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Race, Ethnicity, and Public Policy Outcomes: From Disparity to Parity



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North Carolina's Changing
Demographic Mix:
New Challenges
for State Government

by Mike McLaughlin

or decades and even centuries, diversity in North Carolina meant three distinct demographic groups: (1) whites, (2) blacks or African Americans, and (3) Native Americans or American Indians. Now diversity has been redefined. North Carolina ranks among the national leaders in Spanish-speaking immigrants, and Hispanics/Latinos now represent 4.7 percent of the population. Asians, representing 1.4 percent, now outnumber the 1.2 percent of the population who identify themselves as American Indians in North Carolina, according to the 2000 U.S. Census. Though whites still make up 72.1 percent, and blacks are by far the largest minority at 21.6 percent, the preconceived notion of who is a North Carolinian has been stretched and reshaped.

Ed Aguirre, a Raleigh geologist who provides environmental services in the construction industry, has watched since the mid-1980s as the trickle of Hispanics into North Carolina has become a flood, observing the changes the wave of immigration has wrought in North Carolina's labor market. "I'm in construction," says Aguirre, a second generation Mexican American. "The Spanish-speaking men in that labor force took over from the predominantly black labor force. We see a predominantly Hispanic labor force. . . . Usually, one or two of them are crew leaders, and most of the rest of them don't speak English."

Aguirre's observations are borne out by anyone who takes more than a casual glance. Spanish-speaking workers are making their presence felt in nearly every hardworking, low-wage field, joining the ranks of Hispanic/Latino workers who are represented in every field or profession. The public schools are struggling to educate students who show up on the doorstep lacking even a basic vocabulary in English. Some 60,000 students now are enrolled in English-as-a-second-language courses in North Carolina, according to the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. Churches are conducting dual services—one in Spanish and one in English—as cultures overlap and blur.

While Spanish-speaking immigrants are by far the largest group of North Carolina newcomers, they are also far from being the only new arrivals bringing with them different customs and languages. According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Latin America has been the primary source of immigration to North Carolina in the past decade,

and Mexico dwarfs every other country of origin. Of 378,963 persons of Hispanic/Latino descent living in North Carolina at the time of the 2000 census, 258,520 (68 percent) claimed Mexico as their country of origin. An additional 43,859 (11.6 percent) hailed from Central America—primarily El Salvador (12,444), Honduras (11,647), and Guatemala (8,335). South America accounted for 19,211 Hispanic/Latino immigrants, while other Hispanics totaled 12,468.

Despite the influx of Hispanics/Latinos, and, to a lesser degree, Asians and Europeans, North Carolina remains "overwhelmingly black and white," says Bill Tillman, a demographer in the Office of State Planning, N.C. Department of Administration. Hispanics have gotten the public's attention by mushrooming 394 percent in a decade—from 76,726 to 378,963. "But out of 8 million?" asks Tillman. "Overwhelmingly, the minority in North Carolina is still black [21.6 percent of the population]." Native Americans, Tillman says, "are regionally focused. Most live in and around Robeson County and a few Eastern Band of the Cherokee live out West [in North Carolina]. You have a young Asian group that has come in for high tech." says Tillman. The remaining populations, Tillman says, are microscopic from a demographic standpoint.

However, Nolo Martinez, Governor Mike Easley's former director of Hispanic/Latino Affairs, says Tillman's assessment of North Carolina as primarily black and white shortchanges a number of growing ethnic populations. "There is overwhelming evidence that more and more counties, towns, and cities show significant presence of immigrants and do not look like the black and white North Carolina of years back," says Martinez.

Table 1.

Top 10 N.C. Counties in Percent
Hispanic/Latino Population

Cou		Total lispanic/Latino Population	Percent of County Population
1)	Duplin	7,426	15.1%
2)	Lee	5,715	11.7
3)	Sampson	6,477	10.8
4)	Montgomery	2,797	10.4
5)	Chatham	4,743	9.6
6)	Greene	1,151	8.0
7)	Johnston	19,090	7.7
8)	Durham	17,039	7.6
9)	Hoke	2,415	7.2*
	Onslow	10,896	7.2*
11)	Cumberland	20,919	6.9

* Indicates tie

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Martinez mentions Guilford County for its resettlement of Vietnamese immigrants and a dozen or more rural or metro areas with high numbers of Latinos. "It's not just Chatham anymore," says Martinez. "[You have] crab pickers in the east, Christmas tree communities in the west, construction workers in Charlotte, metro districts in the Triad, Mecklenburg, Wake, and Orange, and a high birth rate everywhere in North Carolina."

These immigrants join the state's traditional minorities, who lag the white majority on a broad range of indicators—from education levels, to income, to health status as indicated by death and illness rates. In addition, African Americans have higher rates of incarceration and even a greater likelihood of being put to death by the state [see "Race and Ethnicity: What Is the Impact on Outcomes?" pp. 16–75, for more on these disparities]. All of these facts have broad implications for state government, which has a duty to serve, educate, and protect all of its citizens.

Now added to the mix are Hispanics/Latinos, who also lag on a number of these same indicators.

Tillman points to three main drivers of the Hispanic/Latino influx: the military, migrant laborers working in agriculture, and immigrants moving in to take jobs in poultry processing, construction, and other occupations involving hard labor and low pay. Gabriela Zabala of the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities in the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services adds that Spanish-speaking immigrants are moving to North Carolina from other states and "slowly moving out of agriculture" for jobs providing better pay.

For a long time, the counties with the highest percentage of Hispanics were Onslow and Cumberland because these counties are home to major military installations—Fort Bragg, Camp Lejeune, Pope Air Force Base, and Cherry Point Naval Air Station. Tillman says that's because the United States as a whole has a higher percentage of Latino residents than does North Carolina, and the military more closely resembles the makeup of the nation's population as a whole.

Areas of the state with industries employing high numbers of Hispanics/Latinos include Chatham County with its poultry processing plants in and around Siler City. "In a town as small as Siler City with a lot of Hispanics, it's a big deal [in terms of changing the cultural mix]," says Tillman.

Among the top 10 counties in percentage of Hispanic population, Duplin is the leader at 15.1 percent, followed by Lee County at 11.7 percent, Sampson County at 10.8 percent, and Montgomery County at 10.4 percent. (See Table 1). Chatham County ranks fifth with a Hispanic population of 9.6 percent. Statewide, the Hispanic/Latino population totals 4.7 percent.

All of the five highest-ranking counties feature low-wage manufacturing and agriculture as key components of their economies. Duplin County is the prime example, with a migrant labor population initially drawn to work in the fields but eventually shifting over to manufacturing. Now manufacturing jobs are a draw in themselves, according to Woody Brinson, director of the Duplin County Economic Development Authority. "It definitely has created some cultural barriers because the majority don't speak English," says Brinson. "But without the Hispanic population in the work force, we could not have had the growth we've had in the last 10 years. We may never get the majority to understand it—there are too many prejudices—but they are an asset and not a liability."

Brinson offers two examples of industries where Hispanics/Latinos have stepped in to take jobs local residents shunned because they were considered too difficult or undesirable. One is Carolina Turkey, a 2,400 employee turkey processing plant. "Their work force is two-thirds Hispanic," says Brinson. "Nobody local would take the jobs." The other is Accuform Polymers Inc., which uses a heat process to mold plastics. Local residents, whether white or African American, did not last long in the jobs, Brinson says. "Too hot," they would complain. But with the Hispanic/Latino influx, the company has now grown from eight to 50 workers.

Though they're a smaller percentage of the population overall, Hispanics/Latinos have made their presence felt in more urban counties of the state as well. While Cumberland ranks only 11th in percentage of Hispanic population at 6.9, an estimated 20,919 Hispanics/Latinos now call the county home. While many undoubtedly reside in Cumberland because of its strong military presence, the non-military counties of Durham, Mecklenburg, and Wake claim similar numbers.

Yet another interesting development is that Asians have surpassed Native Americans as the fourth largest racial or ethnic group in the state with 1.4 percent for the state's population claiming roots in the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Orange County claims the greatest concentration of persons of Asian descent, at 4.1 percent of the population (See Table 3, p. 10). Other counties with Asian populations exceeding 3 percent of the population are Burke at 3.5 percent, Wake at 3.4 percent, Durham at 3.3 percent, and Mecklenburg at 3.1 percent.

By contrast, Native Americans, representing 1.2 percent of North Carolina's population, are much more concentrated in some regions of the state. Robeson County in the southeast, for example, has a Native American population of 38 percent—most of them Lumbee Indians, who are seeking federal recognition as a tribe (See Table 4, p. 10). Swain County in the far west, home of the Eastern Band of the Cherokee, has a Native American population of 29 percent. Other counties with high concentrations of Native Americans include Hoke County in the east at 11.4 percent, Jackson—continues on page 10

MOSAIC North Ca V. mead Basic Valmead Basic School in Lenoir has the distinction of having more th percent of students score at grade level or above on end of grade tests spitehaving 90 percent of students receiving free or reduced price lunches— basic measure of school poverty. Photographs of the students in this diverse educational setting will be featured throughout this issue of insicht

Table 2. North Carolina Population, by County and Racial or Ethnic Group, 2000

County	Population	Wh	ita	Afri Ame		-	oanic/ tino*	Asi	an	Ameı Ind	
ALAMANCE	130,800	98,900	75.6%**		18.8%	8,835	6.8%	1,172	0.9%	462	0.4%
ALEXANDER	33,603	30,915	92.0%	1,557	4.6%	841	2.5%	348	1.0%	50	0.1%
ALLEGHANY	10,677	10,217	95.7%	131	1.2%	530	5.0%	21	0.2%	28	0.3%
Anson	25,275	12,519	49.5%	12,295	48.6%	211	0.8%	143	0.6%	113	0.4%
ASHE	24,384	23,691	97.2%	162	0.7%	590	2.4%	57	0.2%	79	0.3%
AVERY	17,167	16,129	94.0%	598	3.5%	413	2.4%	33	0.2%	58	0.3%
BEAUFORT	44,958	30,768	68.4%	13,051	29.0%	1,455	3.2%	99	0.2%	74	0.2%
BERTIE	19,773	7,178	36.3%	12,326	62.3%	195	1.0%	21	0.1%	87	0.4%
BLADEN	32,278	18,469	57.2%	12,235	37.9%	1,198	3.7%	31	0.1%	657	2.0%
BRUNSWICK	73,143	60,200	82.3%	10,516	14.4%	1,960	2.7%	198	0.3%	494	0.7%
BUNCOMBE	206,330	183,761	89.1%	15,425	7.5%	5,730	2.8%	1,368	0.7%	803	0.4%
BURKE	89,148	76,678	86.0%	5,984	6.7%	3,180	3.6%	3,106	3.5%	270	0.3%
Cabarrus	131,063	109,127	83.3%	15,961	12.2%	6,620	5.1%	1,190	0.9%	443	0.3%
CALDWELL	77,415	71,017	91.7%	4,223	5.5%	1,927	2.5%	301	0.4%	162	0.2%
CAMDEN	6,885	5,551	80.6%	1,189	17.3%	49	0.7%	39	0.6%	29	0.4%
CARTERET	59,383	53,611	90.3%	4,151	7.0%	1,035	1.7%	323	0.5%	258	0.4%
CASWELL	23,501	14,352	61.1%	8,583	36.5%	415	1.8%	36	0.2%	45	0.2%
CATAWBA	141,685	120,422	85.0%	11,862	8.4%	7,886	5.6%	4,146	2.9%	365	0.3%
Снатнам	49,329	36,969	74.9%	8,422	17.1%	4,743	9.6%	292	0.6%	201	0.4%
CHEROKEE	24,298	23,040	94.8%	387	1.6%	303	1.2%	69	0.3%	396	1.6%
CHOWAN	14,526	8,794	60.5%	5,450	37.5%	219	1.5%	50	0.3%	43	0.3%
CLAY	8,775	8,600	98.0%	70	0.8%	73	0.8%	8	0.1%	29	0.3%
CLEVELAND	96,287	73,955	76.8%	20,155	20.9%	1,433	1.5%	669	0.7%	145	0.2%
COLUMBUS	54,749	34,737	63.4%	16,934	30.9%	1,269	2.3%	123	0.2%	1,706	3.1%
CRAVEN	91,436	63,952	69.9%	22,966	25.1%	3,677	4.0%	908	1.0%	388	0.4%
CUMBERLAND	302,963	167,093	55.2%	105,731	34.9%	20,919	6.9%	5,694	1.9%	4,691	1.5%
CURRITUCK	18,190	16,445	90.4%	1,318	7.2%	261	1.4%	71	0.4%	83	0.5%
DARE	29,967	28,393	94.7%	797	2.7%	666	2.2%	111	0.4%	83	0.3%
DAVIDSON	147,246	128,184	87.1%	13,463	9.1%	4,765	3.2%	1,204	0.3%	545	0.4%
DAVIE	34,835	31,504	90.4%	2,368	6.8%	1,209	3.5%	109	0.3%	79	0.2%
DUPLIN	49,063	28,785	58.7%	14,198	28.9%	7,426	15.1%	75	0.2%	113	0.2%
DURHAM	223,314	113,698	50.9%	88,109	39.5%	17,039	7.6%	7,350	3.3%	660	0.3%
EDGECOMBE	55,606	22,278	40.1%	31,949	57.5%	1,554	2.8%	70	0.1%	109	0.2%
FORSYTH	306,067	209,552	68.5%	78,388	25.6%	19,577	6.4%	3,172	1.0%	923	0.3%

