



GREENBERG MILLENNIAL PROJECT

FOCUS GROUP #8
HISPANIC, MIXED GENDER
DENVER, CO
DECEMBER 5, 2007

MODERATOR: INTRODUCTION AND INSTRUCTIONS.

My name is Anthony. I live in Aurora and I work downtown.

I'm Ernest. I am North Denver's best plumber.

Ricardo and I work in a bar.

My name is Marie. I work in the tech center.

I'm Udera and I'm a student.

I'm Christina and I stay at home right now with my 3 daughters.

My name is Mike and I'm a student.

My name is (inaudible) and I'm a (inaudible) assistant.

My name is [Lavalina] and I'm a (inaudible).

My name is Manual and I'm from Denver, work at the Denver Chamber of Commerce.

GREAT. WELL, WELCOME ALL OF YOU. WE THOUGHT WE WOULD STAY BY HAVING YOU THINK ABOUT YOUR GENERATION. ALL OF YOU HERE ARE UNDER THE AGE OF 29. WE OFTEN TALK ABOUT AMERICAN HISTORY IN TERMS OF GENERATIONS. THE BABY BOOMERS, THE GREATEST GENERATION WHO FOUGHT IN WWII, GENERATION X AND WHAT NOT. DO YOU THINK THAT YOU HAVE A GENERATION? WHAT IS IT THAT WOULD DEFINE YOUR GENERATION IN THE WAYS THAT WE THOUGHT ABOUT THOSE OTHER GENERATIONS IN THE PAST? WHAT SETS YOU APART FROM THOSE WHO CAME BEFORE YOU?

The technology.

Yeah, technology.

That's probably about it.

SO TECHNOLOGY IN TERMS OF WHAT EXACTLY?

Computers, games, movies, music. Pretty much all the way around.

HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOU GUYS DIFFERENT? HOW HAS THAT AFFECTED YOU?

We're really dependent on it.

We're really dependent on it and we're always available. We can always be reached.

MODERATOR – IS THAT A GOOD THING OR A BAD THING?

I'd say both.

MODERATOR – HOW DOES THAT MAKE YOUR LIFE DIFFERENT THAN SOMEONE WHO WAS YOUR AGE WITHOUT A CELL PHONE?

It's a lot easier to get in trouble. A lot easier to get into stuff nowadays. It's a lot easier for people to get into stuff that they don't need to get into.

MODERATOR – LIKE?

Like students. She's dabbling in suicide, all kinds of stuff that she shouldn't be going into. But she can access it from online. Back in the days, it would take other stuff to trigger that. Now it's just easy access.

MODERATOR – SO TOO MUCH INFORMATION?

Exactly.

I like being able to get all the information. I think it could backfire. But the more information you get, the more you get to learn. With the internet, you go online and you can talk to somebody halfway across the world and learn about their culture a lot easier than just reading a book.

MODERATOR – DO YOU THINK THAT PEOPLE YOUR AGE ARE MORE KNOWLEDGABLE THAN SAY A PERSON YOUR AGE IN THE 1940'S OR THE 1930'S BECAUSE OF THAT?

I think they're more world-wise. Maybe not in common sense.

(Laughter.)

MODERATOR – ANYBODY ELSE?

We definitely, since the Internet came around, I was a teenager when it came around. You're able to start talking to people across the country without knowing who they were. So you can kind of create different personalities vs. like in our grandparents' day, you knew everybody on your block. Now you may not know everybody on your block, but you know somebody in a different state because of the internet. So I think that the information age has helped out with research and everything. But maybe it's developing our generation, it's helped us out.

MODERATOR – DEVELOPING IN TERMS OF. . . ?

Well, my parents were raised with good morals and everything. But I think now we have a bigger pool to feed us as far as we know more stuff so we can dabble in more stuff. Things like we probably shouldn't, like pornography. Something that has effected children more than it had before you had to actually go in and try and find a way to maybe get a magazine or something. It's so easy for kids to get into that. I don't think that's necessarily a good thing.

There's not much imagination anymore. Back in the days, you'd have to put a lot of imagination into what you were thinking about. Now there's no imagination, is there?

My kids still play with boxes. Take the toy out and play with the box.

MODERATOR – SO YOU THINK THAT'S NOT. . .

I understand the age you're talking about, the younger age. . .

Right.

. . . reading papers or whatever. I'm talking a little bit older age, our generation.

The access to so much more information, made us more violent, too.

MODERATOR – IN TERMS OF. . . ?

Again, the internet, there's so many sites that are just dedicated to violence, you know the movies and pornography. It's just really accepted now.

We've desensitized our (inaudible).

Yeah.

MODERATOR – HOW ABOUT THIS SIDE OF THE TABLE?

I don't know. I don't got the internet yet. I know that my kids want it really bad. With their school it would be helpful. If I ever wanted to go back to school, it would be helpful to be able to stay home and do it.

MODERATOR – IS THERE SOMETHING OTHER THAN TECHNOLOGY THAT DEFINES YOUR GENERATION?

I think it's the type of intergenerational, in some respects, lazy and becoming a generation seeking instant gratification, whether it's the internet or like cell phones. Are they a tracking device or a means of communication? Whatever their business, it's instant gratification either way around. That defines our generation. I wouldn't even call it knowledge because most of the stuff on the internet is just crap.

MODERATOR – HOW DO YOU SEE APPLYING OUTSIDE OF WHAT YOU INSTANTLY WANT, TO BE ABLE TO BUY THE THING, GET THE INFORMATION? BUT BEYOND THAT, DO YOU SEE IT AFFECTING . . . ?

Our parents never grew up with Visas. This whole, who cares about cash anymore? Or checks? What are checks? You know what I mean. We've got plastic in some way or the other, whether it's credit or a debit. I think it's the whole instant gratification that we're seeking for, longing to.

I think our generation knows a little too much, like driving wise, we have more kids driving than 15 years. You have 16 years olds having babies. They're doing a lot more than generations used to do. My mom is 22 years older than me as opposed to some kids whose moms are 14, 15 years older than them. Babies having babies.

MODERATOR – IS THAT MORE OF AN ISSUE NOW?

Yeah, it is. You see it more now.

I think one of the key points in our generation is that there's been no defining moment. I think other generations had like whether it was WWI and WWII, or the Baby Boomers and Vietnam. I think the fact that we haven't had any real defining moment. The only two things that I can see really defining our generation are that we're post-9/11 and that we're going to be the generation taking care of the Baby Boomers.

MODERATOR – YOU DON'T THINK 9/11 WAS A DEFINING MOMENT?

I think it was a defining moment. But then it was quickly divisive. It wasn't like WWII where the country was unified and we had a mission in mind and everybody was in pretty general agreement with it. I think the year after 9/11 was unifying and decisive, but what's happened since then has been more divisive than anything else.

Yeah, I think it was less of a defining moment because it was so controversial and so much going on all around it that it took away from the actual event.

MODERATOR – WHEN DID IT BECOME CONTROVERSIAL?

I think after everybody realized that war wasn't based on what we were told it was.

It was kind of from the get-go, it was that away. They tried to hide everything. We never knew from the beginning what was really going on. All of us were divided from the beginning.

(Inaudible).

MODERATOR – CAN SOMETHING BE A DEFINING EVENT THAT PEOPLE HAVE DIFFERENT RESPONSES TO?

Yes and no. But we would all be different, just like we are all different with the way we said. He said something different. She said something different.

I think it was like a real major event. It was really memorable. But I just think that the things that surrounded it took away from it.

It sort of shows that we're pretty diverse in our culture still. As soon as 9/11 happened, there was a lot of hate towards Muslims. But that's obviously calmed down because you don't hear about it as much. So we're pretty diverse and it shows by the fact that we still allow the protests. There are still protests going on at armed forces funerals. They are still going on and there haven't been laws or anything passed against those. Although we're split, we're still keeping certain morals in some areas.

The technology again. Like with Vietnam and things that happened in the past. Americans didn't really have access to the kinds of behind the scenes information as to where 9/11 (inaudible).

We're on the front lines, watching on the news.

MODERATOR – WHAT ABOUT IRAQ?

That's another situation.

Yeah.

We've had a lot of stuff, especially being our age. Iraq has been another storm. The war with Bin Laden, Saddam. The President. We've had a lot of stuff going on in our generation and we can't just pinpoint that to be a big thing because there's been so much.

