



INDEPENDENT SECTOR
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Closing Plenary "Beyond Election 2008: A New Look at Race and Gender in America"

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Emcee:

- RALPH B. EVERETT, President and CEO, Joint Center for political and Economic Studies

Panelists:

- RANDALL L. KENNEDY, Michael R. Klein Professor of Law, Harvard Law School, Harvard University
- STERLING SPEIRN, President, W.K. Kellogg Foundation
- LUZ VEGA-MARQUIS, Secretary, Independent Sector; President and CEO, Marguerite Casey Foundation
- MARIE WILSON, President and Founder, The White House Project

Panel Moderator:

- KELVIN TAKETA, Independent Sector Board Member; President and CEO, Hawaii Community Foundation

ANNOUNCER: Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome the president and CEO of the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, Ralph Everett.

[Applause.]

MR. EVERETT: Good morning. We are delighted to have a wonderfully, timely program on race and gender in America to close a conference filled with important sessions.

We will turn to a panel discussion on the topic after our meal, but before we eat, help me welcome Richard Gunderman, professor, radiology, pediatrics, medical education, philosophy, liberal arts, and philanthropy, Indiana University.

He is also a Fellow of the Tobias Center for Leadership Excellence and serves on the Board of Governors of the Kinsey Institute and Institute for Advanced Studies.

Dr. Gunderman is the author of 210 scholarly articles and has published four books. His most recent book, "We Make a Life by What We Give," was published in April of 2008.

Dr. Gunderman has served as our first Scholar in Residence at this year's conference, and will now help us reflect on the conference as a learning experience.

Dr. Gunderman, I turn it over to you.

[Applause.]

DR. GUNDERMAN: Thanks, Ralph. Thank you very much.

I want to acknowledge the contributions of some individuals to the Scholar in Residence program; first, two bright and energetic graduate students at Carnegie Mellon University, Jessica Obergas and Scott Rosenblum.

[Applause.]

DR. GUNDERMAN: Thank you very much.

And also our wise facilitator, Tom Beech who, as you know, is president and CEO of the Fetzer Institute.

In the next few minutes, I would like to do something somewhat unusual, briefly explore four missions of the Scholar in Residence program and relate them to some systems in the human brain.

T.S. Eliot once wrote, "Where is the knowledge we have lost in information, and where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?"

One challenge of a rich and diverse meeting like this is information overload. There is a part of our brain called the reticular activating system which enables us to sort through incoming sensations and focus on what matters most, and I would just like to say that was one goal of the Scholar in Residence program, to try to maintain a high level focus on the major themes of the meeting and integrate them into two articles that we will be publishing in the near future.

Second, another challenge was to bring together the content of so many dispersed sessions in a fruitful way. There is a neural network on the left. You can see the image before you up on the screen. That overloads the central node with too much input. That neural network you see on the right leaves too many insights on the table, dormant and unconnected.

We attempted to emulate the network in the middle. Just as the human consciousness integrates many diverse elements into a unified experience, we convened small discussion groups of participants on the first and last days of the meeting to pursue a higher order discussion.

These attracted a number of people who look at the sector from a broad perspective and have studied the sector for a long time.

Third, there are centers in the brain, in the hypothalamus, that are activated when we feel pain, but as many of you know, they also light up when we anticipate pain.

On functional MRI, MRI imaging, subjects who are told were about to be shot showed patterns of alarm, but this distress is reduced if a stranger holds our hand, and it is even further dampened if our spouse holds our hand.

By providing opportunities for sustained face to face conversation to integrate themes like the economic downturn and the looming leadership transition, even in tumultuous times, we can enhance equanimity and resolve.

And finally, there are circuits in the brain of primates and human beings that attune us to others. Using these so called "mirror circuits," the newborn Macaque monkey is able to mimic human facial expressions.

Likewise, these same neurons fire when we act to help someone, but also when we see someone else render aid. The Scholar in Residence program aims to play a role similar to these mirror networks in the human brain, not only drawing together diverse threads of a lot of dispersed conversations, but also enabling us to come together in ways that foster genuine sharing of compassion and understanding.

In conclusion, let me say it has been both a privilege and a pleasure to serve as the first Scholar in Residence at our Annual Conference, and my colleagues, Jennifer, Scott, Tom, and I, look forward to seeing the Scholar in Residence program grow and flourish in years to come.

Thank you very much.

[Applause.]

MR. EVERETT: Thank you, Dr. Gunderman.

Before we move to lunch, I am reminded that today is Veterans Day. I would like to pause from the program to recognize the bravery and sacrifices of the men and women who have served our nation in uniform. Please join me in a moment of silence in honor of their important contributions to our nation and to our world.

[Moment of silence.]

MR. EVERETT: Thank you.

Now, everyone, please enjoy your meal.

[Luncheon break.]

MR. EVERETT: Good morning again. Good morning again. I know that you are all enjoying your meal and the conversation. If I could have your attention, I would appreciate it.

We will now turn to exploring issues of race and gender in America in light of this past week's election, historic election.

I will now want to introduce the moderator for today's panel. Kelvin Taketa is a fellow IS board member and president and CEO of the Hawaii Community Foundation. Since his appointment in 1998, the foundation has become a leader in facilitating charitable investments in Hawaii, serving as a resource for philanthropy and building partnerships and grant making programs that have demonstrable impact for the community.

Kelvin, the mic is yours.

[Applause.]

MR. TAKETA: Thank you, Ralph.

