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Federal Cutbacks and the Local Economy

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America is moving toward an economic and social system in which the federal government will have a smaller presence. Whether it will actually be possible to balance the budget by 2002 remains a question, but it is clear that the federal government will play a smaller role in the future financing and delivery of public services. Additional responsibilities are expected to devolve to the states and to local governments. That devolution, in turn, is likely to increase financial pressures on state and local governments. In some instances, federal cutbacks may also affect the local economy.

Stronger than anticipated economic growth in 1996 has improved the budget outlook, but the long term spending projections in the president's 1997 budget still offer an indication of how future federal spending could be affected. For entitlements—programs such as food stamps and family support assistance, where baseline future spending levels are determined by the number of eligible individuals and the expected cost of the services mandated under current law—cuts averaging 10 percent from the 2002 baseline were proposed. Medicare and Medicaid, the two largest and fastest growing entitlements, were expected to receive cuts of 11 percent and 13 percent respectively from 2002 baseline levels.

For non-defense discretionary programs, where spending levels are tied to annual appropriations, cuts averaging 20 percent from current spending levels adjusted for inflation were included. Defense spending would have been cut by 10 percent from the baseline levels for 2002 under the president's fiscal year 1997 budget plan.

Spending reductions of the size necessary to balance the federal budget will

create significant tensions in state and local budgets. Public officials everywhere need to begin planning how they and their communities can best deal with the financial challenges posed by the coming federal downsizing and devolution.

States will need to determine how much of the lost federal revenue they wish to replace through increased state spending. Existing programs to be maintained at current levels will need to be explicitly identified, as will those to be cut back, eliminated, or delegated to local government. In Minnesota, as in most states, it is not realistic to believe that state funds will be available to fully cover all the projected federal cutbacks.

At the local level, where final responsibility for service delivery typically rests, the impact of federal cutbacks will vary depending on the importance of the federal sector to the local economy, and on the programs the state chooses to continue. Impacts will differ by community and program, but all Minnesota localities need to begin now to identify how they might be affected by cuts in federal spending. Careful planning at both the state and local level will be necessary if unnecessary service disruptions and dislocations are to be avoided.

Table 1. Federal Spending in Minnesota Per Capita, fiscal year 1995

Program	$ Per Capita	U.S. Average	U.S. Ranking
Direct payments	2,315	2,714	47
Aid to state and local government	807	866	30
Salaries and wages	361	636	46
Procurement	349	765	38
Other	290	178	10
Total	4,122	5,161	48

Note: Numbers may not add to total due to rounding.
Source: Bureau of the Census.

Federal Spending in Minnesota

Minnesotans and their governments received more than $18.8 billion in federal spending during the 1995 federal fiscal year, about $4,122 per capita.* Federal spending in the state was 19 percent of personal income.**

But, while the federal presence in Minnesota's economy is large and significant, the amount residents of this state receive falls well below the national norms. Nationally, federal spending exceeds 24 percent of personal income, and averages $5,161 per capita. Minnesota ranks 46th of the 50 states in federal spending as a percentage of personal income, and 48th in per capita federal spending. Only Wisconsin and Indiana receive less than Minnesota on a per capita basis. The state ranks 46th in federal salaries and wages per capita, 38th in procurement receipts, and 30th in per capita state and local grants and aids received (Table 1).

Spending in Minnesota on the largest federal programs is also below the U.S. average. Minnesotans received $1,189 per capita in Social Security payments in 1995, about 95 percent of the U.S. average of $1,252. Medicare receipts were 85 percent of the U.S. per capita average of $681. Federal reimbursements to Minnesota's Medicaid program (which provides medical assistance to the poor and nursing home care for the elderly) were right at the U.S. average of $337 per capita.

About a third of every federal dollar coming to Minnesota goes to pay retirement and disability benefits to state residents. Medicare and Medicaid account for an additional 25 percent, while federal purchases and wages and salaries paid to federal employees constitute another 17 percent. The remaining 25 percent funds all the other well known federal programs, such as highway construction and farm supports, food stamps and low income housing, unemployment compensation and school lunches.

Cuts Will Differ By Region

Local impacts of federal spending cutbacks will depend on the programs cut and the relative size of the cuts. Social Security and Medicare, for example, are a larger portion of the economy in counties with large proportions of their residents over the age of sixty-five, while agricultural program payments are most important where corn and wheat are major crops. Potential cuts in research funding (which totalled more than $300 million statewide in 1995) will be concentrated in Hennepin and Olmstead Counties, the locations of the University of Minnesota and the Mayo Clinic. Some indication of the differences across the state is provided in the maps* and discussion that follows.

Total Spending of federal dollars in Minnesota can be examined in a number of ways. Residents of Hennepin County and their local governments received more than $5.25 billion in federal payments in 1995, nearly double the amount received by second place Ramsey County. Federal spending was only $16 million in Lake of the Woods County, less than anywhere else in Minnesota. But, when the importance of federal dollars to the local economy is considered the picture changes. In Hennepin County, federal spending as a percentage of personal income was only slightly below the state average of 19 percent, while in Lake of the Woods County it amounted to more than 22 percent.

Statewide, there were substantial differences in the local importance of the federal sector (Figure 1). In nineteen of Minnesota's eighty-seven counties, federal spending was less than 17 percent of personal income. At the other end of the scale, federal spending exceeded 28 percent of personal income in eighteen counties. In four counties—Washington, Carver, Scott, and Dakota—federal spending was less than 9 percent of personal income, while it exceeded 35 percent of county personal income in Norman, Kittson, Marshall, Red Lake, and Mahnomen Counties. Federal spending exceeded 49 percent of county personal income in Red Lake County.

Retirement and Disability Payments are direct payments from the federal government to retired or disabled citizens. In 1995 they amounted to 6.7 percent of Minnesota personal income. Federal pensions and veterans' benefits, as well as programs providing income supplements to the disabled, are included in this spending category, but Social Security benefits are more than three-quarters of the total.

* U.S. Bureau of Census, *Consolidated Federal Funds Report.* 1995.

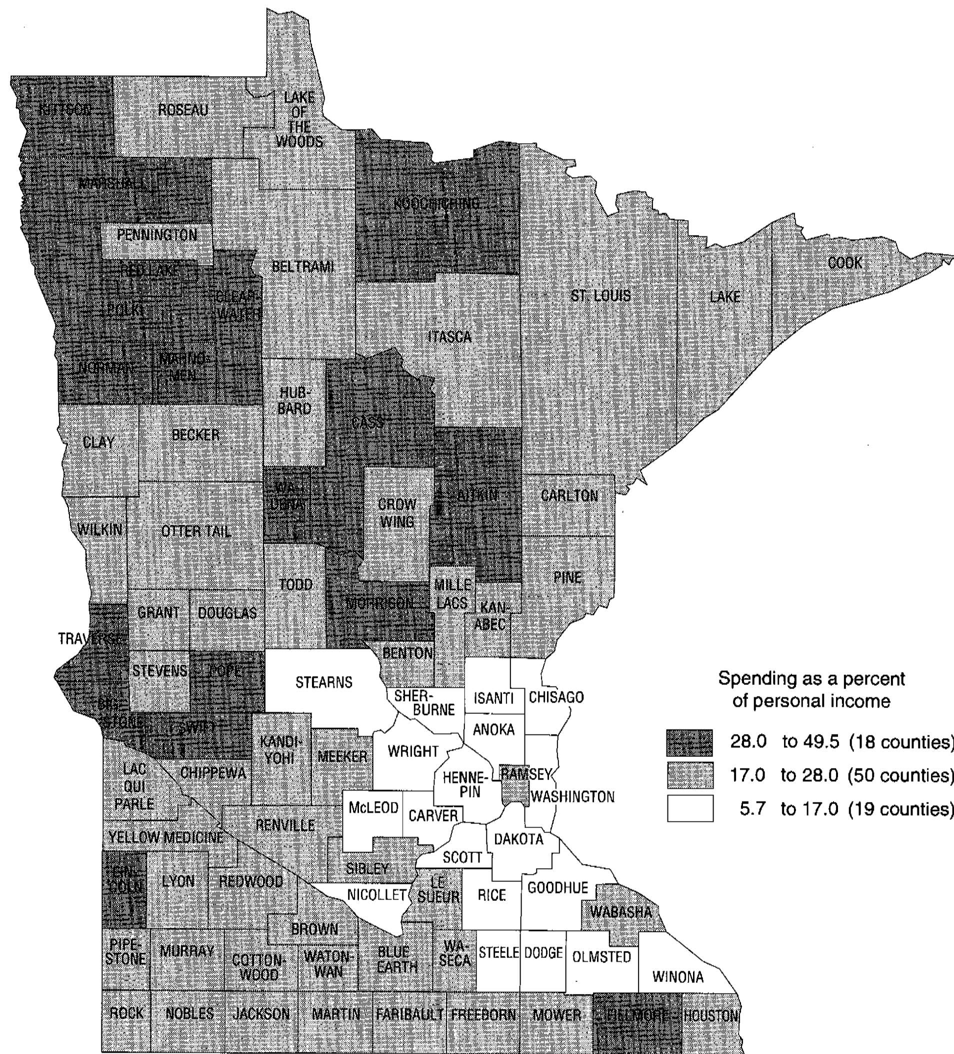
** Since personal income measures only income received by households, the ratio of federal spending to personal income overstates the importance of the federal sector when payments for goods and services in an area go for items other than wages and proprietors' incomes. Personal income is, however, the only relatively comprehensive measure of economic activity compiled at the county level on a consistent national basis.

In general, this article compares spending for programs whose primary impacts are on the local economy to county personal income. Programs that principally provide aid for state or local public services are compared on a per capita basis so as to provide an indication of the size of the tax increases necessary to continue the programs at their baseline level.

* Map shadings were chosen to highlight counties most likely and least likely to be affected by federal budget cuts. Usually about one-sixth of Minnesota counties were in each of the extremes.

Cover photo: County governments across the state, like that in Gaylord for Sibley County, need to look at how they will be affected by federal spending cuts.

Figure 1. Total Federal Spending, fiscal year 1995



Most analysts believe there will be little more than token cuts from the projected baseline growth for retirement and disability spending. This means that, if all other things are equal, in communities where Social Security and federal pension payments are a greater than average proportion of the local economy, federal budget changes will have little impact.

Retirement and disability payments ranged between 7.5 and 12 percent of personal income in approximately 60 percent of all Minnesota counties (Figure 2). At the extremes, however, there were wide differences. In six counties—Aitkin, Lake, Cass, Wadena, Big Stone, and Hubbard—retirement and disability payments to local residents totalled more than 14 percent of personal income, while in five Twin Cities suburban counties—Anoka, Dakota, Scott, Carver, and Washington—those payments amounted to less than 4 percent of county personal income.

Medicare spending in Minnesota reached $2.6 billion in 1995, but as with retirement and disability payments, there were large differences among counties. As would be expected, suburban counties received substantially less as a percentage of personal income, and rural counties with larger populations of senior citizens received more (Figure 3). In seventeen counties, Medicare spending as a proportion of personal income exceeded 4.7 percent. In eleven counties, it was more than double the statewide average of 2.6 percent; and in Lincoln and Big Stone Counties, Medicare payments exceeded 6.5 percent of personal income. In sixteen counties, Medicare payments were less than 2.75 percent of personal income; and in Anoka, Dakota, and Washington Counties, Medicare spending was less than 1 percent of personal income.

