

Weber Shandwick

Kellogg Conference

Closing Plenary Session

Moderator:

**Gail C. Christopher,
Vice President for Program Strategy,
W.K. Kellogg Foundation**

Panelists:

**Douglas Blackmon,
Author,
“Slavery by Another Name”;
Heather McGhee,
Director,
Demos (Washington, D.C. Office);
Manuel Pastor,
Professor,
American Studies and Ethnicity and
Director for Environmental and Regional Equity Program and the Center for
Study of Immigrant Integration, University of Southern California,
Dornsife College**

Location:

**New Orleans Marriott
555 Canal Street,
New Orleans, Louisiana**

Time: 10:00 a.m. CST

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MS. : Welcome back, everyone, and I think, for my final time, good morning.

AUDIENCE MEMBERS: Good morning.

MS. : One last time, everyone, good morning.

AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (In unison.) Good morning!

MS. : Thank you. I wish I could say that there was some sort of monetary benefit or reward to you all being here until the very end – (applause) – but I would like to think that your reward is about to come from this panel.

No pressure.

I have a few final announcements for you, and then I will hand off to Gail. Cellphones – please check them, make sure: vibrate or silent. Aren't you glad that's the last time you'll hear that from me?

On your table, there should be light blue evaluations. Please take those and complete those for this session. There are – should also be some note cards or some hotel – sort of long cards on your table. We will be collecting those to gather questions from you later on in the session. So you can grab one of those now and keep it close by should something pop into your mind that you would like to pose as a question. Do note, if you have trouble reading your own handwriting, it's not going to happen. (Laughs.) So do whatever you can to make it as legible as possible so that we can review it quickly to see if we might be able to include it in the conversation.

Again, for those of you who brought resources that were on the second floor, should you want to collect those, please do after the session is over because the hotel will dispose of them.

In looking at the participant list, if you have any changes to the information that's in there for your contact information, feel free to stop at the registration desk after the session is over.

Also, out there, there were some (bio ?) books of this healing community that helps you to know who was here. Feel free to take those with you.

There's also a resource book of all sorts of resources related to racial healing that is out there as well. So if you have not gotten one, please feel free to get one.

And lastly, many of you have asked the question about getting presentations and materials from the conference. My understanding is that those materials will be made available via Yammer, and that should be within the next week or so. So look for a notification of follow-up so that you can see how you can have access to some of the presentations and slides that were here.

So with that, I am going to hand it off to Gail for our final panel.

GAIL C. CHRISTOPHER: Good morning.

AUDIENCE MEMBERS: (In unison.) Good morning.

MS. CHRISTOPHER: Good FRIDAY morning. (Laughter.) While this week has just flown by, and it gives me great pleasure to share with you this last panel, and I'm really honored to be able to moderate it. I happen to know and love all of the panelists, both for their work and for their beings. And you have an interest – interesting set of perspectives that will be shared with you.

It's been clear, from day one, of this convening, that this is about (generations ?) and how the persistence of the belief, the mythology of racial hierarchy, how it has persisted through centuries and is passed on from generation to generation. And I think we have been reminded, in so many ways, of the primacy of the work of addressing the fundamental belief, the fallacy of racial hierarchy. And so our panelists in this closing session – they're going to share with you perspectives from a generations' point of view.

How many had an opportunity to see the movie or read the book, "Slavery by Another Name"? Good, yes – (applause) – it does deserve applause. Our first panelist will share with you stories and insights about the generational dynamics because he wrote the book and produced the movie. Doug Blackmon was extremely credible when he started this journey, and that mattered, working for The Wall Street Journal as a bureau chief. He made the sacrifice that comes along with the choosing to tell the truth. Currently, he is a writer and resident at the University of Virginia. He also writes for The Washington Post.

This wonderful film was one of six that were selected to be premiered at the Sundance Film Festival. It was viewed on its first night by more than 5 million viewers. So think about what impact that will have in the collective consciousness of the nation, helping to make the ground more fertile for the work that we are all doing.

And the book, which I read and bought several copies and gave them to almost everybody in the foundation – and I know they were looking at me with a jaundiced eye, saying, what, another book? But the book is a Pulitzer Prize-winning book.

So join me in welcoming Doug Blackmon. (Applause.)

DOUGLAS BLACKMON: Thank you so much. It's so wonderful to be here this morning, and it's been wonderful to be here the whole week. And I have to say, right off the bat, that I also have to extend thanks on – from me and on behalf of all the other people involved with making the film "Slavery by Another Name," we couldn't have done it without the support that we received from Kellogg Foundation very early on. A film about a topic that is really uncomfortable for many, many people is not one that's a magnet for funding, and so it takes some bravery on the part of the people who support a project like that. And without Kellogg, I don't know that we could have done it. So thank you very, very much. (Applause.)

But Gail asked me to tell a story, and any of you who attended either the screenings of the film this week and the Q-and-A afterwards probably have already figured out that I'm a bit of yarn spinner. And I grew up in Mississippi, and I could consume the whole session if I weren't pulled aside. I won't do that, but I will tell you some stories, some that come from the book and the film, and then a couple of other stories.

But as the historian on this panel and journalist and chronicler more than an activist, I think that what I can do is talk about the importance of history in understanding the present. And it's – and it's important to explore the history that we think we know but maybe don't completely know and don't completely understand.

We all know that slavery happened, the kind – the slavery that occurred before the Civil War. We know that there was terrible abuse and denial of civil rights and opportunity to African-Americans after the Civil War, deep into the 20th century.

But I think most Americans, black, white and otherwise, don't fully understand what really happened in that period of time between the Civil War and, really, the beginning of World War II, just how terrible things were in so many places, how catastrophically people's lives were wrecked or limited, the millions of people whose ambitions were circumscribed against all of their valiant efforts to achieve and accomplish and make for their families and be a part of American life, and all the ways that they were denied.

And so I'll tell you some stories that are all about the basic history of how it was that after the Civil War slavery was resurrected; after the – after the time that we were all told slavery was supposed to have ended, how slavery came back. And when I say slavery came back, I don't mean bad times came back or that poverty came back or that being called a bad name came back. Those are all terrible things – the denial of basic civil rights – those are all terrible things, but what I'm talking about is not those things. I'm talking about slavery, a system in which thousands and thousands of mostly men but also many women were bought and sold and forced to labor against their will and without compensation. And it – that system took many forms, and the most insidious of them was a perversion of the criminal justice system and the echoes of which we still see today and the impact of which we're still struggling against and many of you are actively struggling against.

But I'll start with the story of a man whose name – we don't know what his name was when he was born, but his name in slavery was Scipio, Scipio Cottingham. And he was born in Africa in 1802. We don't know where. We don't know exactly what age he was when he came to America, when he was forced to come to America. Probably, based on the way things worked in that time, he came after the first decade of the 19th century. And by that time, the importation of Africans to America and into slavery was a crime, and yet thousands and thousands and thousands of black people were still being forced into America, into lives of slavery. And Scipio was almost certainly one of those – one of those Africans forced to become an African-American.

He arrived somewhere on the East Coast, probably Virginia, was sold into slavery there at a time that – again, it’s a chapter of American history that most of us don’t know much about and that historians really haven’t even explored too much about, and I won’t talk too long about it, but it’s a – it’s an important and pivotal moment in our history, because what was happening in that period of time was that most of America was still unsettled in the 1820s and into the 1830s. Native Americans still controlled huge amounts of land in the eastern United States. Most of Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, the places where the majority of African-Americans would eventually come to live – the bulk of those parts of the South were still Indian territory until the 1830s.

And then, in a very rapid sequence of events, the Native Americans were forced out of – out of those parts of America, those lands were appropriated by the federal government, and then they began to be sold to white settlers in a very rapid pace of events. Millions and millions of acres of land transferred from the ownership of Native Americans into the hands of white settlers.

And the reason that was happening and was happening so fast was because cotton was emerging as the most powerful element of the American economy. We think of cotton as a Southern thing, but in reality cotton was the engine of the American economy and American society. In the 1830s, the exports of cotton from the United States represented more than 60 percent of the value of the American economy. And so cotton production was zooming and surging, and this land was being opened up across the South. And these millions of acres being turned over to white people to raise cotton were covered in a vast forest, a vast, vast forest of millions of trees, virgin forests where no trees had been cut for all intents and purposes. And the settlers who arrived there came upon these places that were covered with trees that couldn’t be reached around by four or five men. And this land had to be turned into plantations with nothing but saws and axes and mules and ropes and slaves. There was no possible way to turn this vast area into productive land without the labor of first hundreds of thousands and eventually millions of African-Americans.

