

American Indians Inside and Outside American Indian Areas in  
Oklahoma: 1980

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This paper briefly describes some of the recently tabulated data for American Indians inside and outside American Indian areas, derived from the 1980 census. Although this paper describes data only from Oklahoma, a later, more detailed paper will look more closely at data from the United States as a whole, SMSAs and Central cities.

The types of identified American Indian areas recognized in the 1980 census were based on recommendations of the Office of Management and Budget Task Force on Indian Census, consultations with American Indian tribal governments and organizations, and State governments. The 1980 census is the first to identify all Federal and State American Indian areas.

Information on American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts was derived from answers to the 1980 census race item (question 4). The concept of race as used by the Census Bureau reflects self-identification by respondents; it does not denote any clear-cut scientific definition of biological stock. Since the 1980 census obtained information on race through self-identification, the data represent self-classification by people according to the race with which they identify.

For persons who could not provide a single response to the race question, the race of the person's mother was used; however, if a single response could not be provided for the person's mother, the first race reported by the person was used. In 1970 the race of the person's father was used.

The categories "American Indian," "Eskimo," and "Aleut" include persons who classified themselves as such in one of the specific race categories. In addition, persons who did not report themselves in one of the specific race categories, but entered the name of an American Indian tribe or reported entries such as Canadian Indian, French-American Indian, or Spanish-American Indian, were classified as American Indian.

For the 1980 census, American Indian areas consisted of American Indian reservations, tribal trust lands, and historic areas of Oklahoma (excluding urbanized areas). American Indian reservations are areas with boundaries established by treaty, statute, and/or executive court order; in 1980 the reservation boundaries were identified by the Bureau of Indian Affairs and the State governments and were located in 33 States. Some of the American Indian reservations have tribal trust lands in the vicinity of the reservation, but none of these were in Oklahoma. The historic areas of Oklahoma (excluding urbanized areas) consist of the former reservations which had legally established boundaries during the period 1900-1907. These

reservations were dissolved during the 2- to 3-year period preceding the statehood of Oklahoma in 1907. The former reservation boundaries are used for planning by tribes and the Federal government. In the census, the entire area encompassing the former reservations was identified (excluding urbanized areas); individual former reservations were not identified separately. The historic areas of Oklahoma (excluding urbanized areas) were not identified in previous censuses.

#### GENERAL DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS

Residence. There were 171,274 American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts in Oklahoma in 1980, divided almost equally between urban (85,554) and rural (85,670) areas. \*\*\*

Footnote: Due to computing procedures all of the data presented in this paper are for American Indians, Eskimos, and Aleuts combined. In 1980 in Oklahoma there were 75 Eskimos and 57 Aleuts in the sample for Oklahoma; so these figures will not appreciably affect the results for American Indians alone. For this paper, "American Indians" will refer to the sum of these groups. \*\*\* About 67 percent of Oklahoma's total population lived in urban areas in 1980. Since almost all of the American Indian areas were in rural parts of the state, 120,959 (71 percent) of the American Indians in 1980 lived inside American Indian areas, while 50,265 lived outside these areas. Although only slightly more than one-third of the Indians living inside American

Indian areas were urban, almost 9 out 10 American Indians living outside the areas were urban. In other words, although 48 percent of the American Indians living in urban areas lived inside American Indian areas, fully 93 percent of those living in rural areas lived inside American Indian areas. That is, American Indians living in American Indian areas were overwhelming rural (Table 1).

Age. The median age of the American Indian population in Oklahoma in 1980 was 23.9, much lower than the 30.2 years for the whole state. The median age inside American Indian areas was            and the median age outside areas was            .

The proportion of the American Indian population less than 15 years old was 31 percent; about 32 percent of the population inside American Indian areas was under 15, and the percent of the population in this category outside areas was 30 percent. Not only was the percentage of American Indians under 15 inside areas greater than outside, but the proportion of the population 65 years and over was also much greater inside areas (10 percent) than outside areas (6 percent) - 8 percent of all American Indians in Oklahoma were 65 years and over.

The percentage of elderly males was smaller than the percentgae of elderly females. Although 7 percent of all American Indian males in Oklahoma were 65 years and older (8 percent of those inside American Indian areas and 4 percent of those outside areas), more than 10 percent of all

American Indians females were 65 years and over (12 percent inside areas and 7 percent outside areas).

Household type and relationship. Of the 171,224 American Indians in Oklahoma in 1980, 166,239 (97 percent) lived in households; the other American Indians lived in group quarters. There were 3.24 persons per American Indian household (as defined by the race of the householder) compared to 2.62 for the state as a whole, and 3.84 persons per family compared to 3.13 persons per family for the state. As might be expected, American Indians living inside American Indian areas tended to have larger households and families -- 3.35 and 3.97, respectively -- than those living outside American Indian areas ( and , respectively). Both sets of figures are greater than for the state.