Table 2, continued

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County	Population	Wi			erican		tino*	Asi		Ind	
FRANKLIN	47,260	31,190	66.0%	14,193	30.0%	2,100	4.4%	140	0.3%	208	0.4%
GASTON	190,365	157,965	83.0%	26,405	13.9%	5,719	3.0%	1,814	1.0%	525	0.3%
GATES	10,516	6,213	59.1%	4,120	39.2%	81	0.8%	26	0.2%	44	0.4%
GRAHAM .	7,993	7,346	91.9%	15	0.2%	60	0.8%	13	0.2%	547	6.8%
GRANVILLE	48,498	29,459	60.7%	16,943	34.9%	1,951	4.0%	176	0.4%	222	0.5%
GREENE	18,974	9,835	51.8%	7,820	41.2%	1,511	8.0%	17	0.1%	57	0.3%
GUILFORD	421,048	271,686	. 64.5%	123, 253	29.3%	15,985	3.8%	10,294	2.4%	1,944	0.5%
HALIFAX	57,370	24,424	42.6%	30,151	52.6%	579	1.0%	312	0.5%	1,801	3.1%
HARNETT	91,025	64,744	71.1%	20,481	22.5%	5,336	5.9%	591	0.6%	794	0.9%
HAYWOOD	54,033	52,330	96.8%	684	1.3%	763	1.4%	114	0.2%	266	0.5%
HENDERSON	89,173	82,505	92.5%	2,725	3.1%	4,880	5.5%	546	0.6%	245	0.3%
HERTFORD	22,601	8,464	37.4%	13,459	59.6%	354	1.6%	71	0.3%	269	1.2%
Ноке	33,646	14,982	44.5%	12,664	37.6%	2,415	7.2%	278	0.8%	3,852	11.4%
HYDE	5,826	3,650	62.7%	2,043	35.1%	131	2.2%	21	0.4%	18	0.3%
IREDELL	122,660	100,785	82.2%	16,762	13.7%	4,182	3.4%	1,553	1.3%	328	0.3%
JACKSON	33,121	28,378	85.7%	552	1.7%	577	1.7%	169	0.5%	3,379	10.2%
JOHNSTON	121,965	95,237	78.1%	19,090	15.7%	9,440	7.7%	368	0.3%	494	0.4%
JONES	10,381	6,329	61.0%	3,724	35.9%	282	2.7%	16	0.2%	37	0.4%
LEE	49,040	34,343	70.0%	10,032	20.5%	5,715	11.7%	328	0.7%	206	0.4%
LENOIR	59,648	33,685	56.5%	24,115	40.4%	1,891	3.2%	202	0.3%	106	0.2%
LINCOLN	63,780	57,557	90.2%	4,108	6.4%	3,656	5.7%	196	0.3%	172	0.3%
McDowell	42,151	38,853	92.2%	1,753	4.2%	1,214	2.9%	388	0.9%	122	0.3%
MACON	29,811	28,969	97.2%	357	1.2%	454	1.5%	117	0.4%	84	0.3%
MADISON	19,635	19,169	97.6%	162	0.8%	266	1.4%	45	0.2%	53	0.3%
MARTIN	25,593	13,447	52.5%	11,611	45.4%	528	2.1%	61	0.2%	74	0.3%
MECKLENBURG	695,454	445,250	64.0%	193,838	27.9%	44,871	6.5%	21,889	3.1%	2,439	0.4%
MITCHELL	15,687	15,353	97.9%	34	0.2%	311	2.0%	32	0.2%	70	0.4%
MONTGOMERY	26,822	18,527	69.1%	5,857	21.8%	2,797	10.4%	431	1.6%	108	0.4%
Moore	74,769	60,002	80.2%	11,589	15.5%	2,981	4.0%	332	0.4%	506	0.7
Nash	87,420	54,152	61.9%	29,664	33.9%	2,939	3.4%	495	0.6%	397	0.5%
New Hanover	160,307	128,098	79.9%	27,203	17.0%	3,276	2.0%	1,333	0.8%	627	0.4%
NORTHAMPTON	22,086	8,633	39.1%	13,125	59.4%	161	0.7%	20	0.1%	71	0.3%
ONSLOW	150,355	108,351	72.1%	27,790	18.5%	10,896	7.2%	2,526	1.7%	1,108	0.7%
ORANGE	118,227	92,272	78.0%	16,298	13.8%	5,273	4.5%	4,845	4.1%	457	0.4%
										con	tinues

-continues

Table 2, continued

County	Population	W	hite		rican erican		panic/ tino*	As	ian		rican lian
PAMLICO	12,934	9,464	73.2%	3,178	24.6%	171	1.3%	49	0.4%	68	0.5%
PASQUOTANK	34,897	19,866	56.9%	13,975	40.0%	429	1.2%	300	0.9%	130	0.4%
PENDER	41,082	29,882	72.7%	9,689	23.6%	1,496	3.6%	74	0.2%	201	0.5%
PERQUIMANS	11,368	8,051	70.8%	3,182	28.0%	68	0.6%	24	0.2%	20	0.2%
PERSON	35,623	24,504	68.8%	10,049	28.2%	746	2.1%	53	0.1%	218	0.6%
PITT	133,798	83,061	62.1%	45,019	33.6%	4,216	3.2%	1,443	1.1%	357	0.3%
Polk	18,324	16,906	92.3%	1,079	5.9%	551	3.0%	44	0.2%	34	0.2%
RANDOLPH	130,454	116,370	89.2%	7,342	5.6%	8,646	6.6%	830	0.6%	582	0.4%
RICHMOND	46,564	30,193	64.8%	14,215	30.5%	1,319	2.8%	316	0.7%	770	1.7%
ROBESON	123,339	40,460	32.8%	30,973	25.1%	5,994	4.9%	404	0.3%	46,896	38.0%
ROCKINGHAM	91,928	71,087	77.3%	17,987	19.6%	2,825	3.1%	254	0.3%	250	0.3%
Rowan	130,340	104,294	80.0%	20,562	15.8%	5,369	4.1%	1,105	0.8%	433	0.3%
RUTHERFORD	62,899	54,592	86.8%	7,066	11.2%	1,136	1.8%	206	0.3%	125	0.2%
SAMPSON	60,161	35,955	59.8%	18,018	30.0%	6,477	10.8%	186	0.3%	1,086	1.8%
SCOTLAND	35,998	18,535	51.5%	13,434	37.3%	423	1.2%	182	0.5%	3,197	8.9%
STANLY	58,100	49,196	84.7%	6,657	11.5%	1,237	2.1%	1,049	1.8%	144	0.2%
STOKES	44,711	41,774	93.4%	2,084	4.7%	836	1.9%	86	0.2%	109	0.2%
SURRY	71,219	64,383	90.4%	2,965	4.2%	4,620	6.5%	403	0.6%	165	0.2%
SWAIN	12,968	8,602	66.3%	221	1.7%	191	1.5%	20	0.2%	3,765	29.0%
TRANSYLVANIA	29,334	27,476	93.7%	1,235	4.2%	298	1.0%	111	0.4%	83	0.3%
TYRRELL	4,149	2,343	56.5%	1,636	39.4%	150	3.6%	31	0.7%	8	0.2%
Union	123,677	102,441	82.8%	15,480	12.5%	7,637	6.2%	720	0.6%	475	0.4%
VANCE	42,954	20,709	48.2%	20,749	48.3%	1,957	4.6%	167	0.4%	85	0.2%
WAKE	627,846	454,544	72.4%	123,820	19.7%	33,985	5.4%	21,249	3.4%	2,152	0.3%
WARREN	19,972	7,769	38.9%	10,882	54.5%	317	1.6%	26	0.1%	957	4.8%
Washington	13,723	6,626	48.3%	6,716	48.9%	311	2.3%	44	0.3%	7	0.1%
WATAUGA	42,695	41,181	96.5%	680	1.6%	622	1.5%	251	0.6%	108	0.3%
WAYNE	113,329	69,452	61.3%	37,422	33.0%	5,604	4.9%	1,088	1.0%	412	0.4%
WILKES	65,632	61,008	93.0%	2,733	4.2%	2,262	3.4%	213	0.3%	95	0.1%
Wilson	73,814	41,210	55.8%	29,032	39.3%	4,457	6.0%	310	0.4	199	0.3%
YADKIN	36,348	33,638	92.5%	1,246	3.4%	2,357	6.5%	62	0.2%	59	0.2%
YANCEY	17,774	17,417	98.0%	101	0.6%	478	2.7%	23	0.1%	60	0.3%
N.C.	8,049,313	5,804,656	72.1%	1,737,545	21.6%	378,963	4.7%	113,689	1.4%	99,551	1.2%

Table 2, continued

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census.

- * Individuals identified as Hispanic/Latino are those who classify themselves as "Mexican," "Puerto Rican," "Cuban," "other Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino."
- ** Percents appear in italics.

Table complied by former Center intern Meredith Flowe.

- White. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as "White" or report entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Near Easterner, Arab, or Polish.
- Black or African American. A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as "Black, African Am., or Negro," or who provide written entries such as African American, Afro American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian.
- American Indian and Alaska Native. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America including Central America, and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment. It includes people who classify themselves as described below.
- American Indian. Includes people who indicate their race as "American Indian," entered the name of an Indian tribe, or report such entries as Canadian Indian, French-American Indian, or Spanish-American Indian.
- Alaska Native. Includes written responses of Eskimos, Aleuts, and Alaska Indians as well as entries such as Arctic Slope, Inupiat, Yupik, Alutiiq, Egegik, and Pribilovian. The Alaska tribes are the Alaskan Athabascan, Tlingit, and Haida. The information for Census 2000 is derived from the American Indian Detailed Tribal Classification List for the 1990 census and was expanded to list the individual Alaska Native Villages when provided as a written response for race.
- Asian. A person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. It includes "Asian Indian," "Chinese," "Filipino," "Korean," "Japanese," "Vietnamese," and "Other Asian."
- Asian Indian. Includes people who indicate their race as "Asian Indian" or identify themselves as Bengalese, Bharat, Dravidian, East Indian, or Goanese.
- Chinese. Includes people who indicate their race as "Chinese" or who identify themselves as Cantonese or Chinese American. In some census tabulations, written entries of Taiwanese are included with Chinese while in others they are shown separately.
- Filipino. Includes people who indicate their race as "Filipino" or who report entries such as Philippino, Philippine, or Filipino American.
- Japanese. Includes people who indicate their race as "Japanese" or who report entries such as Nipponese or Japanese American.
- Korean. Includes people who indicate their race as "Korean" or who provide a response of Korean American.
- Vietnamese. Includes people who indicate their race as "Vietnamese" or who provide a response of Vietnamese American.
- Other Asian. Includes people who provide a response of Bangladeshi, Burmese, Cambodian, Hmong, Indonesian, Laotian, Pakistani, Sri Lankan, or Thai.

Table 3. Top 10 N.C. Counties in Percent Asian Population

Cou	nty	Total Asian Population	Percent of County Population
1)	Orange	4,845	4.1%
2)	Burke	3,106	3.5
3)	Wake	21,249	3.4
4)	Durham	7,350	3.3
5)	Mecklenburg	21,889	3.1
6)	Catawba	4,146	2.9
7)	Guilford	10,294	2.4
8)	Cumberland	5,694	1.9
9)	Stanly	1,049	1.8
10)	Onslow	2,567	1.7

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

—continued from page 5

County in the west at 10.2 percent, and Scotland County in the east at 8.9 percent.

Tillman notes that both the Asian and Hispanic/ Latino population are young, with strong family ties to their native lands. This increases the chances that they may return to their country of origin and makes future population projections difficult for these demographic groups. Based on household income figures alone, Tillman surmises that some Hispanics/ Latinos who do not learn English and assimilate into the larger culture ultimately will not be able to afford to retire in North Carolina and may return to their country of origin. But if some Hispanics/ Latinos may not be able to afford to stay, Tillman says some Asians may not be able to afford to leave as they earn too much money in their high-tech jobs compared to what those jobs pay in their home countries.

Brinson agrees that Hispanic/Latino workers may be prone to move back and forth between their native country and North Carolina. "It depends on whether they bring their families," he says. Those who do leave their jobs typically will give notice and find somebody to take their place, Brinson adds.

Table 4. Top 10 N.C. Counties in Percent Native American Population

Cou	nty	Total Native American Population	Percent of County Population
1)	Robeson	46,896	38.0%
2)	Şwain	3,765	29.0
3)	Hoke	3,852	11.4
4)	Jackson	3,379	10.2
5)	Scotland	3,197	8.9
6)	Graham	547	6.8
7)	Warren	957	4.8
8)	Halifax	1,801	3.1
9)	Bladen	657	2.0
10)	Sampson	1,086	1.8

Source: 2000 U.S. Census

Martinez, on the other hand, believes families left behind ultimately will be brought to the United States rather than workers returning to an economy that could not sustain them in the first place. He says family reunification—in the United States—will be a driving force for the Hispanic/Latino population for the foreseeable future. As to failure to assimilate, Martinez points to decades of growth in the Hispanic/Latino population in other areas of the United States and believes the same will occur here.

Enrique Gomez Palacio, a Hillsborough resident who writes frequently about immigration issues, believes the large Mexican population is here to stay, though the population may never fully assimilate due to its close proximity to Mexico. He believes that North Carolina is yet to confront the issues around a Hispanic/Latino population that could grow to 15 to 20 percent in as little as a decade, many of whom lack legal immigration status. "The problem we are facing in North Carolina has to do less with lack of jobs for immigrants and more with the fact that most undocumented immigrants are unable to participate fully in the formal economy, where economic opportunities come with clear rights and responsibilities," he writes.²

Nonetheless, Hispanics/Latinos born in the United States are legal U.S. citizens, and the number of Hispanics/Latinos born in the United States is increasing rapidly. Indeed, a study by the Pew Hispanic Center in Washington, D.C., indicates that the number of Hispanics/Latinos born in the United States now exceeds the number who immigrate to the U.S. each year.³ Within two decades, the Center projects, the Hispanics/Latinos born in the U.S. will be the majority—with full rights as citizens.

The influx adds a new and important player to the traditional Tar Heel cultural mix of whites of predominantly European origin, African Americans, and a smaller indigenous population of Native Americans. It also adds a new set of public policy challenges as cultural differences are heightened by a language barrier. What are some of these challenges and how are they being addressed—or not addressed—as North Carolina moves into the 21st century? In this edition of North Carolina Insight,

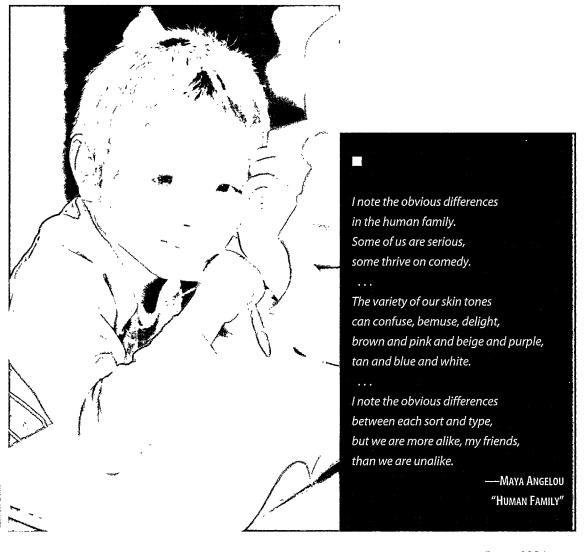
the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research addresses these questions in a broadranging examination of race, ethnicity, and public policy outcomes in North Carolina.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Steven A. Camarota and Nora McArdle, "Where Immigrants Live—An Examination of the Foreign Born by Country of Origin in 1990 and 2000," Center for Immigration Studies, Washington, D.C., September 2003, p. 11. The Center for Immigration Studies is an independent, nonpartisan think tank which some view as having an anti-immigration bias. The center's mission statement indicates, "The Center is animated by a pro-immigrant, low-immigration vision which seeks fewer immigrants but a warmer welcome for those admitted."

² Enrique Gomez Palacio, "North Carolina's Mexican Future," *The Independent Weekly*, Durham, N.C., Jan. 22, 2003, p. 1. On line at www.indyweek.com/durham/2003-01-2/first.

³Robert Surn and Jeffrey S. Passel, "The Rise of the Second Generation: Changing Patterns in Hispanic Population Growth," Pew Hispanic Center, Washington, D.C., October 2003, p. 3.



The Condition of African Americans Improves— But Has a Ways To Go

As a state with a reputation for moderation in white resistance to black racial progress, North Carolina must own up to some dubious distinctions. Lynchings, for example, were not as prevalent in the Old North State as in its neighboring states to the South, but North Carolina still recorded 75 lynchings by white mobs from 1882 to 1930.¹

The bloodstains on the state's record of socalled moderation include the Wilmington race riots of November 10, 1898—in which an unknown number of blacks were killed, and black leaders were run out of town at gun point and never allowed to return—and a 1906 lynching in Salisbury where five black corpses were strung from the same tree.

The leader of the Salisbury lynchings was sentenced to 15 years hard labor, a fact noteworthy enough that the *New York Times* opined that N.C. Governor Robert Glenn would probably pay a political price.² It's hard to imagine a more lowly starting point from which to measure racial progress.

Yet progress has been made. Blacks served admirably in World War I and World War II, and began to realize economic gains as early as the 1940s, moving out of jobs that until then consisted mainly of sharecropping and manual labor.

