

Name MODEL



Text Secretary Hillary Clinton's APEC speech

Clinton argues that when systemic restrictions on the full participation of women in the economy are removed, all members of society will benefit. She contends that improving opportunities for women is not at the expense of other members of society, but rather will improve the lives of everyone.

Clinton presents the fact that women's participation in the economy has historically been limited. For example, women "are denied access to credit and may even be prohibited from opening bank accounts, signing contracts, purchasing property, incorporating a business, or filing lawsuits without a male guardian" (99-101). These "structural and social impediments" "stack the deck against them" (56). This "stacking of the deck" against women hampers our economy. Clinton sees women as a "vital source of growth" that needs to be "unlocked" (22-23). Unlocking this vital source of growth is essential to solving today's economic problems. Playing off the words of her husband, President Clinton, she emphasizes that in facing our economic challenges, "we don't have a person to waste, and we certainly don't have a gender to waste either" (63-64).

Clinton strengthens her argument by showing how "increasing women's participation in the economy and enhancing their efficiency and productivity" can lead to "a dramatic impact on the competitiveness and growth of our economies" (25-27). She illustrates that economies that allow more participation of women by "improving the distribution of their talents and skills," "are dramatically outperforming those that have not" (50-53). She offers further support by citing a Goldman Sachs report. According to the report, "a reduction in barriers to female labor force participation would increase America's GDP by 9...the Eurozone's by 13 percent...and Japan's by 16 percent" (122-125). She deftly highlights how this report shows both that women's economic participation is still limited and that it would offer a needed solution to a major worldwide problem.