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LECTURE

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“Evaluating Public Policy from a Feminist Perspective:
The Case of the US Summary”

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the text is the transcription of the lecture

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I want to say how happy I am to be here, this is my first time in Greece and I really want to thank professor Stratigaki, for contacting me this summer and asking me to come in the winter which was actually the most convenient time for me, so I am very pleased to be here... However, I realized I forgot something so excuse me for a moment. I asked my partner who's accompanying me to hand out a few random items. Here we go...

What I want to start out with besides saying what a pleasure is to be here, it is really a unique experience to be in Greece for the first time, and to kind of see how much you all have contributed to human civilization over the centuries. It is really humbling and it's quite an honor for me to be here. Tonight I want to start out by talking about the work that I've been doing at the Institute for Women's Policy Research and also introduce some methods or ways of evaluating public policy from the point of view of women, from a feminist point of view. And I also want to explore the question of how far women's liberation can go under capitalism. And in that way, I'll be harking back to my earlier paper on the unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism. And I will start also to introduce all of that by talking a little bit about the United States Economy giving you an overview, I am sure most of you are familiar, but a summary might be helpful.

In talking about the institute for Women's Policy Research I am particularly pleased to be here as a guest of this program as the gender studies program is beginning and in so many universities in Greece right now, and to help to bring to you the idea of helping Euro-programs really apply themselves to public policy. This is what I have tried to do with the institute in the United States. And starting the institute, we really saw two gaps, we saw a gap in public policy where there really was no evaluation of public policy in terms of what it was or wasn't doing for women. And yet, more and more women were entering leadership positions in the government as members of congress, as senators and more and more men realized they were getting elected with women's vote and so they too want to make their policy-making responsive to women's needs. And we have an enormous policy-making apparatus in US, since we have a small government sector we compensate for with a large non-profit sector (which we also call the independent sector), we have many - many think tanks hundreds of think tanks, many advocacy groups, civil right groups, women's groups peace groups, all working to try to influence the government. And yet admits all this apparatus, there was really very little that was actually specifically focusing on evaluating public policy from a women's point of view. And at the same time one of the most successful aspects of the women's movement in America, I will have to say, has been the establishment of women's studies of the gender studies programs in the university. We probably have more than 600 women studies programs around the US many of them are 25 to 30 years old. And they've started out in a small program of women's studies and they

moved into all major departments across all, almost all, major universities. So, a tremendous amount of research was being produced in academia but none of it was being brought to bear on public policy. And this is the other gap that I sought to rectify with the institute.

The Institute for Women's Policy Research is not the only one that attempts to fill this gap, I've met one of your professors and she has spent some time at the Wesley centre for research on women up in New England, and this is another one, which tries to bring academic research to bear on public policy issues. And, IWPR we really try to speak the language of policy makers, which we have found out pretty much, as money, dollars and cents, and so we do a lot of counting, we count a lot of things, and we do mainly quantitative research. I want to show you just a sample of one of our reports is called the status of women in the states and we are basically counting what happens to women state by state; as you know we have fifty states and they are very different. In this report we try to provide information to State base policy-makers, which are equally important in the US with those at a federal level. And being a policy-oriented think tank no matter how long a report we produce we always make sure that we boil it down into a page or two because we found that's about all the policy makers read, and it's very important to be able to summarize it and to know exactly what your main point is. So, we are always doing short things like this. So again I am just showing you these things as examples of the kind of work I hope that you'll increasingly do here in Greece as a gender studies program develops. We work also very closely with activists, advocates who're working to influence the government. And in fact, most of our best research questions are posed by them. They tell us what they would like to know the answer to, the answer they need to try to convince the government to do something, and that is usually the question that we research and that we try to get the answer to. And always and everything we do, we try to put women at the center of the analysis to ask how this would affect women's lives and we also explore class differences among women and of course in the US race and ethnic differences, are very important. We also often look at sexual orientation differences, differences in marital status and age and so on.