Wages and Salaries paid to Minnesotans by the federal government in 1995 totaled $1.6 billion, about 1.6 percent of state personal income. More than 60 percent was paid to postal employees. Indeed, almost 5 cents of every federal dollar received in Minnesota goes for postal service wages. Residents of Hennepin County received about 40 percent of the total, statewide federal salaries and wages, $657 million. Federal employees living in Ramsey County received $269 million. Those in St. Louis and Dakota Counties also received more than $100 million in wages and salaries. In eighteen counties federal salaries were less than $2 million.

In some counties even though the actual dollar amounts were relatively small, federal wages paid were a large percentage of county personal income (Figure 4). Federal wages and salaries were more than 2.5 percent of county personal income in eight counties–Kittson, St. Louis, Cass, Beltrami, Stearns, Cook, Pine, and Morrison. They were less than 0.75 percent of personal income in sixteen counties; and

Figure 2. Retirement and Disability Payments

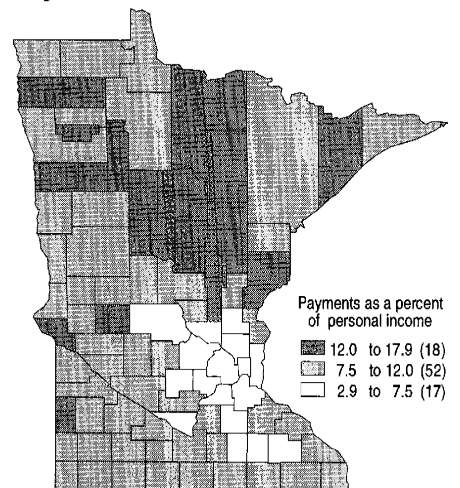
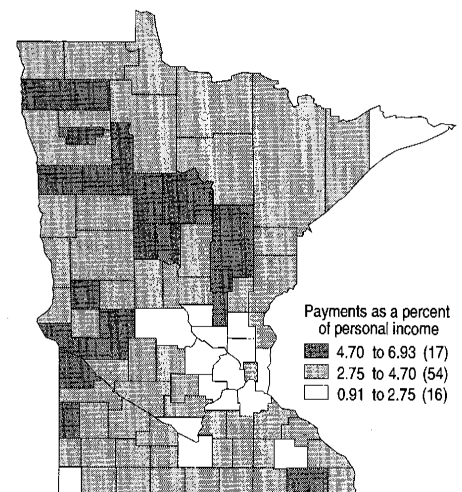


Figure 3. Medicare Payments



in Anoka, Washington, Nicollet, and Carver Counties—less than 0.5 percent of personal income. In Hennepin and Ramsey Counties federal wages and salaries accounted for 2.1 and 2.2 percent of personal income, respectively.

Procurement spending by the federal government in Minnesota was estimated to be $1.6 billion in 1995, about 1.5 percent of state personal income. The allocation of procurement spending across states and localities is less reliable than that for the other federal spending data compiled by the Census Bureau, however. Attempts are made to allocate procurement spending to the location where the work is done and not to the location of the prime contractor, but not all subcontracts can be identified and included. The data we present probably overstate federal procurement's importance in locations where prime contractors are concentrated, while understating its impact elsewhere.

The *Consolidated Federal Funds Report* for fiscal year 1995 assigns nearly two-thirds of all procurement spending in Minnesota to Hennepin County. Hennepin and Ramsey Counties, combined, account for nearly 80 percent of the $1.55 billion in federal purchases made in the state, and in Hennepin County procurement was 3.2 percent of personal income. Again, however, relatively small amounts were important parts of some local economies. Federal procurement in Red Lake, Koochiching, Watonwan, Marshall, and Pope Counties exceeded 3.5 percent of personal income. In Red Lake County federal procurement was 8.9 percent of personal income.

Agricultural Payments are an example of a program where changes are already underway. Decisions about future funding cuts were made as part of the 1996 farm bill. These changes will affect the outlook for the agricultural sector in Minnesota and in other states where agriculture is important.

Farm program payments, broadly defined to include the conservation reserve and specialty programs as well as the better known commodity programs for feed grains and wheat, add significantly to personal income in some Minnesota counties. Farmers in two counties, Marshall and Polk, received more than $25 million in federal payments during the 1995 fiscal year, while those in Kittson, Norman, and Roseau Counties received more than $10 million.

Farm program payments exceeded 4 percent of personal income in eleven counties. In four of those counties—Marshall, Kittson, Norman, and Red Lake—they exceeded 10 percent of personal income (Figure 5). Farm program payments were less than 1 percent of personal income in forty-five of Minnesota's eighty-seven counties.

Figure 4. Federal Salaries and Wages

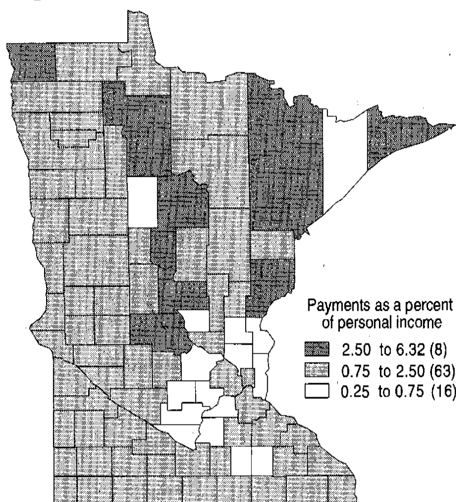
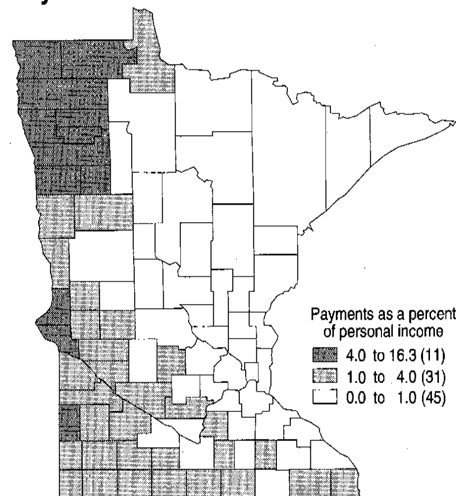


Figure 5. Agricultural Program Payments



Not all of the federal government's support for agriculture is reflected in these payments, however. The farm program provides an indirect subsidy to the dairy industry through its purchase of butter, cheese, and non-fat dry milk from processors. Those purchases, which are scheduled to be eliminated in 1999, are included in the procurement spending discussed earlier.*

Local Government Programs Will Also Be Cut

Direct federal aid to local governments, and aid for which the location of the recipient or the recipient government can be identified even though funding passed through state government, totalled nearly $4 billion in Minnesota in 1995.** Hennepin County received roughly one-third of those funds, and Ramsey County $500 million. Dakota County and St. Louis County also received more than $150 million.

Statewide, per capita grants and aids to state and local governments averaged $863, including $348 per capita in Medicaid. Two counties—Red Lake and Beltrami—each received more than $1,400 per capita, and twenty additional counties received more than $1,000 per capita. At the other end of the scale, eighteen counties received less than $600 per capita, and Washington, Carver, and Sherburne Counties received less than $350 per capita. The distribution of some of the better known federal aid programs is discussed below.

Medicaid reimburses state governments for a portion (54 percent in 1995) of the costs incurred in providing medical assistance to the needy and long term care for the elderly. Medicaid reimbursements accounted for more than 40 percent of all federal aid received by state and local governments in Minnesota in 1995.

Federal Medicaid reimbursements averaged $348 per capita in Minnesota in 1995. Sixteen counties received more than $465 per capita, while twenty counties received less than $300 per capita (Figure 6). Seven counties—Norman, Clearwater, Kittson, Red Lake, Big Stone, Traverse, and Wadena—received at least 50 percent more than the statewide average, while six counties—Scott, Carver, Dakota, Anoka, Sherburne, and Washington—received 40 percent less. Per capita receipts in Hennepin County ($427) and Ramsey County ($443) exceeded the statewide average.

Highway Planning and Construction Aid to Minnesota governments reached nearly $316 million in 1995, just over 8 percent of all aid to state and local governments. Since these local grants depend on the number and cost of projects currently in the planning stage or under construction, the amount received in any particular county varies over time. Hennepin County ($73 million in 1995) and Dakota County ($28 million) received about one-third of the statewide total in 1995.

When spending is viewed on a per capita basis, counties with smaller populations often appear to receive disproportionately large amounts of funding. In six counties federal highway planning and construction

* Low interest loans are also available to some farmers. Federal lending and loan guarantee programs, including student loans, are not included in this analysis.

** An additional $2 billion in federal spending ($432 per capita) was unallocated at the county level. Much of this spending came in the form of direct assistance to individuals through unemployment compensation and the earned income tax credit, but a portion was redistributed by state government to various localities. That spending is not included in the analysis which follows.

Figure 6. Medicaid

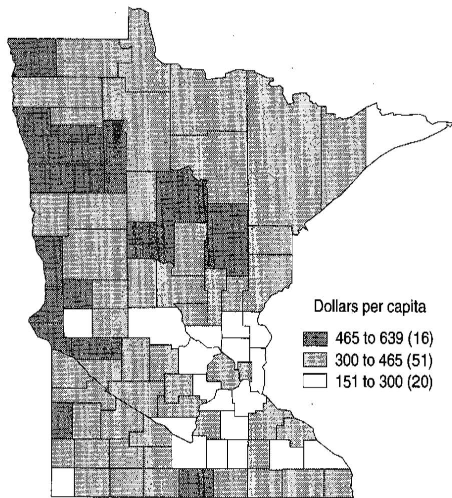
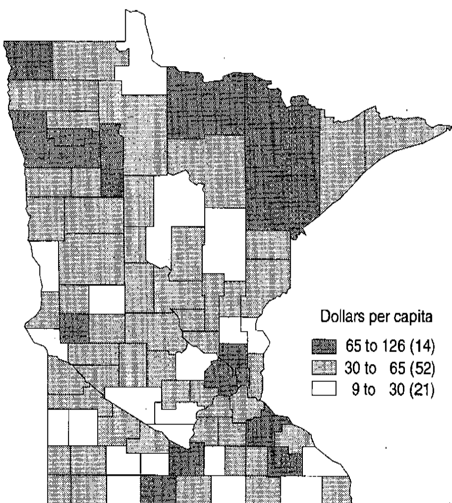


Figure 7. Low Income Housing Assistance



spending exceeded $400 per capita in 1995, while in thirteen counties spending was $10 or less per capita. The statewide per capita average was $69.

Low Income Housing Assistance programs provided more than $291 million to Minnesotans in 1995. While almost two-thirds of those funds went to individuals living in the Twin Cities metropolitan area, four of the five counties receiving the greatest per capita amounts—Polk, Kittson, Martin, and Red Lake—were located outside the metropolitan area. Low income housing assistance exceeded $65 per capita in fourteen counties and was below $30 in twenty-one counties (Figure 7). Twenty-three counties received less than half the statewide average of $64 per capita.

