



Male-female wage gap a myth

Chris Woodward - Sunday, October 21, 2012

People and organizations continue to speak out against the idea of a wage gap between male and female workers in the wake of an audience member questioning both presidential candidates about the issue in the most recent debate.

Among the skeptics is [Charlotte Hays](#), director of cultural programs at the [Independent Women's Forum](#).

"The wage gap is a big talking point of feminists and Democrats in the Obama campaign," she says. "We have a great [piece](#) on the Independent Women's Forum website by Carrie Lukas. Carrie quotes Diana Furchtgott-Roth, who is a terrific scholar. She says that if you factor in the choices that women make, the wage gap vanishes. For example, women often work fewer hours in the week. Women also tend to get out of the job market for a while and raise kids. That is going to affect what you earn."

Hays adds that younger, college-educated women in urban centers are actually out-earning their male counterparts.

Other groups that dismiss the wage gap include The Heritage Foundation, the Competitive Enterprise Institute, and the Cato Institute. Consad, a consulting company responsible for a 2009 report for the Labor Department, found that these factors account for most of the pay gap.

Meanwhile, a related article on [Bloomberg](#) this year states that, when correction is made for those factors, men make only 5-7 percent more than women for the same work.

"It's a way to enlarge government," Hays says about why the issue continues to come up. "If you pretend that there is this problem out there, then you can pass some laws.

"Think about the Lilly Ledbetter Act. The president presented it [during the most recent debate] as a way to help women earn more money. It's really not. It's a way to give women more time to sue their former employers. In fact, it lengthens

the amount of time that you can sue so long that people who knew about the case may be gone."

Hays adds that in her opinion, a better name for the Lilly Ledbetter Act would be the Tort Lawyers Full Employment Act.