

# Breaking Barriers: Women Defining Leadership

Speaker 1: [inaudible].

Pamela Reeves: Hello everybody. Welcome.

Speaker 1: Hello.

Pamela Reeves: Seems like there are a lot of people interested in women breaking barriers, so I'm not wrong. I love that. It's a good way to start. Welcome everybody. Um, welcome to the ideas festival and welcome to this panel. We're here to talk today about the future of leadership for everybody in business, in politics, in sports. And we're going to talk about experience and potential. We're going to talk about data and practice and we're going to talk about the supply and demand sides of women's leadership. And we're going to do that in conversation with a dozen women in 90 minutes. So wish us luck and listen carefully. You don't want to miss anything. So I've spent a large part of my career and honestly many panels here at Aspen thinking about and solving for a gender disparities and in harnessing the untapped potential of women and girls around the world.

Pamela Reeves: I've done it through government, working in the State Department with the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in academia at Brown university teaching on these topics. Um, and now my work supporting Melinda Gates and her team. And I have to say that I am asking myself, as many of you may be doing, it's 2019 and we're still having this conversation. So what makes the issues confronting women's leadership? So uniquely unsolvable, particularly given that in the u s and in global and globally are thinking about gender and inclusion and diversity has evolved positively so dramatically over the years. And we've collected so much thoughtful data on the subject, but the barriers facing women who strive to lead in all sectors somehow remain pervasive and absolutely stubborn. So we're going to break our time together today into four parts as we dive into different perspectives in sectors where women are leading and every woman we're going to hear from today and there'll be introduced on each panel is intelligent and creative and mercifully efficient.

Pamela Reeves: So we're gonna get a lot done. Uh, we're in for a treat and I'd like to start us off, uh, by asking Lorraine yee from Mckinsey to kick this whole session off with some of the globally important research Mckinsey has been doing in this arena. Lorena, um, who's a leader in Mckinsey's high tech practice is also the head of Mckinsey is North American women program and she leads the firm's ongoing research on women in leadership. And there is a lot more to say about Lorena, but I will not take that time right now, but I urge you to look at her full bio is I urge you to look at everybody's full bio in your programs. So Lorraine thank you.

Speaker 1: [inaudible] so

Lareina Yee: when I was five, my parents sent me to an all girls grammar school in San Francisco. It was an amazing education and one of the benefits is I grew up seeing female all around me, female friends, female athletes, female academics, female role models, female leaders. And then by no surprise I entered the working world and it was really different, really, really different. Fast forward, many, many years later, I'm a senior partner at Mckinsey. I sit on our global management team as the chief diversity and inclusion officer and lead our tech practice. That kind of sounds like maybe I get to make some decisions, but every day I can count on two hands. The number of I go to where I'm one of the only or a few women with a decision making role at that table. And if I splice it as a woman of color, I'm definitely the only one.

Lareina Yee: So what happened, and I bet my experience is not exclusive to myself. If I were to look around this room and all the women here, all they incredibly accomplished women, I would suggest you raise your hand if you've ever experienced the fact that you found you were the only one or one of a few at a table, predominantly of men. Everyone's hand went up. We know this experience. So this is the launch point of a, just a quick discussion. Um, obviously one thing at Mckinsey is I completely love data. So I'm going to give you a bunch of data. It's on these cards if you just sort of want a companion to the data, but essentially let us take a look at where we are in corporate America and the global economy and just level set before we meet the extraordinary women today on where we are, what the challenges are in corporate America.

Lareina Yee: Specially in the business sector, we face about six gaps that are pretty alarming and pretty serious that have slowed us down and don't worry, I do have a message of optimism towards the end. Um, the first gap is around leadership. If you take a look at companies, fortune 1000 companies at the top teams, those supporting the CEO, one in five are women, one in five, very few women at the top. And by no surprise we have less than maybe six or 7% CEO's of fortune 500 companies on a good year. Sometimes it's only three because if one goes we lose a whole percentage or two points and maybe it's a little better in European economies at the board level, not at the management team level where their quotas, but systematically we don't see women in leadership. All of you are nodding because this is experienced, we have every single day.

Lareina Yee: And while I'm very concerned about that, what I'm more concerned about is the leadership gap that starts at the beginning. And this is the for first promotion gap. So interestingly enough, you see very few women at the top. By the way, this has been the case for 10 1520 years. I see more nodding, but then you look at the beginning and it starts off pretty well. And in the U s we have 47% entry level workers in America that are women. Yay, that's really great. But guess what? She earns her first paycheck. She works really hard and she's up for her first promotion to become a manager. And guess what? This is where the disparity starts. This is where that glass ceiling starts and it's super thick and very hard to get through because for every 100 men that received that first promotion, only 79 women receive that same promotion.

Lareina Yee: And by the way, if you're a woman of color, and if you're black, that number is 60 you're just right out of school. Maybe you're not even 30 you're just trying to get to that first manager level. And that's where the disparity starts. And from there we lose women at every step of the way. More and more. And as you think about that, a rational mind might say, well maybe my career doesn't need to be in a big company, Lorena, maybe I don't need to be a senior executive. Maybe I could start my own company. But here's the thing. If you leave the big company track and you try and start your own company, you're going to need something called funding. And today venture capital funding disproportionately goes to men. One study found that 98% of all male teams that pitched receive funding, 2% of all women teams received funding in the u s so if you can't get funded, how do you start to build that oxygen and business development and in June entity and if you can't get promoted, how do you climb the corporate ladder?

Lareina Yee: These are just three of the biases that kind of in bed where we are. And by the way you'd say, well why is it that we've had the situation for so long? And one theory that I have that a lot of other people share is oddly we've gotten comfortable with it, which is kind of the familiarity bias or gap, which is that we asked 64,000 men and women, if you see one and 10 leadership positions held by a woman, do you consider that a, do you consider that a company where women are well represented? 50% of men said if one in 10 liters is a woman, women are very well represented. I work in business as many of you do. And I'm thinking if you made one in 10 of your quarterly earnings, if your one in 10 of your products launched successfully, if one in 10 of your sales people made their numbers, would that be okay?

Lareina Yee: That's not well represented and that's not a good place to be. And by the way, 34% of women thought that women were well represented in that scenario. And it's not to say that those people saying that felt or aren't supportive of women, it's that somehow we've gotten comfortable seeing so few women in leadership roles and across corporate America that when we see one or two were like, yes, we've made some progress. But as all of you would attest, that's actually not anywhere near a quality or anywhere near the potential, the intellectual capital and economic powerhouse of the women who are not fully participating in the economy, which leads to another interesting gap, which is the support gap. So as many of you know, there's the formal economy, which we were just talking about the paid economy. And then there's the unpaid economy. The unpaid economy would be your housework and house keeping activities, um, elderly care, taking care of children, all of that family and homework is unpaid.

Lareina Yee: And someone spent some time calculating how many hours women spend globally. That number is one point 1 trillion. Women spend 1.1 hours in the unpaid economy and that's three times more than men. And often they're doubling up the unpaid work with their paid work. So if you wonder why women say they run a double shift, it's because they do. And then they're trying to think

about how they advance their skills for the next generation of jobs that are available. And that leads to the six gap. And this gap is something that I deeply worry about but is also potentially a source of optimism. And that gap is around the tech gap. So globally men have 35% more access to digital technologies that's fancy for a smart phone, even a two g phone, broadband access, internet computers. And in our developing countries where a household only has access to one device, it generally will go to a man.

Lareina Yee: So if you think about the portal to which all the new jobs and so many of the opportunities in our global economy sits, you absolutely need digital access, digital fluency, digital mastery. And without that it's really hard to have a sense of that. And in the u s closer to home over the last decade, we're one of the few countries in the OACD where we've seen a decline in women having stem majors specifically see us. And so if our women aren't learning stem at an early age, if it's harder for them to participate, how will they be able to put themselves in line for some of the most interesting and fresh jobs that are out there? And by the way, it doesn't mean that you need to code for life, but as we see going forward where jobs are going, it's going to be such an important skill. It's a capability that's really important, which leads to something optimistic.

Lareina Yee: Um, which is that as we think about where jobs are going, we are facing a major disruption. Um, our Mckinsey Global Institute, we just finished a piece of research on the role of the future of work for women and we find that generally women will be as disrupted as men that amounts to about one in four women will see globally their job either completely transformed or actually taken away through automation. And while that sounds scary, what also is happening is ushering a whole set of new jobs, whole set of new roles, um, some of which are really, really exciting. We call them frontier jobs. In all of that disruption. The workplaces unsteady. And that is a perfect time to actually assure a different type of agenda, an agenda where you think about how can you use the fact that work and jobs and employment are changing so dramatically to also rebase and rebalance how we think about the cultural norms in the workplace.

Lareina Yee: And so while many people think that the future of work is a very scary thing for women, and certainly there's a lot that we need to do in terms of investing, it also could be a time of opportunity, but it's a decade away. So we stand before us where we spent the last decade a bit stuck and then we look at the next decade for which there'll be lots of change. And the question is how can we actually architect that change? How can all the people with so much creativity and ideas here, architect that change towards one that resets the gender norms towards a more equal inclusive workplace. Those are just a couple of facts to get us started. Thank you so much.

