries in the world. And so the answer is structural. And there is resistance to that in the U.S., and I don't know why.

MS. SAWHILL: Well, you know, just building on that, because I really agree with the first part of it, we know -- we have great research on this actually, that the United States is way behind other advanced countries in terms of making work and family values consistent. And we are the only -- not only the only advanced country, but almost the only country in the world that doesn't provide paid leave when a baby is born. And if you are a woman in a managerial professional position, your employer probably allows you to take it and even keeps your salary going, but if you're a low wage woman, you don't and you are just no place. I mean it's rather shocking to me. And childcare is obviously another example of this, and flexible work hours, and so forth, and not saying to a low wage worker in the service or retail sector, oh, well, you know, you showed up for work but we don't have any work for you right now. I mean it's even being told in advance about whether or you are going to be expected to work that day and forgetting about whether you might need to arrange childcare.

So there are all those policy issues. And just again to make this a little bit fun and provocative, I wonder to what extent the fact that America is more religiously oriented and religiously conservative than some of those European countries is making it harder for us to adopt these policies that would enable people to combine work with raising children.

So I would suggest to the religious community, especially some parts of it in America -- I noticed, by the way, that the largest religious group in your sample was

Catholics. And, you know, we are going to have now a huge debate about abortion and birth control, which makes it even more difficult for women to manage getting educated, making a living, and raising a family because they're going to have more trouble planning all of that.

So if I were being -- I said something positive about religion being an important institution in terms of these major disruptive changes we're having, but it politically might not be such a positive influence. And that's not to take away from its very positive effect I think that you identify in your report in terms of personal relationships.

MR. WILCOX: I think on the issue of paid parent leave, I think there is a good deal of openness on the part of many religious institutions towards moving forward on that particular issue. I think that's a point where we can find some common ground perhaps. Other areas, you know, not so much.

But I guess -- I want to just also sort of ask you, Hanna, I think it's true that there's been a lot of change both in Europe and the United States, but if you actually look at a more granular level at women's sort of preferences when it comes to how they combine work and family, what you see not just in the U.S., but even in Europe, and obviously a place like the Netherlands, is there's a lot of interest in particularly of women in working part-time or in some cases even being at home full-time when their kids are younger.

So I think it seems to me like the public conversation about kind of work and family in the U.S. is sort of off and predicated on this idea we should be moving towards kind of a model where women are working full-time on a pretty consistent basis across the life course, when actually sort of our surveying ordinary women in places like the Netherlands or the United States, you actually see a lot of heterogeneity in their attitudes about sort of the best arrangement. And I think we could do better to sort of acknowledge that. And also from a policy perspective, kind of create a space where if you want to be at home part-time, great, if you want to work full-time, great, or if you want to be at home full-time, great. And the policies should not be putting, you know, a premium on one way to address these work

and family challenges.

MS. ROSIN: For sure. First of all, the Netherlands is an exception. I mean I love that study in the Netherlands. Two, I don't think anybody should be working full-time. (Laughter) I think my broad objection to these conversations is that I do not -- I for the life of me, in my soul, do not understand why this is a question for women. Men have children and women have children. This is a conversation for families, this is not a thing where what do women want to choose or how to do women want to work. It's like how do we want to raise our families, how does a father want to raise our families. The father should not be working full-time when they have children, obsessively, and the mother should not be working full-time. Children need to spend time with their families, families need to be together. It is not the mother's responsibility to, in my mind, even one iota more than it's the father's responsibility.

So I don't think of it like how can the father help, I think of it as like the baby is half the father's and half the mother's, and this is a family, and everybody figure it out so the children are happy and everybody is happy. That is honestly how I think about these questions, you know.

So we're always asking women what do you want to do, what's your work-life balance, when do you want to have maternity leave? It's like she's not the only one who had the baby, so ask everyone in the family what they want to do.

MR. WILCOX: Well, you know, the *New York Times* did do that a number of years ago and they found that there was a desire on the part of -- I think Pew has done something similar -- but there was a desire on the part of both fathers and mothers to spend more time with their kids.

MS. ROSIN: Yes.

MR. WILCOX: But there is also kind of a difference in how moms and dads think about this sort of work-family juggle. So on average moms are more likely to prefer -- actually, the part-time was their preferred model here in America, and dads are more likely

to prefer the full-time option. So I think we have to recognize that, yes, kids belong to both mothers and fathers and they both have responsibilities. And obviously one of the points in the report is to sort of stress how that plays out in both secular and religious context. But there are also some differences in terms of what ordinary people prefer that I think we should acknowledge.

MS. ROSIN: Totally. And I bet if you asked my question you would get different answers from men and women, but ask it to everybody.

MS. SAWHILL: So, Brad, I want to ask the following question in that context, which is do you believe these differences, that you've sometimes cited, between men and women in terms of their preferences, how much are they biological and how much are they cultural --

MS. ROSIN: Ooh, Belle, don't --

MS. SAWHILL: I'm sorry, but we have to --

MS. ROSIN: That's a hard one.

MS. SAWHILL: We have to confront it. And I do believe you wrote a book or edited a book about this. And we may not know the answer. I certainly don't pretend to know the answer right now. I would only point out that data that show right now, or 10 years ago, or whenever, that women have preferences that are different than men, well, you know, duh, because they have been socialized differently.