Now, I think many of you are trying to figure out what this local boy from Hawaii is doing moderating this panel about race and gender in America, and I am here to tell you why I am standing here. Because the forty fourth President of the United States is a "keiki o ka aina," in our language, a child of the land, born of Hawaii, raised in Hawaii.

[Applause.]

MR. TAKETA: When I was asked to moderate this panel about three months ago, I was praying to God, I was going to be able to say that.

[Laughter.]

MR. TAKETA: We have got a great panel for you today. To my far right, Sterling Speirn, president and CEO of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation; Randy Kennedy, the Michael Klein Professor of Law at Harvard Law School; Marie Wilson, the co founder and president of The White House Project; and our good friend, Luz Vega Marquis who runs the Marguerite Casey Foundation.

So we are going to jump right in. This panel's responsibility today is to take a look at what has happened in the election, what does it mean for America, and a comment on basically the non profit sector and what our challenges are going to be coming out of 2008.

So we are going to ask for questions from the audience. We are going to mix it up with the panel, and I will ask for questions about halfway through, and then we will end with questions at the very end of the session.

So I am going to start off. We have flipped the coin. What we say in Hawaii is "junk and pole," paper rock scissors, and we are going to let the token white guy go first.

[Laughter.]

MR. TAKEYA: So we are starting off. I am just going to throw it out there. What happened in the selection when it comes to race and gender? Sterling, you get to start.

MR. SPEIRN: Thanks, Kelvin.

Well, first, full disclosure, like many of you probably feeling a great deal of apprehension and hope before the election, but I refused to assume any outcome, except for one thing. On the Thursday night before the election, I booked round trip airfare to Washington, D.C., for January 20th.

[Applause.]

MR. SPEIRN: I also have to say you won't find me on the web as a high giver to this campaign, but I managed to get around that by subsidizing my 20 year old's full time work all summer on the campaign. So, truly and even this morning's papers, to see the continuing surge of support for this new President, far beyond those who voted for him, it is clearly, as has been said many times during the conference, a milestone, a watershed, a huge new base camp to keep climbing this mountain towards racial equity.

That said, I want to talk about two things very briefly, and I hope we will talk more among the panelists. First, of course, as that glass ceiling is smashed, there are a whole bunch of people trapped in the basement.

And in talking to Randy before the session, he has written a lot about race and crime. Our prison industry employs more people than Walmart, GM, and Ford combined. Now, GM and Ford used to be our largest employers. I can't say that right now.

Barack was born in the early '60s. For black men born in the late '60s who dropped out of high school, 60 percent of them were incarcerated before they turned 40. So, clearly, the structural issues we face are not undone by this incredible accomplishment of this President.

Then second, something I hope we will talk about on the panel is it was interesting to see how race was discussed during this campaign because really, throughout our history, the mystification of some of our structural issues around race and racism have gone towards the personal and interpersonal and not to the structural and historical.

So we saw Newsweek do a racial resentment pole, and you thought, hmm, I wonder who they asked about racial resentment. Of course, it targeted white people, to find out would they vote for a black man and why or why wouldn't they.

So I think figuring out how we as a community of non profit workers help shift that discussion not just from the personal feelings and I would say, not to diminish this, I think so many people in our country today are so proud of our country for what we have done, even if they didn't vote for that President.

[Applause.]

MR. SPEIRN: That is a huge accomplishment, and if we can move the needle on personal feelings and interpersonal feelings around race, then we have never had a better chance to move the structural systems in our society that continue to work the other way.

MR. TAKETA: Randy?

MR. KENNEDY: I would agree with those statements.

Clearly, there is good reason for there to be this feeling of congratulations. I mean, given the history of the United States, it really is remarkable what occurred last week. In the lifetimes of many people in this room, black people couldn't vote, couldn't vote in primaries, couldn't vote in general elections. So, to have Barack Obama elected President of the United States is a wonderful thing, and Americans ought to feel proud.

At the same time, there is a sober side to the feeling of to this landmark. I mean, after all, why is everybody sort of why is there this feeling of wonderment? Why is there this feeling of who'd have thunk it, who'd have thunk it that there would be people who would be able to pull the lever for a person of color?

I mean, we are happy about it that there were enough people to enable Barack Obama to become President of the United States, and that is a great thing. At the same time, there is a sort of a minimalist aspect to that. So we are happy that we are carrying through with the promise of American life.

I don't want to rain on the parade, and again, I think the congratulations is clearly, deeply felt. There is good reason for it. We need soon, however, to be thinking about what next, and I hope that we aren't so entranced by what occurred last week that we fumble an opportunity to push the agenda for social justice further.

MS. WILSON: But we get to kind of celebrate for just a few minutes.

[Laughter.]

MS. WILSON: I mean, some of us need it so badly.

MR. TAKETA: We will focus on the best of times and save the worst of times for later.

MS. WILSON: Yeah.

Well, what I love about what happened in this, a couple things that I love about what happened, as a woman who grew up in Georgia in the '40s, I mean, I never thought I would live to see this day. So it is very moving to me.

But I think when we started The White House Project, trying to get women into power in this country, leadership up to and including the Presidency, Kathleen Hall Jamison who was the dean of Public Policy at Annenberg, said to me, "Marie, if you want to change what happens around gender, change the conversation."

Now, that is a tall order, but what happened in this election and the outcome of this election is two conversations got invoked that just don't get invoked around the neighborhood, the kitchen table, up in the fighting sometimes, but we actually had conversations with each other around race, around gender, around class, because Obama got classed upwards and Hillary Clinton got classed downwards. I mean, it was a fascinating class conversation, and we needed a conversation.

