Kadın/Woman 2000, 2016; *17(2)*: 109-132

Marissa's Choice: Media Coverage of Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer

Karen Grandy[*]
Saint Mary's University

Abstract

This study examines the American business media's presentation of the ideal worker/ideal mother conflict, as seen in the 2012-2013 coverage of Marissa Mayer, the then newly appointed, pregnant CEO of the prominent internet company Yahoo. Pregnancy, maternity leave, and childcare are issues that foreground a seemingly unresolvable dilemma for working women who are also mothers: how to meet competing societal pressures to be both an 'ideal worker' and an 'ideal mother'. It might be tempting to dismiss Mayer's experience as irrelevant to the vast majority of working mothers, given her exalted position and the plethora of options available to her. However, I will argue that the media coverage of Mayer illuminates the double-bind that all working mothers face and the often obscured inequities embedded in the idea of 'choice', a neoliberal construct continually invoked in media representations of work and motherhood.

***Keywords**: business media, maternity leave, working mothers, women executives, choice feminism.*

[*] Assoc.Prof. Karen Grandy, Saint Mary's University, Department of Marketing/Communications, Nova Scotia-Canada. E-mail: Karen.Grandy@smu.ca.

Original Research Article
Article submission date : 1 July, 2015
Article acceptance date : 22 August, 2015
1302-9916©2016 emupress

Özgün Araştırma Makalesi
Makale gönderim tarihi: 1 Temmuz, 2015
Makale kabul tarihi : 22 Agustos, 2015

Marissa'nın Seçimi: Yahoo CEO'su Marissa Mayer'in Medyadaki Temsili

Karen Grandy
Saint Mary Üniversitesi

Öz

Bu çalışma, Amerikan iş dünyası medyasının sunduğu, 2012-2013 yıllarında önde gelen internet şirketi Yahoo'nun yeni atanmış ve hamile CEO'su Marissa Mayer'in yer aldığı, ideal çalışan / ideal anne çatışmasını incelemektedir. Hamilelik, annelik izni ve çocuk bakımı gibi sorunlar anne olan çalışan kadınlar için "ideal bir çalışan" ve 'ideal bir anne' olarak toplumsal baskıyı nasıl karşılayacakları çözülmeyecek bir ikilem gibi görünür. Üst düzey yönetici olması ve olanaklarının fazla olması nedeniyle, Mayer'in deneyimi çalışan annelerinin çoğunluğunun deneyimiyle ilgili görünmeyebilir. Fakat ben, neoliberal kurgunun sürekli bir şekilde medyada servis ettiği çalışma ve annelik temsili bağlamında Mayer'ın medyadaki temsilinin, tüm çalışan kadınların karşılaştığı çifte açmazı aydınlattığını ve çoğu kez gizli eşitsizliklerin 'tercih' kelimesinde saklı olduğunu savunacağım.

***Anahtar Kelimeler**: iş dünyası medyası, annelik izni, çalışan anneler, yönetici kadın, seçim feminizmi.*

Introduction

In July 2012, Yahoo, a prominent American internet company, announced the appointment of Marissa Mayer as its new Chief Executive Officer. The story moved from a standard business announcement to major headline news when, on that same day, Mayer announced via her Twitter account that she was six months pregnant. Within two weeks, 4000 articles and commentaries were published on the topic (Kellaway, 2012), commending and critiquing Mayer's decision to take on the CEO position at that stage in her pregnancy and her stated maternity leave intentions. The media scrutiny resumed when Mayer's baby was born in late September 2012, picked up again in February 2013 when her unique childcare arrangements were publicized in the coverage of Yahoo's new ban on telecommuting, and again when Yahoo announced new parental leave policies for its employees in April 2013. The intense, widespread interest in Mayer's maternity choices provides a good opportunity to examine the current representation in the American business press of work/motherhood tension and, in particular, of the concept of choice therein.

Motherhood and paid employment are both what sociologist Lewis Coser called "greedy institutions," heavily demanding of one's time, energy, and loyalty (1974: 4). Working mothers face a seemingly unresolvable dilemma: how to meet competing societal pressures to be both an *ideal worker* and an *ideal mother*. Significant gains made by the American feminist movement in the 1960s and 1970s (dubbed the Second Wave), including workplace equity and reproductive rights, made it possible for many more women to join the workforce, but did not resolve the *ideal worker* versus *ideal mother* conflict (Crittenden, 2001; J. Williams, 2000). As feminist scholar Joan Williams (2000) explores in her book Unbending Gender: Why Family and Work Conflict and What to Do About It, men are better able to be both *ideal* workers and parents because they more often have supportive spouses doing most of the essential but largely invisible domestic work, including childcare (see also Acker, 1992; Crittenden, 2007). This analysis is bolstered by statistics that show that women at the highest executive professional levels have significantly fewer (or no) children than their male counterparts, the vast majority of whom also have stay-at-home spouses (Williams, 2000).

Gendered expectations also increase the work-childcare tension experienced by women, who "find that if they perform as ideal workers, they are condemned as bad mothers; if they observe the norm of parental care, they are condemned as bad workers" (Williams, 2000: 70). The current parental care norm known as "intensive mothering," demanding even more time and attention in the name of good mothering, further exacerbates this pressure (Douglas & Michaels, 2004; Hays, 1996). The work/motherhood tension becomes evident immediately after the baby's birth (if not during the pregnancy itself) around the issue of maternity leave. Indeed, the phrase maternity leave is oxymoronic: leave denotes a temporary absence, but maternity once entered into is a permanent state of being. Maternity leave is

a juncture, one of many, at which working mothers must make choices about work/childcare.

Choice is a key concept to both neoliberalism and to a particular branch of contemporary feminism known as *choice feminism*. Central to both is the primacy of the independent individual and the notion of liberation as defined by freedom to make choices for oneself and one's family (Brown, 2005; Ferguson, 2010; Rottenberg, 2014). Choice is a controversial idea for feminist theorists: celebrated, on the one hand, for its embrace of non-judgemental inclusion and independent agency; critiqued, on the other, for the seeming abandonment of collective advocacy for social change in favour of individual self-fulfillment and, at worse, narcissistic consumerism (Gill & Scharff, 2011; Mendes, 2012). Critics have both defended and decried, for example, the depiction of a highly educated woman's decision to leave paid employment in favour of fulltime childcare (known as "opting out") as a feminist choice (Hirschmann, 2010; Hirshman, 2006). Choice rhetoric can also ignore and thus leave unchallenged cultural ideologies and systemic inequities that inform and constrain choices.

A choice feminist stance would concur with the neoliberal view that childcare arrangements, including maternity leave, are individual, personal decisions, which women should be free to make without outside interference or judgment. With such individual freedom, however, also comes personal, rather than public, responsibility for resolving the worker/parent conflicts discussed above. As Stone and Lovejoy explain in their article, "Fast-Track Women and the 'Choice' to Stay Home": "choice rhetoric attributes women's status to their private and personal tastes and preferences and assumes that their decisions operate outside of any system of constraints" (2004: 63). Limiting factors such as eligibility for paid leave and the ability to afford quality childcare at the end of any such leave are obscured by the dismissal of work/childcare conflict as simply one's choice.