In looking at the issue just how far women's liberation can go under a capitalist system, -my sort of main topic for this evening- I am harking back to the unhappy marriage of Marxism and feminism. I argued there that gender is a dynamic in society that is just as important as class in shaping people's lives, and I still believe that very much to be true. But in some ways I have been surprised by the developments of the last thirty years I think at that time I would have argued more on the sight that capitalism and patriarchy were kind of in a partnership and they sort of had a hegemonic way of keeping

women down, of oppressing women. But I think what we've seen in the US particularly in a free market system is that there's been a lot of conflict among capitalist interests and the interests perhaps of men to maintain some control over women. And women really have in some sense used the capitalist system to become liberated. They've participated in the economy; I like to say they're voting with their feet, by going into the economy they're voting for economic autonomy. And in this sense, they're voting to leave the family to some extent and we will see some data on that. And so the question for me is how far can that go, and people would ask me 'how far women's liberation under capitalism can go?' I would always say 'let's wait and see how far can that go'. And I think now we're beginning to see the limits in the US, I've been pre-optimistic for a large number of years but whether it's just the political situation in the US currently or what it is, I find myself getting a little bit more pessimistic about the future.

To begin the discussion let's take a look briefly at the political economy of the US. And that would be the first transparency where I made a few bullets for you, which I'm sure most of you are familiar with. It's a free market economy, we had a tremendous amount of dynamic job growth in the 90's, I know in some sense we were the envy of the world, particularly of Western Europe. Is an economy with very little regulation, we have a small public sector, less than 25% of the gross domestic product, in Europe I think the average is about 50% for your public sector. We have very high inequality, we have very high poverty and when I say high poverty I truly mean high poverty; for children in the US it is about 20% of them 1/5 are poor particularly those in single mother families, single mothers are poor and single older women also have a high rate of poverty. And just to give you an idea of what the poverty level is, official poverty level according the government, it is essentially about 10 thousand dollars a year. So these are families that they're living with less than 10 thousand a year, and those are American dollars, which are worth a lot less than it used to be, I've noticed on this trip that the dollar is falling and the euro is rising...

We also have uneven development this was one of the surprising things we discovered in that report I showed you, the status of women in the states, we found that in the worst states the wage gap between women and men is twice as big as it is in the best states for women. And also that the poverty rate for women can be twice as high in the worst states as in the best states. And in general, the best states for women turn out to be those on the two coasts the west coast and the east coast. And the worst states are very much in the south the southeast and also the midwest. And to some extent that has to do with the types of economy that you find on these states. The two coasts really have a more modern economy, economy that it is based on services, finance, education, healthcare and

so on. Whereas the economies in the south and in the Midwest are more based on manufacturing, and those are the economies in which men will do better relative to women. And women will do better actually relative to men in the newer forms of service economy.

In terms of public policy, we have had some strains, particularly in the 60's and in 70's with a very strong equal employment opportunity policy, which was largely, motivated by the black civil rights struggle but it also included women. And the women's movement was very strong at forcing the government to create equal employment opportunity policies. They're really quite strong in the US, women sue the employers, they go to court, they frequently win, they frequently lose of course, but we also have a government agency that takes their cases, when their cases are good, and helps the women, the plaintiff argue against the employer and helps the women prove that discrimination is happening on the job. And you can read about the successful cases everyday in the newspaper. We do however have a very weak family policy, we have almost no public policy supporting families, enabling them to both work, and take care of their families, very little subsidy child care, virtually no paid family leave. Only in 1993 till, did we finally had a federal law.

So, we have a very weak social safety network, a very weak redistribution of public funds to the poor. But even in this context women have made a lot of progress and (we're going to look at the next graph), and in particular, they are really voting with their feet and moving into the labor market; and this graph shows for each birth cohort of women how their labor force changed, the labor force participation, the percentage of all women in that age group who went into the labor force. How it changes as its cohort ages and also as it change cohort to cohort. My cohort is the one that starts out at about 50% in our twenties that means about 50% of people my age were working in our twenties and then in our late twenties as we had children our labor participation dropped and then it increased quite rapidly as our children aged, particularly compared to the earlier cohorts. If you look at women younger than myself, one more group did drop a little bit during their child bearing years, that is more of them dropped out of labor force so, you saw a drop there. But if you look at younger women at the top line here, women born in the early 60's, those women from the late fifties to the early sixties they haven't dropped their labor force participation at all during their child bearing years. So in that sense their labor force participation now looks virtually identical to men's and this is in a society that really has no particular family policy, making it easy for women to do this, yet they are about 46% of the labor force in the US an overall now about 70% of women are working. And this compares to about 55% of women in the European union working. So, this is one of the major changes. Another major change has been increasing education, lets look at this next table. This shows

particularly that the increase in labor force participation has been for mothers. And it shows that for women with no children there has been an increase in labor force participation but the increase has been larger for mothers, including children under six. And that number today is much higher and for women with children under one the rate of participating in the labor force in the US today is now 55%. So, that is quite high again, in a country with very little subsidy as childcare.