And it's all connected.

Exactly. It's all one, it's pretty much the same group of people.

MODERATOR – ON WHICH SIDE?

On both sides. Overseas and here. The Presidency. We can't exactly pinpoint it because we get lies all the time. We don't get the truth.

MODERATOR – DID OTHER GENERATIONS GET THE TRUTH?

No. Definitely.

I think that the most interesting thing with technology and the war has been the fact that we have been so able to ignore it despite all the technology and all the information. I think the first year, we were on the front lines and then somehow managed to start ignoring it. You never see how many soldiers died today or caskets being rolled, which with Vietnam, you saw people being shot on TV and all the caskets rolling in. Somehow we have not used the technology to really keep ourselves informed and keep ourselves part of the war. We've managed to ignore it really for the last few years. I think for other generations, wars have been a unifying thing. But I think that's not been the case for our generation for whatever reason.

Probably because of all the different rumors and hearsay and lies. It makes you just not want to take it as seriously as you probably should because it is an actual war. But. . .

Plus in WWII, weren't we like in a depression when WWII came about? So everybody was sort of downtrodden. When we were starting to go to war, they were able to get more people to fight. Where now, 9/11 happened and we watched it on TV, read about it on the internet. Everybody was ready to go up in arms. And then a year later, we waited out. The President says he's going to do something and then we go to Afghanistan. Then people want answers. But I don't have anybody, I don't know anybody who's in Iraq, fighting. So I don't really have that connection. There may be people in the room that do and you may have that connection. So for me, it's not like I don't think about it because I know it still affects us. But I'm leery of any information that comes my way be it from this administration or the administration's opponents. People saying we should have done this or that better. When we were attacked in Pearl Harbor, we bombed Japan. We retaliated. Two big towers in one of our greatest cities go down and we're chasing after one guy and it seemed like everyone was accepting with Afghanistan. But we go to Iraq, people kind of stigmatized that with the previous Bush Administration and his going to Iraq. Everything comes in your mind and you don't know what's right and what's wrong. Our generation sees that and so I think there's a lot of distrust there.

MODERATOR – SO IT SEEMS LIKE SOME OF YOU HAVE A DISTRUST OF INFORMATION AND NEED SOME (INAUDIBLE) HAVE COME UP. SO DO YOU THINK THERE ARE OTHER SETS OF VALUES AND MOTIVATIONS THAT DEFINE YOUR GENERATION?

For me, I want to get back to good values. Loving your neighbor. People live on the same block and probably never talked to their neighbor. I think doing that. Just going back to treating people with respect. Being able to shake somebody's hand in agreement and hold that agreement. But now since lawyers and everybody got involved in lawsuits and everything, it seems like our generation has seen lawsuits that you probably never would have seen. One that I remember is

the first McDonald's incident where the lady got burned. I want to get back to where there's trust and . . .

Accountability.

That's the main thing. People need to be held accountable for their own actions.

There are things where you need to stand up and say, that was all me. Whether it was how you were raised or whether it's just the way you want to be, it's up to you to say that was me, and not say, it was that guy and he talked me into it.

Exactly.

I think that comes down to principle there.

MODERATOR – YOU THINK THAT'S UNIQUE TO YOUR GENERATION? DO YOU THINK THAT'S CHANGED?

Ah, yeah. Actually I don't think we're . . .

I think we're lack of.

Yeah, lack of. I think we're definitely moving away from holding our own selves accountable for the actions we do and stuff like that.

I would say that our generation is very individualistic and that goes back to the morals. Like you don't care about people on the street. You're just about yourself.

MODERATOR – WOULD THAT BE HOW YOU WOULD DESCRIBE OTHER PEOPLE OR HOW YOU WOULD DESCRIBE YOURSELF?

Both I guess. I'm trying to better myself in school and get ahead.

Nobody wants to be down on the bottom. Everybody wants to be up on the top.

MODERATOR – DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR GENERATION IS FOCUSED MORE ON PERSONAL GOALS OR ON SORT OF THE GREATER GOOD?

Personal.

Professional.

MODERATOR – MORE SO THAN OTHER GENERATIONS?

A lot more. Like he was saying, that's the way of life. Everything is now or you find a way to get it.

MODERATOR – SO WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT THE GREATER GOOD, HOW DO YOU THINK IT'S DIFFERENT THAN NOW?

Because we're not worried else at the table. I'm worried about myself. I'm sure everybody is great people here, but I want to make my check. You know what I mean? That's the bottom line.

We're very compartmentalized. Our era has seen a lot of communities that are fenced in as opposed to. . .

MODERATOR – YOU MEAN GATED?

Gated. As opposed to the 50's and 60's. We surround ourselves with homeowners associations and things like that. You're in or you're out. That's all driven by this individualistic idea.

MODERATOR – SO IN THE 80'S AND 90'S, THEY GENERALLY TALKED ABOUT YOUNG PEOPLE AS THE "ME GENERATION". DO YOU THINK THAT YOU GUYS ARE STILL THE "ME GENERATION" OR MORE OF A (Inaudible) GENERATION?

I think we're definitely a "me generation".

Yeah.

MODERATOR – EVEN MORE SO THAN BEFORE?

Right.

Yeah. I think so because it used to be about family. My mom and my dad, they started a family and they were great. I don't want kids.

That's what I say.

I don't want kids for selfish reasons, because I don't think I could get for the kid just because of the way I live. I'm not sure that I'd be able to change for that kid. So that's mostly just me protecting myself.

I still care about my family. Bigger house one day. My family's had the same 4 houses since I've been born. So we've always been in the same 4 houses on the same block. So I know my neighbors. It's my grandmother right across the street.

I can see both points of view because I'm really close with my family. But as far as kids go, yeah, no. But because I don't have money for them. I don't want to give up my lifestyle. The

world, the green house effect, everything's that going on. My family is the most important to me, but that's going to be it.

Is that because of your culture or your society?

Society.

Every time you talk about having family and kids, is your idea of kids just because of the social concern or is it your culture?

When I was growing up, we got together, aunties, uncles, everybody got together at Christmas. Now it's changing so much. I love my family to death, but then again, there goes me thinking of myself. We set ourselves apart from everyone else, not meaning to or realizing it, but we're doing it. It happens. You don't see families doing things like they used to.

MODERATOR – IS YOUR FAMILY STILL DOING IT LIKE THEY USED TO?

We're getting back into it. We're getting slowly back to having birthday parties and having things like that. These days we just don't do the whole big family thing anymore.

I think society's changed, culture, mine. Because I was the same way. I had the huge family. We were always together. Then like society, this time you don't show up because they're broke and they didn't come. They don't want this cousin there because they're on drugs and they steal. This one didn't come because they're in jail. Things like that.

And with technology. People have better things, and some people don't. it makes an awkward situation for both people.

MODERATOR – SO IT'S EASIER NOT TO GET TOGETHER.

Yeah.

I think there are a lot more single parents, too, in this generation. That causes people not to get together, as well. Maybe being ashamed or whatever the reason.

MODERATOR – SO WHEN YOU THINK ABOUT SOME GREATER GOOD, YOU THINK OF FAMILY, COMMUNITY, THAT KIND OF THING? OR WHAT ELSE COMES TO MIND? WHAT VALUES DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR GENERATION HOLDS?

Slim to none. When I think of the greater good, I think of neighborhood community. Now honestly, yeah, I'm not going to help the old lady up the street. I need to help my mom. I have a mom to help. Which is not hateful, but it's true.

MODERATOR – WHAT ELSE DO YOU VALUE?

The family.

Yeah, the family. I value my family but which is kind of sad because there's an old lady up the street who needs help.

I can remember having friends on the block and you would run from house to house. You don't see that anymore. You don't just send the kids outside. Oh, you can go a couple of houses down and play with that kid over there. It's not like that. I think it's just building bigger houses. Everyone's just to themselves in that house. You don't see, I never see my neighbors.

I think we're a generation that values money.

MODERATOR – JUST FROM A PURE CASH STANDPOINT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

Materialistic.

MODERATOR – SO IN TERMS OF SHOWING, HAVING OR BOTH?

Showing.

Pretty much a lot of showing. It's a lot about show matters. It really is. Clothing.

Cars, jewelry.

Jobs. We've got to out show the other person.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER VALUES OR BELIEFS?

