

# Internet Research Projects

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## Chapter 6: African Americans: From Segregation to Modern Racism and Institutional Discrimination

### Assessing the Status of African Americans Using Census Data

In this exercise, you will use U.S. Census data to gather information about the total population, African Americans, and one of the white ethnic groups you chose in the Internet Research Project in Chapter 2. You will then use course concepts to assess and analyze this information and place it in the context of this text.

1. Go to the official U.S. Census Bureau website at [www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)
2. Click “Data” from the list of options at the top of the home page and then click “Data Tools and Apps”
3. Click “The American Fact Finder” – the top selection in the list on the page that opens
4. On the next page,
  - a. Click “Advanced Search”
  - b. Click “Show Me All”
5. On the next page, in the box in the middle of the page,
  - a. Click the button next to “Race/Ethnicity”
  - b. Type African American in the box under “race, ancestry, or tribe.” As you type, some group names will appear. Click on “Black or African American alone or in combination with one or more other races”
  - c. Click “Go”
6. The next screen will list a number of datasets. Look in the right-hand column and find the data set called 2012 ACS 3-year estimates. Click on “Selected Population Profile in the United States” for this data set
7. The Population Profile for African Americans will appear. Scroll down the table until you get to “Educational Attainment,” “Employment Status,” “Income in the Past 12 Months,” “Poverty Rates for Families and People ...,” and “Housing Tenure.” Add the information to the table. Data for the “Total Population” have already been entered.
8. When you have entered all data, use your browser’s “Back” button to return to the previous screen.
9. Find the “Your Selections” box in the upper left of the screen and click the “x” next to “Black or African Americans ...” You will be returned to selection screen
10. The button next to “race/ancestry” should still be checked. If not, click on it to re-select it.
11. Type the name of your white ethnic group in the box and in the table below.

12. Click “Go” and repeat steps 6 and 7 for your white ethnic group<sup>1</sup>

**NOTE:** THESE VARIABLES ARE SIMILAR BUT NOT IDENTICAL TO THOSE USED IN THE CHAPTER

Category	Variable	Total Population*	African Americans	
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT	High School Graduate or Higher	85.9%		
EMPLOYMENT STATUS	Unemployed	6.5%		
INCOME IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS	Individuals – Per Capita Income	\$27,385		
POVERTY RATES	All people	15.7%		
HOUSING TENURE	Percentage in Owner-occupied housing Unit	64.7%		

\* Results are from the 2012 American Community Survey, Three Year estimates

**Questions for Research Discussion:**

1. What stage of Gordon’s model of assimilation (see Exhibit 2.1) do these variables measure?
2. Review the Blauner hypothesis (see Chapter 4). Do the patterns you observe in the data you’ve collected conform to the predictions of the hypothesis? How?
3. Review the themes stated at the beginning of Chapter 4 and the “corollary” stated at the beginning of Chapter 5. How do the patterns you’ve observed in the table above relate to the contact situation and changing subsistence technologies?
4. Review the concepts of modern institutional discrimination and past-in-present discrimination introduced in Chapter 5 and applied in this chapter. How do the patterns you’ve observed in the table above relate to these concepts?

*Optional Group Discussion:* Bring the information on your groups to class and compare with the information collected by others. Consider the issues raised in the question above and in the chapter and develop some ideas about why the groups are where they are relative to one another and the total population.

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<sup>1</sup> If you cannot find your group, see the “Alternative Instructions for Locating the American Community Survey 2012, Three-Year Estimates”