Some of the other ways in which women have made progress, is particularly in education. Women are now receiving about 55% of the 4-year university degrees in the US, bachelors' degrees. They are also receiving more than half of the Masters degrees. And they are about half of the students in medical school and law school. And this is all an enormous change compare it to the time when I was in graduate school. Therefore there has been progress in closing the wage gap back in 1960 when the women's movement in America first popularized the concept of the wage gap, women were making about 59% of what men made, that means if you compare women and men who worked full time, year round, women made only 59, the average woman made only 59% of what the average men made. Over the seventies and eighties there was substantial progress and by about 1990 women were making in the US about 75% of what men were making for full time year round work. However, since the 1990s there really hasn't been much progress in narrowing the wage gap anymore. And some of that progress I might add, really came about because women happened to be in a good place in the economy, in the service sector largely, and men were in a pretty bad place, in the 1980's manufacturing was really hit in the US and men's real wages actually fell. So part of the narrowing of the gap that we saw was actually because men were doing worse, but some of that was because women were actually doing really better. So, there was a real narrowing of the gap during that time. So there has been a fair amount of progress for women and yet it would seem now that, that progress has stopped.

And this is just a summary, an overview of what we have seen, so what I like to say is that actually all of those changes add up to women, becoming more like men, at least economically speaking. They're working more, they're entering the labor market, they're getting an education and they're supporting their families. The most typical form now of family in America is with children is a two-parent family but it is one in which both of parents are working. It's a small minority now, less than a quarter of all families in which the husband works and the wife does not, when they have children. So, they are working more hours, and they are also working more in jobs that they were formerly male jobs such as medicine and law, which I mentioned. But there is a problem, and I think this is part of the reason why we don't see more change, is that men are not actually becoming

more like women. There is a small increase in housework and childcare by men, but it's really pretty small. And they are also not entering female jobs, like nursing, teaching, childcare work, nursing home aids. Perhaps because of the low pay and the low prestige.

In thinking about what to do next, or how do we evaluate public policy, this is a framework that we've developed at the Institute for Women's Policy Research. Primarily by studying poor women and how they live, we realized that women have, traditionally had, three sources of access to income. One of course is from men, primarily by marrying them. And you know that's a pretty good economic strategy as long as you only earn 75% of what they earn, you might as well just marry one of them to try to get the whole or some of their income. I don't want to be totally crass and economic here but it is certainly a strategy that women have used over the years. Secondly, of course they can enter the labor market and get their own income from the labor market. And finally, they can receive income from the government. And even in the US which has a very poor social safety net, not a very good one, it's still very important that we do have support for poor women and children and we have a public pension program, social security support for people in their old age. And actually the pension the social security system is one, which very much relies on marriage. We also noticed that most of our public policies in the US are really based on older traditional family form, where the husband is working and the wife does not. And one way to provide security to the wife, in retirement for example is that she has access to his earnings record in calculating her retirement pension.

So in the US a woman who is over 65 is eligible to receive half of the pension that her husband gets, whether she worked or not. So we very much sort of reify that connection to the men or that marriage in terms of our public policy. And, interestingly we would say that each of these sources of income support are very legitimate in a capitalist society, which generates a lot of inequality and generates a lot of poverty, is important for the government to ameliorate that and to reduce that poverty. And so we would say at the Institute for Women's Policy Research that government's support is good, is just as good as any other kind of support. Earning money is good of course and pull income in families whether is with men, with other women, with your parents, with your sister, your brother, whatever. Pulling income is also a traditional and a good strategy for women and men to be less dependent on the vagaries of the labor market and to be able to have some security, that they give each other through income pulling in the family. But interestingly, in studying poor women we realized that our government was really attacking the third form of income support and saying that it is terrible to rely on welfare and rely on government payments. And, it's really very good to rely on the labor market and it's even

better to rely on men. And you may think I'm joking but this is actually, what our new welfare policy is.