And at the very time that all that was happening, there were too many slaves on the East Coast in Virginia and Maryland and New York, in those places, where slavery had flourished but was beginning to lose favor or where the economy no longer needed the numbers of African-Americans who were being enslaved on those places.

And so a great selloff began, and at least a million African-Americans were sold from the – from the Eastern Seaboard of America into the interior, and they were sold into a kind of hell that we can barely imagine. All of the stories that you may have heard about families being divided and the most terrible aspects of slavery really happened in this period of time.

And it came to be that in particular, if you were sold from Mississippi or some of the other places where slavery was taking its most brutal form, there was almost no hope, if you were sold into those places, that you would ever be heard of again. The mortality rates of the slaves who arrived where I grew up, in the Mississippi Delta, were staggeringly high.

And so Scipio Cottingham is one of these people. He's one of these men who's sold from somewhere on the East Coast into Alabama, into this boomtown frontier, this booming world where the land is being cleared and cotton is being planted. And he, alongside a white man named Elisha Cottingham – they carve out of this wilderness a farm and a plantation and a small fortune. And Scipio – and the name Scipio is important, by the way, because in the years of antebellum slavery, in that period of time, white Southerners had – particularly wealthy white Southerners, had a fetish for the classic cultures – for Greece and Roman Empire. And so Scipio is the name taken from a Roman emperor – Scipio Africanus – the emperor who conquered Africa and then put down a slave revolt during his reign, in which 10,000 slaves were crucified in the Roman Empire. And so to give a slave the name Scipio was no accident. There was a malevolent joke, almost, to name a slave Scipio after the man who had conquered Africa and had slaughtered 10,000 slaves centuries before.

And so Scipio and Elisha Cottingham carve out of the wilderness this place that comes to be the home of a large and prosperous white family and an expansive black family. But Scipio, we know none of his words, he left behind no writings, but we know a good bit about who he was and the life that he led, because he lived a long and productive life. And he survived the Civil War into the – and lived until late in the 19th century. He was the father of many, many children. He married – married a young woman right after slavery and had many, many more children.

But Scipio, throughout his life, remembered that he was from Africa. And every time he encountered the opportunity to insist upon his African origins, he did that. That was the record that Scipio left behind.

But among the children who he fathered and the grandchildren and the great-grandchildren, these were individuals who in the aftermath of the Civil War experienced a period of real freedom, of authentic freedom, in which African-Americans in the 1860s and 1870s participated in elections, worked hard to become a part of the mainstream of American life and the American economy. Thousands and thousands of African-Americans who began the period after the Civil War almost completely illiterate – almost no literacy among African-Americans – in an incredibly short period of time had achieved very high levels of literacy – as high or higher than the population of poor whites in the South from whom I descend. And so there was this period of 20 or 25 years of real freedom after the Civil War.

But in that same period of time, white Southerners simply could not resurrect the cotton economy without the labor of these 4 million African-Americans. And that's important in – for all of America because of the importance of the Southern economy to the national economy. And so – and if you imagine for a moment what would happen if we suddenly today removed the catalytic converter engine from the American economy, if you just took gasoline-powered engines, if they all stopped working, what would happen? Well, that's what happened after the Civil War, was that the engine – these engines of American commerce stopped. They were no longer available, wouldn't work at will, wouldn't work for free. It was a cataclysmic event. And the – and slavery was, by then, had been the biggest industry in America, along with cotton. And so after the Civil War, white Southerners had to find a way to force these 4 million African-Americans and their descendants back into some kind of involuntary servitude. And so my book and the film are really the story of how that happened.

And so Scipio lived through some of this freedom, prospered in some respects before he died late in the 19th century. His children and some of his grandsons also prospered. But he had a – but there was another Cottenham named Green, Green Cottenham, who was born in the 1880s. He's either a grandson or a great-grandson of Scipio. And Green grows to adulthood at the end of the 19th century as the white South is moving to end this freedom and force African-Americans not just back into hard times, but back into a form of slavery. And Green comes of age at the beginning of the 20th century at a moment when this terrible shadow is falling across black life. All of the Southern states are passing laws which essentially criminalize blackness. It becomes impossible for any African-American man who's not living under the protection of a white person in the rural South – it becomes impossible for them to live in any security against arrest and enslavement at almost any time. It was a crime to walk beside a railroad. It was a crime to speak loudly in the company of a white woman. It was – it was a crime obviously to have sex with a white woman or any kind of intimate relationship with a white person.

But it also was a crime simply not to be employed. The – all of the Southern states resurrected old vagrancy statutes and made them into very serious offenses so that any person who couldn't prove at a given moment that they were employed could be arrested and then sold into a kind of slavery. And there were thousands and thousands and thousands of people who had that happen.

And then most insidiously of all among those laws, it was a crime for a farm worker – and almost all black men were farm workers in 1900 in the South – it was a crime – if you were employed by one man, it was a crime for you to seek employment from another man without permission from the first man. That was a crime. And there were thousands of African-American men who were arrested for the crime of seeking employment, seeking to improve their lives – who were arrested for that event and returned to the person they had worked for in chains.

And those conditions lasted in the South on a very large scale all the way up to the beginning of World War II. And so Green Cottenham, the grandson of Scipio, of the slave born in 1802 – he becomes a man at the moment that this shadow is falling across black life in the most diabolical way. And he is eventually arrested for having committed no crime at all, charged with a made-up offense of vagrancy, sold into a coal mine on the outskirts of Birmingham, Alabama, where he's forced to work with a thousand other black men in similar conditions and where he dies a terrible death in 1908, as did thousands and thousands of other men.

And so that's a catastrophic story of that period of time, but that I think most importantly tells us that it's not just a sad, unhappy tale of that time; but it also tells us an important thing in trying to understand the world we live in today. And that is that whenever you've been in a conversation – and all of you have been – when someone says, what's the problem with black people? Why can't they get over it? Slavery ended 150 years ago or 160 years ago. Why are we still talking about it? Why are they still talking about it? Why can't they get over it?

Well, there's -- just very fundamentally – the answer to that is that slavery didn't end 150 years ago or 160 years ago. Slavery began to be meaningfully dismantled for the majority of African-Americans only in the 1940s. And indeed, real vestiges – (applause) – thank you. Real vestiges of that system continued into the 1950s, the 1960s.

If I had more time – and maybe later in the Q&A we'll get to do this – there are also heroic stories from this period that are – that are not just the stories of the catastrophes that befell so many African-Americans, but the ways in which so many African-Americans stood against this oppression, stood against the wind, and how particular families across multiple generations pulled that off. And in the film and the book, there are also some of those stories that are critically important to understanding how the system has begun to make the changes that it has, but also the things that still have to happen. I'll leave it there. Thank you. (Applause.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: You will – you will have an opportunity to hear much more from Doug. But what's so amazing is the chronological perspective that his book presents. And I would just remind you, if the actual application of the beliefs existed through 1940 in its most overt form, imagine the residual beliefs that are still with us today in terms of how we view one another, and more deeply and probably more significantly, how we view ourselves as human beings in America.

Our next speaker is a dear friend, and he actually – and this deserves an applause – he actually took the red eye in this morning from his own conference to be here for ours. (Applause.) Manuel Pastor is a warrior and a visionary and has been a leader in this work for justice for several decades. He's not as young as he looks. He's been one of my heroes. Currently he directs the program for environmental and regional equity at USC in California.

He has a way of getting people to see things differently, connecting the dots if you will, and also showing us the implications of the insights that he brings to this journey for justice. I asked him to tell me something that's not in the bio book, and he said he's been married and in love with the same woman for 30 years. (Applause.) And she says – and she says they've been married for 30 years, most of them happily. (Laughter.) So join me in welcoming Manuel Pastor. (Applause.)

MANUEL PASTOR: So I want to thank you for that lovely introduction – and I will mention that to my wife that you brought that up. (Laughter.) And I'd like to think that I'm here because I'm articulate about these issues, but I think it's actually because in the last conference I was out with Gail, someone called her the godmother of place-based health disparities, studying that, working on it. And I got up and said: No, she is the goddess of this work. And – (laughter, applause) – and by the way, guys, if you want to get ahead, that's a good thing to do. (Laughter.)

So we spent a little time talking about the past. What I want to do is talk a little bit about the future, and in particular what the future of America looks like in terms of its demography, its age structure and what that's going to mean for the work that's going ahead. So let's see if we can bring up these slides.

