Wendy Crone: And I've been given the honor today of introducing Professor Nancy Hopkins. Nancy is truly world renowned, and she has accomplishments in such a wide variety of areas. Let me just give you a little bit of her CV so you can be as amazed as I am. She's the Amgen Inc. Professor of Biology at MIT, where she works in the Center for Cancer Research with the Biology Department. She's a member of the National Academy of Sciences, a fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and a member of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences and serves in its council. In addition to her highly recognized scientific work, since 1994, she has been working to promote women in science. In 1995 she was appointed chair of the first Committee on Women Faculty in the School of Science at MIT, and in 1999, a summary of the findings of her committee, published in the MIT faculty newsletter, came to be known as the "MIT Report on Women in Science." And probably many of you have read it. It's been read across the nation. In 2001, she was appointed co-chair of the first Council on Faculty Diversity at MIT. She's going to be giving a public lecture this afternoon that I'll just briefly mention. It will be held at the Ebling Symposium Center in the new Microbial Sciences Building. The reception for that is at two-thirty, and the lecture is at three. But we've asked her here to give some brief remarks, and then open up the floor for questions. So it's my honor to invite Nancy to take the floor.

[Applause]

Nancy Hopkins: Thank you very much for that kind introduction, and for inviting me here. I've had a wonderful time. I've been on an emotional roller coaster. I had one meeting where I thought all the problems for women were solved, and the next one I thought there was nothing but problems for women.

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: And I'm trying to come back to equilibrium. But because both things are true, unfortunately.

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: It's all solved and we have a long way to go. Let's see, first of all, I think what has happened on this campus is really remarkable. And you have incredible women here, and incredible women leaders, and you've been a national presence in this issue. And maybe it all began with Denice. Probably a great deal of it did. And I was really privileged to get to know Denice a little bit and to get to know her mother, which has really been wonderful. I don't know how much of what happened here is directly the result of her; I gather a lot of it is. I think it's extraordinary what's been accomplished here. I've been to a lot of campuses and some of them you have hope for, and some of them you don't. And this one really has really done a great job. And I think the WISELI program, but many other things – I met people here, the administration you've got [it's] just extraordinary. And these are things that – honestly, it's easy to forget – but ten years ago, I think we couldn't have imagined these things happening.

[Applause]

Nancy Hopkins: So I want to applaud the women of the University of Wisconsin for what you've accomplished here. I think it's really stunning. When I was asked to just make very brief comments – and I should say when I do these trips, the only reason I keep doing this at all is that I learn so much when I go, so I don't like to talk much. I like to listen. But I saw that it was about mentoring, so I thought well maybe I should talk about mentoring. Then I realized, wait a minute, who am I to come here and talk about mentoring, when, as I say, at MIT, when we were trying to set up mentoring programs, we had to go and get Denice Denton's mentoring programs and bring them to MIT. And I think Wisconsin has done a fabulous job, a better job on this than we have, so who am I to talk about that? So I thought I'd just make a few, sort of almost personal comments about what I've seen about mentoring over the years. I'm old enough now that I can look back on history, history, and report on progress over long periods of time, historical

periods of time. And so I thought just briefly about mentoring and how it played out in my lifetime, and then a little bit about where we came at MIT, because I have to say, MIT also changed a great deal in the last decade. The place I went to thirty-five years ago and the department I'm in now are like two different universes. It really is astonishing. And yet, I think that it's also fragile. So, I want to just quickly say something about critical mass and where are we and can we even tell? But just a bit on the mentoring. When I started out, I don't think that I had ever heard the word mentoring. I went through college and graduate school, and mentoring was something that you knew was important for people's careers – men's careers – and it just happened. It didn't happen because there were mentoring programs. There weren't any mentoring programs. Men mentored men. It happened. It happened in the men's room, happened in the hallways, happened in the corridors, just happened. And I think any of us who were fortunate enough to succeed in the system in that era were lucky enough to have fabulous, male mentors. And I certainly did, and I don't know if it would have been possible to become a scientist if you hadn't had such a thing happen. Somebody had to identify you, take an interest in you, pick you out, tell you you could do it, and encourage you. And mine happened to be, of all people, Jim Watson. Who knew?