Speaker 1: [inaudible].

Pamela Reeves: Thank you Lorraine for that. And I, you told me earlier that, um, it might be a little depressing, but I actually think it was refreshing. Um, we can't move

forward unless we know what's in front of us. Uh, so welcome again everybody joining Lorraine on this panel with me about women breaking barriers in business and leading in this area. Um, we have Peggy Johnson who is the executive vice president of business development at Microsoft and she leads their strategic partnerships and transactions. And before that, Peggy spent a number of years at Qualcomm technologies. Uh, she was the president, the executive vice president of Qualcomm and president of global market development. And if I remember correctly, you started your career as an engineer in general electric's military, yes. Division, which I think you still don't talk about anti submarine warfare. Yeah. Um, and Lauren sentence, so we have in front of us in historic figure Moren at age 22, um, became the youngest woman to be a full time trader for the New York Stock Exchange. And the second right?

Speaker 1: Absolutely.

Pamela Reeves: There's more. And the second African American woman in the exchange is 226. History, your head.

Speaker 1: [inaudible]

Pamela Reeves: um, so for the question today in front of us is how do women lead in business? And then I'd like to frame this with an overarching question, which is do we have the right definition for leadership? Is there a holy grail of leadership, a particular way to do it? Or is it time to look at an entirely new paradigm for leadership, particularly given the changing demographics that you've told us about in the future of Ai, can the status quo of leadership expectations and modeling hold and shut it? So you've seen Lorena's handout, you've heard her stats. Um, could I start with you Lorena and asked you what's the impact you've seen with all this amazing work that Mckinsey has been doing that you've been doing, um, who's using it and how, and also by the way, who isn't using it? I still, I'm supporting or do we updated deniers in our midst, right? Or date of resistant people? Um, well, largely think corporates

Lareina Yee: are using it. Um, and that's the intended audience. So when we have more than 400 companies in the u s opt in to spend the time with us, it's because we have all decided that we want to figure out the solutions together. Um, I don't think any of us think we've kind of checked the box and we're doing incredibly well. And so you need a cohort of companies that are committed to change. So for a lot of companies, there's a perception, a sort of misplacement like, oh, well I think, you know, we've got a lot of programs and policies and, and I care personally really deeply, but at the end of the day, what's actually happening? And when we put a huge amount of data to it, it helps companies put in perspective a couple of things. One, the numbers aren't budging to where the soft spots that matter because in a world is still limited time and capacity.

Lareina Yee: You have to put your focus on things that are going to have outside, in outsized impact. And so we've seen some companies change their diversity and inclusion programs, and I think that's, you know, that's a piece of it. Um, outside of that, I think for the policy world, you know, it's helpful to share the facts. So all the research open and to shape and provoke the dialogue. So are you seeing, um, governments or policy shops as much as private sector and are there any any surprise users or people attaching themselves to your data? Um, I think that for our Mckinsey Global Institute are future of work. There's a lot of discussion that's starting, especially since we just published it on how to think about reskilling and that's going to take a combined level of partnership across the public sector and the private sector. And what I'm really hoping is that they're going to be some more innovative ways to get at that rather than kind of the old kind of trotted ways. And so a little bit more energy and creativity. I think the data haters, I mean you may hate the data, but the data is the data. And we sit in a room and you see, you know, eight out of 10 are men. Um, it kind of speaks for itself. So, um, I wanted to ask you something else, Peggy, but Microsoft does not strike me as a data hater.

Peggy Johnson: No, we loved today and likers knocked.

Lareina Yee: And I wonder if you, how you were using external data, if, if that's a relevant question.

Peggy Johnson: Yeah, I mean we, we definitely do and we use quite a bit of data from Mckinsey. Um, and it, it helped because you can talk yourself into things without the data and you really have to get the data in front of you to help make informed decisions. So we've relied a lot on that. Um, but you know, the numbers, like for instance, in my field in engineering, you look at things like a funnel, you know, coming into, into the discipline of engineering, we only have about 25% women even entering into that field and probably about the same 10 years, maybe even a little less than. So what do you do? You have to start early and introduce and expose these disciplines to young women. And there's a lot of studies that say, going back to data, you really have to catch them about fourth grade. Otherwise, they sort of get convinced by cultural biases and things, maybe I'm not good in math. And they, you start to feel and talk yourself into that. So you have to catch them early so that we can increase that number, uh, that we are graduating, which is right now only about 25%. Well, you know, Peggy

Pamela Reeves: in, uh, ask you about structural barriers and a pipeline and wondering if you have a pipeline problem. Um, so we know that diverse teams, particularly in your areas, AI and generally speaking, um, are going to make things like AI more accessible and more universally useful. Um, but, and we also know that in the workplace, diversity makes people smarter. Right? Which I did not make up. That's, there's research on that. Um, so where, where are your people coming from if only a sliver of women are, you know, in the tech fields. And so few of them are even have access.

Peggy Johnson: You know, it's interesting. So we, we've been working to increase those numbers. So there seems like girls who code black girls code, there's a lot of great organizations out there that are starting to increase those numbers. But once you, you know, you start to move that 25%, you have to retain them and it kind of goes back to what you're seeing you when you look up at a company, you go for your first promotion and you don't get it. How, you know, you can convince yourself you might not be in the right field. I almost convinced myself I wasn't in the right field. I was in engineering and I felt all my performance reviews were, well, you're not, you don't speak up very much. Um, you're not very aggressive in meetings. These, these weren't my personality styles. I had leadership attributes. They weren't being valued.

Peggy Johnson: Yeah. Tell us more about that. Yeah. So basically I convinced myself I was going to leave the field of engineering because I wasn't doing very well in performance reviews because they were only rating me against things that I was never going to be good at. I would be changing my fundamental personality, uh, to be those things. But they weren't giving me any points for teamwork, collaboration, um, things that weren't on that performance rating. And thankfully I had a manager who became an ally of mine and lobbied HR to change our performance review so that just me, but every woman who came after me after at Qualcomm had the benefit of that. So we could be more inclusive of who we described as leaders. It wasn't just a certain type.

Pamela Reeves: And have you seen that kind of, um, openness, um, and sort of flexibility, um, in other places you've worked and in the big companies that can really make this change for women and other diverse teams coming off?

Peggy Johnson: Yeah, so five years ago I joined Microsoft and I feel like from the day I got there, it has been a focus of ours and we don't know everything for sure. We're constantly learning. We're informed by data, like what Lorena's company does and we're continuously trying to make a more inclusive environment, an inclusive environment for everybody. There's quiet men out there, there's, you know, there's all types. There's very opinionated, aggressive women we want them to. Right. You shouldn't have to change your fundamental self to be able to give your best at work. And the more inclusive we can make our environments, which we work on every day, uh, the more the better and the more diversity we have on our teams. You want this diversity of thought when you're trying to solve

Pamela Reeves: problems. Um, Lorena, I'm curious if there is a research, you don't have to give us numbers, but about these kinds of companies that are changing their internal, um, the ways they do business in order to make it possible for this? Yeah, I mean, I think most people think about diversity in terms of representation, which is counting how many women we have. So on this panel, you know, we have 100% women. Um, but yeah, great. Um, but I think the challenge is, is that the underlying piece is much more profound and it's something you, you know, Microsoft and others are working on, which is

fundamentally how do you build a culture of inclusion and acceptability a sense of connectedness and belonging. And if you look at kind of micro segments, um, and so let me give you a counter intuitive example. So a lot of companies are very excited that they have parental leave policy.

Pamela Reeves: So it's not just that they're going to pay women to go on family leave, you're going to pay men. And while the gesture is fantastic and innovative, the application of which sucks period because you know, very few men take that paternity leave and then, and so that's one thing, but then you have to dig a little deeper. Why. And what's interesting is the vast majority of them feel that it's associated with a sense of professional risk. Right? And that is more around the mindset of inclusion and connecting and having a different set of cultural norms. And that is much, much harder. I can easily change paid leave policy and flexibility policies. I can't change your sense that there's a sense of risk there. Um, and the fact that women do actually have to take that. Um, and so, you know, I think we have a ways to go on inclusion. Okay. Well, Lauren, we're not going to ask you to represent all young people, um, but share your thoughts as you will. Um, so you've broken leadership barriers and um, in addition to gender, right? You've broken age barriers and culture barriers. I don't know if I'm speaking to this, so can you just talk to us about what makes you a leader? If you can do that? I mean, and, and not just that, but did you look up, look around and say, that's it, that's a leader and I'm going to do that?

