

# THE PRICE OF SEX

*A Beckerian Analysis of Differing Marriage Rates Among Africans and Indians  
in Trinidad*

*Kevin Baldeosingh & Pramenath Narinesingh*



Is the price of \$ex higher...

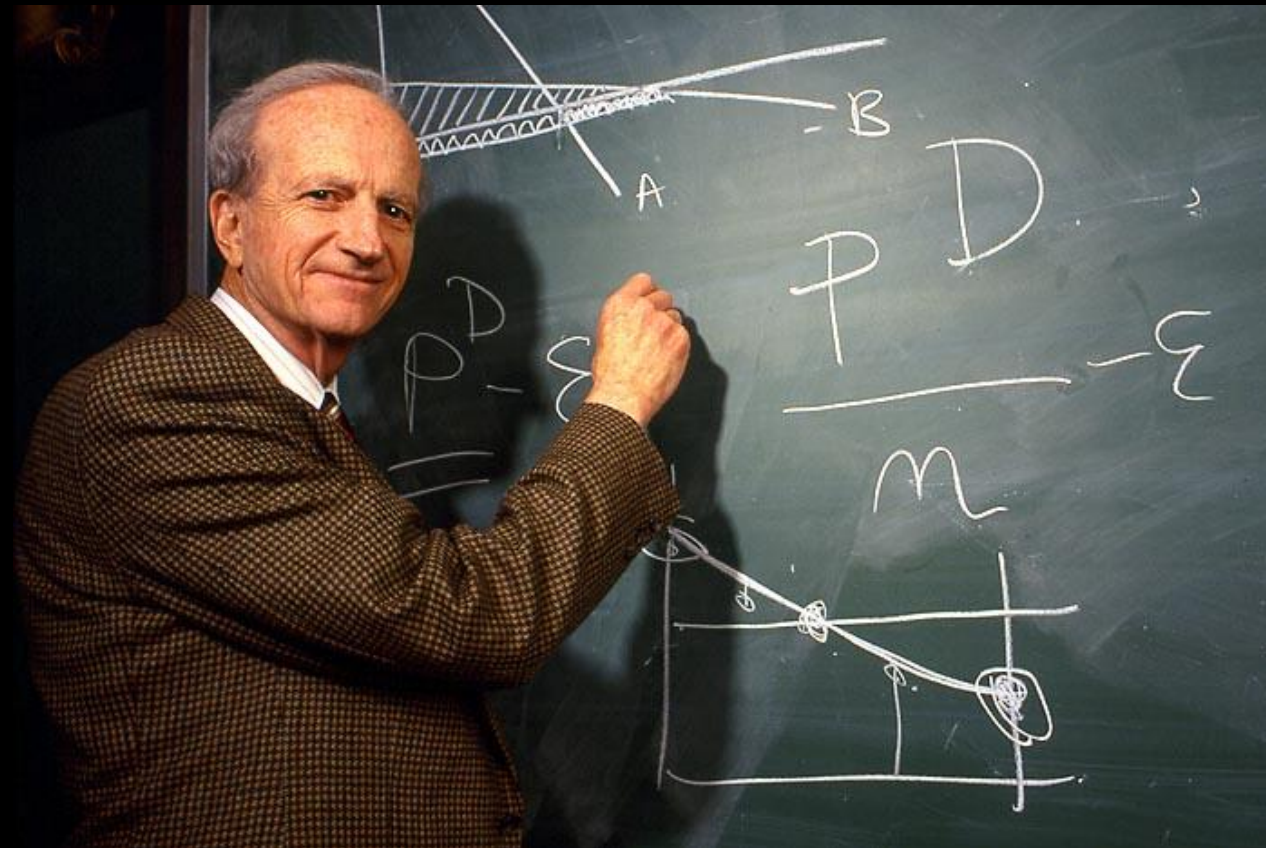
The background features a solid black field. At the top, there is a decorative, wavy horizontal band with a color gradient. From left to right, the colors transition from a warm orange-red to a bright yellow, then through green, and finally into a light blue on the far right.

**Among Indo women**

The background features a solid black field. At the top, there is a decorative, wavy, translucent shape with a color gradient from yellow and orange on the left to green and blue on the right.

