Facts used in reference to gender gap were wrong

Posted: 2/18/08

TO THE EDITOR:

In the complaints about the gender gap bake sale and the defenses of it, the factual basis of the gap has been misstated.

For 2005, the ratio of women's median earnings to men's for employees who worked full time all year was 0.77.

This is the most common statistic used to state the "gender gap," as in, "women earn 77 cents for every dollar men earn."

This is documented in reports by the Institute for Women's Policy Research using data from the federal government.

This gender gap does not refer to the wage gap within particular occupations. That requires much more detailed data, and the most recent breakdown is from the 2000 census. Among full-time workers, it showed that men earned more than women in 486 occupations, and women earned more in 13 occupations.

If you're interested in cookies, you might like to know that the average full-time working woman baker earns 71 percent of her male counterpart's earnings.

Philip Cohen
Associate Professor
Sociology