Lauren Simmons: No, I think for me it definitely happened organically. Um, I went into finance, but you've been, I don't know many people know this. Before I went into finance, I was a genetics major. And so, and even before college I was an engineering. So I was always in spaces where throughout stem and having people around me encouraged me to continue doing this. But the caveat would be, but just realize you'll probably be the only black woman and these spaces, which to me gave me power because I can now be a representation for people coming after me, which he has. It puts a lot on my shoulders because the pressure is on. If, if I mess up, then people inherently think that other people after me, you're gonna mess up, which sucks. Um, but I love the platform that I have. I've looked up to a fearless, courageous women before me, such as my mom and my first job on the trading floor.

Lauren Simmons: Richard Rosenblatt, who was that, a Rosenblatt securities CEO, my boss, et Cetera, et Cetera, was my first mentor in my career and absolutely believed in me. I came from a genetics background when it's a finance, um, how to statistics minor so I wasn't in the space of finance, but he believed in me, is still soundboard, is still helping me develop more leadership skills for the future. Um, and has been very open and optimistic as to the direction of where I want to go now the leaders, the Gen z years that are going to come after me. Touching back on diversity and inclusion, I really think that even now we are way more open minded than a lot of CEOs and executives that are in position now. And they thrive for diversity. And inclusion. They know the importance of it. I mean, there's so much that out there that says your company will do so

much better if you have it. But they really put it into practice. And so instead of being traditional Wall Street where it's predominantly men, a lot of these new companies that are coming along are so excited to have different representation in the room so that they can, one, continue to learn about their organization and keep growing, but to, um, to have a bigger outreach. And I really, I'm very optimistic for the future and what the gym, I'm a millennial, but what the Gen z Gen z years have in store for us.

Pamela Reeves: So that's very interesting. And I also just want to state for the record that I don't know the difference between a millennial, a gen Z or,

Lauren Simmons: or any of that. So I didn't know how old you are, but Gen z and millennials, the youngest millennials, 24, the oldest Gen z or is 23? I'm 24 so right off the cuff here. Yeah. Good to know.

Pamela Reeves: Um, so if you, um, what's the future you'd like to see for young men and women who are seeking to be leaders or are going to, I mean you say you're on the cusp of your generation, but you and your colleagues, your cohort are going to be on the cusp of leadership, right? People our age and older people are going to still be in positions of leadership. So do you have any ideas about vision or advice or something that you'd like to see or pitfalls you'd like to one them about

Lauren Simmons: what I would like to say. I think what I would like to see we're doing, I know that a lot of the organizations would have been around the, have been around for years, centuries. Um, and with us at least widegeons ears and even younger millennials, we don't need a gatekeeper to make our dreams a reality. And so whether that means starting your own businesses completely going against policies, completely doing things in our hand, in our control, we are going to do that. But not only are we going to do that again, we're going to be inclusive of all we I think are very tired of the very routine practices that are in place and they want change and we are eager for change and, and I think that is going to continue to just continue. And not only that, but also being inclusive but also being very much in support and not being in competition. I think women who are leaders that are older, oftentimes she find this competition for some reason with what the younger woman coming in and, and not having the mentorship to even develop to get into these leadership roles. But that is going to be a switch or the younger woman because they are going to want to see all of us come up. Thank you.

Speaker 1: Somebody snapping. So technical

Lauren Simmons: [inaudible] we're really out of time, but I just want to ask each of, I want to ask one question of each of you respond to if I can. Okay. Do you see yourself as a woman who leads or do you sell see yourself as a leader who happens to be a woman?

Lareina Yee: No, no, no. You pointed to somebody else. That means you have to go first. I was actually fixated on him quote, cause I saw a Starbucks cup from Madeline Albright that there's a certain place in a certain place for women who don't support women. Yeah. Oh yes, yes. Yeah, exactly. I think we all go,

Lareina Yee: uh, the first. Um, so I think of, I dunno, I mean I think of myself as a leader, um, but I also feel deeply responsible, um, for women who are my peers, but also the next generation. Because I think that when I started, I remember I gave a commencement speech at my college and I thought, you know, we can do it all and it's all gonna be great. And I just felt this effusive energy of a changed generation. And I still feel that energy. But I also feel that the stats show us that it hasn't shifted. And the only way that it's going to feel as great as I thought it would when I was leaving college is if we who have power, all of us start to use it in ways that actually reshape norms. And Society. And that's the only way I can imagine it actually being better.

Lauren Simmons: Yeah. Thank you Peggy.

Peggy Johnson: Everything she said. That was great ladies. Thank you very much.

Speaker 1: Thank you. [inaudible]

Pamela Reeves: you all leave the stage, which either side, you're welcome. I'm going to invite the women breaking barriers in the political realm to come up.

Speaker 1: Am I okay? [inaudible]

Pamela Reeves: I'm so tempted to start by saying hello. I'm Pamela Raves, but I won't. So we are here now to talk about women leading in politics and in the political sphere. Um, and I have with me three pretty phenomenal women. Um, I was going to start with Cecile, but it looks like you're getting miked. Um, I'll just introduce you all to briefly. Cecile Richards is the cofounder of Super Majority, which is an organization fighting for gender equity. And some of you may recognize her as in her former role. She was president of Planned Parenthood Federation of America and the Planned Parenthood Action Fund, um, which she did from Oh six, I think to 2018 Alisia. Garsa is her cofounder at super-majority. Yup. You are indeed. And I'm also the CO founder of black lives matter. Um, and you're

Speaker 1: [inaudible],

Pamela Reeves: um, you're also in your spare time, the strategy and partnerships director of the national domestic workers alliance, which is pretty fabulous. And you focus on the intersections of race and gender in the economy. And I believe last year, Alicia, you'd cove you founded the black futures lab, which is an organization dedicated to building political power in black communities. Right? Uh, Lauren leader to my immediate left, I'm not politically just sitting to my left here is a cofounder and CEO of all in together. I mean, we don't know really. Right. We'll

see. Um, which is a nonpartisan organization, uh, training American women in civic leadership. Um, and before that you were center, uh, president of the center for talent innovation and she also is the author of the book crossing the thinnest line. So thank you all for joining us. Um, and I just want to start by saying I don't want to alarm anybody.

Pamela Reeves: Um, but, uh, it turns out that Hillary Clinton, who was the first major party, you know, presidential candidate is not the president of the United States. True. Which it might be an interesting place to start. So that number zero, but I would like to start with some other numbers just to ground us. Um, so today in 2019 23.7% of congress sets of the 525 people who sit there, 127 women hold seats, Congress, 25 women in the Senate, 102 in the house. Plus we have four women, non voting delegates. That would be American Samoa, DC, Puerto Rico and virgin islands. And to further break that down, um, there's a hundred 106 of those hundred and 27 women are Democrats, 21 are Republicans. 47 of those hundred and 27 whip women or women of color and 22 self identify as black. 13 is Latina, eight is Asian American, Pacific islander to as native American, one Middle Eastern, north African and one as multiracial. So those are astoundingly fantastic numbers given where we used to be, but they're terrible. Um, so seal, if I could start with you. Um, so what needs to change and let's just put it on the table. What are you doing about it?

Cecile Richards: So actually, and I want to add a couple of other numbers to those. Those are important numbers, but we actually have three women on the Supreme Court. It probably the most important thing that President Obama did in my opinion that he did. Um, so can you imagine, I mean that to me and they are, are carrying, just say they're carrying more than their weight is such an understatement. They are carrying an entire gender and more on their backs. And so as Ruth Bader Ginsburg says, what if we had nine? Just imagine, um, uh, the other, the other statistics actually we were, we were kind of discussing what I mean, no matter what you say, it's a bad number. Uh, we were discussing whether this is right number, but my number that I use now I think is, is since the 2018 election is that we are 78th in the world in women's political representation right behind Somalia.

Cecile Richards: Okay. So yeah, we've got a long way to go. And um, and I think an Alicia was talking about this earlier, that the women who did get to Congress this time, the ones who will, like a lot of people have heard about Alexandra Ocasio, Cortez, Lauren Underwood, I had a Presley, none of them got there because anyone in a political party asked him to rock. Okay. So I think it's really important to say that women are basically trying to bust into a political system that was literally built to keep us out, not just women, people of color. Right. And so all it is time to ask to me is to build power outside of the political infrastructure. And that's actually what Alicia and I are working on. And part of it is, it's fascinating right now is that women are now, I think everyone knows we were 54 55% of the, of the voters in 2018 record number of women and women of color.

Cecile Richards: Um, we're elected to Congress. That actually is a fairly common statistic and yet how is it that we are the vast majority of voters, the overwhelming majority of volunteers, hundred million dollars more was given by women to political candidates in 2018 than even the year Hillary Clinton ran. So we're doing everything and yet the issues that we care about are largely aside. And I think that's the issue. It's not, you know, we're essentially doing all the work but nothing changes. And I'm, this last panel was inspiring and depressing because I would say that every issue that was raised has a political implication. And I'll just end on this cause we obviously this, I'm obsessed about this. We could talk about it forever. Um, but we cannot, we know how to solve the fact that there is no national childcare policy. We actually know the medicine to deal with issues like maternal mortality. And black maternal mortality, which is three to four times the rate of white women

Cecile Richards: the country. Right? And it is and it is going up. Actually a woman in America

Cecile Richards: today is 50% more likely to die in childbirth or a complications than her own mother. I mean I could go down the list, we know how to solve these problems. We have not built the political will in this country to do it. And that's what super majority is all about.