**Or Afro women?**

# *GARY BECKER 1930-2014*



# RATIONAL CHOICE THEORY

*“The economic approach I refer to does not assume that individuals are motivated solely by selfishness or material gain... The analysis assumes that individuals maximise welfare as they conceive it, whether they be selfish, altruistic, loyal spiteful, or masochistic.”*

- *-Becker, 1992.*



# SEXUAL ECONOMICS

- *“The laws of supply and demand can be substantiated in all sorts of marketplaces, and there is no reason that sex should be an exception. With sex, the female resource hypothesis depicts that women constitute the supply and men constitute the demand.”*
- *Baumeister & Vohs, 2004*

# BECKER'S PREMISES

- Since marriage is mostly voluntary, either by the persons marrying or their parents, the theory of preferences can be readily applied.
- Since men and women compete as they seek mates, a market in marriages can be presumed to exist. Each person tries to find the best mate, subject to restrictions imposed by market conditions.
- Marriage occurs only if both parties are made better off – i.e. their utility is increased.



# AFRO & INDO STATISTICAL PROFILES

Indicator	Afro	Indo
Proportion of population	34.2%	35.4%
2009 HBS sample	42%	37%
Income Levels		
<\$1000	41%	37%
\$3,000-\$4,999	44%	37%
>\$25,000	50%	22%
Socioeconomic Status (subjective)		
Upper-class	43%	31%
Middle-class	36%	37%
Lower-class	31%	46%

# AFRO & INDO EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

Education		
CSO – No formal qualifications	53%	55%
CSO - Ordinary Levels	22%	22%
WVS - Secondary education	38%	39%
Bachelor's Degree	3%	3%
Doctorate	0.1%	0.1%

# AFRO & INDO STATISTICAL DIFFERENCES

Crime	Afro	Indo
Killers	67%	26%
Murder victims	74%	18%
Crime victims	41%	25%
Domestic violence victims	41%	40%
Convicted prisoners	55%	25%
Marriage		
	33%	51%