That's bad that we can't find values or beliefs in our generation.

I can think of one. It's post-60's. I think one of the things that we've gained is tolerance. I think we've all grown up after the Civil Liberties and the women's rights movement. So I think we're more tolerant regardless of culture or sexual orientation. It might not be based on really love of one another. Maybe it's more, you leave me alone and I'll leave you alone. But I think that's one thing.

Yeah, I agree. I think it may be forced, but it is (Inaudible).

That's goes all the way around, too. Not just ethnicity. But with people's beliefs, religion. That goes a lot of way around.

MODERATOR – SPEAKING OF BELIEFS, LET'S TALK A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOUR POLITICAL VIEWS. WHEN PEOPLE TALK ABOUT IDEOLOGY, THEY TALK ABOUT LIBERALS OVER HERE ON THE LEFT OF THIS SCALE AND YOU'VE GOT

CONSERVATIVES OVER HERE ON THE RIGHT, KIND OF MIDDLE-OF-THE-ROAD, RIGHT? WHERE DO YOU THINK YOUR GENERATION IS?

Towards the left.

Liberal.

MODERATOR – LIKE WAY OVER HERE LIBERAL OR KIND OF IN THE MIDDLE?

Closer to the middle.

I'd say a little more liberal.

There you go.

Halfway between the center and liberal.

MODERATOR – WHERE WOULD YOU PUT YOURSELVES?

Pretty much in between the middle and the middle. Right there where you marked it.

MODERATOR – SOMEWHERE OVER HERE?

Yeah.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – DO YOU THINK THIS SCALE STILL FITS? WHEN YOU HEAR PEOPLE TALK ABOUT THESE TWO POLES, DO YOU THINK IT STILL APPLIES TO YOU GUYS?

Definitely.

MODERATOR – YEAH?

Yes.

MODERATOR – HOW DOES IT APPLY?

Walking around campus, it definitely applies. I go to U of C Boulder and it's still ranked as one of the 5 whitest in the nation. Me, being a POC, a person of color, it's definitely a culture shock. So you definitely that a lot. You definitely see who's going to be a liberal, a conservative, just how they behave themselves, and also how they are in the classroom and how I respond.

MODERATOR – CAN YOU GIVE ME AN EXAMPLE? HOW WOULD YOU GUYS KNOW SOMEONE IS CONSERVATIVE?

Probably their intolerance of other people because they won't accept the change in the big things. Just holding on to the idea that it's just not allowed. It's wrong.

MODERATOR – THERE'S NO GRAY.

Right. It's black and white.

MODERATOR – YOU THINK THAT'S TRUE OF PEOPLE IN YOUR GENERATION?

As a generation? No. I think as society, yeah. The other thing is that you have to think about, too, is as a generation, we are still influenced, I don't want to say, heavily, but influenced by the (inaudible). This other generation who clearly are conservative.

It's not just our generation that are part of that.

Right.

MODERATOR – SO IT SEEMS LIKE YOU'RE SAYING THAT THEIR CONSERVATISM HAS INFUSED YOUR GENERATION WITH CONSERVATISM. AND YOU'RE SAYING THAT THEIR CONSERVATISM, YOU'VE REJECTED.

Yeah, that's how I feel. Because they try to push it so much upon us. I know my parents, they felt one way or they felt the other and they wanted me to feel that way, too. That pushed me to go and seek the other ways that there is.

MODERATOR – SO YOU'RE SORT OF DEFINING CONSERVATISM AS INTOLERANCE. HOW WOULD YOU DEFINE IT?

They're not bendable. They're firm. There's no other way around it. It's their way or no other way. So I don't know how you would say that.

Inflexible.

Inflexible, intolerant.

I think about people who are very flexible, who have very rich, liberal ideas and thoughts. Then when it came down to voting for our President, for Bush, the only thing that they saw was that he was for the family and anti-gay. So they voted for him for that reason alone. So they're very firm in that way.

MODERATOR – SO SORT OF A SOCIAL AND MORAL STUFF IS WHAT DEFINES IT FOR YOU?

Yeah.

MODERATOR – ANYONE ELSE?

I'm conservative. On that scale, you could probably put me pretty close to the right. But my conservatism isn't pressured by society or culture. But it's really the thing makes me conservative is my belief in God. My belief that the Bible is absolutely true and that the morals that are displayed in the Bible and the instruction that it's infallible, that's what I think is advice out of that. And people would say that I'm very conservative. About tolerance, though. I guess it's sexual orientation is a big, big thing. Talking about civil rights, they've separated people because of the color of their skin or from their language. They've discriminated because they were different in that way. Gays and lesbians have piggybacked on that thought that now we're being excluded because we're homosexual. When I think that there are scientific studies and people say that they are born that way. But when you're born, you wink at me, I'm a different color than you. I speak differently than you because that's who I am. You can't just, you know. I think we've come a long way there. But now with sexual orientation with me, that's something I would never accept. Do I go and bash the gays? Of course not. So I guess I'm tolerant there. I'm not going to go and burn down their houses or anything like that. Being that I said that, you'd probably call me ultraconservative.

ANOTHER TERM THAT PEOPLE ARE USING ABOUT YOUR GENERATION IS PROGRESSIVE. SOMEONE WHO IS BEING PROGRESSIVE. DO YOU THINK THAT'S AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION?

I hear more of the liberals saying, I'm progressive.

MODERATOR – DOES THAT SOUND DIFFERENT FROM LIBERAL OR ABOUT THE SAME?

I think they've been bundling in the same. When someone says that they're progressive, to me, they're telling me that they're liberal when in fact, I feel I'm progressive. I'm not liberal.

I think it's being used as a substitution for liberal because liberal is being made into a dirty word in the last few presidential elections. Liberal means amoral in the last few elections. Try to get around that.

MODERATOR – DO YOU THINK IT APPLIES MORE OR LESS TO YOUR GENERATION OR DO YOU THINK IT'S JUST ANOTHER WORD FOR THE SAME THING?

I think it applied more to our generation. I think judgment is changing. But I do think that our generation is more progressive and that the range has been I think that comes down to principle there.

MODERATOR – YOU THINK THAT’S UNIQUE TO YOUR GENERATION? ANOTHER TERM THAT PEOPLE ARE USING ABOUT YOUR GENERATION IS PROGRESSIVE. SOMEONE WHO IS BEING PROGRESSIVE. DO YOU THINK THAT’S AN ACCURATE DESCRIPTION?

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MODERATOR – DO YOU THINK IT APPLIES MORE OR LESS TO YOUR GENERATION OR DO YOU THINK IT’S JUST ANOTHER WORD FOR THE SAME THING?

I think it applied more to our generation. I think judgment is changing. But I do think that our generation is more progressive and that the range has been narrowed. That the extremes of right and left are much less common now than they were. I think that the older generation in their 80’s and 90’s now, when they are gone, really the far, far right is going to be gone. I think that maybe the generation that our parents are from, for example, sometimes in order to counteract that conservatism of their parents, they went far, far left. And that’s something that our generation is less likely to do. We’re more (inaudible).

MODERATOR – YOU GUYS AGREE ABOUT THE EXTREMES?

I think that we’re progressive in a sense. I think that we’re partially progressive. As a society, I think when you start taking about certain morals, then you stop being progressive and you start going in the opposite direction.

MODERATOR – SO AN EVOLUTION?

Yeah, something like that.

MODERATOR – OKAY. DO YOU THINK THAT THERE IS A WORD THAT’S BETTER? OR DO YOU THINK THE GOOD OLD LIBERAL. . .?

I like liberal, but I am a liberal, so. . .

MODERATOR – WOULD YOU DEFINE YOUR GENERATION AS PATRIOTIC?

No.

No.

No.

No.

I think yeah. I think I'm fairly patriotic. Everybody's always going to talk about whatever amendment is it, the free speech, they're always spouting off about that.

MODERATOR – BECAUSE THAT'S PATRIOTISM?

I believe so. They're willing to exercise their rights here rather than going to another country where they don't have those rights. So I think that that is part of being patriotic, is being allowed to exercise your rights, whether it's speaking out against the government or somebody's beliefs. I think you're still patriotic even if you disagree with what the government is doing.

