

→ **Fast Facts**

→ **Access to government documents**

“More than 1 million pages of historical government documents—a stack taller than the U.S. Capitol—have been removed from public view since the September 2001 terrorism attacks, according to records obtained by the Associated Press. Some of the papers are more than a century old.” A processing backlog exists of more than 400 million pages of withdrawn documents.

Frank Bass and Randy Herschaft, “Officials shield more than 1 million pages of documents from public view,” the Associated Press. March 14, 2007, www.statesmanjournal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2007703140329. March 15, 2007.

→ **Degrees and earning power**

Adults with advanced degrees earn four times more than those with less than a high school diploma, according to tabulations released by the U.S. Census Bureau. The series of tables reveals adults 18 and older with a master’s, professional, or doctoral degree earned an average of \$79,946, while those with less than a high school diploma earned about \$19,915. Adults with a bachelor’s degree earned an average of \$54,689 in 2005, while those with a high school diploma earned \$29,448. In 2006, 86 percent of all adults 25 and older reported they had completed at least high school. More than one-quarter (28 percent) of adults 25 and older had attained at least a bachelor’s degree.

Educational Attainment in the United States: 2006. U.S. Census Bureau, Population Division, Education and Social Stratification Branch. September 7, 2006, www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/education/cps2006.html. March 16, 2007.

→ **Literacy in everyday life**

Women had higher average prose and document literacy than men in 2003, which was a change from 1992. In 1992, men had higher average document literacy than women. Document literacy is defined as the knowledge and skills needed to search, comprehend, and use information from texts such as job applications, payroll forms, transportation schedules, maps, tables, and drug and food labels.

M. Kutner, E. Greenberg, Y. Jin, B. Boyle, Y. Hsu, and E. Dunleavy (2007). *Literacy in Everyday Life: Results From the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NCES 2007-480)*. U.S. Department of Education. Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007480. April 3, 2007.

→ **Foreign languages**

“A pervasive lack of knowledge about foreign cultures and foreign languages threatens the security of the United States as well as its ability to compete in the global marketplace and produce an informed citizenry.” So says a new review by the National Research Council. According to the report, programs under Title VI of the Higher Education Act and the Fulbright-Hays Act offered instruction in more than 250 less commonly taught languages between 2001 and 2003. The Defense Language Institute and the Foreign Service Institute, by contrast, offered instruction in only 74 of those languages.

National Research Council (2007). *International Education and Foreign Languages: Keys to Securing America’s Future*, Committee to Review the Title VI and Fulbright-Hays International Education Programs, Mary Ellen O’Connell and Janet L. Norwood, Editors. Center for Education, Division of Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press, books.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11841. April 11, 2007.

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