Family Support Assistance (AFDC, now known as Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, TANF) payments were the fourth largest source of federal aid for Minnesota governments. Spending on this program reached $243 million in 1995, about 1.5 percent of all federal spending in Minnesota and about 8 percent of federal aid to state and local governments. On a statewide, per capita basis federal payments for family support assistance in Minnesota were right at the U.S. average.

In twenty-one Minnesota counties family support assistance exceeded $55 per capita (Figure 8). In two counties, Beltrami and Mahnomen, federal family support assistance payments exceeded $128 per capita. Cass and Ramsey Counties also received family support assistance which averaged over $90 per capita. Twenty counties received less than $25 per capita.

Food Stamps also accounted for about 1.5 percent of all federal spending and about 8 percent of federal aid to Minnesota's state and local governments. Total food stamp funding in 1995 was $240 million, or about $52 per capita. Residents of Hennepin and Ramsey Counties received just under half the total amount of federal food stamp assistance provided to Minnesota, but the per capita amounts received were higher in several rural counties. Food stamp assistance was less than $30 per capita in twenty-one counties (Figure 9). In twenty counties food stamp receipts exceeded $60 per capita.

Other Spending was distributed across Minnesota in various ways. For some programs, such as child support enforcement and school lunch subsidies, per capita amounts were relatively constant in all counties. For programs, such as the low income home energy assistance program, where eligibility depends on household income or poverty status, lower income counties received proportionately more. And, for programs providing project-specific subsidies for construction of housing, or water and sewer projects, payments were concentrated in a relatively small number of counties. For these programs it is likely that different sets of counties receive funding each year.

Looking Ahead

The financial outlook for local governments in 2002 is sobering, but not calamitous. State officials have already begun to plan, hoping to identify the changes that will be necessary during the next few years. Local policy makers need to follow their lead and identify the likely impacts of changes in federal spending on their communities. Then, strategies for dealing with the financial challenges posed by financial devolution can be developed.

Federal funding for some services currently supported by the federal government will simply be dropped. For others, responsibilities and some funding will devolve to the states and local governments. And, as the struggle to find spending reductions to balance the federal budget proceeds, it will be no surprise if federal funding for the devolved programs is insufficient to maintain baseline service levels.

Local governments are unlikely to be able to raise taxes sufficiently to offset all the federal dollars that will be lost, but tax increases necessary to continue essential services may be possible. Fewer federal restrictions on state programs will help ease the problems of transition, as will increases in local productivity. The key will be to focus on establishing priorities and redesigning service delivery systems, so that communities are able to do more with less.

Policy makers will have time to devise strategies for providing services in programs that have been returned to the state and local levels by the federal government.

Figure 8. Family Support Assistance

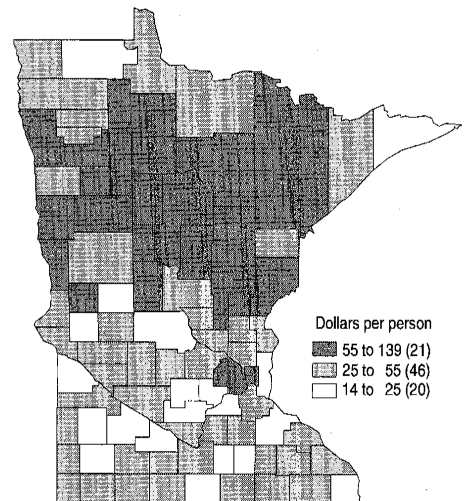
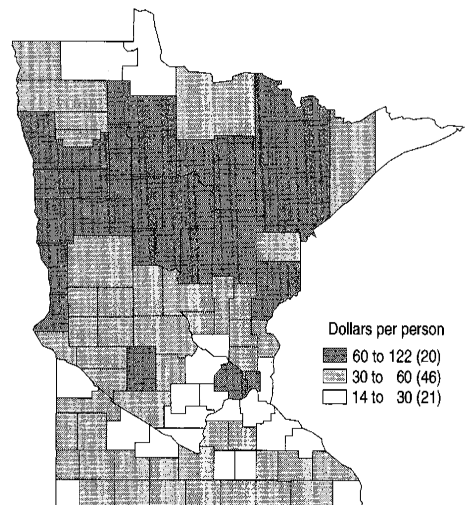


Figure 9. Food Stamps



Under current plans, the baseline budget cuts increase as we approach 2002, and the largest are delayed until after the turn of the century. That gradual phasing in of the cuts offers a window within which state and local officials have the opportunity to design, test, and modify new approaches to providing services before the spending reductions appear.

Local officials will need to make their own analyses of the likely impacts of changes in federal spending as they form their strategies for managing through the financial challenges posed by federal devolution. But that task will be easier if they begin making plans now for those changes which are surely underway.

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This article summarizes federal spending by county in Minnesota as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Census. Data for the report have been drawn from a complete and comprehensive set of federal spending profiles for Minnesota counties that is available on request from the authors. For further information, contact Carole Yoho in the Department of Applied Economics (612/625-1941 or on e-mail at cyoho@dept.agecon.umn.edu). **This project was supported by CURA, the Minnesota Extension Service, and the Agricultural Experiment Station.**

New Languages in Minnesota

by William J. Craig

According to the 1990 Census, nearly 80,000 Minnesotans did "not speak English very well" at the beginning of this decade. Most were new immigrants to the state—refugees from war-torn countries or ambitious folk looking for better economic opportunities. Most of these people quickly picked up enough language to deal with day-to-day activities, but they still needed help in dealing with more complicated issues, such as talking to a doctor about health concerns or reading the fishing regulations. CURA estimates that the number of people needing such help has grown dramatically since 1990, perhaps even doubled.

In order to better communicate with people not fluent in English, translation and interpretation services are needed. In fact, Minnesota law requires that qualified interpreters be provided (without cost) in every official encounter between a person "handicapped in communication" and any representative of state government. This includes all people with limited proficiency in English. In addition, the Civil Rights Act requires the same thing of every agency receiving federal funds (and thus virtually every hospital). But what languages are needed? And where are the services needed?

Translation is needed for written documents and most often this means translating English documents into another language so that they can be read by the immigrant. Fishing regulations is an example. One or a few centers could handle most needs if we knew which languages are most needed.

Interpretation is needed when speakers of English and speakers of other languages need to communicate directly with each other. Often this is when immigrants need to communicate with professionals, such as lawyers or judges in a courtroom or doctors in a hospital. The Mayo Clinic, for example, sees 8,000 non-English-speaking patients a year, with a growing number of them residing in the Rochester area. The clinic expects to have ninety interpreters available by this summer. Hennepin County Medical Center has a combined full-time and freelance staff of forty interpreters, assisting 4,000 patients a month, 48,000 patients a year. As with translation services, estimating the need for more interpreters requires an estimate of the number of speakers of each language. But, in addition, because oral communication requires both participants to be present, we need to know where those foreign languages are spoken across the state.

The Twin Cities Reader publication *Employment Weekly* for December 4-10, 1996 carried a story about the potential for a career in this field. The article said that the University of Minnesota's Program in Translation and Interpreting is the only academic curriculum in interpretation offered in the Midwest. The program is "held in high esteem by both Hennepin and Ramsey County Medical Centers as well as many area law firms."

The state legislature has shown an interest in meeting the need for translators and interpreters in Minnesota. It asked Minnesota State Colleges and Universities (MnSCU, the new consolidation of state universities, community colleges, and technical colleges) to work with the University of Minnesota in preparing a plan to meet the need. MnSCU asked CURA for assistance in estimating the nature and location of foreign language speakers around the state. Because the results appear interesting, we are sharing them with a larger audience. In the meantime, a bill has been introduced into the 1997 legislative session calling for MnSCU and the University of Minnesota to put in place a state-wide program for training bilingual people in the skills of translation and interpreting and for certifying those skills.

Data Sources

The basic problem was finding relevant data. The 1990 Census, which asked about language spoken at home and skill with English, is already seven years old. Federal immigration data shows "where people got off the boat," but does not track people as they move around the country in search of a better life. One source, however, is current if not perfect. The Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning (CFL, formerly the Department of Education) collects annual data from public school districts across the state about the number of students who 1) speak a language other than English at home, and 2) are enrolled in English-as-a-second-language (ESL) classes. In both cases, the schools report

Hennepin County Medical Center Surgical Oncologist Dr. Rick Zera talks with a patient with the aid of Hmong interpreter Pang Her. Full-time staff at HCMC can interpret in Hmong, Lao, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Spanish, and Russian. Free-lance interpreters are also available for more than fifty other languages, including Chinese and Somali.

which language the student speaks—in one of sixty-two categories.* While this database counts only school-age children, it is a good indication of the number and location of other people from the same family, and of family friends and relatives who do not have children in school.

CURA purchased 1989-90 and 1994-95 school year data, the most recent data available as of Fall 1996, from the Minnesota Department of Children, Families, and Learning.** We concentrated on the language spoken at home and ignored the ESL counts; because even if a child speaks English fairly well, the parents may very well continue to need the assistance of an interpreter or a translator. Still, this measure is a generous indicator of the need for language services. Among the various questions indicating language spoken at home is "What language was spoken in the home when the child was born?" Many parents may have gained sufficient English skills in the five years between the birth of their child and his or her enrollment in kindergarten. In plotting language groupings around the state, we aggregated school district data to the county level.

What Languages?

In 1990, just over 20,000 public school children lived in households speaking a language other than English (Table 1). By 1995, this number had nearly doubled, to 38,000. In absolute numbers, those from Southeast Asia and Latin America had the largest increases. Some of this growth is due to immigration and the resettling of existing immigrants and some, because these groups tend to have fairly large families, is due to children of settled immigrants reaching school age. The largest increases in relative terms are new refugees from Africa and Eastern Europe, including Russia, where the numbers quadrupled and tripled.

In 1995 over half the children spoke a language from Southeast Asia at home, some 20,000 children. Nearly 10,000 children spoke Spanish at home. Most of these families moved to Minnesota from the southern border regions, especially Texas and Mexico.

In order to provide translation and interpreting services, the state will need to know exactly which languages are involved. Table 2 lists the twenty-one largest language groups of children in descending order. All languages spoken by more than 100 children are listed here. Hmong is the most popular language and three other Southeast Asian languages are in the top five. Spanish is the second largest group, accounting for one-quarter of all children from non-English-speaking homes.

The eighth item in the list, African Languages, presents a problem. Hundreds of

* Two of the sixty-two categories are not languages. *Not available* is used when the school does not ask for the language, the parent does not provide the requested information, or the language is not on the code list. *Not specific* is used where more than one non-English language is used at home. Neither group is very large. In 1994-95 there were 465 children listed as *not available* and 321 children listed as *not specific* out of more than 38,000.

** The 1989-90 data is from the MINCRIS database—Minnesota Civil Rights Information System. The 1994-95 data is from the MARSS database—Minnesota Automated Reporting Student System.

sub-Saharan African languages are combined under this single label, so it is impossible to tell exactly what specific translation and interpreting services are needed. Until recently, there have been too few immigrants from Africa to count each language separately and many of those who did emigrate from Africa already spoke English or some other colonial language. The 1995-96 data will provide another nine language categories, most of them African languages, for school districts to use in documenting languages spoken at home.