I think we're confused. I know I have been. When 9/11 first happened, when it was the first year after that, it was gung ho American. People would join the army. Then about a year later, you know more information and things started to come out. We felt kind of betrayed. I know I did. It looked like confused as far as how I felt about being patriotic.

MODERATOR – WE'RE GOING TO SHIFT GEARS AND TALK ABOUT LEADERSHIP, OUR COUNTRY'S LEADERS. HOW WOULD YOU RATE OVERALL, THE LEADERSHIP IN OUR COUNTRY TODAY, MEANING POLITICAL LEADERS, RELIGIOUS LEADERS, CORPORATE LEADERS.

Rate them? What's the scale?

MODERATOR – LET'S SAY 1 TO 10 WITH 1 BEING AWFUL, 10 BEING FABULOUS.

About a 4 or 5.

MODERATOR – WHAT KIND OF LEADERS ARE YOU RATING?

Religious, political, pretty much the whole realm. They've all got their agenda to make money. Or make themselves look better or profit off it.

MODERATOR – EVEN RELIGIOUS?

Some of them. Or their sexual preferences.

A lot of preachers, yeah.

Tom Haggert.

(Inaudible) Jones.

I'd rate the religious leaders that are in public view like zero's.

MODERATOR – WHO DO YOU MEAN? ALL FAITHS?

You know all those guys that show up with ball players, I forget their names. The civil rights guys?

Oh, Sharpton.

MODERATOR – JESSE JACKSON.

And of course, the ones you all named.

MODERATOR – WHAT ABOUT THE POPE?

I'd rate him as a zero, too.

Yeah.

MODERATOR – SO HIM, TOO.

Right. And then the political leaders, probably below 5.

MODERATOR – SO THAT'S ZERO FOR THE RELIGIOUS. FIVE FOR THE POLITICAL. DOES ANYONE HAVE HIGHER THAN THAT?

Yes, I do. The President is my Commander in Chief. I joined the Marines. I'm pretty conservative from that point-of-view.

MODERATOR – SO WHAT WOULD YOU GIVE HIM?

Probably an 8. He's made some stupid decisions, but I think with all his advisors and everybody he's got around him. I would really hope that he's trying to make decisions that he things are for the best good of the country. They may not be now, but hindsight is 20/20. Whereas decisions made, you have to [take again].

MODERATOR – SO THOSE OF YOU IN THE 5 RANGE, WHAT DO YOU THINK THAT THE FAILURE IS? THEY'RE NOT DOING WHAT THEY SHOULD BE DOING? YOU WERE SORT OF TALKING ABOUT INCLUSIVENESS, I GUESS.

Inclusive with the religious.

MODERATOR – WHAT ABOUT FOR THE POLITICAL?

I like how we started our discussion tonight in terms of our technology. Not using the technology available to the best of their capabilities, i.e., Louisiana, the whole Hurricane Katrina thing.

MODERATOR – THEY SHOULD HAVE USED TECHNOLOGY TO HAVE THE RESPONSE BE. . .

Either way. Instead of putting money towards it, even public awareness, you just let it go. Also the whole original WMD argument. There were no WMD. Where are they now? Of course, I think he was just cleaning up after Bush 41. it was a failed attempts. Whether it was Kuwait. Heck we even got involved with Reagan. With his Reaganomics. We're finally see the trickle-down, the full effects. We're not going to have Social Security. Medicare Part D, we're not going to see that either. We're finally seeing all the trickle down of Reagan. I hate to use the term, conservative. Maybe the better term would be Republican plans. All these things are affecting the very echelon of society. Not us. I commend you being a Marine. That's awesome. I have a lot of high school buddies who made several trips out there. Numerous tours and have come back and given flags to other fallen Marines. I can't even imagine. I can't even fathom that. But to rate our President now with anything more than a 5, I can't do it.

MODERATOR – WE WERE TALKING EARLIER ABOUT THE PLACE THAT MORAL ISSUES PLAY IN OUR POLITICS. IT SEEMS LIKE YOU GUYS ARE SAYING THAT WE SHOULD BE MORE CONCERNED WITH ECONOMIC ISSUES, RATHER THAN BEING FOCUSED ON ISSUES LIKE GAY MARRIAGE, ABORTION. DO YOU THINK ISSUES LIKE THAT HAVE A PLACE IN POLITICS? THAT WE SHOULD BE TALKING ABOUT THAT IN A NATION?

No, that's the reason for separation of Church and state. I'm conservative, too, in terms of the Bible and my religious faith. But again, when you look at society, what are we constantly seeking for? When we work, we're not working for our own enjoyment. We're working for money because of our families. It's about money. Sad, but true, our society runs on money. There's a capitalistic gain to everything. So, yes, our government, our social system should have some economic standpoint. When we choose our President, we should look for that. The borders is one thing. Healthcare is another big issue. We're all going to age. We're all going to get sick.

I think moral issues play a part because it kind of forced its way into politics. . .

Yeah.

. . .with some Supreme Court decisions. I think if we can vote, we have to pay attention to that. Once you open the floodgates, like with abortion, the whole stem cell thing went away because there are other methods to get stem cells. But it's almost like where do you stop the line? Once you kill fetuses in the womb, where does that end? Does it end at that? Or as a society, as we form, will we turn to them when they're 8 months pregnant? When they're born, they can't even

see yet. So where does it end. As a voter, I want to snip it at the bud. If I have that voice to vote for a candidate who's against abortion, for me, that's my method of doing it.

MODERATOR – IF YOU THINK THAT OUR CURRENT LEADERSHIP IS FAILING US, WHERE DOES THAT LEAVE US?

Try again.

I think it leaves us with so much secrecy and lack of information. People are really confused where they stand.

MODERATOR – YOU KNOW THE OLD SAYING THAT IF YOU WANT SOMETHING DONE RIGHT, YOU'VE GOT TO DO IT YOURSELF. DO YOU THINK THAT YOUR GENERATION CAN TAKE A LEAD IN PROVIDING THAT LEADERSHIP? GETTING RID OF SECRECY? PROVIDING TRANSPARENCY, HONESTY?

I don't think so. Everyone's out for themselves. The whole war deal, I can't help but think it was for his own personal gain. They said it was to re-build Iraq. I don't understand why. Iraq was never one of our allies. If they can't re-build themselves, are they going to be able to stand on their own? There's so many issues. I don't want to admit it because I don't want to believe that it's true. But I can't help but think it was for his own personal gain. If the President is doing it, everyone else is going to be doing it, too. Everyone's out for themselves.

MODERATOR – DO YOU GUYS GIVE A DIFFERENT EXAMPLE?

I'd try.

MODERATOR – WHAT WOULD IT TAKE?

It would take morals.

I have to agree with him about separation of church and state. Although I did agree with some of Bush's morals, I didn't vote for him because of some of his politics. I think it's just going to come down to society as a whole and who the President is on. . .there's abortion as you were saying, or gay marriage, I think that needs to come down to society as a whole rather than the government.

I think they intertwine, although I would like them not to be, I think they have to. Just because you start with like abortion, whether they have the right to or not, that's not an issue. When they're just doing it, there are malpractice issues and things like that and the law gets involved eventually and the government is going to be involved. Gay marriages. There's going to be issues with, like what's their issue with them being able to share property and things like that. The law is going to have to get involved eventually.

MODERATOR – WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE IDEA, IF YOU WANT TO CHANGE, YOU HAVE TO CHANGE YOURSELVES? FOR MORE PEOPLE IN YOUR GENERATION TO TAKE PART, TO MAKE THOSE CHANGES?

We need to become honest. The thing with abortion, the malpractice suits. There are people who come up with wrongful lawsuits where it wasn't wrongful but they want to sue someone.

MODERATOR – SO BACK TO PERSONAL INTEGRITY?

Yes.

MODERATOR – WHAT ELSE?

We need to have a better set of principles.

MODERATOR – WHAT WOULD MAKE THAT HAPPEN?

I don't know.

I think necessity will make it happen. When people realize how ill-prepared we are for the future, and different areas of society start crumbling, like healthcare, Social Security, we are, I think, the most prepared generation. We're probably the most educated generation. I think what would really push us into the forefront is seeing that if we don't do it, there's going to be serious consequences.

