

EDITORIALS

Hillary Clinton and the honesty gap

There may be some poetic justice in the recent revelation that Hillary Clinton, who has made big noises about a “pay gap” between women and men, paid the women on her Senate staff just 72 percent of what she paid the men. The Obama White House staff likewise has a pay gap between women and men, as, of course, does the economy as a whole.



THOMAS SOWELL
SYNDICATED COLUMNIST

Does this mean that Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama both discriminate against women, that they are themselves part of the nefarious “war on women” that so many on the left loudly denounce? The poetic justice in the recent “pay gap” revelations is that the fundamental fraud in the statistics that are thrown around comes back to bite those who are promoting that fraud for political purposes.

What makes such statistics fraudulent is that they are comparing apples and oranges.

Innumerable studies, going back for decades, have shown that women do not average as many hours of work per year as men, do not have as many consecutive years of full-time employment as men, do not work in the same mix of occupations as men and do not specialize in the same mix of subjects in college as men.

Back in 1996, a study published in the New England Journal of Medicine showed that young male physicians earned 41 percent higher incomes than young female physicians. But the same study showed that young male physicians worked over 500 hours a year more than young female physicians.

Innumerable studies, going back for decades, have shown that women do not average as many hours of work per year as men.

When the study took into account differences in hours of work, in the fields in which male and female doctors specialized and other differences in their job characteristics, “no earnings difference was evident.” In other words, when you compare apples to apples, you don’t get the “gender gap” in pay that you get when you compare apples to oranges.

This is not peculiar to the medical profession. Nor was this a new revelation, even back in 1996. Many studies done by many scholars over the years – including female scholars – show the same thing, again and again.

A breakdown of statistics in an old monograph of mine – “Affirmative Action in Academia” – showed the pay differential between women and men evaporating, or even reversing, as you compared individuals with truly comparable characteristics. This was back in 1975, 40 years ago!

There might have been some excuse for believing that income differences between women and men were proof of discrimination back in the 1960s. But there is no excuse for continuing to use misleading statistics in the 21st century, when their flaws have been exposed repeatedly and long ago.

Many kinds of high-level and high-pressure careers require working 50 or 60 hours a week regularly, and women with children – or expecting to have children – seldom choose those kinds of careers.

Nor is there any reason why they should, if they don’t want to. Raising a child is not an incidental activity that you can do in your spare time, like collecting stamps or bowling.

If you trace the actual history of women in high-level careers, you will find that it bears no resemblance to the radical feminist fable, in which advances began with the “women’s liberation” movement in the 1960s and new anti-discrimination laws.

In reality, women were far better represented in professional occupations in the first three decades of the 20th century than in the middle of that century. Women received a larger share of the postgraduate degrees necessary for such careers in the earlier era than in the 1950s and 1960s.

The proportion of women among the high achievers listed in “Who’s Who in America” in 1902 was more than double the proportion listed in 1958. The decline of women in high-level careers occurred when women’s age of marriage and child-bearing declined during the midcentury “baby boom” years.

The later rise of women began when the age of marriage and child-bearing rose again. In 1972, women again received as high a proportion of doctoral degrees as they had in 1932.

The truth is not nearly as politically useful as scare statistics. The “gender gap” is not nearly as big as the honesty gap.

Thomas Sowell is a senior fellow at the Hoover Institution.

San Bernardino’s mayor talks budget, development

State of the City address was short on the particulars.

On Friday evening, San Bernardino Mayor Carey Davis issued his first State of the City address. The mayor emphasized positive developments in the city’s fiscal situation and sought to present an image of stability in the city, which has been bankrupt since 2012.

“Together we are building a community, and we are developing a series of strategic plans that will propel the city forward,” said Mr. Davis. “Our city is not paralyzed by bankruptcy. There are many things that are happening that are raising the quality of life for our residents.”

The mayor pointed to the city’s currently balanced budget, which has only been made possible thanks to the bankruptcy process. Of course, it has also been made possible by deferring debt payments and infrastructure maintenance. Friday’s address was in stark contrast to the last State of the City address by Mayor Pat Morris in October 2013, which was notably more aggressive and direct.

“The giant whale in the general fund deficit that eats the city’s services and destroys the city’s financial viability is public employee pensions and related benefits paid into the California Public Employees’ Retirement System,” said Mr. Morris in 2013. “The growth

of this monster goes back many years as the public unions acquired control of this city’s political process with their political action committees.”

Mr. Davis’ address was largely short on particulars, likely because the city’s bankruptcy exit plan has yet to be officially submitted. City Attorney Gary Saenz has indicated that the city will submit its plan of adjustment before the May 30 deadline set by bankruptcy judge Meredith Jury.

That plan will not impair pension obligations, but may impair other post-employment benefits.

The city’s decision has prompted a sharp response from Moody’s: “San Bernardino’s choice to leave its accrued pension liabilities unimpaired means that its contribution requirements to CalPERS will likely increase to the point where they weaken the city’s financial profile, even after the relief provided by the bankruptcy adjustments.”

This wasn’t touched on in the State of the City address for obvious reasons. While it may be hoped that the city’s plan of adjustment will put the city on the right track, the decision to punt on pension reform may make a rosy fiscal circumstance for the city difficult to achieve.

Clinton needs to end silence on emails

Feinstein, a major supporter, advises her to explain.

When Hillary Clinton declared herself a candidate for the 2008 Democratic presidential nomination, California U.S. Sen. Dianne Feinstein was “an early and enthusiastic supporter.”

And when Mrs. Clinton left the State Department in 2013 in preparation for a 2016 run for the White House, Sen. Feinstein said she believed in the former first lady, former New York senator and former secretary of state “now more than ever.”