This study presents the languages spoken in Minnesota in terms of counts of school children. Some readers would prefer estimates of adults or all people speaking each language. It is possible to make such estimates. Using the 1990 Census as a base, we find there were 2.54 Hmong in Minnesota for every school-age child speaking Hmong at home in 1990. Using this multiplier, we can estimate that there were 32,500 Hmong in the state in 1995. Hmong and Cambodian have fairly low multipliers because a substantial portion of their numbers are young and in school.

The multipliers for Laotian (3.3) and Vietnamese (4.4) are slightly higher. These multipliers give us a rough estimate of 8,500 Laotian speakers and 12,900 Vietnamese speakers. It becomes difficult to perform a complete analysis, however, because the Census lists only twenty-four languages and omits many that are critical in Minnesota (such as Hmong and Lao). In some cases, where nearly everyone in a group is a non-English speaker, as with the Hmong, we can substitute Census racial counts. The language-based multiplier is roughly 10 to 13 for Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Arabic, Pilipino, Japanese, and Portuguese. This means there may be as many as 115,000 Spanish speakers, making them the largest single non-English-speaking group. All Southeast Asians combined add to under 60,000. For immigrant groups where the people are generally older, such as German, French, and Polish, the multiplier approaches 100 or more.

Table 1. Origin of Language Spoken at Home by Minnesota Public School Children

Place of Origin	1990	1995	Ratio (1995/1990)
Latin America	3,617	9,828	2.7
Southeast Asia	12,104	20,192	1.7
Other Asia	1,829	2,789	1.5
Western Europe	578	1,165	2.0
Eastern Europe	464	1,510	3.3
Middle East	397	813	2.0
Sub-Sahara Africa	192	854	4.4
American Native*	504	116	0.2
Other	546	1,049	1.9
TOTAL	20,231	38,316	1.9

* The 116 children listed in 1995 is a small fraction of the American Indian children who live in households speaking such languages. Most American Indian households speak a fair amount of English as well, enough to qualify as English-speaking for the Department of Children, Families, and Learning, which is focused on whether children need special classes in English-as-a-second-language.

Table 2. Language Spoken at Home by Minnesota Public School Children and Percent Living in Twin Cities or Rochester Area, 1995

Specific Language	Statewide Count	Percent in Twin Cities Metro Area	Percent in Olmsted County
Hmong	12,800	95.9	0.7
Spanish	9,828	41.5	2.6
Vietnamese	2,948	81.9	6.2
Lao, Laotian	2,557	65.8	6.6
Cambodian	1,775	67.4	24.9
Chinese, Cantonese	1,146	85.6	7.4
Russian	968	90.0	3.1
African Languages	854	84.7	11.0
Korean	542	88.0	7.6
Arabic	484	86.6	6.0
German	402	55.5	4.2
Asian Indian	300	81.0	10.0
Pilipino, Tagalog	263	83.3	1.6
Sign Language*	246	73.6	8.4
Hindi, Urdu	243	82.7	10.3
Japanese	225	68.4	15.6
Farsi, Irani	194	82.0	6.2
French	166	82.5	4.8
Polish	141	81.6	6.4
Ukranian	136	97.8	0.0
Portuguese	129	78.3	1.6
Other	1,969	68.6	8.6
TOTAL	38,316	74.5	4.5

* Sign Language is associated with families where members are hearing impaired. These families may need intrepreting services, but not translation of written documents.

Where Are They Spoken?

Most immigrants come to the Twin Cities metropolitan area or Olmsted county (see Table 2). The Twin Cities contain just over half of the state's population, but have attracted the families of three-fourths of the school children who speak a foreign language at home. For most languages, the overwhelming majority of the children speaking it live in the Twin Cities area. And virtually all of the Hmong live in the Twin Cities area—90 percent of the state total in the cities of Minneapolis and St. Paul alone.

Rochester is the county seat of Olmsted County, and a thriving metropolis that is attracting many immigrant families as well as families of medical professionals from around the world coming to train at the Mayo Clinic. Olmsted County has only 2.4

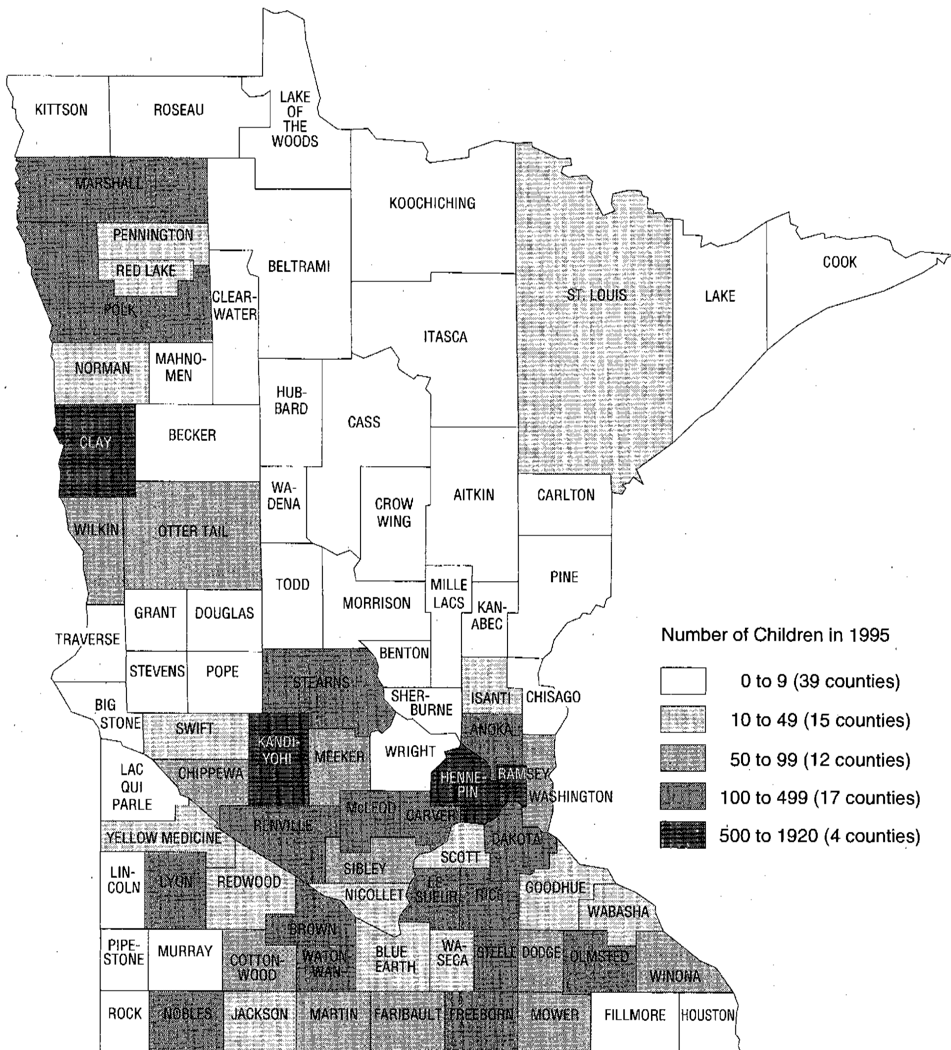
percent of the state's population, but 4.5 percent of the school children who do not speak English at home. Besides 892 Southeast Asian children, Olmsted County has 254 children that speak Spanish at home, nearly 100 children from families that speak an African language, 85 Chinese, 41 Korean, 35 Japanese, 30 Russian, and 30 Asian Indian. In all, Olmsted County has 1,700 children speaking at least thirty-eight languages other than English at home.

Spanish-speakers are distributed more evenly around the state. Some 60 percent of the children living in homes where Spanish is spoken live in outstate Minnesota (Figure 1). These children are concentrated in the agricultural counties in southern and northwestern Minnesota, with the largest concentrations in counties with larger cities. Some 825 children are found in Kandiyohi County, straight west of the Twin Cities, where Willmar is the largest city. Another 727 children are in Clay County, where Moorhead dominates. But specific industries can attract relatively larger numbers of Spanish-speaking families to smaller places. The third largest outstate concentration of children speaking Spanish at home is in Watonwan County, where St. James, the largest city, has a population of under 5,000.

Likewise, Laotians are relatively scattered around the state. They are alone among the Southeast Asian communities in locating outside the Twin Cities and Rochester. Figure 2 shows Laotians in several other parts of the state, particularly in Cottonwood and Nobles Counties in the southwestern part of the state where they are involved in food processing industries in Windom and Worthington, as well as in manufacturing. Altogether, 529 children from Laotian-speaking families live in the southwestern corner of the state. Another 240 live in the southeast and 78 live in the St. Cloud area.

Of the twenty-one languages in Table 2, only six do not have at least three-quarters of their numbers located in the Twin Cities seven-county area. Adding Olmsted reduces that number to three: Spanish, Laotian, and German. Children who speak German at home are fairly fluent in English, only 12 percent are enrolled in ESL classes, so perhaps their families have mastered English. Half or more of the Spanish and Laotian children are enrolled in ESL, so people in these language groups will need local interpreting assistance.

Figure 1. Spanish Speaking Children in Public Schools



In addition to the need for language services, these new immigrants present other issues to the Minnesota communities where they settle. Joseph Amato, director of the Regional Studies Center at Southwest State University, has documented many of these issues in a recent book, *To Call It Home: The New Immigrants of Southwestern Minnesota*. He shows that new immigrants are making significant contributions to local economies and local schools. But he also discusses the tensions and problems between local people, with their entrenched social norms, and immigrants, who bring new cultures with them. Churches and civic leaders are helping to bridge the gap in places like Madelia (Wantonwan County) and Tracy (Lyon County).

Amato documents how many of these immigrants in rural Minnesota have come to earn a living in the region's new and expanding meat industry, especially in poultry processing. These are tedious, low wage jobs ($6 to $7 an hour) that are ignored by locals, even by high school dropouts. But they are jobs that provide an economic base for people who, because of their lack of English skills, have little other choice if they want to work and not be on welfare.

