

PBS' "TO THE CONTRARY"

HOST:

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GUESTS:

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IRENE NATIVIDAD

KAREN DeWITT

CISSY BAKER

6:00 A.M.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2002

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TRANSCRIPT BY: FEDERAL NEWS SERVICE
620 NATIONAL PRESS BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20045

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MS. ERBE: The campaign to open the all-male Augusta National Golf Club to women, Augusta home to the prestigious Masters Golf Tournament, is controversial, but at least partially succeeding. Does this signal the end of all-male private clubs?

MS. CZARNECKI: No, but it certainly does make them look bad if they want to host a major public sporting event.

MS. NATIVIDAD: Until the Augusta National was ousted, I didn't even know clubs could still discriminate against women.

MS. DeWITT: No, there's always the john. Private clubs don't have to worry unless they set international standards of achievement.

MS. BAKER: Of course it's wrong not to admit women to the club, but I don't think the club should have to admit women at gunpoint.

(Musical break.)

MS. ERBE: Hello, I'm Bonnie Erbe. Welcome to To The Contrary, a discussion of news and social trends from a variety of women's perspectives.

In the news, how women candidates fared at the polls this election.

Then, a new study says good attitudes towards aging can add years to one's life.

Behind the headlines, we talk with Martha Burk, head of the National Council of Women's Organizations, about her fight to open the private Augusta National Golf Club to women.

Up first, women and Election 2002. A record number of women ran for office in this week's mid-term election. But 2002 could hardly be called the Year of the Woman, or the Year of the Woman Governor, as some had hoped. Overall, women candidates did little better than hold their own. Of 10 women who ran for governor, four won. That brings to six the total of women governors, four Democrats and two Republicans, up by one over the five currently serving. Among them, Michigan Democrat Jennifer Granholm; Arizona Democrat Janet Napolitano, who takes over from a Republican woman governor; and Kansas Democrat Kathleen Sebelius. Meanwhile, in the first ever woman versus woman race in Hawaii, Republican Linda Lingle defeated Mazie Hirono by five points.

124 women ran for the U.S. House of Representatives, just a smidgen more than the 120 six years ago, 59 made it to the 108th Congress, so women's representation remains exactly the same in the House. But the party mix is changing, as there will be more Republican women in the House. Among the seven new women entering the House, two are Democrats, five are Republicans, including Florida Secretary of State Katherine Harris, who rose to prominence during the 2000 Bush-Gore election. Eleven women ran for U.S. Senate seats, with a total of two declared victories, and two women still vying for one seat, Louisiana's Democratic Senator Mary Landrieu will face her Republican challenger, Suzanne Terrell, in a December runoff election.

SENATOR LANDRIEU: I feel very good. I really, really feel good. I'm surprisingly not tired. We've been up since early, and this is Mary Shannon's first time to vote, and we're real excited. She wasn't born last time. And we've shown everybody how to come vote, so she's going to come vote with her daddy today.

MS. ERBE: Former two time cabinet minister Elizabeth Dole won North Carolina's open Senate seat, holding it for her party. She replaced long-time Senator Jesse Helms.

SENATOR-ELECT DOLE: And I want to ask those who voted for Erskine Bowles to please give me a chance, because I intend to be a Senator for all of North Carolina.

MS. ERBE: The number of women in the U.S. Senate will remain at 13, only limited information is available on how women voted because exit polls normally produced by the Voter News Service were scrapped. In two state-wide races where exit polls were produced, Democrat Jennifer Granholm won with the support of the women's vote by a nearly two-to-one margin, but in Maryland Gubernatorial Candidate Kathleen Kennedy Townsend lost the women's vote, 56 percent of which went to her victorious Republican rival Bob Ehrlich, despite strong attempts by her to woo women voters.

FORMER LIEUTENANT GOVERNOR KENNEDY TOWNSEND: Unfortunately, we fell short.

But we stood up for our beliefs, for our future of justice, and equal rights, and opportunity for all.

MS. ERBE: Did it turn out to be the Year of the Republican Woman?

MS. O'CONNOR: Well, it certainly can't be called the Year of the Democratic Woman. Very clearly Republican women did much better than Democratic women did. There's was only one woman running for governor, Republican woman running for governor, she won. So many Democratic women went down, particularly at the Senate level and for governorships that, in comparison, anyone was going to look good, but actually in the open seats, Republican women took five of them compared to two Democratic women. So it really does show a new thrust in the Republican Party.