MR. CARROLL: I think what we're capturing here is what I meant by this idea of partnership through sameness or similarity and partnership through complementarity. And what the progressive ideology, right, there's a sense that that needs to be confronted, that needs to be changed. Where I think we see from patterns, and I think many from religious tradition are bringing with it a different set of meaning, perhaps, or the way that they're viewing purposes and fundamental identity. And so I think that the ideals -- the one data point that I've got to jump in here that we didn't cover in the first session was the shared decision making, which the central story line was across all the groups, similarly high shared

decision making. So in the highly religious traditional couples, the women are reporting same levels of shared decision making in important household decisions. So I think when there's a process equality, there is at least those that have that view of family life, that they're much more comfortable with a complementarity model that might say we're both equally engaged, we're both equally contributing, but it isn't necessarily in a sense of sameness.

Now, of course for others, that's not their relationship regime, and there's that pattern of saying oh, my partnership pattern is a sameness, so to speak. But that notion seems to be prevalent. We see it in many of our higher fertility families, that that complementarity model seems to work and to fit for them.

So the question is, is there space for that, is there continued space --

MS. SAWHILL: There should be. I think neither Hanna nor I are going against that.

MR. CARROLL: Yeah, and the notion too that -- and that's where I think that notion about choice, if there's a sense of feeling that that might be a more supported choice inside of a religious community or context, if that's the view.

So I think that's where those things do, but when it comes to policy issues, then it starts to feel like well wait a minute, if we're trying to move towards these kind of progressive sameness policies, does this hold us back from that. And others may feel, wait a minute, we're prioritizing policies that are about childcare outside of the home, are we doing the same for that when a family is making sacrifices inside the home. I think it becomes a major part of that.

MR. WILCOX: Now you're obviously posing a big question, both Hanna and Belle about sort of culture and biology when it comes to gender. And that's obviously a hot button issue, a hot button question. But I think sort of the science on this is still I think in some ways, you know, embryonic, but we do actually have I think research that suggests that part of the story here is biological, and a large part of course is cultural. But it's also

interesting too that there is evidence that suggests there is considerable heterogeneity or there are kinds of differences within the sexes. So there are some women who are more oriented towards sort of work and a professional life, and some women who are oriented more towards the family and domesticity. The same is true for men, but, you know, in different shares.

And my view here is if we kind of continue to do the research on this question, that we will see that part of this difference, not just between women and men, but within women and within sort of -- among men is related to not just sort of cultural patterns, socialization patterns, but also the biological differences as well.

And so there's a study, for instance, looking at differences in utero for kids and how those are connected across the life course to differences in behaviors and orientations.

So I think to be kind of fair to the admittedly kind of beginning research in this area, we need to sort of recognize that there's probably a place for this, you know, both when it comes to sort of acknowledging the role of culture and the role of biology, but again as sort of recognizing it's not just about men versus women, it's about some women are different than some women and some men from other men as well.

MS. SAWHILL: You know, going back to the hours of work issue, I wrote a piece a couple of years ago citing John Maynard Keynes, who back in 1930 wrote an essay addressed to his grandchildren and told them that by now we would all be working 15 hours a week. Why? Because productivity would have grown so much that we could afford to.

So I actually checked the numbers to see if we had grown as much as he expected us to, and we had. And where he was totally wrong is how we used our affluence. Instead of using it to buy more time to spend with family or to do other things, he was very into Aristotelian notions of cultivating the arts and the mind and so forth. But another use of time would be family time. And we completely missed the boat. And in fact, the standard work week in the United States, after having plummeted during the 19th and early 20th

century, has been stuck at where it is, 40 hours a week, since the 1930s.

So I wrote this piece and said why don't we think about reducing the standard workweek to 35 hours. That doesn't sound so radical. Oh, my god. (Laughter) Anyway, end of story.

MS. ROSIN: Well, I mean the research I find most -- for me what's between the lines in all of this is it's not exactly about family, because there are also Scandinavian countries where sort of traditional family has decreased, but people still live together and raise children together. It has to do with isolation and connection. To me that's the most sort of shocking trend that's happening. And I think the most interesting research to me is connected to time and kind of how badly we are managing our time and our free time and conceiving of our time and using our time in a way which is the trend is away from -- and I'm not just talking about kids and their smart phones -- like the way technology has increased work hours and not decreased work hours, and sort of made us generally less human, and how the effect that has on family and people's sense of isolation and connection, whether they are married or not.

MR. CARROLL: Yeah, I agree.

MR. WILCOX: So one other question that I wanted to touch on before maybe opening up to the group here is we've obviously touched on already some serious points of disagreement between more religiously conservative and more progressive feminist leaning folks, but are there kind of points of common ground that we could identify when it comes to either sort of a cultural agenda or a policy agenda? And I think certainly, just touching on your point, Hanna, there's a concern that I've been having, just sort of figuring out ways to sort of limit the sort of power and character of the rise of sort of the screen culture in ways that may be affecting dating, marriage, and family life as perhaps one point of common ground.

But are there other points of common ground that we could think of that might be there for us to identify and to make use of?

Jason, do you have a thought on that question?