We had a major race speech. We haven't had a major gender speech, but it is not too late. But actually, I thought that changing of the conversation is really a major milestone.

And a second thing that Marian Wright Edelman of the Children's Defense Fund taught me when we did take our daughters to work, she said, "You can't be what you can't see. You can't be what you can't see," and that is profound.

And what happened all over America is that there are now children of every gender and of some races that actually think they can be the President of the United States, and that is not a bad thing. That is an excellent thing.

[Applause.]

MS. WILSON: So I am looking at it in kind of a mega way, but I know that I can't celebrate very long. But I am really looking at something profound that I think changed, and that's great.

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: Well, for me, I am still very, very excited and elated, and I am going to be and I don't care what happens. I am going to be there, being so excited about our opportunity and our possibility.

You know, I am an immigrant, and when Sarah Palin talked about the real America, I want to tell her that the real America showed up at the polls.

[Applause.]

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: Twenty five percent of the electorate were Asians, Latinos, African Americans. I think that is the real America, that we finally got included, and I think that is a wonderful thing to have experienced.

MS. WILSON: I agree.

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: And I want to say how proud I am of Latinos for having voted the right way this time.

[Laughter.]

MR. TAKETA: You mentioned the people who showed up at the polls. You know, a lot of the media has talked about Obama as being almost a transcendent figure, the person who has weaved this multi racial sense, and we all attribute that to growing up in Hawaii, where there is no majority race. The fastest growing part of our population is mixed race.

But he obviously had a high degree of comfort about his own personal style and the way that he attracted and reached out to other people of different races. Is he unique? Is this a moment where you can really say the ceiling has been broken and there's opportunities for other African Americans or even for women to pursue the White House or higher office, or are we really talking about an anomaly here?

Randy, I remember reading in The Washington Post, your op ed piece where you talked about a student in your class writing about Obama as if he was a transient figure, he was a once in a lifetime person, and we would never see another black candidate running for President. I thought that was a really interesting sentiment.

MR. KENNEDY: Yeah. I certainly hope he is wrong.

MR. TAKETA: Yeah.

MR. KENNEDY: And I think he was. I think that the student was.

Obviously, Barack Obama is an extraordinary politician. You don't do what he accomplished without being extraordinary.

At the same time, a couple of other things are true. With respect to the gender line, Barack Obama had a very hard fought campaign to be the Democratic Party standard bearer. His rival in that was Hillary Clinton.

Then with respect to the general election, there was a woman, you know, standard bearer for the Vice Presidency on the Republican side. It seems clear that the various line, gender, racial lines, are moving.

Are they still there? Yeah, they are still there. I mean, the fact of the matter is Barack Obama still had to overcome his race. It is not like race didn't make any difference.

MS. WILSON: Right.

MR. KENNEDY: It was there. It was something that he had to negotiate. He had to overcome it.

Now, the great thing is it wasn't insuperable. It wasn't decisive, but was it there? Yes, it was there.

Now, to get back to your question, are there others? Yeah, there are others. I mean, the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, Deval Patrick, a wonderful Governor. I wouldn't be surprised at all, if we didn't see him on the national stage. There are a variety of politicians of a variety of racial backgrounds, women politicians. I mean, they are oncoming. Barack Obama is clearly the person of the hour, but he really is, it seems to me, the tip of the ice berg, and in a way, that is the most hopeful thing about last week. I mean, it is great for him, but there is more coming.

MS. WILSON: Cory Booker.

MR. KENNEDY: Cory Booker, absolutely.

MR. SPEIRN: Well, let me go back, though. Our good friend and esteemed colleague, Bob Greenstein, last night ticked off the high priority issues this administration is going to face.

He started with the financial system. He talked a lot about the health care system that is bankrupting us. He talked energy and climate warning. He, like the candidates, did not talk about our educational system, and if we don't have more kids of color and poor kids graduating high school and college, the pipeline is still going to be thin for qualified candidates.

What was the percentage of black delegates at the Republican National Convention? 1.5 percent.

So I would argue that our education system is the one that is bankrupting our nation because health status is linked to socioeconomic status. Socioeconomic status is linked to educational attainment, and the social determinants of health far outweigh the influence of the health care system, and yet we continue to not graduate all of our kids from high school and send them all on to great jobs or great careers. And it is interesting. While that system isn't costing us a lot, it doesn't cost us a lot to not educate our kids, but it costs us a tremendous amount when we don't, and we aren't.

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: But I think it is also important that I understand the expectations we have of Barack Obama, but he also talked to us about us, that this victory was about us, and what responsibility do we take as members of the electorate, members of this society to take an active part in that.

So I think we should also own some responsibility for the kinds of things that we want to see. So I am hoping that in the not for profit community and the private sector that we begin to shape agendas in our communities that don't put it all on him. We want miracles

MS. WILSON: Right.

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: That is not going to happen overnight, and I think we need to be patient, and we need to support him.

I think that America deserves many, many stars behind its name because we had the audacity to trust a black man to take over the White House. I think that is the milestone that none of us will ever forget. I hope we never do, but I hope that that is just the beginning, and it is just the opening.

But we do have problem sin this country. We have serious, serious problems that we are going to have to face, and I think that we are all going to do our part. I think it is the collection of all of our efforts, that hopefully we can create a better society.

That is why I am optimistic. I am optimistic for Barack, but I am also optimistic for what we said, we said with this election. We said we care. We are stepping up. We are going to do something, and he reminded us of that.