Meanwhile, the nation was seeing other signs of black progress. Jackie Robinson of the National League's Brooklyn Dodgers broke the color line in Major League Baseball in 1947, to be followed 11 weeks later by Larry Doby of the American League's Cleveland Indians. Both endured racial epithets and hardships, but both excelled, paving the way for a steady stream of stars like Hank Aaron, Willie Mays, and Barry Bonds. Blacks have since come to dominate professional sports, with North Carolina producing arguably the best professional basketball player of all time in Michael Jordan of Wilmington, N.C., and best college basketball player in David Thompson of Shelby, N.C.

A unanimous May 17, 1954, ruling in Brown v. Board of Education³ of Topeka, Kan., overturned the legal doctrine of separate but equal established in the 1896 Supreme Court case Plessy v. Ferguson⁴ – the notion that blacks and whites could have separate public facilities as long as they were equal. The Brown decision required that schools be integrated "with all deliberate speed." Yet noted N.C. civil rights lawyer Julius Chambers says the school integration efforts saw "a lot of deliberation but not much speed."

"A lot of black friends of mine are not sure integration is the right thing to do anymore," said Chambers in April 2004 at the 50th anniversary celebration of the *Brown* decision in Durham, N.C. "That says to me we need to do a better job of helping people understand the situation." Chambers won the historic U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Swann v. Mecklenburg Board of Education* in Charlotte in 1971 and is a former chancellor of N.C. Central University. During his legal career, his house was bombed, his car was firebombed, and his office was bombed.

Prior to the 1960s, many blacks could not register to vote, could not serve on juries, and went to separate and unequal primary and secondary schools. They could not swim in public swimming pools, eat at local restaurants, stay in most hotels, or go to local movie theaters without entering side entrances and sitting in the balconies.⁵

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 further advanced the cause of school desegregation, allowing the federal government to cut funds for schools that remained segregated and allowing the U.S. Department of Justice to sue recalcitrant school systems to force integration. It also opened the way to fair employment practices and

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This Collier's Magazine illustration on file at the N.C. Division of Archives and History depicts the Wilmington race riots of November 10, 1898, in which an unknown number of blacks were killed, and black leaders were run out of town and never allowed to return.

the integration of public facilities such as restaurants, movie theaters, and restrooms.⁶

The 1965 Voting Rights Act outlawed such devices as literacy tests and poll taxes that were designed to prevent blacks from registering to vote and required that states covered by the act pre-clear any changes in election laws that might affect black turnout. Forty counties in North Carolina are covered by the federal Voting Rights Act. Today, blacks hold or have held every major political office short of the presidency, along with numerous high-level appointments, including current U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell and National Security Advisor Condoleeza Rice. In North Carolina, African Americans hold 24 seats in the 170-member N.C. General Assembly. three of 10 cabinet positions in Gov. Mike Easley's administration, and the chairmanship of the State Board of Education. African Americans also hold the State Auditor's Office and three

seats on the N.C. Court of Appeals—all of which are statewide elected positions.

These social advances did not come easily, as both blacks and whites marched in the streets, went to jail, and in some instances gave their lives to bring down the barriers to racial equality. Yet today it is clear that legal and political progress has been made.

On the economic front, there is a growing black middle class. Blacks have made huge strides in the professions and in every line of work. Comedian Bill Cosby once campaigned against demeaning images of blacks in the media and complained that black faces never appeared in ads marketing products to the masses. Now, talk show host Oprah Winfrey rules the airwaves, and blacks are deployed to sell everything from minivans to laundry soap, in some instances directing the companies that produce the products. And, the first professional sports team



The News & Observer, Raleigh, N.C.

"The moral arc of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice."

--- DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR.

owned by an African American is Charlotte's NBA Bobcats, owned by Black Entertainment Television CEO Robert Johnson.

Still, with all of the recorded gains, there is huge progress yet to be made. The National Urban League reports that black Americans have 73 percent of the earning power of whites, are less likely to own their own homes, don't do as well in school, and don't live as long as whites.⁷ In North Carolina, the 2000 U.S. Census indicates that the annual mean household income for blacks, at \$36,289, is 65.3 percent of that of whites, who earn \$55,589. More telling: black earnings are running about a decade behind those of whites, who were found to have mean household earnings in excess of \$36,000 in the 1990 census. Blacks also are much more likely to live in poverty in North Carolina, with 22.9 percent below the poverty line compared to 8.1 percent of whites.

And, there are more subtle challenges in the rates of progress for black women and black men. Katherine Boo, a senior fellow at the New America Foundation and a reporter for The Washington Post, says the greatest policy achievement in recent history may be the significant numbers of formerly welfare-dependent black women who have successfully entered the work force. From a peak of 5.1 million families in 1994, national welfare rolls have dropped to 2 million while the poverty rate for African-American children has hit an all-time low. "African-American teenage childbearing has declined, and the median annual income for African American households has surpassed \$27,000, reaching the highest level ever recorded," she writes.

But the condition of black men stands in stark contrast. Boo says, "Today black women are more likely to work than white or Hispanic women, whereas black men are less likely than their counterparts. Among non-college-educated young blacks the gender gap is starker." Fully half of these young black men "are unemployed or not in the labor force—and these figures don't even include men in jail," she writes. So despite decades of progress, still more decades may pass before we bridge the gap between the races on measures of economic and social equality.

-Ran Coble and Mike McLaughlin

FOOTNOTES

¹ Stewart E. Tolnay and E.M. Beck, A Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882–1930, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1992, Table 2–2.

² Information on the Salisbury lynchings is taken from the Without Sanctuary exhibition of souvenir postcards on line at www.musarium.com/withoutsanctuary/. The postcards are from the collection of James Allen and have been exhibited at museums across the nation.

³ Brown v. Board of Education, 347 U.S. 483 (1954).

⁴ Plessy v. Ferguson, 163 U.S. 537 (1896).

⁵David Halberstam, "Brown v. Board of Education: What It Means To Every American," *Parade*, April 18, 2004, pp. 4-6.

⁶Tim Simmons, "Brown decision still resonates," *The News & Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., April 18, 2004, p. 1B.

⁷ The State of Black America 2004, National Urban League, Washington, D.C., March 24, 2004, Executive Summary, p. 1.

⁸ Katherine Boo, "The Black Gender Gap," *The Atlantic Monthly*, January/February 2003, pp. 107–109.

What Is the Impact of Race and Ethnicity on Outcomes in Public Policy?

by Joanne Scharer



Summary

isparities persist between minority groups and whites in many areas—education, economic well-being, housing, voter participation, Internet access, health, and criminal justice. In this report, the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research examines these differences and asks the question, what can and should state government do about them?

According to the U.S. Census, North Carolina's population grew by 21.4 percent from 6.6 million in 1990 to 8,049,313 in 2000. The 2000 decennial census indicates that African Americans, American Indians (also referred to in this article as Native Americans), Asians, and Hispanics/Latinos combined now account for nearly one-third (28.9 percent) of the state's population. In the decade between 1990 and 2000, the Asian population in the state grew by 128 percent. Even more astounding, the Hispanic population nearly quadrupled in size, growing 394 percent. While it is never healthy for a racial or ethnic group to lag behind the majority in outcomes, growth in the state's minority population brings the issue into sharper focus.

The first area where disparities are apparent is **education**. Comparing educational attainment rates by race/ethnicity for North Carolina residents 25 or older, those least likely to graduate from high school are North Carolina's Hispanic/Latino residents, with only 44.5 percent having attained a high school degree. That compares to 62.7 percent of Native Americans who have graduated from high school in North Carolina, 70.7 percent of African Americans, 79.3 percent of Asians, and 81.2 percent of whites.

College completion rates also are much lower for the state's minorities—again with the exception of Asians. Only 10.4 percent of Native Americans hold a bachelor's degree or higher, while 10.5 percent of Hispanics/Latinos have attained this level of education. African Americans fare modestly better at 13.1 percent, while 25 percent of whites have attained a bachelor's degree or higher. Asians have the highest college completion rate at 43.9 percent.

Minorities also lag on measures of economic well-being. Per capita personal income for Hispanics/Latinos in 1999 was \$11,097. That compares to \$13,441 for American Indians, \$13,548 for African Americans, \$19,815 for Asians, and \$23,237 for whites. And, 25.2 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, 22.9 percent of African Americans, and 21 percent of American Indians lived in poverty in 2000, compared to only 10.1 percent of Asians and 8.1 percent of whites.

In **housing**, according to the 2000 U.S. Census, 1.3 percent of African Americans and 1.2 percent of Hispanics lived in homes without complete plumbing facilities. Native Americans are the next most likely group to live in homes without complete plumbing at 1.1 percent. That's followed by Asians at 0.7 percent and whites at 0.4 percent.

There are 16,860 housing units without complete kitchen facilities in North Carolina, according to the census, and on a percentage basis, minorities are far more likely to reside in them. Among Hispanics/Latinos, 1.0 percent of households have incomplete kitchen facilities. The figure is 0.9 percent for African-American households, while 0.7 percent of American Indians, 0.6 percent of Asians, and 0.4 percent of white households have incomplete kitchen facilities.

Minorities also lag on measures of voter participation. After the general election in November 2000, The Charlotte Observer of Charlotte, N.C., reviewed data for 82 of the state's 100 counties, and found that white voter participation topped that of African Americans in every county analyzed. And, according to U.S. Census data, at the time of the November 1998 election, only 12.2 percent of Hispanics/Latinos were registered to vote. That compares to 57.4 percent of the non-Hispanic African-American population and 66.9 percent of the non-Hispanic white population in North Carolina who were registered to vote.

In terms of Internet access, most minority groups still lag the white majority, though progress is being made in computer use. Internet use hovers around 60 percent for whites and Asians/Pacific Islanders, dropping to 39.8 percent for African Americans and 31.6 percent for Hispanics/Latinos. Computer use logs in at 71.2 percent for Asians/Pacific Islanders, 70.0 percent for whites, 55.7 percent for African Americans, and 48.8 percent for Hispanics/Latinos.

Measures of health status are yet another area where disparities emerge. These disparities are apparent across a broad range of major health conditions and causes of death. American Indians have the highest death rates from heart disease, at 312.3 per 100,000 population. That compares to 308.7 deaths due to heart disease per 100,000 persons for African Americans, 249.6 heart disease deaths per 100,000 population for whites, 83.1 deaths per 100,000 for Asians, and 78.5 for Hispanics/Latinos. African Americans have the highest death rates from stroke, at 98.9 deaths per 100,000 population, compared to 74.6 stroke deaths for American Indians, 70.1 per 100,000 persons for whites, 42.2 for Asians/Pacific Islanders, and 31.4 for Hispanics/Latinos. African Americans also have the highest death rates from diabetes-related causes, at 169.5 per 100,000 population. That's followed by Native Americans at 154.6 diabetes-related deaths per 100,000 population, 78.1 white deaths from diabetes per 100,000, 41.6 Asian deaths, and 41.2 Hispanic/Latino deaths.

Chronic obstructive lung disease and lung cancer deaths are areas where whites have high death rates, in part due to heavy rates of smoking. Whites are the racial or ethnic group most likely to die of chronic obstructive lung disease at 48.5 deaths per 100,000 population, compared to 44.2 deaths per 100,000 for Native Americans, 31.8 deaths per 100,000 for African Americans, 8.6 deaths per

100,000 for Asians, and 7.7 deaths for Hispanics/Latinos. African Americans have the highest death rates from lung cancer at 62.1 per 100,000, closely followed by whites at 61.3 deaths per 100,000. Native Americans are next at 47.5 deaths per 100,000, followed by Asians at 24.5 deaths, and Hispanics/Latinos at 14.0.

At 21.2, African Americans have the highest AIDS deaths per 100,000 population, followed by Hispanics/Latinos at 4.1, Native Americans at 3.3, whites at 1.6, and Asians at 0.7. As for reported cases of sexually transmitted diseases, African Americans have the highest rates of infection by HIV and AIDS, gonorrhea, and chlamydia, while Native Americans have the highest infection rates of early syphilis.

Hispanics/Latinos, while a younger population due to the large number of immigrants and thus less likely to have elevated death rates in such areas as heart disease and cancer, have high rates of traffic fatalities, homicides, and teen pregnancies. For example, the Hispanic/Latina rate of pregnancy for teens ages 15–17 is 90 per 1,000 teenage girls, compared to 72.4 for African Americans, 63.2 for Native Americans, and 38.0 for whites. All racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to have health insurance than is the white population in the state. Among Hispanics/Latinos, 26.8 percent report having no health insurance, compared to 25.3 percent for American Indians, 19.5 percent for African Americans, 14.4 percent for Asians/Pacific Islanders, and 13.8 percent for whites.

In criminal justice, minorities also are more likely to be imprisoned or sentenced to die for crimes. In 2002, minorities made up 67 percent of the prison population in North Carolina, with the white prison population at 10,854 (32.8 percent) and the African-American prison population at 20,347 (61.5 percent). The state's overall population is 71.3 percent white and only 28.7 percent minority.

Analyzing all homicide cases between 1993–1997, the rate of those receiving death sentences in white-victim cases was nearly twice as high as among non-white victim cases (3.7 percent versus 1.9 percent). Looking beyond the race of the victim to that of the defendant, further racial disparities appear. When non-white defendants murdered white victims, the death-sentence rate was 6.4 percent. However, when white defendants murdered white victims, the rate fell to 2.6 percent. When non-whites were both the defendant and the victim, death sentences dipped even more, to only 1.7 percent of the cases.

Thus, the Center found disparities between the white majority and minorities across a broad range of indicators—from education, to economic well-being, to housing, to voting participation, to Internet access, to health, to criminal justice. The question then becomes, what can and should the state do about these disparities? The Center makes broad-ranging recommendations, while recognizing that addressing these disparities is a long-term process.



he signs designating water fountains and restrooms for whites and blacks and signifying exclusion and separation have long since disappeared from view in North Carolina. Four decades later, new, more welcoming signs are cropping up every day that depict the increasing diversity of the state's population and hint at a growing number of different cultures.

North Carolinians are seeing more and more announcements, warnings, and directions posted at public and private facilities in two or more different languages, primarily English and Spanish. Businesses and organizations are offering bilingual phone menus and a choice between English and Spanish websites. Many Automatic Teller Machines (ATMs) at banks have English and Spanish options. A stroll down the street, a trip to the grocery store, or a visit to a public elementary school provides the same message through dual language signage and bilingual services.

According to the U.S. Census, North Carolina's population grew by 21.4 percent from 6.6 million in 1990 to 8,049,313 in 2000. The results from the 2000 decennial census indicate that African Americans—at 21.6 percent, Hispanics/Latinos at 4.7 percent, Asians at 1.4 percent, 3 and

American Indians at 1.2 percent⁴ together now account for nearly one-third (28.9 percent) of the state's population (see Figure 1, p. 22), while whites account for just over two-thirds (72.1 percent).⁵ In the decade between 1990 and 2000, the Asian population in the state grew by 128 percent.⁶ Even more astounding, the Hispanic population⁷ nearly quadrupled in size, growing 394 percent—the largest percentage increase in the 50 states. This increase in the Hispanic/Latino population accounted for more than one-fifth (21 percent) of the total population growth in the state, and minorities as a whole accounted for more than half of the growth (52.4 percent).

These demographics clearly illustrate the fact that North Carolina is not a homogenous state. A growing number of its residents now hail from different backgrounds, eat different foods, speak different languages, and practice different religions. Demographically and culturally, North Carolina is emerging as a vibrant, colorful community, remarkably more diverse, with no signs of slowing down. While nearly three-quarters of the state's residents consider themselves "white,"8 the racial and ethnic mix in the state is evolving. Socially and economically, North Carolina has made progress since its segregated past, but disparities persist between many minority groups and whites. In this report, the N.C. Center for Public Policy Research examines these differences by

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looking at factors such as education, economic well-being, voter participation, Internet access, health outcomes, and criminal justice issues and asks the question, "What can and should state government do about them?"