MR. CARROLL: I really like Laurie's comments from the first panel about the commonality of the dignity of the person and the respect and the value. I think these domains of family life and relationships become deeply, deeply symbolic, and we're looking for the symbols. The symbols aren't exactly the same in every relationship, but they become deeply symbolic of what means I'm valued, what mean's that I'm heard, what means that I have a complete stake, so to speak, in marriage and family life and relationships. And I think there's commonality in there. I think the voice of feminism and gender equality has been powerful in that call of making sure that voices are heard and that choices are there and that there's that dignity and importance of that. And I think in the right dose. I think there's an important part of this report that shows the religions effects, there's the dosage effect. If it's the nominal, there's not much impact. If it's at the attendance level, I think there's a higher dosage. I think when you add that to home personal worship and home practices, you have even more of a dosage effect. And in those proper patterns I think that message is very similar about the dignity of the person and the value and the respect that should be there.

And so I think they come from -- again, what I think can be pitted as false opposites. There's probably some folks -- and if you're in the room, go ahead, raise your hand when we get to question and answer -- there are a lot of folks saying hey, wait a minute, I'm in that progressive religious category and these are blending and mixing. That share decision making variable I mentioned shows that there's a lot of people having the sense of equality in decision making, even those in our traditional category. So I think they're informing one another and having a common message there that I would hope for a rising generation of millennials would also be really valuable in a sense of that's how you're going to have relationship quality. It has to start with that sense of peer inequality and teamwork, not something that's going to ever happen from a hierarchy or a distinction in those ways.

MS. SAWHILL: I'm going to say something that may sound like it's at odds with what I said earlier, but I mean I do think -- first of all I can't disagree in any way with, you know, there are lots of different ways to live your life and there are lots of different types of marriages and we should respect all of them. I don't think any of us is saying we need to move away from that.

But I also think that on the progressive side of many of the arguments in this space, there is too much emphasis on individualism and too little acknowledgement that social norms and social institutions do provide scaffolding -- the verb you used in your report, which I think is a good verb for people's lives -- and that without such scaffolding, whatever that scaffolding may be, it can be religion for some people, it could be some other kind of institution for someone else, those institutions are important and we have moved in a direction in this country, and many other western countries, towards so celebrating individual differences that we have paid too little attention, especially for children I would say -- you know, like in the K-12 years, you can't teach values. And so if you're growing up in a family or a neighborhood where there aren't strong institutions, whether religious or otherwise, where are you going to get your values and your sense of support from? I think you need more than reading and arithmetic to navigate today's world.

So religion I think can play a role there.

MR. WILCOX: Hanna?

MS. ROSIN: I liked your point. I had never thought of it and I thought it was really interesting, the connection. This idea that both from traditional religious and progressive there has been a cultural permission to kind of let men -- to sort of include in the definition of manhood emotional connection, emotional connection to your family, not sort of just like role, like your role as the provider, but just like a more connected emotion pose towards the family. And I think that is -- I never thought of that, but I think that is absolutely a commonality on both sides.

MR. WILCOX: So let me open up the floor to questions from the audience

and we can kind of continue the conversation. Is there a mic here?

SPEAKER: Hello back there. No? Okay.

MS. COPE: Good morning. I'm Margaret Cope. Is this on?

My question has to do with I agree 100 percent with you saying that perhaps we need more --

SPEAKER: Just put it closer.

MS. COPE: Okay, there we go. Margaret Cope. I am retired military, but also work on gender gap issues, national service, and national security reform.

I appreciate your comments with regard to connectedness and community, the value of that extended family. But another aspect is following up on your religion, because the religions have a broad spectrum. When you say Catholic it goes from progressive to completely conservative. And so does Judaism, Muslim. And so when you say religion there is a spectrum there for all of those. Maybe further definition with regard to that would be good.

Also the age of the study, 15-49. During that period women go through a biological clock issue. How does that impact the study?

MR. WILCOX: Well, there are a lot of differences between religious traditions and among religious traditions. We kind of try to keep that relatively simple in the report by focusing on religious couples who kind of are more culturally conservative versus those who are more culturally progressive. And we do see that in the main couples who share a faith tend to do better in a lot of the outcomes, but not all. And there are -- you know, depending upon the outcome, those who lean a little bit right are more likely to be doing better. But there's not a -- in some ways it looks like sort of the power of religion -- or the role of religion is more central than their cultural attitudes.

Now, in terms of the second question, there isn't really -- I mean we're just sort of trying to focus in this particular report on women who are in their prime childbearing years or child rearing years as well, but we don't kind of do much with sort of differences

among that particular age group in this report.

MS. COPE: Right. But when you reach like 40, that's kind of -- so I mean that age group is not so much in the childbearing.

MR. WILCOX: Right, they're more in the child rearing stage, yeah.

MR. CARROLL: It is simple at the broad level of that. I mean we did try to -
- we controlled in all the analyses for children in the home or out of the home, knowing that that could be a little bit different.