MS. WILSON: I think Obama actually did do something that was fairly transcendent, but it is something you may disagree with, and that is, I mentioned this to your earlier. Shelby Steele wrote a fairly controversial book about why Obama couldn't be the President, and he talked about how the major ways that African Americans have made and leaders have made progress was that they would challenge, you know, assume racism and challenge, and that actually there were African Americans

who were leaders and I think he mentioned Oprah who made bargains. You don't look at race, and I won't look at you as a racist.

I think Steele said he couldn't win because he was a challenger, he would be a bargainer, but I don't think he bargained. I actually think he did whatever their third way was. He did a third way. I don't know what it was, but what I can think of is he assumed goodwill. He assumed goodwill, and he spread that throughout his campaign staff.

Remember, this is the only campaign that has ever been run where you cannot find one negative story about the campaign staff only, and so something he put into his campaign that came out was not bargaining or challenging, but about how this is how we are going to operate, this is what it looks like to be respectful and do good, and I think that was a very interesting lesson I want to learn.

MR. TAKETA: Marie, can you talk a little bit about Hillary Clinton's campaign and what you saw? I know you had a

[Laughter.]

MR. TAKETA: You had a conversation in Los Angeles, you know, talking about the media's role

MS. WILSON: Right.

MR. KENNEDY: and how it played out with the campaign. I think that was kind of an interesting point.

MS. WILSON: Well, one of the things that is very hard in this country is we go in everything very like it's the person, and often what we don't look at is there are structural things that actually affect things. And Clinton and Obama were a part of that, but when it comes to gender, agenda will always trump gender because people are really looking for agendas. It will always trump gender, but the hard thing is when you only have one person who is different, the first thing you look at is what they are different, and that is about gender.

Certainly, Hillary Clinton got gendered, so to speak. She had to go out and be the first woman, and that had good things and bad things, but what was hard about it was that it meant that she had to walk that fine line that all first women have to do about how they can be tough enough and how they can maintain their appeal.

And it wasn't until the end of the campaign when it was kind of like "I got nothing left to lose," which we all should probably think about in leadership, you are best when you have got nothing left to lose, and she just got up every day and went out there and actually I thought was more in herself because people want you to be authentic, no matter how you stand, and she was more in herself. If she had started out in that way, that would have been really very interesting.

But what we did learn in this country is about the continuing way that the press treats gender, and it is not pretty. And the press owns up to this, by the way. There was enormous sexism.

I mean, it really is stunning that we had these Clinton nutcrackers for sale. You know, in every airport in America, you could go up and buy a nutcracker like Hillary to crack nuts. It is so

understandable. Christiane Amanpour couldn't get over that these things happened, and when you look at it, there was enormous amounts of sexism, and that did hurt her, but it isn't the only thing. There was a campaign that didn't stick to message and could have been better, and I can go on and on.

But she broke the glass ceiling. There will never be a question again about whether there can be a woman President ever again in this country, and that is a great triumph.

[Applause.]

MS. WILSON: And she really changed everything, and young women are completely inspired, and she will go on, and she will lead, but it has to be a great disappointment.

MR. TAKETA: So let's move from the candidates to the movement. You know, we had Hillary Clinton, Barack Obama. What happens now? What do you see post this election in terms of the civic engagement of younger people, women, African Americans? What is changing now in this civic engagement and discourse that is going to happen post this election?

MR. SPEIRN: Well, I think that the comment was just made. I mean, the horizons have just been widened so dramatically.

I think the sense of possibility, whether we are talking about young women, whether we are talking about people of color, frankly, regardless and I think that everybody's horizons were opened, and that has something to do with the extraordinary moment we are in.

I think everybody, even and I think it was you who stated that even people who did not vote for Barack Obama, even his political rivals, I think that many of them, not all of them after all, I think some people who were talking about what a wonderful moment it is, obviously it has become the thing to say, but the fact that it has become the thing to say is itself important.

MR. TAKETA: Right.

MR. SPEIRN: And there are a lot of people I mean, I know people who didn't you know, who didn't vote for Obama, but who they too have been genuinely changed, moved. Their minds have been opened, and I think that is really going to be the legacy, more than anything else.

MS. WILSON: Completely agree.

We do training all over the country for women running for office, and I am starting to notice. We do a hundred at a time. Well, I won't go into what we do, but the most important thing is that when the women came this time, they started to say, "I am here because of Hillary coming. I am here because of Hillary Clinton." I mean, it really inspired these young people.

Actually, the challenge to you and us up here is what do we do next

MR. TAKETA: Yeah.

MS. WILSON: because they are there.

MR. TAKEA: Right.

MS. WILSON: And now we have to figure out if they are not engaged, if it is just about their votes and not their vision and their leadership, if they are not included, if they are not having the next step, we will lose them again because it was hard to get them there.

And I think Obama has got a plan, and that's good, but I think all of us have to have a plan for what we do with the energy these young people have.

I have to tell you a funny story. I was in Springfield, Mass, about a week ago, and somebody who was working for the Obama campaign was dealing with the colleges, and this young woman called her. She says, "Oh, my God, I think I am failing." She said, "Oh, you are not failing. You are getting people out to rallies. You are just fabulous. I can't tell you what you have done." She said, "No. I am failing out of school."

[Laughter.]

MS. WILSON: So, I mean, that is the degree of the commitment of these young people. They are willing to fail out of school. I mean, watch it, parents. But I think that is the big thing. That has really gotten them on.