Education

Failing to graduate from high school has a lasting impact on an individual's future. Quitting school often contributes to a life of poverty and deprives young people of the opportunity to reach their full potential. Young people drop out of school for a variety of reasons, but at the top of the list is lack of academic achievement.⁹

The "achievement gap" between whites and minorities (especially African Americans) in North Carolina has been a major issue in the media in recent years and has been the subject of a number of studies and debates. Also referred to as the education gap, the term refers to a difference in measures of academic progress discernible by race or ethnic group. While "achievement gap" puts the onus more on the student, "education gap" places responsibility more on the institution that failed to bring the student along at the same pace as the white majority. Whatever the terminology, the gap is apparent among white and minority students who are currently pupils in the K-12 public school system in North Carolina (see

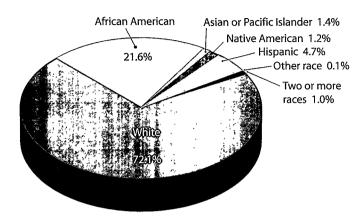
"Educational Achievement: Bridging the Gap" pp. 76–103, for an in-depth discussion on this issue). For example, in the 2002–2003 school year, nearly nine out of 10 white students (88.8 percent) scored at or above grade level in both reading and math in grades three through eight. That compares to only two-thirds, or 66.9 percent, of African-American students, 70.2 percent of Hispanic/Latino students, 72.3 percent of Native Americans, and 87.4 percent of Asians.

Additionally, there is an educational attainment gap-a disparity in the number of North Carolinians who graduated from high school (or its equivalent) and college. According to the 2000 Census, 78.1 percent of North Carolina's population 25 years or older completed high school, up from 70 percent in 1990, and 22.5 percent had obtained bachelors' degrees or higher, compared to 17.4 percent in 1990. Comparing educational attainment rates by race/ethnicity for North Carolina residents 25 or older, it is clear that the white population graduates from high school and beyond to a greater degree than minorities (see Table 1, p. 24). Among whites, 81.2 percent are high school graduates, while 79.3 percent of Asians, 70.7 percent of African Americans, and 62.7 percent of Native Americans have graduated from high school. By far, those least likely to graduate from high school are North Carolina's Hispanic/Latino residents, with only 44.5 percent having attained a high school degree.



Karen Tam

Figure 1 North Carolina Population 2000



The disparities also are evident among the state's college graduates. Only 13.1 percent of black North Carolinians hold a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 25 percent of whites. The numbers are worse for Hispanics/Latinos, with only 10.5 percent holding a bachelor's degree or higher, and worse still for Native Americans at 10.4 percent. Asians are highest at 43.9 percent.

One of the reasons for the lower college completion rate among most minorities may be financial, as minorities are generally less affluent than the white majority (see discussion on economic well-being, pp. 23–24). However, North Carolina's tuition costs rank well below the national average, despite increases over the last several years, and the state is home to five public, four-year historically black colleges and universities (HBCUs)—more than any other state.

One barrier to academic achievement for Hispanic/Latino high school students is that many do not qualify for in-state tuition due to the immigration status of their parents. Because Hispanics/Latinos are on the whole among the most impoverished of any ethnic or racial group in the state, families typically cannot afford out-of-state tuition and college remains out of reach. As a result, many of these students become discouraged and do not even bother to finish high school. "That is why our number one legislative issue is in-state tuition," says Andrea Bazan-Manson, executive director of the El Pueblo, Inc., a Hispanic/Latino advocacy group in Raleigh, N.C. "Half of Latinos drop out. They get to the point where they know

they won't be able to go beyond the high school level because of some policy issues that are barriers." Bazan-Manson describes these students as "trapped in a window of time" in that their families arrived in the country illegally when the children were in elementary or middle school. Because of the immigration status of their parents, these children are not eligible for in-state tuition, even if their entire education has taken place in the North Carolina public schools.

El Pueblo has pressed the General Assembly to authorize in-state tuition for Hispanic/Latino immigrants—thus far without success. "It's really a huge concern for all of us—not just the Latino community," says Bazan-Manson. "We

have the fastest growing Latino population in the nation. It's not migratory. They're settled here, they're highly talented, and the talent is being wasted. You're talking about a whole group of youth who are not going to be able to contribute like they should, like they want to, like they could."

Nolo Martinez, former Hispanic/Latino Affairs director in the administrations of both Governor Mike Easley and former Governor Jim Hunt, sees the need for greater understanding of the importance of education on the part of Hispanic/Latino parents as a barrier to academic achievement for Hispanics/Latino children. "Parental involvement, or the lack of it, presents the biggest challenge for N.C. Latino students," says Martinez. "[P]olicy changes must address the parental deficiencies—language, lack of understanding of the educational system, low educational levels—that hinder Latino

"I sit in the Jim Crow [railroad] car. But my mind is rejuvenated to strive harder to build a race that will someday rise in majesty and break down every wall of segregation in American life."

----CHARLOTTE HAWKINS BROWN
N.C. EDUCATOR, 1900

parents' ability to help students achieve success and value educational opportunity."

Efforts to eliminate the achievement gap among students in grades K-12 ultimately may help to reduce or close the gap in the high school completion rates. It may be more difficult for state government to influence educational attainment after a student graduates from the state's public school system or receives a GED (General Education Development) certificate from one of the state's community colleges. Still, the state does have efforts in place to improve the educational attainment of North Carolinians beyond high school. In its "Long Range Planning: 2000-2005" document, the University of North Carolina System Board of Governors includes a goal to "continue to promote access on the part of traditionally underrepresented segments of North Carolina's population, particularly racial minorities."10 A statement on access initiatives by The University of North Carolina System recognizes that "North Carolina's college-going rate trails the national average, and the state will suffer in global competition if it cannot raise the educational attainment of its workforce."11 While North Carolina historically has had low college participation rates, recent statistics indicate an upturn. The Southern Regional Education Board reports that as of fall 2000, the

state's college going rate was 61.1 percent, which ranks the state 13th in the nation. That's an improvement from 26th in the nation in 1998, 36th in the nation in 1996, and 26th nationally in 1994. Unless it is addressed, the educational attainment gap will only undermine the state's ability to compete in the expanding global economy.

Economic Well-Being

In the U.S., families with higher incomes are more likely to be able to provide for the educational and health needs of their children, to be living in a neighborhood characterized by more amenities and lower levels of crime, to have greater resources in times of economic hardship, and to have more political influence. "You don't see many full-service grocery stores in poor neighborhoods," says Victor Schoenbach, associate professor of epidemiology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Income

Economists generally regard personal or household income as the single best measure of economic well-being. Considering these income measures, it is clear that the economic well-being



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of minorities in North Carolina lags behind that of the white population. Per capita personal income for whites in 1999 was \$23,237. ¹⁴ African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics earned as little as 47.8 percent of that amount at \$13,548, \$13,441, and \$11,097 respectively (see Table 2, p. 25).

Statistics on median household income tell a similar story. ¹⁵ In 1999, the median income for white households was \$42,178. African-American households earned only 66 percent of white household earnings at \$27,845. American-Indian (\$30,390) and Hispanic households (\$32,353) again earned less than white households did, although Asian households actually earned more (\$53,962).

And, income disparities may not be fully explained by factors such as individual skills, choice, or education. A 2001 study published in the *American Sociological Review* found that even as African-American men get into higher-salaried occupations—such as physicians, dentists, and lawyers—they earn as little as 72 cents for every \$1 white men earn.¹⁶

Poverty

Poverty rates also are a key indicator of economic well-being, measuring the number and proportion of people with inadequate incomes for needed consumption of food and other goods and services. In North Carolina, 25.2 percent of Hispanics/Latinos and 22.9 percent of African-American persons lived in poverty in 2000, compared to only 8.1 percent of white persons (see Table 2, p. 25). If "Truly it is paycheck to paycheck living," says Andrea Bazan-Manson, the El Pueblo director. "They may go back to zero right before the

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom and yet deprecate agitation are people who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning."

—Frederick Douglass
Mural in the Frederick Douglass Library,
Univ. of Maryland Eastern Shore

next paycheck." The American Indian population also had a much higher poverty rate than whites at 21 percent.

These differences are even higher when examining the percent of children less than 18 years of age living in poverty. Among white children younger than 18, only 9.4 percent live in poverty, while 24.9 percent of Native-American children, 28.4 percent of Hispanic/Latino children, and 29.6 percent of African-American children are impoverished.

Housing

The sound of hammers nailing plywood on new homes is familiar in communities across North Carolina. New developments and shopping centers seem to materialize overnight as the state grows and its population and

Table 1. Educational Attainment in North Carolina, 2000 Census

	N.C. Overall	White	Black	American Indian & Alaskan Native	Asian	Hispanic/ Latino
High School Graduate or Higher	78.1%	81.2%	70.7%	62.7%	79.3%	44.5%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	22.5%	25.0%	13.1%	10.4%	43.9%	10.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

economy diversify. However, these fruits of the state's growing prosperity remain out of reach for much of the state's minority population, many of whom live in inadequate housing.

Statistics show that thousands of the state's residents live in substandard housing—housing units that lack complete plumbing or kitchen facilities or have at least five basic maintenance problems, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, 19,953 housing units in North Carolina lack complete plumbing facilities. A total of 1.3 percent of African Americans and 1.2 percent of Hispanics live in these homes (see Table 3, p. 26).19 While these percentages may seem low, they are three times as high as the white population at 0.4 percent. Among North Carolina's American Indians, 1.1 percent of households lack complete plumbing facilities, while 0.7 percent of Asian homes lack these necessities.

There are 16,860 housing units without complete kitchen facilities in North Carolina, according to the census.²⁰ Among African-American households, 0.9 percent have incomplete kitchen facilities. The figure is 1.0 percent for the households of Hispanics/Latinos, while 0.7 percent of American Indians, 0.6 percent of Asians, and 0.4 percent of white households have incomplete kitchen facilities (see Table 3, p. 26).

Not surprisingly, low-income families are more likely to confront housing problems such as inadequate plumbing or insufficient kitchen facilities. Yet, simply finding affordable housing can be even more challenging. Families who pay large parts of their incomes for housing often have little left for other necessities.

The generally accepted definition of affordable housing is paying no more than 30 percent of annual income on housing.21 More minorities live in housing that exceeds this standard of housing affordability than do whites. This contributes to difficulty in affording other necessities such as food, clothing, transportation, and medical care. According to the 2000 census, 43.8 percent of the African American households in North Carolina paid more than 30 percent of their household incomes on gross rent in 199922 compared to 34.3 percent of white households (see Table 3, p. 26). American Indian households also paid a higher percentage of their income on housing compared to white households, with 40.7 percent paying rents beyond the definition of affordable housing. Among whites 34.3 percent spent more than 30 percent of their income on rent, while 32.9 percent of

Table 2. Economic Well-Being in North Carolina, 2000 Census

Per Capita Income (2000 Census)

N.C. Overall:	\$20,307
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	\$23,237
African American	\$13,548
American Indian or Alaskan Native	\$13,441
Asian	\$19,815
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	\$14,703
Hispanic or Latino	\$11,097

Median Household Income (2000 Census)

N.C. Overall:	\$39,184
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	\$42,178
African American	\$27,845
American Indian or Alaskan Native	\$30,390
Asian	\$53,962
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	\$49,497
Hispanic or Latino	\$32,353

Percent of Persons Living Below the Federal Poverty Level (2000 Census)

N.C. Overall:	12.1%
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	8.1%
African American	22.9%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	21.0%
Asian	10.1%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	15.1%
Hispanic or Latino	25.2%

Percent of Children Under 18 Years of Age Living Below the Federal Poverty Level (2000 Census)

N.C. Overall:	18.5%
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	9.4%
African American	29.6%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	24.9%
Asian	10.5%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	17.3%
Hispanic or Latino	28.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Table 3. Housing in North Carolina

Homes Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities (2000 Census)

N.C. Overall:	0.6%
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	0.4%
African American	1.3%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	1.1%
Asian	0.7%
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.0%
Hispanic or Latino	1.2%

Homes Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities (2000 Census)

N.C. Overall:	0.5%	
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	0.4%	
African American	0.9%	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.7%	
Asian	0.6%	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	0.0%	
Hispanic or Latino	1.0%	

Gross Rent More Than 30 Percent of Household Income (2000 Census)

N.C. Overall:	37.3%	
White (not Hispanic or Latino)	34.3%	
African American	43.8%	
American Indian or Alaskan Native	40.7%	
Asian	31.8%	
Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander	28.9%	
Hispanic or Latino	32.9%	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau.

Hispanics/Latinos spent more than this amount of their incomes, and 31.8 percent of Asians exceeded this affordability standard.



Voting Participation

Voting is the most common form of civic participation, and the percentage of vot-

ers casting ballots serves as an important gauge of involvement in civic related activities. "Voters are more likely to be interested in politics, to give to charity, to volunteer, to serve on juries, to attend community school board meetings, to participate in public demonstrations, and to cooperate with their fellow citizens on community affairs," says Harvard University professor Robert Putnam, in his seminal study of civic involvement, *Bowling Alone*.

It appears that minorities are less active in participating in elections in North Carolina. After the general election in November 2000, The Charlotte Observer of Charlotte, N.C., reviewed data for 82 of the state's 100 counties, and found that white voter participation topped that of African Americans in every county analyzed.23 In Mecklenburg County, or example, 56 percent of registered whites voted compared to only 45 percent of registered blacks. And, according to U.S. Census data, at the time of the November 2000 election, 71.5 percent of voting-age non-Hispanic whites in North Carolina were registered to vote. Voter registration for the non-Hispanic African Americans was 63.1 percent, while only 12.1 percent of the Hispanic population was registered to vote.

More important than registering to vote is actually voting. Voter participation as a percentage of the voting age population shows that more whites voted than African Americans or Hispanics in the 2000 presidential election. But in 1998, African Americans who were registered actually voted at a higher rate than whites who were registered (see Table 4, p. 28). Voter turnout among all North Carolinians in 2002 was woefully low, at 36.4 percent of the voting age population. (For a thorough discussion of voting and civic participation, see the April 2003 edition of North Carolina Insight.24) But the fact that a lower percentage of African Americans are registered to vote contributes to a disparity in voter participation. Experts say that since elected officials pay more attention to those who vote, the gap means that African American interests are underrepresented in city halls, legislatures, and Congress. "One should be concerned about how to engage otherwiseunengaged Americans," says Claudine Gay, a Stanford University political scientist who studies ethnic voting patterns.25

Poor and lower-educated people are less likely to vote than others, and African Americans make up a disproportionate share of that group. "If you could correct for [income] nation-wide, then African Americans are actually more likely



to participate than whites of the same status," says political scientist John Aldrich of Duke University. "[The gap] is almost all class and educational background."²⁶

Far less likely to register and vote are North Carolina's Hispanic/Latino residents. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, only 12.1 percent of the state's Hispanic/Latino residents were registered to vote in the 2000 presidential election, and only 8.4 percent of the state's Hispanic/Latino voting age population actually cast a ballot. Bazan-Manson says part of the problem is the immigration status of many Hispanic/Latino residents. "That's going to be interesting to monitor, to see how it grows," says Bazan-Manson of Hispanic/Latino registration and voting participation. "It's completely an open field."

