



Written by [Brian Koenig](#) on September 7, 2012

Planned Parenthood President Speaks at Democratic Convention

Shoving aside countless hours of research, Planned Parenthood President Cecile Richards said Wednesday at the Democratic National Convention that before birth control was legalized women were unlikely to finish school and had life expectancies not much higher than the age of 50. In her [speech](#), she also noticeably omitted the word “abortion” while railing against pro-life Republicans such as Rep. Todd Akin (Mo.).



“Nearly 100 years ago when Planned Parenthood was founded, birth control was illegal,” Richards told the convention. “And as a result, few women had the opportunity to finish school, and we really weren’t even expected to live much past the age of 50. But times have changed.”

“Today, we’re mothers and we are teachers and scientists and accountants and members of the armed forces,” she continued. “And because of President Barack Obama, more women than ever are serving in the U.S. cabinet and on the United States Supreme Court. We’ve come so far. We’ve come so far.”

Ms. Richards was sure to remind the gathering of Democratic supporters that Akin, who recently [said](#) “legitimate rape” victims seldom get pregnant because their bodies have “ways to shut that whole thing down,” joined House Republicans in an attempt to “redefine rape.”

“Two years ago, when John Boehner, Paul Ryan, Todd Akin and the Tea Party took control of the House of Representatives, they promised to create jobs and jump-start the economy,” [asserted](#) Ms. Richards. “But instead, on day one, they came after women’s health, and they haven’t let up since.”

Taking a shot at GOP presidential candidate Mitt Romney, Richards went on to blast President Obama’s November rival for threatening to defund Planned Parenthood, which cashes in on tens of millions of taxpayer dollars every year. She continued:

So why are we having to fight in 2012 against politicians who want to end access to birth control? It’s like we woke up in a bad episode of *Mad Men*. Because when Mitt Romney says he’ll “get rid of” Planned Parenthood, and turn the clock back on a century of progress, it has real consequences for the three million patients who depended on Planned Parenthood last year. Women like Libby Bruce, the patient you just heard from. Women like Brandi McCay, a 27-year-old whose stage two breast cancer was caught at a Planned Parenthood health center. She is now cancer-free. Or the woman who went on Facebook, after Paul Ryan voted to defund Planned Parenthood, and posted, “I guess they don’t understand that us military wives go to Planned Parenthood when the doctor on base can’t see us.”

While much of Ms. Richards’ speech was filled with empty political rhetoric and accusations against Republicans, her allegation regarding women’s health and education, quite simply, defy thousands of hours of professional research. For instance, a [study](#) on high school graduation rates for Americans born between 1900 and 1980, which was conducted for the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER), notes that throughout that timeframe females were more likely to graduate than males.



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Specifically, 81.4 percent of males born between 1946 and 1950 graduated while 82.1 percent of females graduated from high school, according to the NBER analysis. Further yet, from the period of 1980 through 1982 American women were 4.9 percent more likely to graduate than their male counterparts.

“To the degree that contraception use increased among American school girls born after 1945 it could not have increased their likelihood of graduating from high school because the female high school graduation *declined* after that,” CNS News’ Terence Jeffrey noted in an article on the Planned Parenthood president’s speech.

There is also a disconnect with Ms. Richard’s bold assertion on male-to-female life expectancies, as statistics released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) show that in *all periods* dating back to 1900 women in the United States have had *longer* life expectancies than men. According to [data](#) from the U.S. Life Tables, documented in the CDC’s *National Vital Statistics Reports*, American men born from 1900 to 1902 had a life expectancy of 47.88 years; comparatively, women born in this time period had a life expectancy of 50.70 years — more than two years higher than their male counterparts.

The CDC has since conducted 10 other studies on male and female life expectancies and concluded that women have consistently maintained a higher life expectancy than men. According to the CDC’s most recent data, formulated in 2007, women have a life expectancy of 80.4. Meanwhile, men born that year are expected to live an average of 75.4 years.

Related article: [Aggressive Abortion Stance Central to Democratic Platform](#)

Photos: President of Planned Parenthood Cecile Richards addresses the Democratic National Convention in Charlotte, N.C., on Sept. 5, 2012 (left); Richards also addressed the DNC in

Denver in 2008 (right): AP Images



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