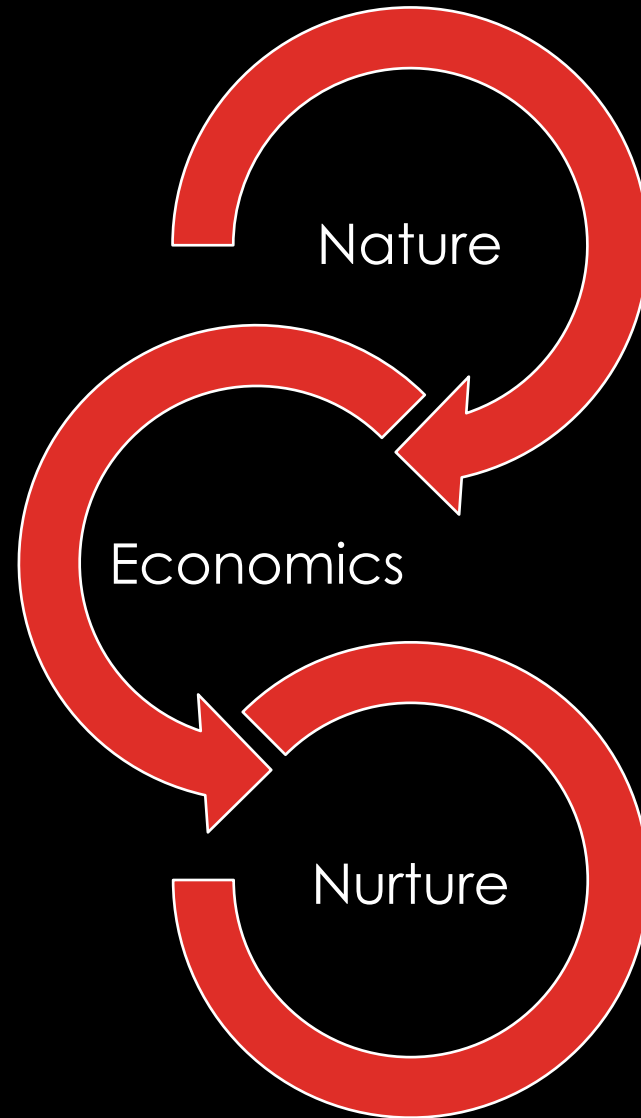
# HISTORY OR CULTURE

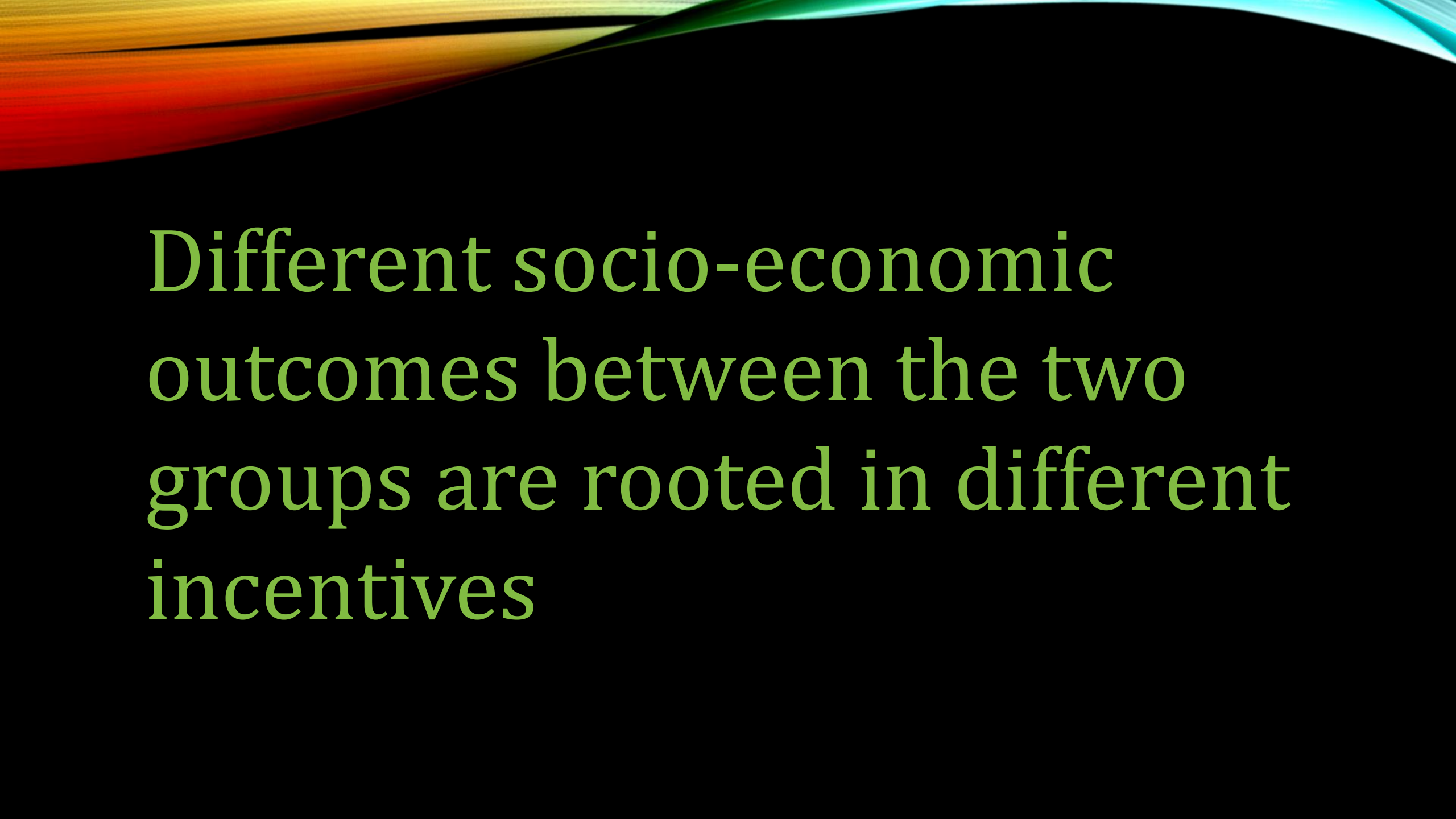
*Cultural explanations are  
tautological*