In the United States, maternity leave is governed at the federal level by the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA), which guarantees a new parent 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave1. The FMLA applies only to companies with at least 50 employees. It does not cover employees who have worked at a company for less than a year or for less than 1240 hours in the past year, and so-called "key" employees, that is, the top 10% of a company's earners are exempted (U.S. Department of Labor. Wage and Hour Division, 2015). According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), just 13% of American workers have access to paid family leave; class differences, furthermore, are obscured in that average: 22% of the highest 10% of earners receive the benefit, compared to 4% of the lowest 10% of earners (U.S. Department of Labour, 2015). As Kelly Ward and Lisa Wolf-Wendel observe in their book Academic Motherhood: How Faculty Manage Work and Family, discussion of work/family balance is "clearly an issue rooted in socioeconomic privilege" (2012: 32).

My study examines the American business media's presentation of the ideal worker/ideal mother conflict, and specifically the notion of choice therein, as seen in the coverage of the newly appointed, pregnant CEO of a prominent internet company. This work is based on the premise that the media plays an important role in both reflecting and shaping public perception of contemporary social issues (Hall, 1997; Richardson, 2007). With 69.9% of women with children now in the workforce in the United States (U.S. Department of Labor, 2013), the work/motherhood conflict is a widely experienced conundrum. Feminist scholars agree that gendered assumptions exacerbate that conflict (Heilman, 2001; Williams, 2000) and that the media can either reinforce or challenge those gendered norms (Gill, 2007; Johnston & Swanson, 2003; Ross, 2010).

Rather than showcasing the causes of work/motherhood tension, the mainstream media has emphasized divisive conflicts, such as the so-called "Mommy Wars" ("'Mommy Wars' incited," 2006; Peskowitz, 2005). While the media coverage of women in politics has received considerable scholarly attention, that of women in business has not2. Given that the vast majority of women are more likely to be in the workforce than the political arena, the media coverage of prominent businesswomen and of issues pertinent to working women deserves more critical scrutiny. This study undertakes to help fill that gap.

The presentation of "choice" in the Marissa Mayer coverage is also relevant to the media representation of contemporary feminism in the United States3, an ongoing subject of interest to feminist media scholars, who have found the coverage of feminism to be limited, simplistic, and trivializing. Carolyn Bronstein, for example, has critiqued the American media for presenting "personal choice" as the "consummate third wave objective" and thus ignoring the political analysis and social activism that third wave feminists see as intrinsic to such choices (2005: 792). Kaitlynn Mendes likewise concluded that the recent (2008) coverage of feminist issues in British and American news articles was "neoliberal" in its emphasis on individual empowerment and choice (2012: 563). Sisco and Lucas found in the framing of feminism in the 2008 U.S presidential election coverage a preferable presentation of neoliberal "choice feminism" over traditionally liberal, second wave feminism (2015). Of particular relevance to my interest in the work/motherhood conflict, Mary Douglas Vavrus examined the media presentation of the so-called Opting Out Revolution. She argued that the neoliberal discourse and choice rhetoric found there promoted "dangerously archaic notions about women, work, and family" (2007: 49). The intense scrutiny of Marissa Mayer provides an opportunity to examine the media representation of a working woman who, by contrast, opts in.

Media Study

The databases EBSCO Business Source Premier and ABI Inform and the search engine Google were used to identify stories about Mayer published in major American business magazines and newspapers within twelve months of the announcement of her appointment as Yahoo CEO in mid-July, 2012. This search yielded 57 articles, in 30 publications4. The stories cluster around six events: 1) Yahoo's appointment of a female CEO; 2) Mayer's pregnancy announcement; 3) her maternity plans; 4) her maternity leave; 5) Yahoo's ban on telecommuting and Mayer's childcare arrangements; 6) new benefit policies impacting working parents enacted at Yahoo under Mayer. My approach was qualitative, as I hoped to elucidate through a close reading of the word choice, headlines, and content of the stories in the sample both explicit and underlying ideas (Berelson, 1971; Hall, 1975) about work/motherhood conflict and working women's choices. I was also on the lookout for any stated or implied references to feminism in the articles.

Findings and Discussion

CEO Announcement

Yahoo announced Mayer's appointment as its new President, Chief Executive Officer, and member of its Board of Directors on July 16, 2012. Mayer at the time was a well-known executive and prominent spokesperson for Google, where she had worked since 1999, and so the news of her move from a dominant company to its struggling competitor was greeted in the business press with "surprise" (Albanesius, 2012: para. 1) and "shock" (Stone, Womack, & Chang, 2012: 30). In addition to a discussion of the challenges awaiting her at Yahoo, where she would be the fifth CEO in five years, and her expected compensation (speculated to be up to $20 million a year), the appointment of a woman at this level was also considered newsworthy. Of 18 announcement stories published within two weeks' of Yahoo's press release, 13 (72.2%) referenced the significance of her accomplishments as a woman. For example, the fact that she was the first female engineer hired at Google was noted in eight articles. In its first article on the appointment, the New York Times described the appointment as "making her one of the most prominent women in Silicon Valley and corporate America" (Sorkin & Rusli, 2012: para. 1). The Wall Street Journal, in its initial article on the announcement, pointed out that Mayer would be one of only 20 women CEOs (4%) at Fortune 500 companies in the United States (Efrati & Letzing, 2012).

From the beginning, this business announcement was reported as significant not just for Mayer's impressive accomplishments as an individual, but for working women as a whole. Although Mayer was not Yahoo's first female CEO (Carol Bartz held the post from 2009-2011), Google co-founder Eric Schmidt was quoted in Forbes magazine as being "personally very excited to see another woman become CEO of a technology company" (cited in Guglielmo, 2012: para.

4). Yahoo's choice was described as "great news for women" by both The Huffington Post's Arianna Huffington (cited in Shalvey, 2012: A04) and Facebook's Sheryl Sandberg (cited in Efrati, 2012: para.10), and it was hailed as significant progress for an industry in which gender disparity at the executive level is well known (Casserly, 2012; Foroohar, 2012).

Mitchell Stephens, in A History of News, discusses seven standard criteria used by the news media to determine newsworthiness: "impact, emotional appeal, conflict, timeliness, proximity, prominence and the unusual" (2007: 26). Yahoo's announcement of its new CEO was newsworthy to the American business press because of timeliness and the prominence of both the company and Mayer. Yahoo's appointment of a woman, however, makes the event additionally unusual and, potentially, impactful. Evidence of the latter interpretation is seen in the widespread enthusiasm to present Mayer's appointment as a victory for working women. Although none of the articles explicitly reference feminism, the story was implicitly framed within second wave American feminism and its well known goals of equal employment opportunities and the advancement of more women into positions of economic power.