Speaker 1: [inaudible]

Pamela Reeves: so I want to ask you this then. Have you been surprised at all by the people who are supporting you and the people who are not supporting you? It's super majority.

Cecile Richards: I can't even count the number of people that are supporting us. I mean that is the crazy thing is that I've been an organizer my whole life and usually you're out there trying to convince people we can make a difference. We can make change. This is the complete, it's like an inverse, right? It is an Alicia know. I see you nodding and we've been going around the country. It's like you put up the bat signal and like women are flooding. They're like, it's like temp revivals. Women are just like, I want to do more. I'm not burned out. I'm not, you know, I'm not discouraged. I want more skills. I want more tools. I want to build across racial lines. I want to build across generational lines and I want to change what's happening in this country. And I think really importantly, I want to do more than resist. Women have been leading the resistance for the last two years, right? I mean you talk about family separation, defending planned parenthood, fighting back to, to defend the ACA. And women are now saying, well what if we actually, what if we could build the country? Imagine the country we want to live in where there was a gender equity. We wouldn't have to fight all the time and let's go build that. And that's what is animating women too.

Cecile Richards: It's exciting. Let's get off the stage and go build it and like an hour. Yeah.

Pamela Reeves: So to further contextualize this, so 2020 is the hundredth anniversary of the ratification of the 19th amendment. Women getting the vote. Okay. So it's a hundred years later. Um, but, uh, women's enthusiasm to participate. I'm looking at Alicia right now. I'm in the electoral process at all levels as to fork, female, and to support female candidates seems sort of Luke warm at best. Um, and maybe this is reflective of a larger disengagement in the political process in America. I don't know Alicia, but you really focus on human values and human potential. I mean, that's how I see it. Um, you embrace voice and agency and rights and the power of participation. So can you tell us how on the ground you energize and encourage people about or around political participation and politics, not just participation, and how do you actually build political power? What does that look like?

Alicia Garza: Well, let's start with that question and I'm going to work backwards because I do think that it's time for us to have a different definition of what power looks like. And too much of the time we're talking about people being empowered and not talking about people making decisions over their own lives and over the lives of people that they love and care about. And that is actually how power is functioning right now. And so when we talk about, you know, the numbers of women of color or the numbers of women are the numbers of black people in Congress, I actually am looking at it from a place of decision making and that's why those numbers are too low for me. Um, it is not okay

Alicia Garza: to have two, two

Alicia Garza: black people in the Senate. That's like not okay. It's just not okay.

Alicia Garza: Okay. And that is the dynamic that we're talking about when we talk about power.

Alicia Garza: And so I, I agree with Cecile. I don't think that people are discouraged or tired or you know, don't feel like change can happen. I think that actually what is happening is that people want power and that is something that is really shaking up the foundation of this country. It is 100% true that when Ilhan Omar or uh, uh, Alexandria, a Cortez ran for office, that people told them it's not your time. Even though in 2019, right, the demographics of this country actually reflect exactly those women, those are exactly the women who should be running for office right now. Those are exactly the women who should be making decisions on our behalf. And those are exactly the women that I want to be sitting down at a table with and saying, this is what I want to elect you to do. So with that being said, I think that what is happening right now is a political revolution. I spent time in Georgia last year when Stacey Abrams was running for governor. She won by the way,

Speaker 1: right? And I can tell you,

Alicia Garza: not only are people not tired, but when I was standing in lines at prospect park where there were empty voting machines with no cords, but there were lines and lines and lines of predominantly poor and working class black people and people of color. And I would walk up to them with a bottle of water and I would say, why are you still here? It's 90 degrees, aren't you tired? They're like, Oh yeah, I'm not going anywhere. And that is women who are holding babies on their hips, that is, um, elders that we were bringing chairs for so that they could sit down and get their place in line. The problem is not that people are tired. The problem is people are tired of the political system as it exists. They're tired of power as it exists. And I think the question for all of us is how tired are we have power as it exists? If we're really of power as it is, then what we're going to do is we're going to invest in the constituencies and the communities in this country who have a plan for what needs to happen in order to change the country for the better. Black women know what to do to change this country for the better. We're really, really clear. Are y'all coming with us?

Speaker 1: [inaudible]. So

Alicia Garza: if we're able to activate the super majority, which we have in the first month, 100,000 women signed up. And to be frank, it wasn't all women, right? These were people who did not all identify with she and her pronouns. That's exciting to me. What that means is people are waiting to be tapped in. I get text messages every single day. What can I do? How can I do it? I'm down to March and I'm also down to knock on doors. I'm down to make phone calls. Hell, I'm down to run for office. I'm ready. I just need somebody to say I believe in you. So I think that's what super majority is trying to do right now.

Speaker 1: [inaudible]

Pamela Reeves: all right. I have a lot more questions, but let me turn to the horn. Um, Laura, you're training women for civic life, right? And I think we like to hear more about what you do actually every day and what you're finding out. But, and this may sort of dovetail with something Alicia was saying, are you seeing any trends in the kind of women that are coming to you right? Does your training or your work attract a certain type of women, a woman who has a particular kind of goal or aspiration or or vision of the future.

Lauren Leader: We're going out and trying to connect with women who have not participated in the political process and yes, there are the amazing 100,000 women who stepped forward. But look, I want to just put it in the context of the conversation we had right before this, right? So we spent 20 minutes having a fantastic conversation about what's going on in the workplace. There are huge numbers of women who are not making any connection between the political process and the barriers that they're facing at work. They are connected. The fact is the reason why women are stalling out, why we're 78th in the world according to the World Economic Forum and everywhere else is because we have an entire generation of women who have not seen the connection

between participating politically and solving some of these big problems that they're facing at work. And not as, because we've also had a generation all through, particularly the eighties and nineties that told women government is broken, government is not the solution.

Lauren Leader: Participating in politics will not solve your problem. You need to just lean in and that's wrong. That is missing a huge part of how democracy works in the 77 countries that are ahead of us on that list, including by the way the 60 that if elected women heads of state and we are obviously not one of them. Those are countries where women looked at the status quo and mobilize on mass. No one handed them their place. At the top of those rankings, women did exactly what seal is talking about. They stood up, they got organized and they went to work in politics because you cannot, you cannot reach a quality if you do not have power voice in all of the places where decisions are being made. And by the way, that includes here in the Aspen Institute, right? So there should be no places or no spaces where women are not at the table as part of that conversation.

Lauren Leader: So what we're trying to do is that there are, yes, there are millions of women that March, there are also millions of women who think that the political process is so hopelessly broken. They want nothing to do with it. I'm running for office in my small town in New York and I will tell you that all those women that spend 50 hours a week in the PTA, you know, running things to their kids. They all say to me at parties, oh, I could never do what you're doing. They can, but they don't because they don't think it has value. And when we go around the country, so we have focused this last year at the last 18 months on training thousands of survivors of domestic violence, which by the way is one and three American women, one in three American women have experienced violence or harassment. Those women are on the sidelines of our political process.

Lauren Leader: Well guess what? The laws are broken. We can't pass the violence against Women Act, right? We need those survivors to stand up. We need the women whose lives are most effected by the laws. We passed the stand up and, and I love to seals point about it not being just about resistance. That is key. And you can probably guess where I am on the political spectrum and I'm sitting in the right place for that. But the point is we are nonpartisan and we are strictly nonpartisan because I don't want to give women a litmus test to pull it to democracy. I may not agree with them. I don't agree with a lot of the women that we work with. But I want them there and I want them to show up and I want them to participate because their voices matter. And we have to be willing to hear people's voices even when we don't agree.

Lauren Leader: So the point is we need, we need to make sure that we are doing the hard work of reaching into communities. There are, the best thing I think that's happened in the last four or five years is all these organizations like mine and so many others around the country that are doing this very hard work of reaching out to women who are not on Twitter, who are not on social media. You know, we bus

women to our program, we give them free childcare and we give them free lawyers. We've worked through the hundreds of direct service organizations that are serving them around the country. It is hard. It's hard to get to them. But when we do, and that's your point, right? As soon as you hand women, uh, the tools and the resources and you say you can do it and I'm going to help you, they go out and do unbelievable things. And that is how we changed the country, is getting to all those women who have been at the margins of our political process, giving them a voice, giving them the opportunity, uh, showing them the tools. The hallmark of our democracy is participation in shrine in the for in the first amendment is not just, you know, free speech, et Cetera. It is the right to petition our government for our grievances that is in the first amendment. And we have to take that seriously if we want change. [inaudible]

Pamela Reeves: Alicia, this is what's going to be a question for you and Laura, but I think she's sort of already answered it. Um, there's an interesting nexus I think between who is participating in what they want their outcomes to be. So I'm interested in that. I'm going to ask you all a question. You don't have a pipeline problem, right? Your texts machine is going off every minute. Um, cool. Are they, who are these women and what are they all on the same page? What do they look? Do you have a sense of that?

