

Fact Sheet

IWPR #D471

November 2006

The Economic Security of Older Women and Men in California

Social Security is a crucial source of income for California's seniors, and especially so for women.

- More than 8 in 10 men and women aged 65 or older in California receive Social Security benefits (Table 2).
- Social Security is the largest source of income for older women (45 percent of income; Figure 3).

Fewer women than men have pension income.

- Only 1 in 4 California women receives pension income (compared with 43 percent of men).
- For those who have pensions, the typical woman receives only about half as much as the typical man (\$7,350 vs. \$14,314; Table 2). Comparing all women and men (those with and without pensions) women's pension income is only about one-third of men's (Figure 3).

The majority of California's senior women live alone.

- 60 percent are not currently married; they are widowed, divorced or never married.
- 60 percent of older white women (866,000), 72 percent of older African American women (88,100),
- 63 percent of older Hispanic women (219,200), and 51 percent of older Asian American women (128,800) are not married (Table 1).

Many seniors in California continue to work for pay.

- 12 percent of older women (260,000) and 21 percent of older men (349,300) in California work for pay (Table 2).
- The typical working older woman makes only 60 percent of the typical older man's earnings (\$14,000 for women compared with \$22,594 for men annually).

Older African American and Hispanic women are the most likely to be poor and the least likely to have income from assets such as savings accounts or stocks and bonds.

- Almost 1 in 5 older African American women (18 percent) and more than 1 in 7 Hispanic women (13 percent) in California are poor, compared with 1 in 20 white men (5 percent), as shown in Table 1.
- Only 28 percent of African American women and 26 percent of Hispanic women have income from assets, compared with 71 percent of white men, and among those who have asset income, the typical African American woman receives less than one-third and the typical Hispanic woman receives less than one-eighth the amount the typical white man receives (\$534 for African American women and \$195 for Hispanic women vs. \$1,628 for white men per year; Table 2).

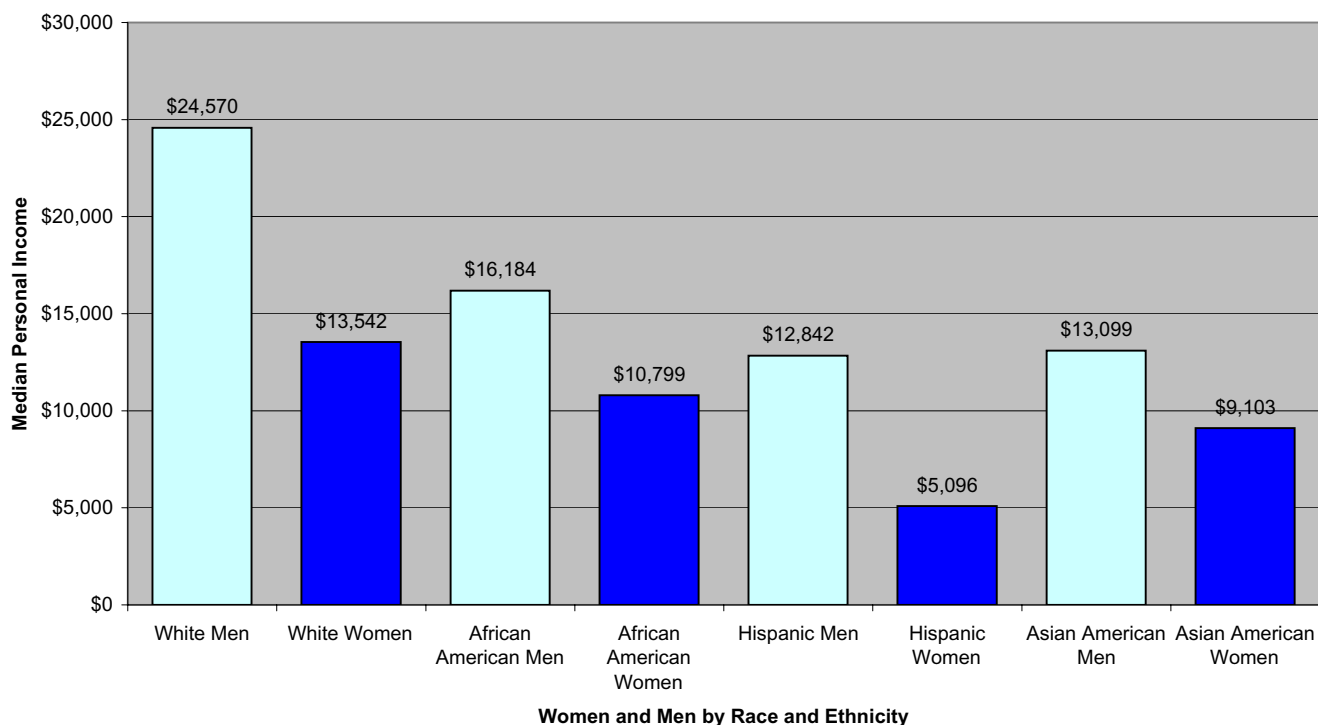
Table 1. Characteristics of Older Women and Men by Race/Ethnicity (Aged 65 and Older) : California vs. United States