It is notable that Mayer herself, however, had previously publicly resisted a gendered mantle, insisting "'I'm not a woman at Google, I'm a geek at Google,'" (cited in Taylor, 2012: para. 15) and "'I don't think that I would consider myself a feminist'" (cited in Rochman, 2013: para. 3). In an article published the same day as the CEO announcement, Forbes writer Meghan Casserly observed that Mayer "has never been interested in the conversation surrounding 'women in tech'" (2012, "Marissa Mayer"). Instead, Mayer publicly espouses a position that aligns with postfeminism[5] as evidenced in comments from an April 2012 interview with CNN. She stated in that piece, "If you can find something that you're really passionate about, whether you're a man or a woman comes a lot less into play. Passion is a gender-neutralizing force" (Sutter, 2012).

In addition to the explicit references to Mayer's sex, her gender was also signalled in the announcement stories in allusions to her photogenic physical appearance and her love of designer fashion, as exhibited in a recent Vogue fashion spread (Swartz & Martin, 2012). Time's Rana Foroohar described her as a "stunning blond designer-clothes-wearing mother-to-be" (2012: para.1). A July 17 Forbes article was headlined "Yahoo's Marissa Mayer Is The 'Hottest CEO Ever'. And It's Great For Business" (Casserly, 2012). The media's emphasis on the physical attributes of prominent women has been well documented and is condemned as discriminatory according to second wave thinking. However, Forbes writer Megan Casserly argues, admiringly, that Mayer herself "has always been savvy--leveraging both her brains and her beauty in the media" (2012, "Yahoo's," para.6). Mayer is thus presented as using the tactics of third wave American feminism, 6although she herself never claims that connection.

Pregnancy Announcement

Hours after the announcement of her appointment, Mayer broke the news via her Twitter account that she was pregnant. She disclosed in a Fortune magazine interview published on July 17 that the baby was due October 7 (Sellers, 2012). In contrast to the Yahoo board's reportedly quiet acceptance of Mayer's condition (Sellers, 2012), the media treated this new information as an integral part of the story. Subsequent to her twitter announcement, articles on the CEO appointment made at least a passing reference to her pregnancy, often in conjunction with her age and marital status. "New Yahoo CEO Mayer is Pregnant" ran the headline in Fortune (Sellers, 2012). The New York Times showed more discretion, referring to the pregnancy midway through its article on her appointment, in a parenthetical aside: "(In a bit of personal news, Ms. Mayer disclosed on Twitter late Monday that she is pregnant)" (Sorkin & Rusli, 2012: para.8).

Unlike in the initial coverage of the appointment of a woman CEO, some writers now emphasized potential conflict in their stories about the pregnant executive. A writer for Investors Business Daily included Mayer's pregnancy as one of many challenges awaiting her in the new position (Shalvey, 2012). Likewise, a July 18 article in the Wall Street Journal was titled "For Yahoo CEO, Two New Role—Six Months Pregnant With Her First Child, Marissa Mayer Must Also Turn Around a Troubled Firm" (Lublin & Kwoh, 2012: B1). Elsewhere the question was raised whether Yahoo had an obligation to shareholders to disclose Mayer's condition in its CEO announcement, because of the potential impact on stock price (Heffernan, 2012; McKenna, 2012). The issue here is whether pregnancy and (eventual) motherhood should be considered as liabilities to effective leadership. When advertising executive Neil French spoke to this question in 2005, his explanation for the dearth of female creative directors of advertising agencies caused an uproar: "'to be a creative director requires 100 per cent commitment. People who have babies to look after can't do that'" (cited in Cadwalladr, 2005: para.5). More recently, investor Paige Craig expressed similar concerns when he "confessed" his belief that "a pregnant founder / CEO is going to fail her company" (2011: para. 5). Craig went on to give as his opinion that "a ton of us decide not to invest, support, promote or work with women because of this whole 'marriage / pregnancy' hurdle that most women will face in their career" (2011: para.8).

The fact that Yahoo did not see pregnancy as a disqualification for the position of Chief Executive Officer was greeted as an important breakthrough by those who disagree with the views of French and Craig. The novelty and thus newsworthiness of the appointment was proclaimed in the media. Forbes, The Washington Post, and Time all noted that Mayer was the first pregnant woman to be named the CEO of a Fortune 500 company (Foroohar, 2012; Goudreau, 2012; McGregor: 2012). Even critics who objected to the media obsession with Mayer (see discussion below), noted her appointment while

pregnant was "significant" (Lerner, 2012: para. 11) and "signals progress" (J. Williams, 2012: para. 6).

Other publications emphasized the potential impact. Working Mother called the executive appointment of an expecting woman a "milestone" and stated that it "broke down several barriers" (Bourne, 2012: para. 1). It was elsewhere depicted as setting a precedent (Goudreau, 2012), creating "a new standard," and "fundamentally shift[ing] the discussion" (McGregor, 2012: para. 7). Here again, the collective aspirations of second wave feminism are invoked. Mayer's situation was presented in the media as significant not just for her as an individual but in the words of management consultant Kevin Coyne, quoted in the Wall Street Journal, "a landmark case for women everywhere'" (cited in Lublin & Kwoh, 2012: B1). Sharon Lerner made explicit the connection with the second wave feminist movement: "it's clear her hiring will pave the way for other women – just as it was undoubtedly made possible by earlier women's fight for equality" (2012: para. 11).

Postfeminist discourse is also evident in the coverage, in the dismissal of the significance of the pregnancy, and hence work/motherhood conflict, to the story. According to Time's Rana Foroohar, Yahoo "investors couldn't care less" about Mayer's condition (2012: 17), which one executive recruiter called a "non-event" (cited in Goudreau, 2012: para. 9). Most notably, Mayer herself stated her view in the Fortune interview that Yahoo board members' lack of concern about hiring a pregnant executive "showed their evolved thinking" (Sellers, 2012: para. 8).

Maternity Leave Plans

While the appointment of a pregnant woman as CEO was overwhelmingly presented as a positive development for gender employment equity, Mayer's maternity leave plans, also revealed in the July 17 Fortune article, provoked a more mixed response in the media: "'My maternity leave will be a few weeks long and I'll work throughout it,'" she stated in the interview (Sellers, 2012: para.10). This statement was referenced or discussed in 16 of the 36 articles (44%) published within two weeks of her appointment, in my study sample. The differences in opinion on Mayer's stated maternity leave plans, and on their broader relevance to other working women, reflect again the differences in the aspirations of second wave and more recent iterations of feminism.