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: Jim Watson, the man who discovered the structure of DNA. Anyway, he was a fabulous mentor and remained a friend of mine for many years – long story. Ah anyway, so but when I got MIT we saw the graduate students come in, and many graduate students were just lost. As more women came into the graduate program, they were just at a loss. And so mentoring programs became enormously important. And then women faculty also were at a loss, and mentoring programs had to be established for them. And this is, I say, when we went and learned about Denice Denton, who was by then making a national impact with the program she was developing by at then at the University of Washington and got hold of hers and readapted them for MIT. And they were the basis of what we did there. But as I think about it now, thinking back on all of

this [pause] – yes, we still absolutely need them, you absolutely need them. As I say, in some ways, they used to just happen informally because men selected good men and mentored them through. And there weren't people to do that for women; so we had to have these programs. I guess the question is: what will happen as we go forward? So, what is the best mentor for a person? So, something people always ask me is, "Well, don't you need a woman mentor if you are a woman?" And the answer is no. You need a person who is powerful and successful, and knows the ropes and knows how to tell you what to do. And the problem we had at the beginning when people said, "Oh, we have to have a woman mentor for every woman." These poor women were themselves needing mentors. So our senior women were in need of their own mentors, and they were not good mentors for people because they didn't know what was happening either. And so, what you really need is powerful people to be your mentors. You need powerful women. And I think what we've learned is – and I think you, I've seen it here today, also – is that when you don't have enough in your department because like you're the only woman in your department, then you have to get mentors from across the university. You have to reach outside the department. You have to reach across the school. You have to reach across the whole university sometimes. And that's what I think is one of the huge benefits that's come out of the work that all of you have done here. You are a network, and you're an amazingly positive network who really knows how to help each other. The other thing I think we've learned about it is – what's astonishing is, okay men had a system; it worked for them. Along came women, it didn't work for them. They had to invent a new system. Along came minorities, it didn't work for them. We have found that doesn't work. We've even found within the community of women it doesn't necessarily work for all women. Asian women have a specific problem. And these things that it's very hard to even see happening and you have to be attentive to the fact that what works for one group doesn't necessarily work for the person who is different in a slightly different way. So it's a very complex problem. But, finally I'm just going to say – and then I'm going to be quiet so that everybody else can talk and we can really get into this – I love science a great deal. And when I went to MIT, I felt I couldn't live without science. I felt if I could

not be a molecular biologist, I could not be a happy person. And so I was going to put up with a great deal.

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: There's no question. When I look back on it though, those twenty years of my life, I have to say I would not relive them. This was not a good way to live your life. The last fifteen years have been fabulous. And the difference actually was the coming together of the women faculty to make that network. At first it was fifteen, there were only fifteen tenured women when we came together. We made a network. So, suddenly, you had an environment outside of that place you had lived by yourself alone for twenty years, struggling with these problems individually. You had a network that was supportive, and that was completely life changing. And it made it a wonderful thing. And now when I go to my department, I hardly recognize the place. The women who came in after us – first of all, the number went up – okay so in my department, when I started at MIT, there were fifteen percent women. By the time I was hired fifteen percent women. That's thirty-five years ago. Twenty years later there were fifteen percent women. There were – no women ever had been in the administration. Today we have about twenty-two or -three percent women on our biology department faculty. And there have been women at every level of administration, except chair of the departments. So we've had associate chair of department, head of the Cancer Center, head of the Whitehead Institute. This has made an unbelievable difference. And I've gone from being the only tenured woman in my building for twenty years to having three tenured women – myself and two others – and they are colleagues. So it's a completely different life. So, and the thing that's most gratifying: I used to go to department meetings, no woman ever spoke. For twenty years, I never heard a woman speak up, except if they said something, it would be passed over as if nobody had spoken. It was like silence. I once spoke when I was a junior faculty member, some man made a nasty comment to me. I never spoke again for twenty years. So, now young women come in and they don't know that's the way it was and they speak up. And we've had women actually run a department meeting,