*Historical explanations are  
paradoxical*

# HUMAN BEHAVIOUR

*Economics bridges genes and culture*





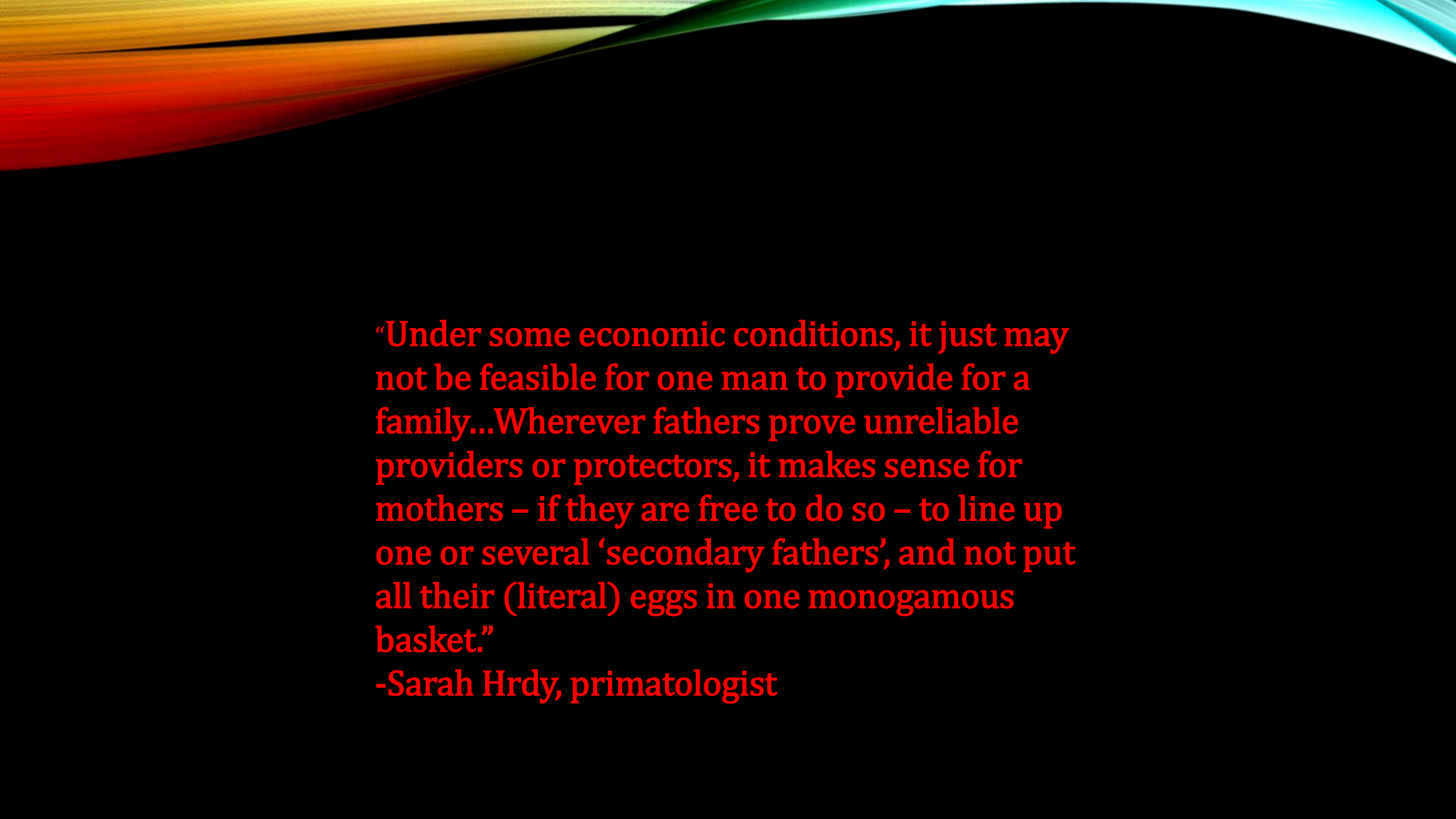
Different socio-economic  
outcomes between the two  
groups are rooted in different  
incentives



BECKER: MARRIAGE IS TWO PERSONS M AND F IN THE SAME HOUSEHOLD

## Standard Caribbean unions

- Legal marriage (Highest priced)
- Common Law Relationship (Medium priced)
- Visiting Relationship (Lower priced)



“Under some economic conditions, it just may not be feasible for one man to provide for a family...Wherever fathers prove unreliable providers or protectors, it makes sense for mothers – if they are free to do so – to line up one or several ‘secondary fathers’, and not put all their (literal) eggs in one monogamous basket.”