So you know, I'm an economist, but I'm also a demographer. So when the new census data comes out, it's a little bit like Christmas for children, right? I get, like, so excited and I start playing and having a good time and taking the wrappers off the census data. And what did we find out in the last census going from 2000 to 2010? We found out that the growth rate, the increase in the number of Latinos was 43 percent. The increase in the number of Asian-Pacific Islanders was 43 percent – a remarkable coincidence. They must have been coordinating. The

growth rate for African-Americans was 11 percent. And the growth rate for non-Hispanic whites was only 1 percent – 43 percent, 1 percent, very dramatic differences.

Now, when you hear that 43-percent growth rate in the number of Latinos, where do most people think that's coming from? Immigration, right? Is that right? No. In fact, immigration for the last couple of years has been slowing down in the United States, partly a result of a slow economy, partly a result of increased border enforcement. But Pew Hispanic Center just put out a study showing there's been no net migration from Mexico for the last four years. And the reason is actually much longer term, which is that the fertility rate in Mexico, which used to be above five children per woman, has dropped to 2.4. The fertility rate in the United States is 1.7. They're basically gliding into each other. And the pushback from Mexico is no longer occurring.

These economies in Latin America are getting better as well. And we are not looking at more migration. In fact, we are looking at increasingly a second- and third-generation population. And while the general public is worried about the browning of America, demographers are actually worried about the graying of America and the fact that we may not have enough immigrants rolling forward. So what is – forward.

So what does that look like in terms of the youth population in particular? This was what happened between the year 2000 and 2010. The number of young white people – folks below the age of 18 – fell by 4.3 million. Now that does not mean that 4.3 million young white people died. We would have noticed that. (Laughter.) But you get out of that (cohort ?) by becoming 19 and 20 and 21 and having less people come in at the one and two. For African-Americans, number of young youth fell by 250,000. For Latinos the number went up by 4.8 million; for Asian-Pacific Islanders, 800,000. So this is the demographic wave that's coming forward, and these are the young people. And this is why, moving forward, it's predicted that by the year 2042, the United States will be majority minority – or as I like to think of it – all minority, all the time. (Laughter.)

So everyone will be a minority. And actually, what's interesting about that, for those of us who have been – right? – is that when you are a minority group, you have to practice coalitional politics, right? Because you have to learn what other people's interests are, what other people's values are, what the common ground and uncommon common ground is for you to get together with folks.

So by the year 2042, we're a majority minority country. By the year 2020, the majority of folks under the age of 18 will be folks of color. And it's probably last year the data will come in that the majority of births were to people of color. So we are undergoing very dramatic change. And the work you're doing preparing people to really deal successfully with that change, both at the interpersonal level and at the level of dealing with structural racism, is incredibly important.

Now we've actually been through this before – move forward one slide – because the demographic change we're going to see in the United States between the year 2000 and the year 2050 is roughly the demographic change the U.S. went through between the year – I'm sorry, the demographic change California went through between the year 1980 and 2000. In 2000 in the

United States, we're about two-thirds white. In 1980 in California, 67 percent white; went down to 47 percent white by the year 2000.

Those 20 years were not delicate years for race relations in California. They were filled with the riots of 1992. They were filled with controversial trials, with Prop 187, the attacks on immigrants, et cetera. And so it's in some sense no surprise that this is spilling out in this kind of a way in the rest of the country as well.

Now demographers say that they know the exact day that California became majority-minority. You know, like demographers do that. They go, the 300 millionth baby was born today. His name is Jose. (Laughter.) So like, how'd you know that, right? So on December 15th, 1999 I kept getting phone calls from reporters all day long – white reporters – saying, we're majority-minority, we're majority-minority, we're majority-minority. What's it mean, what's it mean, what's it mean? (Laughter.) There was a little bit of anxiety in their voice. (Laughter.)

And finally I got frustrated, and I said, I don't know, but we're having a salsa party at my house tonight to celebrate. (Laughter, applause.) In the spirit of the new California, everyone's invited. (Laughter.) They just have to learn a new step. (Laughter.) Right? And those of you who can salsa dance, you know that little dance you get, the little class you get right before you go dancing, right? So it is about learning a new step. It's learning a new step of leadership, what it means to lead in different communities, in each other's communities and bringing people together around new kinds of multi-racial, multi-sector coalitions for the changes that we need.

Now this just shows you that in fact what's driving this is not so much immigration as it is, you know, again, the native-born. Los Angeles, which in the 1980s received one-quarter of the nation's immigrants in that period – the share of foreign-born in Los Angeles has been on the decline for the last three years. The share of foreign-born in California has been on the decline for the last year, two years. It's going up in the rest of the country, but again, immigration is not the main driver here.

Move forward one slide. So this is a set of quick -- charts or maps that we've been working on with PolicyLink. Many of you are familiar with PolicyLink. And this is a set for 1980, and these are the counties of the United States. And basically the browner the county, the browner the county. So the darkest color here is greater than 50 percent people of color. The kind of orange color is the tipping-point counties, 40 (percent) to 50 percent people of color. What we notice in demographics is that when you're kind of on the 40 (percent), 50 percent brink you're likely to tip in to the majority brink – category. And then the lightest color is less than 40 percent people of color.

So what you'll notice is that in 1980, the areas that were majority people of color were basically the border areas of Texas, New Mexico – which was a mix of indigenous folks and Hispanics – and then the Black Belt of the South, right? This is what it looks like in 1990 – go forward; in the year 2000; 2010. So big changes. And this is what it looks like going forward to the year 2020; 2030; finally 2040.

So two things about this. First, if you have friends that were in the sort of lighter areas of the country in the earlier period, and they were worried that they did not have a good taqueria near them, don't worry. One is coming. (Laughter.) The second thing to notice is that with the exception of the industrial Rust Belt, most of the lighter areas are the emptier areas in terms of not having many people, right? So this is where the dynamism is going to be coming.

And one of the things that we often do when we talk about race is look backwards. And it's important to understand our history, but we also need to look forward about changes that are about to come and the assets that will be there and what that means in terms of the need to invest in the young to be a more productive country.

There are two aspects of this geographic change that I'd like to bring up as well. The – move forward one slide. This is a complicated chart, but basically the punch line is the following. It used to be that the suburbs of America were much whiter than America. But it turns out now that what's going on is that the suburbs in the United States basically mirror Americans' – America's demographics. The central cities are definitely much more people of color. But the suburbs, particularly the large metro areas, actually mirror America's demographics. And there's been this increasing growth of Latinos, African-Americans, Asians in the suburbs.

Why this is important is, so much of our work gets done – those of us who do urban work – in central cities. And yet these suburbs are now beginning to experience new populations, and they don't have the organizing infrastructure, the social service infrastructure, particularly in these inner-ring suburbs. It's a big challenge.

Second big thing – next slide – is that we need to look at the fact that the two populations moving into the closest proximity in our urban areas are African-Americans and Latinos. And this is an important phenomena. One way to look at this is through the high schools. These are the high schools of South Central Los Angeles in 1981, 1982. If you look at the ones on the right, the – Jordan, Locke, Manual Arts – just follow those – Jordan was 90 percent African-American in 1981, 1982. Locke was 98 percent African-American. Manual Arts, right near USC, was two-thirds African-American.

This is what these schools look like in 2008, 2009. Slide. It's an amazing change. I'm going to do that again. Can you go back one? Just because I like it when you make that noise. Go forward one. (Laughter.) And so – yeah, so you can see – for example, Locke went from being nearly exclusively African-American to being two-thirds Latino. Manual Arts went from being about two-thirds – being about 80 percent African-American to being 80 percent Latino. Big changes.

Another really interesting piece of data about these schools in South LA – go back one again. In 1981, 1982 there were exactly 37 white students in these South Central high schools. Forward. 2008, 2009 there were exactly 37 white students in these same schools. We think they're the same students. (Laughter.) And we're launching a research project called "Leave No Child Behind" – (laughter) – because apparently the feds don't want the name. So – (laughter).

So another big piece of data from the census which is really key to the discussion we're having – move forward – is the median age. And while most people have focused in on the growth rates, and so did I, the most telling statistic is that the median age – half older, half younger – for non-Hispanic whites is 42. The median age for (Asia and ?) Pacific Islanders is 35. The median age for African-Americans is 32. The median age for Native Americans is also 32. The median age for Latinos is 27. Forty-two, 27. That is basically a generation gap.

And it is a generation gap that I'll suggest to you both explains our demographic changes and also explains one of our big political problems. It explains our demographic changes because when you're 27, you're in prime family-formation age. When you're 42, you're not – unless you're Newt Gingrich and you're on your second or third family. So – (laughter).