While one might expect that work/motherhood conflict would be the obvious way to frame this aspect of the story, of the 16 articles that include her maternity leave plans, 10 (62.5%) either make no mention of or downplay any potential conflict. Mayer herself sets the tone. Her phrase "work throughout it" was repeated many times without query, including by Christian Science Monitor journalist Allison Terry, who also predicted, without commenting on the seeming contradiction, that Mayer would "redefine what it means to balance work and family life" (2012: para.13). In a July 20 New York Times story profiling other successful executive women who did not take

maternity leaves, Gootman and Saint Louis quoted former Massachusetts governor Jane Swift, who sees maternity leave as "an outdated notion for high-achieving women and men" (2012: para.25). The one writer who speculated that Mayer "may need more than a 'few weeks' and may not be able to 'work throughout it'" raised the question in the context of a potential problem for Yahoo shareholders, not because of work/motherhood conflict (McKenna, 2012; para.9).

Two writers optimistically speculated that when the time came, Mayer might change her mind and thus still be an exemplar for other working mothers. A July 30 Bloomberg Businessweek editorial titled "The Message of Marissa Mayer" expressed hope that Mayer would decide to take a longer maternity leave, as she could thereby help promote California's paid parental leave program, which the editors described as "a successful model for other states, just as Mayer will be an example for women in her company and industry"7 (2012: 8). Senior media executive Kara Norton wrote a piece for Business Insider with the provocative title "New Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer Needs to Take a Real, 12-week Maternity Leave" (2012). Norton noted that taking a maternity leave would give Mayer an "opportunity to create an even greater legacy to women and men everywhere by building a culture that finds the balance between business achievement and emotional satisfaction" (2012: para.16). Also speaking within the framework of second wave feminism's advocacy for social change, but from a different angle, some commentators argued that the media focus on Mayer's plans was an irrelevant distraction from an urgently needed public discussion about the inadequacies of the Family and Medical Leave Act and other structural supports for working parents in the United States (Kurtzleben, 2012; Lerner, 2012; J. Williams, 2012).

Individualized solutions, favoured by both choice feminism and neoliberalism, were touted in a Wall Street Journal piece, which opened with the claim that that how Mayer would "juggle" workplace and family was "the real conversation" (Lublin & Kwoh, 2012: para. 1). The writers later presented "the key to making this work" as "a phalanx of nannies, a solid leadership team and a husband ready to shoulder more of the hands-on parental duties" (Lublin & Kwoh, 2012). The language of choice feminism was also used by Laurianne McLaughlin in her article, "Yahoo's Marissa Mayer vs. the Mommy Judges." McLaughlin defended Mayer's right to act based solely on what was best for her as an individual and asserted, "It's not about societal change or breaking ceilings. I make my choices. You make yours. Let Mayer make hers" (McLaughlin, 2012: para.15-16).

Maternity Leave

After having been positioned by the media to have "the most scrutinized maternity leave and new motherhood in modern corporate history" (Lewis, 2012: para.1), Mayer stuck to her plan to take, in effect, no real leave from her position. On October 1, one day following the birth of her son, a Yahoo

spokesperson issued a statement that Mayer was still actively leading the company, would be "working remotely and is planning to return to the office as soon as possible (likely in 1-2 weeks)'" (cited in Oreskovic, 2012: para. 3). On October 16, Mayer stated on Twitter that she was back at the office.

The image projected in the media of Mayer, pregnant CEO, as pioneering role model for the successful combination of work and motherhood was thrown off kilter by both her stated maternity leave plans and her follow through. Compared to the articles published right after her appointment, there was now much less certainty about the significance of Mayer's position and the potential positive impact on other working mothers. Some writers now critiqued Mayer for setting an unfair bar for other working women to live up to (Benedikt, 2012; Lewis, 2012; Lichter, 2012). A story in Fortune magazine quoted a New York University professor who labelled Mayer's decision to take no time off "'a backward-looking message'" (Lewis, 2012: para. 7). She was also accused of neglecting her child and herself in a Slate article, headlined "Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer Is Making a Huge Mistake by Cutting Her Maternity Leave Short" (Benedikt, 2012).

Other commentaries, including "Marissa Mayer Can Work If She Wants" in Salon (M. Williams, 2012), used the rhetoric of choice feminism to defend Mayer's right to make her own personal decisions. In the same vein, Ruth Margalit, in The New Yorker, lamented Mayer's public disavowal of feminism and in the same paragraph argued, "giving birth and deciding how to balance your time afterward is a personal choice, and deserves to be kept that way: personal" (2012: para. 7). Margalit then went on to ask why the work/family balance choices of Mayer's husband were not interrogated in the media. Still other writers argued that Mayer's already noted rare position and socioeconomic privilege rendered her choices irrelevant to most working mothers, such as Jessica Grose in her article, "How Relevant is Marissa Mayer's Maternity Leave? Not Very," for Bloomberg Businessweek (2012).

Childcare Arrangements/Telecommuting Ban

In the speculative discussion of how Mayer might eventually balance running a major company with being a new mother, a number of writers pointed out that her socioeconomic status—her executive position and salary—provided options not available to other working women (Grose, 2012; Lerner, 2012; Miller, 2012; J. Williams, 2012). Mayer did in fact take advantage of her privileged position, by refusing to take either of the choices on offer for working mothers: to return to your workplace or to stay home with your child(ren). When Mayer went back to the office less than three weeks after giving birth, she brought her baby and his nanny with her and installed them in the nursery she had created next to her office (Sellers, 2013). These unusual childcare arrangements received no attention in the media, however, until nearly four months later.

On February 22, 2013, the Wall Street Journal broke the news about a new Yahoo policy that would disallow telecommuting for its employees (Swisher, February 22). In her continuing coverage of the story, the same reporter a few days later referred to Mayer's own childcare arrangements at Yahoo, the details of which were revealed by disgruntled employees, unhappy about the new decree (Swisher, February 25). Mayer's childcare arrangements and her company's new policy were henceforth linked and critiqued in the media, as seen in headlines such as, "Marissa Mayer, Who Just Banned Working From Home, Paid To Have A Nursery Built At Her Office" (Carlson, 2013). Nearly 80% of the articles about the telecommuting ban in my sample mention Mayer's custom built, personal nursery.

As presented in the media, Yahoo's insistence that all employees work at the office met a number of criteria for newsworthiness. Mayer's obvious prominence was cited: she was described as "corporate America's most famous working mother" in the first sentence of the Los Angeles Times story on the new ban (Guynn, 2013: para. 1). The policy was also noted to be unusual amongst technology companies in Silicon Valley, which are typically more open to flexible working arrangements than other industries. All of the articles, however, also alluded to the work/motherhood conflict, which the new policy was widely seen to exacerbate. Mayer was now presented as a traitor to working mothers (Bamberger, 2013; Rochman, 2013), the group for whom the media originally set her up to be a role model; as a "tough-as-nails, whip-cracking, anti-family crusader" (Rochman, 2013: para. 7); and as a hypocrite, for doing herself what she would not allow her employees to do—work and parent simultaneously (Dowd, 2013; Guyunn, 2013).