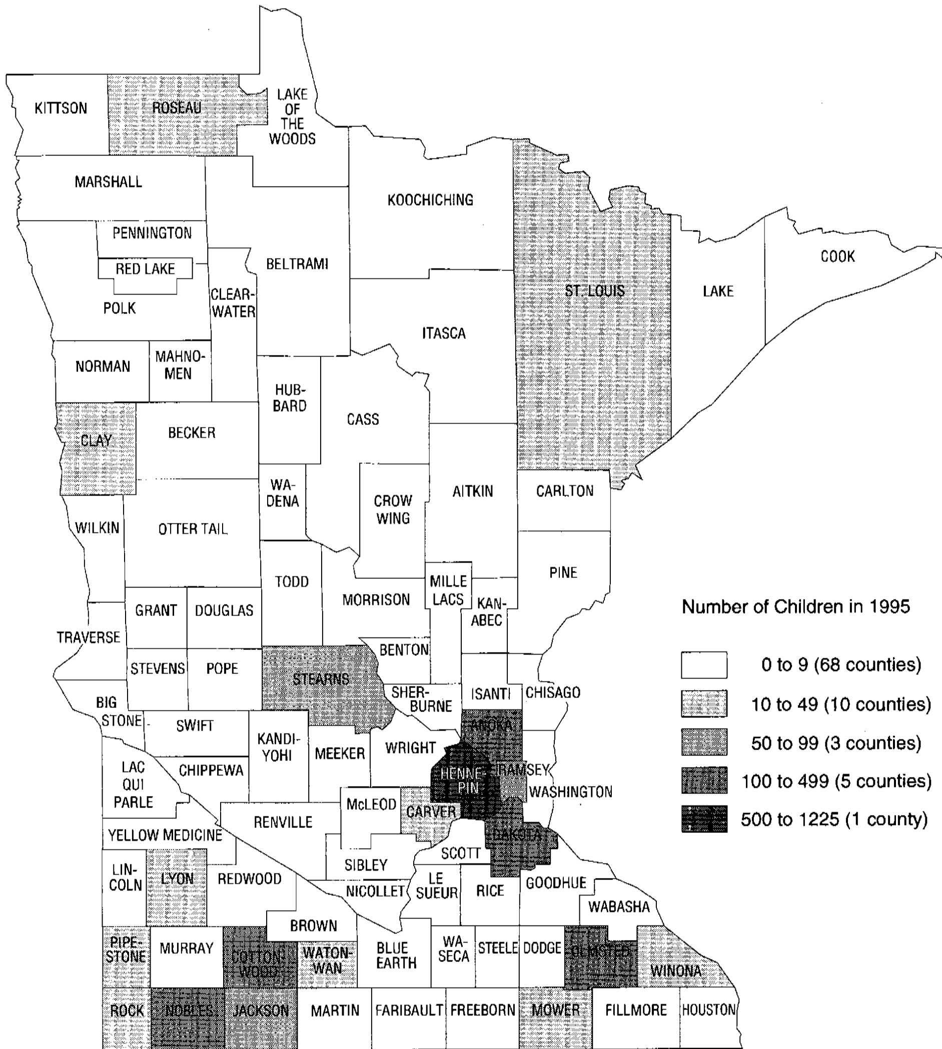
Conclusion

There is a large and growing number of immigrants in Minnesota for whom English is not their first language. In 1990, there were nearly 80,000 people who did not speak English very well. Since then, the number of children in public schools who do not speak English at home has doubled, so it is reasonable to assume that this indicates a large increase in the number of all people having difficulty with English.

The largest numbers of people not speaking English at home are Southeast Asians and Hispanics. But African and Eastern European languages are growing rapidly. So the need for interpreting and translation services is both large and broad.

Fortunately, from the standpoint of providing language services, most of the populations speaking these languages live in the Twin Cities or Rochester areas, at least those with school-age children. The number of languages is enormous, especially considering the growing number of

Figure 2. Laotian Speaking Children in Public Schools



African languages. And, given transportation difficulties, it may be necessary to provide bilingual services at multiple locations within these areas.

Two language groups need services in more locations around the state. Laotian interpreters are, no doubt, needed in southwestern Minnesota. Services based in Rochester probably could meet the needs of the Laotians scattered across southeastern Minnesota. The need for Spanish interpreters is more far-flung and requires more study.

People and the economy are very dynamic. Opportunities disappear and people move on to new ones. A factory in outstate Minnesota might need workers, recruit them from the Twin Cities' Somali community, and make this current analysis obsolete. News stories remind us of a recent Somali movement into the Rochester area. Fresh data from the Department of Children, Families, and Learning can monitor these changes, and additional language categories will make their data even more useful. Data from the 1995-96 school year is now available.

While the database used for this analysis was current a few months ago, it was not a complete indicator of the number of people needing help with translation and interpreting. Enclaves of working young men sending money home to their families cannot be monitored by a system based on counting school children. Joseph Amato, for example, estimated that 150 Somalis worked at Heartland Foods in Marshall (Lyon County) in 1994. He says that most were single males, though families were beginning to move in. The data we studied showed only nine school children speaking any African language in all of Lyon County in 1995. It would have been impossible to estimate the size of the Somali population from the school data alone. So those preparing to provide language services will need to listen to individual calls for assistance from communities around the state.

Will Craig is CURA's assistant director and the immediate past president of the University Consortium for Geographic Information Science. UCGIS includes the thirty-five most significant GIS research institutions in the country.

Errata

Our apologies to Fred Lukermann and William G. Shepherd. On page 2 of the December 1996 **CURA Reporter**, Lukermann was incorrectly identified as vice president for Academic Affairs in 1968, when CURA was first formed. He was actually assistant vice president under Shepherd, who was vice president for Academic Affairs.

Thanks to the Minnesota Board of Engineering, who pointed out an error in Table 1 of Morris Kleiner and Mitchell Gordon's article "The Growth of Occupational Licensing" in the December 1996 **CURA Reporter** (see p. 9). Engineers should not have been asterisked in the 1950 column. They have been licensed since 1921 in Minnesota.

When Foster Parents Are Kin

by Sandra Beeman and Laura Boisen

Few social services for children are used both as widely and as reluctantly as foster care. Yet it was estimated in 1990* that nearly half a million children were in out-of-home placements across the United States. Many of these children were placed with relatives. For a variety of reasons, kinship foster care—the formal placement of children by a child protection service agency with their relatives or others with close familial ties—is one of the fastest growing types of out-of-home placements for children in need. The growth of kinship foster care is as dramatic in Minnesota as it is across the country. According to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, by 1994 approximately 23 percent of the children needing foster care in Minnesota's metropolitan counties were placed with kin, while just under 10 percent were placed with kin in non-metropolitan counties.

Children are removed from their homes for a variety of reasons. Their parents may no longer be able to care for them. Child abuse or child neglect is often the issue. The child's own behavior may be causing difficulties that the parents can no longer cope with. Whatever the problem, children often have gone to live with relatives. In fact, the practice of relatives caring for children through informal family arrangements is a long-standing American tradition, but the formal placement of children with kin is a relatively recent phenomenon.

The movement toward a greater reliance on kinship foster care has resulted from new conditions within the overall foster care system. There are increasing numbers of children needing placement and declining numbers of foster families available. Child welfare agencies also have come to more fully recognize kin as placement resources. An emphasis on the importance of a child's racial and ethnic heritage, and the recognition that placement with kin is often less traumatic for the child, have led many child welfare agencies to look first to kin when the need arises. In Minnesota, county social service agencies are required by Minnesota Statute (Section 257-071) to follow an established order of preference in finding an out-of-home placement for a child. Agencies are required to first try recruiting a foster family from among the child's own relatives.

As the number of children in kinship foster care grows, Minnesota, like many other states, must consider how this kind of care fits within the larger established system for out-of-home child placement—a system based on placement with unrelated foster parents. How does foster care with kin differ from foster care with nonkin? Are the needs of the foster parents different? Is the

When children are placed with kin it is most likely to be with their grandparents. Their birth parents are often involved in selecting which kin they will live with and, in the sample we studied, close to half were already living with kin before formal placement was made.

* U.S. House of Representatives Select Committee on Children, Youth, and Families.

outcome for the children different? Like most states, Minnesota has needed to respond quickly to the dramatic growth of kinship foster care with policies and procedures for licensing, financial support, and supportive services developed without the benefit of adequate information on the unique issues involved when foster parents are kin. Our study systematically collected data on kinship and nonkinship foster care in Minnesota in order to inform the development of sound policies and programs across the state.

The Kinship Foster Care Study

In order to gather data on a range of county experiences with kinship foster care, we selected three Minnesota counties to participate in our study: an urban county (Hennepin), a suburban county (Anoka), and an outstate county (Blue Earth). Because so little was known about the state of kinship foster care in Minnesota when we began our study, we designed a progressive, multi-phase project. Each phase of data collection used different methods and focused on a different sample of cases.

We began with an analysis of computerized administrative data about all the children in foster care in our three study counties during the first six months of 1994. In all there were 2,820 children in Hennepin County, 574 children in Anoka County, and 80 children in Blue Earth County. In the second phase, we surveyed 381 child welfare professionals about foster care in Hennepin, Anoka, and Blue Earth Counties. Responses were received from 259 child welfare and home licensing workers (68 percent). These are the workers who have the most contact with children placed in foster care and with their families. For the third phase, we selected a sample of fifty kinship and forty-eight nonkinship cases in Anoka and Hennepin Counties for more detailed study through case file reviews.* The sample cases were chosen to reflect the racial and ethnic diversity of foster care children in Anoka and Hennepin Counties. In the fourth phase, we conducted interviews with twenty-two kinship and twenty-three nonkinship foster parents, and also with nine birth parents in Hennepin and Anoka Counties.

* We were able to collect data from child workers for all fifty kinship and forty-eight nonkinship cases, but from licensing workers (who work with the foster parents) for only thirty-four kinship and forty-two nonkinship cases. Consequently, data related to foster parent characteristics were available for only a portion of our sample. In addition, because the amount of data available in case files varied, even information from child workers was not always complete.

Table 1. Race and Hispanic Heritage of Children in Kinship and Nonkinship Foster Care, 1994*

	Hennepin County				Anoka County				Blue Earth County			
	Kinship		Non-kinship		Kinship		Non-kinship		Kinship		Non-kinship	
	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)	%	(n)
African American	60.1	(573)	51.1	(889)	10.3	(6)	6.0	(31)	0.0	(0)	1.3	(1)
American Indian	18.4	(175)	17.1	(298)	3.4	(2)	4.3	(22)				
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.5	(5)	2.2	(39)	0.0	(0)	0.8	(4)				
White	17.4	(166)	26.3	(457)	86.2	(50)	88.9	(458)	0.0	(0)	98.8	(79)
Unknown	3.6	(34)	3.2	(56)								
Hispanic Heritage	1.4	(13)	3.5	(60)	0.0	(0)	2.7	(14)				
Totals	100	(953)	100	(1,739)	100	(58)	100	(515)	0.0	(0)	100	(80)

* Numbers are for the first half of 1994 and represent only those children for whom type of placement was known. Race and Hispanic heritage are two separate variables, thus Hispanic children are counted twice in this table.

Table 2. Race of Children in Case File Review Sample According to Worker

	Kinship		Nonkinship	
	%	(n)	%	(n)
African American	26.0	(13)	29.2	(14)
American Indian/Alaskan	14.0	(7)	18.8	(9)
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.0	(1)	2.1	(1)
Latino/Chicano/Hispanic	4.0	(2)	2.1	(1)
White	36.0	(18)	39.6	(19)
Biracial	18.0	(9)	8.3	(4)
Total	100.0	(50)	100.1	(48)

Note: Sampling proportions are *not* equivalent to the distribution of children in foster care (see Table 1). Proportions were first determined for those in kinship homes, then replicated for those in nonkin homes.

Patterns of Foster Care Placement

Our analysis of administrative data revealed wide variations among the three study counties in how often children are placed with kin. In Hennepin County more than a third (33.8 percent) of all foster care children were living with kin; in Anoka County, slightly more than 10 percent were with kin, while in Blue Earth County none had been placed with kin (Table 1).