Next slide please. And it's a growing generation gap. It's a growing generation gap. And – you don't have to worry; you're nonpartisan, I'm not. So – (laughter) – so it's a growing generation gap in terms of the share of the – those above the age of 65 that are white compared to the share of those below the age of 18 who are white. That gap has been growing in the United States.

And it actually has some important and real consequences. It has important consequences because the old do not necessarily see themselves in the young. And it's reflected – do you remember that tea party sign everybody made fun of, "Keep your government hands off my Medicare"? People made fun of it because they're like, well, that's a government program, right? But basically what that sign is saying is, we're lifting up the drawbridge just as a new generation is arriving. What state do you think has the whitest old and the brownest young?

Q: Florida.

MR. PASTOR: Arizona. And is it any wonder, the racialized politics around immigration/ethnic studies that are playing out there?

Next slide, and then I will come to a close. What we've been finding out in the work that we're doing is that those states that have the bigger demographic gap between the old and the young actually invest less in the future. So they invest less in terms of state capital spending.

Next slide.

They invest less in terms of human capital, education spending. So the bigger the demographic gap between the old and the young, the less the spending per capita on education. And then let's – the next slide – next slide, going to just close this – next.

I'm going to close on a – so the racial gap is a generation gap. And we need to begin to create a narrative. I'm hoping you ask me a question so I can actually finish what I was going to say. You could ask me one of those leading questions, like, what was that last point you were going to make? So – (laughter) – it's a good question. So we need to work on a new narrative, one that is certainly about race but also one that is about generations. We need to recognize that

there's another set of generational issues also within the racial equity movement, and that's the generational issues of mentoring young leaders.

The young leaders – (applause) – the young leaders are demanding it. And let me ask you, though, for your patience – those of you who are younger – because what you don't always know is that those of us who were the first through had no mentors. And we may not know how to mentor because we were the folks who just go through going we're just – no matter what you got to throw at us, we're going to get through. So patience with us; as Jessie Jackson once said: God is not finished with me yet.

Next slide.

And we – finally, we need – when we think about the connections between the old and the young, when we think about the connections between whites and people of color, we need intraspace arguments. We need arguments around issues like if you invest in the young folks of color now it'll generate a more productive economy in the future. But most of all, we need values-based arguments. We need not thin coalitions based on interest; we need thick coalitions based on values and visions and the kind of healing and shared experiences that you're all working on here.

Thank you. (Applause.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: I was asked to remind you to write your questions down, and the staff will be walking around to collect them.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Off mic.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: I'm sorry?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: (Off mic.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: Oh. (Chuckles.) We'll get to that too. So the generational divide, the misperceptions about the progression of generations, I believe very much rooted in the fact that we've never done the healing work that this country needs to do. Martin Luther King talked about the beloved community, but most people never understood what he really meant.

And so we are charged and challenged in these times, as we stand on the shoulders of giants, to bring a new consciousness to this work. And there's a generation, not my generation and not the generation of most of us in the room, but there is a generation – some people call it the millennials – who, with our guidance and mentorship, will lead us into the desired state of democracy in this country.

It gives me great pleasure to introduce our next speaker. Her name is Heather Charice (sp) McGhee. She's the vice president of a very important progressive think tank in the country, called Demos. Early in her career, she served as the domestic policy director for a presidential

candidate, John Edwards. She graduated from Yale University and the University of Berkeley Law School. And you may have seen her recently interviewed on Bill Moyers' special where he talked about the millennial generation.

And I won't say what – I shouldn't say now, but I guess I have to, and she also happens to be my daughter. (Cheers.) So join me in welcoming Heather McGhee. (Applause.)

HEATHER C. MCGHEE: Thank you, Dr. Christopher. (Laughter.) So I – she said in the green room, I think we won't tell people that you're my daughter. And I said, good luck, Mom. You tell strangers on the street. (Laughter.)

I do really want to thank the Kellogg Foundation and Dr. Christopher for bringing us all here together into yet another sacred space. I was in Asheville last year, and it really continues to be this sort of (flip in ?) space and place in time in which we are having the conversations and the emotional transformations that we should be having all over this country. And we're just so grateful. (Applause.) So thank you. And I know that she's doing that not just for us to feel good, but because we need it in order to go out and create that space everywhere else.

So Manuel really set this up extremely well for me. I want to talk to you about what it means to be a young person in America in this generation, my generation. I'm at the very leading edge of the millennial generation, which is the most diverse generation in American history, as Manuel showed so vividly in those slides. It is in many ways a generation that is full of the children of Dr. King's dream. You know, when he talked about wanting to see little black boys and little white girls – little white children – he probably wouldn't have said that – little white children and little black children side by side, he really could never have known what was in store. He couldn't have known what was in store because it wasn't until 1965 that the Immigration Act was passed that fundamentally changed the face of America, that lifted the racial quotas that had kept people of color from being able to enter the country on their own terms, legally, since our beginning, with few exceptions; and really could not at all have imagined that this would be a country of deep, deep diversity in such a short time.

And I think we should all remember that when we try to unpack the confusion. And for me, for someone who's grown up completely after the moment of civil rights in this country, the civil rights movement, there's always this question of what on earth happened? And I think – and I'm sure that you all agree – that that fact, the fact of our growing diversity after the civil rights movement and the national conversation about the imperative for integration ended, is such a salient fact that it helped pull everything together in a way that I know is so much a part of the story that you all are all telling.

And so when I like to tell that story, I like to tell it from a generational perspective, because it's the perspective that I have. And I actually also like to tell it from the perspective of our economic history over this period of time as well, because that's also the perspective that I have.

So one of the important sort of precursor shifts that needs to happen for us to really understand what's happened in our economy over the course of my lifetime, the past 31 years – really maybe the past 40 years – is to first upend the model that we have in our heads about what an economy is. I mean, if you actually ask people to define an economy, you get a lot of sort of

vague notions about, well, it's – you know, it's when I have a job; it's when – you know, it's when things are going well in the country. It's – you know, and people often use a lot of metaphors actually that give you the feeling that they deeply believe that the economy is something like the weather; that it is not something that is controllable, that it is something that sort of changes at will. You can predict some things, but some things happen. And in fact, we have to sort of batten down the hatches for when something like a recession comes in; and that in fact, because it is a naturally occurring phenomenon, it is in fact wrong for men, people, to try to change it in some way. And in fact, the government should only really sort of step in to alter the whims of the economy in a crisis.

But that's not what the economy is. The economy is not the weather. Will you say that with me? The economy is not the weather. And in fact, when I'm talking to people in my generation, a very useful metaphor that I found is that I actually say that the economy is not the weather, but it's in fact more like a massive multiplayer game where the most powerful players on the field, on the game, usually businesspeople, government officials, are constantly tweaking the rules a little bit in ways that shape how a team or an individual does – constantly tweaking the rules. And just like in a game, in the economy, individual effort and skill and determination and practice – right? – they all matter. They all matter. Like in a game, they all matter in an economy. And yet what really matters the most in our economy, just like in a game, is really what the rules are and, in fact, so often what team you start out on.

And so upending that idea that the economy is something natural helps us ask the question: Who's writing the rules and with what purpose? And over the course of my lifetime, the answer to that question has shifted in ways that are – that have had an incredible amount of ascent from an incredibly large number of people in ways that have been extraordinarily damaging to the promise that was made when we created the middle class in this country in the postwar period.

So I'm not using a slide – PowerPoint, but sometimes I like to just my hand to show – when they – when I'm, you know, on the road and I don't have a PowerPoint – to show an incredible shift in – over this one period of time in our family income growth and the distribution of that income growth. So from – in the postwar period, just sort of the golden era of shared prosperity – or at least that's what us progressive economic types like to say – if you divided the country's household income into fifths and tracked how quickly and on what distribution the growth was from 1947 to the late 1970s to 1979, the growth really looked like this, and with the pinky finger, the poorest fifth of families actually having their growth be a little bit faster than everybody else's. Imagine that.

Now I swear this didn't just happen because I was born, but around 1980 the growth began to look like this, where we have the pinky finger being again the least well-paid, I like to say, families and the thumb being the highest-paid families. And instead of going like this, the growth was slower and it went really something more like this. And in fact, for me to be really accurate and really show the huge disparity, I'd have to go within this top 20 percent and sort of take off my kind of thumbnail here and talk about the top 1 percent and in fact the top 1 percent of the top 1 percent, and it would have to leave my hand entirely, right?

So what happened between this period of time, the late 1970s, and then an economic shift that occurred starting in that period of time and moving far into today and in fact accelerating over the past few years? We moved from a time when one man – usually a man – with a high school diploma in one hand and the union card in the other could raise a family, buy a house – and not just on an exploding teaser rate – buy a house – even including many African-Americans – buy a house, save for the future, have health insurance, have a guaranteed pension and have and experience real generation-to-generation mobility, even African-Americans but certainly the vast majority of Americans at that time who were what we now call white.