Bazan-Manson says she isn't sure what party would benefit politically from a more engaged Hispanic/Latino electorate. "Latinos are more likely to vote for issues than for parties," she says. "There are active Hispanic Democrats but the two legislators who are Latinos are Republican, and Pitt County just elected a chair of the Republican Party who is Latino."

Experts agree that the picture is less than

clear. A study of polling data taken from 10 states with key gubernatorial and U.S. Senate races in 2002 found little difference in voting patterns between Hispanics/Latinos and non-Hispanic whites. "There is no 'Latino' voting bloc, as such," writes James Gimpel, a professor of government at the University of Maryland at College Park. "[A]fter controlling for party identification, income, and education, there is no difference between Latino voting and the voting pattern of non-Hispanic whites in either the Senate or gubernatorial races of 2002. This is not true of African Americans. who are a distinctive voting bloc even after controlling for education, income, and party identification."27 Gimpel says his findings support the work of social scientists who discuss "the lack of a 'pan-ethnic' identity across various Latino nationality groups."28 He adds that, "The characteristics that do distinguish Latinos as an ethnic group: sharing a common language, their predominant Catholicism, and an Iberian influenced heritage, have no obvious and consistent political ramifications."

A study by the Pew Hispanic Center and the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation finds that "[Hispanic/Latino] immigrants hold a range of views

Table 4. Voting Participation in North Carolina

Percent of Population Registered to Vote: November 2000 Election (U.S. Census Bureau)

White (not Hispanic or Latino)	71.5%
African American	63.1%
Hispanic or Latino	12.1%

Percent of Population Voting: November 2000 (U.S. Census Bureau)

White (not Hispanic or Latino)	58.9%
African American	47.7%
Hispanic or Latino	8.4%

Percent of Registered Voters Voting: November 1998 (U.S. Census Bureau)

White (not Hispanic or Latino)	61.9%
African American	66.5%
Hispanic or Latino	21.4%

Percent of N.C. Voting Age Population Voting: November 2000*

50.2%

Percent of N.C. Voting Age Population Voting: November 2002*

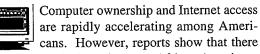
36.4%

on matters like gender roles, abortion, and homosexuality that are somewhat more conservative than most non-Hispanic whites. Meanwhile native-born Latinos, including the children of immigrants, express attitudes that are more squarely within the range of views voiced by non-Hispanics."²⁹

Bazan-Manson does not believe that lack of Hispanic/Latino political involvement indicates a satisfaction with the status quo. As evidence, Bazan-Manson points to a Hispanic/Latino involvement day at the General Assembly in May 2003 that drew a crowd she estimates at 2,000,

dressed in red and seeking to raise awareness about the needs of the Hispanic/Latino community. "I don't think we could have had 2,000 people at the legislature if everything were rosy and fine and if Latinos were not interested in making their voices heard," says Bazan-Manson.

Internet Access



is a technological gap between African Americans and Hispanics and whites.³⁰ "The 'digital divide'—the divide between those with access to new technologies and those without—is now one of America's leading economic and civil rights issues," says Larry Irving, undersecretary at the U.S. Department of Commerce.³¹

According to a February 2002 report published by the National Telecommunications and Information Administration in the U.S. Department of Commerce, 2001 computer use rates were highest for Asian American and Pacific Islanders (71.2 percent) and whites (70.0 percent). Among African Americans, 55.7 percent were computer users, and approximately half of Hispanics (48.8 percent) were computer users. Internet use among whites and Asian American and Pacific Islanders hovered around 60 percent, while Internet use rates for African Americans (39.8 percent) and Hispanics (31.6 percent) trailed behind.³²

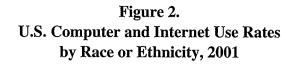
Part of the issue for Hispanics/Latinos is the mobility of the population, says Bazan-Manson. "Latinos move around a lot," she says. The disparity became apparent when El Pueblo was working with a Hispanic/Latino youth group in eastern North Carolina. "We asked them how many had access to email," she says. "None of them did. . . . We're still not a connected community at all."

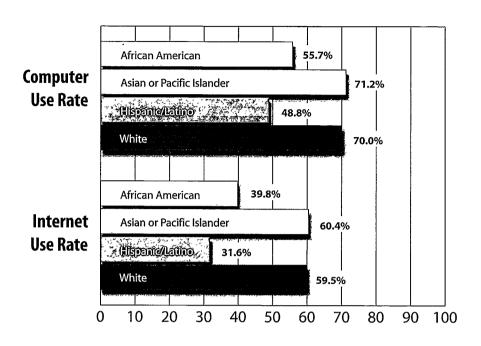
Not everyone agrees that Hispanic/Latino groups all lack access to the Internet. "One of the groups with the highest number of email address we communicate with is Latinos in high school in North Carolina," says Nolo Martinez, the governor's former director of Hispanic/Latino Affairs. Disparities do exist for computer usage and Internet use across the various ethnic cultures in the United States, but since 1997, usage has increased among all ethnic groups, and growth in Internet use rates has been faster for African Americans and Hispanics than for whites and Asian American and Pacific Islanders. From December 1998 to September 2001, Internet use among African Americans grew

^{*} Source for 2000 and 2002 Data: Federal Election Commission, Committee for the Study of the American Electorate.



Karen Tam





Source: National Telecommunications and Information Administration, U.S. Department of Commerce.

at an annual rate of 31 percent, and Internet use among Hispanics grew at an annual rate of 26 percent. Internet use continued to grow, although not so rapidly, among Asian American and Pacific Islanders (21 percent), and whites (19 percent). African Americans and Hispanics also have had somewhat faster growth in computer use than whites and Asian American and Pacific Islanders.³³

The affordability of computers and the Internet is one reason why the "digital divide" exists in the United States. Family income remains an indicator of whether a person uses a computer or the Internet. Individuals who live in high-income households are more likely to be computer and Internet users than those who live in low-income households.³⁴ Nonetheless, both computer and Internet use have increased steadily across all income categories. While notable differences remain in Internet use across income categories, Internet use has grown considerably among people who live in lower income households. Among people living in the lowest income households (less than \$15,000 annually), Internet use had increased from 9.2 percent in

October 1997 to 25.0 percent in September 2001.³⁵ Still, while computer usage has increased in low-income and middle class homes, those gains still leave people in the lower income brackets lagging.³⁶ In our ever-increasing high-tech society, if people do not have computer and Internet access, they face obstacles in education and a distinct disadvantage in the job market. Furthermore, with a growing number of government services, town meetings, and health care services going online, the need for equity in access to computers and Internet access increases.³⁷

Health

Inequalities in education, economic well-being, housing, voter participation, and Internet access are all important areas that ultimately contribute to other social ills. In fact, some argue that economic and social factors underlie many of the reported disparities in health outcomes by race and ethnicity in the United States and North Carolina. "When we

look at children and the health challenges they face, race is more a proxy for education, income, housing, and other measures that restrict access to care," says Tom Vitaglione, a career public health practitioner in state government and now a senior fellow at the North Carolina Child Advocacy Institute. "Some lower income families might make slightly too much money to meet the income limits for assistance, and then even if they do qualify, providers might not be available—either because the reimbursement rates are low and the provider doesn't participate or regionally there are few providers. It also seems that some people aren't exposed to enough information about health issues and what's available." (See Table 5, p. 32, for a county-by-county look at poverty in North Carolina, by race.)

Victor Schoenbach, associate professor of epidemiology at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill's School of Public Health, agrees that the poor are at a disadvantage in gaining access to health information. "When we learn through research how to prevent disease, that information is more readily available to people of education and

resources," Schoenbach says. "When knowledge is obtained, they are the first to get that knowledge."

The World Health Organization defines health as "a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity."38 This definition not only applies to individuals but to communities as well. "Healthy People 2010," a set of health objectives developed by the federal government,39 suggests that a population's health is determined by a complex interaction of several factors including individual behaviors, biological makeup, physical and social characteristics, environmental conditions, policies, interventions, and access to health care services. 40 The interconnectedness of these factors convinced the consortium of agencies, organizations, and individuals involved with developing "Healthy People 2010" to include eliminating health disparities among segments of the population as one of the initiative's two primary goals.41 More specifically, the consortium seeks to eliminate health disparities experienced by minority groups compared with the white, non-Hispanic population in the United States.42



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Table 5. Poverty Rates by County in N.C. for the White and African American Population, 2000

N.C. County	% of White Persons in Poverty 2000	% of Black Persons in Poverty 2000	N.C. County	% of White Persons in Poverty 2000	% of Black Persons in Poverty 2000
Alamance	8.29	19.16	Davie	7.61	15.11
Alexander	7.90	15.74	Duplin	11.94	28.16
Alleghany	15.78	33.33	Durham	7.40	19.35
Anson	8.25	27.68	Edgecombe	8.59	26.80
Ashe	12.60	20.80	Forsyth	6.39	21.20
Avery	14.79	44.19	Franklin	8.40	20.74
Beaufort	11.36	38.23	Gaston	8.71	22.97
Bertie	9.42	31.52	Gates	10.77	26.97
Bladen	12.56	32.66	Graham	18.00	N.A.
Brunswick	10.57	22.79	Granville	7.68	18.81
Buncombe	9.63	29.35	Greene	10.25	29.44
Burke	9.83	13.00	Guilford	6.21	18.60
Cabarrus	5.21	13.68	Halifax	10.95	33.70
Caldwell	9.22	27.80	Harnett	11.30	23.93
Camden	7.47	21.28	Haywood	11.23	14.98
Carteret	9.86	19.76	Henderson	8.38	34.03
Caswell	10.37	20.69	Hertford	9.66	23.34
Catawba	7.11	21.86	Hoke	9.21	26.31
Chatham	7.42	16.78	Hyde	11.85	24.31
Cherokee	14.87	22.93	Iredell	5.67	22.63
Chowan	6.25	35.42	Jackson	14.32	28.14
Clay	11.23	N.A.	Johnston	9.15	22.27
Cleveland	10.20	23.47	Jones	13.78	22.78
Columbus	15.03	37.29	Lee	8.32	23.00
Craven	8.00	27.24	Lenoir	8.25	28.09
Cumberland		20.78	Lincoln	7.48	25.15
Currituck	9.23	23.57	Macon	11.90	47.12
Dare	7.25	18.46	Madison	15.08	26.23
Davidson	7.91	25.64	Martin	9.88	31.89

As on the national level, the health status of minorities in North Carolina is an area that has received particular attention in recent years, including two reports by the North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research on the issue—in 1995 analyzing minority health generally and in 1999 focusing on the health of Hispanic/Latino residents of North Carolina in particular.43 The "Healthy Children and Families Vision" of the N.C. Progress Board⁴⁴ presents a goal of creating an environment where "[f]amilies and individuals of all ages thrive in North Carolina. From early childhood well past retirement, our citizens are mentally and

physically fit, with no significant differences in health across racial, ethnic, or geographic lines."45 Shortly after Governor Mike Easley appointed Carmen Hooker Odom as Secretary of the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services, Odom established eliminating health disparities as a priority for the Department and asked the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities to develop the "DHHS Call to Action to Eliminate Health Disparities."46

Odom also co-chaired the Task Force on Latino Health convened by the Institute of Medicine and El Pueblo, which in February 2003 issued

Table 5, continued

N.C. County	% of White Persons in Poverty 2000	% of Black Persons in Poverty 2000	N.C. County	% of White Persons in Poverty 2000	% of Black Persons in Poverty 2000
McDowell	11.25	14.07	Rowan	7.81	23.29
Mecklenbur	g 5.37	16.22	Rutherford	12.36	25.30
Mitchell	13.59	12.96	Sampson	11.06	26.56
Montgomer	y 10.79	25.84	Scotland	10.19	34.32
Moore	7.35	28.56	Stanly	8.02	27.17
Nash	7.04	23.19	Stokes	8.62	15.16
New Hanov	er 9.55	28.78	Surry	10.56	25.98
Northampto	n 9.12	29.29	Swain	13.52	70.83
Onslow	10.31	21.66	Transylvani	ia 8.61	24.03
Orange	12.43	19.51	Tyrrell	11.02	39.91
Pamlico	11.02	29.37	Union	5.51	20.12
Pasquotank	8.29	33.38	Vance	12.51	28.61
Pender	10.47	21.97	Wake	5.09	15.10
Perquimans	10.83	35.68	Warren	10.05	25.94
Person	7.74	21.58	Washingtor	n 7.98	35.44
Pitt	14.44	29.25	Watauga	17.54	25.51
Polk	9.12	26.87	Wayne	7.22	24.53
Randolph	7.63	23.46	Wilkes	11.20	20.94
Richmond	12.59	34.47	Wilson	8.97	29.67
Robeson	13.53	34.32	Yadkin	9.47	17.04
Rockinghan	n 10.41	20.31	Yancey	15.49	23.26

Source: LINC, Log Into North Carolina Bureau of the Census—Census of Population and Housing.

Percent of white persons in poverty in the calendar year prior to the census. Based on number of white persons and black persons for whom poverty status is determined. The data represent those who classified themselves as white or black only; thus it is not comparable with white or black population in earlier years. White and black poverty figures are the only classifications available from this data source. Hispanic/Latino, Native American, Asian and other classifications are not available.

a report offering 13 recommendations to address health issues among North Carolina's Latino population.⁴⁷ The Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, through the Hispanic Health Task Force, is working on the following recommendations: securing workers' compensation for agricultural workers if they work for an employer who employs three or more full-time workers at least 13 weeks in a year; expanding efforts to help local communities hire bilingual and bicultural providers and hire and train interpreters; raising awareness about chronic diseases affecting the Hispanic/Latino community; broadening the lay

health advisor program; meeting and monitoring compliance with the requirements of Title VI of the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964, which has been widely interpreted by the courts to mean that facilities receiving federal funds must address the needs of their non-English speaking clients; and securing additional funding to strengthen the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities so that it can address more Hispanic/Latino health issues.

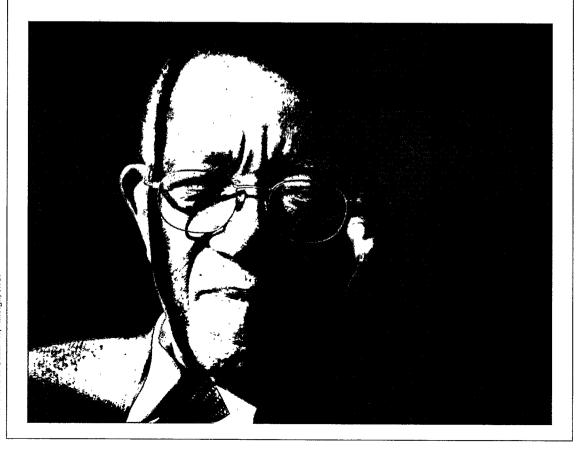
The North Carolina Center for Public Policy Research had originally recommended that the state adhere to the requirements of Title VI of the

John Hope Franklin's Perspective on Racial Progress

Eminent historian John Hope Franklin observes black progress from a unique perspective. The 89-year-old Duke University professor-who has written or co-authored literally dozens of books on African-American history and has been awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom-recalls the disappearance of his own father during the Oklahoma race riots of 1921—the day his father went off to work and did not return for a week. Franklin, at the tender age of six, wondered whether his father would return at all, or whether he had fallen victim to racial violence. This, along with his own view of history, leads Franklin to view claims of racial progress through a lens of skepticism. He has seen even the best intended efforts to address racial injustices fall short.

