FOCUS ON SLESINGER’S AFRICAN AMERICAN CHARTBOOK

In the last newsletter we reported that Dr. Doris Slesinger, professor emerita of Rural Sociology and a former director of the APL, passed away on October 1, 2006. This newsletter features articles relating to Dr. Slesinger’s varied interests, especially Wisconsin’s minority populations, women, migrant workers, and health.

Some of Dr. Slesinger’s most requested works were the chartbooks she created for Wisconsin’s African American and Hispanic or Latino populations. The most recent African American chartbook (2006) compiled a wide array of statistical data from federal, state, and local sources, including published and previously unpublished data. The chartbook covered topics ranging from geographic location, age, gender, criminal justice, and health, among other categories. The majority of the data is still the most recent available for the state of Wisconsin, as much of it relies on Census 2000. Here are some highlights:

— There were 304,460 African Americans in Wisconsin in 2000, constituting 5.7% of the state’s population. While African Americans are the largest minority population in Wisconsin, the Hispanic population had been growing rapidly and is a growing proportion of the minority population. In 1990, African Americans constituted 56% of the minority population, but by 2000, they constituted only 44%.

— In 2000, both African American households and total Wisconsin households were about two-thirds family households and one-third non-family households. (A family household is a household that includes a householder and persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, adoption, or marriage.) African American family households, however, were more likely than total households to consist of a single parent with one or more children. 27.4% of all African American households consisted of family households headed by women (no husband present) with children under 18 years, compared to 6.2% for total households. This means that there are more than four times as many female headed family households in the African American population than in the general population.

— The African American population of Wisconsin is young. The median age in 2000 was 25.4 years, while it was 36.0 for the total Wisconsin population. About 38% of African Americans were under 18.

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years of age in 2000, while only 5% were 65 years or older. In comparison, 26% of all Wisconsinites were less than 18 years old, while 13% were 65 years or older. Additionally, there is a smaller ratio of African American men to women in the 20-44 age group, when compared to the same age group of the total population. There are multiple reasons for this aggregate imbalance across the total population, including reasons related to non-attachment to specific households, a distrust of the government collecting data about them, and a higher death rate. See the population pyramid at right.

— Most African Americans live in the heavily urbanized southeastern area of the state; 76% live in Milwaukee County. Residential segregation in the Milwaukee Metropolitan Area is extreme. Milwaukee is among the most segregated metro areas in the US. The maps on the following page show the sharply defined area where many of Milwaukee’s African American population lives. This area is slowly growing northwest. In 2000, 56 tracts had populations that were at least 75 percent African American.

— In 1999, median family incomes showed a large difference between African American and total Wisconsin family incomes: $26,986 for African American families and $52,911 for all Wisconsin families. Additionally, African American families are larger, on average, than the families of the total population, so there were more people dependent on that income. 18% of African American families were at the upper end of the income distribution—$60,000 or more—while 42% of total Wisconsin families were within that category. At the low end of the income distribution were the 28% of African American families that were in poverty in 1999. This rate is nearly five times that of all Wisconsin families (6%).

— Fifty-nine percent of African Americans participated in the labor force in 2000, compared to 69% for the total Wisconsin population. There was more unemployment in the African American population than the rest of the population. Additionally, females participated in the labor force in higher proportions than males. The reverse is true of the total population.

— In October 2004, of the 23,000 inmates in the 21 state-run adult prisons, half of the inmates (49.8%) were White and nearly half (46.2%) were African American. (WI Department of Corrections)

**ON THE HORIZON**

— Wisconsin Land Information Association (WLIA) Annual Conference, March 7–9, Appleton, WI.

— Wisconsin American Planning Association (WAPA)/Wisconsin Chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects (WI-ASLA) Annual Conference, March 15–16, Milwaukee, WI.


— American Planning Association (APA) Annual Conference, April 14–18, Philadelphia, PA.


— Wisconsin Association of School District Administrators (WASDA) Annual Education Conference, May 2–4, Green Bay, WI.

— Wisconsin Association of School Business Officials (WASBO) Spring Conference, May 15–18, La Crosse, WI.
**FEATURE FACTS:**

This newsletter’s feature facts article focuses on women in Wisconsin, in tribute to Doris Slesinger’s work and study of women’s issues. March is also National Women’s History Month, as first decreed by congress in 1987. All figures come from the 2005 American Community Survey, produced by the US Census bureau.