Children of color make up a slightly larger proportion of those living with kin than those with nonkin. In fact, an analysis of administrative data from 1993 showed that children of color—particularly African American and American Indian children—were more likely than White children to be placed with kin for foster care.** When children are placed with kin, it is most likely to be with their grandparents. In Hennepin County during the first half of 1994, 35.5 percent of kinship foster parents were grandparents, while in Anoka County, the proportion was even higher, 43.1 percent. Aunts or uncles make up the second largest group—18.5 percent (Hennepin County) and 34.5 percent (Anoka County) were foster parents during the same period.

** Beeman, S. "An Analysis of Children in Out-of-Home Placement in 1992 and 1993: A Minnesota Report." Report submitted to the Minnesota Department of Human Services by the author.

Characteristics of Children, Birth Parents, and Foster Parents

Study of individual case files, which included interviews with child welfare and home licensing workers, gave us a closer look at the differences involved when placing children with kin or with nonkin as foster parents. Fifty kinship and forty-eight nonkinship cases were included in the sample. Cases were chosen to highlight the racial and ethnic diversity of children in foster care in Anoka and Hennepin Counties.

The children in our case sample were predominately White, African American, and American Indian (Table 2). Our sample included more girls in foster care with kin than with nonkin, but the difference was not large (66 percent compared with 50 percent). The children ranged in age from one to seventeen. The average age for children placed with kin was a little over eight years, while for children placed with nonkin it was almost nine years.

Birth parents of children placed with kin were likely to be listed in the case files as mothers rather than fathers or both parents (80 percent compared to 69 percent for children placed with nonkin). The case files, indeed, contained significantly more data about birth mothers than birth fathers, an indication of the child welfare system's inattention to birth fathers and their role in child protection issues. Mothers of children placed with kin and nonkin were similar in age and education level. The mean age for mothers whose children were with kin was thirty-two, while for mothers whose children were with nonkin it was thirty-four. Over half of both groups were high school graduates, although information on education was not available for seventeen kin and fourteen nonkin foster parents.

Under the present system, foster parents who are not kin receive more services and training as well as larger monthly payments than foster parents who are kin to the children they care for.

Most birth mothers had low incomes. Whether their children were placed with kin or with nonkin, the majority relied on some form of public assistance. Only a little over a third (37 percent) of the mothers whose children were with kin received some income from employment, while even fewer (28 percent) of the mothers whose children were with nonkin received income from employment.

Birth mothers in both groups were identified as having multiple problems. Alcohol and drug problems were most prevalent among mothers of children in kinship care. Chronic family violence was more often found among mothers of children in nonkinship care. However, even with these identified problems, child welfare workers believed that mothers of children in both groups possessed strengths that could be used in caring for their children. Birth mothers were overwhelmingly seen as committed to the best interests of their children.

Foster parents were also predominantly women (88 percent of the foster parents who were kin and 93 percent of the nonkin). Most kin foster parents (primarily grandmothers and aunts) were related to the children's mother. Although other studies have found kin foster parents to be older than nonkin, ours did not. The average age of kin was forty-five and of nonkin, forty-four. The two groups were similar in marital status. In both, the majority were married (56 percent kin and 60 percent of nonkin), with about a quarter divorced (24 percent of kin and 26 percent of nonkin). More kin foster parents were "never married" (15 percent) than nonkin (10 percent).

The two groups of foster parents differed in sources of income. About three-quarters of the foster parents who were kin (76 percent) received income from wages, either from their own employment (55 percent) or from another household member's employment. Almost all of the nonkin (90 percent) received income from wages (57 percent from their own employment). The two groups also differed in their levels of education. Almost a quarter (21 percent) of nonkin foster parents were college graduates while only 6 percent of the kin had completed college.

Placement Characteristics

When children are removed from their birth homes, it may be for any number of reasons. The case files we examined showed that most often these children were removed from their homes for reasons related to their parents—a parent was jailed, or abandoned them, had drug or alcohol problems, or was unable to provide a stable home. Sometimes it was an illness or disability that left the parent incapable of caring for them. This was true for half of the children placed with kin and for almost half (47 percent) of the children placed with nonkin.

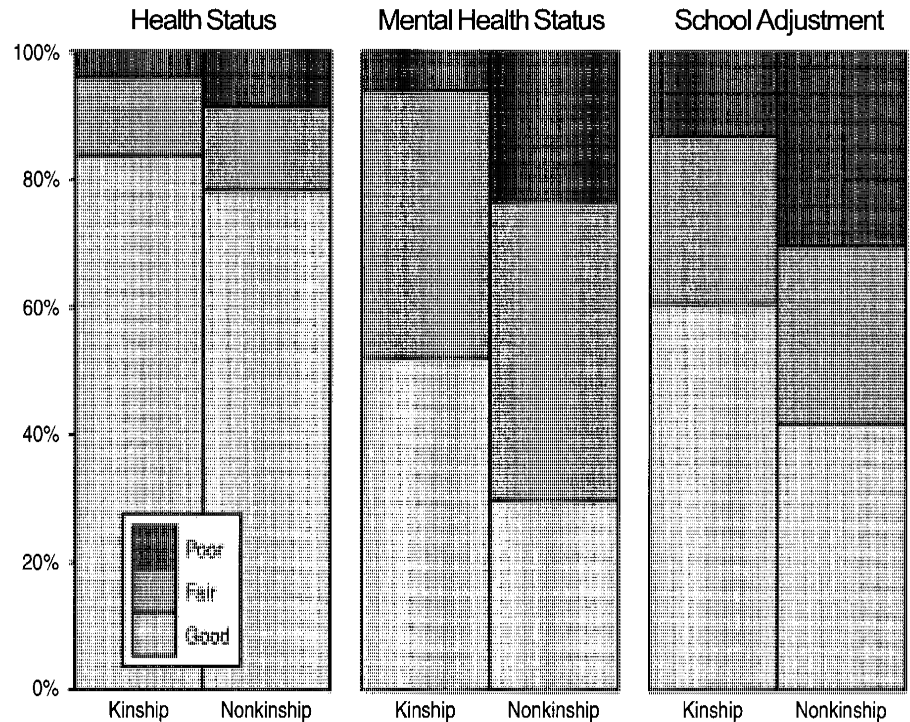
A slightly smaller number of children had been removed from their birth homes for "child protection" reasons. These cases involved the risk of sexual abuse, physical abuse, neglect, or medical neglect. About 40 percent of the children placed with kin and 36 percent of the children placed with nonkin had been removed for these reasons.

However, the majority of cases in both groups included substantiated maltreatment (for 72 percent of the children living with kin and 64 percent of the children living with nonkin). Differences emerge when the type of maltreatment is considered. Child neglect had clearly been more predominant among the children now living with kin (83 percent) than among those living with nonkin (66 percent), while abuse had been more predominant among those now living with nonkin (21 percent versus 9 percent).

A number of things stand out about the placement of children with their kin. Child welfare workers told us that many birth parents had been involved in selecting which kin would serve as foster parents. In fact, close to half of the children in kinship placement (46 percent) were already living in that situation before formal placement was made. In addition, most of the children living with kin whose brothers or sisters were also under the custody of the county (81 percent) were living with their brothers and sisters in the same foster home.

For most of the cases we examined, this was the first time that the child had been moved from home for an episode of care with foster parents. And, indeed, the goal for the majority of the cases we studied was eventual reunification with the birth parents. There were differences, however, between children living with kin and with nonkin in how many placements the children had experienced during the current episode of care. For children living with kin the median number of prior placements was none, their only placement had been with these kin. For children living with nonkin, the median number of prior placements was two. This alone speaks to the stability that placement with kin offers children.

Figure 1. Child's Well-Being According to Family Workers



The Children's Well-Being

How were the children doing in their out-of- home placements? We asked the family workers for their perceptions of the children's well-being. Most were in generally good health and were receiving regular physical and dental checkups (Figure 1). There were differences between those placed with kin and with nonkin, however, when it came to their mental health. While we were told that about half of the children placed with kin (52 percent) had generally good mental health, workers said that less than a third of those placed with nonkin (30 percent) did, and the proportion of those with serious ongoing mental health problems was much higher among children living with nonkin (23 percent) than among those living with kin (6 percent).

Children's school adjustment also differed between those living with kin and those living with nonkin. The workers told us that well over half of the children living with kin (60 percent) were adjusting well to school, while only 42 percent of those living with nonkin were. In addition almost a third of the children living with nonkin (31 percent) had chronic behavioral and academic problems. Only 13 percent of those living with kin had such severe problems.

While most of the children in the cases we studied did not have either learning or developmental disabilities, many of the children in nonkinship homes had emotional and behavioral problems (80 percent). Children in kinship homes were much less likely to have emotional and behavioral problems (39 percent). Overall, the majority of the children in both types of placement (77 percent of kin and 88 percent of nonkin) were adjusting positively to their placement, according to their workers.

Services, Training, and Support

Children in foster care received regular visits or phone calls from their family workers twice each month whether they had been placed with kin or nonkin. In addition to regular casework services, many had received psychological services during placement (50 percent of those with kin and 63 percent of those with nonkin). Some children had also received educational services (18 percent with kin, 25 percent with nonkin) as well as medical services (12 percent with kin, 19 percent with nonkin).

Birth mothers also had regular contact with their family workers, four times each month, whether their children were placed with kin or nonkin. Other services were also available to birth mothers. Psychological services were used by 84 percent of the mothers whose children had been placed with kin and by 77 percent of the mothers whose children had been placed with nonkin. Training and support services were used by over half (54 percent) of both groups of birth mothers.

When we examined support, services, and training for foster parents we found significant differences between those who

were kin and those who were nonkin. The majority of kin foster parents had restricted licenses—they were licensed only to provide foster care for their kin. Less than a third (29 percent) had received training before the child was placed with them (as compared to 100 percent of nonkin foster parents). Foster care payments to the kin were markedly lower as well. The mean monthly payment to foster parents who were kin was $618 compared to $834 for nonkin. Family workers had significantly less contact with foster parents who were kin during the child's placement and the types of service received during the placement differed greatly (Figure 2). Both types of parents did receive training during the child's placement and licensing workers told us that they did not believe that foster parents who were kin were more in need of further training than those who were nonkin.