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: You know, I don't have time to tell you all the things that we have been doing with the Marguerite Casey Foundation and our grantees, but this past year, we have been engaged in a campaign. We call it Equal Voices for America's Families, and it mostly focuses on poor and working families.

Since the beginning of this year, we have gathered more than 32,000 families at the last meeting. We had three conventions on September 6th that brought together more than 20,000 people, 20,000 families, and they come to pledge their commitment to work for change in their communities. These are people making less than \$45,000 a year, and they came with their children. They came in caravans and buses, and it was an amazing experience.

Now we are trying to create our chapters, local chapters in these different communities to ensure that this experience, the experience of being part of the convention, the experience of electing this President to the White House to lead us I think they want to be part, and we want to make sure that there are ways, that the voice at the local level is heard and even at the national level. So that is what we are trying to do.

MR. TAKEA: I want to come back to capturing that kind of community energy and seeing what we can do, but I wanted to take some questions from the audience.

There are people with roving mics out there, and so we will take the question over here from the yellow. Does anybody have a question? Okay.

MR. DORFMAN: Hi. Aaron Dorfman with the National Committee for Responsive Philanthropy.

Many of us in this room are very committed to racial justice and racial equity work, and I expect that some of the pushback that we will face as we try to advance our campaigns is that people will say, "Why are you still talking about race? We have solved that problem. Look, an African American was elected President of the United States."

Do you think we will face that kind of pushback as we continue our work for racial equity, and what can we do about it?

MR. KENNEDY: You will, indeed, face that problem.

In the past week, there must be literally hundreds of examples of people saying problem has been solved, what more do you want, aren't you satisfied now, and that indeed is going to be a challenge to your work, and it seems to me that is why it is important to, again, give full credit both to Obama, to his campaign, and to the electorate, all of that, I mean give unstinting credit, at the same time recognizing that, you know, it is a phenomenon with limits.

I mean, the United States of America is not the first country to have as its chief political officer, a person from a group that has been insubordinate. Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister of Great Britain. Was there sexism that continued in Great Britain at the time that Margaret Thatcher was Prime Minister? Answer, of course.

You just heard about the statistics with respect to education. You could talk about the incarceration. In fact, you could tick down every, every point of well being, whether it is health, education, incarceration, what have you, and we will still see the scars of racial injustice.

Now, Barack Obama himself is going to have to grapple with that, and that is going to be a problem that is going to outlive his administration. So there is work to be done, but is that problem that you put your finger on something that you are going to have to really work with? Absolutely. And there are going to be people who are going to spin that line relentlessly, and I think that you are just going to have to work really hard to keep people's eyes on the work that still has to be done.

MS. WILSON: I have to add something here. When I first came to the Ms. Foundation in 1985, one of the first things that I asked was the foundation community had just spent six years talking about women and that something needed to happen with women, and when I came in '85, suddenly there was no money for women. I said, "What's going on here?"

So we asked the foundation men and women who were leaders why isn't there money for women after six years, 1985, and the men wrote back, "We did women."

[Laughter.]

MS. WILSON: So they have been doing women for years, and they ain't done it yet. You know, we are sixty ninth in the world in women's political representation. That's how good it's done.

So I think this is America, we have to remember Deborah Brody says it so well at Stanford, "America loves to think of itself as a fair country."

MR. TAKETA: As a what?

MS. WILSON: A fair country.

I mean, we think of ourselves. We like to think we just get over these things. So, yes, it is going to happen, and I think it is just, oh, ho hum, okay, that's done. We are going to have to go at it, but women and people of color have been doing this for years, and we will keep on doing it.

MR. TAKETA: Let's take a question in the back.

MS. CAMPBELL: Hi. Kristen Campbell from the Case Foundation.

This is such an interesting discussion, and I just really appreciate the opportunity to have it here.

My question is, I guess, obviously, there is no question that this has opened huge doors to elect more racial minority presidents, gender, you know, female presidents. What about religious minorities? What about people with disabilities? What about homosexual presidents? What kind of doors do you think it has opened for that? Do you think that this means there are opportunities for those people too, or what do you think?

MR. TAKETA: You are exactly right. American pluralism is constantly being challenged. So, obviously, race was a salient marker in the last election, obviously gender, but religion as well.

I mean, after all, in the race for the Republican nomination, Mitt Romney comes forward. He is a Mormon, and he had some of the same issues that all outsiders have, which is, on the one hand, he wants to come forward as a Mormon; on the other hand, how do I make people comfortable with me. So he gives a big speech, and it is a constant issue that he had to face.

On the question of sexual orientation, as happy a moment, as happy a moment as last week was and I think last week was an extraordinary moment. In my own mind, people ask me about it, I say, well, it is sort of a combination of the Emancipation Proclamation, Joe Louis being Matt Schmeling, and the landing on the Moon.

I mean, quite frankly, if you take a look at the public response, I don't think that that actually overstates it.

At the same time, in California and in other places, there was a ratification of anti gay sentiment in the United States, and it seems to me it is a very sobering thing. Is there work to be done on that front? Answer, yes, there is work to be done.

So, again, as much as we celebrate the opening of American democracy, we have to constantly focus on the ways in which we still face exclusions, wrongful exclusions, and prejudice.

MR. SPEIRN: It is interesting too, the comparisons coming between President Elect Obama and FDR, and the thought that FDR was our first disabled President, the ADA didn't pass for decades after that. It wasn't a big issue probably for his administration, and yet both that President and this new President had to overcome something very profound in their experiences, and it actually made them great presidents because of that.