Franklin has lived through the Brown vs. Board of Education ruling that integrated the schools, yet seen the vision for an integrated society that ruling represented go stagnant as the races voluntarily re-segregate in the schools and elsewhere. He has seen the death of Jim Crow as a legal institution, yet seen Jim Crow live on in segregated housing patterns and institutional racism. Still, Franklin sees hope for the future if people are willing to do the work.

"There are several levels on which to look at it," says Franklin of black progress through the decades. "On one level, the black middle class has made remarkable strides. In teaching, the professions, in many aspects of business, blacks are making progress. But we are not doing well in the education process. The number



of African Americans being educated has not significantly improved, and that's one of the disturbing problems.

"Brown vs. Board of Education has not worked out how we might have anticipated," Franklin says. "Resistance [to integration] has been institutionalized. It's no accident that more black men are unemployed in Washington, D.C., than employed. It's no accident that there are more young black men in prison than in college. It's part of the system, and it's deeply disturbing."

As for the successful black middle class, Franklin says its membership is too small and too inclined to join the white flight to the suburbs. "More and more, they are moving to the suburbs," says Franklin. "Not only do they often isolate themselves from the whites out there but from blacks back in the city.... Blacks move into a neighborhood and whites immediately leave. Blacks move too because they get more affluence. They want to get out and follow the country club crowd. That leaves vast numbers of blacks isolated with no leadership. They stay down, and in fact, they go further down."

Franklin also won't budge from his insistence that the situation for blacks and other minority groups in America can improve—but not without some significant work from both minority groups and the white majority.

Franklin's father, a successful lawyer, had purchased a home in Tulsa, and the family was about to move in when the Oklahoma race riot

broke out. While the child was left to wonder whether his father was even alive, B.C. Franklin spent six-days in a make-shift prison camp. He was released to find the new home destroyed—along with 35 surrounding blocks. "He came out and found the entire area where he lived had been leveled, to the point that he couldn't even find out where he lived."

Franklin sees an analogy in the state of society for vast numbers of black Americans. There is a great deal of rebuilding to do. Yet he sees hope if the nation's citizens are willing to do the work. "I hope that all of these things I mentioned can be somehow reversed," says Franklin. "We'll look at our education system and repair it. It's not good in many places. We'll transfer our expectations for success onto our children. There's nothing wrong with these kids that a little nurturing, and training, and care won't help. They can improve.

"I hope we can take the stereotypes out of our view of blacks," Franklin adds. The same goes for other minority groups, such as immigrants from Mexico. "Treat them like immigrants of the past," says Franklin. "They can make it. Just give them the chance."

Most of all, Franklin hopes that people who are concerned about the state of society will move on from idle fretting to action. "We have to be much more pro-active and do something about our society and not just moan about it and groan about it and feel like you've done your duty because you complained."

-Mike McLaughlin

Civil Rights Act in its August 1999 look at Hispanic/Latino Health in North Carolina.⁴⁸ The Center also recommended funding of interpreter services at local health departments as a fundamental means of meeting this requirement.

Despite these efforts to call attention to and address health disparities in North Carolina, a sizable portion of the state's racial and ethnic minorities—particularly African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics—continue to experience a disproportionate burden of poor health and premature mortality compared to their white counter-

parts.⁴⁹ According to a recent report published by the N.C. Center for Health Statistics and the N.C. Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities, racial and ethnic disparities in health status are apparent in almost all major health conditions and causes of death.⁵⁰ The report shows that African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics/ Latinos in North Carolina are more likely to have a poorer health status than the white population in the state. Moreover, these inequalities are not limited to health status but extend to the type and quality of services minority and underserved



Haliwa-Saponi Tribal School, Hollister N.C.

populations receive, such as access to life saving technologies, insurance coverage, and specialty care.⁵¹ Minorities and other underserved populations living in urban and rural communities continue to experience limited access to quality health care services and economic resources, and they experience poorer health than the general population.⁵²

Leading Health Indicators

The federal government's "Healthy People 2010" report selected 10 leading health indicators that reflect major public health concerns in the U.S. and help to illuminate individual behaviors, physical and social environmental factors, and important health system issues that greatly affect the health of individuals and communities.⁵³ The indicators in *Healthy People 2010* include: (1) physical activity; (2) overweight and obesity; (3) tobacco use; (4) substance abuse; (5) responsible sexual behavior; (6) mental health; (7) injury and violence; (8) environmental quality; (9) immunization; and (10) access to health care.

In response, the N.C. Department of Health and

Human Services developed its own "report card" on racial and ethnic health disparities in North Carolina, taking into account the leading health indicators in the "Healthy People 2010" report. The "Racial and Ethnic Health Disparities in North Carolina Report Card" aims to monitor the state's progress towards eliminating the health status gap between racial and ethnic minorities and the white population. The report card's leading indicators include health care access, risk behaviors and health promotion, maternal and infant health, child and adolescent health, adult health, and sexually transmitted diseases. Data in all of these areas reveal disparities along racial and ethnic lines.

Access, Risk Behaviors, and Health Promotion

For many families and individuals, the rising cost of health care makes seeking treatment or even having a regular checkup cost prohibitive without the help of health insurance. According to North Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) findings from 1997–2001,⁵⁴ 15.6 percent of North Carolinians ages 18–64

report having no health insurance.⁵⁵ Whites are least likely to be uninsured, with 13.8 percent reporting no health insurance, compared to 14.4 percent of Asian/Pacific Islanders, 19.5 percent of African Americans, 25.3 percent of American Indians, and 26.8 percent of Hispanics/Latinos (See Table 6, p. 38). Other studies have reported that from 1997–2000, an estimated one in five adult North Carolinians reported having no health insurance or had interrupted coverage within the past year.⁵⁶

While the disparity is evident between the white population and other racial/ethnic groups with regard to health insurance coverage, health care experts believe this is more a product of socioeconomic status.⁵⁷ Household income as opposed to race alone seems to have the strongest independent effect on limited access to health care, making health access primarily a matter of economic wellbeing rather than intrinsic to race and ethnicity.⁵⁸ But Dr. Ernest Goodson, a Fayetteville orthodontist, makes the argument that racial prejudice can have a major impact on income, trapping minorities in low-wage jobs that don't offer insurance. So the end result is the same—less access to health care. "In some cases, race and socioeconomic status are inextricably related," Goodson says. "The skin color of an individual due to discriminatory practices could be inextricably related to his socioeconomic and educational status." Because minorities have less income, they also have less access to health care. This is evident in the percentage of adults who reported being unable to see a doctor in the last year due to cost,59 and the percentage of adults who did not visit a dentist in the last year (see Table 6, p. 38).60

For the Hispanic/Latino population, which had the highest rate of uninsured adults at 26.8 percent, immigration status may exacerbate the socioeconomic challenges to obtaining health insurance or health care. 61 Still, while the rate of uninsured African-American and American-Indian adults was lower than that of Hispanics/Latinos, these groups had higher rates than Hispanics/Latinos of not seeing a doctor due to cost and were less likely to have seen a dentist in the past year. One possible reason for this inconsistent finding is increased utilization of community health centers and county health departments among the Hispanic/Latino population, where treatment is more affordable and dental care is sometimes available.62 It may also be that surveys such as the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System have trouble reaching a representative sample of Hispanics/Latinos due to issues around immigration status of those who do and do not respond and even those who have a telephone in their homes. The survey was done only in English during the 1997–2001 period. Spanish interviews were added in 2002.

Ultimately, without health insurance, people are less likely to have preventive check-ups and more likely to postpone seeking care until the problem is acute and potentially more costly. Thus, the higher rates of being uninsured among the non-white population suggest one cause for some of the health disparities among the various racial and ethnic groups.

While health care access pertaining to financial resources and health insurance may prove to be a key component in eliminating health disparities among North Carolina's various racial and ethnic groups, individual behavior also plays a role. Nutrition, exercise, and healthy body weight all contribute to physical and emotional wellbeing. Ignoring any of these can lead to disease and stress, and they have proven to be one of the components contributing to higher health care costs across the country and in North Carolina.63 As with health insurance, disparities along racial/ ethnic lines in these areas may contribute to the disparities that exist among other key health indicators discussed in this article. With regard to the percent of adults who eat five or more fruits and vegetables per day (as recommended by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration), those who participate in leisure time physical activity, and those who are overweight, whites score better than any other racial/ethnic group with the exception of Asians/Pacific Islanders, who appear to have a healthier diet and fewer adults with weight problems (see Table 6, p. 38).64

Two other risk factors that suggest poor health are high blood pressure and smoking. High blood pressure increases one's risk of getting kidney disease, heart disease, or having a stroke. 65 It is especially dangerous for individuals

"the problem of the Twentieth Century is the problem of the color-line."
—W.E.B. Du Bois
IN THE SOULS OF BLACK FOLK, 1903

Table 6. Access, Risk Behaviors, and Health Promotion

All North Carolinians	15.6%	All	28.2%
White	13.8%	White	25.8%
African American	19.5%	African American	35.4%
American Indian	25.3%	American Indian	43.0%
Asian/Pacific Islander	14.4%	Asian/Pacific Islander	34.5%
Hispanic or Latino	26.8%	Hispanic or Latino	37.1%
Percent of Adults Who Could Not See a D the Previous 12 Months Due to Cost, 1997		Percent of Adults 18+ Who Are Overweight Obese (BMI >25kg/m²), 1997–2001	ht or
All	12.0%	All	57.0%
White	10.8%	White	54.7%
African American	15.8%	African American	66.9%
American Indian	18.5%	American Indian	59.3%
Asian/Pacific Islander	11.3%	Asian/Pacific Islander	38.6%
Hispanic or Latino	15.3%	Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu	58.1%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a De	15.3%	Hispanic or Latino	58.1% re
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Der in the Last Year, 1999 & 2001	15.3%	Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001	38.6% 58.1% re 24.9% 23.5%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Del in the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All	15.3% ntist 31.7%	Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Der in the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0%	Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5% 32.2%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Desiin the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White African American	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0% 41.7%	Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White African American	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5% 32.2% 20.9%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Der in the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White African American American Indian	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0% 41.7% 41.6%	Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White African American American Indian	58.1% re 24.9%
Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Design the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Do Not Eat Five on	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0% 41.7% 41.6% 31.4% 24.4%	Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5% 32.2% 20.9% 8.4% 17.7%
Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Design the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Do Not Eat Five on	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0% 41.7% 41.6% 31.4% 24.4% r More & 2001	Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5% 32.2% 20.9% 8.4% 17.7%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Derin the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Do Not Eat Five of Fruits and Vegetables a Day, 1998, 2000, All	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0% 41.7% 41.6% 31.4% 24.4% r More & 2001 77.5%	Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Smoke, 1997–200	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5% 32.2% 20.9% 8.4% 17.7% 1 25.5%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Derin the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Do Not Eat Five on Fruits and Vegetables a Day, 1998, 2000, All White	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0% 41.7% 41.6% 31.4% 24.4% r More & 2001 77.5% 76.2%	Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Smoke, 1997–200. All	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5% 32.2% 20.9% 8.4% 17.7%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Derin the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Do Not Eat Five on Fruits and Vegetables a Day, 1998, 2000, All White African American	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0% 41.7% 41.6% 31.4% 24.4% r More & 2001 77.5% 76.2% 81.7%	Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Smoke, 1997–200. All White	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5% 32.2% 20.9% 8.4% 17.7% 1 25.5% 25.8%
Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Did Not Visit a Derin the Last Year, 1999 & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Do Not Eat Five on Fruits and Vegetables a Day, 1998, 2000, All White	15.3% ntist 31.7% 29.0% 41.7% 41.6% 31.4% 24.4% r More & 2001 77.5% 76.2%	Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults with High Blood Pressu 1997, 1999, & 2001 All White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander Hispanic or Latino Percent of Adults Who Smoke, 1997–200. All White African American	58.1% re 24.9% 23.5% 32.2% 20.9% 8.4% 17.7% 1 25.5% 23.3%

Source: N.C. Department of Health and Human Services.



Karen Tam

who do not have access to regular health care because it often has no warning signs or symptoms. African-American adults had the highest rate of high blood pressure (32.2 percent). Notably, they also had the highest rate of stroke deaths (98.9 per 100,000 population) and the second highest rate of deaths (308.7 per 100,000) related to heart disease (see Table 9, p. 45). White adults had the second highest rate of high blood pressure (23.5 percent), but this rate was still nearly one-third less than that of African Americans.

Smoking is a risk factor for having health problems and disease. Approximately a quarter (25.5 percent) of all adult North Carolinians smoke. The white adult population who smoke (25.8 percent) closely mirrors that of the overall adult population, and the adult African-American population who smoke is slightly less (23.3 percent). American Indian and Hispanic/Latino adults have the highest smoking rates at 35.3 percent and 31.9 percent respectively, while Asians are the lowest at only 13.3 percent (see Table 6, p. 38).

One possible reason for the higher rate of smoking among American Indian adults is that for many Native-American groups, tobacco figures prominently in religious and cultural practices.⁶⁶

Unfortunately, tobacco use, especially cigarette smoking, also is directly related to the leading causes of death for American Indians—heart disease, cancer, and stroke.⁶⁷

Maternal and Infant Health

The health of the mother is essential for ensuring normal pre- and post-natal development of infants and young children. The consequences of late or inadequate prenatal care and additional stress factors during pregnancy include low birthweight, birth defects, and underdeveloped brain growth. Doctors and health researchers associate these consequences with higher probabilities for infant mortality, illness, disabilities, and learning disorders. 68

A key indicator of maternal and infant health is the infant mortality rate, which is tracked as the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births. From 1997–2001, the infant mortality rate in North Carolina was 8.6 per 1,000 live births (see Table 7, p. 40), ranking the state seventh highest among the 50 states. For the white population, the rate was 6.4, better than the state as a whole, while the African American rate was more than two times that of the white population at 15.1 per 1,000 live births.

Table 7. Maternal and Infant Health

Infant Mortality Rate (Number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births), 1997–2001

All North Carolinians	8.6
White	6.4
African American	15.1
American Indian	11.9
Asian/Pacific Islander	6.1
Hispanic or Latina	5.8
	White African American American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander

Percent of Births That Were Low Birthweight (< 2,500 grams), 1997–2001

	All	8.9%
	White	7.2%
Afr	ican American	13.8%
At	nerican Indian	10.2%
Asian/P	acific Islander	7.8%
Hisp	panic or Latina	6.2%

Percent of Women with Late Prenatal Care (after 1st trimester or no prenatal care), 1997-2001

15 50
15.5%
12.1%
24.7%
24.9%
17.0%
31.0%

Percent of Women Who Smoked During Pregnancy, 1997–2001

All	14.4%
White	15.7%
African American	11.0%
American Indian	26.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	2.7%
Hispanic or Latina	1.7%

Source: N.C. Department of Health and Human Services.

American Indians' infant mortality rate also greatly exceeded the state average at 11.9 per 1,000 live births. The only racial/ethnic groups with lower infant mortality than the white population were Asian/Pacific Islanders at 6.1 and the Hispanic/ Latino population at 5.8. According to Julius Mallette, senior associate dean at East Carolina University School of Medicine and an African American, accounting for this disparity is complicated. "Providers used to pinpoint lack of health care as the reason for the higher risk [of infant mortality]," says Mallette, "but recent studies implicate a six-letter word we all face in our daily livesstress." 69 Considering societal, racial, and gender prejudices along with family demands and economic concerns, the theory is that African American women are under more stress during pregnancy-stress that causes adverse physical responses that may lead to premature labor. Other important risk factors are age and the education level of the mother (the African-American teen pregnancy rate is nearly twice that of whites), four or more previous pregnancies, and whether the mother had a previous fetal death or a previous live-born child who later died.⁷⁰ Behavioral issues such as smoking or drinking also play a role, though African American women are less likely to smoke during pregnancy than are white women. Inadequate prenatal health care, stress, and

premature labor can result in low birthweight (less than 2,500 grams) babies, the leading contributor to most infant deaths. Statistics regarding low birthweight infants in North Carolina indicate that from 1997-2001, 8.9 percent of births were lowweight births (see Table 7). Slightly more than 7 percent of white infants had a low birthweight, compared to 13.8 percent of African American infants. American Indian infants also were more likely to have a low birthweight than whites, but less likely than African Americans, with 10.2 percent born dangerously underweight. Only Hispanics/Latinos had fewer low-weight births than whites, at 6.2 percent. The percentage of Asian/ Pacific Islander infants with a low birthweight was slightly higher than whites at 7.8 percent.

