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## 7 of 10 LGBT Americans Say U.S. Remains Far from Gender Equality

*90 Years After Enacting Women's Suffrage, LGBT Americans See Greater Evidence of Inequalities Still Facing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Women*

**New York, N.Y. — August 16, 2010** — In 1920, 144 years after the signing of the Declaration of Independence, women in the United States achieved the right to vote. Ninety years later, the issues of gender equality remain debated and unresolved.

Among all American adults, 63% agree that the U.S. still has a long way to go to reach complete gender equality. While three-quarters of women (74%) agree with this, so do just over half of men (52%). By comparison, when this question is posed to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) adults, 73% say the U.S. still has a long way to go, including 95% of lesbians (an especially notable finding when compared with 74% of heterosexual females.)

When querying whether things are fine between men and women, the nation is split – just over half of Americans (52%) disagree that things are fine between the genders while 43% say things are fine. But men and women have a different take on the situation with over half of men (55%) believing things are fine compared to just one-third (32%) of women who say the same.

However, when these overall findings are contrasted with the attitudes of lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender adults, the differences become even sharper. Only 22% of lesbians (and 32% of gay men) suggest that things are fine between genders, as well as only one-third or 34% of all LGBT adults sampled.

These are some of the results of **The Harris Poll** of 2,412 adults surveyed online between June 14 and 21, 2010 by **Harris Interactive** including 341 adults who self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender by Harris Interactive, a global market research and consulting firm, in conjunction with Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc., a strategic public relations and marketing communications firm with special expertise in the LGBT market. [Please note that this survey was designed to measure the general attitudes and beliefs of American adults about the changing roles of men and women in society – and not specifically about issues surrounding gender identity and expression nor about continued discrimination towards transgender Americans.]

Whether the issue of gender equality should be addressed is another question in these times with so many other pressing concerns. Three-quarters of U.S. adults (74%) agree that they do not think gender equality is perfect, but there are more pressing issues to fix first. And men and women are in agreement on this (74% of men agree as do 75% of women). A smaller majority (59%) of LGBT adults agrees that while gender equality is not perfect, there are other priorities requiring attention.

## Women and Work

Some of the discrepancies the still unratified Equal Rights Amendment was intended to correct were chronic inequities in the workplace among men and women. Seven in ten Americans (69%) say that women often do not receive the same pay as men for doing exactly the same job; which rises to nearly eight in ten (79%) LGBT Americans.

Three in five of all U.S. adults (62%) and 72% of LGBT adults agree that women are often discriminated against in being promoted for supervisory and executive jobs. Women are much more likely than men to agree with this but almost half of men also agree with both sentiments. Four in five women (80%) and 96% of lesbians agree that women often do not receive the same pay for the same job compared to 58% of men (71% of gay men). Three out of four women (yet 93% of lesbians) agree women are discriminated against in their promotions compared to 48% of all men (and 69% of gay men).

### For LGBT Americans, do these findings sound familiar?

In ninety years many things have changed for women in this country simply beginning with the right to vote. And some may argue things are better, but there is still the undercurrent that there are issues, especially when it comes to pay and employment, where things have not yet approached an equal footing with men.

Bob Witeck, CEO of Witeck-Combs Communications, which specializes in LGBT marketing and trends, notes that, “LGBT Americans, who most likely recognize the consequences of their own workplace and social inequities are especially sensitive to perceived discrimination in all forms. For gay Americans, these may be life lessons that mirror their own experiences – and demonstrate that the divide today between men and women remains as real as the evidence of unfair and unequal treatment still shown to women in public life.”

**TABLE 1  
GENDER EQUALITY TODAY**

“On another subject, August of this year will mark the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women receiving the right to vote in the United States. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about gender equality in the United States today?”

Base: All adults

	<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not at all sure
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I don't think that gender equality is perfect in the United States, but there are more important issues to fix first.	<b>74</b>	36	38	<b>21</b>	14	7	5
The U.S. still has a long way to go to reach complete gender equality.	<b>63</b>	30	34	<b>32</b>	21	11	5
Things are fine the way they are between men and women.	<b>43</b>	13	30	<b>52</b>	33	19	5

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 2**  
**GENDER EQUALITY TODAY**

“On another subject, August of this year will mark the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of women receiving the right to vote in the United States. How much do you agree or disagree with the following statements about gender equality in the United States today?”