MR. TAKETA: One more question.

MS. LEWEN: I just wanted to return to Mr. Speirn's opening remarks.

MR. TAKETA: Can you introduce yourself, please?

MS. LEWEN: Jody Lewen from the Prison University Project at San Quentin State Prison.

MR. TAKETA: Thank you.

MS. LEWEN: I am just wondering if each of the panelists could talk about what, if anything, they intend to do in 2009 to address the situation of the over 2 million people who are currently incarcerated in the United States, and then specifically if any of them intends to support programs that deal with sentencing reform, prison rehabilitative programs, or support for people who are returning home from prison.

MR. TAKETA: Rather than have every panel member do it, Sterling, why don't you and Luz respond to it because it is partly about foundations and funding priorities.

MR. SPEIRN: Well, I think there is some great work emerging in juvenile justice reform, the MacArthur Foundation's work across several States in drug courts. I mean, two thirds of the offenders in our prisons are non violent offenders. So I think there are seeds of that movement.

I know we hope to actually sponsor ordinary citizens talking about issues like prison reform.

We have a big election coming up in Michigan. We spend more on our prisons than we do on our education system.

I know in California, a black male is much more likely to be incarcerated than to be in college. So I think we are seeing this issue, but not as a separate issue.

It is as you said, the impact it has on communities of color, you know, that incarceration breeds more incarceration, but it is true. Thirty years ago, we sort of gave up on rehabilitation or preparing offenders to reenter society.

I think the exciting movement around restoring the franchise to former felons is a hopeful, hopeful sign, but I don't think Americans are happy with how much they spend on their prison system and the current level of incarceration that we pursue, but they are not being offered any sort of options to look at how they might rebalance that equation. But I think there's some promising signs.

MS. WILSON: Yeah. It supports upstate New York.

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: For us at the Marguerite Casey Foundation, first, if I have a chance, I want to tell Aaron, we have not abandoned our commitment to work on issues on race and on doing structural racist, exposing it and working on it, I am sure like we are with Kellogg Foundation. So I think that is a very important commitment for us.

And we think that shame on us for making people of color, black males and Latino males and children, a commodity. We trade on that. We trade the fact that our kids are not learning at the third grade level to build a number of prisons. That is so immoral, and I think we need to recognize that. We need to deal with that.

So we are still very, very committed to working with these populations, and we do in all the States in which we fund.

In the State of Illinois, for example, I just came from having a board meeting there with our grantees. They are very involved in the criminal justice system and bringing the kind of reform to restore the right to vote, to do a number of things, and worry about the number of children that are going in. So I think that we are very committed and continue to be. We will continue to do that kind of work.

MR. TAKETA: I want to go back, Sterling, to your opening comment where you talked about the basement, and the issues in this society and really what all the people in this room are really working towards is social justice and equity.

We have just had this landmark election. We have new coalitions that were built through this election that we haven't seen before. What do we need to do?

To all of you, what do we need to do as the non profit, as the civic sector, to really capture this moment and this momentum and move forward in a way that perhaps gives us a greater opening to change the social compact in our country?

MR. SPEIRN: Well, it's interesting. The thought just occurred to me, listening to my colleagues. If you thought of the President Elect as a new CEO who had to be a turnaround artist in a company, what would he need to do?

I am just three years into my job as a new CEO at a large private foundation, and yes, we can change what we need. Well, change management is exactly what we are about.

What we know in organizations is you have to build a container for change. You have to start building just transitional structures, but what we call it, you have to create an authorizing environment at the top for people to be enrolled.

I think, as people are saying, people are very much enrolled right now. They are excited. The worst thing would be this spike of participation around this election I mean, the good news is people did not have, as far as we can tell, although I think Public Agenda is going to come out with a great report on what people's experiences were in the election booths this time because it is critical when people go to vote, they do not have a negative experience.

But if you said, "Okay. Our new CEO has created an authorizing environment. It is unfortunate that he has to focus on putting Americans back to work," I mean actually work, but what we need to do is make American work again.

And I think it is exciting that there is, once again this excitement, I think is about a new domestic agenda. I mean, we really are going to make this country work domestically, even as our standing in

the international world has just skyrocketed because of this, but there has not been much attention to a domestic agenda that has worked.

As Luz and others said, if all of our constituents and colleagues in the non profit sector now make public engagement around whatever issues we are working on, but not as a separate issue, but as part of this new change that we are trying to create across the domestic issues we are facing.

MR. KENNEDY: Can I say something? I would like to go back to the question about prison and bring it back to the election.

I think that the situation of mass incarceration in the United States is absolutely shameful, and I am not a foundation person. I am a law professor, but a number of years ago, I wrote a book, "Race, Crime, and the Law," and one of the major deficiencies of that book is that it doesn't talk more about the problem of incarceration.

If I were to revise that book, incarceration would get a lot more attention, and one of the things that I would try to say to people it certainly has affected me is that it is never just one person that is being sent to prison.

MS. WILSON: Right.

MR. KENNEDY: We think that. I mean, as angry as we might be at somebody, it is never just one person. That person is related. That person might have a son or a daughter. That person is somebody's son or daughter. There are relations, and I think what happens, I think for a lot of people, you know, good people, wonderful people, but we focus so much. We individualize the criminal, and we lose sight of that person's place in a broader society.

Now, to bring this back to our subject, I think it is a major issue, just like you think it is a major issue. I don't anticipate that Barack Obama is going to say much about mass incarceration, for a variety of reasons. There's a reason why a lot of politicians avoid the issue. There is a special reason why he will avoid the issue.