Joanne Bamberger in USA Today accused Mayer of "launch[ing] the latest salvo in the war on moms" (2013: para.13). In Time magazine, Bonnie Rochman stated that Mayer was "throwing darts at working parents everywhere" (2013: para. 9). Bamberger alluded to second wave feminism when she chastised Mayer for having "forgotten about the women who came before, enabling [her] to land in [her] lofty position in the first place" (2013: para.13). Gloria Steinem's response to the ban also connected, or rather disconnected the new policy from feminism: "'When Marisa Mayer directed all employees never to work from home, I understood why she said she isn't a feminist'" (cited in Bamberger, 2013: para. 2).

Other commentators, however, adopted postfeminist language in defense of Mayer, such as Anne-Marie Slaughter in a piece titled "Marissa Mayer's Job Is to Be CEO—Not to Make Life Easier for Working Moms" (2013). Slaughter argued that Mayer had to be "a CEO first and a woman second" (2013: para. 2). Patricia Sellers, likewise, observed in Fortune that being "a role model for the new generation of aspiring women" was "precisely what Mayer does not want to be" (2013: para.3). Sellers contrasts Mayer with Facebook executive and "proud feminist" Sheryl Sandberg: "while Sandberg endeavors to change the world, Mayer has other priorities… 'God, family and Yahoo—in that order'" (2013: para.10).

The importance of Mayer's exalted socioeconomic position as a factor in her work/motherhood choices was also referenced in many of the articles about the telecommuting ban. Forbes contributor Joel Kotkin, for example, described "the amazing hubris of a rich, glamorous CEO, with a nursery specially built next to her office, ordering less well-compensated parents to trudge back to the office" (2013: para.1). Maureen Dowd of The New York Times stated that Mayer lived in "an elite cocoon" and urged her to "be sympathetic to the very different situation of women – and men – struggling without luxurious layers of help" (2013: para. 13 & para.19). It is notable and unexpected that it is these articles about the telecommuting ban, rather than the earlier stories about Mayer's maternity leave plans, that better highlighted the vast differences in options and constraints that are often obscured in neoliberalism's and choice feminism's valorization of individual choice.

New Parental Leave Policies at Yahoo

In a Salon article published one day after the CEO announcement in July, Joan Walsh stated that she would be "more interested in what Marissa Mayer does to allow Yahoo employees to combine work and family than in how she combines hers" (2012: para.17). Nine months after becoming CEO, Mayer took such action. In April 2013, Yahoo doubled the length of paid maternity leave available to female employees at Yahoo, from 8 to 16 weeks, and for the first time offered new fathers a paid paternity leave benefit of 8 weeks (Fiegerman, 2013). All of the stories about the new benefits referenced, by contrast, the telecommuting ban and Mayer's abbreviated maternity leave. The benefits announcement was presented as damage control, a calculated response to counter the bad publicity generated by her own short maternity leave, private nursery, and the telecommuting ban (Fernandez & Schuppe, 2013; Fondas, 2013; McGregor, 2013). However, Mayer was also widely praised for instituting the new and generous parental benefits, which were favorably compared to the inadequate FMLA and to the complete absence of leave faced by those not covered by federal policy or without the means to take unpaid leave (Fernandez & Schuppe, 2013).

In language echoing that seen in the early coverage of her appointment, the new policies were described as "a great precedent" by NBC (Fernandez & Schuppe, 2013: para. 6). The Atlantic's Nanette Fondas outlined the impact of the paternity leave benefit, which she praised for potentially helping to alleviate work/motherhood conflict, by encouraging "equally shared parenting particularly and gender equality generally" (2013: para.4). So it seems that other journalists also agree with Joan Walsh's hopeful prediction that the real impact that women's equity employment advocates had looked for with Mayer's appointment might come about not by her wildly anticipated and scrutinized choices as a media icon, but as a self-identified postfeminist CEO

in a position to enact what Fondas called "potentially revolutionary paternity leave policy" (2012).

Conclusion: Marissa's Choices

It might be tempting to dismiss Mayer's maternity choices as irrelevant to the vast majority of working mothers, given her exalted position and wealth, and the subsequent plethora of options available to her. However, in the media's intense and often critical reportage on Mayer's first year as Yahoo CEO are illuminated the challenges all working mothers face, and the social and workplace constraints that impede their efforts to be both good employees and good mothers. Mayer's highly scrutinized actions, as a mother and as an executive, show neoliberal ideology taken to its logical conclusion, whereby all responsibility for solving the work/childcare conflict rests with the individual. However, as Canadian journalist Anne Kingston later observed on the subject of Mayer's maternity leave: "The only clear answer was that even a privileged woman like Mayer was in a no-win situation: if a short maternity leave made her a neglectful mother, a long one would have made her a neglectful CEO" (2012: para.3). Likewise, Mayer's onsite, personal nursery, by its very irreproducibility, shows how socioeconomic circumstances delimit all childcare arrangements, from the working poor to senior executives.

The coverage of Mayer also provides an opportunity to examine the presence of feminist ideologies in the American business media. As discussed above, scholars have found in the American press a pervasive influence of neoliberalism and choice rhetoric in the recent media coverage of feminism and issues of interest to feminists, such as the work/motherhood conflict. Neoliberal and choice feminist discourse was certainly present in the articles in my sample, but so were language and ideas influenced by second wave, third wave, and post feminisms. One often noted difference between the second wave and more recent feminist movements is the seeming – and regrettable – transformation of "the personal is political" to "the personal is personal" (Ferguson, 2010; Hirschmann, 2010). However, my analysis of the media's coverage of Mayer's pregnancy and childcare arrangements, and especially its insistent coupling of her own maternity choices with her company's new policies on telecommuting and parental leave, suggest that the personal and political have not yet been completely separated in the mainstream media. Fortunately, "choice" continues to be a contested concept in these stories—a resistance which those who stand against neoliberalism and choice feminism should welcome.

Notes

[1] According to the United Nations' International Labour Organization, the United States and Papua New Guinea are the only countries in the world with no national paid parental leave policy (International Labour Organization, 2014).

[2] For notable exceptions from the field of Management studies see Kreftling (2002) and Lee & James (2007); from Sociology see Smith (2001); and from Linguistics see Koller (2004).
[3] For a discussion of the history of American feminism, including the three so-called "waves," see No Permanent Waves: Recasting Histories of U.S. Feminism, edited by Nancy A. Hewitt (2010).
[4] See Appendix A for complete list of publications.
[5] For a discussion of the multiple definitions of postfeminism see Bronstein (2005), Mendes (2012) and Gill & Scharff (2011).
[6] See Baumgardner & Richard (2010) for an overview of third wave feminism.
[7] Paid parental leave is dependent on the state one lives in and/or whether one's employer provides that benefit. In California, for example, where Yahoo's headquarters are located, the state pays eligible workers up to 55% of their salary for six weeks (State of California, 2014). As a new and "key" employee at Yahoo, however, Mayer would not qualify for federally mandated family leave (FMLA).

