


White Privilege/ The Black-White Pay Gap



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Racism terminology

- ✓ Racism: belief that humans are subdivided into distinct groups that are different in their social behavior and innate capacities and that can be ranked as superior or inferior (p. 393)
- ✓ Personal racism: individual's expression of racist attitudes or behaviors (p. 391)
 - Can be either prejudice (attitudes) or discrimination (unfair treatment)
- ✓ Institutional racism: laws, customs, and practices that systematically reflect and produce racial and ethnic inequalities in a society, whether or not the individuals maintaining these laws, customs, and practices have racist intentions (p. 405)

Adapted from Newman's Sociology (2000). Pine Forge Press. © 2008 David Schweingruber

White privilege

- ✓ White privilege: term coined by Peggy McIntosh to describe "an unearned package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious"
 - I can, if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
 - I can avoid spending time with people whom I was trained to mistrust and who have learned to mistrust my kind and more.
 - I can be reasonably sure that my neighbors will be neutral or pleasant to me.
 - When I am told about our national heritage or about "civilization," I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
 - Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance that I am financially reliable.
 - I can swear, or dress in secondhand clothes, or not answer letters, without having people attribute these choices to the bad morals, the poverty, or the illiteracy of my race.
 - I can be reasonably sure that if I ask to talk to "the person in charge," I will be facing a person of my race
 - I can worry about racism without being seen as self-interested or self-seeking.
 - I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazines featuring people of my race.
- ✓ Whites can act as though they are "colorless" (not having a race)
 - Racial transparency: tendency for the race of a society's majority to be so obvious, normative, and unremarkable that it becomes, for all intents and purposes, invisible (p. 407)

Peggy's (2000) Racist America. © 2008 David Schweingruber

More benefits of whiteness

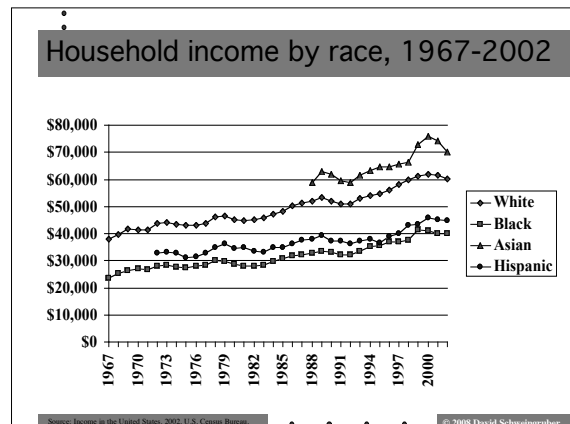
- ✓ Psychological benefit of not having to experience discrimination—self-report studies show discrimination in:
 - College: including with white students, professors, campus police
 - Military: 75% reported racist encounters in past year, e.g., racist joke (52%)
 - Public: retail (30%), dining out (21%) in last month (Gallup Poll)
- ✓ Immediate economic gain—audit studies show discrimination in:
 - Housing: landlords in 53% of cases, real estate agents in 59%
 - Housing insurance in 53% of cases (Memphis 32% —Chicago 83%)
 - Hiring: 20% of cases in FEC DC study, 38% in UI DC-Chicago study
 - Another hiring study: "white" names 50% more likely to get interview
- ✓ Non-economic discrimination—studies report discrimination in:
 - Parents visiting schools: whites more likely to speak to principal and get tour
 - Asking for help in public places: blacks less likely to get response
- ✓ Longer-term economic gain

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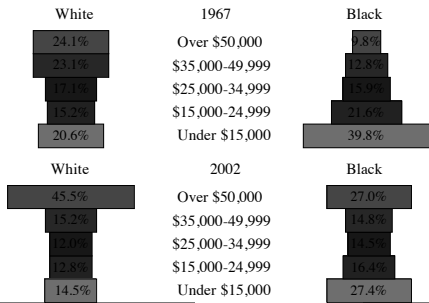
Why do whites make more than blacks?

- ✓ Household incomes vary by race
 - ✓ White mean = \$60,166; Black mean = \$40,011
 - ✓ Gap has closed slightly; 2002 = 66.5%; 1967 = 62.8%
- ✓ Why?
 - ✓ Household composition
 - ✓ Education gap
 - ✓ Work in different occupations
 - ✓ Blacks offered lower paying jobs within same occupations
 - ✓ Wealth gap

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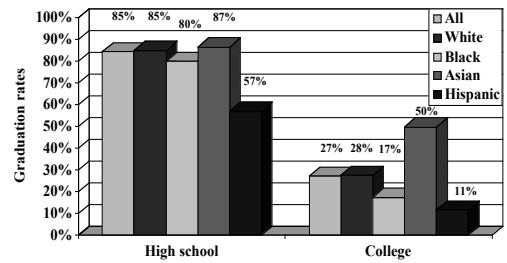
Changing income configurations



Source: Income in the United States, 2002, U.S. Census Bureau.

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Education by race, 2003



Source: 2004 OF Statistical Abstracts of the U.S., table 212.

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Black occupational representation

Greatest black overrepresentation		Greatest black underrepresentation	
Nursing aides & orderlies	30.4%	Geologists	0.5%
Postal clerks	29.3%	Dental hygienists	1.0%
Hotel maids & housemen	29.1%	Cabinetmakers	1.6%
Corrections officers	28.2%	Tool & dye makers	1.7%
Bus drivers	27.9%	Dentists	1.9%
Telephone operators	26.0%	Bartenders	2.0%
Pressing-machine officers	24.9%	Advertising executives	2.3%
Social workers	23.7%	Architects	2.5%
Security guards	23.4%	Realtors	3.4%
Textile & apparel workers	20.3%	Lawyers	3.6%
Janitors & cleaners	20.1%	Designers	4.2%

Source: Hacker, 1997, *Minor: Who Are They, How Much and Why*.

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