MODERATOR – I'M GOING TO PASS AROUND THESE HANDOUTS. BELOW IS A LIST OF 10 ISSUES THAT WE FACE IN OUR COUNTRY TODAY. READ THROUGH THE LIST AND RANK ORDER THE TEN IN TERMS OF IMPORTANCE THAT THAT ISSUE HAS WITH YOU AND THE URGENCY WHICH YOU BELIEVE IT SHOULD BE ADDRESSED. ONE IS THE MORE IMPORTANT, 10 IS THE LEAST IMPORTANT.

[. . .END OF SIDE A/BEGINNING OF SIDE B. . .]

OKAY FOR NOW, TELL ME WHICH ONES WERE IN YOUR TOP 3. HOW MANY OF YOU HAD A IN YOUR TOP 3? THREE. HOW MANY HAD B? [NO COUNT HEARD.] C? [NO COUNT HEARD.] D? [NO COUNT HEARD.] E? SIX. F? [NO COUNT HEARD.] G? [NO COUNT HEARD.] H? [NO COUNT HEARD.] I? TWO. J? [NO COUNT HEARD.]

I had G as well, sorry.

MODERATOR – OKAY. SO BACIALLY WE'RE LOOKING AT B, C AND J. THOSE WERE THE BIGGIES. LET'S TALK ABOUT B. DECLINING QUALITY OF PUBLIC EDUCATION. TELL ME WHY. WHAT DO YOU THINK ARE THE GREATEST CHALLENGES ABOUT EDUCATION AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO YOU?

The ones that are out there pushing them too hard sometimes. That's a big problem. My little girl just doesn't, all day, they have 25 words and they're supposed to write all 25 words 5 times. She never gets it done. Every night she supposed to do the same thing over and over and over again. We're supposed to be checking them off if she gets them right. I worry that it's too stressful. My one daughter has learning disabilities and I think that they're not helping her with that either.

I think it's so important because these kids are going to be in the work force in 10 or 20 years. If they're not educated, the crime rate is going to go up.

Unemployment, too.

I think that the big issue on education is with government as well as society. We need to take responsibility to make sure that they're doing. . . a lot of parents are putting too much on the school system, as far as sex education and things like that. You need to teach values in your home. So that's really important. But it's not just for the government. It's for society.

I think it's really important that higher education is encouraged.

MODERATOR – NOT ENOUGH PEOPLE ARE GOING TO COLLEGE?

It's expensive.

(Inaudible) the government funding it.

There's a lot of things wrong with education.

I don't think that the teachers aren't getting paid enough. That's why they don't care because they don't have a good paycheck that they deserve.

Yeah.

Teachers have a tough job. And police, fire fighters and teachers have the most important jobs in society and they're paid the least.

I think it's one of the few areas of society that is still completely unequal. It makes a big difference whether you go to Northford or to Cherry Creek. This is an area where there should be absolutely no inequality. Everybody should be entitled to the same amount of education, not based on whether your dad is a lawyer or a construction worker.

They should be teaching a specific thing in each of the grades. Not go to one school and they learn something different and you go to another school and they learn something different. The students get lost.

I went to a private school K through 8th and then went to a DPS school. It was like two completely different worlds. In 10th grade I was doing earth sciences again, which I had done in

7th grade at the private school. And then 3 years later, I'm doing the same thing I did in 7th grade. Education needs to be equal. In private school, they teach you a lot more. The levels are higher than what the public schools are.

That's where I go back to where the teachers are being paid pretty good. In public schools, the teachers don't care because they're not getting paid as much.

Or they don't have the materials.

And it's only 15 kids in a class.

And it's double that in public schools.

MODERATOR – HOW DID WE GET HERE?

We're trying to limit a lot of spending. So we cut a lot of the funding and stuff like that. So it goes back to someone trying to make the dollar.

How much money did we spend on (inaudible) Field when it could have gone to a teacher's raise or something like that?

I stopped getting involved because I don't read everything, every week, that's before the election. We don't get involved ourselves.

That's why we've dropped the ball. We should get more involved, pay more attention to the bills that are being discussed.

MODERATOR – IS THAT THE SAME THING THAT HAPPENED? THE NEXT MORE IMPORTANT THING FOR YOU GUYS IS HEALTHCARE?

Exactly. That and we got a lot of illegal immigrants coming in and taking advantage of this system. A lot of them are taking what we should have.

MODERATOR – WHAT SHOULD WE HAVE?

Insurance and healthcare.

Everybody pays for Medicare out of your taxes. So everybody should be able to use Medicare if you need it. I have a daughter that's been really, really sick, and they cut my Medicaid off. I had no insurance and I had to take her to the ER. I've been reading a lot of what Hillary Clinton has been saying on the Medicaid thing. She's saying something about how if you don't have medical insurance, finding some way to punish people that don't. I would be voting for her except for that part right there. How could she, you know. They shut my Medicaid off. I didn't tell them to shut my Medicaid off. They just do it every 6 months when you have to go through everything

again. There's got to be an easier way that if I am paying for that Medicare, that I get it. That would take a lot of pressure off people. It would take pressure off me as far as that goes.

Can someone enlighten me on that?

She's proposing a national healthcare system, that it's governmentally mandated that you have health insurance of some sort. So you would be legally required to have some sort of health insurance. If you cannot afford it, you would be subsidized based on your income level. So they would pay for part of your health insurance. It means that pretty much everybody would be part of Medicare.

So they're offering an alternative.

It's not easy to get it. It takes 60-90 days.

Yeah, you go to the office and you're there from 9 till 2 or 3 o'clock. And you fill out the paperwork and then you don't hear back from them for 2 months. They need to get their system down on what they need to do. If you have to make an appointment and you have to turn your paperwork in, oh, they didn't get it. I just got my job and for me and my two kids, it's going to cost me \$450/month. That's ridiculous.

That aggravates me as a taxpayer. I pay Medicare tax and I have my own insurance and the people that need it, can't get it. That's just crazy.

MODERATOR – SO WHAT SHOULD IT? HOW DO WE FIX IT?

I think that we could use the money that we're putting on our taxes to pay for it because I know I've been working forever. There's quite a bit of money that I've paid in.

There should be an allowance that we should have and what goes out to everybody else. You know, a percentage that we keep for our Medicare, a percentage goes to the rest.

Things cost so much, like \$25 prescriptions for a little kid. \$10 for cough syrup and stuff like that.

The reason it costs so much is that those of us who are insured are covering for those who aren't insured, there's no way for them to be covered. I think the thing that needs to be done is to take care of the uninsured problem.

People who are covered by Medicaid. Medicare is for the elderly. Medicaid is more for our generation who can't afford insurance. But then again, if they have a job, if they have something in which they still have a zero co-pay, they don't have to pay for prescriptions or anything like that, which is sort of unfair in a way, also. Why should they benefit while everyone else is paying for them to go to the doctor's? We're trying to work, we work, we don't qualify for that. We have to be broke in order for the insurance to cover us. That's unfair.

You asked for a way to fix it. The chain stores are coming in with their own small little doctor offices, like in Wal-Mart where they check small sprains, little cold symptoms, stuff like that. I think that's going to help out a lot on the bigger hospitals and taking off the strain.

Like (inaudible)?

Exactly. It's the convenience of it, instead of having to go to a major hospital and clogging up the ER with small stuff like that.

There's also an issue of accountability. Do we have these priority systems in place, like Medicaid? We all contribute to it. But we tend to abuse it in the sense that we only use it in emergencies, and not in all cases. Whatever happened to going to the doctor for an annual checkup? We don't do that anymore. We put ourselves in unhealthy situations. We talk about child obesity as one of our big health issues. Or the whole diabetes situation. These weren't issues in the 50's and 60's because we're abusing ourselves. Our own natural resources, our own systems. Yeah, we are putting into it and we should get the same thing out of it, but then again, we're turning around and getting grossly obese or just not taking care of ourselves properly. We went from fast food being a luxury. You took families there once a week for one meal. It wasn't that they take them for one meal a day. That's kind of our mindset of our society, that we're abusing ourselves. I hate to put it that way, but (inaudible). You ask why is it so much to insure you and your kids. Because we put ourselves in such a high risk area. That's our society. That I think why I put the declining quality of (inaudible) raising America's public system, is that we're not teaching them. It's got to start somewhere, whether it's at the family table, which I believe that's where most of our moral issues should start with. Second is to the blackboard.