CALIFORNIA						
	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian American	All ¹	Total Population ²
WOMEN						
Racial composition	66.4	5.5	14.6	12.4	100.0	2,203,634
Percent married	40.8	28.4	36.8	49.5	40.5	892,472
Percent living in poverty	7.8	18.4	12.9	8.6	9.2	202,734
Median personal income ³ (Sample size)	\$13,542 (1,553)	\$10,799 (277)	\$5,096 (702)	\$9,103 (451)	\$11,627 (3,021)	
MEN						
Racial composition	67.0	5.1	14.1	12.6	100.0	1,695,572
Percent married	70.0	61.0	70.3	80.5	70.7	1,198,769
Percent living in poverty	5.3	7.5	11.7	9.8	7.0	118,690
Median personal income (Sample size)	\$24,570 (1,275)	\$16,184 (196)	\$12,842 (526)	\$13,099 (359)	\$19,846 (2,387)	
UNITED STATES						
	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian American	All	Total Population
WOMEN						
Racial composition	81.5	8.7	5.9	2.9	100.0	20,062,666
Percent married	44.7	26.3	39.6	48.1	42.8	8,586,821
Percent living in poverty	10.0	27.2	22.3	11.8	12.3	2,467,708
Median personal income	\$12,407	\$9,350	\$7,703	\$8,604	\$11,671	
MEN						
Racial composition	82.5	7.5	6.0	3.1	100.0	15,146,792
Percent married	75.4	59.0	70.3	78.9	73.8	11,178,333
Percent living in poverty	5.3	17.3	17.6	11.4	7.3	1,105,716
Median personal income	\$21,958	\$13,860	\$12,000	\$14,046	\$20,420	

Source: IWPR calculations based on the Census Bureau's March Current Population Survey, 2002-2005.

Notes: ¹Statistics for "All" include Native Americans, others, and those with two or more races. ²"Total Population" refers to population estimates for the population aged 65 and older calculated by IWPR using DataFerrett at the Census Bureau website based on the 2005 March Current Population Survey. ³Income data are for calendar years 2001-2004 in 2004 constant dollars.

