

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

males in the labor force was greater than females, the proportion of employed females in the civilian labor force was greater. For example, although 8 percent of all American Indians were unemployed, only 7 percent of the females were unemployed compared to 9 percent of the males. Unemployment for both males and females outside American Indian areas was about the same (5 percent), but unemployment among males inside American Indian areas was much greater than for females (11 percent compared to 8 percent).

Class of worker. Part of the discrepancy in labor force participation may be due to the types of activities available inside and outside American Indian areas. Although 67 percent of all employed American Indians in Oklahoma in 1980 were private wage and salary workers, more than 71 percent of all employed persons in Oklahoma were; fully 75 percent of those living outside American Indian areas were in this category compared to only 62 percent inside areas. On the other hand, while 10 percent of all American Indians in Oklahoma were local government workers (compared to 8 percent of the whole state), only 7 percent of American Indians living outside areas were local government workers, compared to more than 12 percent of those living inside American Indian areas. Also, larger proportions of American Indians inside areas were employed by the Federal and State governments than outside. Finally, the percentage of self-employed workers was about twice as

high inside American Indian areas (8 percent) as outside (4 percent) (table 3).

Fully 70 percent of all employed American Indian males in Oklahoma in 1980 were private wage and salary workers, compared to only 63 percent of the females. On the other hand, a larger percentage of females than males were Federal, State, and especially local government workers. In fact 13 percent of all employed American Indian females were local government workers (compared to 11 percent for all females in the state). Also, although 8 percent of the males were self-employed, only 4 percent of the females were.

Again, there were large differences between residence for the two sexes. For example, although 13 percent of all employed American Indian females in Oklahoma were local government workers, almost 16 percent of those living inside American Indian areas were local government employees, compared to only 9 percent of those living outside these areas. Also, although 8 percent of American Indian females outside areas were Federal government employees, 14 percent of those inside areas fell into this category. These figures compensated for the difference in females who were private wage and salary workers; 72 percent of American Indian females outside American Indian areas were private wage and salary workers compared to 58 percent of those living inside American Indian areas.

Although 78 percent of the employed American Indian

males living outside American Indian areas were private wage and salary employees, only 66 percent of those inside these areas selected this class of work. On the other hand, 10 percent of all American Indian males inside areas were self-employed, compared to only 4 percent of those living outside the areas.

Occupation. Of the 57,449 employed American Indians 16 years and over in 1980 in Oklahoma, the largest proportions worked as operators, fabricators and laborers (24 percent), and technical, sales and administration support occupations (also 24 percent). These two sectors made up almost half of the American Indian labor force. For the state as a whole, 30 percent of the employed persons were in technical, sales and administrative support occupations, and 17 percent were operators, fabricators, and laborers; more than 21 percent were in managerial, professional and specialty occupations (the second largest occupation grouping). A second level of occupations for American Indians in Oklahoma - service occupations, precision production, craft and repair occupations, and managerial and professional and speciality occupations - each had about 16 percent of the American Indian employed population in Oklahoma. The other 4 percent of the employed population was doing farming, forestry and fishing occupations (table 4).

Almost 26 percent of the American Indians living inside American Indian areas were operators, fabricators of

laborers; the second largest proportion were in technical, sales, and administrative support occupations (21 percent). Compared to the American Indian population as a whole, a smaller proportion were managers and professionals (15 percent), and a larger proportion were in service occupations (17 percent), but the proportion in precision production, crafts and repair was the same.

The occupational distribution between males and females was also very different. Although more than 32 percent of employed American Indian males in Oklahoma were operators, fabricators and laborers, this was true for only 14 percent of the females; similarly, although 26 percent of the males were in precision production, crafts and repair occupations, only 3 percent of the women were in these occupations. On the other hand, although 39 percent of the females were in technical, sales and administrative support occupations and 25 percent were in service occupations, 12 percent and 10 percent, respectively, of the males were in these corresponding occupations.

There were also great occupational differences by sex for American Indians inside and outside American Indian areas in Oklahoma. For example, almost 46 percent of all American Indian females in Oklahoma living outside American Indian areas were in technical, sales and administrative support occupations, including 32 percent in the sub-category for "administrative support occupations including clerical"; only 35 percent of the females inside American Indian areas

were in this category, but this was still more than 8 percentage points higher than the next large category - service occupations (27 percent in American Indian areas compared to 22 percent outside these areas).

The largest proportion of employed American Indian males both inside and outside American Indian areas were operators, fabricators, and laborers (33 percent inside areas and 30 percent outside). However, although 17 percent of the American Indian males living outside American Indian areas were in technical, sales and administrative occupations, only 10 percent of those inside areas were involved in these occupations.