In 1996 we ended the, what we called the entitlement that all poor women with children had in the US. Before that time they could go to any community, show up at the welfare office and say I am a poor woman with children, and as they can prove that they could get an income. And they could get that income until their children were 18 years of age, out of high school. Now, since 1996 our new federal law policy limits that to five years, in many states is limited to one or two years only. They gave the states a lot more individual power of what to do. They enshrined the concept or the value, the superior value, of the two-parent family and said that money for the poor can be spent on encouraging marriage. I have nothing against marriage most men and women in fact have tried marriage at least once. It is nothing wrong with it, but what's insulting is the double standard, the idea that poor women don't know how to pick a marriage partner. That, they don't recognize the great marriage, when they see it. That is it, for poor women marrying a poor man is going suddenly make them less poor. And to spend money that is supposed to be reserve for lifting people out of poverty, to encourage them to marry struck us as wrong or wrong-headed. There was no proof that we should be spending public dollars on this type of social policy, no proof that it worked to increase marriage, no proof that increasing marriage reduces poverty for people who are poor before they get married and so on. So this policy has actually moved in a fairly far direction, I am going come back to it.

In evaluating public policies, then, this is just a sub-sample of those that they really can increase women's income security. We tried to group them in these 3 types of public policies; those that they want increase women's economic where through marriage, those that they want increase it through the labor market, and those that they work through public policy. And then we evaluate the public policies; we use some of these measures down the right-hand side of the graph. We would say we'd be good to reduce the dependence of women, on any single income source, allow them to have all income sources and to pull. We would like to reduce poverty and we would like to reduce inequality between men and women, and between the classes and between the races. And the next graph is an example of a set of policies that we analysed, mainly anti-poverty policies that we analysed in a paper that we produced at the Institute. I'm not going to go through them all, but I just want to give you the idea that we try to measure its policy for how it's doing on reducing poverty, or reducing dependence on any income source, or reducing inequality. And one thing that you can see is that the labor market policies pretty much do very well, in terms of increasing women's economic autonomy and their income security. And I think

that's really been the direction of what we've worked on most, hardest in the US, it is really to increase women's ability to get income from the labor market.

This is just an illustration of how poor our anti-poverty policy is in the US. This is a measure of inequality; on the horizontal graph, it is a measure of inequality before government programs before taxes or transfers. You can see that the countries, these are OECD countries they vary in how unequal their economic systems are overall, with the Anglo, some of the Anglo-Saxon countries being the most unequal in their market policies. And some of the... Germany, Belgium, Netherlands and Sweden being more equal even before taxes and transfers. And then, how well most of these countries do in reducing the inequality after taxes and transfers, which are shown on the vertical axis. So that in the Netherlands for example, they start out with an index of nine and it's reduced to two after the taxes and transfers. And then look at the US, it doesn't have the worst index to begin with, it starts about sixteen but it only reduces it to about ten through its anti-poverty policies. One social scientist Nancy Fraser, you may know her work, she's commented that she thinks that the two areas of policy that I mentioned that were particular weak, that we don't have a strong social safety net and that we don't have strong family policies, are connected. She points out that in most of Europe, in most advanced countries you have a long standing family economic security policy, either child allowances, health care for everyone.

All of these are universal; everyone gets them, and it's a form...and also is maternity leave and maternity policies. So there is a form of support from the government to middle class families, to middle class mothers. I mean usually the woman gets these funds. We don't have that in the US that is completely missing. What we have as a result, is a very stingy social safety net policy, because the only mothers in America they really get any support from the government, are very poor mothers and it's a very stingy policy, perhaps precisely because it isn't a universal policy and it isn't been shared by everyone. So probably, those two particular gaps, our lack of family policy and our lack of anti-poverty policy are probably very much related. Finally, the final transparency is a sort of a summary of the types of strategies, and I put 'strategies' in quotes because I'm not sure how conscious they all are.

The women have used to make progress as I summarized before, I said that women were becoming more like men economically. But men were not becoming more like women economically. And perhaps that is the limitation under capitalism. There's a lot of incentive for women to join a capitalist system but there is very little incentive for men join what in some sense you can consider the pre-capitalist system, family care which very often takes place in the home, outside the market place, the wages are crappy, no vacations, no fringe

benefits to speak of. And so there's an inherent limitation then in how much change there will be, because there will be an incentive for women to enter that system but not much of an incentive for men to kind of leave that system. So, in terms of what some of the big, overarching strategies might be the first one is certainly to continue to work for women's equality in the labor market. I think I've always felt that that has been the easiest the most important lever for change. If you can get it finally so that women do an equal pay with men then women's bargaining power in the household should be increased as well as their political power; Their top-office holding both in corporations and in the political system, which certainly increase. You may not realize that in the US women have only 14% of the seats in congress. Only 14% of our national parliament and about 6% of the top corporate positions, in largest corporations.