MS. ERBE: What will this do to the Democratic Party's campaign powerhouses, such as Emily's List and the Women's Campaign Fund?

MS. O'CONNOR: I think Emily's List is going to have to really go back and sort of reassess its strategy in this election. Emily's List has always been very important in putting early seed money in, but their success rates in this election were really fairly abysmal. It wasn't for want of trying, but they're really going to have to go in and see, what did we do with all of our money, and how can we make it more effective next time. I think it's going to be very difficult to get Democratic women candidates to come out and face all the difficulties that you have in an election when they fared so badly this year.

MS. ERBE: One reason Democrats, men and women, fared so poorly overall, analysts say, is because they failed to energize women and minority voters, a critical part of their base.

That analysis of how women fared and changed the 2002 elections by the Director of American University's Institute of Women and Politics Karen O'Connor.

On to the next topic, as we age. It's often reported that women live longer than men, an average of five years longer, but according to a new study, attitude may be a bigger factor than gender. A positive attitude towards aging is extremely important according to a new study published in the journal of personality and social psychology. And it's a tough approach for women in today's youth-focused culture. The journal reports older Americans with an optimistic outlook on aging live an average of 7.5 years longer than those who believe their lives are worthless, empty and hopeless. They define the better attitude as "the judgment that the perceived benefits of one's life outweigh the perceived hardships." 660 participants, about half male, half female, were watched and interviewed over a 20-year period. They were asked about health issues, and grilled about their own outlooks on life and aging. The findings that self-perception may be a matter of life or death were the same when controlled for general health, education, gender, and economic status.

So, Cissy Baker, welcome to the panel.

MS. BAKER: Thank you.

MS. ERBE: Is it tougher for women than men to maintain a good attitude about aging when we live in a society where there is so much emphasis put on youth?

MS. BAKER: I'm not sure there's any difference. I mean, attitude is attitude. And I think that real key to being able to live longer is your activity, is the attitude and how active you are, for men and women. I really don't think there's a difference.

MS. ERBE: Well, as a self-propelled victim of three sessions of plastic surgery, I would beg to differ.

Now, Karen DeWitt, more and more men are --

MS. DeWITT: Whoa, what a transition.

MS. ERBE: Now, men are getting more and more plastic surgery these days, but I still think it's tougher for women. I think women -- you know, there's more of an emphasis on us looking good. They have to succeed, and we have to look good.

MS. DeWITT: Well, there's certainly, if you are -- if you take your cues from contemporary culture, which I don't think is necessarily best cue to take for running your own life, yes, you could freak out that you're not, what is it, Aguilar, I mean, who can show her bellybutton. I mean, I'm certainly not going to show my bellybutton, even if I had plastic surgery, I wouldn't show my bellybutton. I'm just -- but to a person, I think, once again I would agree with you, that it's attitudinal, and attitudinal across the age groups. I mean, if you're 20 and you're deeply depressed, you will look older, your health will not be as well. Equally, I visit every week a 93-year-old lady, Southern lady from a little town in Georgia, and she is phenomenal. And the only thing that keeps her -- I keep trying to talk her into getting a wheelchair that she can propel, because her mind is alive, she's as sharp as a tack. The only thing is, she has osteoporosis, so her ribs literally sit on her hips. Of course, they didn't know about that. But, she is as sharp as she can be, and she is optimistic all the time.

MS. NATIVIDAD: Let me tell you, there's a critical mass of people who are aging, the boomers. And I think they will impact on the cultural attitudes, because even though some of us are trying to have our facelifts, and so on, it is a group of people who are attuned to health, who have more information about taking care of their bodies than others, who are incredibly engaged in a way that prior generations perhaps could not be. So, I do think attitudes will change because of this critical mass. It doesn't mean that there's no lesser emphasis on youth. I think they'll strive to find their way of looking better at a certain age.

MS. CZARNECKI: I think we're living in a parallel universe. You've got your Hollywood, you do have your obsession with youth in our pop culture. I do agree with you. And I think that is extremely destructive. I try not to look at all the different magazines as I'm in the grocery stores, because it's depressing. I have never looked like any of that, and I will never look like that, and I'm not going to try.