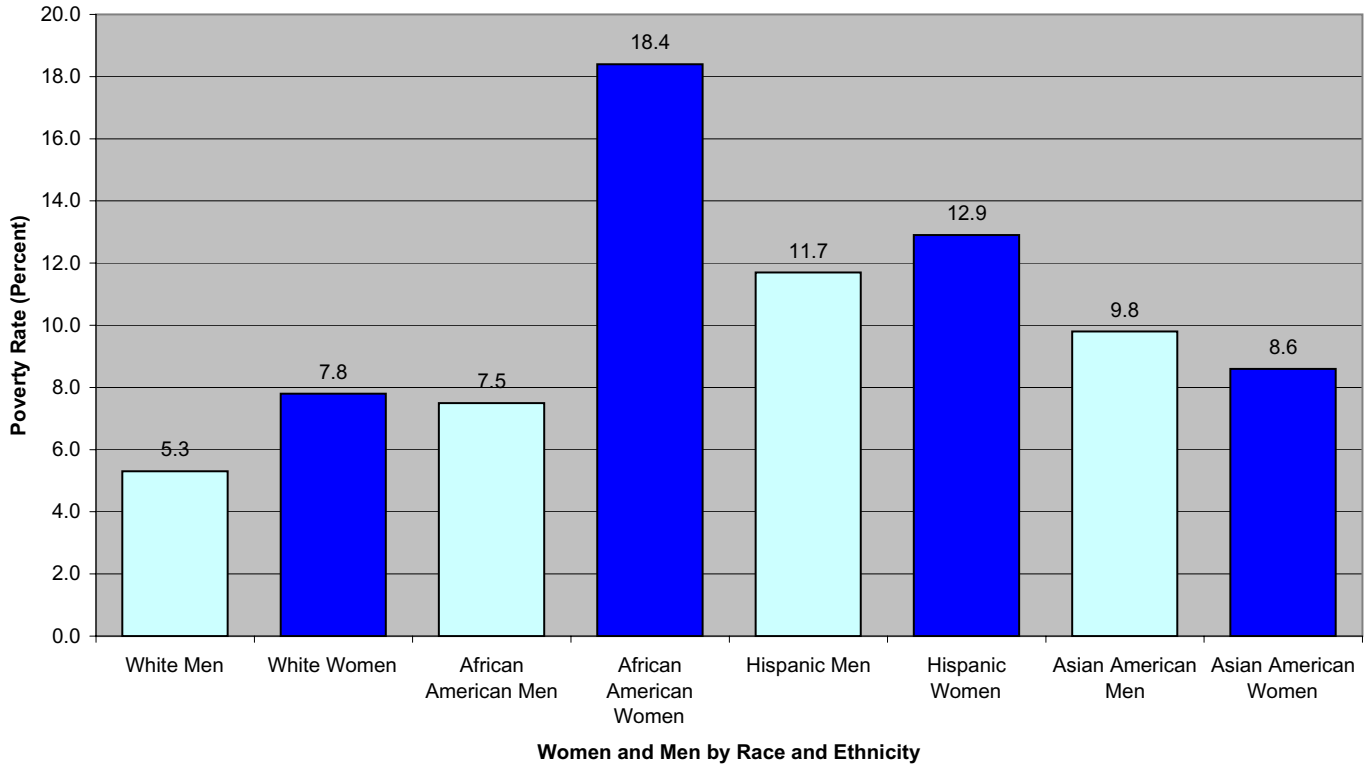
Figure 1. Median Annual Personal Income in California for Older Women and Men by Race (Aged 65 and Older)



Source: IWPR calculations based on the Census Bureau's March Current Population Survey, 2002-2005.

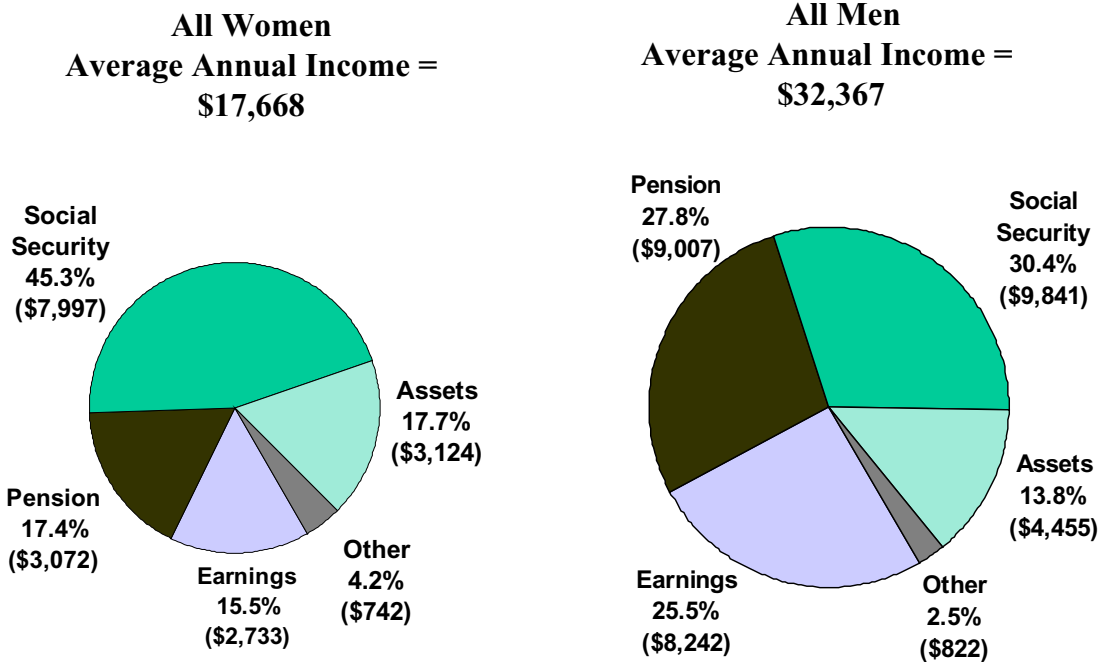
Note: Income data are for calendar years 2001-2004 in 2004 constant dollars.

