

May 10, 2012

NHWI

Contemporary.Gender.Equality.Listening.Session

University of New Hampshire in Durham, NH

About the New Hampshire's Women's Initiative (NHWI):

The New Hampshire Women's Initiative (NHWI) is a new non-profit organization dedicated to continuing the legacy of success of our merging partners: the Commission on the Status of Women, the Women's Lobby and Alliance, and the Women's Policy Institute. The NHWI mission is to advance social, economic, and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire.

The NHWI has a unique governance structure. Its board is supported by both a Founding Mothers' Panel, comprised of the founders of the merging partners, and a Gender Ambassadors Panel, a group of young women leaders who are interested in better understanding and re-framing the dialogue around gender equality issues in New Hampshire. This multi-generational sphere of influence will help the NHWI leverage both the rich history and accomplishment surrounding women's issues in New Hampshire and at the same time craft a new path forward for gender equality born out of contemporary thinking and needs.

About the Gender Ambassadors Panel (GAP):

The goal of the Gender Ambassadors Panel (GAP) is to support the mission of the NHWI by informing its research, outreach, and advocacy with a better understanding of the gender equality issues that younger women and men identify as important to them. GAP members will work toward that goal by hosting Contemporary Gender Equality Listening Sessions in various geographic locations around the State. The Listening Sessions will be facilitated focus groups consisting of six to ten participants engaged in a formal discussion for up to ninety minutes using pre-determined questions. Results will be documented and shared with the NHWI Board. The Listening Session participants will come primarily from the existing networks of GAP members and are expected to be primarily women, however the method can be adapted to reach other networks and populations, including men.

About the Network Facilitators:

The first round of listening session hosted by GAP members took place in the fall of 2011. The listening sessions generated so much interest that participants, board members, and other colleagues wanted to be a part of the process and host their own sessions! The NHWI Board and GAP members enthusiastically support this extension of the listening sessions to others in our community. Network Facilitators use the same facilitation packet, including the note takers table, and draft a report based on the content of their session.

Contents

Introduction and Background 4

Methods:..... 4

 Listening Session Format..... 4

Summary of Findings: 4

 Closing remarks from participants: 14

Limitations:..... 14

Facilitator and Note-taker observations and concluding thoughts: 14

Appendix A: Listening Session Script..... 14

Introduction and Background

Methods:

Gaining insight into a community with the use of focus groups is a commonly used approach to qualitative research. Qualitative research is a systematic approach to understanding human thoughts, behaviors and motivations through thoughtful survey design, observation, and inquiry.

The GAP Listening Sessions are designed like focus groups where a facilitator and note-taker work together to gain insight into participant's thoughts and feelings about contemporary gender equality issues facing young women and men in NH.

Prior to conducting the listening sessions, each facilitator and note-taker is provided a facilitation packet that details instructions for conducting an effective focus group. This includes instructions for the specific roles of the facilitator and note-taker, the length of the session, and how to draft the report after the listening session.

Location

The listening session was held at the University of New Hampshire in Durham, NH.

Participant Background

The participants are between ages 20 to 21. 5 women, 3 men. 8 total.

Listening Session Format

The listening session followed a traditional focus group format, which included a two to three minute allotment per question, per person. Each session was designed to last two hours including introductions, participant feedback, a participant exercise, and concluding remarks.

The Listening Session was conducted using an agenda and script provided in the facilitation packet (Appendix A: Listening Session Script). The participants introduced themselves by first name, occupation, age, and town of residence.

Summary of Findings:

The Summary of Findings is organized by each question asked at the listening session. Synthesis of material will occur at a later date when all of the listening sessions have been conducted. Please note that participants are identified only by a number to protect their privacy.

