



# The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Changes Everything

*Maria Shriver*

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When we look back over the 20th century and try to understand what's happened to workers and their families and the challenges they now face, the movement of women out of the home and into paid employment stands out as a unique and powerful transformation. At one level, everything has changed. And yet so much more change is needed. Even though we were all witness to the shift of women becoming equal or primary breadwinners over many years, these changes seem somehow to have snuck up on us. As a result, our policy landscape remains stuck in an idealized past, where the typical family was composed of a married-for-life couple with a full-time breadwinner and full-time homemaker who raised the children herself.

This report contemplates what a new America should look like after we finally embrace this important new dynamic in our lives and the changes in our homes and businesses it has caused. It examines every institution, including:

**Health Care**--Health care and child care must be overhauled to accommodate the 24 hour work day.

**Education**--With more women acting as equal or primary breadwinners in the family, it is critical that there are resources to provide better and up to date education for all ages.

**Business**--Research shows that corporations with more women in the board room are more successful than those with all male boards. With that in mind, the report puts forth many recommendations to allow businesses to get the best out of all employees by thinking outside the box of old fashioned models in scheduling, benefits, and role playing.

**Media**--The disconnect between how women are portrayed in the media and reality is as present as ever; although women are now portrayed as thin, well dressed, successful stars in their careers and home lives, the reality is that women still struggle to have it all. The report highlights the many disparities that still exist and calls for specific changes.

**Faith**--Many religious institutions have resisted the integration of women into the higher ranks of spirituality, and many feel that it is to the religious community's detriment.

**Marriage**--the dynamics of marriage have changed as gender roles have become less clear and there is more flexibility in the division of responsibilities. Yet no one is sure what the rules are any more. This section, which includes candid essays from men about fatherhood and masculinity, addresses the tricky balancing act that many couples are engaged in.

The report will be the cornerstone of the 2009 Women's Conference held in California October 26-27th of 2009. The Women's Conference is the nation's premier forum for women and is hosted by California First Lady Maria Shriver and Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. The Conference, also known as The California Governor and First Lady's Conference on Women, has grown from a California initiative for working professionals into an international network of women from all walks of life, backgrounds and perspectives, and a life-changing experience for the thousands of women who have attended. The mission of The Women's Conference is to inspire, empower and educate women to be Architects of Change in their own lives and in

the lives of others.

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