Alicia Garza: Yeah, I do. Can we do some truth telling real quick? So, um, we don't have a pipeline problem, but we do have a values challenge. And for me. And I think for us super majority, like we stand for something, um, and who we want to see, get engaged, get organized and be powerful, um, are folks who believe that there is something that we could be doing better than what we're doing right now and that that has to include all of us. So, uh, what I see in terms of people who are stepping forward, what I see in terms of people who want to get activated and, and uh, organized our people who are not only dismayed about not being involved or not being engaged in the political process, but people who feel like the values that are leading this country right now are off track.

Alicia Garza: And I will be super honest with y'all. Um, I am not interested in building the capacity of people who are in office that wants to take away my healthcare and I don't care if you're a woman or not. What I want is for us and our folks, um, who have been marginalized from the political process, who have been told Time and time again. It's not your time. And also your voice doesn't matter. Your issues don't matter. Your opinions, your experiences don't matter. Even though policy is what is shaping those experiences, those issues, right? And those values. Uh, I want to make sure that it's people like me, like you who don't want to be the first, the only one of two, one of five, but also don't want to be one of five who believe that there should be more black women in that room.

Alicia Garza: Don't want to be more, uh, one of five who believed that black women deserve to be in that room. Don't want to be one of five people who believe that black women are just as good as every other person in that room. And that is, um, a values question, right? And so when we're dealing with, uh, black women who

are wanting to get involved, uh, Muslim women who are wanting to get involved, they're wanting to know that super majority is a place that not only can train them on how to be more powerful, but also that it is a home that shares their values. And it's not about like not being around people you disagree with. I mean Cecile and I don't agree on everything. Can you believe it? Hard to believe you believe on very 99.99999% of the things we want to hear what that point whatever is maybe don't tell us but I will say this that um, I don't think that the challenge here and I think sometimes when we are thinking about like who stepping forward and what's getting in the way that what we can shape it or frame it as is we're paying too much attention to race.

Alicia Garza: We're paying too much attention to gender. We're paying too much attention to things that people are living and experiencing every single day and that they didn't choose for themselves. I didn't wake up and say, today I want to be a black queer woman is going to be excluded from most of the things I feel like I should be included with. Right. Those are things that are being shaped for me. And so I think the people who are stepping forward right now, the people who are on my phone are people who want to see this country reflect their values. They want to be represented, but they also want their values represented in such a way where it makes sense, what it means to be an American, where it makes sense, right? What it means to be a woman in power, where it makes sense, what it means to be a black woman who's leading that. That's not just about having people in seats from different demographic groups. It's about having those people with a vision of what is possible for the country and how it can, how it can turn it off

Cecile Richards: about more than just resistance hundred hundreds about the future. And I think it's about, it's about, that's what democracy's about. It's actually representation. And you know, it's funny, when I worked at planned parenthood, I used to think, okay, if we could finally elect, if half of Congress could get pregnant, we would quit fighting about abortion and birth control and everything else.

Cecile Richards: That's right. Then we'll like get there. And, um, and I, so

Cecile Richards: it isn't just about who it is about who, who's at the table. When we saw 24 members of the Alabama legislature vote to take away the right of people to make their own decisions about their pregnancy, there was only one thing they had in common that none of them will ever be pregnant because they were all men. And so I do think that is why sometimes folks are discouraged about voting and democracy cause they feel like it's sort of hopeless. I think that's changing. I think we saw Stacey Abrams bring out a whole new electorate. We saw Andrew Gillum and flora bring out a whole new bunch of folks who had never been involved in politics before. We saw better or work in tech in my own state of Texas. And that to me is the idea is do we really want to build a democracy now? Or we all agree on everything but we're, everybody is represented. I think that's a fundamental American value. And the last thing I'll say, because you asked about like who we are hearing from. I know we're almost out of time, but

it's interesting. We asked folks who signed up with super majority in that first month to name

Lauren Leader: their super power. I think they thought was most important. And the number one thing that folks listed was empathy. Yep.

Lauren Leader: And I think it represents the hopes and dreams, frankly, people have for this country and for our government that we actually can be a country that believes in the basic humanity of all people, even if we disagree on issues. We've lost that in America. Um, and I think people are yearning for that. And I hope that's something that we can lift up, not just in this election, but every single day and demand more of our government in the last 24 hours. I heard four or five conversations here at Aspen about all the things that are going to solve the world's problems that have nothing to do with our political process or our government. It's a yes. And like we cannot abandon our democracy because we want free because we think it's broken. No, we have to step in, own it and fix it. That's the essence of democracy. So if every one of us keeps opting out and saying, oh, we're going to just leave it to the private sector and you know, black rock's gonna write a letter and so that's going to fix the problem.

Lauren Leader: No, no, no, that's right. And don't let anybody tell you differently. That's because every one of those people

Lauren Leader: on your community who say, no, you know what? I'm just, I'm going to volunteer for the nonprofit on my corner. That is all amazing. We need Americans committed to service, but it is an ant. We have to commit to surface and commit to each other through making our democracy better. And that only happens when we participate. I know we're out of time. I just have to say this, women are taking the jaw, taking joy in the success of other women in a way we have never seen in this country and women or

Cecile Richards: boy to determine the next president. I stayed. So we better damn do it.  
[inaudible]

Lauren Leader: enough said. Right. I'm going to invite Peggy Clark up.

Speaker 1: [inaudible] [inaudible] Mike is not on yet. Yeah, I think so.

Speaker 6: I already on it yet.

Speaker 1: I think we're all done.

Speaker 6: We give Kudos to this person who was crawling around on the floor. It's okay. Good. I have a voice now. I have a boy. I'm so honored to, to

Lauren Leader: be here with an extraordinary woman who had the very great pleasure of meeting recently at a program that Pat Mitchell's together on. Woman, um,

Peggy Clark: Lawn Yan is often known as the Oprah of time use media. She's an extraordinary woman. I've already learned so much from your line in the, in the little bit of time I've, I've met you, but this whole session is about breaking barriers and so lawn and her, her husband, uh, Bruno Woo, they invest or founded sun media. It's a multi-platform empire which spends TV, Internet, location based events and education. She's a leading television host. In fact, one of the first women anchors in China and she's interviewed Hillary Clinton, George Soros, and a number of other people. She has a daily file during a 40 million. We both our as four zero, which is a Chinese microblogging say [inaudible] will be in my today's blog. So welcome [inaudible] you've traveled so far to be with us and we are honored to have you with us. Very privileged. Oh, thank you. So welcome. So, um, two we're really going to talk about breaking barriers and I want to have a sense lawn. It's so interesting to us. Um, many of us don't really understand what it's like in China, but you had a role model that helped you to figure out how to break barriers. Tell us who that was and how did you start on that path or interviewed

Yang Lan: so many leaders across borders and across countries in the world. But the women, uh, who is my role model, my icon is my grandmother. Um, I was very close to, uh, to her. She raised me up when I was very young and my, when my parents were sent to educational camps during the culture of Ellucian. So we're not just only very close, but her stories, uh, never stopped to inspire me at the age of 17. Um, she left home from arranged marriage, um, and ran all the way from a little town in judge young proddings all the way to Shanghai and became independent by working in the sewing factory to make handkerchiefs every day and supported herself. Um, and then, uh, she met my grandfather. They got married, they even started a little factory themselves. But before the culture revolution, the factory was taken away, uh, and um, the red guards, the rationing to their home and basically grab everything away.

Yang Lan: And then it was my grandmother who gathered the whole family together saying that I know what was happening is terrible, but I want to want each of you to promise me that nobody is allowed to take his life. He's, or her life because we have to hand on. And we started with our bare hands and I just want to let you know, there's nothing to be ashamed of to make living with our hands. So she even, um, you know, uh, made her living by, um, uh, collecting vegetables and also helping neighbors to wash their clothes and taking care of their babies. And so in my heart, she is a woman of great courage, faith, hope and resilience.

Peggy Clark: Oh yeah. I'm so glad you shared that with us. That's, I can almost see her in, in your eyes when you talk about her. Um, so you are amazing because at age 21, you were the first female anchor in Chinese television and you became a national superstar. You had a weekly audience of 300 million people. So what was it like to be an on air host? So early in your life? Did you have, what often women refer to as imposter syndrome? And, and tell me a little bit about that time in your life.

