

GENDER,
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this is much bigger than just WSSU. This is much bigger than even college.

High school graduation rates for men are now slightly lower than those for women, and male students make up the vast majority of those enrolled in special education classes. There are more women in college than men, and there are more black men in jail than college. Where are our black men? Last year at colleges and universities across the United States, the proportion of bachelor's degrees reached an ultimate high at an estimated 57 percent. Men account for 51 percent of the nation's college-age population, so this growing inconsistency between the sexes reflects not only the increasing success of women, but also the educational problems of men. African-Americans are now seeing two women earn bachelor's degrees for every man. The late 1970s is when female enrollment in institutions of higher learning overtook male enrollment, and by the early 1980s women began outnumbering men among four-year college graduates. Since then, the number of female bachelor's degree recipients has risen to 698,000 this year, according to U.S. Department of Education estimates. The number of male college graduates has increased much more slowly, to 529,000.

Why is this phenomenon occurring so readily in the black society? Some say women in general have better learning styles. Others say black men are more vulnerable to the lures of popular culture. Even others say there are finan-

cial hindrances and black men typically are from poorer families than whites and feel more pressure than women to work while in school, forcing some to have problems keeping their grades up. Something else to consider is the harsh fact that black women have recently suffered from a high rate of teen pregnancy. This puts some into a mentality that they have no choice but to go into higher education and beyond because they can't depend on anyone else, especially a man, to support them. This unkind truth brings focus to women who would otherwise lack it.

It used to be that women went to college and eventually found their lifelong mate there, but records are showing that these women are now having a hard time finding men of equal educational backgrounds, which is causing social problems. In the long run, who is going to suffer from women being significantly more literate and educated than their counterparts? Despite all the progress black women have made, they still seem to be the least satisfied.

The reality that women are making more money is not making it easier, but harder, for them to find mates. So, should women settle for a man who doesn't live up to their educational or financial standards?

Because black women are making more than their male counterparts, it seems that the choices are slim and few. Black men seem to be threatened or intimidated by the success of women. Surveys have showed that black women are much more likely than white women to have husbands who earn less. Divorce is twice as likely among black couples where the

man is making less, than among white couples. Knowing this, in the long run, will black women be penalized for marrying less successful men?

Heading back to the root of the black gender gap dilemma, if black men aren't graduating from high school or college, what are they doing?

Twenty-five percent of young black men go to college; 35 percent of women do.

Only 13.5 percent of young black females are high-school dropouts; more than 17 percent of young black men are. It seems that in high school, most black males were encouraged to be athletes, not intellectuals. The leadership roles in high school were most often held by women, also. This has continued to follow black men into college. Does the educational system favor girls over boys? There is \$184 million more spent on male athletics than female athletics.

The National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) issued a report in September that focused on the graduating class of athletes who entered college as freshmen during the 1995-96 school year. Black males graduated at a rate of 43 percent, 11 percent less than the overall rate for male athletes. African-American women did better at 60 percent, but still fell 9 percent short of the overall national rate for female athletes.

Your freshmen year lays the foundation for the next few years in college; it is where students get their start. So is not getting off to a good start predicting what's to come in the future? This seems to be true for some, but while they are struggling, there is a more

independent, self-governing, single black woman out there who is progressively making her way to the top (whatever that is).

This fresh, new, innovative appearance may not be busting through, but is persistently chipping through the high-

class, professional glass ceilings. Once mandated by occupations requiring little or no skill, black women have ascended to the professional-managerial class and it seems they will continue to excel with or without their male counterparts.

SPEAKER,
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Most Fascinating Women in Politics" by *George* magazine, and "One of the 50 Smartest Women in the Money Business" by *Money* magazine. Herman also received the prestigious Tribute to a Black American Award from the National Conference of Black Mayors. Since leaving the U.S. Department of Labor, Herman has continued to lend her

expertise to corporate enterprises and nonprofit organizations. Presently, she serves on the board of her alma mater, Xavier University. She is the chair of the Coca-Cola Co.'s Diversity Task Force, a senior advisor to Toyota Motor Sales, USA, Inc., a member of the Board of Directors of the Cummins Engine Co., director of MGA/Mirage, Inc. and Presidential Life Insurance Corp.

She is president and CEO of

New Ventures, an independent consulting firm, in Washington, D.C.

Corrections

In the March issue of *The News Argus*, we inadvertently cut of the ending to the story "High school athletics on bad course." The article should have ended:

"It has to be made whole again, and we have to see it as an amateur sport that preps young minds to become good people instead of great athletes."

Also, in Stephanie Price's sorority story, we misspelled Lambda in our headline.

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