Progress and Outcome

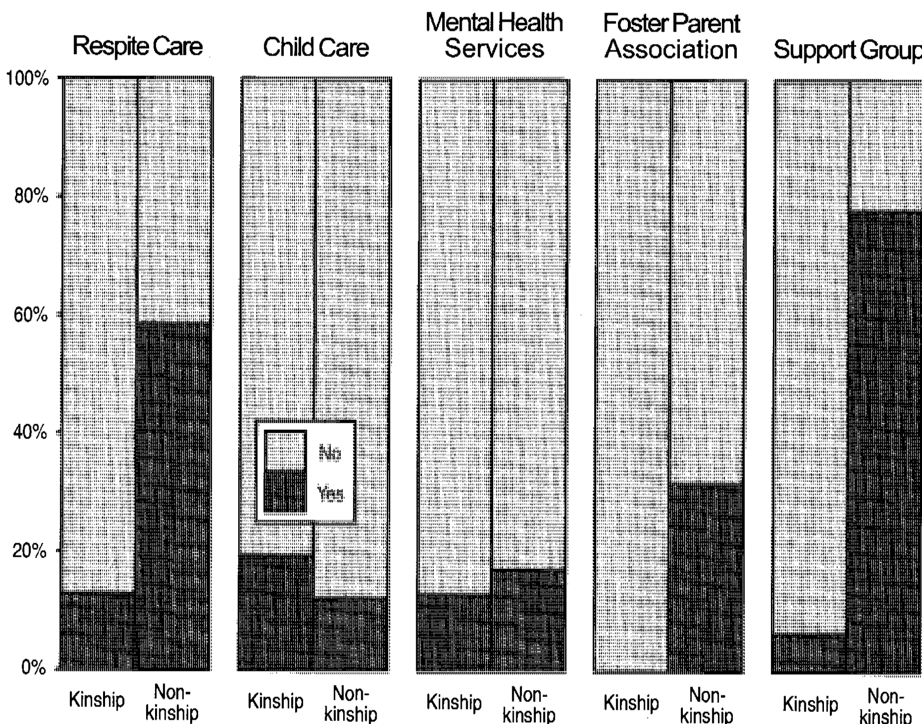
For children placed in both kinship and nonkinship foster care, child welfare agency goals are to obtain a safe and permanent living arrangement for the child in their charge, and if possible, to reunify the child with his or her birth parents. In most cases (70 percent kin and 64 percent nonkin), satisfactory progress was being made toward these goals. Because the goal for most of these children was reunification, we asked about the relationship between foster parents and birth parents.

Again, we found significant differences. Family workers believed there were problems between birth mothers and foster parents who were kin that were not as evident when the foster parents were nonkin. Among the nonkin foster parents, family workers said the birth mother and foster parent either got along very well (36 percent) or did not have much interaction (27 percent). The workers had no knowledge about the relationship in fifteen cases. With the kin, however, they found that birth mothers and foster parents had some interpersonal issues (41 percent) or did not get along very well (22 percent). Licensing workers reported similar discrepancies.

What was the outcome for children placed with foster parents? Of the children whose placement ended during the interview phase of our study,* 84 percent of those placed with kin had returned home, while only 49 percent of the children placed with nonkin had done so. Children who had not been placed with kin were more likely to have moved to another placement or been adopted or emancipated. There were no significant differences in the length of placement or the overall length of time in out-of-home care for children in the two types of placement. Children placed with kin averaged only one placement during their episode of care compared with two placements for those with nonkin.

* Twenty-two children in kinship care and twenty-four children in nonkinship care.

Figure 2. Services Received by Foster Parent in Addition to Case Management



Conclusions and Recommendations

In comparing the long established system of foster care with the rapidly growing practice of placing children with their kin as foster parents, we discovered some significant differences. Foster parents who were not kin were more highly educated and more likely to receive income from employment. They received more foster-care training, and more money for their role as foster parents. Children placed under their care were more likely to have been physically abused than neglected, were more likely to have emotional and behavioral problems, and were more likely to move on to another foster care situation than return home.

Foster parents who were kin were less educated and received less money from wages. They also received less money for their foster care role, fewer services, and less training as foster parents. The children under their care had suffered more from neglect than from physical abuse. The children tended to have better mental health and a better adjustment to school. In addition, their placements were more stable. They were more likely to have only this one placement, and they were more likely to return home after their episode of care with relatives, despite the tensions that were often observed between birth mothers and kin foster parents.

As kinship foster care becomes an established part of the foster care system, policy and practice must be changed to accommodate this unique form of out-of-home care. The results of our study led us to make several recommendations about what types of changes are needed. Overall, we recommend improvements in data collection and coordination across county and state lines. Payment disparities need to be addressed and changes are clearly called for in the services, support, and training available to foster parents who are kin.

We recommend that the state improve its data collection efforts at both the state and county levels. Improved data collection will make it possible to track children across episodes of out-of-home care. Kinship and nonkinship foster care needs to be clearly specified along with data about the birth and foster parents. The use of kin in foster care currently varies widely across the state, as was evident in our three county samples. More accurate data will allow for more carefully tracking and understanding of these variations. Because placement with kin often involves more than one county or even more than one state, policy changes

that facilitate communication and coordination between county and state agencies are needed. Better case coordination is in the interest of the state, the welfare agencies, the foster parents, and the children.

The current payment disparities among family support assistance, foster care payments, and adoption subsidies (the three sources of financing that support children living with kin) serve as a disincentive for kin becoming legal guardians or adoptive parents. Minnesota needs to explore some of the alternative payment structures (such as subsidized guardianship) used to support kin foster parents in other states. In addition, disparities between payments given to kin and nonkin based on difficulty of care needs to be carefully examined. A better payment structure would not only correct current inequities, but also add to the ways in which the state can provide stability for troubled children.

Improved integration of services, support, and training is also needed for foster parents. Since kin foster parents typically do not view themselves as "professionals," they may need additional help in learning to negotiate the system of services available to their foster children and themselves. Training specific to the needs of foster parents who are kin is needed. In addition, we suggest the development of support groups specifically for kin foster parents. Finally, we believe that family workers also need to be trained to recognize and respond to the unique issues involved with kin foster parents so that they can provide appropriate supervision and monitoring of kinship placements.

Kinship foster care has the potential to be an effective and successful type of out-of-home placement option for children in need. However, its use must be guided by sound policy and practice designed specifically for the unique needs of kinship foster parents and their foster children. The findings of our study are being used by the Minnesota Department of Human Services to develop a responsive framework for kinship foster care policy and practice in Minnesota.

Sandra Beeman is an assistant professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Minnesota and a research associate in the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare. She conducts research on child abuse and neglect, children in foster care, and the overlap of child maltreatment and violence against women. Laura Boisen is a doctoral candidate in the School of Social Work and an assistant professor at Augsburg College. Laura was a research assistant on this project and is completing her dissertation based on interviews with kinship foster parents. This article summarizes some of the findings from their study (with Esther Wattenberg and Susan Bullerdick) *Kinship Foster Care in Minnesota.* To receive a copy of the full report, contact the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare, School of Social Work, 400 Ford Hall, 224 Church St. SE, Minneapolis, MN 55455 (612/626-8202).

This study was supported by grants from the Minnesota Department of Human Services and an interactive research grant from CURA and the Office of the Vice President for Research, University of Minnesota. Interactive research grants have been created to encourage University faculty to carry out research projects that involve significant issues of public policy for the state and that include interaction with community groups, agencies, or organizations in Minnesota. These grants are available to regular faculty members at the University of Minnesota and are awarded annually on a competitive basis.

Child Maltreatment

How wide spread is child abuse in Minnesota? What type of abuse is most prevalent? A special study on child maltreatment in Minnesota from 1991 through 1994 has just been published by the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare. Based on county statistics provided to the Minnesota Department of Human Services, the study examined types of maltreatment, age and race or ethnicity of abused children, maltreatment in the seven-county Twin Cities metropolitan area, and how the Minnesota data compares with the rest of the United States.

The most striking finding was that almost half of Minnesota's abused children are six or younger, and that infants and toddlers are the largest share of this group of abused children. Copies of the study results—**A Report on Child Maltreatment, The State of Minnesota, 1991-1994** by Esther Wattenberg and Hyungmo Kim—are available from the Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare. Copies many be requested by phone through Sharon Haas, 612/624-1383.

Minority Stereotypes in Minnesota

by William J. Craig

Minnesotans hold racial stereotypes as deep as those of the rest of the country, according to a new survey conducted by CURA. Minnesotans, like their counterparts across the country, think members of most minority groups are lazier and more prone to violence than Whites. With a few exceptions these views are uniformly held across the state: they do not differ by demographic group or location.

The good news is that Minnesotans rated all minority groups better than average in both their strong work ethic and their low tendency toward violence. Similar national surveys have given lower ratings to communities of color. Perhaps this means that Minnesota employers and others may be more willing than their national counterparts to give minorities the opportunities they need to succeed.

On a seven-point scale, where four is middling and higher scores are more desirable, Minnesotans gave all groups an average score above four on work ethic. Just as Garrison Keillor tells us, all groups were rated "above average," but more as George Orwell would have said, Whites were viewed as more above average than others.

Eight hundred adults took part in the survey conducted by CURA's Minnesota Center for Survey Research.* First they were asked about the work ethic of Whites, Blacks, Asians, Hispanics, and Indians. Except for Asians, all groups rated significantly lower than Whites (Table 1).

The survey replicated a national survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, which used a seven-point scale where one meant most people in that group were lazy, seven meant most people were hard working, and a four meant people were not toward one end or the other. All racial/ethnic groups were rated higher in Minnesota than they were in the national survey. Where comparable data exist, the gap between ratings for Whites and other groups was as great in Minnesota as in national surveys, sometimes greater.

The survey also asked about each racial/ethnic group's tendency toward violence. All racial groups were seen as significantly more prone to violence than Whites (Table 2). The score for Blacks on this measure was slightly below four, meaning that more Blacks were seen as prone to violence. As with the question about work ethic, Minnesotans rated all groups more positively than did the nation, but the gap between Whites and others was comparable to the national gap. On this issue, comparisons with national data are harder to justify because that data is six years old and there is reason to believe that national opinion is shifting.

Minnesota is a state new to diversity and may be carrying stereotypes learned from other parts of the country. In 1980 only 3.9 percent of the state's population were people of color; the number grew to 6.3 percent by 1990 (still a fairly small proportion of the state). Some 93.2 percent of the people answering this survey were White. The number of non-White respondents was so small that no effort was made to remove them from the analysis.

There are some encouraging notes in the survey. Most groups scored better than average on both measures. The most popular response for all groups was "four," neither good nor bad. A significant number of people refused to answer these questions, varying from twenty-seven to forty-four people depending on the question. Another eighteen to thirty-seven people insisted they did not know enough to answer questions about the minority groups. Below is a sample of the comments given by these people:

"These questions are awful and unfair"

"I don't want to generalize"

"It's an individual issue, not race"

"I haven't worked with them"

"My answers are the same across the board"

"Who makes up these damn questions?"

"Color has no effect"

"I've never had any contact with these people, so I couldn't say"

Will Craig is CURA's assistant director and a past director of the Minnesota Center for Survey Research. A thirteen-page report with more detailed analysis of the survey results is available from CURA, phone 612/625-1551.

Table 1. Responses When Asked to Rate Each Group's Work Ethic

Score	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Indian
1 Lazy	1.2%	2.6%	1.4%	1.6%	2.7%
2	0.4	3.2	1.4	3.0	7.4
3	2.1	11.5	5.0	10.2	15.3
4	33.7	44.8	30.3	43.9	45.9
5	27.8	22.7	23.5	26.2	17.9
6	24.3	10.9	25.5	10.4	7.4
7 Hard working	10.6	4.3	13.0	4.6	3.4
Average score	5.05	4.32*	5.02	4.40*	4.05*

* Significantly different from the rating for White.

Table 2. Responses When Asked to Rate Each Group's Tendency to Violence

Score	White	Black	Asian	Hispanic	Indian
1 Prone to violence	1.5%	3.8%	2.5%	1.7%	1.9%
2	1.9	9.5	3.5	6.0	4.3
3	7.4	24.0	11.0	18.2	12.3
4	41.3	43.0	49.6	48.1	48.1
5	25.6	13.4	19.1	17.8	20.7
6	16.9	5.1	11.0	6.0	9.4
7 Not prone	5.4	1.2	3.3	2.4	3.4
Average score	4.58	3.73*	4.25*	4.02*	4.23*

* Significantly different from the rating for White.