-Sarah Hrdy, primatologist

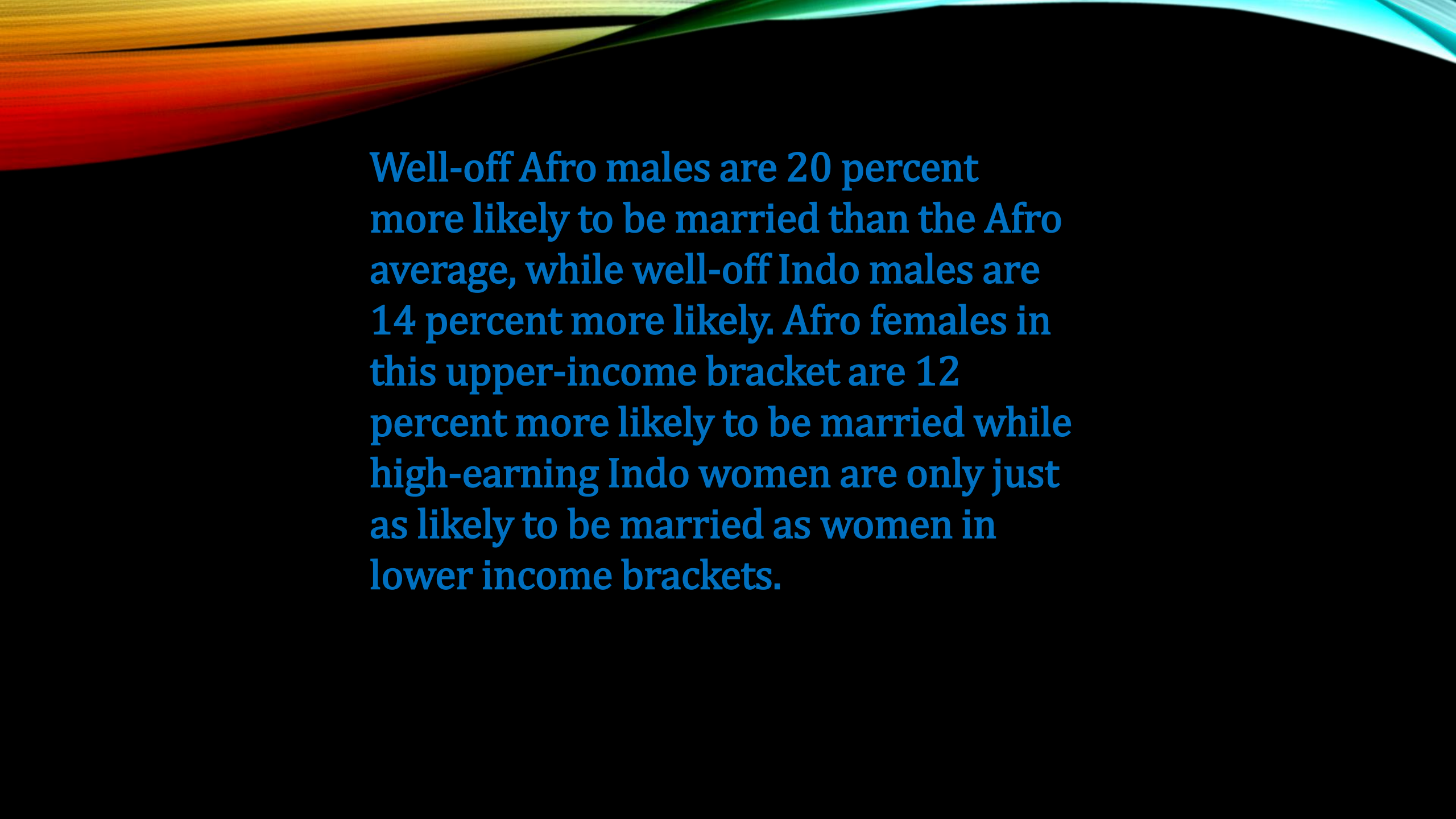
## ***MATERNAL PRODUCTIVITY BY RACE***

- Childless Afro-Trinidadian women = 38,612 (35%)
- Childless Indo-Trinidadian women = 45,595 (36%)

# HOUSEHOLD MONTHLY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE BY SEX OF HEAD

	All households	Male Headed	Female Headed
Income	\$8,074	\$8,692	\$6,919
Expenditure	\$7,223	\$7,668	\$6,396
Social Programmes	\$460	\$370	\$628
Gifts	\$136	\$133	\$142
Remittance	\$51	\$35	\$82
Other Income	\$309	\$211	\$492

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- \$ Married Indo men earn same modal salary as married Indo women.
  - \$ Never married Indo men earn modal \$1000 LESS than Indo women.
  - \$ Married Afro men earn \$2000 higher modal salary than married Afro women and \$1,000 higher than Never Married Afro women.
  - \$ Never married Afro men earn same modal salary as never married Afro but \$1000 more than married Afro women.
  - \$ Married and Never Married Indo women have same modal salary.
  - \$ Married Afro women earn \$1000 less than Never Married.