1. What made you interested in today's session in gender equality?

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

Participant	Comment	Note-taker observation
8	Came initially ... as a facilitator	
7	Pays attention to politics. Obama vs. Clinton is interesting.	
6	Knows [redacted]. Powerful woman. Wants to see dynamics. Happy we mixed gender; never really thought about it much before. See as person more than gender but not all see it that way.	
5	Fac. → Participant. Women's studies class as a freshman at UNH. Became a feminist. Saw <i>Miss Representation</i> . Excited. Took class on a whim. More suggested to take the class WS401. Greatest class.	
4	Does not feel informed. Interested in learning more.	Group feels not informed. It's more information.
3	Interested, but does not know much.	
2	Never taken a class but girlfriend has helped to educate on sensitivity. Much to learn to support her and learn.	
1	Has already seen difference. Provided language at college. Power and privilege in college graduate school social justice.	
3	Person of color will be different than diversity. Gender, race, and level of understanding of the issue.	

2. How do you define gender equality?

Participant	Comment	Note-taker observation
8	No concept of gender equality	1912 – Gender equality

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

	because their isn't only gender equality in the world. How can I come up with a definition when it doesn't exist?	amendment – has not (still hasn't) signed.
7	Concept ... women and allies (men who identify as feminist – understand dynamics of being a woman). Woman bashing a man – image of a feminist – not the case.	
6	Hard to describe something when a definition does not exist. Not ... reversal – working together – seeing eye to eye – not just about women but men too.	
2	Equal treatment – seen as people not generalization. Being equal regardless of gender so you can work together. Had not even heard of ... Amendment. Though if you can pass all the laws you want, but it takes time to integrate into society.	
3	Also didn't know EK Amendment existed. Italian. Traditional rules. Passed down in generations. Grandparents - parents. Grandmother had 7 daughters – cultural expectations with family – has disagreement with family. Traditional Italian dad at restaurant. Making comments about a waitress – he does not agree with that. What gender equality is not.	
4	Can relate to 3. Similar background. Elderly grandparents – how he treats his wife. Mom a complete feminist.	

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

	<p>Interesting to see the change. Equal value being placed on all people for the world.</p>	
5	<p>... for the very small (personal) to ... (Legislation). Hard to define. Hard to overlook definition to such a broad subject. In an ideal world, lack of discrimination between sex and gender.</p>	
3	<p>Hard because it's different for every person – hard to put yourself in someone else's shoes. I see a woman as she sees herself.</p>	
7	<p>Hard to walk someone's walk. Education is key.</p>	
8	<p>Haitian / Italian – ripple effect in ... culture. Women do ... All traditional women / kids ... last – Grandfather changed that up. Dad does everything – alpha personality ... for seeing her dad being the 'mom'. Stuff he .../does clothes had her dad doing everything. Shared roles. fluidity – men break gender norms = gender equality. I'm not moving an inch for nothing can change .../dad is a mechanic. Starts at home – life is a ripple effect – raise kids to break social norms. Our generation ... to break the norms. Maybe definition can come about.</p>	
2	<p>How you were brought up effects how you look at gender equality. His parents/family very traditional. Works fine, but in their house it works roles – sister helped mom – he would help</p>	

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

	dad. Felt wrong – but does define the gender norms.	
1	Gender spectrum – dichotomy – feel like they don't fit how we define male and female especially in transgender communities. What is a real woman – we align sex with gender. Gender equality means access – equal access and treatment. Sexism – fits stereotypical bio, but does not equal gender role. Gender in a spectrum – not just male and female. People become impr... in their roles have to act a certain way. Everyone ...	This group really ... education.
8	Forgot about spectrum. I.e. gay and transgender.	
5	Goes back to education and the importance of education and what defines it. Biology/gender/sex – not talked about a lot not until in changing of society – don't wait until college.	
8	This generation has to educate ... the ripple effect.	
3	How you define yourself vs. how others define you. A few years ago he would not have seen himself as a feminist. Morphing changing all the time – views change.	
2	Problem is labels – atheist vs. agnostic. As soon as we put a label on it they think they can know you. In all things prevalent in everything. You can be this or	Fac. – Group is very philosophical. We've talked about what it is / isn't. Gender equality – Do you ... feminist – women issues?