Now we have a situation where it takes two parents, if you're lucky, working full-time jobs to have that kind of income. And that income does not come with that kind of security. You have health care that can be lost at any time. Your pension is actually a 401(k) that you fund, not your employer, that actually is able to be wiped out with a bad quarter on the stock market.

What happened to create that shift? And why is it that so many of American jobs are back-breaking, exhausting jobs that don't pay enough to lift people out of poverty in this day and age? Why is it that there's so much economic insecurity and so much inequality, and yet until very recently it was not a part of our political conversation; and that so many of the people who are experiencing that degree of insecurity, that loss of faith in tomorrow – I mean, the next day, the next paycheck – are not mobilized to demand accountability, solutions, justice?

I would like to posit that one of the major problems was that our democracy became as unequal as our economy. (Applause.) We have allowed – and particularly starting in the mid-1970s and accelerating to today – the rules of capitalism to invade our democracy, instead of having our democracy write the rules for capitalism. (Applause.) Because someone is always writing the rules. It's just a question of who and for what purpose. And we now have a democracy in this country that is a market-based democracy, where the people with the most money and the corporations with the fattest treasuries get to have a louder voice, get to have the only voice.

A political scientist, Larry Bartels from Princeton University, did a study where he demonstrated that the political preferences of the least well-paid 30 percent of Americans have exactly zero impact on their elected officials. No wonder why – in Washington there are 24 corporate lobbyists for every member of Congress. Elected officials, congress people spend one out of every three minutes fundraising. And who are they talking to when they're doing that, and what are their concerns?

It is astonishing. I recently left being the director of Demos, Washington office. I was there for nearly three years, there during the beginning of the Obama administration, there during the fight to regulate the financial sector – excuse me – a fight that I was very, very involved in. It's astonishing the amount of power that the business lobby – and not just the business lobby, but the echo chamber that it creates – has on the imagination of our elected officials.

So that's one part of it – the big money democracy part of it. It's wrong. I do believe that the Citizens United decision helped awaken many more people from all across the ideological spectrum to how corrupt our democracy has become. But of course, it started way before the Citizens United decision. And I think that there is a real chance for movement on this

issue, which is the issue above every other single issue we would ever try to get passed in legislatures across the country.

However, there's a deeper part to what has happened to our democracy that I know that you all live and breathe every day. And as I've been going around the country and talking to people – particularly my generation about it – you understand the relief, the exhalation that comes when I identify how much our inability to see us all as Americans has corroded our democracy – has not corroded our democracy; that makes it seem like there was something gold that has been tarnished, right? – but in fact has led to the incompleteness of our democracy, of our democratic promise.

We are all Americans. Manuel had a picture on the cover of his PowerPoint of a young black woman holding up that sign. One of the ways that I think that we can help to create that true feeling that we are all Americans in this country is to address the economic inequalities and call up the racial divisions – because it doesn't make sense to people otherwise. It doesn't make sense to people what's going on in our economy.

There's starting to be a narrative around corporate power, and it makes sense, right? It's starting – that's kind of starting to help people figure out exactly what's wrong. But there's a huge other missing piece, which is why the solutions that worked to help build a much more diverse middle class than the world had ever seen are so excluded and out of favor now, at a time when the diversity has expanded.

Policies – which is what I do – I work to shape public policies. I try to come up with great ideas for how to fix these problems. And yet I have to spend 80 percent of my time trying to tell this story to help build public will, because we know what the solutions are, right? We know that we have to fix our democracy first. We know that we have to have public financing of elections so that waitresses and school bus drivers and the people in this room who are not wealthy can run for office and that the public can own the elections – because right now, who buys the elections owns them. (Applause.) And the public is not buying the elections.

We know that we have to have deep and fundamental tax reform in this country, because as Manuel's demographics showed, we are not going to be able to fund a future middle class in this country if we continue to let the graying, whiter, wealthier individuals and corporations and individuals who run corporations sew up their pocketbooks and say, I'm not going to invest in my neighbor and in my future, because I don't know what it looks like. (Applause.)

We know that we need to revitalize labor institutions in this country, because that is the only way that we have ever seen across the globe people be able to work their way into a secure life. (Applause.) And we also know that unions fell out of favor in this country at around that time where that shift happened between my two (lands?). But we don't also know – (chuckles) – a piece of information that really made the light bulb go off for me as I tried to figure out what happened, which is that by 1971 the majority of unionized manufacturing workers in this country in the Midwest were black men. And suddenly what's good for GM was not good for America anymore. Now Wal-Mart is our biggest employer.

And I want to just test for you another public policy that I think would do more to build enduring public will, particularly among my generation. We have an unemployment crisis. We use the word “crisis” all the time, but we have an unemployment crisis in my generation. We have a situation in which the country is saying, to an entire generation, we don’t need your labor. We desperately need the labor of my generation. (Applause.)

So what better way to say that than to have a massive public works program where anyone between – under the ages of 30 can apply to get a job building this country back up? And I don’t just mean shovel-ready jobs. I mean working in day care centers, working in parks, working with the elderly, and doing so in a way that they are working side by side and moving into different neighborhoods to do this work, traveling across the country to be placed in communities to deeply integrate (and ?) experience.

This would be a generational experience where, after years, decades of disinvestment in public education, from K through 16, disinvestment from the basic dignity of work, our government said: We value your labor, we value your contribution, we value you as human beings, and that us, the young people who are the children of Dr. King’s dream, would have the experience of loving, nurturing and caring for this country in way that answered the question for once and for all: Are we all Americans? Absolutely.

Thank you. (Applause.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: Thank you all very much for actualizing the vision of our conversation about generations, because we can, I think in the audience, sort of pull that thread. When you integrate it with all that we’ve heard over the last few days, you kind of – lights are going off in people’s heads about how this has played itself out over time. And the “this” that I’m talking about is our inability to embrace one another as full human beings, our belief in the fundamental mythology of difference based on physical characteristics.

So Dr. Manuel Pastor, what was the last thing you wanted to say? (Laughter.)

MR. PASTOR: (Off mic.) (Laughter.) So let me say – let me say one thing before I do that, which is I think after hearing Heather you’ll understand this story, which was actually somewhat embarrassing, which is at one point Gail asked me about – not to this – but asked me about, like, who would be a dynamite speaker with a great analysis for a conference? And I said, have you heard of Heather McGhee? (Laughter.) And lo and behold, they’re related. (Laughter.)

So you know, I’ve been working in multiple ways on this question of this intergenerational narrative. And I’ll just – one thing I’ve been doing often to close speeches – and I’ll stay what it is and then I’m going to deconstruct why I think something like this might be important – is to say that I want to talk about my own story, and my story, like many sons and daughters of immigrants, actually begins a generation earlier with my dad, who arrived in the United States in the 1930s with papers that were imperfect.

And when World War II came, he was given a choice between being deported or joining the U.S. Army to fight in Europe. And he couldn't figure out what to do, literally, so he gave a penny to my cousin Carlitos (sp), who flipped it. And the penny came up a particular way. My dad and the penny went to the war. They, thankfully, both came back safe. And a generation later, his son is a full professor at the University of Southern California – (applause) –

MS. CHRISTOPHER: All right.

MR. PASTOR: – which would be an even bigger achievement if I had season football tickets, but – (laughter).

And what I like to say is that that's a great story, it's an American story, and it's the wrong story. It's the wrong story because when it's told that way, what it sounds like is an individual and their – what we call in Spanish their “ganas” right? – their desires and hard work to succeed. And believe me, my dad worked, my mom worked, I worked, right? And too often, people on the left forget the whole aspect of individual initiative.

But my dad in the 1930s had no papers, but he had a union, and that union defended his rights. And when he came back from World War II there was a GI Bill, and that GI Bill meant two things. One is that he, a guy with a sixth-grade education, could go to a community college, LA Trade Tech, and learn about electricity. And by learning about electricity, he could go from being a janitor to being an air conditioner repairman, and we went from being poor to being working-class.

And because of that GI Bill as well, he was able to buy a house – a piece of the American dream – in La Puente, which is very near Los Angeles. And we went to public schools there because the public schools were decent. And I went to the University of California, Santa Cruz because of affirmative action, which created the opportunity to take a chance on a kid like me that did not fit the typical profile of people going to the university at that time. And that's the American story. It's a story, surely, of people and their initiative and their desires, but it's a story of the public policies we've put in place. And it's also a story of the social movements – the labor movement that gave us unions, the veterans' movements that gave us the GI bill, the civil rights movement that broke down the racially restrictive covenants that meant that we could move into a suburb like La Puente (ph), or that I was able to go to the university. And that's the American story – the story of public policy and social movements. And we won't really restore America till we really retell that story of how we got here. (Applause.)