Yang Lan: Well, that was 30 years ago. Uh, I was just graduating from college and that time the national television held its first open audition for a major primetime show called Gen. Dot. Variety show. That was the first show to introduce the whole world to China, when 99% of our people didn't even have a passport. So that was the window to the world. I got tons of letters from my audience asking how come Americans have a kitchen bigger than my whole house? Uh, Ho, Ho, Ho, Ho family. Uh, the, the, the home. Um, so it was a eye opening and um, mine opening process for my countryman. Um, the producer came to my college and, um, uh, I happen to be recommended to participate in the audition. And so, so the purchase to talk about the kind of women figure they were looking for is something somebody who is very innocent, sweet, lovable, um, uh, I'm very polite and things like that. And so when it was my turn to speak up, I said, how come you still want, uh, you know, uh, like a bed and a sweet, innocent knowing nothing girl on television. Why can't Chinese woman have a brain? Um, so I thought I was kind of offending them, but actually they, they were tolerant enough to admit me into the second audition. In. So after another seven round of addition, I became the one on national.

Peggy Clark: Oh Gosh. Incredible. So it was like TV, American idol, and you want it. So isn't it true, you told me that you were the first person to ever write your own scripts that before they had to be approved by the government. Tell us about that.

Yang Lan: Well, that was the beginning of the nineties when China was really opening up. Um, so, um, uh, in my program, I, um, hosted with a male host, um, and we decided that we want to write things ourselves and to speak up their own our own minds and tell our own and express our own opinions instead of reading some approved script by somebody else. And, and fortunately, it was the time that the Chinese media was opening up. So we were given this opportunity so I could share my family's stories, my true opinions, uh, uh, on the, on the television show. And that was part of the reason, the why there was so popular at the time.

Peggy Clark: Yeah. And did you say the show was also about telling people about the world and yeah, it's about traveling around the world. Yes. So many people that helped people to see that they could send their kids to school outside of China, that it started a whole,

Yang Lan: and that was very difficult at the time. It was very, very difficult. It's only like less than 10%, uh, of, uh, students who got, um, uh, enrollment from American college can get actually get a visa. So it was very rare, rare at the time. But nowadays you can see millions of families sending their children overseas for education. And this whole new generation is bringing back ideas, methodologies, uh, um, uh, the ways to change their own life and our society.

Peggy Clark: And then there was a moment when you did that yourself, you left this incredible, a role you had in television to go to the US to study filmmaking in journalism. So I imagine some people might've said, why did you step off that

track? You are that you are the tiny superstar. Why did you make that choice and what did you learn at that time?

Yang Lan: I was young and foolish. Well, because at the time I didn't want to do a job that I could see the future, 20 years I wanted a stimulation and excitement and things unknown and uncertain about. Um, so my mentality was very much, why not thing? So why not? Um, so I had the opportunity to study, um, uh, for international affairs at a school of international public affairs at Columbia University. And so I decided to quit my job. And at that time you have to burn oil bridges before you could, uh, go abroad to study. But I thought I was young, uh, I could live up to all the risks and uncertainties and it was ready to embrace it.

Peggy Clark: Right. And you talk about that period of time as being really eyeopening for you. Yes. Yes. In what way?

Yang Lan: Well, it, uh, I learned, um, to study very hard and a, um, and also to be inclusive and tolerant of different opinions. Uh, at CPR, Columbia University, we have students coming from more than 100 countries. So we have so many different point of views, values, opinions in the classroom. Uh, and we learn to respect each other. It's about rational discussions, uh, reasoning, but also this at the same time, mutual respect. I think it's so important to live in this current world and with, which is, you know, sometimes, uh, so disturbing to see, uh, that there are so many violations of these basic rules of exchanges and the coexistence in this world. Right,

Peggy Clark: exactly. So you, you then began to move into philanthropy and you're doing some really interesting work right now with, with the one village. Um, but you also, her village, you are also fundamental in bringing the whole concept of philanthropy to China, correct. Is that right? Well, I can not take that credit.

Yang Lan: Um, well, but I have been, uh, uh, raising my voice to advocate for the legislation of philanthropy in China, uh, because there, if there was no law and what had the, the rules to, um, get into this field. And then in the year of 2010, uh, Sun Culture Foundation that my husband and I founded, um, co organize the event with the, uh, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, uh, is the, uh, uh, pledging dinner, uh, in China, uh, which also so participated by, um, uh, Warren Buffett. Uh, and that was a mind opening to the intreprenuer society, uh, in China. And, uh, more than a 68, uh, leading entrepreneurs participated in that event, including Jack Ma and the many other, uh, leaders in, um, uh, the business as well as in philanthropy. Now, uh, at that time there was a, there were less than 20 family foundations in China. Uh, up till last year there are up to 3000 family foundations. So we can see the civic society is really booming.

Peggy Clark: So injury and you hosted that first dinner? Yes, I'm the giving pledge. Yeah. That's so interesting. So then tell us a little bit about, you create a young young lane studio in 1998 and it was sort of a Barbara Walters style interview show, right? Exactly. So what were some of the favorite interviews you did? And the

things you learned in, in, in that really quite successful effort. You did. Well, thank you. Was

Yang Lan: actually the idea that I started to have when I was studying in the U S I love 60 minutes, 20, 20, and many other investigative in depth interview shows and news shows. And there was no such show on Chinese television. So upon my return to Hong Kong, I started the first in depth interview show Yellen's do you do and then call the young lung, the one on one aisle for Chinese television. It has been on air for 20 years. I've interviewed up to 1000 liters, uh, uh, in the world, including, uh, quite a few presidents and secretary of states from the u s as well as many other leaders in business and politics around the world. Uh, it's the most difficult question to answer or, you know, which is the most impressive or memorable interview I've ever done. I enjoyed each of them in different ways, but I remember when I had to interview with the former secretary of state, John Kerry in Washington.

Yang Lan: Uh, we, we talk about the future of the relationship between China and America. I remember John Kerry said that with, um, the scale, um, uh, of China and it's the size of its population, uh, well, soon enough it will become the number one economy in the world. Actually, last year, China's GDP was, uh, 12 trillion US dollars and, uh, America's was a 19 trillion. So basically John Kerry said, so we have to take that as a fact and then we have to learn how to, uh, uh, uh, coexist together and how to collaborate to take mutual responsibilities, uh, for this world, how to make those major decisions to make this world a better place. At that time, American China, we're talking about, uh, the Paris climate agreement of the, um, uh, the, uh, Iran nuclear agreement. Uh, unfortunately now you'll, government has backed out both. Exactly right. Yeah. So let's move forward a little bit because it's kind of interesting that you're coming right after the last panel on politics.

Yang Lan: I'm, I'm a little curious to dive into that, but I want to talk about something which I know is really important to you. And it's about the rise of women business owners in channel and what you're doing now. And in particular my, my sense is that you believe there are many, many women business getting into business, but they, there is a, they don't really know how to be leaders to talk a little bit about what you're doing and what you're seeing there. Well, it is very interesting. It's a in China because when we talk about China from American point of view, it's always about the government. And Jina is a giant daddy, the gigantic monolith. It is not, it's, it's very diversified. And also the private sector of our economy, uh, contribute 70% of our GDP and 80% of employment. So this is that scale you have to take into your, uh, comprehension of China as a country.

Yang Lan: And lately China is going through a major social economic transformation in the economy and society. And at the same time, uh, the technological, uh, disruptive rev revolution is also happening. And that we found that, um, that new technology, New Economy, uh, and the moving of the economy from

quantitative to qualitative growth, uh, is giving more opportunities and opening up more business opportunities for men and women alike. But especially for young women. Uh, there are some statistics. Um, we found out that 50% of Internet businesses are started by women and 70% of Chinese with women entrepreneurs started their business below the age of 35. Wow. Yeah. So this is a whole new generation of Chinese women who are very innovative, very active, uh, seek the business opportunities, uh, and also be very active in social entrepreneurship. So, um, as her village academy that are founded, uh, four years ago is to give capacity training to these, um, phenomenal women leaders.

Yang Lan: Uh, you know, to teach them how to talk with the capital a, how to write their business plan and how to scale up by, uh, connecting with each other. An Oto, also how to give voice to such topics as a a gender discrimination, uh, uh, sexual, uh, harassment and abuse in the society to make the whole society more aware of the gender issues and to make, to move the whole society forward. And that's really your mission right now. You feel that? Yes, I'm totally committed to this. And a, and I'm actually also bringing Chinese entrepreneurs, uh, delegations, uh, to different places around the world to increase their exposures to the international business society and also to, um, um, you know, to enhance their life long learning skills.

Peggy Clark: Exactly. So I'm wondering your thoughts on, you know, you've heard a number of, of us leaders talking about leadership and the challenges and the opportunities we're facing. What are your observations about women's progress globally and women's leadership globally? And are there any insights, insights from your particular perspective you can share with us today about that?

Yang Lan: Well, there are so many different topics we can cover in this field. I think there's so much remained to be done. Um, uh, but I want to make one point, which is why I really appreciate our gathering at Bellagio, Italy, uh, uh, two months ago with our common friend, Pat Mitchell. It's about connected the leadership. I see. So men and women with their head down doing their, no drilling for their day to day, uh, uh, Korea business or family, um, and or, uh, you know, a great courses, but they're so separate and there are so, uh, so hardworking, but sometimes, uh, it's, it's so difficult for them to scale up. So I find it is very, very important to have a connected society, uh, globally, uh, to give, to share the best case studies, uh, to share, um, uh, you know, resources and also to be each other's providers and the man, tourists and, uh, uh, board members, um, uh, to support each other. Right? It's the time that we get United and connected so that we can bigger and to be more powerful and more vocal about the cost that we all believe in. Beautiful, severe. So, um, I have one last question for you, which is you have taken so many professional risks in your life and you speak for so many women in China and you represent so many in China. Do you think of yourself as brave?