So, we are very far from equality even economically in the US as much progress as we've made. But I've always said that that would be the most important lever for change, the easiest one to attack and the easiest one to work on. And I think the one where we have made the most progress. Secondly, I think women continue to fight for change within their families. They try to get men to take on more housework and more childcare responsibility. Just to relay a funny story to you, when in the late 60's early 70's many of us were involved in the anti-war movement against US involvement in Vietnam, and one of the women was Ann Froyanson and she was married to John Froyanson, who I think was one of the seven or nine conspirators, peace activists who were actually tried for conspiracy in Chicago and she said one day at a women's liberation meeting, she said you know we will get the US out of Vietnam before we'll get men to wash the dishes. And we all laughed. We couldn't conceive first of all of ever getting the US out of Vietnam. We didn't think all the protesting we were doing was really going to end the war ever. And we certainly thought in the heydays of women's liberation, with women marching in the streets, that there'll just be another week or two before men will do the dishes, they'll equally share the dishes. But, she was right, so there has been some change here but it is been little change. I think one strategy I think is certainly the next one; that if men aren't going to do it who is going to do it, let get the government to do more, help with child care, provide paid family leaves and take care of the family as women still are doing the most of. I think the Scandinavian countries have an interesting policy now, they have the paid family leave and they have set aside some of it to be used by men and if the men don't use it the family loses it.

So it's a use it or lose it, and that has resulted in men taking more paid family leave in Sweden and Norway and Denmark where they have that policy. We don't even have paid family leave, yet in the US, so we are long ways away from that. I think the next strategy

women spending less time in families is actually a very prominent strategy in the US. I don't know to what extent it's a conscious choice; but women are marrying later, they're divorcing more, they're having fewer children, and generally they're spending more of their lifetimes outside marriage and less of their lifetimes inside marriage. And I think that's a pretty good strategy again, it's like voting with your feet. If the marriage isn't going to be equal, if it isn't going to work out, leave it. And because of women's success in the labor market, they are in fact able to do that. They are in fact able to raise their children on their own and get a little support from their ex-husbands, probably not as much as they would like. But it is a fairly common strategy in the US.

The next to last strategy, the idea of accepting the way things are, accepting the traditional family where women, where there is a gender division of labor, where women do most of the family care, that's a growing strategy in the US, and as I mentioned through our welfare laws, and the supposed anti-poverty policies the government is actually encouraging marriage. A bunch of social scientists from all sides of the spectrum, conservative through liberal said that marriage is a value and children should be raised by two parents, and if it is a value we should have the government encourage it. I would say that part of the way the government is doing this, is through attacking poor single mothers. Talking about people who don't live by the rules who are bad and aren't married and are living on the dole, which is bad living on government handouts, they should play by the rules and they should go to work and get married. And at first when this started happening, and I have to actually blame president Clinton for this because he campaigned on this in the 1992 election. He campaigned against welfare as we knew it, and said we should have a new kind of welfare where people who play by the rules get rewarded. And at first I thought ok, you know it's bad, but it's just a way to get elected. And as I thought about it more and watched it progress it was really grabbed on to by the right wing and by the republicans. I think that a lot of that message was designed actually for the average woman, for the young middle class woman. It was about telling her how to live her life, that she otherwise, she might end up like one of these poor bad women and she should get married.

So there's also a whole drift to a religious fundamentalism in America, we have a group called the 'Promise Keepers'; these are men who teach their members that they have to be the head of their family, they have to be responsible for their family, they have to treat their wives and children nicely but then in exchange the wife must obey her husband. This is also been taught, if you will, by the federal government as well. Because all of these non-profits that I mentioned that we have in the US often get government funds they get federal government funds to do various things, end people's drug abuse, do

job training and in all of these government programs now the federal government is encouraging faith-based organizations that is churches, synagogues, temples, mosques to provide these social services. To some extent this has been a traditional thing, we've had groups like catholic charities that have always gotten government money to provide social services. But always in the past, there was supposed to be a wall between their religious teaching and their social services. And now they're literally being encouraged by the federal government to combine them. So that in the White House, and I'm not making this up, we have an office of faith-based programs. And I've been told by many civil servants, especially when I've thought about the institute, trying to get more federal money (we do get a little but we don't get very much) that if I go for example to the department of labor and say that I want to have a job training program to train women in non-traditional employment, let's say to train women to be plumbers or electricians, I better make sure that one of my training sites, the training will be delivered by a faith-based organization. Because if I went to the government with a proposal and I didn't have a faith-based organization as part of my proposal I almost certainly wouldn't get the money.