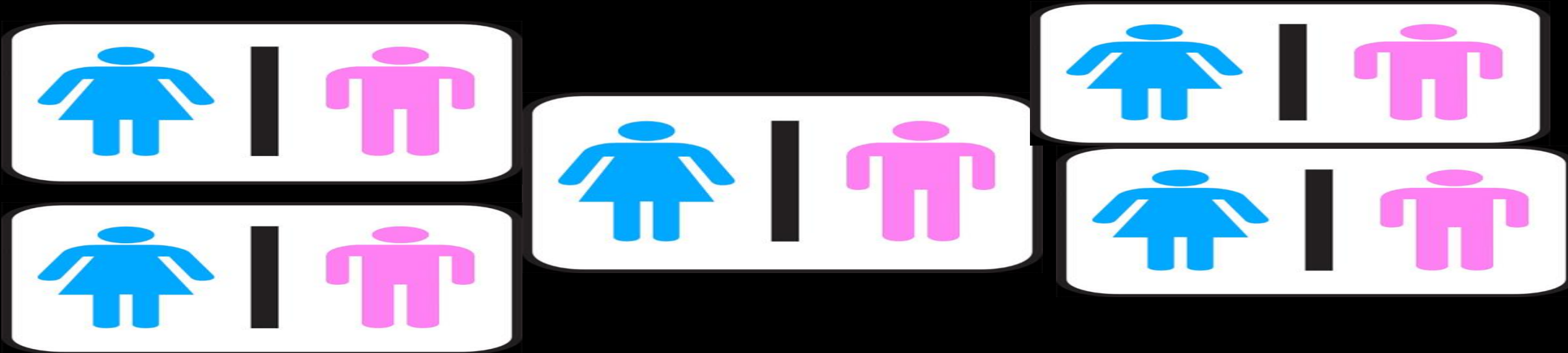
Well-off Afro males are 20 percent more likely to be married than the Afro average, while well-off Indo males are 14 percent more likely. Afro females in this upper-income bracket are 12 percent more likely to be married while high-earning Indo women are only just as likely to be married as women in lower income brackets.