Yang Lan: I don't know. Well, I don't know. As I said, I have this why nods mentality. I think that the faster growth and the transformation of China, um, has given my

generation, um, the opportunity to think big and think bold. Uh, you know, there, if there's nothing available, why don't we start something like that. So this is the can do mentality. It is the resilience that if you fail this time, you can always stand up and take another opportunity. Uh, that has been motivating me and my team to do the things we believe in. But I think the most important thing is that you have to be authentic in what you're doing. You have to truly believe in something you have a passion with, otherwise you cannot sustain. Yeah, man, we are so honored to have you with us today. Thank you.

Speaker 1: [inaudible] all right. Concept there with your time.

Jemele Hill: Right. Hello everybody. Um, all I know is a between Alicia's Cecile. Like now I'm just putting together my political plan over there. So I'm going to have some talking points about you running for office later, but let's talk about it, Jeff. No, I'm just kidding. My boss was sitting right there. Like, what the hell are you talking about? Uh, thank you guys for joining us. My name is Jamel Hill. I'm a staff writer for the Atlantic. And to my left here, I have Katie Sowers who is an offense of a sense that assistant rather for the 40 Niners my favorite football team. So of course all the questions are going to Kate. Sorry Jen. And we have Jen. Oh Walter, who is an author. Um, you know, former football player also was an, uh, a coach in the NFL. Uh, like Katie is currently, um, animals motivational speaker as well.

Jemele Hill: So we're talking about two women who have broken the barrier in a very, very male space, which is professional, uh, football. Um, so I want to open this question up for, for both of you. Um, we saw recently that the NBA has made a number of hires of women putting them in the front office. Uh, and our coaching, uh, physicians, uh, Katie, I believe you're only the second woman to ever have a full time head coaching position in the NFL. So we are seeing the MBA really make a lot of strides. Uh, what level of strides beyond youtube do you feel as if the in the NFL is actually making in terms of making this a space where women can be involved in coaching and or the front office or in whatever other capacities?

Katie Sowers: I know for, for me personally, it's, it's not an NBA issue. It's not an NFL issue. It's a cultural issue. Right? And so what we heard it political spectrum, business spectrum. Let me, I love to start out with this and sorry if I talk too much, but how many of you guys still go through McDonald's and order a happy meal? And it's like, do you have a boy or a girl because they think that one question is going to determine the happiness of your kid, right? Because gender is going to play a role in what toy they want. Right? But little do we know that we are putting imprints on our kids from an early age and so it's not right when we get to the NFL, what can the NFL do right when we get to the NBA level, what can the MBA do? It's what we're doing with our kids every single day.

Katie Sowers: We have gender reveal parties and pink is for girls. Blue is for boys were telling them from day one. Now let me also, and I'll let you talk about that. We played

against each other and she beat me up a little bit so I'm a little bitter about that tackler. Eventually it'll get there. So if you guys can picture, I'm gonna use stereotype just once and then I'm going to let it go. If you want to picture the girliest girl, that's my niece. Her name is Clara. Okay. She likes ballet. Anything that you can think of that society would stereotype as a girl. And so one day because she's about four at this time, she was driving with my twin sister and they, and, and you know, I didn't realize that all my niece had seen growing up was my twin sister and I playing football and we didn't think anything of it.

Katie Sowers: And so here's this little girl like pink bows in her hair, even though we told her she didn't have to wear pink, but she loved it. And, and we're driving and my sister asked Clara if she sees the little boys playing football on the football field and she looks at her and goes, boys don't play football. And we had to explain to this little ballerina hates football that boys and girls play football, not just girls. And so if you guys want to tell me that football, it's just naturally that we naturally think boys play you guys from day one. It is on our TV screens is everywhere. We are telling our kids about gender norms. We are telling them what they can and can't do. I'll get off my soapbox right now. No, stay on it. Yeah, there you go.

Speaker 10: You, you know,

Jen Welter: I'm gonna tell Ya, first of all, thank you for giving us a voice cause for a very long time women have been some of the best in the game of football and I lovingly say we were the best kept secret in sports and we didn't want to be a secret anymore. Right. You have three of the very best to ever play the game of football in this room too or on the stage. And the other one is Liz right here. Um, Katie's twin sister.

Speaker 10: Well your hand,

Jen Welter: like these women in football, the most we ever played. Do you want to talk about equal pay for equal work? I got Oh oh oh one one something. The most we ever got paid for being some of the best women in the world was a dollar a game. The first check I ever got from women's pro football was in 2004 we went undefeated, the Dallas diamonds. We won our first string and we got a check for \$12. You got a check. We did wait nine months. Look. But at that point it was a choice between cash or to keep it. And I kept that check as a reminder for what we were doing it for because it was different for us than it was for everybody else. We were the ones who were out on the field kicking the glass off. We were the ones driving our cars up so we can get a little bit more time at practice.

Jen Welter: We were wearing helmets that were way too old and weights you refurbished. We were still wearing, um, football pads that were hand me downs from boys that didn't account for any of our gender. Not really a problem in my case, but some of those women, it was a problem. Right? And that check was my motivating factor. And it was for a lot of us in this game, because they always

used to say football was the final frontier for women in sports. So we took it as like a challenge. Like, Oh, if this is the final frontier, then if we can change this, can't we change the world? Right. And we all have to find that place that drive that passion. That's what football taught me and it taught me without a doubt, 100000% that diversity is a strength. Football is the one sport that you look at and you can look at it and say it doesn't work if we all look the same. My football family is women and men domestic and abroad who I've played with, played against, coached with, coach against and we are every make, model, shape, size, creed and color. And we are better together than we ever could be apart

Speaker 10: [inaudible]

Jemele Hill: for a moment where you said three of the best football players in the world on this room. I actually thought you were talking about me because back in the day, go at Berry Park. They want to see this right in Jemelle your toughness and everything you stand for. No, we will take you on. Oh No. Any field of battle and yet till

Jemele Hill: I get hit and start crying anyway. Um, just beyond my teams, you'll be better. We'll be behind you and you will take all the punishment. So the NFL currently, I mean the, the fan base for those who don't know, it's almost 50, 50 as in 50% men, 50% women. That's about 46% of women are identify as NFL fans. So would that percentage being there, and again, we've been talking to this entire day about representation and it reflecting a, the product reflecting who's actually consuming it. Um, and is it a proper representation once you guys made that turn from player to coach, uh, what kind of perceptions, stereotypes, obstacles, did both of you, you faced as you pursued really you and it's about last frontier for women to be in charge of other men in this space that is a frontier beyond even captain Kirk's imagination. So I'm gonna start with this one cause I know she's going to talk awhile. Um, but I'm going to first start with,

Jen Welter: you know, I got into men's professional football in the most painful way possible. I actually got tackled by those guys everyday for a year. I played men's pro football and it wasn't something I set out to do. In fact, I used to tell everybody when they'd be like, Oh, you played football for so long. What are you trying to do? Play in the NFL. I will be like, no, I am five foot two 130 pounds. I'm not crazy. God has great sense of humor because I did end up playing with those guys. But what happened is in the process where everybody thought it would not work, could not work, did not work, those guys became better by having me around because it brought something out in them that they were not traditionally used to having on the football field. And we became so close in a situation where nobody thought they would tolerate it, that when a new co head coach came in the following season, we talked, he grilled me on football and the next day she called and said, you have to coach my football team.

Jen Welter: And I said, no. He said, what do you mean no? I said, oh girls don't coach the ball and I, I've never coached before and you want to throw me right into men's professional football like no. And he said, not a lot of guys are going to give you this opportunity. You're taking this job. And I said, no. When I hung up on him the next day he called me back and told me about myself. He said, do you remember how I told you not a lot of guys, we're going to give you this opportunity and you were taking this job? And I said, yeah. He said, good. I took it for you, your coaching for me, and by the way, you can't quit otherwise. The entire narrative surrounding women coaching and men's professional football will be, we had a girl once and she quit. Now, as funny as that was, the important thing about it is is that women will often self select themselves out of situations that they are overqualified for. We're a man will allow himself to grow into the job. Think about the state of our country right now. Men might just happen to think, I had a reality show. I could be presidents, but women won't

Speaker 6: do that.