I love what you're saying. I think there's a whole -- there is so much that gets left on the editing room floor, as we all know with pulling together a report. I love what you're capturing there. I think it gets back a little bit into that dosage notion I was talking about earlier. And I think we will be looking at some further analyses of not only the amount of religiosity -- we have a sidebar in the report that looks specifically at home religious practice. I think that's another indicator of orthodoxy or the degree to which people are trying to live faith centered lives. But then to couple that together with what you're saying, that kind of ideological spectrum -- and like I said, we've got this group, we see them right there, they're progressive, highly religious couples. And so I think being able to get into some of that nuance, we start to see a distinction between attendance, between those with attendance but also with home religious practice, and then together with kind of the branches.

But I will say this, the pattern is remarkably similar across all 11 countries and across a wider range of faith groups. So we do have a relationship quality chapter at least show a little bit in one of our tables. We broke out the quality index by religious affiliation, and the patterns are remarkably common across faith groups. Not saying there couldn't be more that was there. The great comment from earlier about mixed faith couples in relationships. But we did see that. So it was across all the countries, it was across the faith groups by and large, and it was stronger for women than it was for men.

So I think those deeper dives are definitely calling to get into some of what

you're suggesting.

SPEAKER: Belle, I would like to use one of the comments you made to challenge your skepticism that feminism can be the new natalism.

I loved what you said about there's too much emphasis on individualism because the social norms and the institutions provide a scaffolding. If we look at the macro level instead of at the micro level, we find that countries that are more gender progressive actually do have higher fertility than the ones with more traditional gender roles. And I think it might be than expanding of choice. Your assumption was that the expanding of choice would lead more women to opt out and to not do the marriage, childbearing, and home part of women's lives if they had the choice -- that feminism would lead to less kids.

And what I'm challenging it with is the idea that if either social institutions encouraged men's participation or even just made the burden on women as mothers less intense, or that religious institutions helped support the involvement of men in family life that choice doesn't necessarily have to lead to opt out. And I think that's what we're saying, is we might see a higher fertility either because of more gender egalitarianism. Or to say it differently but perhaps more accurately, in more gender egalitarian societies you can see both gender egalitarianism and religion have a more pronatalist effect. That with choice you would expect both of those things to shine out in terms of fertility differences.

And actually do have some macro level work that shows that that middle group does worse at the macro level too that nominally religious countries have lower fertility than either highly religious or highly secular.

MS. SAWHILL: This gets very complicated. And if I'm understanding pushback, which I appreciate, I don't think I'm saying that a more gender egalitarian culture, which allows women more supports when they are doing most things, doesn't help, it definitely does. I'm making -- it's an interaction effect, if you will. I'm saying that at the first level, before you get to interactions, that long-term I don't expect women having more choices and more equality with men is going to lead to higher fertility.

So it's a simpler point and it's a very long-term point, and it's abstracting from policy regimes and religious dictates that might be asking dads to do more or whatever. Those things are to me second order drivers, not first order drivers. Does that make sense?

MR. WILCOX: Conrad?

MR. HACKETT: The big question in the report is, is religion a force for good or ill in society? And you show in the first chapter that the share of people across world value surveys countries who attend services regularly is pretty stable. The people who are attending infrequently is actually declining a lot. More people never attend.

Since you show on a lot of outcomes things are better if you are a couple who both never attend than if you're sort of nominally attending, is your contention then that the rise of people who never attend is good for society, or better than having more people continue to be nominal attenders?

SPEAKER: Good question.

MR. WILCOX: Well, I -- go ahead. Or do you want --

MR. CARROLL: Well, I keep thinking about the editing room floor and all the stuff that's still laying on the ground.

One of the things that I think would be interesting for further analysis is, again, for simplicity and to not have graphs that have got 20 groups compared to 20 groups, we've got the low religious and the mixed religious together in these graphs. And I think we need a little bit of caution around that. When we look at them separated, the mixed religious groups are a bit lower, which isn't a surprise, right. We've got basic, same page I think as what we came to, right, the same page notion that if they're not on the same page. So that's in there kind of mixed in and pulling that down.

So it would be interesting to see a little bit. I think our less religious don't quite get pulled down as much as these other groups that are tied together.

The other part becomes really around people's -- again back to these symbols, a sense of meaning, a sense of purpose around this. I think it's easy at broad

levels and in a multi country report to start to look at it quite demographically speaking, but I think another deeper dive of where we're headed in some future analysis is also our data on life meaning and our data on life satisfaction, and these kind of patterns as well. The sneak peek is that I think some of that would contend a little bit. I think people having those meaning structures -- I love these comments about community and connection around that. I think it's possible across the spectrum, but we still need to see how that is done when we've had some of these traditional social structures that have provided that.

MS. ROSIN: I mean what's like to me this report is startling, alarming, maybe really good -- I don't know -- is that it's like the polls, people are happy at the extremes, people seem to be doing better at the extremes, whatever the extremes are. What the extremes have in common when you're asking what are the points of commonality, the points of commonality is that they're extremes. And so it's just -- I don't know how to think about that. Like I like to think that polarization is bad, I like to think that people kind of believing the things that they believe, you know, just kind of unquestioningly -- well, not necessarily unquestioningly, but without giving much space to a sort of gray area. Vagueness is not where I want us to land, but this report is suggesting, and it sounds like your meaning report that actually people are happier that way.