*Percent saying “Strongly Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”*

Base: All adults

	Total	Gender		Sexual Orientation					
		Male	Female	LGBT	Gay	Lesbian	Hetero- sexual	Hetero- sexual Male	Hetero- sexual Female
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
I don't think that gender equality is perfect in the United States, but there are more important issues to fix first.	<b>74</b>	74	75	59	62	54	75	74	76
The U.S. still has a long way to go to reach complete gender equality.	<b>63</b>	52	74	73	75	95	63	51	74
Things are fine the way they are between men and women.	<b>43</b>	55	32	34	32	22	44	56	32

**TABLE 3  
WOMEN AND EQUAL TREATMENT**

“Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements”

Base: All adults

	<b>AGREE (NET)</b>	Strongly Agree	Somewhat Agree	<b>DISAGREE (NET)</b>	Somewhat Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Not at all sure
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Women today are treated with less chivalry than in the past	<b>81</b>	36	45	<b>10</b>	7	3	9
Women often do not receive the same pay as men for doing exactly the same job	<b>69</b>	35	34	<b>22</b>	15	6	9
Women are often discriminated against in being promoted for supervisory and executive jobs	<b>62</b>	23	38	<b>27</b>	21	7	11
Most employers are willing to make the conditions of work flexible enough to help women with families who want to go to work	<b>52</b>	11	42	<b>35</b>	25	10	13
Women often receive lower pensions or pay more on annuities than men doing the same work	<b>50</b>	22	28	<b>23</b>	16	7	27
Women often have much more trouble than men in getting credit, bank loans and mortgages	<b>42</b>	15	27	<b>36</b>	24	12	21
Women are often discriminated against in the insurance rates they pay	<b>38</b>	15	23	<b>33</b>	22	11	29
Women receive the same pay as men for doing comparable jobs with similar skill and training	<b>35</b>	11	24	<b>56</b>	35	21	9

Note: Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding

**TABLE 4**  
**WOMEN AND EQUAL TREATMENT**

“Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements”  
Percent saying “Strongly Agree” or “Somewhat Agree”

Base: All adults

	Total	Gender		Sexual Orientation					
		Male	Female	LGBT	Gay	Lesbian	Hetero- sexual	Hetero- sexual Male	Hetero- sexual Female
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Women today are treated with less chivalry than in the past	<b>81</b>	81	81	82	85	85	81	81	81
Women often do not receive the same pay as men for doing exactly the same job	<b>69</b>	58	80	79	71	96	69	56	80
Women are often discriminated against in being promoted for supervisory and executive jobs	<b>62</b>	48	75	72	69	93	62	46	75
Most employers are willing to make the conditions of work flexible enough to help women with families who want to go to work	<b>52</b>	60	46	44	53	28	53	60	46
Women often receive lower pensions or pay more on annuities than men doing the same work	<b>50</b>	42	58	66	49	84	49	40	57
Women often have much more trouble than men in getting credit, bank loans and mortgages	<b>42</b>	33	51	44	38	67	42	32	51
Women are often discriminated against in the insurance rates they pay	<b>38</b>	29	46	43	27	72	38	29	46
Women receive the same pay as men for doing comparable jobs with similar skill and training	<b>35</b>	46	25	26	23	21	36	48	25

## **Methodology**

Harris Interactive conducted the study online within the United States between June 14 and 21, 2010, among 2,412 adults (ages 18 and over), of whom 341 self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual and/or transgender. We over-sampled gay men and lesbians in order to allow for more detailed analysis of these groups.

Figures for age, sex, race, education, region and income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. In addition, the results for the gay and lesbian sample were weighted separately based on profiles of the gay and lesbian population that Harris Interactive has compiled through many different online surveys. Propensity score weighting also was used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words "margin of error" as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

***These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.***

*The results of this Harris Poll may not be used in advertising, marketing or promotion without the prior written permission of Harris Interactive.*

## **About Harris Interactive**

Harris Interactive is one of the world's leading custom market research firms, leveraging research, technology, and business acumen to transform relevant insight into actionable foresight. Known widely for the Harris Poll and for pioneering innovative research methodologies, Harris offers expertise in a wide range of industries including healthcare, technology, public affairs, energy, telecommunications, financial services, insurance, media, retail, restaurant, and consumer package goods. Serving clients in over 215 countries and territories through our North American, European, and Asian offices and a network of independent market research firms, Harris specializes in delivering research solutions that help us – and our clients – stay ahead of what's next. For more information, please visit [www.harrisinteractive.com](http://www.harrisinteractive.com).

## **About Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc.**

Witeck-Combs Communications, Inc. is the nation's premier marketing communications and consulting firm, specializing in developing and implementing effective strategies reaching the gay and lesbian consumer market. With over 16 years experience in this unique market, Witeck-Combs Communications not only serves as a bridge between corporate America and lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender consumers (LGBT), but also provides counsel to countless non-profit organizations that aim to educate the public on gay and lesbian issues or to better reach their LGBT membership.

In April 2003, American Demographics magazine identified Bob Witeck and Wes Combs as two of 25 experts over the last 25 years who have made significant contributions to the fields of demographics, market research, media and trendspotting for their path breaking work on the gay and lesbian market, and in 2006 Bob Witeck and Wes Combs co-authored **Business Inside Out: Capturing Millions of Brand Loyal Gay Consumers** (Kaplan Publishing), considered the first-ever book on marketing insights, practical tips and strategies targeting the LGBT market. They have appeared in worldwide media outlets including Fortune, CNBC, CNN, Reuters, Associated Press, Ad Age, New York Times and Washington Post. For more information visit [www.witeckcombs.com](http://www.witeckcombs.com).