MS. : (Off mic.)

MR. BLACKMON: I want to – I want to add something to that, because I think that is so dead-on in terms of the understanding of history and how it relates to the president. This narrative that we've been hearing a lot about from people who claim to be about history and claim to be about the origins of our country and how it all began and what the Constitution really meant, deny all of that – deny that there was a role of government in the elevation of all sorts of people. And the reality is that anybody who believes that government in America started off as something that was hands-off from the economy, it's the opposite, just as Heather was saying. And it's the opposite in the 20th century, just as Manuel was just saying. That the – and the

reality, it's going all the way back to that story I told about Scipio Cottenham. You know, what was going on there? The government was giving away millions of acres of land to who? White people. Now, they blew a lot of it. They frittered away a lot of it, but that made a difference. It made a radical difference.

What happened at the beginning of the 20th century to the people that I come from? I come from really poor white people in the South, a bunch of them who lived about 200 miles north of here in Jackson parish, Louisiana. They were poor. Many of them were sharecroppers. I have a great-grandmother who starved to death in the 1920s – desperate kinds of poverty. And there were millions of white Americans who lived in those kinds of lives as well at the beginning of the 20th century. What happened? The government became involved in bringing electricity to the house that my mother grew up in that didn't have electricity in the 1940s and the 1950s, running water, schools that actually made a difference. Government initiative is what created or created the opportunity for this massive population of middle-class people to emerge in the middle of the 20th century.

And so when people talk to me about what should we do now, how do we deal with the things that I talk about from history or the fact that there was this new kind of slavery – the thing that I always come back to is I don't have all the answers. And I know more about the past probably than about the present. But one thing I do know is that the things that we have done in America in the last 40 years, in the time since America became a place that you could at least argue that all people had some kind of an opportunity to use the mechanisms of achievement in this country – the things we've done since then, like affirmative action – have cost almost nothing, harmed almost no one, and yet have led to such fantastic achievements in American life.

I mean, the achievements of African-Americans specifically, in an empirical way in the last 40 years, in terms of educational attainment and wealth achievement – the things that African-Americans have done in the last 40 years, even with all the problems that persist, is unequal. The growth that we have seen has not been accomplished by any other ethnically identifiable group of people in human history. (Applause.) And that is – that is a mathematical fact.

And what else happened in that same period of time? America had the biggest growth and expansion of any society in human history. We all benefited from that – from the allowance of everyone to finally participate in the economy.

And on affirmative action in particular – something I just have to say – I go around the country talking a lot about the book and the film and other sorts of things. And everywhere I go, I try to find this white guy who's life got screwed up by affirmative action. And I cannot find him. I look and look and look. (Laughter.) I ask people, do you know this guy? There's some guy out here who didn't get to go to a good school and didn't ever get a good job because of affirmative action, and I can't find him. You know, he's nowhere to be found.

Now, I will find – I do find all the time the guy who wanted to be a fireman, the white guy who wanted to be a fireman, and he went down to the station and he took the test. And he didn't do very well on the test, or he couldn't run fast enough to pass the physical. And he went home that day and he told his mama: I can't be a fireman because they're only hiring blacks. I can find that guy. But affirmative action and things like that are the ways in which we

transformed American life at no cost, no harm, and it's madness that we would abandon them today.

MS. CHRISTOPHER: All right. (Applause.)

As hard as we try to be inclusive in our frame of this healing of America, depending on where we are in the country and what moment it is, there is – and who's in the room – there is always the perception that a voice is not in the narrative, you know? And that's good because that's why the room is diverse, so that we can have and be reminded of that perspective.

The question that I'm going to ask you now – coming from the audience – is where do Afro-Latinos and Native Americans sit in this conversation?

MR. : Thanks for the very easy question. (Laughter.) So, you know, let me say a couple things about that.

One is I do think that – you know, I'm not as qualified to speak – I can speak a little bit about the Afro-Latinos; I'm not as qualified to speak about the role of first peoples in the U.S. And I do think that it's a topic that gets continually left off. It gets left off because of the painful history that Americans want to forget. It's wonderful that you're bringing up the work you're bringing up by talking about a different kind of slavery.

And I think it also gets left off because the numbers are so small that the demographers, like myself, wind up leaving it off too. We do have, because of those kind of criticisms, a bunch of charts I didn't show on the different progress of different groups; reservation versus non-reservation, et cetera. But I think it's a very important part of the American story, an important part of the story not simply because of the history, but because I think that fundamental to moving the nation forward is beginning to organize in what we call a transformative way, in a way that really reaches to people's soul and values.

And in that, the Native American traditions of thinking seven generations out, of understanding the relationship to Mother Earth, have so much to contribute to the rest of those of who are working on racial equity issues. (Applause.)

On the Afro-Latino thing, you know, something you may notice – so I'll just tell this thing very quickly about the census, but, you know, 1970 is the first year that the census asked anybody whether they're Hispanic or non-Hispanic. But they asked a very small sample. So 1980 was the first year they actually asked on the short form, which everyone fills out. And they found out that, in that year, 44 percent of Latinos -- they were asked two questions: What race are you – are you white or black or Native American or Asian or other, and then they asked whether you were Hispanic or non-Hispanic.

So they – they found out in the first year they did this, which was 1980, that 44 percent of Latinos marked themselves as “other.” And the – and the census said, well, it's the first time we did it; the Latinos are not used to it; maybe with a little education they'll get it right. (Laughter.)

So in 1990 they do this – the thing again. They ask you, what race are you. And then they ask you -- below that -- are you Hispanic or non-Hispanic? And that year 48 percent of Latinos marked themselves as “other.”

So the census said, we better investigate this, because they started looking at the individual answers on the census to see what people were doing. And they found things like, you know, instead of writing in “race,” somebody would write in “Chicano!!!” (Laughter.) Like with three, you know, exclamation marks, you know. (Laughter, applause.) So they’re like, yo, bro, I did it; OK?

So they said, you know, what we need to do is we’re going to reverse the questions. We’re going to ask people whether they’re Hispanic or non-Hispanic first so they get it out of their system. (Laughter.) Then we’ll ask them what race they are, right?

And that year, more Latinos than ever marked themselves as “other.” This year, for the first time – the 2010 census – those marking themselves as “other” dropped. And actually I think people may make a big deal about this, but if you look at what happened, is now the census says – they ask you whether you’re Hispanic or non-Hispanic, and then in bold it says, Hispanic is not a race.

MS. : Mmm hmm. (Affirmative.)

MR. : And then they ask you what race you are, and it goes: Hispanic is not a race – (laughter) – right? And this year, 40 percent of Latinos completely did not follow directions, and still marked “other.” Right?

MS. : Mmm hmm. (Affirmative.)

MR. : So instead of rethinking the racial categories – right? – which is apparently what the Latinos are doing – right? – the census is trying to beat us into whiteness or something, right? So – (laughter).

MS. : That’s true. There is that.

MS. : There is that.

MR. : So I think that what’s – I think that one of the things that’s – that’s very important here is to understand – there’s a great cartoon by a cartoonist named Lalo who does “La Cucaracha.” And it’s this picture of the – of the future, and it’s, like, the year 2500. And it’s these buildings on spires and – (inaudible) – looks like “The Jetsons,” right? And there’s two guys down in the corner. And one guy goes to the other, I wonder how everybody got along before everybody became Latino? (Laughter.)

And it’s sort of meant to make fun of, like, the growing Latino population, right? But it’s actually, how did everybody get along before they thought about race in different kinds of ways, in which they think that, yes, we are white and we are black and we are Native American and we are Asian and we are – we are everything, right?

Now I think that the – I don’t want to romanticize this too much, because those of us who work in the Latino community know that there’s racism in that community. (Applause.) And we know that there’s racism in Latin America. But there’s something in there about the ability to move from either-or to both-and that’s a marker for where we need to go as a country. (Applause.)

And I think Afro-Latinos bring a lot of that in their particular experience, because they wind up being both inside and outside of the African-American experience and inside and outside of the Latino experience, because they can sometimes experience the discrimination that comes their way as well. So it's a very important population, but it's also a very different way of thinking about race.