MS. SAWHILL: You know, I didn't interpret it as extremes as much as -- and I think Laurie or somebody talked about this earlier -- is that it shared values. You can have shared values around being very committed religiously and practicing that intensively, at your dosage point, or you can be very secular and egalitarian and have shared values around that.

And it would seem to me -- I'm not an expert on, you know, marriage counseling and all that sort of thing, but that one of the sort of common sense views, which is probably right, is that it's a lot easier to maintain a marriage or any kind of relationship if you have shared value.

MR. CARROLL: And shared vision.

MS. SAWHILL: And shared vision.

And I do want to go back to Conrad's point about is below replacement fertility a bad thing or a good thing. I have really worried about the whole conversation around that and I don't think that it's a big a worry as some other people don. If we have below replacement fertility, the positive aspects of it is that we've got 7 billion people in the world, and increasing, and they all want to come to the advanced countries. And it seems to me with appropriate safeguards they should be welcome.

So I'll just get this point about we need to worry about declining fertility in advanced nations.

MS. ROSIN: Thank you for saying that. I'm so confused by that.

(Laughter) It seems obviously that replacement fertility is a disaster for the world right now and creates short-term issues but long-term disasters. Like I don't know, maybe that's not true. And when I read all this, I thought why do we want replacement fertility? Like the world can't handle it right now.

MS. SAWHILL: No, no, environmentally there's a whole argument there.

And then, finally -- and I see a lot of people want to get in and maybe take issue with this -- I think that we should worry less about the number of children we have and what we invest in each. And with limited time and limited resources, and this is what the millennials are choosing, if you're going to have children don't have too many, and don't have them too soon, because if you really want to invest in them and you really care about them and you do want to invest in them, you want to invest your time and you want to invest your resources. So you can have more successful children or children with brighter futures.

MR. WILCOX: I guess in terms of kind of why would we be concerned about low fertility, I think that there are a couple of things one could say. One is that just looking at it kind of from women's perspective, with the work of Lyman Stone at the Institute for Family Studies suggests is that there are a large minority of women in the U.S., for instance, who are not having as many kids as they would like to have. And that number

actually now is larger than the number of women in the United States who have reported they have had more kids than they would have liked to have had.

So I think that because fertility is falling now so comparatively low in the U.S. and because women are postponing having kids for a variety of reasons, we're in a situation that is I think newer than it was say back in 1965, for instance. And that's one thing that I would say.

The second think is it's pretty clear that sort of economic dynamism is connected to sort of population growth. We know that, for instance, entrepreneurs are more likely to come from sort of the younger adult band of the population. So there could I think be some important economic implications of this pattern, particularly if it keeps going farther and farther down. Like we have seen it play out in a country like Japan, for instance.

And then I think, thirdly, there's just a question about whether or not siblings, cousins matter for us, matter for our kids. And it kind of depends on the outcome you want to pick. So if you want to pick education, I think Belle's perspective wins the day. It's clearly the case that kids in smaller families tend to do better on the education front. But if you want to pick socialization or if you want to pick family stability, for instance, I think my perspective is more persuasive.

So we know, for instance, that kids who come from large families are more likely to have stable marriages. I think maybe this sort of -- the difficulties of navigating toys and activities and parental attention makes them perhaps better suited for the challenges of being in a marriage longer term.

So it depends on the kind of things you highlight in terms of how you think about (inaudible).

MR. CARROLL: If we're looking at connection issues.

MR. WILCOX: Yeah, connection issues too. So having kin can be helpful.

MR. CARROLL: A kin network of its own.

MR. WILCOX: Right, yeah, yeah.

MR. CARROLL: A bunch of hands.

MR. WILCOX: We'll start with Christine and then move back.

MS. EMBA: Hi, I'm Christine. I was on the previous panel. A quick point and then a question.

I was reading some research regarding the effects of both genders having parental leave, and it seems that the results from Spain have come out recently. They instituted parental leave for fathers as well as mothers. And one of the most noticeable impacts was that once fathers had parental leave, they realized that they wanted fewer children (laughter) -- presumably having stayed at home with their wives and with their children they realized that, ah, taking care of children is tough, perhaps I don't need seven of them -- while women's preferences actually stayed the same.

Well, they --

MR. WILCOX: Increased actually.

MS. EMBA: -- increased apparently. Maybe because they finally had help.

So I think that touches on a number of different issues that you've just talked about.

But one of my questions is about this traditional versus progressive relationships, whether religious or secular. I think this result was surprising to me, and will be to other readers that often traditional patriarchal relationships tend to be stable and tend to have high relationship quality. And you mentioned on this panel the impact of yes, a headship dialogue, but one that also involves fathers being present, involved in their children's lives. And I wonder if you would say that that's an understanding of patriarchy and headship that has emerged more recently or if this has been the case throughout time and we're only sort of coming to realize it publicly now?

MR. CARROLL: An initial thought, at least drawing from the report, there's a lot of places it can go. That's where I think that shared decision-making piece -- we really thought in many ways that that would be the distinguisher that would trend in the direction of

the shared secular couples. So we wanted to pay attention to that. When we see that, so our highly religious traditionals, women reporting the same level of shared decision making.