References

Acker J. (1992). Gendering Organization Theory. In Mills A.J. & Trancred P. (Eds.), *Gendering Organizational Analysis*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage: 248-260.

Albanesius C. (2012, July 17). Google's Marissa Mayer named CEO of Yahoo. PC Magazine. Retrieved from http://www.pcmag.com/article2/0,2817,2407198,00.asp. Access: 1.7.2015.

Bamberger J. (2013, February 25). The New Mommy Wars. USA Today. Retrieved from http://www.usatoday.com/story/opinion/2013/02/25/the-new-mommy-wars-column/1947589/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Baumgardner J. & Richards A. (2010). *Manifesta: Young Women, Feminism, and the Future*. New York, NY: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux.

Benedikt A. (2012, October 2). Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer is Making a Huge Mistake by Cutting Her Maternity Leave Short. Slate. Retrieved from http://www.slate.com/blogs/xx_factor/2012/10/02/marissa_mayer_gives_birth_to_baby_boy_yahoo_ceo_s_short_maternity_leave_is_a_big_mistake_.html. Access: 1.7.2015.

Berelson, B. (1971). *Content Analysis in Communication Research*. New York, NY: Hafner.

Bourne L. (2012, July 17). Marissa Mayer Becomes First Pregnant CEO of Fortune 500 Company. Working Mother. Retrieved from http://www.workingmother.com/most-powerful-moms/marissa-mayer-becomes-first-pregnant-ceo-fortune-500-company. Access: 1.7.2015.

Bronstein C. (2005). Representing the Third Wave: Mainstream Print Media Framing of a New Feminist Movement. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly,* 82(4): 783-803.

Brown W. (2005). *Edgework: Critical Essays on Knowledge and Power*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Cadwalladr C. (2005, October 23.) This advertising Boss Thinks Women Make 'Crap' Executives. The Observer. Retrieved from http://www.guardian.co.uk/media/2005/oct/23/advertising.genderissues. Access: 1.7.2015.

Carlson N. (2013, February 25). Marissa Mayer, Who Just Banned Working From Home, Paid to Have a Nursery Built at Her Office. Business Insider. Retrieved from http://www.businessinsider.com/marissa-mayer-who-just-banned-working-from-home-paid-to-have-a-nursery-built-at-her-office-2013-2. Access: 1.7.2015.

Casserly M. (2012, July 16). Marissa Mayer named Yahoo! CEO: New Most Powerful Woman in Tech? Forbes. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/meghancasserly/2012/07/16/marissa-mayer-named-yahoo-ceo-new-most-powerful-woman-in-tech/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Casserly M. (2012, July 17). Yahoo's Marissa Mayer is the 'hottest CEO ever.' And it's great for business. Forbes. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/meghancasserly/2012/07/17/yahoo-marissa-mayer-hottest-ceo-ever-great-for-business/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Casserly M. (2012, August 22). Where Are The Women in Tech? On the Forbes Most Powerful Women List. Forbes. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/meghancasserly/2012/08/22/facebook-google-yahoo-women-in-tech-power-women/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Cose, L. (1974). *Greedy Institutions: Patterns of Undivided Commitment*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Craig, P. (2011, April 19). VC CONFESSION: "I have doubts once I think of women founders having kids and being distracted from work." Business Insider. Retrieved from http://www.businessinsider.com/women-founders-2011-4?page=1. Access: 1.7.2015.

Crittenden A. (2001). *The Price of Motherhood: Why the Most Important Job in the World is Still the Least Valued*. New York, NY: Henry Holt.

Crittenden A. (2007). Where We Are Now. In O'Reilly A. (Ed.), *Maternal Theory: Essential Readings*. Toronto, Canada: Demeter Press: 601-616.

Douglas S., & Michaels M.W. (2004). The Mommy Myth: The idealization of motherhood and how it has undermined women. New York, NY: Free Press.

Dowd M. (2013, February 26). Get Off of Your Cloud. New York Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/27/opinion/dowd-get-off-your-cloud.html?_r=0. Access: 1.7.2015. Access: 1.7.2015.

Efrati A. & Letzing J. (2012, July 17). Google's Mayer Takes Over as Yahoo Chief. Wall Street Journal. Retrieved from http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303754904577531230541447956. Access: 1.7.2015.

Efrati A. (2012, July 18). Google seals its reputation for minting tech executives. Wall Street Journal. Retrieved from http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424052702303612804577533073173479052. Access: 1.7.2015.

Ferguson M.L. (2010). Choice Feminism and the Fear of Politics. *Perspectives on Politics,* 8(1): 247-253.

Fernandez L. & Schuppe J. (2013, May 1). After Work-From-Home Ban, Yahoo Expands Maternity, Paternity Leave. NBC. Retrieved from http://www.nbcbayarea.com/news/tech/NATL-After-Work-From-Home-Ban-Yahoo-Expands-Maternity-Leave-205377421.html?sai. Access: 1.7.2015.

Fiegerman S. (2013, April 30). Yahoo Doubles Maternity Leave For Employees. Mashable. Retrieved from http://mashable.com/2013/04/30/yahoo-paid-leave/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Fondas N. (2013, May 1). Marissa Mayer's Potentially Revolutionary Paternity Leave Policy. The Atlantic. Retrieved from http://www.theatlantic.com/sexes/archive/2013/05/marissa-mayers-potentially-revolutionary-paternity-leave-policy/275468/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Foroohar R. (2012, July 30). She's Feeling Lucky. *Time*, 180(5), 17.

Gill R. (2007). Gender and the Media Cambridge. England: Polity.

Gill R. & Scharff C. (2011). Introduction. In Gill R. & Scharff C. (Eds.), *New Femininities: Postfeminism, Neoliberalism, and Subjectivity*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan: 1-17.

Gootman E. & Saint Louis C. (2012, July 20). Maternity Leave? It's More Like a Pause. New York Times. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2012/07/22/fashion/for-executive-women-is-maternity-leavenecessary.html?pagewanted=all. Access: 1.7.2015.

Goudreau J. (2012, July 17). New Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer is Pregnant. Does it Matter? Forbes. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/jennagoudreau/2012/07/17/new-yahoo-ceo-marissa-mayer-is-pregnant-does-it-matter/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Grose J. (2012, October 18). How Relevant is Marissa Mayer's Maternity Leave? Not very. Bloomberg BusinessWeek. Retrieved from http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/articles/2012-10-18/how-relevant-is-marissa-mayers-maternity-leave-not-very. Access: 1.7.2015.

