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## White Men Earn More Than Others With 4-year Degrees

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Black and Asian women with bachelor's degrees earn slightly more than similarly educated white and Hispanic women, and white men with four-year degrees make more than anyone else with bachelor's degrees.

A white woman with a bachelor's degree typically earned \$37,761 in 2003, compared with \$43,656 for a college-educated Asian woman and \$41,066 for a college-educated black woman, according to Census Bureau data. Hispanic women took home slightly less at \$37,550 a year.

The bureau didn't say why the differences exist. Economists and sociologists suggest possible factors: the tendency of minority women, especially blacks, to more often hold more than one job or work more than 40 hours a week, and the tendency of black professional women who take time off to have a child to return to the work force sooner than others.

Employers in some fields may give extra financial incentives to young black women, who graduate from college at higher rates than young black men, said Roderick Harrison, a researcher at the Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a think tank that studies minority issues.

"Given the relative scarcity, if you are a woman in the sciences -- if you are a black woman -- you would be a rare commodity," Harrison said.

Because study in the area is limited, it is hard to pinpoint specific reasons, said Barbara Gault, research director at the Washington-based 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 -- \$66,390 a year, according to the Census