which was amazing for me the first time I saw it happen. And so these are fantastic changes. But what is sort of startling about it is if I look at what has made such a difference, it is all the things I've just named. But it's still fragile. The total number of women we're talking about is still a very small number. I'm getting near retirement. So when I retire, it'll be back to two women in my building. And two isn't that far from one. And they just hired three new faculty and they're all men. And you see that it's still very fragile in a field in which fifty percent of the PhDs today are women. And so I think that for all of the progress, the glass is still half full and half empty. And although we always think about solving this problem somehow with numbers, we aren't going to solve it with numbers for many people, in some fields, in our lifetime. And so we still don't know how to completely solve it for that person who may be the only woman in her building for her entire career, as I was in mine. And other than making these networks – outside, across departments and so forth – I don't know how to solve it. And my final point before we get into a really rip-roaring discussion of what we're going to do next is, yes I've sort of had it on all of this. In the sense of, as I said to you, I met with your provost this morning. I had a great conversation with him and you know, the thing is, we've identified a lot of problems that women have as they've gone through these systems. And people have done extraordinary jobs doing research on them, finding solutions to them. They sort of know how to fix these things. What are we waiting for? Like, hello? Where is the institution stepping up to the plate, and saying, "Okay, just give me the list. I'll get on it."

[Applause]

Nancy Hopkins: And really, I think that's where we are. Okay. That's my comments and I'm happy to discuss this forever.

[Applause]

Wendy Crone: Comments? Questions? Thoughts?

Audience member: So I think your last point is the most important, and it's hard to know, from where I sit, what to do.

Nancy Hopkins: Any ideas? One of the questions that comes up a lot – I just tossed this one out there is, we talked about it this morning, I talked about it with your provost – when do you speak out on these issues? Okay, well in terms of getting institutional response and getting administrative things done, there I think that maybe the one thing you can do is the power of the group. That is to say, if a huge number of women on the campus decide they want that to happen and they go as a group, your university almost has to do it. I mean, you know, kind of put pressure on. I think this question of stepping up and speaking out is a very big issue. And this where I think constantly about Denice, I think about her very often. What gave her the courage to speak out about these issues at a time when it was even much more difficult than it is today? And I think, you know, we all know why it's hard to speak out. It's hard when you're young because you don't have tenure yet. So of course you don't want to speak out. And I've always told, after I started doing these lecture tours, there were a couple of questions that were really common. One of them, the most common one was, people would come up to me afterwards, they'd wait for everybody else to leave and then they'd say, "Is it possible that women are discriminating against me? I think there's a woman who is discriminating, is that possible?" That was the most common question. But the other one was, "Should I speak up?" And I always told them, "No, no. Don't speak up until at least you have tenure, until you're old like me and it doesn't matter anymore." But I am wondering if we're right about that. I just wonder if, you know if we all began speaking up more, would this help this problem to get fixed faster? You know, when you see discrimination – I just don't know. I mean, what do you think? Naomi?

Naomi Chesler: Well, I mean, I'm in favor. I think it's a tough question. You don't want to jeopardize your position by speaking up, but if you're silent, then it goes on for longer. And so, there is a certain point, I guess, when you're on the tenure track, and you have to decide that this is too important to you to live with. And actually it's not that – you know

the university already has a lot of [inaudible]. You might not be as powerless as you think, even though you're untenured, because the university probably wants you to stay and probably it's less of a big splash [inaudible] did a couple of years ago with articles in the paper about discrimination against gays and lack of partner benefits. It's very embarrassing to the university. So, there is power there that we don't use. So, even untenured faculty members have power that we don't use, and so I wonder if perhaps we should – although I'm guilty of doing [inaudible] until I get tenure [inaudible].