So, I know it's a little bit hard to believe that this is happening, in a country that was founded on the concept of religious freedom and the separation of church and state, but it actually is. And I think it was starting first with poor women and poor people and it's moving up. Now interestingly enough we do have federal aid for higher education in the form of subsidies loans and these go up to the middle class. And we also have home mortgages, tax deduction for the insurance you pay on your home mortgage, these are probably the two biggest government benefits that the middle class gets, the home mortgage tax deduction and the federal student loans. Now, none of these so far, so far as I know, are restricted only to married couples. You know, that you will not be able to get a student loan unless you are married or you will not be able to get mortgage tax credit unless you are married. But it may be only a matter of time, we just have to wait and see what happens in the US. So, I just want to point this out as I think one of the negative directions that is happening in the Bush administration in particular although it did start under the Clinton administration. And I think the last item that I have there, attack the double standard in parenting I want contrast it with the second item where I said that women are still working individually within the family to get their men, their husbands to do more.

I think what I mean by this one, 'attack the double standard of parenting' is that there needs to be a sort of societal wide acceptance of the fact that all people, men and women, have obligations and when they work they still have to worry about these obligations, their children, their spouse might be sick, their older parents might need help,

and that we want to recognize that men as well as women are burdened or obligated. And in fact, we want increase the burden on men. And I think a sort of national program perhaps women's movement and other groups could get involved in really trying to name this as a problem. That we still very much have a double standard in parenting in which we expect basically the mother to take care of the sick child, to take the child to the doctor, just stay home from work; and have less equality there. And, therefore employers, you know, in a sense they can be free to discriminate against mothers because well maybe they are in their job less, maybe they are less productive when they are on their job because they are taking care more of these home things. And I think in one way the women's movement has been successful in the US and has been to attack the double standard in sexual behaviour. So, taking that as a sort of victory that we've had, not that's a complete victory and we're still dealing with sexual trafficking and so on. I think that some sort of public campaign about the double standard in parenting or to broaden it out to family care, to include older care would be something that would make a difference. But again is a difficult area to make progressing especially when at the same time you have the government really sort of pushing this very traditional view. And it's a view that is, you know, based on Christian fundamentalism; it's a view that excludes gay parents from the equation that excludes all kinds of all non-traditional families from the equation. So, I think some sort of positive campaign for family diversity and against the double standard and against the hegemony of the traditional family will be a good direction for us to move in.

I want to end by just saying that this relatively new direction in the US of pushing, pushing this religious fundamentalism or this pro-marriage stance is I think a quite dangerous one; and I suggest that we in the US, who always like to think of ourselves as the best, the greatest, the most special on the whole world, and therefore we can ignore the rest of the world. Really, I think women in the US need to recognize that we're not at the head of the pack anymore in terms of women's progress; that we are, sort of, against of a block in terms of how far we've gone. You know, our progress is probably going to be limited because we need a stronger public sector if we are going to make progress in women's liberation, than we have under our particular form free-market capitalism often called cowboy capitalism we need that and we don't have it. And now we're even being attacked, you know, for living outside of marriage, wanting to raise children on our own, wanting to live in lesbian relationships. Our abortion rights are really hanging by a thread. It's five to four on the Supreme Court and if one just resigns or dies while George Bush is President, it's possible that women in America would lose their right to abortion. So it's a fairly I think dangerous situation for women right now. I have been quite optimistic for the last three decades about how much economic change women have been making, I found

myself really worried about this. And in many of these issues, I find that the institute is the only voice speaking out, the only voice speaking out against the government's marriage policy and so on. So, I think it's time for us in the US to really take a look at some of the international protections the international declaration of Human rights, the UN. I wish we had something the equivalent of the European Union to turn to, to say 'this is gone too far, this is got to stop' we need to appeal to this international...to make more use of the international mechanisms, that are out there and that maybe available to us.

So I'd like to end there. Thank you.