MS. NATIVIDAD: You look better than the magazines.

MS. CZARNECKI: But, conversely, we do have an aging population. And I'm happy to see other magazines like More show up on the shelves. But it's so funny, they haven't really crossed paths. They're running two separate tracks, and they're going to collide at some point. I think we don't value the elderly in society, we don't value life enough, and how we live our lives. We need to talk more about that. And that's the only way we're going to --

MS. NATIVIDAD: But I think this boomer generation is writing the script as it goes along. It's not as if --

MS. CZARNECKI: They're flying by the seat of their pants.

MS. NATIVIDAD: Sure.

MS. ERBE: Wait a second. If the boomers, of which I am a proud member, is really running the show, then why is the show running into the ground? I mean, everybody would agree that societal values have gotten horrible compared to where they were 50 years ago. But let me get Cissy in here.

MS. BAKER: I think that this is ridiculous. I think it --

MS. NATIVIDAD: Which part, Cissy?

MS. BAKER: Boomers are the largest sector of the population. So, of course, we're going to pave the way. Boomers are more educated simply by technology and communications. We've got television, we've got radio, we've got the Internet. Older people didn't have that. My great-grandmother became a house mother at the University of Tennessee at 90 years old.

MS. DeWITT: Great genes.

MS. BAKER: She was healthy, she was active. I think it's a matter of health, and activity and attitude, and our generation has an opportunity to do that more because we've been educated more. It's that simple.

MS. NATIVIDAD: But I think women, to go back to your original question, older women do have a reason for sometimes feeling less positive, if you will. Income is lower so, therefore, when they are much older, the pensions will be much smaller. Also, you know, if the husbands die before, or whatever companions you had before, it's not nice to be alone. I think the boomer older women will find ways of connecting, but still no one wants to have their mate be gone.

MS. ERBE: But do you think -- I mean, one thing that will help not just older women, but older men feel better about themselves is if we once again become a society that respects its elders, and more than that values its elders. And there are societies, Asian societies, you value your ancestors, you value your elders, and we don't. Can boomers lead that charge back to valuing old age again?

MS. CZARNECKI: I think they can. But what we have to do is also combine it with our educational system. We have such absolute desperate needs in our schools, perhaps getting them in to do the counseling on a volunteer or part-time basis would be a good way to integrate the generations.

MS. BAKER: But you know what, shame on us if we don't value the elderly. Shame on us. We are here, it's our job, and it should be an honor. It shouldn't be something that is difficult to do. And the other thing is, and I think you hit on it most, older women had less income, if any. That's the problem. The generation above ours, above the baby-boom, didn't really work, and they're living off of husband's pensions and Social Security more. So it's really more of an economic issue for women's health than it is anything else.

MS. NATIVIDAD: Absolutely.

MS. DeWITT: Well, my mother did work, and she certainly is a generation older than the baby-boomers. I think there's something else going on here as well.

MS. ERBE: But, to expand on Cissy's point, she was an exception rather than the rule.

MS. DeWITT: Well, not in my community. Everyone in my -- African-American women have worked forever. This is not a new -- we didn't just come into -- I grew up, I didn't know there was such a thing as a latch-key kid. That was a phenomenon I only heard about in the '80s when a lot of middle class white women went to work. But every -- I don't know, maybe there was a doctor's wife and a lawyer's wife in my neighborhood who did not work.

What I was going to say, though, is when we're talking about older people, who are we talking about? I mean, it's us.

MS. NATIVIDAD: Us.

MS. DeWITT: Exactly.

MS. CZARNECKI: Bite your tongue.

MS. ERBE: I was going to say, not me, I'm still 16, hadn't you noticed.

MS. DeWITT: But I think one of the things is the concept of what is old. I mean, often when people start talking about old people, they're talking about somebody who is 80 and 90, and that is not the society. Also, advertising is built on the baby-boomers, so it has not clicked yet that it's skewed towards

younger people at the time, because we were such a huge population.

MS. NATIVIDAD: But now it's moving towards the big market.

MS. DeWITT: But the market hasn't changed.

MS. ERBE: All right, guys, sorry about that. But I'm still begging to differ from your point, and my next birthday is my Sweet Sixteen. Yeah, right.