MS. CHRISTOPHER: OK. (Applause.) And I do believe our failure to address the meaning of racism and race historically has generated, on conscious and unconscious levels, our willingness to associate or disassociate from anything other than the perception of whiteness. And I think that that is universally embraced, because the experience and the imposition of the belief in racial hierarchy is universal. It's not limited to the United States. So I think part of the questions and the answers to the questions and the decisions about identification – self-identification are wrapped up in what we think that might mean going forward.

This is a question for all of you, very important question for our work. Knowing how brilliant you all are, it'll probably be the last question, because you'll take a long time to answer.

MS. MCGHEE: We got that. (Chuckles, laughter.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: OK, just thought I'd wake you up. How do we organize around value-based coalitions when values look so different from one generation to the next? Great question.

MS. MCGHEE: "Values look so different from one generation to the next." I'm trying to – I'm trying to figure out what that means, because I don't think they do.

MS. CHRISTOPHER: (Inaudible.)

MS. MCGHEE: (Chuckles.) No, but I'm trying – you know, I'm trying to –

MS. CHRISTOPHER (?): To help?

MS. MCGHEE: – you know, to get inside the question. I want to – I want – you know. Well, I'll just say that the values that are in our public discourse have shifted so much. And it is true that sort of the political preferences around certain moral or values-based political decisions – particularly around sort of individual freedom, marriage equality, gay rights, tolerance for integration, diversity, et cetera – have shifted over time.

But I would argue that the bedrock values beneath them that animates one person to say, I believe that people should be able to get married no matter who their – the gender of their partner, is the same love of freedom and love of equality that had a different expression for people a generation before.

Now it is true that there hasn't been, (as ?) we looked through the course of social movements – there actually hasn't been – and Manuel can maybe correct me or embellish or – a

lot of intergenerational movement. So we're asking for a lot. That's OK; we can deliver a lot, right? (Chuckles.) But we are asking for a lot, I think. And there also hasn't been movement until the personal becomes political. And what's been missing, I think, for this period of time, when people are saying, you know, why isn't there an economic movement about all this inequality and disparity and insecurity, it's because the personal has not been transformed to political, because we haven't understood how the politics shape our lives. Really, really the things that keep people up at night people do not connect to a policy choice. The fact that I can't afford child care is not because we're the only industrialized nation without any kind of, you know, universal family policies. I mean, that's not what it is. It's that this paycheck didn't last.

So I do believe that that transformation is one that needs to happen. It's going to look very different for our generation than it did for the New Deal generation, for the Depression generation, not because the values have changed, but because the political structures have changed, the institutions have changed, the media has changed. So yeah, I'm going to – I'm going to leave it at that. (Applause.)

MS. : (Inaudible.)

MR. PASTOR: So I'm going to do that academic thing of pretending to the answer the question while drifting to another topic. So – (laughter) – so I do think that values-based organizing actually stretches across generations. So our particular things – and I'm not even really sure they're values that differ. I remember having a conversation with my dad – he passed away a couple of years ago – about the issue of marriage equality. And he was just opposed. And I said this doesn't make any sense to me.

But actually where I got from was from my kids, right? Because when you talk to people – I've got a 25-year-old son – and they're like – and a 22-year-old daughter – and they're like: Huh? Gay and lesbians can't marry – what's that about, right? Does that make any sense? Does – makes like no sense to them and it sort of shocked us to realize, god, anything we held – sorry, if you hold it – just seems silly. And I'd argue with my dad and my dad just kind of said – a very wise guy – he said, you know, you know what? You're probably right. And I'm going to be dead soon anyway. (Laughter.) So what he realized was the continuity about family, the continuity about love, the continuity about struggle, right? And those were more fundamental values than who can marry and who can't.

The second thing I want to say – and I think this does relate – is that we need to be thinking about the difference between transactions and transformations –

MS. : Yes. All right.

MR. PASTOR: – between building deals based on interest and building deals based on value. I'm just going to give you one example from one of the worlds I work in, immigration reform, and particularly black-immigrant alliances. There's a transactional approach to that, where you say, gosh, we're in the immigrant rights community; I wonder if we can get African-Americans to support us in comprehensive immigration reform. That's different than a transformational approach, which says: Huh, we've got to make sure that immigrants understand

the centrality of the black experience and the black struggle for social justice in America has been THE benchmark for making progress – (applause) – and that – and that unless we do that with our immigrant communities, we will not build a deep values-based transformational coalition around immigration reform.

And likewise – I mean, you know, I’m so impressed by the book “The Warmth of Other Suns,” because what it does – she keeps drifting in and out about like, hmm, sounds like immigrants, you know. And we’ve found in our own work with African-American communities where there’s been a new Latino influx, making people realize that these folks look just like you did when you came from the South – too many people in the house, right, making too low wages, right? – that this is really just another kind of experience.

Then finally, on this generational thing, you know, I’m really worried about the generational thing, because I actually think there’s four generations struggling in the United States right now: the generation that’s above the age of 65 that wants to protect its Medicare and Social Security, has every right to do that; the generation below 25 that’s being screwed by the lack of investment in education; the generation between 25 and 45 that’s being burned by heading into a labor market where the jobs are crappy and that’s going to wreck their trajectory for their entire lives; and the group between 45 and 65, the baby boomers, who are refusing to pay a single penny extra in taxes.

Now that is a recipe for an America coming apart at the seams. And it’s actually interesting because I think we will make more progress framing it around age and framing it around the need to come together as one America across age and then across the other differences as well. Thanks.

MS. : All right. Thank you, Manuel. (Applause.)

MR. BLACKMON: Yeah, I have to agree with all of that, and I think that, in terms of shared values, I do think we can look back, you know, look at the founding (documents ?) of our country and, last night, after the screening of the film, there was a member of the audience who kind of rebuked me at one point because I made reference to the – our country having been founded on principles of equality and she correctly rebuked me – (chuckles) – that, you know, that – in the ways in which the execution of the founding of our country so defied those principles. But, nonetheless, it’s the case that there is this remarkable and miraculous thing that our founding documents and our founding principles enunciate an idea which we failed to achieve, absurdly and abjectly, for two centuries and now begin to have some sort of a shot at fulfilling, that nonetheless, those founding values, I think, are places that a lot of people can come together from different generations and from different places.

And the one line in a – in those documents that I zero in, aside from the ones about equality, is the phrase, “the pursuit of happiness.” And I think that is something that we all share. We all see that one of the purposes of government is to allow the unfettered and responsible pursuit of happiness. And all of these things that we – that we’re talking about here fall into that: the opportunity for us to pursue the kinds of economic lives that we aspire to or to pursue the kind of love that we aspire to.

And over the course of the generations, in fitful and halting ways, we have figured out some of the ways to facilitate the pursuit of happiness. One of the most basic ones was to figure out a long time ago that it's a bad idea to let old people starve to death. And the – and you know – and sometimes we sit around and start talking nostalgically about the old days when there were three or four generations of people in a house and that that was this wonderful thing because there was all this transference of wisdom from one generation to the – to the lowest generation. Well, that's likely true in some measure. But that's not why those people were living in the same house! (Laughter.) They were living in the same house because –

MS. CHRISTOPHER: (Laughs.) (Inaudible) –

MR. BLACKMON: – if grandma and grandpa didn't live there, they were going starve to death and they were going to freeze to death in the winter; they didn't have any money. You know, and so we came up with a way to secure those lives, to secure the pursuit of happiness for those people.

And the problem is that over the generations, we've overwhelmingly concentrated our communal efforts and all that to benefit white people more than anybody else. That's the problem. That's the – and that's the thing we have to untangle, and that's a part of this struggle that's happening now – is that it's threatening to a lot of people to see a repositioning of the ways in which we facilitate the pursuit of happiness. But that is this core value, and it does reach across all of the generations and all of the ethnicities and all of the groups. And I do think that sometimes on the progressive end of (the thing ?), there's too much talk of the individual groups, there's too much of a sense of ownership of a particular need or desire or a particular sense of aggrievement when the aggrievement is – and there is a big aggrievement, and we shouldn't abandon the idea that there's (a big ?) aggrievement – but the aggrievement is our failure as a nation to have pulled off this big miraculous thing, this big miraculous idea that is embodied in those documents. And I think that we can find a lot of common ground in the middle if we're able to frame some of these questions around those very basic American values. But redefining what American values are to include every constituency and all the people who are trying to get to the table, who are trying to pursue happiness in their own way.

MS. CHRISTOPHER (?): Thank you. (Applause.)

I'm going to take a leap and ask the panelists to answer Ruby Dee's (ph) question that was so relevant and touched our hearts in the film we saw, in the life of Harry Belafonte. And she stood and said, as only she could say it, what's my assignment? You all remember that moment? She wanted her assignment. Tell her what to do to fix what's so broken.