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

	that but	
1	Gender equality sounds like it's about women. ... about black – sexuality – gay people. Gender equality – like its – putting the word equity up front – encompasses gender as a spectrum.	Thumbs up.
2	Hard to define but likes it.	
7	Slandered over the years. People don't really get it. Thumbs up – label with baggage. Can it overcome its baggage? Sees gender equality and feminism as different words.	Feminism
5	Feminism is an entire movement. So incredibly ... - history.	
1	Gender equality is feminism. If you are not a feminist, you're a sexist – lack of awareness.	
6	Women's Issues – 'period'	
2	Another label. Too narrow. Not just women's issues – everyone's issues effects everybody.	Everyone in agreement.

3. How have you, in NH, experienced gender equality or inequality? Outside of professional setting? What's happening that's important?

Participant	Comment	Note-taker observation
6	Always hear ... treated as a powerful woman. Taught the same way by her dad. Had a boyfriend – auto parts store — did not want her to change wiper blades. Boyfriend was ashamed.	
8	Experienced the same thing. Dad is a mechanic. Auto parts guy	

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

	<p>didn't get it when she ordered the parts – did she really shut up her friend – label 'tom boy.' Why can't I be a girl that knows what she is doing? Tom boy label if you are not female.</p>	
6	<p>Labels – stigmas follow you.</p>	
4	<p>Because her family was traditional her parents / mom tried very hard to raise their children differently. Raise your daughters like ...</p>	
2	<p>Shouldn't have to say that that's how bad it is.</p>	
3	<p>.... With his mom – shopped with his mom.</p>	
7	<p>Thinking about her family. Successful woman pastor in {redacted}.MA.Friction.in family – pastor is not her dad but her mom. Dad blames mom when something goes wrong in church, not the church. She calls her dad on it – but he is new unemployed taking frustrations out on his mom. ... culture. ... /26 kids. Was told as children she needs to learn to cook ... husband won't. Brothers did not have to do it. Brothers can't find girlfriend because of 'waiting for you on all fours – [redacted] that.'</p>	
2	<p>Waves at computer testing place on campus. Mostly guys. Stigma if a girl is hired there. 'Only hired because she was a girl,' not because she was smarter – The token girl. Director is a woman,</p>	

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

	<p>others manager women - ... the ... is women – there is still the stigma, not a single computer science major he knows is a girl. Why would you want to stay in a major if you don't feel like you belong? We are social beings.</p>	
5	<p>Boss at restaurant. Straight up [redacted]. Hear name. So sexist/conservative/rep. misogynist. ... a bit better out of necessity. Would not hire women in the kitchen – okay at home but not as a profession.</p> <p>Would only hire girls on counter – but no guys – remarks and actions.</p> <p>Boobs don't mean I can arrange flowers a lot of people quit – he had to change a bit. Blatant sexist.</p>	
3	<p>Deli at Hannaford. Guy treats customers in ... Where's my fist bump? Cooking.</p> <p>Profession – Elderly mimi</p>	
6	<p>Only girl in class – stick with it giving a focus group – all men. of Eg. He patted her on the head. She kneed him in the balls and left. He thought he was complimenting.</p>	
2	<p>How can people be that bad?</p>	
3	<p>Teacher mechanical engineering – top 3 grades in class were women. 120/5 girls / 3 top of class. Excuse that the girls were top 3. Slander and bias.</p>	

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

1	Men even make more than women even in traditional female positions. i.e. nursing, teachers. There is no hope. Feels hopeless.	
8	Women who fight to get paid more get shunned. i.e. Hillary Clinton.	
2	Reading games in thrones - ... devil. Woman wants to be a knight – always treated 2 nd class. ... top of the class.	
4	Two female faculty. BFA. Yet female students with male professors. Tenure traditional pre... men.	

