

IN THE NEWS

African Americans: Facts from the Census Bureau

The following statistics about the nation's African American population was compiled by the United States Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

POPULATION

• IN 1790, when the first census was taken, African Americans numbered about 760,000. In 1860, at the start of the Civil War, the African American population had increased to 4.4 million, and doubled by 1900 to 8.8 million.

African Americans reached the 15 million mark in 1950, and close to 27 million by 1980. According to the 1990 census, there were about 30 million African Americans—about 12 percent of the total U.S. population.

The African American population is projected to be over 35 million by the year 2000.

More recent statistics include:

HEALTH INSURANCE

• About 20 percent of African Americans were without health insurance coverage in 1992, a proportion not significantly different from the percent of African Americans in poverty.

BUSINESS

• Sales and receipts from firms owned by African Americans men were doubled those of businesses owned by African American women—\$13.2 billion versus \$6.5 billion in 1987.

EDUCATION

• About two-thirds of African Americans aged 25 and older were high school graduates in 1992, and about 1 in 8 had a bachelor's degree or more.

FAMILIES

• African American families in 1992 are almost evenly split between traditional married-couple families and those maintained by women with no spouse present.

EARNINGS

• The median earnings of African American men aged 25 and over who were year-round, full-time workers was \$23,311 for high school graduates in 1992; \$28,427 for those with an associate's degree; \$31,322 for those with a bachelor's degree; and \$41,691 for those with a post-graduate degree.

Comparable figures for

African American women were \$17,333, \$23,171, \$28,344, and \$32,931 respectively.

• The median earnings ratio of African American women to African American men increased from 75 percent in 1979 to 85 percent in 1991.

POVERTY

• Between 1989 and 1992, the number and proportion of African Americans in poverty increased from 9.3 million to 10.6 million and from 30.7 percent to 33.3 percent.

• Nearly 5 out of 10 African American children under the age of 18 were poor in 1992, compared with 4 out of 10 Hispanic origin children and less than 2 out of 10 White children.

HOME OWNERS/RENTERS

• A larger proportion of African American households were renters (56 percent) than owners (42 percent) in 1992.

OCCUPATIONS

• In 1992, there were more African American women (6.1 million) than men (5.8 million) in the civilian labor force.

A higher proportion of African American women than

men were employed in managerial and professional specialty occupations (20 compared to 14 percent) and in service occupations (28 compared to 19 percent).

Conversely, the proportion of African American men employed in precision production, craft, and repair jobs (15 percent) was 7 times that of African American women (2 percent).

MARITAL STATUS

• In 1980, 45 percent of African American women 15 years old and over were currently married; by 1992, that proportion had declined to 38 percent. The corresponding figures for African American men were 49 and 42 percent.

WORKING POOR

• In 1991, African Americans (15 percent) were more than twice as likely than Whites (6 percent) to be "working poor"—that is, with income below the poverty level while holding a job.

To find more statistics on African Americans, consult:

- The Black Population in the United States: March 1992 (P20-471)
- We, The American Blacks
- Survey of Minority-Owned Business Enterprises
- 1990 Census Profile: Race and Hispanic Origin
- Americans with Disabilities: 1991-92 (P70-33). The report provides information from the first comprehensive disability survey ever taken by the Census Bureau.

WORKING PROFILES OF METRO AREAS FROM CUSTOMER SERVICES

How many African American doctors are there in your metro area? How many Hispanics are employed in service industries?

The Census Bureau's Customer Services sells printouts for each of the nation's metro areas giving totals for 512 occupations in the 1990 census Equal Employment Opportunity file.

The occupation tables give totals by gender, race, and Hispanic origin.

For ordering information, contact 301-763-4100.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

African American Pride

To the editor:

What is African American pride?

For the past few weeks, I have been pondering this question. I have debated within myself and came to my final answer as to "What is African American pride?"

These are truly tough times for African Americans in Kitsap county. Many of us would dispute that the dikes have been broken and that we are on a suicide course.

The trend seems as if it can not be reversed. With the senseless killing of our African-American population, we are committing self genocide.

I believe that there are enough of us with the courage, vision and purpose to push back the ugly and diseased forces and make the human experiment a total success. Just believing is not doing.

We need to take action. We need to get involved in the process of intellectualizing; which will lead to the thrust of our problems.

The African American must begin to reshape the institutions, particularly the university. We can not suit our personal needs but serve the community as a whole and revolutionize the way our children are taught.

For too many decades the African American university, the African American politician, the African American athlete, the African American professional and the common African American have sought to satisfy individual attainment.

Individual glories have failed to mark progress for many. Yet, too many of the best African American talents have mimicked the white image.

In doing so, we have copied many of the white man's mistakes. We have forgotten our heritage.

The African American's responsibility today is to erect his own values and his own goals. The African American man and woman cannot function alone.

They must act within an everwidening community of family, university, job and neighborhood. The communities affect the individual, so will the individual affect his environment.

We as individuals, have a choice, we cannot substitute "honky" for "nigger" and hate for love.

The pride of being Black must shine among us like a beacon. We are proud of who we are. Yes, Black is beautiful. But what have you done lately to make it more beautiful? Black is beautiful so long as you choose to make it that way.

As we have recently honored Black History Month, I call upon every one of us to look at ourselves and not accept the things around us. We can not afford to be separated. Strength is through harmony.

The pride is there; our forerunners have cast the path for us. Kitsap county is becoming an urban center and we must clearly establish the foundation for our future generations.

When this occurs, then we will have answered the question, "What is African American pride?"

Peace be with you and may we continue to look toward the East for the never-ending light.

M. Nathaniel Hibbler
Kingston

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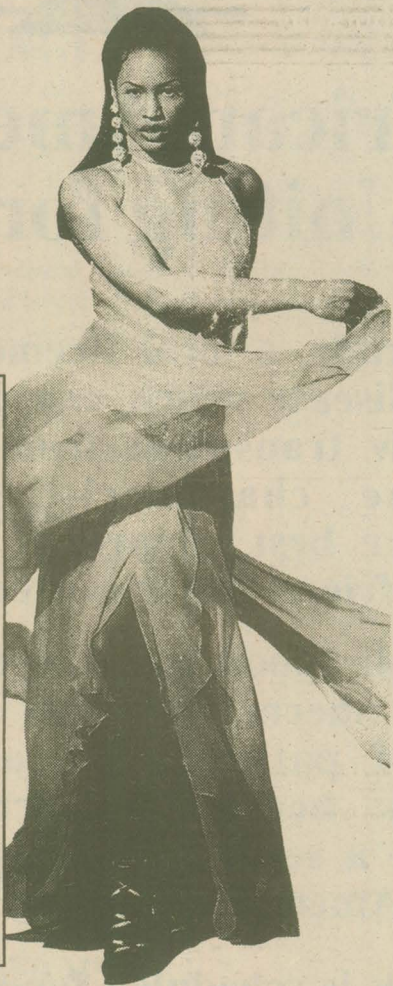
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