Figure 2. Poverty Rates in California for Older Women and Men by Race (Aged 65 and Older)



Source: IWPR calculations based on the Census Bureau’s March Current Population Survey, 2002-2005.

Figure 3. California: Sources of Income for Women and Men Aged 65+



Source: IWPR calculations based on the March Current Population Survey, 2002-2005.

Note: Benefits, income, and earnings data are for calendar years 2001-2004 in 2004 constant dollars. Percentages are calculated based on average annual incomes for each source including zero values. Average amounts for each source are in parentheses. Average (or mean) amounts are typically higher than median amounts (the amount received by the person in the middle of the income distribution, which are shown elsewhere) because those at the high end of the income distribution often have very high incomes that raise the mean above the median.

Table 2. California: Overview of Retirement Income Security by Race (Aged 65 and older)

WOMEN					
	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian American	All¹
Total Population ²	1,462,833	123,088	346,894	255,095	2,203,634
Social Security					
Percent receiving	87.8	80.8	74.8	62.2	82.4
Median annual benefit received ^{3,4}	\$9,779	\$8,275	\$8,003	\$8,117	\$9,331
Pension					
Percent receiving	31.9	27.5	13.8	12.9	26.4
Median annual pension received	\$7,560	\$11,240	\$4,800	\$7,170	\$7,350
Assets					
Percent receiving	62.9	27.6	25.8	35.8	51.9
Median annual income received	\$1,444	\$534	\$195	\$999	\$1,160
Earnings					
Percent employed	12.8	12.4	10.7	8.4	11.8
Median annual earnings received	\$13,871	\$10,927	\$16,647	\$10,270	\$14,000
SSI					
Percent receiving	4.9	15.5	12.3	21.8	8.6
Median annual benefit received	\$8,282	\$3,697	\$3,968	\$8,400	\$7,394
MEN					
	White	African American	Hispanic	Asian American	All
Total Population	1,119,799	85,194	267,541	202,465	1,695,572
Social Security					
Percent receiving	85.3	83.3	76.6	67.6	81.7
Median annual benefit received	\$12,799	\$10,582	\$10,582	\$10,798	\$12,033
Pension					
Percent receiving	49.0	40.9	28.5	27.9	42.7
Median annual pension received	\$16,006	\$15,120	\$8,820	\$12,046	\$14,314
Assets					
Percent receiving	70.6	37.6	29.8	47.5	60.0
Median annual income received	\$1,628	\$675	\$315	\$977	\$1,320
Earnings					
Percent employed	22.0	21.0	17.5	15.5	20.6
Median annual earnings received	\$25,000	\$20,273	\$20,000	\$21,000	\$22,594
SSI					
Percent receiving	4.3	4.6	8.2	15.8	6.3
Median annual benefit received	\$8,400	n/a ⁵	\$4,313	\$8,257	\$7,875

Source: IWPR calculations based on the Census Bureau's March Current Population Survey, 2002-2005

Notes: ¹Statistics for "All" includes Native Americans, others, and those with two or more races. ²"Total Population" refers to population estimates for the population aged 65 and older calculated by IWPR using DataFerrett at the Census Bureau website based on the 2005 March Current Population Survey. ³Benefits, income, and earnings data are for calendar years 2001-2004 in 2004 constant dollars. ⁴Median annual amounts are calculated only among people who received income from each source, excluding zero values in the calculation. ⁵N/A indicates a sample size smaller than 30.

This fact sheet is based on research conducted by Sunhwa Lee and was written by Tori Finkle, Heidi Hartmann, Sunhwa Lee and Barbara Gault. IWPR is grateful to the AARP and the Ford Foundation for supporting both the production and dissemination of this research.

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