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: Because I met Naomi when she was a junior faculty member at the University of Vermont, and she made a great impression on me by telling me about why she thought women left, and I think she was right. And I had forgotten but I apparently told her, "Don't speak up." And she said, "Until you get tenure." And she followed those instructions; got tenure. But I mean, one possibility is, you know, at MIT, I think the reason the women were effective was because they'd bonded as a group. They had a total of seventeen tenured women, and sixteen got together and stuck together, and wrote a letter signed by everybody that said there's discrimination in this institution. That's a powerful thing because a university can't afford to have sixteen or seventeen of their women faculty say there's discrimination. And then they kind of – everybody could hide behind unanimity of this thing. We were a group and we always spoke as a group. So, I'd go to see the Dean, and he'd say, "Okay, Nancy, what do you want? What do you want?" I'd say, "Oh, Bob, I'm really sorry, I can't tell you because I've got to go back and poll all those sixteen women before I can tell you what we want." So I would never speak to him as an individual. He knew he had to deal with all of us together. He could never cut people out and give them what they wanted and get rid of the rest. We were a group, and I think, collectively, you know, you have a lot of power.

Audience member: I also think that in the years since when you were an assistant professor [inaudible] and not changing [inaudible] speaking out [inaudible] even as an

untenured woman is not nearly as dangerous as it was because very likely there is some member of – for instance a senior male colleague in your department. Maybe not all or a majority, but some who are likely to say, "Oh, come on. It's not right. We shouldn't be doing this." There are resources like [inaudible] on campus where women get together and support somebody who [inaudible]. So I think that it's less dangerous than it used to be because of people who remain objective if someone is punished for speaking out.

Audience member: Well when you made the comment [inaudible] idea that there's [inaudible]. [Inaudible] but one of the reasons there's so much damage done to women is because it's done to us individually. So if we can talk about the collective [inaudible]. But we don't recognize that we're individual people [inaudible]. You talk about how women [inaudible] but if we can measure end-points in terms of who left, [inaudible]. I think we might be able to – there's plenty of numbers about who's [inaudible] on this campus you will get women who have gone to all of the different communities and taken all of the different routes, and we don't address problems. We move the woman [inaudible]. We move her into another department, we move her into another college, and we move her into another building. So I don't [inaudible].

Nancy Hopkins: Well, I mean there's two – that's really interesting, there's two things. You want the person to have a better life, so sort of moving them may have been good for the woman but it may not be good for the next one who falls into that same unfortunate trap, place. I mean, I think that is a problem. I agree with you. And you know, because that was what I guess happened today, that we had this meeting. We talked about the progress for women as a whole, and it's absolutely stunning. But then you talk about the individual things that happen to individual people and they're just horrendous. And so these two things are going on at the same time. And how do you deal with that?

Audience member: You've mentioned this talk that you've had with the provost. Can you report back on what the issues are?

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: Well, I mean, you know I had just been to this fabulous meeting where I was handed a list of priorities that were about to be presented to the Provost of things that the women agree are real problems. And he was terrific. And he started out by asking me why I thought progress is so slow. He had just been to a meeting of provosts, and the topic had come up and it said, you know, "Women keep coming into the pipeline. The numbers keep getting better, but they really aren't progressing to the top at the rate they should be. This is not really happening. Why do you think it is?" And, I said, "You know, well we have identified a whole lot of problems," and he agreed with that. We've identified a whole lot of problems. We know they're problems. And I said, "We don't have proof that if you fixed each one of those that you would solve this problem, but if you don't fix them, you know you have a problem."

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: So, "Here I happen to have a list," I said, "of the things that—." I said, "Number one: maternity leave. Ok, Maternity problems." And "oh, maternity," he said. "Oh no, maternity!"

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: So, he really knows about the maternity problem and he is waiting for the report from this committee, and he knows its coming. And he said, "I thought it was true that you said often people think that the reason these things don't get fixed is a financial issue. But very often it is not a financial issue. It's a question of making a set of priorities and just doing it." So, that's what he said but you know I know the actual execution –. But I'm wondering, you know, because you have such a strong group of women here and enough people who know the ropes here, if you were to lay out a five-year plan and say, "Here is my priority list, here's what we want you to do, and here's the

time scale." Maybe he'd do it, you know, because he also raised an interesting question. He said, "How do you think men feel about these things in terms of women asking? Do you think there are a lot of people who feel that this problem has been solved?" And I think this is another part of our problem. A lot of people think this is all whining; there is no problem. And it's all fixed. And there's, again, I wonder if because women have not spoken up enough. I mean, you know, I don't want to get into politics but for those of us who've watched the elections, I mean you have to have been struck by, I think, the sexism in the media and etcetera. And it's so blatant. And, you know, I think there haven't been enough of people speaking up against the things as they happen, day-by-day-by-day. You know, and, I don't know.