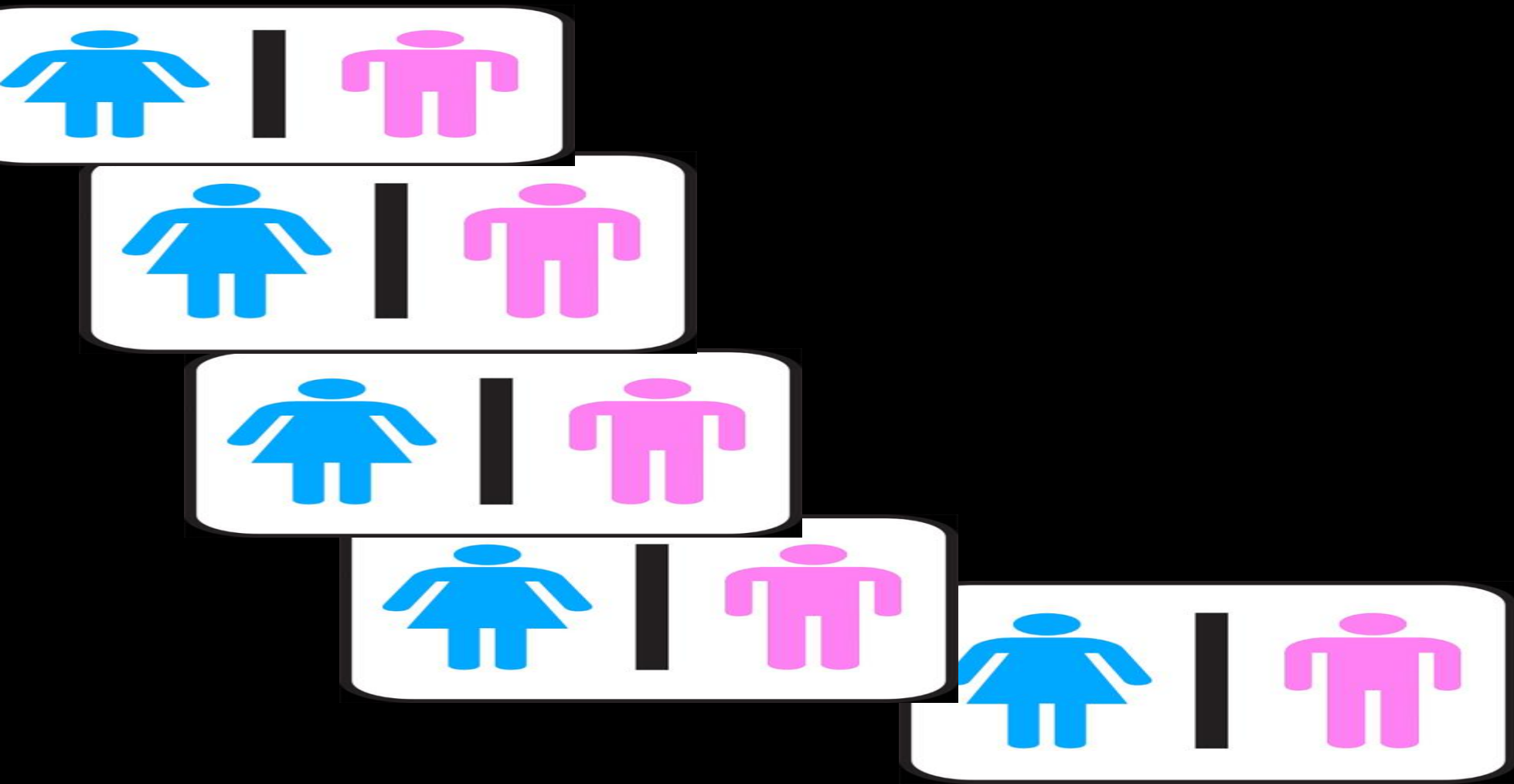


**Hypergamy may be a more  
powerful operator for Afro  
women than for Indo women**

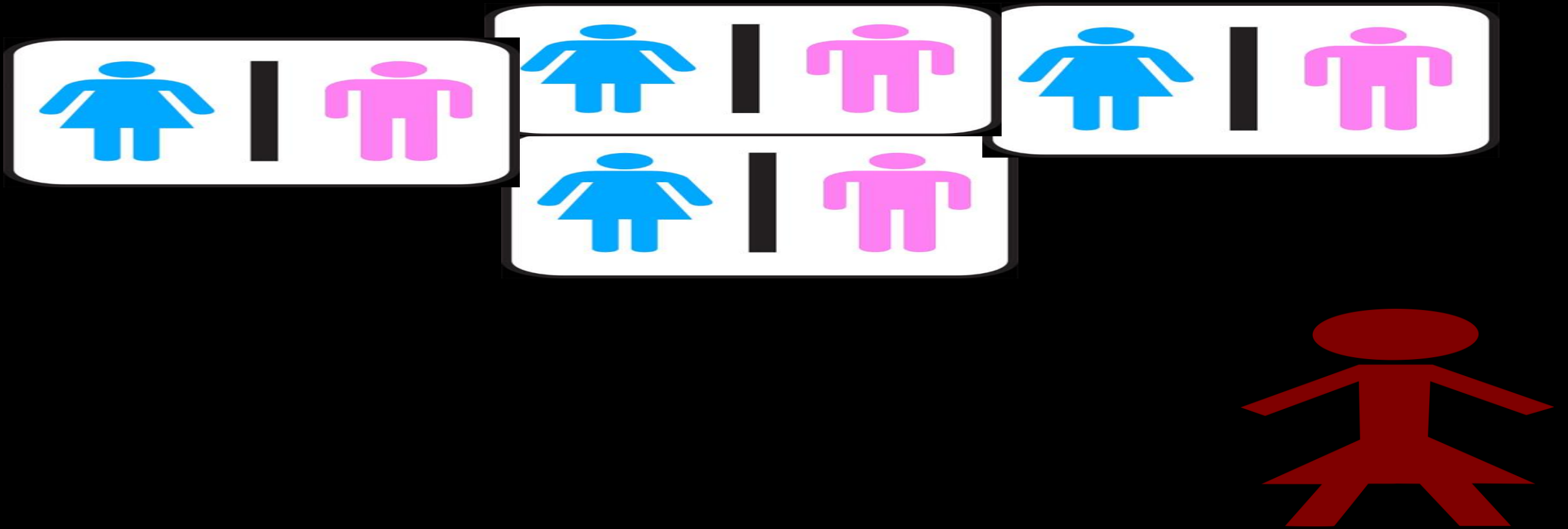
# EQUAL RATIOS & EQUAL STATUS

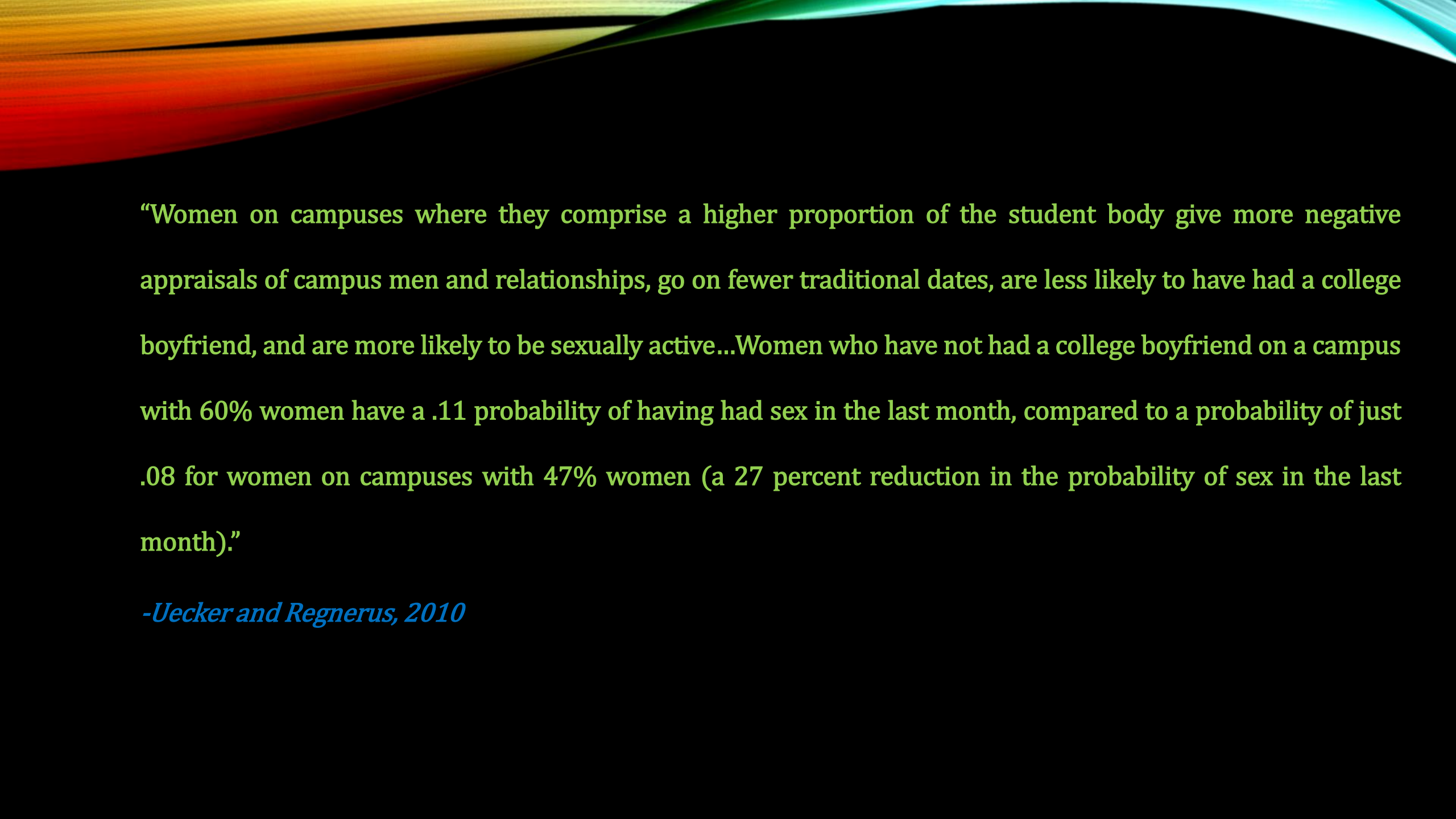


# EQUAL RATIOS & UNEQUAL STATUS



# EQUAL STATUS & UNEQUAL RATIO





“Women on campuses where they comprise a higher proportion of the student body give more negative appraisals of campus men and relationships, go on fewer traditional dates, are less likely to have had a college boyfriend, and are more likely to be sexually active...Women who have not had a college boyfriend on a campus with 60% women have a .11 probability of having had sex in the last month, compared to a probability of just .08 for women on campuses with 47% women (a 27 percent reduction in the probability of sex in the last month).”

*-Uecker and Regnerus, 2010*

# OUT OF WEDLOCK RATIOS

- 6% of Afro women who had never had a spouse had one child, compared to less than 1% of Indo women, and this pattern holds for all numbers of children, with the disparity between Afro and Indo widest at the 9-or-more mark.



# CHILD EFFECTS

- A father-absent household puts girls at higher risk for early sexual activity (Ellis, 2003) while boys with absent fathers have a harder time finding a balance between masculine assertiveness and self-restraint (Gottman, 1997)

# CORRELATION OR CAUSATION?

	Afro	Indo
Marriage	33%	51%
Murder victims	74%	18%
Crime victims	41%	25%
Convicted prisoners	55%	25%



*THE END*