I think too much stuff is getting hurt. My youngest daughter is who I have problems with all the time. She's hearing all this stuff how it's not cool to be fat. She's not fat but she lost 10 pounds this year and her doctor is very concerned over it. I'm overweight, but I don't think it's necessarily out. I don't take my family to McDonald's. The only reason we ever go there is because of the kids. We prefer to stay at home. We think we cook better than any fast food place could. We try to show them the right way. But a lot of the TV and kids are hearing it and the kids are saying, you're fat, bubble-butt, and then all of a sudden one of your children is in the hospital because they lost 10 pounds and they won't eat.

Another high risk situation we put ourselves in is we're talking on a cell phone while we're driving cars? How about that? Or how many kids are drunk and driving? Maybe it's not McDonald's but the fact is that we're putting ourselves in high risk situations and it trickles all down.

I like what Mike was saying. He's saying you can't put a band-aid on what's going on. You have to nip it at the bud.

I never go to my checkups. And things could be detected earlier.

Yeah, preventative care, like pregnancy. How many pregnancies do we have where they haven't taken simple little things like prenatal vitamins? For every dollar that we spend on a quote unquote normal baby, we're spending 3 times more on the premature, on the one that the Mom wasn't either taking care of herself or didn't receive the proper information to take care of herself. That's in the first year alone.

MODERATOR – DO YOU SEE ANY PROGRESS BEING MADE IN EITHER HEALTHCARE OR...?

Yeah, I think that the Wal-Mart walk-in clinics is a step in the right direction because it is serving as a subsidiary service to those who can't afford it. But again, is it the treatment or the right answer, I can't say that. But it is a step in the right direction.

I think it will also be a better way because it will be more accessible to people. You go pick up the groceries, oh, I have a sore throat, I should have it checked out.

Before it gets worse.

Exactly.

I don't know. I'd never trust them because I've been to the (inaudible) a few times. I don't know, I'd only go there for shots.

MODERATOR – THOSE OF YOU WHO THINK THERE IS PROGRESS, WHERE DO YOU SEE THE LEADERSHIP COMING FROM? YOU SEEM TO BE SAYING CORPORATE... .

Yeah.

MODERATOR – LIKE WAL-MART.

I do see a lot of corporates trying to take over and trying to help out, but not much.

It needs to be put out there more. It's hard to them to...there are so many clinics out there.

Clinics don't post that they do discounted programs for people.

Some say that they won't let you go in debt over them. They let you owe them, they'll let you go. You can come in and do your work and they bill you later.

MODERATOR – TURN TO PAGE 2. WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT HEALTHCARE AND RAISING COSTS AND MORE INSURED AND INCREASED IN OBESITY LEADING TO CHRONIC DISEASES AND HOW TO SOLVE THESE PROBLEMS. IF YOU LOOK AT THIS STATEMENT ABOUT ADDRESSING THIS ISSUE, TELL ME HOW YOU RESPOND.

EACH NEW GENERATION IS SUFFERING AN EPIDEMIC OF CHRONIC (INAUDIBLE) DISEASES DUE TO POLLUTED ENVIRONEMNT, A LACK OF BASIC HEALTHCARE AND THE POISONS WE FEED THEM EVERY DAY. EVERY CHILD IN AMERICA, REGARDLESS OF RACE, CLASS OR INCOME SHOULD HAVE FULL HEALTH COVERAGE AND PROPER NUTRITION. PARENTS MUST BE TAUGHT THE IMPACT THAT PREVENTATIVE CARE AND PROPER NOURISHMENT WILL HAVE ON A CHILD. IF WE CONTINUE TO SPEND MORE AND MORE MONEY ON HEALTHCARE WITHOUT ADDRESSING THE CAUSES OF THIS CRISIS, WE WILL ONLY WEAKEN OUR ECONOMY AND CONDEMN MILLIONS MORE CHILDREN TO SUFFERING AND DISEASE.

SO WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I think it's true.

Nutrition, but also morals as far as drug use and things like that.

Not just for your kids, as friends, uncles and neighbors, just step up to the plate and say something.

MODERATOR – WHAT ELSE STANDS OUT TO YOU GUYS?

This is exactly what he was talking about earlier, stepping up to the plate in the beginning and then down the road. . .

The thing that stuck me was, every child in America regardless of race, class or income. Every child in America, I don't know how to put this, the illegal children, do we put them in there, too?

MODERATOR – THAT'S A GOOD QUESTION.

If no one's paying taxes in their family, sorry.

I understand what he's saying. I could see them falling in that category.

They're already in America.

Exactly.

Healthcare is a right. I don't think it matter whether you pay taxes or not. I'm not going to turn away a patient. I'm a medical student. You can't turn away people, especially preventable and basic healthcare needs regardless of whether they pay into the system or not.

MODERATOR – IF YOU GENERALLY AGREE THAT WE SHOULD THINK COLLECTIVELY ABOUT SOME OF THESE PROBLEMS,WHAT DO YOU THINK YOUR

GENERATION SPECIFICALLY CAN DO, OTHER THAN BEING SURE TO BE RESPONSIBLE AS UNCLES OR AUNTS, PARENTS?

Step up to the plate and bring your morals and principles down to our kids and our nephews and nieces.

Yeah, I think we talk about “we” and what can we. . .we is like us. You’re going to be a doctor, you know. We all work for companies. We’re part of a corporation. It’s not like one person. I think that’s about it. If there is a chance. .

MODERATOR – WHAT DO YOU THINK IS GOING TO MAKE PEOPLE REALIZE THAT? WE’RE BACK TO MAKING CHANGE YOURSELF.

I don’t know.

Me and my husband, we go out to Country Buffet or something. He wants to serve the kids junk on the plate. I want to serve them something that is good and healthy for them to eat. He’s like, why can’t they eat whatever they want? There’s a whole bunch of stuff here. I’m like, no. They need to eat what’s good for them before they have anything else.

We need to realize the problems when they’re happening.

MODERATOR – HOW WOULD YOU DO THAT?

Just talking, bringing it to their attention. Just having a simple conversation with somebody.

Word of mouth.

I’m usually happy if I can get my kids to eat anything at all.

MODERATOR – YOU WERE SAYING IT’S FAMILY OR PEOPLE TALKING TO EACH OTHER.

Yeah, it’s how you were raised or what your family’s eating habits were. To me, my kids’ snacks are oranges, apples and bananas, as opposed to some families who only buy them donuts or cookies or things like that. It all plays into what you were growing up with.

The only thing that we can do is talk to the people around us. That’s all that we can actually do.

I can make a change myself, but if someone doesn’t want to do it, they’re just not going to do it.

MODERATOR – TURNING TO ANOTHER SHEET, #3. I WANT TO TALK ABOUT OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL AND FOSSIL FUELS.

OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL AND FOSSIL FUELS IS THE GREATEST THREAT TO OUR NATIONAL SECURITY, OUR QUALITY OF LIFE, AND OUR ECONOMIC FUTURE. THAT'S WHY WE MUST LAUNCH A MASSIVE, CONCERTED NATIONAL EFFORT SIMILAR TO THE APOLLO PROGRAM THAT PUT A MAN ON THE MOON WITH THE GOAL OF MOVING AMERICA BEYOND FOSSIL FUELS AND INVENTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF ENERGY BASED ON NEW TECHNOLOGIES, SUCH AS HYDROGEN OR FUSION. THIS PLAN WOULD REQUIRE A HUGE NATIONAL INVESTMENT THAT WOULD PRODUCE MILLIONS OF NEW JOBS, DRAMATICALLY REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGE AND FREE US FROM OUR DEPENDENCE ON FOREIGN OIL THAT SUBSIDIZES REGIMES THAT SUPPORT THE TERRORISTS THAT ARE TARGETING US.

So where are we going sell all the oil that we're sitting on?

MODERATOR – THAT'S YOUR REACTION?

Yes.

MODERATOR – THAT IT'S GOING TO HURT US TO GET RID OF FOSSIL FUEL?

Well, we're sitting on the world's biggest supply of fossil fuels in the world. We're sitting on it, untapped, in the United States. It's a lot of money that we're sitting.

MODERATOR – WHAT WOULD BE THE ECONOMICS OF THIS IF WE WERE TO DO THIS?

I feel it could hurt us, sort of.

MODERATOR – ANY OTHER REACTIONS TO THIS?

I think if we're the forerunners then that benefits us economically.

