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Census reports racial and gender income divisions

BY GENARO C. ARMAS
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Black and Asian women with bachelor's degrees earn slightly more than similarly educated white women, and white men with four-year degrees make more than anyone else, according to Census Bureau data released today.

A white woman with a bachelor's degree typically earned nearly \$37,800 in 2003, compared with nearly \$43,700 for a college-educated Asian woman and \$41,100 for a college-educated black woman. Hispanic women took home slightly less at \$37,600 a year.

The bureau did not say why the differences exist. Economists and sociologists suggest one possible factor: the tendency of minority women, especially blacks, to more often hold more than one job or work more than 40 hours a week.

Because study in the area is limited, it is hard to pinpoint specific reasons, said Barbara Gault, research

director at the Institute for Women's Policy Research.

"It could be the fields that educated black women are choosing," she said. "It also could be related to the important role that black women play in the total family income in African-American families."

Notions that black women are struggling financially as much as other groups should not be dismissed, Gault added.

For instance, nearly 39 percent of families headed by a single black woman were in poverty, compared with 21 percent of comparable white women, according to census estimates released last year.

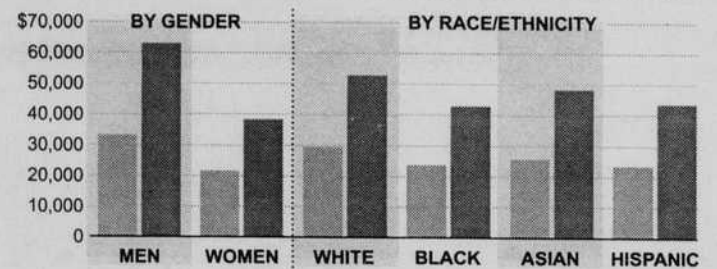
A white male with a college diploma earns far more than any similarly educated man or woman — in excess of \$66,000 a year, according to the Census Bureau. Among men with bachelor's degrees, Asians earned more than \$52,000 a year, Hispanics earned \$49,000 and blacks earned more than \$45,000.

College educated workers earn more

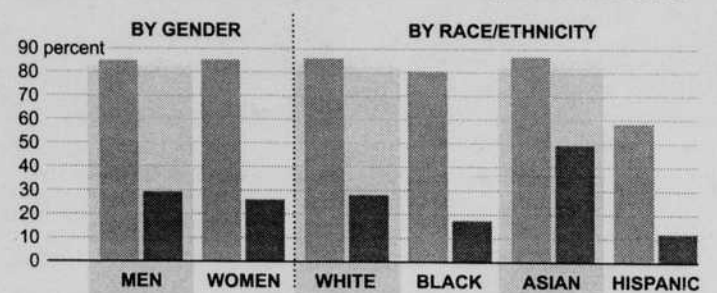
Figures from a 2004 Census Bureau survey reinforce the value of a college education, showing workers with a bachelor's degree earn more than those with only a high school diploma.

■ High school graduate ■ Bachelor's degree

Average annual earnings for workers ages 18 and older



Educational attainment of Americans ages 25 and older



SOURCE: U.S. Census Bureau

NOTE: Hispanic can be of any race

AP

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