And so I'm going to ask – give you 30 seconds to think about it – (laughs) – and then ask each of you as part of our closing plenary to give this amazingly talented, capable, creative and hardworking audience their assignment from your perspective.

And Manuel, I'm going to ask you to go first.

MR. PASTOR: Huh. Such a great question. You know, we didn't get here, to the mess that we're in – economically, socially, racially – by just one policy or one problem or one dimension, so there's not a single thing to do to go forward. I would just lift up two things.

The first is to listen. The assignment is to listen to those that you're working with, organizing with, to try to understand what their issues are, to try to listen to people that you're a bit uncomfortable with listening to as well, because if we're going to bridge this, we're going to be having some conversations with people that we're not the happiest to be talking about, and we're going to have to have the most difficult conversations.

You know, I did a thing trying to bring African Americans and Latinos together with Karen Bass, who's now a congressman. We're doing it in South L.A. and we had about 250 people there, and, you know, we had this conversation talking about de-industrialization in South L.A., black-brown alliances. And the first – you know, we get done, and the first question comes up. Someone says: You know, I used to like Mexicans. I just don't like these new Mexicans. And, you know, it was like – it was a great question. It was a really uncomfortable thing, but it was a really great question. And then someone else said: You know, the thing is that the young black guys don't want to work and all these young immigrants – (inaudible). And you know what? That was a really difficult thing, but we really made progress by being in the uncomfortable space and listening to each other.

The second thing I would say – and this is the thing we were talking about before. We just finished a conference on Los Angeles Civil Unrest 20 Years Later – it's been 20 years – and looking at the transformation of social justice organizing that's taken place. And our single most important lesson is the following: We got to stop empire-building; we got to start movement-building. (Applause.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: All right. Can we say that again?

MR. : You got to not focus just on building your own organization. You got to focus on building the ecosystem of other organizations as well, because we will get out of this mess together.

Thank you. (Applause.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: Wow. Thank you.

Who wants to go next?

MS. MCGHEE: I can go next, because I'm going to cheat a little bit. I'm going to do two, because I'm going to build on what Manuel said at the end.

MR. : (Off mic.) (Laughter.)

MS. MCGHEE: So how many of you are familiar with the Powell memo? Not nearly enough. OK. Go –

MS. CHRISTOPHER: Say it again?

MS. MCGHEE: The Powell memo, the memo written by then future Justice Powell that he wrote to the Chamber of Commerce before it was the Chamber of Commerce, the Chamber of Commerce that has spent nearly \$1 billion lobbying over the past 10 years. He wrote this memo, it was maybe like seven pages, in 1971, laying out what would then become the 40-year march to right-wing economic – (inaudible). And it's available online. Just Google Powell memo. I think Reclaimdemocracy.org has the full text. It's fascinating. It's like seeing the master plan.

And one of the most important insights, that was the insight upon which the Chamber of Commerce then became the Chamber of Commerce that we know today, was that he said that the problem was that American free-market capitalism was under attack and that all businessmen, he said, whether you're making rubber tires or soda pop or diapers, needs to be focused on making rubber tires, soda pop and diapers, but also focused on defending and promoting free-market capitalism itself.

And that lesson was a call to build movement beyond just the organization. So for us as well, we are great at issues, we are great at constituencies; we are not great at talking about the system itself and at being collaboration and deep, deep comity with people who may be making different things but in fact share our overarching values. So that's – read the Powell memo. That's the assignment, read the Powell memo and then take it to heart, the way Manuel asked.

And then the other thing that is, I believe, all of our assignments, and would be extraordinary powerful for everyone in this room to do, is to see the world we want. It is so hard, when we do this work of looking at disparities and injustice, for us to not spend all of our time with our eyes trained on what we don't want. It's really hard, because we say, you know, people have to know about the problem.

But the power of consciousness, of individual consciousness and collective consciousness, means that what we focus on is bigger. You know this in your life. When you start focusing on your bills, they get bigger – (chuckles) – right? You can't see anything else. We have to just do a simple exercise of when we are going to sleep at night, put the work away, put the stress of the money and the injustice and the bad news away. Don't watch news before you go to bed. (Laughter.) Don't do it. Instead, close your eyes and see the world you want.

MS. : Thank you. (Cheers, applause.)

Doug?

MR. BLACKMON: Well, there is one – one easy one that they did not take. And that is that for this room, the people in this room, your first assignment is to keep doing exactly what you're doing. It's why you're here. (Applause.)

MS. CHRISTOPHER: And you're here.

MR. BLACKMON: And it's important, and it makes a difference, and – you know, and in very meaningful ways. And we had a conversation earlier today about this. You know, you're the – you know, among all the do-gooders out there, you're the crème de la crème of the do-gooders – (laughter) – you know. And you're an inspiration to the mediocre do-gooders, you know. And you got to bring them on, bring them along, empower them, you know. And that's a – because doing good really matters, you know. And so first do – you know, keep doing what you're already doing.

I think the other thing I would say – and it really just echoes what you've already heard, but I do think that there's not enough listening. There's particularly not enough listening of the folks on the other side, whatever that means to you and your particular issue. There's not enough listening to them. There's not enough considering the possibility that they may be just as sincere in their beliefs, even if wrong. They may be as sincere and well-intentioned as you are in their own way. And I think we lose track of that.

I'm a member of the media, so I get amazed at how often we the media seem to be the villain. And I was in a session yesterday about the media and basically how bad the media was and how terrible the media is. (Chuckles.) And what was so striking about it was – and I said this to Greg Moore, the facilitator, afterwards – he's the editor of the Denver Post – said to him afterwards that I felt the same way, that I'm – when in the – when I'm in the same sort of session and it's all tea party folks, because they say all the same things – (laughter) – about how terrible the media is and how we don't get anything right at all. And all the – and in fact, all the concerns and complaints are also probably right, in one way or another.

But I do think that there's not enough listening. And one of the results of that is that we live in this society that feels so polarized, feels like it has so many troubles, and all that's correct too. But it's also correct that on so many of the most important and profound issues that face us, the great majority of Americans actually agree, you know, around things like very fundamental ideas of the sanctity of family. Even really complicated things like abortion, people agree more than they disagree on – across a wider spectrum of perspectives than we sometimes realize. People actually overwhelmingly agree that everybody ought to have a fair shot and that nobody should actually have everything guaranteed for them. There really are core ideas that the majority of Americans agree on, and they're all bunched up in the middle, but they get separated and set against each other by people who are very clever at that.

And I think that listening, listening to the other side, contemplating what they're really about, what their anxieties are really about, is the – is the beginning of seeing a way that shared values bring some people together and also allow for people to say we can agree on this one thing, even if we disagree on these other things; now, let's focus on the parts that we agree on, the things that really, really matter. And I do think that that would be the – I mean, Ruby Dee would probably say that's still too vague and ridiculously – (laughter) – broad ambition –

MS. CHRISTOPHER: She would, yeah.

MR. BLACKMON: – but that's the one that I would offer up.

MS. CHRISTOPHER: Well, I've been told how to handle this by our technical people, and so I'm going to ask your indulgence. We're going to end this plenary but transition into a few closing remarks from me. But I'm going to ask our panelists to stay here while we do that, because I was told if I did it otherwise, you would all rush them and we'd never get out of here with some kind of order. So I'm going to try to do this very, very well.

Uh-oh, I'm getting some more advice. (Chuckles.) (Pause.) (Laughs.) OK.

You all are going to laugh with me, I have to share this with you. She says do it at the very end. But she says, at the very end remind them to complete their evaluations. (Laughter.) If you think I'm going to end this conference on that note, you have lost your mind. (Laughter, applause.) Talk to the hand! (Laughs.)

OK. So first of all, I want you to join me in thanking our speakers for giving us a multigenerational perspective here. (Cheers, sustained applause.) And if you all would just mind staying here for a couple of minutes – are you good with that? All right. Then I – (pause) – OK, are you sure, Heather. (Laughs.) (Inaudible.) OK.

We have had an amazing few days together. And this – (applause) – and the amazing team we have working to make it all possible has captured a lot of it in image. And they stayed up most of the night last night pulling together a memorable collage, montage of images of our time together. So -- actually I'm going to be more smooth than they think I am.

So I'm going to suggest that we all share that montage for about five minutes, and at that point the panelists can leave the stage. And when the montage is over, I'll come back and say farewell in the appropriate way. So if we could have the – did I do that OK, Mark (sp)? (Laughs.) OK. So if we could have the montage and we'll leave the stage and then I'll come back.

(Video is shown.)

(END)