East Carolina University's Mallette says better prenatal care leads to healthier births. "What North Carolina needs are effective prevention programs that blend health care with health education, behavior modification, and public policy." He adds that, "North Carolina has much to do to ensure that all our infants are born healthy, regardless of the color of their skin." However, all the minority groups fare worse than the white population

in terms of the percentage of women receiving late prenatal care (see Table 7, p. 40).

For Hispanics/Latinas, studies of births to Mexican women in the United States have found a "paradox" of less prenatal care but fewer low birthweight infants. These studies and anecdotal observation suggest that first generation immigrants in particular are more likely to maintain healthy behaviors such as avoiding the high-risk use of alcohol, tobacco, and drugs. However, as these immigrants spend more time in the United States, there is evidence that they adopt the habits of the majority culture, and these advantages diminish. The protective factors in some cultures for health go away as they [immigrants] become acculturated," says Bazan-Manson.

Child and Adolescent Health

The health of children and youth is fundamental tal to their well-being and optimal development. Children perform better in school, have better social skills, and understand that they have something valuable to contribute to their communities when they feel secure, healthy, and energetic. "Children are about 20 percent of our population, but they are 100 percent of our future," says Tom Vitaglione, the senior fellow at the N.C. Child Advocacy Institute. "They will soon be our leaders, our producers, and our consumers. Now is the time to make the health and safety investments that will assure a bright future for our children and for our state."

Unfortunately, child health varies by family income and by race. As with adults, children living below the poverty line are less likely than children in higher-income families to be in very good or excellent health.74 Nearly 30 percent of both African-American and Hispanic/Latino children under the age of 18 living in North Carolina live in poverty (see Table 2, p. 25). According to the National Academy of Sciences, "The dual risk of poverty experienced simultaneously in the family and in the surrounding neighborhood, which affects minority children to a much greater extent than other children, increases young children's vulnerability to adverse consequences."75 North Carolina's statistics on child poverty may reflect the substandard health, or future substandard health, of children, especially minorities, living in poverty.

Child death rates are the most severe measure of children's health. These fatalities are higher among the American-Indian population in North Carolina than any other group. The number of

Table 8. Child and Adolescent Health

Deaths of Children 1 to 17 Years of Age Per 100,000 Population, 1997–2001

All	31.1
White	30.4
African American	37.5
American Indian	53.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	28.7
Hispanic or Latino	29.2

Pregnancies to Teens Ages 15–17 Per 1,000 Female Population, 1997–2001

A	All 46.7
Wh	ite 38.0
African Americ	an 72.4
American Indi	an 63.2
Asian/Pacific Island	ler •
Hispanic or Lati	na 90.0

Percent of High School Students Who Smoked Cigarettes on One or More of the Past 30 Days, 2001

All	27.8%
White	31.9%
African American	19.2%
American Indian	•
Asian/Pacific Islander	•
Hispanic or Latino	26.5%

Percent of Children Under Age 18 Who Are Overweight or Obese (BMI \geq 95 percentile), 2001

	All	14.4%
	White	13.6%
	African American	14.1%
	American Indian	13.1%
	Asian/Pacific Islander	14.3%
-	Hispanic or Latino	17.0%

Source: N.C. Department of Health and Human Services

deaths for children ages 1-17 per 100,000 population was 53.8 for American Indians (see Table 8, p. 41). The rate for African American children was the next highest at 37.5, followed by white children at 30.4, and Hispanics at 29.2. The rate for the Asian/Pacific Islander population was the lowest (28.7).

One agency that has been fighting to address these grim statistics, the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force, suffered a setback from the 2003 General Assembly when its administrative staff was eliminated in state budget cuts. Paula Wolf, former lobbyist for a coalition of concerned groups known as the North Carolina Covenant for Children, notes that since 1991, the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force has worked to prevent child deaths, pressing for legislation such as mandatory bicycle helmets and a graduated license for young drivers, and reviewing child fatalities in all 100 counties. Yet the 2003 General Assembly stunned advocates for children by eliminating funding for the administrative staff of the Child Fatality Task Force at a small savings of \$64,000. "That's the \$64,000 question," says Wolf. "Why on earth would you get rid of the Child Fatality Task Force when the child death rate has declined by 31 percent in the 12 years of its existence?" The cut eliminated a full-time administrator and a half-time researcher, says Wolf. "In the midst of a \$15 billion budget, when savings were being sought after, they found \$64,000 to save. It was ridiculous." The Child Fatality Task Force continues to work on several issues despite the lack of paid staff.

Adolescent pregnancy is another area where statistics reflect a discrepancy between whites and minorities. Bearing a child during adolescence is often associated with long-term difficulties for the mother and her child.⁷⁷ These consequences are often attributable to poverty and other adverse socioeconomic circumstances that frequently accompany early child bearing.⁷⁸ Compared with babies born to older mothers, babies born to adolescent mothers, particularly young adolescent single mothers, are at higher risk of low birthweight and infant mortality.⁷⁹ They are more likely to grow up in homes that offer lower levels of emotional support and cognitive stimulation, and they are less likely to earn high school diplomas. "The risk of poor child development is much higher for children in single-parent families than for those in two-parent families" writes Paul Buescher of

Nora Hernandez, director of Latin America Women's Club, shares information with a visitor at the March 2004 Latino Forum.



Karen Tam

"When people see a colossal problem, they wonder whether they could do anything to make a difference. They need to keep remembering what they are told about how you eat an elephant—one piece at a time."

—BISHOP DESMOND TUTU OF SOUTH AFRICA

North Carolina's State Center for Health Statistics. ⁸⁰ Children growing up in single-parent households have twice the risk of repeating a grade in school, having behavioral problems, dropping out of high school, and being out of work; girls raised in single-parent households have twice the risk of becoming teenage mothers. ⁸¹ For the mothers, giving birth during adolescence is associated with limited educational attainment, which in turn can reduce future employment prospects and earnings potential. ⁸²

In North Carolina, teen mothers are more prevalent among the Hispanic/Latina population than any other racial or ethnic group (see Table 8, p. 41). There are 90 teen pregnancies per 1,000 Hispanic/Latina girls ages 15-17 in North Carolina, more than two times higher than the white population at 38.0. African American and American Indian girls also have a substantially higher rate of teen pregnancy than the white population at 72.4 and 63.2 per 1,000 girls, respectively.83 This higher rate of pregnancy is consistent with statistics from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control that show that in 2001, America's sexually active non-Hispanic white teens were more than twice as likely as non-Hispanic black or Hispanic/Latina teens to report using birth control pills (23 percent compared to 8 and 10 percent, respectively).84 This differential may be explained by an inability to pay for birth control as supported by income, poverty and access to health care, or it may reflect cultural/religious beliefs about using birth control since most Hispanics are Catholic, and that church disapproves of use of contraceptive devices for birth control.

"Hispanic American adolescents are at high risk of childbearing due to conflicting messages

from two cultures regarding standards of sexuality and timing of childbearing," writes Katherine Fennelly, professor of public affairs at the University of Minnesota.85 Furthermore, American adolescents who are at high risk for becoming pregnant tend to be economically disadvantaged. "Research shows that early sexual activity, like other risky behaviors, is more common among socially and economically disadvantaged groups," says Dr. Jennifer Manlove, senior research associate at Child Trends, a Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization dedicated to improving the lives of children by conducting research and providing science-based information to improve programs and policies that affect children. 86 "Teens who grow up in poverty, who have parents with low levels of education, and who grow up with only one parent are at higher risk of early sexual activity and early pregnancy," Manlove adds. Ultimately, poverty may mean that an adolescent has difficulties affording contraception or birth control methods. Poverty also may affect an adolescent's access to information and services.

But Dr. Ernest Goodson, an African-American orthodontist from Fayetteville, believes that minorities must shoulder some of the responsibility. "It can be difficult to change the mentality of teenage girls who believe it is socially acceptable to have a child or older males who believe it is acceptable to make a young, unfit female pregnant and walk away without any responsibility to raising the child or marrying the mother of the child."

Aside from measures of existing health problems, there also are indicators of child and adolescent health that suggest future health complications. For example, child obesity has increasingly become an issue of national concern. More and more children are overweight. This contributes to problems ranging from low self-esteem to diabetes. "Every day, I see adult diseases trickling down and affecting our children," says Dr. Robert Schwartz, a pediatric endocrinologist at Brenner Children's Hospital in Winston-Salem and medical director of the North Carolina Task Force for Healthy Weight in Children and Youth. "I am treating children with Type 2 Diabetes, hypertension, and osteoporosis—diseases that are related to being overweight and can be prevented with a healthy lifestyle," Schwartz adds.87

In North Carolina, 14.4 percent of low-income children under age 18 are overweight or obese.⁸⁸ More Hispanic/Latino children are obese (17.0 percent) than other racial or ethnic groups (see

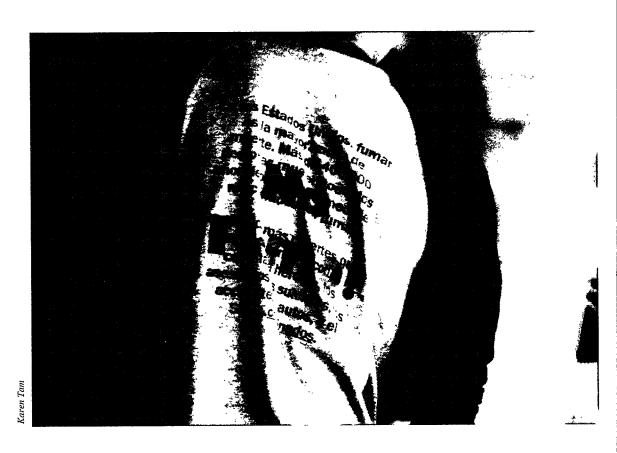


Table 8, p. 41). Asian children are next most likely to be obese at 14.3 percent, followed by African-American children at 14.1 percent, whites at 13.6 percent, and American Indians at 13.1 percent. Adoption of less healthy diets and a more sedentary lifestyle compared to a family's country of origin may contribute to weight gains among Hispanic/Latino youth. However, childhood obesity is a growing problem even in the developing world—and not just among Hispanics.

Another area of child and adolescent health that can lead to future health problems is teen smoking. Health education campaigns regarding the dangers of smoking and increased implementation of policies of non-smoking in restaurants, businesses, and public spaces have had some impact on decreasing smoking among the adult population. But stopping smoking appears to be a onestep-forward, one-step-back battle. "Our cessation rates are pretty good," says Colleen McBride, director of the Cancer Prevention, Detection, and Control Program at Duke Comprehensive Cancer Center. "The real problem is that uptake rates among teen-agers are way too high." "89"

Unlike some other health indicators, the white population actually ranks higher in teen smoking.

In 2001, 31.9 percent of white high school students reported that they had smoked cigarettes on one or more of the past 30 days (see Table 8, p. 41). However, the rate for Hispanics/Latinos isn't far behind at 26.5 percent and is on the increase as more Hispanic/Latino teens pick up the habit. African-American teens fared much better at 19.2 percent. 90

Adult Health

dult health covers a much wider age group, ranging from the late teens to baby boomers to the aged and elderly. Factors contributing to adult health status include behavior, genetics, environment, and age. According to the North Carolina Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), from 1997-2001, 16.7 percent of adults considered themselves to be in fair or poor health (see Table 9, p. 45). During this same time period, 15.7 percent of white adults rated themselves in fair or poor health, compared to a quarter of American Indians (25.8 percent) and more than a fifth of African Americans (21.0 percent). Only 10.2 percent of Asians said they were in fair or poor health. While this measure is based on selfreporting in response to surveys, the disparity is

Table 9. Adult Health

	16.7%	All	5.6
White	15.7%	White	1.6
African American	21.0%	African American	21.2
American Indian	25.8%	American Indian or Alaskan Native	3.3
Asian/Pacific Islander	10.2%	Asian/Pacific Islander	0.7
Hispanic or Latino	11.6%	Hispanic or Latino	4.1
Heart Disease Deaths Per 100,000 Popul 1997–2001	lation,	Prostate Cancer Deaths Per 100,000 Male Population, 1997–2001	
All	257.8	All	35.5
White	249.6	White	28.2
African American	308.7	African American	79.6
American Indian	312.3	American Indian	52.0
Asian/Pacific Islander	83.1	Asian/Pacific Islander	11.0
Hispanic or Latino	78.5	Hispanic or Latino	7.6
Thispanic of Latino	70.5	Thispanic of Launo	7.0
Stroke Deaths Per 100,000 Population, 1		Lung Cancer Deaths Per 100,000 Population 1997–2001	on,
All	74.5	All	60.7
White	70.1		61.3
African American	98.9	White	
American Indian	74.6	African American	62.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	42.2	American Indian or Alaskan Native	47.5
Hispanic or Latino	31.4	Asian/Pacific Islander	24.5
Diabetes Deaths Per 100,000 Population,	19972001	Hispanic or Latino	14.0
All	93.0	Colo-rectal Cancer Deaths Per 100,000	
White	78.1	Population, 1997–2001	
African American	169.5	· All	19.8
American Indian or Alaskan Native	154.6	White	18.6
Asian/Pacific Islander	41.6	African American	27.0
Hispanic or Latino	41.2	American Indian	16.1
Thispanic of Latino	71.2	Asian/Pacific Islander	8.0
Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease Death	20	Hispanic or Latino	9.3
Per 100,000 Population, 1997–2001	i i		
All	45.4	Breast Cancer Deaths Per 100,000 Female	
White	48.5	Population, 1997–2001	
******	31.8	All	26.2
African American		White	24.4
African American American Indian	44.2		
American Indian	44.2 8.6	African American	35.5
American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander	8.6	African American American Indian	35.5 24.0
American Indian			

Source: N.C. Department of Health and Human Services.

Table 10. Sexually Transmitted Diseases

HIV and AIDS Cases Per 100,000 Population, 2001

 All	20.1
White	6.3
African American	66.5
American Indian	17.8
Asian/Pacific Islander	8.7
Hispanic or Latino	16.4

Early Syphilis Cases (Primary, Secondary, and Early Latent) Per 100,000 Population, 2001

11.8	All
2.7	White
37.4	African American
101.7	American Indian
*	Asian/Pacific Islander
13.2	Hispanic or Latino

Gonorrhea Cases Per 100,000 Population, 2001

All	210.2
White	38.0
African American	804.9
American Indian	110.1
Asian/Pacific Islander	192.9
Hispanic or Latino	90.8

Chlamydia Cases Per 100,000 Population, 2001

All	278.6
White	99.7
African American	837.2
American Indian	261.2
Asian/Pacific Islander	185.2
Hispanic or Latino	389.2

^{*} Numbers too small to calculate rate.

Source: N.C. Department of Health and Human Services

also present in more concrete statistics on morbidity and mortality.