Large family sizes also change the composition of the relationships within the household. Although 24 percent of all American Indians in Oklahoma were householders, 25 percent of those outside areas were householders, compared to 23 percent inside American Indian areas. The real difference is seen in the "other relatives" category which includes children, siblings, and other relatives. Although 49 percent of all American Indians were other relatives, 51 percent of those inside American Indian areas were other relatives, compared to only 44 percent of those living outside American Indian areas, indicating higher fertility among American Indians inside areas than outside.

Similarly, the percentage of nonrelatives in households was twice as high for those living outside American Indian areas as for the total American Indian population in Oklahoma, and almost 3 times as great as for those living inside American Indian areas, probably indicating out-migration for jobs and schooling.

Although only 10 percent of all American Indian females were family householders, 38 percent of the males were in this category. A slightly larger proportion of females (8.5 percent) than males (5.5 percent) were nonfamily householders. Because 35 percent of females were spouses compared to only 1 percent of the males, the percentage of male other relatives (54 percent) was greater than the percentage of females (44 percent). The rates for American Indians inside and outside areas were similar to the totals.

American Indians inside American Indian areas tended to have larger households than those living outside these areas. For example, although 8 percent of all American Indian households in Oklahoma in 1980 had 6 or more persons, fully 9 percent of the households inside American Indian areas had households of this size, compared to only 5 percent for those living outside American Indian areas. On the other hand, slightly larger proportions of 2 person households were outside areas.

Birthplace and residence in 1975. Although only 63 percent of the total population of Oklahoma were born in

Oklahoma, 84 percent of all American Indians in Oklahoma were born in the state. (Males and females percentages were the same as the total American Indian population). About 86 percent of American Indians inside American Indian areas were born in Oklahoma, compared to only 81 percent of those residing outside these areas.

Similarly, although 14 percent of Oklahoma's population lived in a different state in 1975, only 8 percent of the American Indian population lived in a different state 5 years before the census. Almost 11 percent of the American Indians living outside American Indian areas lived in a different state in 1975, compared to 7 percent of those living inside American Indian areas. Although the proportion of American Indians living in the same house in 1975 as 1980 was not appreciably different from the state as a whole (49 percent and 48 percent, respectively), 53 percent lived inside American areas, while 39 percent of the American Indians outside areas lived in the same house in 1975 as 1980. That is, American Indians living inside American areas were more likely to have been born in those areas and to have been in those areas (in fact, in the same house) in 1975 and 1980 than American Indians living outside the areas.

Education. More than 58 percent of American Indians in enrolled in school were enrolled in kindergarten and elementary school in 1980. This figure is the percent of all school enrollees and, although greater than the 52

percent for the state as a whole, is compensated by the smaller proportion of American Indians in college. Although 20 percent of the state's student population was in college in 1980, only 12 percent of the state's American Indian population was in college. Also, probably partly because of lack of nearness to colleges, the percentage of American Indians inside American Indian areas enrolled in college was only 10 percent compared to 17 percent of American Indians outside the areas.

American Indian females had larger proportions enrolled in college than males. Although 14 percent of all American Indian females enrolled in school were in college (13 percent inside areas and 17 percent outside areas), only 9 percent of the males fell into this category (8 percent inside areas and 11 percent outside areas).

Although 66 percent of the state's population 25 years and over were high school graduates in 1980, only 56 percent of the American Indian population were graduates. While 51 percent of the population inside areas were high school graduates,            percent of those outside were graduates. Similarly, although 15 percent of the state's population were college graduates in 1980, only 9 percent of the American Indians were. About 12 percent of the American Indians 25 years and over inside areas were college graduates, while 7 percent of those inside areas were graduates.

#### ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Of the 113,586 American Indians 16 years and over in 1980 in Oklahoma, 63,117 (56 percent) were in the labor force. Of these 62,736 were civilians. The percentage of American Indians inside American Indian areas who were in the labor force, however, was much smaller than outside; only 51 percent of Indians inside American Indian areas were in the labor force, compared to 66 percent of those outside. Slightly more than 60 percent of the total state population was in the labor force (Table 2).

Also, although 4 percent of Oklahoma's civilian labor force population was unemployed, more than 8 percent of American Indians in Oklahoma fell into this category. Also, the proportions were not evenly divided by residence. More than 10 percent of American Indians inside American Indian areas were unemployed, compared to only 5 percent in areas outside American Indian areas. Clearly, unemployment among American Indians in general was much worse than that of the state as a whole, and American Indians inside American Indian areas had even lower employment levels than those outside American Indian areas.

There were also great differences by sex. Although 67 percent of all American Indian males were in the labor force, this was true for only 45 percent of the American Indian females; 63 percent of the males and 41 percent of the female inside American Indian areas were in the labor force, compared to 78 percent of the males and 54 percent of the females outside these areas. Although the proportion of