MODERATOR – SO IF WE'RE THE INNOVATORS, WE COULD SELL IT TO OTHER PEOPLE.

Exactly.

Yeah, I agree with that.

But we're not the only ones out there trying to be the first ones.

We're talking about the Apollo program, something that's going to be massive. When America does something like that, we've been pretty successful.

When was that Apollo program? A couple of years ago?

A few years.

When was the last time we did something that big as a country?

So now would be a good time.

It's true.

I think the new hybrid vehicles are great for the environment. But I just can't help think that the oil shortage situation is really something bigger because we really don't have an oil shortage. It's just like the supply we're sitting on. We're not seeing the big picture.

It's found money.

Another thing is at the forefront of the environment, what are we going to do with all our gas guzzlers? Where are they going to go? Are they going to convert them over? There's a lot of questions there.

MODERATOR – WHERE DO OLD CARS GO TO DIE?

Yeah, where are they going to go?

Some of it can be recycled, but yeah, some of it just going to be waste.

A lot of it is.

MODERATOR – I HEAR YOU SAYING IT'S ABOUT MONEY. WHO'S MONEY?

The whole thing in general.

Dick Cheney's money. That's how I feel. I don't like to admit that. Because if we're the greatest nation in the world by far and I love it here. But I think it's pretty corrupt right now. I hate saying things like that, but that's what I think.

With the oil, gas prices keep going up.

MODERATOR – YOU WONDER WHERE ALL THAT MONEY IS GOING?

Yeah.

MODERATOR – I WONDER THAT, TOO.

Why do gas prices keep rising? Or why do they keep going up and down like they are? We're not seeing the whole picture.

There's no actual law to it. They do what they want. The people that make the oil, they make their own prices.

It's about competition.

MODERATOR – BUT IF WE WERE TO MOVE AWAY FROM FOSSIL FUEL, WOULD YOU JUST GET RID OF ALL THAT?

If we look at it again, we're talking inventing the next generation of energy. All of a sudden, when we think fossil fuels and we associate it with cars. But energy, we're always talking about warming homes and providing for this mass technology that we are so rich in abundance with. It's getting colder. Even just to produce energy. It's not just the cars. There's fuel for plants and factories. They give us our warmth. I think the bigger issue is this inventing this next generation of energy. In the 70's, it was solar. Now they have the solar panels. . .

That are actually working.

. . . actually working, exactly. I think we should invest in this. This is a win card. When we think fossil fuels, we think gas in a car. But I think fossil fuels play a bigger role in terms of natural energy that it takes to run a metropolis. To run a city. I think we need to look at it as much bigger and not just my car.

Right.

MODERATOR – DO YOU THINK THAT FROM YOUR GENERATION, DO YOU AGREE THAT THIS IS SOMETHING THAT YOU NEED TO GET INVOLVED IN?

Yeah.

No kidding.

Yes.

I do agree that we should do something like that. But there's a lot of ground that should be explored.

I say, yes, but not on this scale. It doesn't need to be a big huge, as big as the Apollo. It's just that. . .

MODERATOR – HOW DO PEOPLE WANT IT? IT DOESN'T MEAN THAT THE GAS GUZZLERS ARE GOING TO BE HAPPY.

That's the main thing that's slowing it down is a lot of big money out there doesn't want it.

MODERATOR – SO HOW DO PEOPLE LIKE YOU MAKE IT HAPPEN?

Stop buying gas.

Stop running the hot water. Turn off the lights. Sit in the dark.

Stay in the house in the dark.

I guess you can make more things use batteries. When you buy engine oil for your car, that's been the same price for the past 10 years. Why doesn't that go up?

Yeah, or how they use the increase in gas prices, the Hurricane Katrina was an excuse for the price going up. Then other times, prices go up and nothing happened. There's no explanation.

Just like with the Exxon energy stuff, they should look into the employees working for Exxon energy as wasting things because I know because my husband works for Exxon. He does the coal system and stuff. So much coal is wasted as opposed to trying to conserve it and use it for the energy. We need to take a closer look at what they're hiring or who they have working for them. It would help save us money.

When you say how can we make this happen, I think we need to pay more attention to who we're voting into office. . .

Yeah.

Right.

. . .and morals again. Because people talk about politicians like they're bred on some island. Politicians are us, you know. I have politicians in my family.

They're people.

Right.

MODERATOR – ACTUALLY I WANT TO TALK ABOUT LEADERSHIP SO THANK YOU FOR THAT TRANSITION. WE'VE BEEN TALKING ABOUT PROBLEMS AND A LITTLE BIT ON SOLUTIONS. BUT THE FACT OF THE MATTER IS THAT YOUR GENERATION MAKES UP THE LARGEST GENERATION IN THE UNITED STATES. GIVING THAT Y'ALL ARE YOUNG, YOU ARE GOING TO BE SUFFERING THE CONSEQUENCES FOR ALL OF THESE PROBLEMS, MORE SO THAN DICK CHENEY OR BUSH OR ANY OF THE BABY BOOMERS WHO MAY HAVE SET THE STAGE FOR WHAT'S GOING ON NOW. I'D LIKE TO TALK ABOUT WHAT ROLE YOU SEE YOUR GENERATION PLAYING IN THESE ISSUES. AND IF YOU THINK, WE'RE TALKING ABOUT POLITICIANS ARE JUST PEOPLE. SO DO YOU THINK THAT THE POLITICIANS FROM YOUR GENERATION WOULD LEAD IN A DIFFERENT WAY? OR IS IT POSSIBLE

THAT PEOPLE WHO HAVE HAD THE SAME EXPERIENCES AS YOU CAN BE DIFFERENT KINDS OF LEADERS? ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT DIFFERENT POLITICS MAYBE?

I think it depends on the person. If you have some man in office who has offers from lobbyists who want him to promote something he really does not believe in, is it going to come down to, does the money talk or not. So it's the moral issue as far as politicians go and the decisions that they're making. Because they know it's right or wrong when they do it. It's whether the price is right. . .

MODERATOR – ARE THERE OTHER PEOPLE THAT CREATE CHANGE? WE TALKED ABOUT THE CORPORATIONS. BIG BUSINESSES, SMALL BUSINESSES, CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS, CHURCHES, PERHAPS DIFFERENT RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATIONS.

We can make a change. We just have to be firm on it, such as shutting off the lights a couple hours a day. Not driving one day out of a week. Just have to make a stand and be firm with it.

MODERATOR – AND YOU THINK THAT THAT WILL TAKE ACTION?

Exactly. And that kid will pass it on. Other people will say, hey, that guy is trying. Maybe I should try.

Just like that whole big thing 2 months ago where everyone is like for one day, don't get gas. Everybody filled up their cars the day before and the day after, so it makes no sense because you're still giving them the money, just not that day.

MODERATOR – DO YOU GUYS SEE ANY ORGANIZATIONS DOING GOOD WORK OR DIFFERENT KINDS OF WORK, SHOWING THAT KIND OF LEADERSHIP? LIKE ON CAMPUS. . .

I think that they're out there, I just don't ever hear about them.

That's true. You don't hear about good work.

I see it on a daily basis. I think physicians, as a group, people that tend to think about the common good more on a daily basis because we have to. There's a bigger push for universal healthcare coverage. I have always thought that it's ironic that the group that tends to lose the most from a universal health program is the group advocating for it. That specifically meaning physicians. And then there's also a greater push for physician politicians and people running for public office to specifically address issues that they know about.

MODERATOR – SO YOU THINK THAT IF AN INDIVIDUAL PHYSICIAN WERE TO MAKE THAT DECISION, ABOUT INDIVIDUAL HEALTHCARE, IT COULD CHANGE THINGS?

I think so. I think it starts on a very small scale. But in an individual practice or if they decide to push programs through. I think change has to be built up in very small increments.

MODERATOR – HAVE ANY OF YOU DONE ANYTHING SPECIFICALLY TO INCUR CHANGE? YOU DIDN'T BUY GAS FOR ONE DAY?

I didn't pay attention actually.

I lucked out that day.

I got mine the night before.

I don't turn the lights on during the day just because I don't want to pay the cost. So I don't think it's going to be a significant change or anything.

I can't say that I have tried. But I have made some changes. We are doing a lot lower consumption of gas on our water heater and stuff like that. We're trying to reduce our consumption. We're using a lot more environmentally sound equipment.