Behind the headlines, the National Council of Women's Organizations Chair Martha Burk is waging a partially successful and very public fight with the Augusta National Golf Club over its men-only membership policy. We spoke to her about the controversy, and whether her partial success signals an end to men-only private clubs. But, Burk argues, because Augusta is home to the high profile Masters Tournament, it's not truly private.

MS. BURK: Augusta National is one of the most public clubs on the planet. So, to claim there are a few old boys on the back nine is a bit disingenuous at best. Clubs that really are private, while we may not like that very much, I doubt if it's going to have a lot of change. Now, golf clubs that accept women as second class citizens, I think this will have a big impact on them. They'll go ahead and open it up to full membership, as they should.

MS. ERBE: Tell us how you got publicity for this, how did you start putting the pressure on Augusta National, and how did you involve corporations in that whole fight?

MS. BURK: Well, the publicity came because they went to the press. Augusta National said I had them at the point of a bayonet, and they released this very inflammatory press release, at which point I found out that my private letter to them was no longer private.

But in terms of the corporate CEOs, what we have learned is that the heads of some of America's largest corporations, who seek women's dollars in marketing, on the other hand, are members of private clubs, this one in particular, that bar those very same women. And an example I want to give you is Sanford Weill of Citigroup. They opened a division last year to market to women. They want women's dollars. And now we find out that their CEO is a member of a club that bars those very same women.

MS. ERBE: Well, why can't a CEO say, I'm in this club, it's an all-male club. I do business there, but I also want women to buy my products. What's wrong with that?

MS. BURK: They can, but there's a little hypocrisy there. You know, they put forth these values as corporate CEOs, we're for diversity, we are for inclusion. And those are the public values. And then, when you find that their private values don't quite match, it certainly does destroy their credibility in the public arena.

MS. ERBE: And, finally, what about all women's clubs. Do you support the idea of all women's clubs?

MS. BURK: It depends. You know, I've been asked this a lot of times about women's aerobics clubs. And what I say is, when they have the World Series of aerobics that attracts \$20 million in advertising, and a worldwide audience of billions, which the Augusta Masters Golf Tournament does, then I'll be on the barricades to open those clubs to men.

MS. ERBE: All right. Now what about the question, Irene Natividad, of women's clubs. If you're a women's rights advocate fighting for the end to all male private clubs, don't you also risk the possibility of having to shut down all women's clubs? And shouldn't women have a right to have their own clubs if they want to?

MS. NATIVIDAD: Sure. But I mean, you have to open it up to other people as well, if you want to maintain your nondiscriminatory policies. But I give the same answer as Martha Burk, you know, when

a woman's club becomes the seat of a very big international event that is seen by millions of people, then there is an onus on you as an institution to somehow show the fairness in society that is elsewhere. And I think this is something that she herself probably didn't realize would grow as big as it has, but as I said earlier, even I didn't know that that club was still closed to women. And I think those are things that are reminders to a lot of us who say, oh, we've been there, we've already arrived, that somehow there are still institutions that need to be changed. And many of those are institutions that are very familiar to us.

MS. BAKER: It's 2002, it's silly that they don't admit women into the club. And I suspect they will admit women to the club. But if I were there, I would not admit a woman to the club at gunpoint, and with a bayonet at my throat. I would not do it because I was being threatened. I would do it because I see someone as a potential member that would add value to the club, socially, and on a golf basis. But I'm not going to do it at gunpoint, and I don't blame them for not doing it that way.

MS. ERBE: But actually we talked about this before we taped the show, you're the only member on this panel who is a real golfer.

MS. BAKER: Right. And, you know what, I would be honored to be asked to join.

MS. ERBE: There's our first candidate.

MS. BAKER: Listen to me, I would be honored to be asked to join the Augusta club, but I don't want to be asked because they're being held at gunpoint. I want to be asked because of who I am, and how I play golf. I don't want to be asked for the wrong reasons.

MS. NATIVIDAD: Okay, but, Cissy, they would never have been in a position to even want to ask until this pressure happened. Change doesn't happen without pressure --

MS. BAKER: That's not true.

MS. NATIVIDAD: -- and that has been the historical pattern to date. Until this happened --

MS. BAKER: That's not true.