Guglielmo, C. (2012, July 16). Google's Page says Mayer will be missed; HP's Whitman welcomes Yahoo's new CEO. Forbes. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/connieguglielmo/2012/07/16/googles-page-says-mayer-now-ceo-of-yahoo-will-be-missed/

Guynn, J. (2013, February 26). Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer Causes Uproar With Telecommuting Ban. Los Angeles Times. Retrieved from http://articles.latimes.com/2013/feb/26/business/la-fi-yahootelecommuting-20130226. Access: 1.7.2015.

Hall S. (1975). Introduction. In Smith A.C.H., *Paper Voices: The Popular Press and Social Change 1935-1965*. Totowa, NJ: Rowman & Littlefield: 11-24.

Hall S. (1997). *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*. London, England: Sage.

Hays S. (1996). *The Cultural Contradictions of Motherhood*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Heffernan V. (2012, July 24). Bringing Up Baby: Marissa Mayer and Demystifying CEO Pregnancies. Yahoo News. Retrieved from http://news.yahoo.com/bringing-up-baby--marissa-mayer-and-demystifying-ceo-pregnancies-20120724.html. Access: 1.7.2015.

Heilman, M. E. (2001). Description and Prescription: How Gender Stereotypes Prevent Women's Ascent Up the Organizational Ladder. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57: 657-674.

Hewitt N.A. (2010). *No Permanent Waves: Recasting Histories of U.S. Feminism*. New Brunswick, N.J. : Rutgers University Press.

Hirschmann N.J. (2010). Choosing betrayal. *Perspectives on Politics*, 8(1): 271-278.

Hirshman, L. (2006). *Get to Work: A Manifesto for Women of the World*. New York, NY: Viking.

International Labor Organization. (2014). Maternity and Paternity at Work: Law and Practice across the World. http://www.ilo.org/global/topics/equality-and-discrimination/maternity-protection/publications/maternity-paternity-at-work-2014/lang--en/index.htm. Access: 1.7.2015.

Johnston D.D. & Swanson D.H. (2003). Undermining Mothers: A Content Analysis of the Representation of Mothers in Magazines. *Mass Communication and Society*, 6(3): 243-265.

Kellaway L. (2012, July 30). Jobs, Motherhood and Varieties of Wrong. Financial Times. Retrieved from http://www.ft.com/cms/s/0/3f1db994-d73b-11e1-8c7d-00144feabdc0.html#axzz3U09i7Fuh. Access: 1.7.2015.

Kingston, A. (2012, December 6). Marissa Mayer Finds Her Place. Maclean's. Retrieved from http://www.macleans.ca/news/in-her-place/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Koller V. (2004). *Metaphor and Gender in Business Media Discourse: A Critical Cognitive Study*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kotkin J. (2013, March 26). Marissa Mayer's Misstep and the Unstoppable Rise of Telecommuting. Forbes. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com /sites/joelkotkin/2013/03/26/marissa-mayers-misstep-and-the-unstoppable-rise-of-telecommuting/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Krefting L.A. (2002). Re-Presenting Women Executives: Valorization and Devalorization in US Business Press. *Women in Management Review*, 17(3/4): 104-119.

Kurtzleben D. (2012, July 24). Women's advocates try to shift the Marissa Mayer conversation. U.S. News and World Report. Retrieved from http://www.usnews.com/news/articles/2012/07/24/womens-advocates-try-to-shift-the-marissa-mayer-conversation. Access: 1.7.2015.

Lee P.M. & James E.H. (2007). She'-e-os: Gender Effects and Investor Reactions to the Announcements of Top Executive Appointments. *Strategic Management Journal*, 28? 227–241.

Lerner S. (2012, July 20). Yahoo's Marissa Mayer and the Work-Life Dilemmas of the Rich and Famous. The Washington Post. Retrieved from http://www. washingtonpost.com/opinions/yahoos-marissa-mayer-and-the-work-life-dile mmas-of-the-rich-andfamous/2012/07/20/gJQA1pDYyW_stor y.html. Access: 1.7.2015.

Lewis K.R. (2012, October 2). Marissa Mayer's Brief Maternity Leave: Progress or Workaholism? Fortune. Retrieved from http://fortune.com/2012/ 10/02/ marissa-mayers-brief-maternity-leave-progress-or-workaholism/. Access: 1.7 .2015.

Lichter A. (2012, October 2). Marissa Mayer's Maternity Leave. The Wall Street Journal. Retrieved from http://blogs.wsj.com/juggle/2012/10/02/marissa-mayers-maternity-leave/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Lublin J.S. & Kwoh L. (2012, July 18). For Yahoo CEO, Two New Roles—Six Months Pregnant With Her First Child, Marissa Mayer Must Also Turn Around a Troubled Firm. Wall Street Journal. Retrieved from http://www.wsj.com/ articles/SB10001424052702303612804577533332960888756. Access: 1.7.20 15.

Margalit R. (2012, October 8). Marissa Mayer's Choice. The New Yorker. Retrieved from http://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/marissa-mayers-choice. Access: 1.7.2015.

McGregor J. (2012, July 17). New Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer Confirms She's Pregnant — and Shifts the Discussion on Women in Leadership. The Washington Post. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/p

ost-leadership/post/new-yahoo-ceo-marissa-mayer-confirms-shes-pregnant--and-shifts-the-discussion-on-women-in-leadership/2012/07/17/gJQAn6SRrW_blog.html. Access: 1.7.2015.

McGregor J. (2013, May 1). Marissa Mayer is no enigma. The Washington Post. Retrieved from http://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-leadership/wp/2013/05/01/marissa-mayer-is-no-enigma/. Access: 1.7.2015.

McKenna F. (2012, July 17). Marissa Mayer's Pregnancy: What does Yahoo Have to Disclose? Forbes. Retrieved from http://www.forbes.com/sites/ francine mckenna/2012/07/17/marissa-mayers-pregnancy-what-does-yahoo-have-to-disclose/. Access: 1.7.2015.

McLaughlin L. (2012: July 20). Yahoo's Marissa Mayer vs. the mommy judges. Informationweek. Retrieved from http://www.informationweek.com/it-leadership/yahoos-marissa-mayer-vs-the-mommy-judges/d/d-id/1105439? Access: 1.7.2015.

Mendes, K. (2012). 'Feminism Rules! Now, Where's my Swimsuit?' Re-Evaluating Feminist Discourse in Print Media 1968–2008. *Media, Culture & Society*, 34(5): 554–570.

The message of Marissa Mayer. (2012, July 30). Bloomberg Businessweek, 4290, 8.

Miller L. (2012, October 7). Can Marissa Mayer really have it all? New York Magazine. Retrieved from http://nymag.com/thecut/2012/10/marissa-mayer-yahoo-ceo.html. Access: 1.7.2015.

'Mommy wars,' Incited by Irresponsible Media, Says NOW President Kim Gandy. (2006, Spring). *Media Report to Women*, 34: 1-3.

Norton K. (2012, July 19). New Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer Needs To Take A Real, 12-Week Maternity Leave. Business Insider. Retrieved from http://www.businessinsider.com/marissa-mayer-and-women-in-tech-2012-7#ixzz3SsegEM00. Access: 1.7.2015.

