



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on January 21, 2014

Report Decries Gender Pay Gap, Ignores It in White House

When NBC News special anchor Maria Shriver's latest report, "[A Woman's Nation Pushes Back From the Brink](#)," became available on Amazon on Saturday, January 11, it already had 25 "five-star" ratings reflecting its basic theme: There continues to be a huge gender pay gap — 77 percent to be exact — between the sexes. Worthies ranging from liberal Princeton professor Anne-Marie Slaughter to NBA basketball star LeBron James to Beyoncé contributed to the 557-page tome, each expressing some form of dismay over the continuing gender gap and offering various solutions on how to close it, usually from a Progressive point of view.



Wrote Beyoncé:

We need to stop buying into the myth about gender equality. It isn't a reality yet. Today, women make up half of the U.S. workforce, but the average working woman earns only 77 percent of what the average working man makes.

This is from a working girl who describes herself as a "modern-day feminist" [with a net worth of \\$350 million](#) gained as a recording star.

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Then there's contributor LeBron James, the highest paid basketball player in the world, [with 2013 earnings of \\$56.5 million](#).

And there's Shriver herself, a member of the Kennedy family (her mother, Eunice Kennedy Shriver, was a sister of John F. Kennedy, Robert F. Kennedy, and Edward "Teddy" Kennedy) [now living in a \\$10-million home](#) following her divorce from former California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger in May 2011.

Each of these brings a special insight and unique perspective into the problem of wage discrimination in America.

The Shriver Report was cosponsored by the Center for American Progress, a [self-described left-wing think tank](#) founded in 2003 as "an idea factory for the Democrats" and purposely designed to counter conservative groups such as the Heritage Foundation and the American Enterprise Institute. It publishes ThinkProgress, a blog that "provides a forum that advances progressive ideas and policies." One of the main ideas being advanced is that the sexes are equal, or should be, and any difference must be legislatively removed, by force.

When President Obama took office in January 2009, the very first piece of legislation he signed into law was the [Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act of 2009](#), at which time the White House said:



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President Obama has long championed this bill and Lilly Ledbetter's cause, and by signing it into law, he will ensure that women like Ms. Ledbetter and other victims of pay discrimination can effectively challenge unequal pay.

On the White House blog yesterday [appeared](#) similar concerns, including reference to the infamous 77-percent disparity:

Despite passage of the Equal Pay Act of 1963, which requires that men and women in the same work place be given equal pay for equal work, the "gender gap" in pay persists. Full-time women workers' earnings are only about 77 percent of their male counterparts' earnings. The pay gap is even greater for African-American and Latina women, with African-American women earning 64 cents and Latina women earning 56 cents for every dollar earned by a Caucasian man.

Decades of research shows [sic] that no matter how you evaluate the data, there remains a pay gap — even after factoring in the kind of work people do, or qualifications such as education and experience — and there is good evidence that discrimination contributes to the persistent pay disparity between men and women. In other words, pay discrimination is a real and persistent problem that continues to shortchange American women and their families.

Unfortunately the Shriver Report failed to include any reference to a study of White House salaries as reported in its [2013 "Annual Report to Congress on White House Staff,"](#) done by staff [at the Daily Caller](#), which shows the White House discriminating on wages paid to women on its staff compared to males. The analysis concluded that the White House pays its female staffers just 87 percent of what it pays its male staffers, a "gender pay gap" of nearly 13 percent.

Economist Mark Perry looked over the data and [played the rhetorical game](#):

Let's ignore for now the extensive body of research that explains all or most of the 23% raw gender wage gap after controlling for the multitude of relevant variables that contribute to earnings differentials (hours worked, education, experience, continuous/uninterrupted experience, marital status, age, number of children, safety conditions of the workplace, desire for flexible work hours, etc.).

In other words, let's just ignore the empirical evidence, ignore the relevant variables that explain pay differences, and just accept the Shriver/Obama/ Beyoncé narrative that the raw 23% pay gap exists mainly or only because of gender discrimination on behalf of employers. [Let's say that] I'm on board with Maria, Barack and Beyoncé about the pay gap.

[If so, then] what are we to think about the fact that women working in Obama's own White House are paid only 87 cents for every dollar paid to men working for Obama?

As careful as Shriver was in collecting articles favorable to closing the alleged gender wage gap in her report, she overlooked one of the most egregious discriminators in the country: the very man she endorsed for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination — Barack Obama.

With tongue firmly implanted in cheek, Perry expressed his hope that the message being delivered by Shriver and that presented by the White House may one day be coordinated and differences resolved: "Hopefully Obama can work with Shriver and Beyoncé and set an example for the rest of America by addressing the 13% gender pay gap at the Obama White House."

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