MS. NATIVIDAD: -- they don't care at all that women weren't there.

MS. BAKER: That's not true either. Hootie Johnson is a good man. He's done a lot for people who have been discriminated against. He's done a lot for Augusta. Let me just say one more thing, if the threats over this club eventually mean that the golf tournament, the Masters, is pulled out of there, let me tell you, it pulls \$110 million out of that town, and a lot of that town has women and businesses. Now, how do you think those women feel about this controversy?

MS. CZARNECKI: I kind of am between the two of you. I almost would say, this is much ado about nothing. I'm all for private clubs having their membership. The only thing that really changes it is, you've got the highest rated golf tournament in the nation being on that show, and it does set an example, and it does set a standard. I think they ought to accept women. I don't know what the big deal is in today's day and age. However, I'm not going to tell the Boy Scouts they have to have a woman unless, you know --

MS. ERBE: Karen, I'm where you are. I agree, I think people -- if it's a truly private club. But what about this, I mean, the member, the board of trustees were all like the CEOs of major corporations, and what really goes on there is not so much the playing of golf, but the making of careers, and so if women are excluded from that, how fair is it? I mean, I can see --

MS. BAKER: Are you saying that a golf club is the only place that women can advance their careers with other CEOs?

MS. ERBE: No. I'm just saying what do you -- I'm not saying anything. I'm saying, I can't come

out firmly on either side of this issue because I see both sides, but what do you think about the fact that -- what if you are one of those women business owners who wants to get to meet, like all the men in the towns do, the CEO of IBM, or whoever is on the board?

MS. BAKER: I have played golf multiple times at a club that still does not admit women. I think the policy is wrong. But it enables me to meet a lot of people.

MS. NATIVIDAD: There you go, Cissy, that's precisely the reason why women should be allowed to be members of such clubs.

MS. BAKER: The point is, I do play golf there.

MS. ERBE: So, you think it's okay because they let you in?

MS. BAKER: I don't think the policy of not admitting women as members is okay. But what I'm saying is, women are not prevented from meeting these CEOs anywhere.

MS. ERBE: I want to get Karen in here.

MS. CZARNECKI: Well --

MS. ERBE: Let me rephrase that.

MS. DeWITT: Phrases like, you know, people are going to do good stuff because, you know, they're going to figure it out, there would be no discrimination laws on the books now because people made a fuss of it. Not everybody made a fuss about it, but there has to be somebody --

MS. BAKER: And that's a good thing.

MS. DeWITT: But there has to be somebody who does this. So, I don't have a problem with her doing this. I don't even have a problem with -- I don't care about --

MS. CZARNECKI: Are you going to join her? Are you going to join her in the fight?

MS. DeWITT: No, because I have other priorities. There are other things that I'm interested in. But, I think it's fine for her to drill down on this. This is her particular fight, and I'm sure there are a lot of women who would agree with her.

MS. NATIVIDAD: This is not her particular fight. It is the fight of a council that has 160-member organizations, including American Association of University Women, Business Professional Women --

MS. DeWITT: Irene, it's the organization's fight. What I'm saying is, this particular organization's fight. When I say her fight, she's a member of this, what is her exact title?

MS. ERBE: She's the Chairman of the National Council of Women's Organizations.

MS. DeWITT: And that's the particular thing that they want to do. Maybe next year they want to do children's issues, I don't know.

MS. BAKER: You read about women who are being persecuted and raped in Afghanistan --

MS. ERBE: Wait, let her finish.

MS. BAKER: Does this council direct a lot of their energy there, or are they just worried about women getting into a golf club?

MS. NATIVIDAD: Cissy, I will speak as somebody who is a member of that council. Yes, their work continues not only on women in Afghanistan, but on domestic abuse issues in this country, and this happens to be the high profile case that the press picked up.

MS. ERBE: Okay. Now, I have to launch my own war, which is to reign you guys in because we've got to go to credits. That's it for this edition of To The Contrary.

Next week, childcare for impoverished or homeless families, we take you to a San Francisco Childcare Center in one of that city's poorest neighborhoods.

Whether your views are in agreement or to the contrary, please join us next time. And we want to hear from you, please write to us at tothecontrary@pbs.org, or visit our PBS Online web site at PBS.org.

(End of program.)