Now, the other thing that we didn't get to is people always ask, so if they didn't say -- we're in about the 60-70 level of predicted probability of it being the decisions are made together, you say well then what's the alternative for the other 30 percent. The most dominant pattern is that people, both men and women, say I make the decisions. It's not a gendered pattern where it's traditionally pointing at the husband or father or man makes the decision, it's either we make them together or I make them, both men and women report that in some interesting ways.

MS. SAWHILL: But, you know, I just -- because this keeps coming up, do we have any idea what shared decision-making means to people? Does it mean where we're going to live, or does it mean whether we're going to have chicken or steak for dinner?

MR. CARROLL: The question is framed -- and all survey questions can be looked at -- important family decisions. Major? Is it major? Major family decisions.

MS. SAWHILL: All right, major helps. Chicken or steak is not major.

MR. CARROLL: I got it, yeah. Wheat bread or white bread, right.

So I love the question though, because gain I think it gets back to get some false dichotomies here, right, and that it's not happening by degree, right, it's just a type that of what is this sense of equality and is it even possible to have complementarity and at the same time equality. Do you have to have a sameness basis so that you can have that? I think there is such a thing for couples that I would say is a bit of a process equality, and it is in that decision making, it is in that sense I chart the direction and we have that sense of partnership of how that occurs. That's my sense. I think it needs deeper investigation of what is happening in the modern complementarity of many of these highly religious couples' relationships. And these women are satisfied, they're reporting this high emotional connection. We haven't even talked about the sexual satisfaction one, that they just trend away from the rest of the groups.

I'm interested by that because I don't think -- I think these are individuals that are deeply impacted by this sense of equality, this sense of value, this sense of symbolism around that, and they're saying I'm finding that in this type of relationship. If the assumption is that it has to be a shared or a similar background for that to occur, that -- like you said, it becomes nonsensical. I mean how can that possibly be? I don't think it's a situation of being satisfied with hierarchy. I think it is a pattern of their being a complementarity, but still a sense of deep partnership and how that's being expressed in the relationship.

MS. ROSIN: It might be defined roles. Like there are studies on gay couples which show the exact same result, which is that gay couples which divide so that -- in this study I'm thinking of it was gay male couples where one person in the couple does the child rearing and taking care of the home, the other person is working. Like the roles are pretty clearly defined, so they're not negotiating everything. They are more happy and satisfied. So it might be that that's just a more frictionless way to operate, whether you're, you know -- whatever kind of marriage you have.

MR. CARROLL: If they're valued, right. They need to feel that it's valued by their partner, feel that it's something that is important to both of them.

MS. SAWHILL: And, you know, I've seen that research on same sex couples as well and I found it fascinating because it shows exactly what Hanna just said, and it does support your point.

The problem becomes when the division is gendered. Now, you know, I'll just tell you that in my own marriage I did not like to cook. My husband knew that I didn't like to cook, but I did the cooking because I'm a woman of my generation and -- because he knew I didn't like to cook, I can't tell you what positive reinforcement I got from him. I could put the worst meal you ever ate in your life on the table and he would tell me it was fantastic. (Laughter) And it's because he understood, because he was very smart, that if I was going to keep cooking he was going to have to give me more than the normal amount of

reinforcement to get me to do it. And I tell that jokingly, but I think more seriously there has been a pressure on women to do certain things.

MR. WILCOX: Sure. I think to answer your question, Christine, I think one important -- I can't really speak to sort of the historical -- because I don't have data on that, but I think one interesting way in which I think contemporary religiously conservative couples and families and men have been affected by feminism is that there is I think a new expectation for kind of the process in equity that you were just talking about, Jason, that is a kind of post second wave revolution thing.

And so kind of in a weird way I think that part of what's happening here is that more religious family men in America today have kind of been -- and their wives have been affected by this sort of set of new norms. And they're responding to them in part with I think a more engaged approach to the family because they do value the family and the marriage so much. So there's a way in which kind of feminism has had a pretty profound impact, even on religious communities, that we're now I think seeing manifested in sort of this approach on the part of (inaudible) men to, you know, being more practically engaged with their kids.

And the woman that's next to you.

MS. BUDARZ: Hi, Mary Budarz. I'm retired.

When you are talking about the difference between biological and socialization, what about economic? I mean wouldn't that be another factor for decisions, for men and women to make choices?

MR. CARROLL: I think absolutely. And important to say too in this analysis, we looked at in the relationship quality chapter in particular, it was just looking at kind of ideology and preference. It wasn't looking at actually what was your current work pattern and what was happening. I think you're right. I think particularly when we look at this on an international scale as well. We were very sensitive to that, of the realities in some of the countries that we were looking at and those patterns.

So I think you're absolutely right that issues of choice are always going to be based on this idea of the economic and physical survival of the family. I think that is a great caution for us. I think sometimes in kind of academic elite circles it's easy for us to talk as if that's kind of the commonality or the patterns, and then reality is as we get into our Chilean or Colombian sample in this data set, we may be looking at very, very different contexts that are causing families to -- both inside and outside of faith communities, to make real decisions around those fundamental physical survival aspects of a family.

MS. SAWHILL: You know, I'm not sure what you meant by economic, but I'm going to put my own spin on it.