Industry. The almost 21 percent of all American Indians who were professionals (in health, education or related fields) constituted the largest industry category. American Indians inside American Indian areas were concentrated in these fields in slightly high proportions than those outside the areas; for example, although 8 percent of all American Indians in Oklahoma were in health fields, this was true for 9 percent of those inside American Indian areas (and slightly less than 8 percent outside these areas). The data for education fields were even more striking - although 9 percent of all Indians were in education, 10 percent of those inside American Indian areas were in education, compared to 7 percent of those outside. The rank order of major industry categories for American Indians living inside American Indian areas was professional

(22 percent), manufacturing (21 percent), retail trade (12 percent), construction and public administration (both 10 percent); for American Indians living outside American Indian areas the rank order was manufacturing (19 percent), professional (18 percent), retail trade (16 percent), construction and public administration (both 8 percent). Although the rank orders differ only slightly, it can easily be seen that the concentration in the two areas differed considerably, and seems to have been dependent on accessibility to the various industries (table 5).

The largest proportion of employed American Indian males in 1980 were in manufacturing (23 percent), and in construction (16 percent). There was no significant difference between the proportions of males working in manufacturing inside and outside American Indian areas, but although 13 percent of American Indian males working outside American Indian areas were in construction, fully 17 percent of the males inside American Indian areas were doing various types of construction activities in 1980. On the other hand, although 14 percent of the males outside areas were in retail trade, only 9 percent of those inside areas were.

By far the largest proportion of American Indian females in Oklahoma in 1980 were in professional industries - in fact, more than 1 in every 3 females (35 percent) were in health, education, or related fields. The percentage of these women in American Indian areas (38 percent) was significantly higher than for those outside American Indian

areas (29 percent). Although 15 percent of the females outside American Indian areas were in health fields, and 10 percent were in education, almost 18 percent of the females inside American Indian areas were in health, and another 16 percent were in education. Almost 17 percent of the American Indian females were in retail trade (19 percent outside American Indian areas and 15 percent inside), and 16 percent were in manufacturing (13 percent outside and 18 percent inside). It is interesting to note that although 9 percent of all American Indian females in Oklahoma were manufacturing nondurable goods, and 7 percent durable goods, the proportions for males were reversed - 16 percent durable goods, and 7 percent nondurable goods. Further, although the females inside and outside areas were manufacturing durable goods in the same proportions (7 percent), 5 percent of the females outside areas were manufacturing nondurable goods, while almost 11 percent of those inside American Indian areas were manufacturing these goods.

Workers in families. Of the 39,590 American Indian families (defined by the race of the householder) in Oklahoma in 1980, 20,576 (52 percent) had 2 or more workers. However, 14 percent had no workers and 34 percent had 1 worker. The proportions for the state as a whole were similar: 13 percent had no workers, 34 percent had one worker, and 54 percent had two or more workers. There was a slightly larger percentage of American Indian families inside American Indian areas (35 percent) than outside these

areas (32 percent). Although fewer than half (49 percent) of American Indian families inside areas had 2 or more workers, 59 percent of those outside areas were in this category; also, while 9 percent of families outside areas had no workers, 17 percent of those inside had no workers (table 6).

Female-headed families were in "worse" shape than male-headed families for this characteristic. Although 12 percent of all male-headed American Indian families in Oklahoma had no workers, this was true for 23 percent of all female-headed families. More than twice the percentage of male-headed families inside (14 percent) than outside (7 percent) had no workers; the figures for female-headed families were 26 percent and 17 percent, respectively. As would be expected, female-headed families had a much larger proportion of one worker families and fewer two worker families, both inside and outside American Indian areas.

Income. The 51,275 American Indian households (defined, again, by the race of the householder) had a median income of \$11,400 and a mean income of \$14,200, considerably below the median of \$14,700 and the mean of \$18,300 for the state as a whole. As might be expected from the occupation and industry distributions, the mean and median incomes inside American Indian areas were lower than those for American Indians in Oklahoma as a whole. The median income for American Indian households inside American Indian areas was \$10,100 compared to \$            for American

Indian households outside these areas (table 7).

The distribution by levels of income also differed considerably between American Indian households inside and outside American Indian areas. For example, although 16 percent of American Indian households outside areas had incomes of less than \$5000 in 1979, 26 percent of American Indian households inside areas had incomes in this category. Similarly, although only an additional 9 percent outside areas had incomes between \$5000 and \$7499, 13 percent of American Indian households inside areas had incomes in this range.

There were also large difference between households with male reference person (hereafter referred to as "male households") and households with female reference persons (hereafter referred to as "female households"). Although the median income for male American Indian households was \$14,300, the median for female households was only \$6,300. The median income for male households inside American Indian areas was \$12,800 compared to \$            for male households outside American Indian areas, while the median for female households inside areas was \$5,600 compared to \$            for those outside these areas.

Large numbers of female households, especially, were in poverty. About 42 percent of all American Indian households in Oklahoma with female reference persons had incomes of less than \$5000 in 1979. Although 32 percent of all female households outside American Indian areas were in

this category, 47 percent of these households inside areas fell into this category.

The income data for families was better than for households. The 39,590 American Indian families had a median income of \$13,500, with \$12,100 for families inside areas and \$        for families outside areas.