M Gmail   **Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>**

PolitiFact
9 messages

Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>   Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 1:17 PM
To: zebrafactcheck@gmail.com

I meant to say "women earn 78.7 percent as much as white men..." The language has been corrected. Thanks for your catch.

Warren

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>   Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 1:20 PM
To: Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>

That mistake aside, where did you get job category information specific to race? I'm trying to retrace the steps in your story and I can't do it.

What I really still want is the answer to my question. What is your source for the corrected version of the sentence?

Cheers.
[Quoted text hidden]
--
Sincerely,

Bryan W. White
editor
zebrafactcheck.com

Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>   Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 1:43 PM
To: Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>

You have to create your own table on the BLS website.

Google "Labor force statistics from the current population survey."

Hit "cps databases" on top left.

Go to "weekly and hourly earnings" and hit green icon.

Set up your data base using, in the first box, "Median usual weekly earnings in constant dollars second quartile."

[Quoted text hidden]

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>   Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 1:45 PM
To: Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>

Very much appreciated. Cheers.
[Quoted text hidden]

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>   Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 1:51 PM
To: Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>

> Wednesday, March 13, 2019   1:50 PM
> The database is currently unavailable.

:-(
[Quoted text hidden]

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>   Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 1:55 PM
To: Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>

Thankfully the unavailability was very brief. Cheers again and have a good day.

[Quoted text hidden]

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>   Wed, Mar 13, 2019 at 7:15 PM
To: Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>, ccarper@ideastations.org

Dear Warren Fiske,
cc: Craig Carper

I'm embedding a portion of Table 18 (the chart you apparently used to estimate the "similar job" gender pay gap minus racial considerations) to help illustrate

my grave concern about the methods you used for your fact check.

Dredge, excavating, and loading machine operators	29	-	1	-	28	-	-
Hoist and winch operators	6	-	0	-	6	-	-
Industrial truck and tractor operators	584	624	46	-	538	632	-
Cleaners of vehicles and equipment	237	530	40	-	197	531	-
Laborers and freight, stock, and material movers, hand	1,450	578	254	500	1,196	595	84.0
Machine feeders and offbearers	29	-	15	-	14	-	-
Packers and packagers, hand	368	480	210	462	158	500	92.4
Pumping station operators	19	-	0	-	19	-	-
Refuse and recyclable material collectors	56	522	7	-	49	-	-
Mine shuttle car operators	0	-	0	-	0	-	-
Tank car, truck, and ship loaders	6	-	0	-	6	-	-
Material moving workers, all other	41	-	6	-	34	-	-

Note: Women's earnings as a percentage of men's are not shown where employment for either women or men is less than 50,000. Median earnings are not shown where employment is less than 50,000. Dash indicates no data or data that do not meet publication criteria.
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey.

Note the relative abundance of dashes, along with the explanatory note at the bottom of the chart. It says the dashes represent either "no data" or "data that do not meet publication criteria."

If the 21 broad job categories you reference are each made up of data from subcategories featuring "no data" or "data that do not meet publication criteria" then how could you proceed with any confidence in the BLS numbers for those 21 broad categories? Is there good reason to believe the numbers representing the 21 categories do not suffer deficiencies where the subcategories lack data?

Alternatively, if the numbers simply exclude subcategories with "no data" or "data that do not meet publication criteria," shouldn't we conclude that the subcategories for which we do have data are very likely not representative? We would put ourselves in the position of endorsing cherry-picked data, wouldn't we?

Finally, how would the gender wage gap for 21 categories of jobs (covering all or most U.S jobs?) offer a relevant measure with respect to the wage gap targeted by anti-discrimination laws? Is the job "cleaners of vehicles and equipment" similar to "mine shuttle car operators" in some significant wage-gap sense, for example?

I don't expect a reply from you, but I hope you take these concerns seriously. I'm somewhat surprised that you apparently did not seek out expert opinion for the sake of your fact check. If my concerns resonate at all with you, perhaps consider asking an expert if the methodology in the fact check bears the weight it's been asked to bear.

Cheers.
[Quoted text hidden]

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>   Thu, Mar 14, 2019 at 11:22 AM
To: Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>, ccarper@ideastations.org

One more thing (since I just noticed this):

I'm encountering something I don't recall seeing before. When I load the fact check page, the "women earn 78.7 percent as much as white men" still appears. But when I **save it to the Internet Archive it shows and saves the corrected version.**

I suppose it's a byproduct of page caching? Results may depend on the user, if that's the case.

Give it a try and see if it works the same for you, please.

https://www.politifact.com/virginia/statements/2019/mar/13/bobby-scott/bobby-scott-says-women-earn-80-percent-pay-white-m/

I just pasted in the URL and here's how it reads when the page loads:

> Overall in 2018, women earned 78.7 percent less than white men in the same areas of work. The comparison of women's pay to white men's produces a bigger gender gap than the comparison to all men. That's because white males tend to earn more than black males.

and, in each of those fields, breaks down women and men by sex.

Overall in 2018, women earned 78.7 percent less than white men in the same areas of work. The comparison of women's pay to white men's produces a bigger gender gap than the comparison to all men. That's because white males tend to earn more than black males.

White men out-earned women in all 20 fields of work

Do you believe fixing this without an editor's note is in keeping with PolitiFact's policy on corrections?

Cheers.
[Quoted text hidden]

Bryan White <zebrafactcheck@gmail.com>   Fri, Mar 15, 2019 at 2:05 PM

To: Warren Fiske <wfiske@ideastations.org>, ccarper@ideastations.org

Dear Warren Fiske,
cc Craig Carper

In further attempting to reconstruct the steps you took for the gender pay gap fact check, I found myself puzzling over how you made your determination regarding 29 categories of work.

Could you share the 29 categories on which you settled, please?

When I viewed the BLS data, I found myself having trouble following the nested hierarchy. It seemed like I could count 29 or so categories of work, but I distrust my short-term memory. Plus it seemed to me that the hierarchical structure from Table 18 (apparently the same list of jobs found in the BLS survey data you encouraged me to search) changed.

So I clipped Table 18 piece by piece and reconstructed it in Inkscape. The resolution wasn't as great as I would have liked, but I'm confident I matched the pieces together correctly despite the fuzzy text.

Then I pulled out vertical guides, allowing me to follow the BLS hierarchical structure. Sure enough, the top part of the list has an extra level compared to the lower part of the list. The top hierarchic level, by my count, has 5 groups. The secondary level has 14 groups. And the tertiary level has 12 groups. The fourth level has 352 groups.

Without knowing how you decided on 29 groups of similar types of work (or at least knowing what groups you chose) I cannot reliably reconstruct your line of reasoning in your fact check.

Thanks for any guidance you can offer.

(Here's a link to a .png image of the pieced-together Table 18. The resolution is poor, but it should help give a picture of what I'm talking about and boost your confidence that I'm not making this up.)
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YgQJhtegQ6NQfW-HVCZL2lqAkvltGfTe/view?usp=sharing

Cheers.
[Quoted text hidden]