



## Just the Facts

### Marriage costs women doctors in the US an 11% salary drop

Married women doctors in the United States earn 11% less than men and unmarried women without children, according to research reported in the *Journal of Human Resources*. They earn another 14% less if they have one child and 22% less if they have more than one child.

The research, which was carried out by a team from Mount Holyoke College, Massachusetts, and based on the American Medical Association's young physicians survey, a nationally representative sample of US doctors aged under 40, looked at how much of the earnings gap between men and women doctors is due to women's greater family responsibilities.

Changes over time in men's and women's incomes were compared with marital status and numbers of children. The study also included data on specialties, type of job chosen, and hours worked.

The results show that married women earn less than other women.

Source: *British Medical Journal*

### HIV infections in the US pass one million

The number of US citizens living with HIV has surpassed one million for the first time, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated on 13 June.

Dr. Kate Glynn, an epidemiologist at the CDC, said that their estimates, as of December 2003, were that between 1 039 000 and 1 185 000 Americans were infected with the virus. The ethnic breakdown is 47% black, 34% white, 17% Hispanic, with the balance composed of Asian and Native American populations. Black and Hispanic people compose roughly 13% and 14% of the total US population and are disproportionately affected by HIV.

The epidemic remains overwhelmingly male, at 74%. Men who have sex with men constitute the largest single risk factor for becoming infected (45%); high-risk heterosexual behaviour was next on the list (27%); followed by injecting drug use (22%).

Source: *British Medical Journal*

### Choosing a Car Color? This One Is Safest

If you're in the market for a new car, choose one that is silver. Why? Silver cars are involved in far fewer crashes than cars of other colors.

According to a study by researchers at the University of Auckland in New Zealand that assessed the effect of car colors on the risk of serious injury in over 1,000 Auckland drivers between 1998-99, silver cars were 50% less likely to be involved in a crash resulting in a serious injury when compared with white cars.

Reuters reports that the least safe car colors are brown, black, and green. The risk factor for white, yellow, gray, red, and blue cars is in the middle range and about the same for each. Globally, about 3,000 people die every day in a car crash.

About half the drivers in this study had been involved in a crash in which one or more of the occupants had been admitted to the hospital or died, while 571 were not involved in crashes and served as a control group. Even after taking into account the vehicle and road conditions, driver's age, gender, and educational level, as well as whether the driver had been using drugs or alcohol and had worn a seatbelt,

the color of the car still had an impact on the likelihood of a crash.

Why? The researchers have no idea, but they speculate that silver, a light color that is highly reflective, may make cars more visible on the highway. Silver was also the most popular car color in the United States, Europe, and Asia last year, according to the most recent DuPont Global Color Popularity.

Source: *British Medical Journal*



### Men do have trouble hearing women, study finds

Men who are accused of never listening by women now have an excuse – women's voices are more difficult for men to listen to than other men's, according to the findings published in the specialist magazine *NeuroImage*.

The report said men deciphered female voices using the auditory part of the brain that processes music, while male voices engaged a simpler mechanism. The female voice is actually more complex than the male voice, due to differences in the size and shape of the vocal cords and larynx between men and women, and also due to women having greater natural "melody" in their voices. This causes a more complex range of sound frequencies than in a male voice.

The findings may help explain why people suffering hallucinations usually hear male voices, the report added, as the brain may find it much harder to conjure up a false female voice accurately than a false male voice.

Source: *Yahoo*