**$25,507 ( +/-$202)**—Median income for Wisconsin working women over age 25, a figure that lags far below the median income of men in this category ($39,035, +/-$496). Median income for a female with a bachelors degree was $33,739 ( +/-$756), while similarly educated males earned a median of $50,452 (+/-$705).

**$51,150**—Estimated number of dollars of wage disparity between men and women in the field of health diagnosing and treating practitioners, the largest figure in the ACS occupational categories. Women in the food preparation and serving sector earned only $959 per year less then men, the smallest gap. The highest paying sector for women was the computer and mathematical occupations, where women earned a median income of $46,853 (+/-$3,517).

**65.9 (+/-1.2)**—Percentage of married women who classify themselves as in the labor force, compared to 77.4% (+/-1.0%) of married men. Unmarried women have a nearly 10% higher likelihood of being in the labor force than married women do, at 75.4% (+/-2.0%).

**75,853 (+/-4,334)**—Number of Wisconsin women who had given birth in the last 12 months. Of these births, 70.2% (+/-6.0%) were to married women, and the largest portion of these (76.6%, +/-6.7%) was to women age 20-34.

**24.7 (+/-3.1)**—Percentage of women in Wisconsin with a Bachelors degree or higher, statistically equivalent to the figure for men (25.2%, +/-3.1%). 10.5% of women (+/-8.4%) had less than a high school education, while this figure was 12.0% (+/-8.5%) for men.

**57.6 (+/-3.2)**—Percentage of those in poverty in Wisconsin who are women. The disparity between men and women in poverty is even more apparent at older ages, as 7.5% (+/-7.8%) of women over 75 are in poverty, compared to 3.2% (+/-13.4%) of men in this age category.

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**ON THE MAP**

As part of Dr. Slesinger’s efforts to study African Americans in Wisconsin, these maps of Milwaukee County illustrate an interesting story of the last 30+ years. The darkest areas represent populations that are 75% or more African American. Over the decades, the African American population has grown towards the northwest part of the county, yet still remains highly segregated.
The past few months have been a time of great change around the APL, some temporary and some unfortunately permanent. Dan and his family have successfully made their trek to Puerto Escondido, Mexico. After a month off for travel and settlement, Dan will be resuming his Extension duties 50% via the magic of the Internet starting March 1. Also in this issue we are taking a look at the issues that Dr. Doris Slesinger worked on throughout her career. We mentioned in our last newsletter her passing, but we wanted to devote an entire issue to concentrate on her passions, and to highlight her wonderful work.

Despite all of the changes in and around the APL, the lab continues to tackle many new and exciting challenges. We are adding efforts on Geovisualization, sampling frame production, and increasing requests for geocoding to our already diverse set of skills. While it is a bit quiet around the lab with both Dan and Dave on leave, we are excited by the new challenges that are complementing our existing strengths, knowing full well that it won’t be long before the lab is once again full!

To all our friends and colleagues, we hope this finds you well and we look forward to seeing and hearing from you soon.

Cheers,
Bill

Staff Spotlight: Jennifer Huck

The APL welcomes Jennifer Huck as its newest full-time staff member. Jenn worked here as a student hourly during the summer of last year and subsequently was hired as an assistant researcher. She earned a M.S. in Sociology from UW-Madison in 2006 with a focus on women’s labor market outcomes in relation to social networks. While working at the APL, Jenn has been able to expand her knowledge of various demographic techniques, including spatial regression analysis. Currently, Jenn works on population projection projects, drafting and editing reports, and serving as editor of this newsletter. She will soon begin working with Sarah Kemp and associated staff on our school enrollment projection projects. In her spare time, Jenn enjoys a good curling match and knitting. You can contact Jennifer Huck at (608) 263-5091 or via email at jhuck@ssc.wisc.edu.

Trivia Question

How many migrant workers are in Wisconsin and where do they work?

- In 2005, there were 5,002 reported migrant workers in Wisconsin (WI DWD Migrant, Refugee and Labor Services).
- Waushara County had the most migrant workers in Wisconsin; 752 migrant workers were reported. (WI DWD Migrant, Refugee, and Labor Services).
- In 2001, about two thirds of migrant workers worked in food processing plants (e.g., canneries) while the rest worked as field workers (Slesinger and Deller 2002).