

ABSTRACT

In spite of Sheryl Sandberg's call for women to "lean in" to their careers in order to break through persistent glass ceilings, 29 percent of mothers and 10 percent of women with a masters degree leave the workforce to care for their families (Livingston, 2014) and many others "opt out, ratchet back, and redefine work" more broadly (Belkin, 2003). One dominant explanation for this phenomenon is that women are making volitional choices to prioritize their families above their careers. An emerging body of research, however, points to a more complex set of factors that drive mothers' workplace and family behaviors. This presentation will describe findings from longitudinal and multi-source surveys as well as lab and field experiments that reveal the stereotype-driven messages that women encounter when they have children and the impact of these experiences on women's careers.