Jen Welter: Women won't do that. We will over check the boxes. However you put us in there and we all know the implications of us being there. It's a narrative that goes well beyond us. The thing that has driven me in all of my toughest decisions has been, if you are the first, your opportunity and responsibility is to ensure that you are not the last, because I'll tell you what, nothing has brought a better feeling to me in this world or Chico, like chills than hearing that my sister was going to get an opportunity in the national football league. That was one of the greatest moments of my life, and I feel it everyday. Every time I see her on the field

Speaker 6: [inaudible] obviously

Katie Sowers: that pretty much sums it up, but let me tell you a story. I was, I was in Kansas City, which is where I'm, my family is all from, and I was invited to go watch ballet. I'm don't know much about ballet, which is funny in itself. Nutcracker was going, you know what? It sounds like a good name.

Katie Sowers: I figured that I would go. I was going to say, insert punchline here. Yeah, get it. Yeah, that's right. I'm a lesbian. Okay. Anyway, so, um, so really I'm digressing. Okay. So

Katie Sowers: I was watching and all of a sudden I realized, okay, so if we're going to stereotype again, I know I promised I wouldn't do it, but ballet, this kind of like a girls thing, right? You know, it's kind of, but there was this man that was leading a lot of women and some men, but never once would I have ever imagined going up and asking him if the women respect him. Never once, what did we ever do that? But yet we, I mean every time I'm sure both of us, we can just go ahead and guess that that's going to be a question. How do the guys treat you as a woman leading men, but you guys, we have women who have been

teachers. That is what coaching is, is teaching, is leading. And until we change our mindset, we will never change the culture. It has to be a mindset every single day. I was just watching the World Cup and I, and, and anyone know the women's team that's plan. There may sell one today.

Katie Sowers: And one thing that drove me freaking insane was the commentators just kept saying, the girls that are watching this game, they are just taking so much out of it. The young girls, what the hell? What about the boys? Because let me tell you something, boys can look up to women.

Katie Sowers: We would never just say the boys when we're watching men

Katie Sowers: tell, we change our mindset. Boys can look up to him.

Katie Sowers: Women, women can lead men. That is it. Period.

Katie Sowers: People growing up are going to be like, what the hell were we talking about? What is it? What's the big deal?

Speaker 6: I remember I'm going to give you one. Did you ask about the,

Jen Welter: you heard and it kind of brought me back to when I was playing and the thing I realized really fast is that you cannot read the Internet comments. You cannot because one day you are like the savior for all women and you'd be like yes. And then the next minute you'd be like curled up under a table sucking your thumb. Right? Cause it's not pretty. So I would just not read it. And here I am playing on a men's team and everybody's wondering what's going to happen when I get hit by these men for the first time. And one of my friends said I couldn't help but comment and she sent me a link to a comment from a guy who said I was going to get hit and die and or get pregnant.

Jen Welter: And I remember I read it and I just started laughing. I mean I'm blessed out. I'm like by myself.

Jen Welter: I start laughing and then I have to do all the interviews and you know, they want to ask me the same question so I've learned something really fast, have a great answer and let it be funny and answer the questions before they can be asked. Because when they would try and get into the like, oh, what's the worst things? Oh my gosh, I have the best story for you. This one dude said I was going to get hit and die and or get pregnant. Now listen, I was one of the best linebackers in the game for a really long time. I used to hit people really hard, but I did not know. It was, you know, you could hit somebody so hard that you could cause immaculate

Jen Welter: deception and debt once. You never know. You just, you just never know. And they laugh. Yes. Immaculate Conception in deaths. Imagine that. Um, by the way, that would probably be a way to keep women out of playing football. So

you get hit, you get pregnant. So I'm a lesbian, same thing would've happened. I mean, it was such a hard of which

Jen Welter: you are also the first openly gay NFL coach. Um, having that as a, you know, a, a sort of addition and addendum to already being one of the few women's

Jemele Hill: coaches. Um, what have your experiences been like, especially regarding your sexuality? Were there additional challenges or perceptions of stereotypes you worried about or encountered?

Katie Sowers: You know, when I, when that whole story came out about me being the first gay, openly gay coach, I, I didn't under, I didn't think it was gonna blow up like that. I mean, I was answering a question to an article, they asked if it was okay that they talked to. I had a girlfriend at the time and they asked if it was okay that I say that I did and I said, that's fine. And then all of a sudden boom. And you know, it, it was kind of a shock to me. But for me to be successful, whatever it is that you do, you have to be your true self and you have to let others see that because that's vulnerability, that's power, that strength, that's integrity. And there was no question in my mind that, that, that, you know, I would say no, you can't say that.

Katie Sowers: I mean to me it's insane to think about being someone that I'm not and trying to do a good job at the same time. It doesn't happen. And actually from that moment there was a coach who, a former coach, he, I won't say what team he coached for, he doesn't coach in the NFL anymore, but he actually came to me and he is gay. He struggling with being open. Uh, but he, during his whole time, throughout the NFL, he was basically in hiding and he spent so much energy to hiding who he was, hiding the stories that he was telling, that he wasn't even focusing on the players that he was coaching or the team that he was helping. And, and you know, he ended up quitting. And I, I don't know if that's why, but I, I can, I didn't guess that that spent a lot of his energy was just being someone that he's not. And so for me, you know, you come out when you want to come out, but no matter who you are, straight, gay, whatever, being yourself is what's most important and that's what's going to bring success.

Jemele Hill: Yeah. I noticed the, I think it is important to make a decision about first openly doesn't mean the first no at all. Um, last question before I get you guys outta here. And even though I know you're probably about to shit all over this question, but you brought it up earlier, so I don't care. So do the players respect you now? Look honestly, what is, um, what is your relationship like with, with your, your players? I mean people seeing how other football coaches behave and I'm sure people are very curious as to what that dynamic is like.

Jen Welter: Um, you know, the best advice I got before going into the NFL, because I'll tell you there's a lot of things that are, are tough in this world, but being the first and not being able to look at anybody and say, I am going to like her, right. There had never been a woman on the sidelines of an NFL team before I went

there. And so I didn't have somebody that I could look up to and say, you know what, I'm going to coach like her. And so a good friend of mine, Terry Glen was in the NFL for a long time. He used to coach with me and arena and he was a, you know, a very often misunderstood but very well thought out guy. And he came up to me, I'm sorry, he passed away not too long ago. So it's still tough for me.

Jen Welter: But he said, the best advice I could give you, and this goes back to what Katie just said, is to be 100% authentic. He said, if you are the same person that you work with, those guys in the NFL that you were with us here every day, those guys will absolutely love you. But if you're fake in any way, they will sense it and they will eat you alive. So at each moment when I wondered what type of leader or coach I was going to be, that's what I went back to. And I mean I have a doctorate in psychology, I have a masters in sports psychology. And what I knew is that, and Katie could tell you this, is that, look, if I believed in you, even at five foot two I would run through a freaking wall. But if I thought you didn't have my best interest at heart, I might freestyle a little bit more.

Jen Welter: Right? So with those guys, I was very authentic, very honest. We were very one-on-one. Guys would joke all the time. They'd be like, man, coach Jill, Jen doesn't yell. Well guess what? First of all, if I was trying to yell like I, it would be out of belly button. Not really intimidating. It's more funny, but I knew any one of those guys could lean down and hear a whisper. So we were very one on one. I wasn't going to call them out because what I knew to is that every decision I made I had to realize I had an implication for every woman who came after me and a narrative that they could use to say, this is why women can't coach in the NFL. Just imagine what would have happened to one of those young men if which is normal and football. I yelled at him, he yelled back.

Jen Welter: Now what's the narrative surrounding him? Even if I said I was wrong, it would have created problems for him, so I would never do that. Instead I would just be like, hey, all right, next time just do this. And what happened is when it worked, they'd be like, man, coach, that worked. What else she got? Right. So it was like a secret weapon. And I also knew that things were hitting home very well when they would take me to meet that significant woman in their life, which was often an Auntie, a mom, a grandma, a wife, and they'd say, coach, you know, I want you to meet So-and-so. And I'd be like, okay, let's go meet mom right now. W W I know you're busy coach. Nothing is more important than meeting your mom. Let's go meet her. And the moms would say, oh, coach Jen, I'm a big fan. I'm like, Mama, let me stop you right there. Don't you be a fan of mine because I am a fan of yours. And what could have been a very difficult situation. Your son makes it a joy to be here every day because of the way you raised him.

Speaker 10: And I know, I know we're almost out of time.

Katie Sowers: I know we are out of time, so thank you guys for listening to me first of all. But when it comes to the players, how they respect me, they will tell you that I'm no

different than anybody else. And I challenge all of you guys. If you guys haven't learned anything, then shame on you. You wasted your money, but take away this, and that's gender is just one of our differences. The whole coaching staff, we are different races, we have different backgrounds, different religions. Gender is just one of our differences. Let's not make it divide us. Let's just make it make us a better unit as a whole, and that's the way that we need to, to attack life and we'll be a better culture.

Jemele Hill: I think you guys can tell why they're dynamic coaches. So keep applauding for these younger, definitely

Speaker 16: for coming. Thank you to all of our panelists and I hope that among all the other things we're going to take away today, we will remember Lauren's words as we look to the future. We don't need a gatekeeper to make our dreams a reality.

Speaker 10: Thank you everybody.