Audience member: I think one of the reasons that people don't speak up is – I hear this from people all the time, "I'm picking my battles. You know, I've only got so much energy." And there is some advantage. People tend to say, "Oh, [inaudible]." So I think [inaudible] problem working together as a group [inaudible].

Nancy Hopkins: Right, it's also the fact that, I mean it's true that in a university you're going to live with your colleagues for thirty years and if you get on bad terms with them, that's thirty years of bad terms you have to live with. So it's hard for people to speak up against the individual problems within their department. And, again, that's where having people outside – I mean the sort of salary battles. I don't know if you've done these here. We have these things called Gender Equity Committees and a woman is the head of that committee and reviews the salaries every year with the Dean and looks for ones that are low. That's a person that can sort of do it for somebody else, be an advocate for the salary issues without the person having to go and fight with their department head [inaudible] and things like that. So somehow we can take the burden off the person. But I've found when I was doing this work – I used to beg women to come and complain and they really don't want to often. And understandably because you have to live there. But if you don't complain, then how do you fix it? And you know, but the problem, some of the problems I heard about today, I was really just totally shocked I have to say. I mean and I'm sure

they're going on at MIT. I just haven't looked, I haven't followed them. I mean having to do with sexual harassment, having to do with maternity issues. I mean these policies and stuff – I mean, these are not okay. And there are things that could be done as a general thing, I think, as a part of a plan, five-year plan. And then the individual cases, I mean you almost want to say require people to report them, almost. I don't know how you do it to prevent retaliation.

Audience member: I have a question and a comment. First of all, I was in graduate school in Boston when the MIT report came out. And I am fortunate that [inaudible].

[Laughter]

Audience member: And I think it would be great for some of us who haven't heard about how that all went down to hear about it. [Inaudible] But the other thing that I've noticed, being in a few different institutions, is that blatant discrimination where, if you're meeting the standards of a man, if you're following a male [inaudible]. I think that's less of a problem, but the issue is saying, "Well, you know what? I have a different trajectory." For [inaudible] and even if maternity leave is given, how does that get evaluated from tenure? Where does that mom time go? [Inaudible] and I think one of the problems is that it's in the university's interest—and I don't know enough about here—but in my previous position, I was at another university where, when I started in on graduate school, my husband was diagnosed with cancer. And he continued to decline for five years, and it was very, very intensive care. And I was also the only bread winner. And I said, "You know, look. I can teach because I need to earn money and I need to have health insurance, but I can't proceed with my research in this situation." And they said, "Well, we'll go and make an exception to you, but we don't want anyone to know about it because we don't want it to become a precedent. Now, we had a union, and I said, "No." And I went to the union and it became a policy. But it was partly because when somebody is dying you think, "Who cares what happens to the rest of my life?" You know, I was just kind of willing to fight anything. But I think that that is, you know,

a question of, when somebody's up against the wall like that and the university's offering to solve your individual problem so long as [inaudible] that becomes a really difficult exchange to make. You know, I mean I often –people write to me now from my old institution and they thank me for making the care giving policy a policy. And it was only because I was pissed off and I really didn't care. You know if I had thought more I probably would have taken the first deal that was offered. But, you know, I think that that's part of what goes on, it's the individual cases. The thing is they're not individual cases. Everybody gets sick. Everybody has somebody in their life who gets sick. Everybody – you know people have children. People have this time that they need to spend caring for others and that tends to fall within women unfortunately. And that hasn't changed. And should that affect career trajectory? I don't think so. You know, should we be forcing women to give up their care giving responsibilities? I wouldn't have given them up. I wouldn't have given them up at all. And I did have female mentors who said, "You shouldn't spend so much time with him. You should be getting your dissertation published." You know, I'm sorry. He's dead now; I have no regrets in terms of how I cared for him. Did I pay career-wise? Sure. But, you know, should it be that either or? You know, you go forward and you just kind of go along with that.