4. Post-It Exercise!

Participant	Comment	Note-taker observation
3	Everything ended up in education. People are different – comes from ignorance not from not knowing.	
5	Education.	
2	Early education. Teaches like it already happened at least in high school. Taught early won't put a stigma. Hard to teach an old dog new tricks.	
8	Should as early as possible in an age appropriate way. Even pre K.	
4	Start early – whole issue when we P-K. Girls in play house /	

The New Hampshire
WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

	boys with trucks.	
2	Sister would play dress up with him – had fun but then as a teen was ... - had to admit he did it. Impatience of early int.	
1	Inclusive curriculum – how can you teach those topics in an inclusive form? More impt. than even really need to have cultural competency in education – Nashua different than the rest of state.	
3	High school history class. American history – women studies major. UNH / taught both sides of everything.	
	Always have programs where we have the dialogue. UNH budget crisis – liberal studies gets cut – women's studies / ethnic studies. How is UNH going to neglect the state?	
1	... is news Labels Who I am matters Gender issues at a man Start breaking norms How do you support the people having the conversation? Gift of dialogue – water drops	

Closing remarks from participants:

None.

Limitations:

Facilitator and Note-taker observations and concluding thoughts:

Appendix A: Listening Session Script

I. Welcome and Introductions (*slightly shortened for this listening session)

- Thank participants for coming
- Distribute participant information sheets (and agendas if using)
- Introduce facilitator and note taker
- Overview of New Hampshire Women's Initiative
 - The New Hampshire Women's Initiative is a new non-profit organization
 - A unification of:
 - The Commission on the Status of Women
 - The Women's Lobby and Alliance
 - The Women's Policy Institute
 - ***NHWI Mission: To advance social, economic and political opportunity and equality for women in New Hampshire.***
 - Has a Board of Directors and two advisory panels
 - Founding Mothers
 - Gender Ambassadors Panel
- Objective of Listening Sessions & GAP
 - Gender Ambassadors Panel will support the mission of the NHWI through researching and better understanding the gender equality issues that younger women and men identify as important to them.
 - Members of GAP will host a series of Contemporary Gender Equality Listening Sessions in various geographic locations around the State.
- Introduction of participants: *First name, age, town, occupation*

II. Overview of the Process

- Description of plan for Listening Session by facilitator

- How discussion will be documented during the Session
- How a report will be prepared after the Session
- Assurance of confidentiality (inform participants that any report will only identify participants by age, zip code, and industry/occupation)

I. Establishment of Ground Rules (*slightly shortened for this listening session)

- Ground rules encourage active and honest participation and a safe discussion environment.
- If a participant violates a ground rule, they will be politely reminded of the ground rule.
- If a participant continues to violate a ground rule, they will be asked to leave the group.

Ground Rules (The 5 A's)

Participants of this group...

- Agree to maintain confidentiality
- Agree that there are no “right or wrong” answers to the questions
- Agree to speak honestly based on our own experiences
- Agree that only one person will speak at a time
- Agree to respond to one another politely and respectfully

II. Discussion of Contemporary Gender Equality

1) What made you interested in attending today's listening session on gender equality?

2) How do you define the term gender equality?

What does gender equality mean to you?

What does gender equality not mean to you?

What issues or subjects do you think about when you think of gender equality?

3) In New Hampshire, have you experienced or observed gender equality or inequality?

III. Post-it Note Exercise

What issues relating to gender equality do you think are most important for the New Hampshire Women's Initiative to address?

(Each participant receives 3 standard yellow Post-it notes and a black sharpie; they must write their top three issues, one per Post-it note. Ask them to put the Post-its up on a white board or wall. Then each person gets one red dot. They must place their red dot on their top issue, which doesn't have to be one of the ones they originally wrote.)

** Facilitator must collect the Post-its and return to the GAP Committee when complete*

IV. Wrap-up

- Do you have any other thoughts or ideas that you really want to share about gender equality in NH? (*not asked at this listening session due to time constraints)
- Thank you to participants by facilitator
- Collect participant information sheets; distribute NHWI information sheets

V. Adjourn