You know, there are very good economists like Claudia Goldin and Fran Blau, and so forth, who have done these studies of why women have traditionally made less money than men. And after they go through everything and do this very vigorously, they find that the thing that stands out the most, than can possibly explain the wage gap, other than some kind of discrimination, is the fact that women do spend more time in the home and have somewhat more discontinuous careers, less true than in the past, but still true.

So this becomes then a circular thing that, you know, women can't earn as much as men, that puts the preference on the male to do the breadwinning, because he has the comparative advantage to do it, but as long as women are taking major responsibility for home and family, that's going to limit their economic prospects. So there's no way to get around that, except to somehow or other just disrupt the system.

One really interesting piece of research, again done by some really well-known economist, is that increasingly in married couples we are seeing cases where the woman now earns more than the man. It's grown quite a lot. In fact, you all may not know, but over 40 percent of families in America the woman is the primary breadwinner, either because she's a single mom or because she's in one of these couples where she earns more than her husband. But in these couples where the woman earns more than her husband, they also do more housework. And the researchers who discovered that

empirically didn't quite know what was going on there, it didn't make a lot of sense. But the hypothesized -- and I think they had some circumstantial evidence as I remember, that the reason was because the women felt guilty about the fact that they were earning more than their husbands. I mean they were worried that that was going to undermine his sense of status, his sense of being an effective successful breadwinner, and so they overcompensated by doing even more in the home.

I can give you the citations to these studies if you're interested.

MR. WILCOX: Although just to be clear, in terms of married families with kids, it's 25 percent approximately of women who are earning more than their husbands. So the breadwinner story is partly driven by the fact that there a lot of single mothers who are --

MS. SAWHILL: It's mostly single parents, it's mostly single parents.

MR. WILCOX: Yeah.

MS. SAWHILL: But, you know, they're here.

MR. WILCOX: No, that's certainly right.

Yeah, in the back.

MS. BROADIE: I have a question. My name is Val Broadie, I work here at Brookings.

And so my question is about a concern that I had that when we talk about Evangelicals, historically in the polling that I've seen in recent years, and when we seem to be talking about traditional conservative Christians, we're talking mostly about white people. And I want to understand from your survey, did you do some racial breakdown of your groups of people you interviewed and what did those things tell you that might have been different from what they said about others?

MR. WILCOX: Do you want to jump in, Spencer, here just quickly?

MR. JAMES: So in the United States we did include race. There are some racial differences, but they're not as pronounced as you might sort of expect.

MS. BROADIE: I wouldn't expect anything. I'm asking. (Laughter)

MR. JAMES: They are there but they're not overly large.

In the other 10 countries, one thing that is interesting about race internationally is that I think many of us have this idea that most countries are as diverse as the United States is, and that's simply not true. And so I don't even think we have race in any of those other countries except for the United States, where we did control for it and we did see some, but not huge differences.

In terms of relationship quality they tended to follow what the existing literature says, which is that Asian Americans tend to report the highest levels of relationship quality followed by whites, Hispanics, and then African Americans.

It's important to note, however, that those differences, like many of the differences that we've been talking about today, are shrinking over time. And I think -- I mean if we extrapolate out -- and, again, that's a big assumption that these trends will persist exactly as is, but if they do, most of those racial differences, at least in terms of relationship quality, we can expect to disappear within the next 20 years. But again, that's a big assumption. I'm not saying that will happen, but, yeah.

MR. CARROLL: And then it's deeper dives for the interaction effects. You're talking about putting that inside of faith traditions, and I don't think we've gotten that --

MR. WILCOX: Although in terms of -- just my own work looks at the impact of shared religious attendance on African Americans, Latinos, and whites in the U.S. That's a different project, it's my book called "Soul Mates" with Nick Wolfinger. And in that particular book we find -- so there's kind of a 10-percentage point premium for couples, black, Hispanic, and white who attend religious services together. They're higher than their peers who either don't attend or who don't attend together. And there are modest racial differences in that book between African Americans and Hispanics and Whites. But sort of the religious gap and relationship quality is larger than the racial gap.

So if that's at all helpful to your question.

MS. ROSIN: Can I ask a question of the authors. You had both cohabiting

and married couples in your sample. Did you break them out? I would have assumed, based on much of your past work, Brad, that you would have wanted to look at them separately and had some hypotheses about levels of commitment and relationship quality.

Can you say more about that?

MR. WILCOX: Yeah. So in the interest of trying to keep this story fairly simply, we combined them and just controlled for marital status in this particular report. We've done some separate analyses that suggest that on average there is more family life satisfaction and more commitment and more perceived stability on the part of married respondents compared to cohabiting respondents in the sample. But that wasn't a key kind of sort of factor in this particular report.

SPEAKER: These differences are quite small. Like I guess I just want to underline a lot of these differences, when we talk about contemporary trends in family, these aren't enormous differences that we're talking about. They tend to persist, they are important, but the difference in outcomes between cohabiting versus married couples are not enormous, because if they were as enormous as maybe some people think they are, we would have a much different place in the American family landscape

So, yes, while these things persist, I do want to underline our data don't suggest that they are very large and I haven't seen much data that would suggest otherwise.

SPEAKER: Given the stability piece though.

SPEAKER: Yeah, that's true. Yes, in terms of stability, you do see relatively large differences. Although even that one, still large, but it is shrinking over time.