Nancy Hopkins: Well, first of all [inaudible].

[Applause]

Nancy Hopkins: Secondly, how does the university look on [inaudible] tenure extension? This is one of the big issues that I think really got addressed quite effectively, it's not [inaudible]. And that was women were afraid [inaudible], knew what they were and women were afraid to take them because of the stigma attached. So men took them [inaudible].

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: So, when we started out I remember one woman [inaudible] said [inaudible] when her tenure case came up. Well she had gone to the [inaudible] person and said she wanted to take a [inaudible]. The person said, "Oh please, do. You'd be the first woman ever to do it and get tenure."

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: And she said, "I guess I won't."

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: And she, that woman did get tenure and [inaudible]. She came up, he afterwards congratulated her and said [inaudible]. I did commend the fact that she [inaudible].

[Laughter]

Nancy Hopkins: And he was then [inaudible] because he knew they would not be [inaudible]. That's not that long ago, a few years ago. So, in terms of that, so one of things that was done after the MIT report became public was to make a uniform family leave policy [inaudible]. And extend the tenure clock for women who have a child. And we were very concerned about, first of all, would it work? Would people take it? And will it help more people and how [inaudible]? And this takes a long time to answer; the first data is just starting to come through. So we've just seen the first women come through who've benefited from it. And actually all except one has come through to thank me [inaudible] because it made the difference for me. I couldn't have done it [inaudible]. And the thing is that women are taking [inaudible] across the university. Everyone was involved; an administrator was involved [inaudible]. And so it's gradually becoming as standard as taking a sabbatical. [Inaudible] talk about because it's an unsolvable problem [inaudible]. So there, I think that people can [inaudible] we can [inaudible]. And I think

it's gradually becoming part of the culture. But these things just take so long. They take so long.

Audience member: I'm just going to make a comment on that. [Inaudible] on our campus it's the University Committee that has the final say on tenure extensions and it is the policy of that committee to grant tenure extensions without question. And don't let anyone on this campus tell you that there's not a good reason to get a tenure extension. The reasons are all over the map, okay. And all sorts of different people are applying and all sorts of different people are granted tenure extensions. And that I think is something that is really strong on this campus. But what's not so strong is the knowledge [inaudible]. Okay, so please don't let anyone tell you, or anyone tell anyone, that they can't apply. Everyone who has a situation that warrants it should apply.

Audience member: Can I just add I sat on the University Tenure Committee for the biological sciences [inaudible]. It is not looked upon negatively. People do not believe me when I say this but it is the truth. Half the people on those committees have had them as well. They have kids. They understand [inaudible]. At the divisional level, all that's said is there was an extension to the tenure clock. The reason never comes up. It's never [inaudible], it's a non-issue. I cannot address the department and that's maybe where [inaudible]. I would encourage all of you who are tenured in this room to nominate yourself for service on the commission of review, especially the tenure committee because this is one of the most hallowed places where you can make change. You get more women on the committee and that continues to improve the culture. Yes, it's more committee work but this is an important one.

Wendy Crone: Wonderful questions and comments. I'm sorry that we have to cut short but we're to the time that we said we would have lunch today. We will get to hear additional remarks at the public lecture this afternoon. I wanted to just mention the list that Nancy mentioned came out of the workshop that the Women Faculty Mentoring Program held three weeks ago. And we had women from all over campus, at all different

levels coming together to think about what are the issues, prioritizing those issues, and what might we do about them? And we'll be taking that list of issues as well as some of the action plans that were developed out of that workshop to the Provost and to various committees where responsibility will hopefully reside. So, things will be moving forward off of that. But we're definitely seeking your support and additional input. Let me close by thanking you again, and let's give Nancy a hand for –

[Applause]

Wendy Crone: And thank you very much for your participation today.