* The survey was conducted from October 22 to December 21, 1996. The response rate was 65 percent and there was a sampling error of no more than ±3.5 percentage points.

Project Awards

In an attempt to update our readers about new CURA projects, we feature a few capsule descriptions of projects underway in each issue of the **CURA Reporter.** The projects listed this time are the proposal that won the Borchert Fellowship Award for 1997-98 and two new programs at CURA.

University Access for the Community (U-ACT)

This new CURA program seeks to establish stronger links between the University of Minnesota and community organizations of color. The program began in the fall of 1996 and is modeled after CURA's Communiversity Personnel Grants and CURA's Neighborhood Planning for Community Revitalization program. U-ACT awards personnel grants to organizations seeking help with applied research, program development, evaluation, or other issues identified by the organizations. Each student hired for the program has both a faculty and a community mentor. Students are given the chance to make a significant contribution while organizations gain technical or research help for an extended period of time (one University quarter or longer). Information about other University resources is shared on an ongoing basis with the participating community organizations.

This new initiative is a cooperative effort growing out of a pilot project in 1995-96, Community University Health Care Partnerships, supported primarily by the Minnesota Extension Service. Current U-ACT partners include the College of Education and Human Development, the College of Architecture and Landscape Architecture, the Humphrey Institute of Public Affairs, the Minnesota Extension Service, and CURA. Two rounds of awards have been made to date and a sampling of the projects that have been awarded grants follows:

The Conflict Resolution Club. The club is an innovative approach to teaching elementary students the importance of laws while at the same time training them in how to mediate conflicts between peers. The program is expanding as part of the Minnesota after school initiative and two graduate students were funded to lead the program in four St. Paul elementary schools. The Conflict Resolution Club was developed by the Roots Program and J.J. Hill Montessori School in St. Paul. The Roots Program is a new nonprofit organization created in response to increased tensions in St. Paul caused by a lack of tolerance.

Economic Impact of Migrant Farmworkers. An advanced graduate student was funded to prepare a cost-benefit analysis of the ways in which migrant farmworkers contribute to the economy in Minnesota. Sponsored by the University-Migrant Project, the research includes an examination of state taxes deducted from wages; purchases of food, clothing, and automobiles; payments for rent; and federal and state monies brought into the county economy because of eligible, low income families. The student worked under the supervision of a professor of agricultural economics.

Evaluation Collaborative. Four St. Paul agencies that receive grants from the United Way are required to evaluate their programs periodically. Their staffs have limited knowledge about the process of evaluation. They were awarded two graduate students to help them implement evaluation plans and to present quarterly seminars on various evaluation strategies and techniques. The four agencies in the collaborative are: CLUES (Chicano Latino Unidos En Servicio); Hallie Q. Brown, Martin Luther King Center; Model Cities, Inc.; and the St. Paul Urban League.

Preserving Hmong Textile Arts. The Women's Association of Hmong and Lao has been awarded a graduate student to help create an intergenerational program that will teach Hmong girls the fast-disappearing textile arts of the Hmong culture.

Expanding the Little Earth Volunteer Program. Little Earth of United Tribes, in the Phillips neighborhood of Minneapolis, is the largest urban Indian housing complex in the country. Their residents' association seeks to build self-esteem among tribal families through culturally-specific programs that focus on academic learning, careers, and other areas. A graduate student is developing a volunteer handbook and will help design a volunteer program to expand the agenda that can be offered to residents at Little Earth.

Geography in the 'Hood

In the face of increasingly smaller budgets for urban programs, the future of many inner-city neighborhoods depends upon the ability of residents to act together to improve their quality of life. Deborah Martin, the graduate student who won this year's Borchert Fellowship Award, will be studying the Frogtown (Thomas-Dale) neighborhood of St. Paul to learn how a neighborhood sense of place interacts with collective action by the neighborhood. She will examine how neighborhood organizations use a shared experience of place to generate collective action and how a focus on place may be able to bridge differences of race, ethnicity, and class by focusing diverse people on their shared concerns and building a vision for the future.

The Borchert Fellowship Award is granted each year to the best proposal from an advanced student in geography for study of an issue of importance to the citizens of Minnesota. The award, made jointly by CURA and the Department of Geography, honors John R. Borchert, Regents Professor Emeritus and the first Director of CURA.

University-Migrant Project

This new CURA program seeks to educate the University of Minnesota community and the public about Minnesota's approximately 20,000 migrant farmworkers, while it works toward improving migrants' access to education, legal services, housing, and health care. Begun in 1994, the program includes four components: a graduate-level, interdisciplinary class "The Migrant Experience in Minnesota"; a summer internship and research program, which places students with agencies serving migrant workers; a volunteer action group that supports migrant workers through legislative lobbying and educational campaigns; and collaborative projects that link University faculty and students to migrant-serving agencies to meet critical needs of migrant workers while hands-on learning opportunities are offered to people from the University community. This year the program will offer, for the first time, a service-seeing trip to South Texas, where students may gain a better understanding of the area where most of the migrants coming to Minnesota have their permanent home.

Credits:

Photo on page 1 courtesy of the *Gaylord Hub*.

Photo on page 7 by Nancy Leegard, Hennepin County Medical Center.

Photos on pages 11 and 13 by Nancy Conroy.

Maps and figures prepared for the authors by the Cartography Laboratory, Department of Geography, University of Minnesota.

1996 CURA Publications List and Order Form

ENVIRONMENT

- ☐ **Courses on the Environment: A Student Guide to University of Minnesota Courses on Environmental Issues on the Twin Cities Campus.** Margaret R. Wolfe. 1996. CURA 96-4. 40 pp. Free.

HOUSING

- ☐ **There Goes the Neighborhood? The Impact of Subsidized Multi-Family Housing on Urban Neighborhoods.** Edward G. Goetz, Hin Kin Lam, and Anne Heitlinger. 1996. CURA 96-1. 94 pp. Free.

HUMAN SERVICES

- ☐ **Defining Excellence for School-Linked Services.** Esther Wattenberg and Yvonne Pearson, editors. 1996. CURA 96-3. 47 pp. Free.

LAND USE AND POPULATION

- ☐ **Minnesota's Housing: Shaping the Community in the 1990s.** John S. Adams, Barbara J. VanDrasek, and Elvin K. Wyly. Fourth in the series, **What the 1990 Census Says About Minnesota.** 1996. CURA 96-2. 134 pp. Free.

POLICY AND GOVERNMENT

- ☐ **Financing Long Term Care: Dilemmas and Decisions Facing the Elderly, Family Members, and Society.** Marlene Stum and Estelle Brouwer. 1996. CURA 96-5. 33 pp. Free.

OTHER CURA PUBLICATIONS AND RESEARCH ARTICLES

- ☐ **CURA After 25 Years.** 1996. CURA 96-6. 58 pp. Free.
- ☐ **The Complete List of CURA Publications**. December 1996. 80 pp. Free
- ☐ **The Complete List of CURA Reporter Articles.** December 1996. 53 pp. Free.

☐ **CURA Reporter**, Volume XXVI, Number 1. April 1996. Free.

"There Goes the Neighborhood? Subsidized Housing in Urban Neighborhoods," Edward G. Goetz, Hin Kin Lam, and Anne Heitlinger. pp. 1-6.

"Thin Sections: Retrofitting the Minneapolis Park and Parkway System," Lance M. Neckar. pp. 7-10.

"Managing on a Limited Income," Marilyn J. Kennedy. pp. 11-12.

"Medicaid and the Challenge of Paying for Nursing Home Care," Marlene Stum and Estelle Brouwer. pp. 13-18.

☐ **CURA Reporter**, Volume XXVI, Number 2. June 1996. Free.

"Minnesota's Housing: Shaping Community in the 1990s," John S. Adams, Barbara J. VanDrasek, and Elvin K. Wyly. pp. 1-7.

"American Indian Experiences with Home Ownership," Andriana Abariotes and John Poupart. pp. 8-11.

"Given Choice: The Effects of Portability in Section 8 Rental Housing Assistance," Elizabeth G.D. Malaby and Barbara L. Lukermann. pp. 12-15.

☐ **CURA Reporter**, Volume XXVI, Number 3. August 1996. Free.

"Tourism and the International Wolf Center," David T. Schaller. pp. 1-5.

"The Geography of Consumer Demand: Gasoline Retailing in St. Cloud," Paul Plummer. pp. 6-8.

"Groundwater Modeling in Minnesota," Erik Anderson, Richard Pennings, and Otto D.L. Strack. pp. 9-11.

☐ **CURA Reporter**, Volume XXVI, Number 4. December 1996. Free.

"CURA After 25 Years," pp. 1-7.

"The Growth of Occupational Licensing: Are We Protecting Consumers?" Morris M. Kleiner and Mitchell Gordon. pp. 8-12.

"Women, Work, and the City," Elvin K. Wyly. pp. 12-17.

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New CURA Publications

A Directory of Nonprofit Organizations of Color in Minnesota. Third Edition. Frederick W. Smith. February 1997. CURA 97-2. 198 pp. Free.

Since its inception in 1991 this directory has been popular and it keeps growing. The new third edition lists over 700 organizations and for the first time includes a brief description of each group, and their main activity. The listings include the name and address of each group and, whenever possible, their phone/fax numbers, e-mail address, and the name of a contact person. These organizations are all controlled by persons of color and/or primarily serve persons of color. Religious organizations and tribal governments are included, but for-profit groups and state office are not. Organizations are categorized as African American/African, American Indian, Asian American, Chicano/Latino, or Multicultural. Mailing label matrices are provided for each community of color.

CURA After 25 Years. 1996. CURA 96-6. 64 pp. Free.

After more than 25 years, CURA toots its horn a bit. This celebration of where we came from, what we do, and where we are today draws on material prepared for an external review in 1995, the report of the national scholars who reviewed our operations. It also tells a number of stories about CURA projects as they have evolved over the years.

A Minnesota Mailing List for Equal Opportunity Announcements and Advertisements. 1997. 97-1. 33 pp. Free.

How can one be sure that announcements or advertisements will reach minorities or other disadvantaged people living in Minnesota? This directory should help. It gives detailed information about newspapers and magazines whose primary audiences are: African American, American Indian, Asian, Chicano/Latino, gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender, people with disabilities, seniors/older adults, veterans, and women. This is a new and updated version of the directory that was first published in 1991 and again includes mailing labels in the back of the book.

CURA publications may be ordered by phone (612/625-1551) or through our web site (http://www.umn.edu/cura).

reporter

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CURA connects University faculty and students with the people and public institutions working on significant community issues in Minnesota. CURA helps:

- faculty and students produce more relevant research on critical issues,
- students strengthen their education through practical experience,
- government agencies and community organizations get the assistance they request,
- and the University of Minnesota fulfill its land grant and urban missions.

The **CURA Reporter** is published four or five times a year to provide information about what CURA projects are doing. This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Please call Judith Weir (612) 625-7501.

Thomas M. Scott, director; William J. Craig, assistant director; Judith H. Weir, editor.

Phone: 612/625-1551, fax: 612/626-0273, www: http://www.umn.edu/cura.

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