And getting back to the gentleman's question about is the race problem solved, no, it's not solved. There's a set of issues that Barack Obama has to think about, how will I, a black man, deal with this issue or not deal with it. This is one that I would suppose I would be willing to bet that Barack Obama and his brain trust, if they were even thinking about this issue, somebody would say, "Hmm, as much as this issue needs to be dealt with, somebody else is going to have to deal with it," because after all, black man talking about prisons, talking about something which political rivals might say, "Oh, you are being easy on prisons," we don't have to go deep in our political history to see where Presidential races have been determined precisely on this issue.

MR. TAKEA: Right.

MS. WILSON: Yeah.

[Applause.]

MS. WILSON: I will be brief because I am in my third act, which means that you have to bring the first two together. My first act was at the Ms. Foundation where I saw that women were actually leading. Women across all race and classes were leading the best social policy in America. They were creating different kinds of ways to get jobs. They were doing something different about health care, but they were fighting every time the legislature, the city council, whatever.

So I think in terms of deep civic engagement and what we need to do and have never tried in this country to change is to get women on the school boards, the city councils, the commissions, to sit by men and change our options by being in power.

So I have proposed to the administration we will see what they do that they create something that actually is a commission to figure out how to get more women elected in this country to office because the only way I think that is going to change, the only way is if there are more women sitting beside men, because the policies that affect jobs, the policies that affect who gets into prison, the policies that affect women's safety and health are actually being decided every day from the local level on up.

So I hope they will create a commission to figure out how to do it. Other countries have done it by establishing quotas. We will never do that. We will never say 30 percent. We just like other countries to do that.

So what we have to do is to figure out new ways to change. This is not a representative democracy in any way.

So, if you want to really get people engaged permanently, then I think you need to support the commission idea and get more women in office, again, across all race, and make this country look like America not just at the top but at every level.

[Applause.]

MS. WILSON: Yes.

MR. TAKETA: One last question over here.

MS. KIM: My name is Angie Kim. I am with the Getty Foundation.

One of the wondrous things about our sector is we are very decentralized. We have a lot of very individual missions that are all incredible and honorable, and we do a lot of deep engagement in our own regional and localized ways.

But I am wondering about where we sit right now in history and all of these problems that we are facing, and acknowledging that even though we have all these problems, we also are sitting at the cusp of a lot of opportunities.

But one of the things that I wonder just about the independent sector is in terms of this collective action, to take a term that you use, is there something about our decentralized nature that we actually need to look inward and think about changing? And I don't know if that means regulation of us, but you mentioned education or, you know and we can all name so many others that are not

going to get accomplished, I don't think, through our own deregulated actions, but really will need to take a very large, mobilized, collective effort, and I wanted to get your thoughts on that.

MR. TAKEITA: Because we are running out of time, let me just ask the panel to each comment on this as sort of your closing thought.

You are sitting here in an audience full of civic leaders. We have had, as Randy describes it, the opening chapter of a new day come to be. Give us advice. Take Angie's point. What do you think we need to do differently now that we haven't done before?

Luz, do you want to start?

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: Yes. Thank you.

Well, I will tell you a story. When we started the Marguerite Casey Foundation, we decided we would not fund silos. So we never received a grant application or made grants just on an issue. We looked for a kind of an organization.

We have a number. We have education, criminal justice. You name it, we have it in our portfolio, but we don't name it that. We work with cornerstone organizations in different communities.

Now, the challenge for us is to try to forge a conversation among these different organizations when they come together, and one of the issues that they always raise is what about my expertise on the issue. I say, "That is exactly what we bring you. We need your expertise, but we don't need you to be locked up. We need you to hear others and to elevate the conversation and see the connections, to create a larger platform."

I don't think we need to be regulated to do that, but I think it requires an activism on our part to reach out to others, to learn, and to have an open mind.

I have said time and time again, I am very thankful of my foundation colleagues who provide the direct service support to organizations because it enables us to do this different kind of work that has been enormously difficult, to bring our organizations together across issues, across discipline, across race, across geography, and yes, across eagles, but we are beginning to make some dents in that and beginning to have conversations that are really enlightening because people realize now that in order to win, they need to win together. And that to me is hopeful at the local level. That is what I know, and that is what I wanted to share with you.

MS. WILSON: That is true.

The economy is going to do it. I mean, the economy is making those of us who run these organizations have to say, "Could we share things? Could we live together?"

[Laughter.]

MS. WILSON: I mean, truly, the economy is an opportunity here because you can reward people who do this. You can actually use it as a chance to say we are going to have to do this. It is going to make you have to have community. It is going to make you have to do.

So all we have to do I think is at a time when people are going to have to do something different, give them something great to do, honor them, put them down, give them money if they work together better. You don't need to regulate it. You just need to make it happen because the economy is going to force it.

MR. TAKETA: Quick comments from Randy and Sterling.

MR. KENNEDY: Just quickly. In a country as big and complex and diverse as this, it seems to me that decentralization is a great benefit. I mean, you know, you all are interested in lots and lots and lots of different things, and of course, there are lots and lots and lots of different problems in our society.

So, far from seeing the decentralization as a problem in the foundation world, it seems to me it is a great opportunity, a great benefit, and again, given the sort of society we have, it seems to me that is actually the way to go.

MR. SPEIRN: I am not going to answer your question. I want to talk to the American people.

[Laughter.]