MR. WILCOX: In the back.

MR. GREENSPAN: Gabriel Greenspan Competitive Enterprise Institute again. I wanted to get back to this question of paid family leave. And the thought that occurs to me is that there are two types of people that could have an objection to paid family leave for both parents. And the one type that's kind of been alluded to in this panel is a sort of fundamentalist religionist who says well, man's role is to work and therefore there

shouldn't be paid family leave for both people.

But the other type is kind of someone coming from -- I would say very American tradition of suspicion of government, limited government, who is kind of a libertarian who might say yeah, it will be a great thing for both parents to be invested in the child, but this shouldn't be something that the government is mandating on businesses and maybe this is something that should be done at the private sector. Business is kind of voluntarily doing this or NGOs -- non-governmental institutions -- encouraging businesses to do this.

I guess can there be a conversation about like for that type of people who might agree with the principle but not agree with the method of using government force, can it be a conversation about, you know, maybe we can do this in a non-governmental way.

MR. WILCOX: Well, that's your baby.

MS. SAWHILL: That is exactly where the debate is. There are still a lot of people, especially in the political arena, who would argue that this is not government's role, this is a family role, and if you're going to have children you should plan for it and you should save it and then you're going to have private resources with which to help with the -- some time off needed to take care of a child. And a lot of those people also point out that the private sector already does provide quite a lot of paid leave, although not all of it. And it does, as I said earlier, tend to be very tilted towards higher paid people.

So, yes, unlike other countries, the U.S. is still unable to come to any consensus about exactly that question.

I mean I might add as a footnote -- sorry -- that some conservatives would argue we need paid leave but we should pay the stay at home mother of four, taking care of children, just as readily as we do the woman who is in the workforce. And that gets into child credits and children's allowances.

MR. CARROLL: Right, right.

MR. WILCOX: Yeah.

Yes, sir, in the --

SPEAKER: Thank you. Am I correct in thinking that your measure for religiosity, for lack of a better term, is the amount of times people attended church? Is that true? If that's true, here comes my cynicism. A lot of people hide behind their religion, and a lot of these folks who attend church or whatever every week, and then you go to a party -- and they're very proud about their religiosity -- you go to a party and you find he left his wife or she left her husband. And how do you account for that in any survey like this?

And it's very common. I mean I see it in my friends and my neighbors, and so.

MR. CARROLL: Stay tuned. I know Spencer and I have a lot of interest in this. Like I said, we do have the one sidebar. We did think about that issue. And where I think you go with this is personal worship and home religious practice. Again, not that that could -- you know, how much are you praying in the home, do you have religious conversations, do you read religious texts, is this happening inside of the home.

And, again, it could be -- those behaviors could be susceptible to the same thing, but I think less so than these kind of extrinsic religious social behaviors of hey, I put myself in the pews. There's a social piece to that.

SPEAKER: But how does your study encompass that? I mean how would you know?

MR. CARROLL: It does. And we had a lot of conversation about should we --

SPEAKER: Do you have the data on that?

MR. CARROLL: Should we build the religiosity index. We decided to go with the sidebar that looks at the patterns of prayer in the home, and it shows it to be a positive factor. I think it's a dosage issue, and I think it is trying to get to these sub-groups. I think you would get a smaller -- so back to the question we've had -- you may have bigger impact, but is it with a smaller segment of society. But you would find that subset of couples

where it is more than just the extrinsic religious attendance, but it is also the intrinsic personal worship.

We also have some questions that get into people's sense of spirituality, their sense of presence of god in their lives, these types of things.

So I think you're right, I think there can be even further. My sense is that what we'd see is that group being even strong in some of the effects that we've identified, but it would be a smaller segment of society that would get into that truly kind of personal orthodoxy pattern that hopefully would bring more consistency that you're talking about, not just kind of here's my religiosity on a day of worship, but I'm different at other times.

MR. WILCOX: But I think another point I would make, too, is that, number one -- or I guess three -- number one, religion is not a panacea, certainly in our view. And, secondly, that there are certainly religious hypocrites, including myself. Different outcomes as there are across any number of different ideological groupings in American life. But the third piece is there is kind of a classic difference in the literature between intrinsic religiosity and extrinsic religiosity. So people who are kind of doing religious things to sort of send off social signals often have things going on in the background that aren't so good, whereas folks who are trying to kind of as best they can be living in accord with their tradition, kind of at the sort of individual level, sort of away from the spotlight, tend to do better on a lot of these outcomes.

But we're basically at the end of our time here. I just want to give each panelist a quick opportunity to say anything else that comes to mind.

So I'll just start with Hanna? No, you're good?

MS. ROSIN: No, very happy. This was very interesting. Thank you.

MR. WILCOX: Belle, anything else that you want to jump in with, Belle?

MS. SAWHILL: I just want to say that this was a very interesting discussion and you all did some very interesting work. So thank you for doing all of that.

MR. WILCOX: Great. Jason, anything?

MR. CARROLL: Just a thank you to the panelists and others who have come in. It's always great to get this kind of discussion and have this kind of feedback and dialogue.

So thank you to all of you for taking the time to prepare and to be with us on the panels today.

MR. WILCOX: Great. So thanks, everyone for coming. (Applause)

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