That’s why we think it quite significant that Sen. Feinstein this past weekend called on Mrs. Clinton to make a clean breast of the personal email domain she set up – Clintonmail.com – on a server located at her private residence in Chappaqua, N.Y., to secretly handle all of her State Department online correspondence.

“I think she needs to step up and come out and state exactly what the situation is,” Sen. Feinstein said during an appearance Sunday on NBC’s “Meet the Press.”

“From this point on, the silence is going to hurt her.”

Indeed, it appears that Mrs. Clinton’s strategy for diffusing the growing controversy is

to say as little as possible, while, at the same time, suggesting she has nothing to hide.

That explains her tweet last Wednesday in which she assured that she wants the public to see her email, that she asked the State Department to release them, and that the State Department will “review them for release as soon as possible.”

Well, the review – of a reported 55,000 pages of emails – will take at least “several months,” a State Department official told Reuters.

Furthermore, she has withheld roughly 10 percent of the emails on the account that supposedly were strictly personal.

Rep. Trey Gowdy, R-S.C., who heads the House Select Committee on Benghazi, said Sunday on CBS’ “Face the Nation” there “are gaps of months and months and months” in the emails Mrs. Clinton has turned over.

Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Burbank, who sits on the select committee, accused Mr. Gowdy and his fellow Republicans of a partisan attack on Mrs. Clinton.

But the Republicans are only asking her to “come out and state exactly what the situation is.”

RICK MCKEE / CAGLE CARTOONS



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Hillary’s bid for president

Editorial cartoonist Lisa Benson – as usual – hit the mark with her cartoon that featured a political sign, “Running from Hillary 2016” [Cartoons, Online].

Surely, Hillary Clinton, the former first lady (co-president), senator and secretary of state, has made it painfully clear that she is unquestionably entitled to inherit absolute power in Washington, D.C.

Unfortunately, the first black president, Barack Obama, was an impulsive, costly mistake by the press and voters. Indeed, President Obama is establishing a painful legacy of unrelenting abuse of power.

Will America make a worse mistake than the first

woman president? Hillary Clinton has a long record of political corruption and abuse of power, as evidenced by her sullied performance as first lady, U.S. senator and secretary of state – which carelessly resulted in the terrorist murders of our ambassador and three other Americans stationed in Benghazi, Libya.

Alas, the only alternative from the Democratic Party appears to be extreme leftist, Sen. Elizabeth Warren, D-Mass., which would be worse. Warren, along with Sen. Bernie Sanders, I-Vt., and Obama, represent Evil Revenuers and Regulators – the ERR – demons who defame the name of the Democratic Party.

Daniel B. Jeffs
Apple Valley

WHAT UNIONS INCENTIVIZE

In 1969, as a teenager, I worked in a union shop. They

showed me my task. I picked up scrap metal in several manufacturing areas and dumped it into a rail car. On day two, they turned me loose.

The following Monday, the shop steward told me Joe would teach me my job. I insisted I knew my job.

Joe gave me a novel and we proceeded with a half hour break after each part of the job. My sin was that I was making three rounds instead of the union standard two.

I needed the \$3.50 an hour and complied by slowing down. They showed me how to cheat the company rather than doing the best job I could. In unions, the standard trumps why the companies move overseas.

Alan L. Strzemieczny
Riverside

Online charter school knocked in report

A Washington, D.C.-based anti-privatization advocacy organization, In the Public Interest, just issued a blistering



GLORIA ROMERO
STAFF COLUMNIST

report on California’s largest provider of online public K-12 education, California Virtual Academies.

CAVA, a public charter school network, exists entirely online. Students take classes

from home, communicating with teachers via computer. According to the report, CAVA has a troubling record of poor academic outcomes and a questionable financial relationship with its for-profit parent company. CAVA is the California arm of the largest for-profit operator of virtual schools nationwide – K12, Inc.

In California, primary oversight of a charter is the school district that authorized that specific school to operate. According to the report, CAVA

prefers small districts as authorizers, more likely due to their limited capacity to provide stringent oversight. CAVA San Diego, for example, enrolls over 3,000 students – 100 times the size of its authorizer, tiny Spencer Valley Elementary School District located in rural Riverside County with only 30 students served in a schoolhouse building. Critics argue Spencer Valley is nothing more than a “front” for collecting revenue.

Among the report’s findings:

- CAVA’s graduation rate over the past four years is an anemic 36 percent, meaning it had more dropouts than graduates.
- According to teachers interviewed for the report, some CAVA students log into their virtual classroom for as little as one minute a day – enough to count towards attendance and enabling CAVA to receive its daily revenue from the state for attendance.

- Moreover, financial structures at CAVA open the door to conflicts of interest. K12, Inc. pays itself out of bank accounts it manages and prohibits schools from finding other vendors – unless K12, Inc. itself signs off on the deal. CAVA is perpetually in debt to K12, Inc., owing them \$23 million in 2013.

- While K12, Inc. paid almost \$11 million to its top six executives in 2011-12, the average CAVA teacher salary was \$36,150 that year – about half the average teacher pay in California and \$20,000 less than area teachers, fueling teacher turnover.
- In December 2011, the California Charter Schools Association called for the closure of CAVA in Kern County because the school failed to meet its renewal standards.

CAVA defended itself in a written statement, accusing the report’s authors and backers of fueling misinformation from CAVA teachers seeking to unionize with backing from the California Teachers Association. I plan to drive out to tiny Spencer Valley’s schoolhouse to get answers to these alleged ghost-like education practices in California.

Stay connected.

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