MR. TAKETA: I can't let this session end without asking one more question to Marie and Luz, which is the first black First Lady who brings gender and race, this towering person in Michelle Obama, who shows up on Larry King and John Stewart, who was a key part of this campaign. any thoughts on this First Lady and the role she will play?

MS. WILSON: Oh, God. Do you want to start?

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: I love her. I think she is wonderful. I did not like her dress.

[Laughter.]

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: But I think she is going to bring great energy.

MS. WILSON: Oh, she is the real thing.

MS. VEGA MARQUIS: I think she is so smart. So I just cannot wait for the things that she will bring forth. So I am very excited for Michelle.

MS. WILSON: Yeah, it is very interesting because a lot of people think she actually could have been the first President. You know, it is interesting that they do, but what is fascinating about knowing how she has done her life and herself and her children, it is, again, what you see is what you get. Those children were every day in the same school and the same place.

Let me tell you what she said that really was interesting. Gayle King, at a meeting I was at, asked her what had happened with she and Obama that was so important, and she said, "In 16 years, he has never disappointed me."

In 16 years, he has never all right, you men out there.

[Laughter.]

MR. TAKETA: Okay. And I think with that statement, we are going to conclude. Thank you again, Sterling, Randy, Marie, Luz. Thank you. Thank you, everybody.

[Applause.]

MR. EVERETT: Please join me in thanking Kelvin Taketa and his remarkable lineup of speakers for giving us some provocative ideas that we can all take home with us.

[Applause.]

MR. EVERETT: Ladies and gentlemen, I hope that you agree with me that this has been a remarkable three days here in Philadelphia, and did you hear who won the World Series?

[Laughter.]

MR. EVERETT: I encourage you to take back to your organizations and to your communities, both a commitment to address the difficulties we face and an appreciation of the possibilities we can fulfill.

Our current financial difficulties on Wall Street and in government budgets have taken years to develop, and they will take years to resolve.

The same is true of the other concerns such as health care, education, and housing. We, therefore, need to measure our success not just on the one year, but over five or ten. The conference should give you confidence that together, we can respond to these problem.

Over the past three days, you have seen constant examples of the non profit community's dedication to making a positive difference in the country and the world. You also have seen constant examples of the many ways in which we can improve lives from providing more effective programs to participating in the shaping of public policies, and as you take these steps, let Independent Sector know about them, so our coalition becomes even stronger.

So our hard work continues with a renewed sense of purpose. We will look forward to meeting you again next year in Detroit.

I now turn the program over to David Egner, president of the Hudson Webber Foundation in Detroit who will help us kick off next year's conference.

[Applause.]

MR. EGNER: Thank you, Ralph.

I know you all want to run out the door. So the question becomes what do I leave you with that paints an image that says "I got to be in Detroit."

Can you imagine a conference better than this one? It is hard to picture that. With the staff that we have at IS and with the great Conference Planning Committee and Host Committee, we will be equal too.

I have been charged, however, by Diana with a fail or pass task. She said if I don't get then President Obama at the next year's conference, I fail.

[Laughter.]

MR. EGNER: I am not promising that, but I will promise you, with this great staff, Host and Planning Committee, it will be a great conference. So you know the conference is going to be great.

So what do I tell you about Detroit? I could throw up the Convention and Visitors Bureau video. That wouldn't do it. I could tell you about the great things. I can talk about our Riverfront, which according to a European company that rates such things, it is the third most beautiful riverfront in the world. I can tell you about the Riverwalk that is there that is attracting thousand of people, hundreds and millions of dollars of investment.

I could talk to you about the North American border, the most crossed North American border in North America that goes to Canada. More trade and people cross there than anywhere else. We are an international city.

I could talk to you about our cultural amenities, the Detroit Institute of Art, one of the most important art collections in North America; the Detroit Symphony, one of the best symphonies in the United States; the Charles Wright Museum of African American History, the only museum that is devoted specifically to the history of the African American population in this country; or right next to it, the Science Center which is on its third expansion in the last three years; the great growth of culture that is happening in our community as we see populations that are Latino, Arab, and Asian grow in Detroit.

I could talk about the funder community and the non profit community that have built collaborative that are unrivaled anywhere in the country that you can learn from, \$100 million initiative for a new economy, a safe community collaborative, looking at the issue of prison reentry in our communities.

I could talk to you about the work Skillman is going on K 12 education which is unrivaled anywhere in the United States, but somehow telling you about all of that just doesn't do it.

There is something happening in Detroit, and it is something I can't explain without help. There is a movement that looks very much like the NGen movement that is happening here at this conference.

So I asked my friends at the Issues Media Group, a group of folks who produces Modelled.com, a publication that comes out weekly in Detroit, to put together a video, a quick video of people in Detroit that are making a difference, business owners and leaders that are leading this movement.

[Video presentation.]

[Applause.]

MR. EGNER: We look forward to having you next year to learn more about the movement that is Detroit, to be part of that movement, and to come to my hometown, Detroit. We will see you there.

[Applause.]

MR. EVERETT: Thank you so much, Dave, and we do look forward to seeing you in Detroit.

On behalf of the Independent Sector Board of Directors, I want to offer my thanks to everyone whose extraordinary efforts helped to make this conference such a great success, the many volunteers who served on the programs and Host Committees, the IS staff, the wonderful speakers who gave their time and their talents to us during the last three days.

I wish you safe travels on your return trip. May you take many of the ideas and inspirations with you back home.

The 2008 Independent Sector Annual Conference is now adjourned. Thank you very much.

[Applause.]