Oreskovic A. (2012, October 1). Yahoo CEO to Return to Office One-Two Weeks after Birth of First Baby. Reuters. Retrieved from http://ca.reuters.com/article/technologyNews/idCABRE89015220121001. Access: 1.7.2015.

Peskowitz M. (2005). *The Truth Behind the Mommy Wars: Who Decides What Makes a Good Mother*? Emeryville, CA; Seal Press.

Richardson J.E. (2007). *Analyzing Newspapers: An Approach from Critical Discourse Analysis*. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rochman B. (2013, February 28). How Yahoo CEO Marissa Mayer is building a nursery by her office, and dissing working moms. Time. Retrieved from http://healthland.time.com/2013/02/28/how-yahoo-ceo-marissa-mayer-is-building-a-nursery-by-her-office-and-dissing-working-moms/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Ross K. (2010). *Gendered Media: Women, Men, and Identity Politics*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Rottenberg, C. (2014). The rise of neoliberal feminism. Cultural Studies, 28(3), 418-437. doi:10.1080/09502386.2013.857361. Access: 1.7.2015.

Sellers P. (2012, July 17). New Yahoo CEO Mayer is pregnant. Fortune. Retrieved from http://fortune.com/2012/07/17/new-yahoo-ceo-mayer-is-pregnant/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Sellers P. (2013, March 11). While Sheryl Sandberg leans in, Marissa Mayer lies low. Fortune. Retrieved from http://fortune.com/2013/03/11/while-sheryl-sandberg-leans-in-marissa-mayer-lies-low/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Shalvey K. (2012, July 18). Mayer's product design skills to be put to the test at Yahoo. Investors Business Daily, p. A04.

Sisco, T., & Lucas, J. (2015). 'Flawed vessels': Media framing of feminism in the 2008 presidential election. *Feminist Media Studies*, 15(3): 492–507.

Slaughter A. (2013, February 28). Marissa Mayer's job is to be CEO—not to make life easier for working moms. The Atlantic. Retrieved from http://www.theatlantic.com/sexes/archive/2013/02/marissa-mayers-job-is-to-be-ceo-not-to-make-life-easier-for-working-moms/273584/. Access: 1.7. 2015.

Smith A.M. (2001). Mass-market magazine portrayals of working mothers and related issues, 1987 and 1997. *Journal of children and Poverty,* 7(2): 101-119.

Sorkin, A. R., & Rusli, E. M. (2012, July 16). A Yahoo search calls up a chief from Google. New York Times. Retrieved from http://dealbook.nytimes.com/2012/07/16/googles-marissa-mayer-tapped-as-yahoos-chief/?_r=0. Access: 1.7.2015.

State of California. Employee Development Department. (2014). Paid family leave. http://www.edd.ca.gov/disability/paid_family_leave.htm. Access: 1.7.2015.

Stephens, M. (2007). *A History of News*. New York, NY: Oxford UP.

Stone, B., Womack, B., & Chang, E. (2012, July 23). Reading the mind of Marissa Mayer. *Bloomberg Businessweek*, 4289; 30-31.

Stone P. & Lovejoy M. (2004). Fast-track women and the 'choice' to stay home. The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science, 596, 62-83.

Sutter J.D. (2012, July 17) Marissa Mayer: From Google 'geek' to Yahoo CEO. CNN. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/16/tech/web/marissa-mayer-bio/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Swartz J. & Martin S. (2012, July 17). Yahoo gets new CEO: Well-respected Google exec Marissa Mayer. USA Today. Retrieved from http://usatoday30.usatoday.com/tech/news/story/2012-07-16/marissa-mayer-yahoo-ceo/56256682/1. Access: 1.7.2015.

Swisher K. (2013, February 22). Yahoo CEO Mayer now requiring remote employees to not be (remote). Wall Street Journal. Retrieved from http://allthingsd.com/20130222/yahoo-ceo-mayer-now-requiring-all-remote-employees-to-not-be-remote/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Swisher K. (2013, February 25). Survey says: Despite Yahoo ban, most tech companies support work-from-home for employees. Wall Street Journal. Retrieved from http://allthingsd.com/20130225/survey-says-despite-yahoo-ban-most-tech-companies-support-work-from-home-for-employees/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Taylor F. (2012, April 5). Google's Marissa Mayer: Passion is a gender-neutralizing force. CNN. Retrieved from http://www.cnn.com/2012/04/05/tech/google-marissa-mayer/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Terry A. (2012, July 17). Marissa Mayer: Yahoo's new CEO takes 'having it all' to new level. Christian Science Monitor. Retrieved from http://www.csmonitor.com/The-Culture/Family/Modern-Parenthood/2012/0717/Marissa-Mayer-Yahoo-s-new-CEO-takes-having-it-all-to-new-level-video. Access: 1.7.2015.

U.S. Department of Labour. Bureau of Labour Statistics. (2013). Women of Working Age. http://www.dol.gov/wb/stats/recentfacts.htm#mothers. Access: 1.7.2015.

U.S. Department of Labour. Bureau of Labour Statistics. (2015). Employee benefit survey http://www.bls.gov/ncs/ebs/benefits/2014/ownership/civilian/table32a.htm. Access: 1.7.2015.

U.S. Department of Labor. Wage and Hour Division. (2015). The family and medical leave act. http://www.dol.gov/whd/regs/compliance/1421.htm. Access: 1.7.2015.

Vavrus M.D. (2007). Opting out moms in the news. *Feminist Media Studies*, 7(1): 47-63.

Walsh J. (2012, July 17). Marissa Mayer's new job. Salon. Retrieved from http://www.salon.com/2012/07/17/marissa_mayers_new_job/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Ward K. & Wolf-Wendel L. (2012). Academic motherhood: How faculty manage work and family. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.

Williams M.E. (2012, October 3). Marissa Mayer can work if she wants. Salon. Retrieved from http://www.salon.com/2012/10/03/marissa_mayer_can_work_if_she_wants/. Access: 1.7.2015.

Williams, J. (2000). Unbending gender: Why family and work conflict and what to do about it. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.

Williams, J. C. (2012, July 30). Marissa Mayer's maternity leave is no model to follow. Newsweek. Retrieved from http://www.newsweek.com/marissa-mayers-maternity-leave-no-model-follow-65609. Access: 1.7.2015.

Appendix A

List of Publications in Sample

Associated Press
Bloomberg Businessweek
Business Insider
Christian Science Monitor
CNN
Forbes
Fortune
Informationweek
Investors Business Daily
Los Angeles Times
Market Watch
Mashable
NBC
New York Times
Newsweek
PC Magazine
Reuters
Salon
Slate
TechCrunch
The Atlantic
The New Yorker
The Washington Post
Wired
Time
USA Today
U.S. News & World Report
Wall Street Journal
Working Mother
Yahoo News