MODERATOR – HOW ABOUT ON THE EDUCATION SIDE? HAVE YOU DONE ANYTHING SINCE THAT WAS ONE OF YOUR BIG ISSUES? TO MAKE EDUCATION BETTER.

I save the Campbell's labels for my niece.

MODERATOR – OKAY, THAT'S SOMETHING.

I want to be a teacher. But not ultimately be a teacher, but to get my foot in the door to work to make change.

MODERATOR – SPEAKING SPECIFICALLY ABOUT THAT KINDS OF THINGS THAT YOU GUYS HAVE DONE, SKIP #4 AND TURN TO #5. GO THROUGH THE LIST AND CHECK OFF WHICH OF THE THINGS YOU HAVE DONE, WHICH ARE THE THINGS YOU WOULD BE LIKELY TO DO, AND WHICH ONES THERE WOULD BE NO CHANCE?

HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE VOTED?

Can't vote.

MODERATOR – OKAY. SO MOST OF YOU GUYS. THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVEN'T, HOW MANY ARE LIKELY?

Can't vote.

MODERATOR – CAN'T. OKAY. WHAT ABOUT BLOGGING? HOW MANY OF YOU ARE LIKELY TO DO THAT? SO HOW COME?

I think if it gets to the point where I think my voice would be valuable, like for something that really motivates me, right now, I haven't felt the urge to blog. But I think I would on something that really struck a cord.

MODERATOR – LIKE AN ISSUE THAT YOU'RE REALLY PASSIONATE ABOUT.

I would agree with that. There's nothing that I'm really passionate about.

MODERATOR – CAN YOU IMAGINE WHAT KIND OF ISSUE THAT WOULD BE?

For me, there might be something on healthcare.

I would, plus I like to hear other people's points-of-view. Their opinions.

MODERATOR – SO YOU LIKE THE INTERACTING ASPECT OF THAT.

Yeah. And I have an opinion on everything.

MODERATOR – HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE SIGNED PETITIONS OR LETTERS? HOW MANY HAVE SIGNED? HOW MANY SENT LETTERS? ONE LETTER AND TEN SIGNERS. THOSE OF YOU WHO HAVE SIGNED, WHY DID YOU? WAS IT JUST SOMEBODY THAT PRESENTED IT TO YOU?

It was something that I was interested in.

MODERATOR – DID YOU SEEK IT OUT?

No. They presented it.

It was the same thing. It was presented to me.

MODERATOR – JUST OUT OF CURIOSITY, WHAT DID YOU WRITE THE LETTER ON?

I've written letters several times. Just a different times when it's been helpful to flood a politician's mailbox.

MODERATOR – ARE ANY OF YOU GUYS LIKELY TO DO THAT?

I'd be likely to sign a petition.

Probably not a letter. I don't write.

MODERATOR – WHAT ABOUT AN EMAIL?

No.

MODERATOR – THE REST OF YOU GUYS, NO? NO. HOW MANY HAVE ATTENDED A MEETING? WHAT MADE YOU ATTEND?

(Inaudible).

Community, local issue.

MODERATOR – HOW MANY OF YOU WOULD BE LIKELY TO ATTEND? YEAH? SO HOW COME? WHAT WOULD MAKE IT PREFERABLE TO GET YOU TO GO?

To stay informed.

MODERATOR – WHAT ABOUT WRITING ARTICLES, LIKE A LETTER TO THE EDITOR OR AN OP-ED PIECE? ANY OF YOU INTERESTED IN THAT? A COUPLE. WHAT WOULD MAKE IT INTERESTING FOR YOU?

Writing to the newspaper maybe (inaudible) because they stereotype a lot.

MODERATOR – WHO’S THEY?

The newspapers.

MODERATOR – SO IF YOU READ SOMETHING THAT STRUCK YOU AS INCORRECT OR MISREPRESENTING THAT YOU WOULD WANT TO CORRECT THAT PRESENTATION?

Yeah.

MODERATOR – WHAT ABOUT A PUBLIC PROTEST, DEMONSTRATIONS? NONE OF YOU GUYS? WHAT MOTIVATION WOULD MAKE YOU DO IT? WHAT WAS THE ISSUE?

Pot.

MODERATOR – WHAT ELSE?

Immigration.

Immigration issues.

MODERATOR – WHAT MADE YOU, WHY WAS THAT IMPORTANT ENOUGH?

Because I was tired of getting caught. Just kidding.

MODERATOR – WOULD ANY OF YOU BE LIKELY TO GO? WHAT WOULD MAKE YOU, WHAT KIND OF AN ISSUE WOULD MAKE YOU . . . ?

Racial stuff.

MODERATOR – THE RACIAL STUFF?

Yes. Or maybe police brutality.

MODERATOR – OKAY. HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE CHOSEN TO BUY OR NOT TO BUY SOMETHING BECAUSE OF THE POLITICS OF A COMPANY? HOW MANY OF YOU WOULD DO THAT?

I won't buy either for myself or as a present that Ax spray just because Ax is also. . . I think it's funny that their commercials are very sexually provocative. Yet they say that the company who makes Ax makes Dove who does the opposite.

MODERATOR – BUT DO YOU NOT BUY DOVE, TOO, OR JUST THAT?

Right. Because it's all the same company.

MODERATOR – HOW ABOUT VOLUNTEERING FOR LOCAL CAMPAIGNS?

(Inaudible).

MODERATOR – WHAT MAKES YOU. . . ?

I was real interested in the Musio de Las Americas. They had this thing for Ken Salazar. They took volunteers for that. So I volunteered for that because I supported him when he was running.

MODERATOR – SO ARE YOU LIKELY TO DO THAT NOW?

No.

MODERATOR – HOW COME NOT?

I don't know.

MODERATOR – WHAT IF THERE WAS A POLITICIAN THAT YOU REALLY, REALLY LIKED?

Oprah Winfrey.

I don't know. I guess I have my own opinions and this is the first time I've ever really expressed what I felt to the public, I guess and basically to myself. I don't really speak out what I feel to anyone really, I guess to my household.

MODERATOR – DO YOU FEEL DIFFERENTLY NOW THAT YOU'RE DONE THIS?

Honestly I do because now I can say now that I'd feel like a hypocrite going and saying on certain things, when before I never even put it to thought before this.

MODERATOR – ARE ANY OF YOU GUYS MEMBERS OF A POLITCO-SOCIAL GROUP THAT ENGAGES IN OTHER ACTIONS. . .

Just different groups on campus. Like racial issues.

MODERATOR – WOULD ANY OF YOU CONSIDER DOING THAT?

Yeah.

MODERATOR – JUST IF THEY HAD SOMETHING THAT YOU REALLY LIKED? WOULD IT BE THE ORGANIZATION THAT WOULD DRIVE YOU OR THE ISSUE?

I think the issue. . .

Issue.

Issue.

. . .I don't think that the organization would really sway me here or there. I think you have to be the issue.

MODERATOR – HAVE YOU EVER FOUNDED OTHER BUSINESS ORGANIZATIONS WITH POLITICAL OR SOCIAL OBJECTIVES? THAT'S PRETTY HIGH BAR. ANYONE EVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT?

A union?

MODERATOR – ANYTHING. IT COULD BE A UNION. IT COULD BE A NON-PROFIT. IF YOU REALLY CARED ABOUT HOUSING AND YOU DECIDED TO START A NON-PROFIT THAT TAKES CARE OF HOUSING. OR IF YOU REALLY CARED ABOUT. . .

I could see myself likely doing it, but. . .

I tried getting a union going at one of my jobs. They weren't really for it.

MODERATOR – HOW ABOUT RUNNING FOR POLITICAL OFFICE? THINK ABOUT IT MAYBE IN THE FUTURE AT SOME POINT?

I would do that. My ex-girlfriend just got on the school board. And that's something that I would like to do.

MODERATOR – THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T EVER, HOW COME?

I don't want them digging in my basket.

I was going to say that.

There are reasons I can't vote.

The responsibility of it.

Exactly. You have to know yourself well. If you have a family, you have to have time.

You're really got to be ready to be scrutinized.

Yeah. Because if it fails, everyone's looking at you.

MODERATOR – WE HAVE ONE LAST THING THAT I'M GOING TO ASK YOU TO DO...

(end of session)