Take, for example, mortality statistics from 1997-2001 for a number of illnesses more typical in adults. Adjusting for population size, the white population fared better than the African-American and the American-Indian population for most of these causes of death, in some cases substantially better. For example, diabetes deaths among the African American population were twice as high (169.5 per 100,000 population) as for whites (78.1 per 100,000 population). Those with the lowest rates were Asians at 41.6 deaths per 100,000 population and Hispanics/Latinos at 41.2 deaths per 100,000. The American Indian population also had a substantially higher rate of death from diabetes than did whites, Asians, and Hispanics/Latinos at 154.6 per 100,000 population.

AIDS deaths among African Americans were thirteen times higher than those among the white population at 21.2 for African Americans versus 1.6 per 100,000 for whites. AIDS death rates for American Indians (3.3) and Hispanics (4.1) also were higher than for whites, but the disparity was much less. In fact, AIDS was the only major cause of death other than motor vehicle injuries and homicides for which Hispanics had a higher mortality rate (4.1) than whites (1.6). Likewise, the death rates for the Asian population were less than that of whites in every case (see Table 9, p. 45). The only area where whites had higher mortality rates than any other race or ethnic group was deaths related to chronic obstructive lung disease. Buescher says this may be related to whites having a longer history of heavy smoking as opposed to other populations.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

A city bus pulls away from the curb at Raleigh's Fayetteville Street Mall, wrapped with an advertisement featuring lovers locked in an embrace. "He doesn't know he has syphilis. Will you?" reads the copy on the rolling billboard. The message is repeated in Spanish. Although all adult health issues and diseases are important considerations for improving the health status of a community, sexually transmitted diseases may warrant particular attention due to their communicable nature and the fact that they can be prevented.

The health disparity between whites and other racial/ethnic populations is clearly evident in the rates of sexually transmitted diseases among the various groups (see Table 10). In every case,



whites have lower rates of sexually transmitted diseases than any other population. In fact, the rates are at least twice as high for non-white populations in nearly every case. The most extreme differences are between whites and the African American population, with African Americans becoming infected with HIV/AIDS, syphilis, and gonorrhea at a rate at least 10 times higher than whites. However, American Indians had the highest rate of syphilis cases (101.7 per 100,000 population) and the greatest disparity at over 37 times the rate of syphilis cases for the white population (2.7 per 100,000 population). At 13.2 cases per 100,000 population, syphilis among Hispanics/ Latinos also was much more prevalent than among whites.

Part of the gap in sexually transmitted disease rates between whites and other racial/ethnic groups may be explained by reporting bias. Minorities, especially African Americans and Hispanics/Latinos, are more likely to use local health departments for diagnosis and treatment, and local health departments are thought to be more likely than private providers to report such cases to the state.⁹¹

Mental Health

A less discussed but no less important component of health care is mental health. The evident disparities between the white population and racial/ethnic minorities in the health arena also exist in mental health care. In 2001, then-U.S. Surgeon General Dr. David Satcher reported that minorities suffer a disproportionate burden of mental illness. 92 This higher level of burden stems from minorities having less access to services than other Americans, receiving lower quality care, and being

less likely to seek help when they are in distress, rather than from their illnesses being inherently more severe or prevalent in the community.⁹³ "While mental disorders may touch all Americans either directly or indirectly, all do not have equal access to treatment and services. The failure to address these inequities is being played out in human and economic terms across the nation—on our streets, in homeless shelters, public health institutions, prisons and jails," says Satcher.⁹⁴ "Left untreated, mental illnesses can result in disability and despair for families, schools, communities, and the workplace. This toll is more than any society can afford."⁹⁵

Eliminating the Health Disparities

hile the connection between race and health continues to be a key policy issue, there has been considerable controversy about the appropriateness of examining racial differences in health.96 Some have gone so far as to call for abandoning race as a variable in public health research. They argue that race is an arbitrary system of visual classification without biological merit, and that demarcations by race largely reflect racism in our society.⁹⁷ "The public thinks race is biological, but it's not. That's misleading mythology," says Dr. Robert Hahn, an epidemiologist at the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta who studies disease clusters and race. "Race has only a minimum connection with biology."98

Nonetheless, differences in health outcomes according to race and ethnicity are easily and troublingly distinguishable (see "Summary of Health Outcomes: Minorities Fare Worse than

I am in that fix, Senators, you will not forget now that when I use the word "I" I mean the whole Cherokee people. I am in that fix. What am I to do? I have a piece of property that doesn't support me, and is not worth a cent to me, under the same inexorable, cruel provisions of the Curtis law that swept away our treaties, our system of nationality, our every existence, and wrested out of our possession our vast territory....

— DEWITT CLINTON DUNCAN, CHEROKEE
FROM "THE OUTRAGE OF ALLOTMENT"

NATIVE AMERICAN TESTIMONY

Summary of Health Outcomes: Minorities Fare Worse Than the White Majority

The following is a narrative summary of differences in health outcomes between minorities and the white majority, where at least one minority group's outcomes are substantially poorer than those of the white majority. All figures are excerpted from tables appearing elsewhere in this report. In each instance, the group with the least desirable outcomes is highlighted in bold type.

Among Children

Child health is one area where minorities trail the white majority on a number of broad indicators, though areas of strength also emerge, such as low infant mortality rates among Hispanics/Latinos. African Americans have the worst infant mortality rate, at 15.1 per 1,000 live births. That's followed by Native Americans at 11.9, whites at 6.4, Asians at 6.1, and Hispanics at 5.8. Thus, the African-American rate is 160 percent higher than the Hispanic rate.

A similar pattern emerges among low birthweight babies—an important contributor to infant mortality. African Americans have the highest percentage of low birthweight infants at 13.8 percent. That's followed by Native Americans at 10.2 percent, Asian/Pacific Islanders at 7.8 percent, whites at 7.2 percent, and Hispanics/Latinos at 6.2 percent. The African-American rate is more than twice that of Hispanics/Latinos.

However, a paradox emerges in the percentage of women with late prenatal care (after first trimester or no prenatal care). Here, Hispanics/Latinas are most likely to be late in receiving prenatal care, at 31 percent, despite having the lowest infant mortality rates. Native Americans are next at 24.9 percent, followed by African Americans at 24.7 percent, Asian/Pacific Islanders at 17.0 percent, and whites at 12.1 percent.

Child fatalities—that is deaths of children ages 1–17 per 100,000 population—are another health indicator where rates are elevated for some minority groups. The Native American child fatality rate is highest at 53.8, followed by African Americans at 37.5, whites at 30.4, Hispanics/Latinos at 29.2, and Asians/Pacific Islanders at 28.7. The Native American rate is 87.5 percent higher than that of Asians.

In addition, teenage pregnancy is an important indicator of child health. Hispanic/Latina teenagers ages 15–17 have the highest teen pregnancy rates per 100,000 population at 90.0. That's followed by African Americans at 72.4, Native Americans at 63.2, and whites at 38.0. Asians had too few episodes of teen pregnancy to provide accurate rates.

Finally, there is the percentage of children who are obese. Hispanic/Latino children have the highest rates of obesity at 17.0 percent, followed by Asian/Pacific Islanders at 14.3 percent, African Americans at 14.1 percent, whites at 13.6 percent, and Native Americans at 13.1 percent. The Hispanic/Latino rate is 25 percent higher than that of whites and 30 percent higher than that of Native Americans.

Among Adults

dult health is another area where the majority white population consistently ranks higher in terms of desirable health outcomes, though every racial or ethnic group has areas of strength. Consider the percentage of adults who self-report being in fair or poor health. Among Native Americans, more than a quarter, or 25.8 percent, say they are in fair or poor health. Among African Americans, 21.0 percent believe themselves to be in fair or poor health, while only 15.7 percent of whites, 11.6 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, and 10.2 percent

-continues

of Asians/Pacific Islanders feel this way about their own state of health. The Native-American rate is 153 percent higher than the Asian/Pacific Islander rate.

Death rates from heart disease illustrate the health concerns of Native Americans, as they have the highest death rates from heart disease per 100,000 population at 312.3. The African-American death rate is next highest at 308.7, while the white rate is 249.6 and the immigrant-heavy Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic/Latino rates are 83.1 and 78.5, respectively. The Native-American rate is nearly three times higher (298 percent) than the Hispanic/Latino rate.

African Americans have the highest rate of stroke deaths per 100,000 population, at 98.9. That's followed by Native Americans at 74.6, whites at 70.1, Asians/Pacific Islanders at 42.2, and Hispanics/Latinos at 31.4. The African-American rate is 215 percent higher than that of Hispanics/Latinos.

African Americans also have the highest rate of diabetes deaths per 100,000 population, at 169.5, followed closely by Native American deaths at 154.6. The white death rate due to diabetes is 78.1, while the Asian rate is 41.6, and the Hispanic/Latino rate is 41.2. The African American rate is 117 percent higher than white rate.

AIDS deaths per 100,000 population represent another area where African-American rates are elevated compared to other racial and ethnic groups. In fact, at 21.2, the African-American rate greatly exceeds that of any other racial or ethnic group. Hispanic/Latino rates are next highest at 4.1, followed by Native Americans at 3.3, whites at 1.6, and Asians at 0.7. The African-American rate is 12 times higher than that of whites and 24 times higher than that of Asians. Both Hispanic/Latino and Native American death rates are more than twice as high as those of whites.

Cancer is another disease for which African-American death rates are disproportionately high. Consider prostate cancer deaths per 100,000 males. The African-American prostate cancer death rate, at 79.6, is higher than the Native American rate of 52.0, the white

rate of 28.2, the 11.0 Asian rate, and the 7.6 Hispanic/Latino rate. The African-American rate is 182 percent higher than the white rate and more than 10 times higher than the Hispanic/Latino rate. Colo-rectal cancer deaths per 100,000 population also are elevated for African Americans at 27.0, followed by whites at 18.6, Native Americans at 16.1, Hispanics/Latinos at 9.3, and Asians/Pacific Islanders at 8.0. The African-American rate is 68 percent higher than that of Native Americans, and 45 percent higher than that of whites. Breast cancer deaths claim disproportionate shares of African-American women, at 35.5 per 100,000 population. That's compared to a white rate of 24.4, a Native American death rate of 24.0, the 10.4 Hispanic/ Latina rate, and a 6.7 rate for Asians and Pacific Islanders. The African-American rate is 430 percent higher than the Asian rate and 41 percent higher than the white rate.

Sexually transmitted diseases are another area of concern in adult health. African Americans have the highest rates of HIV and AIDS cases per 100,000 population, at 66.5, followed by Native Americans at 17.8, Hispanics/Latinos at 16.4, Asian/Pacific Islanders at 8.7, and whites at 6.3. The African-American rate is more than 10 times higher than white rate.

Native Americans have the highest rates of early syphilis cases per 100,000 population at 101.7, compared to African Americans at 37.5, Hispanics/Latinos at 13.2, and whites at 2.7. Asians did not have enough reported cases to calculate an accurate rate. The Native-American rate is more than 37 times higher than that of whites.

Chlamydia cases per 100,000 population are highest for African Americans at 837.2. Hispanics/Latinas have the next highest rates at 389.2, followed by Native Americans at 261.2, Asians/Pacific Islanders at 185.2, and whites at 99.7. The African-American rate is 740 percent higher than the white rate.

Elevated rates of sexually transmitted diseases for minorities may reflect a reporting bias as disproportionate numbers of minorities receive services at local health departments or other government-funded clinics. These facilities are thought to report their cases of sexually transmitted disease more faithfully than the private sector.

However, it is difficult to argue with mortality statistics that show African Americans and Native Americans have death rates higher than those of the white majority across a broad range of causes for which prevention and early detection are key to survival. These include heart disease for Native Americans, stroke and diabetes

deaths for African Americans, and African-American death rates from the most lethal forms of cancer that exceed all other racial and ethnic groups. Low death rates from heart disease and cancer may be misleading for Asians and Hispanics/Latinos, as these populations include disproportionate numbers of young immigrants.

-Mike McLaughlin

the White Majority," p. 49). For example, the African-American infant mortality rate (or the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births) is more than 'twice that of whites. For Native Americans, the rate of deaths of children ages 1–17 is 76.9 percent higher than that of whites, and the teen pregnancy rate among Hispanics/Latinas is 137 percent higher than that of white teenage girls. Among adults, African Americans

have a 25 percent higher rate of heart disease deaths and a 41.8 percent higher rate of stroke deaths than do whites. Diabetes death rates among African Americans are 117 percent higher than those of whites, and AIDS death rates are more than 12 times higher. Hispanics/Latinos are more likely to die in fatal car crashes or be the victims of homicides than whites. In addition, African Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, Native



Karen Tam

Americans, and Asian/Pacific Islanders all have vastly greater reported rates of infection with sexually transmitted diseases than do whites.

The N.C. Department of Health and Human Services takes the position that, though racial classification is imprecise and often based on self-identification, there is some utility in describing racial and ethnic differences in health as it allows for targeting of resources and health improvement programs toward populations most in need.99 The Department also notes that race is considered a marker of health problems, not as a risk factor or cause, and that there is not a complete understanding of why race is associated with health problems. 100 One theory is that low socioeconomic status, stress, and racism are among the underlying causes of the poorer health status of minorities (on average) compared to whites. But few health data systems gather information on these other factors, while most do have information on race. Thus, race often serves as a proxy for a variety of other factors.

Criminal Justice

There has been much discussion in North Carolina and nationwide about the "overrepresentation" of racial and ethnic minorities in the criminal justice system. The most common usage of the term compares the proportion of a specific minority in the general population with the proportion of that minority in the prison system. 101 While African Americans comprise approximately 22 percent of North Carolina's population, they constitute 65 percent of the state's convicted felons and 63 percent of its prison population. However, as pointed out by the N.C. Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, using the terms "overrepresentation" and "disparity" is misleading. "Disparity" in the criminal justice context refers to a series of unfavorable decisions

Correctional facility, that's what they call this place.
But look around and you will see the politics of race.
—SINGER PAUL SIMON
"TIME IS AN OCEAN"

in a case where the prosecutor, judge, or jury uses

the minority status of the offender (or any other specified extralegal factor) to arrive at the decision. 102 Despite the clear evidence that minorities are overrepresented compared to the composition of the state's population, the question is whether, given this initial overrepresentation, the court made disparate decisions in the processing and disposing of cases based on the offender's race.

The National Criminal Justice Commission (NCJC), created in 1994 to produce an independent and critical assessment of the American justice system, published a "Report Card on Safety" which ranked the 50 states according to their policies for promoting public safety. One of the measures, "rational use," assessed how wisely state criminal justice systems allocate their resources. North Carolina ranked 41st, with 50th being the worst. North Carolina ranked even lower, 45th, on the measure "hope for the future," which assessed how a state's priorities affect its residents' hopes for the future, whether states are "planning for failure" by building more prisons, or whether they are "creating success" by building schools and giving the next generation the skills they need to succeed. 103

The "Report Card on Safety" did not specifically address or rank racial disparities in state criminal justice systems. However, the inclusion of a "hope for the future" measure implies that a state's role in addressing criminal justice issues goes well beyond policing the streets and housing inmates.

The U.S. State Department went a step further. In its report to the United Nations Commission on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD), the Department asserted that discrimination in the criminal justice system is a "principal causative factor" hindering progress toward ending racial discrimination in society.¹⁰⁴

To begin to address the question of whether or not the responsibility of North Carolina's criminal justice system includes tackling issues relating to the racial disparities, the Center looked at what the racial/ethnic picture of North Carolina's criminal justice system looks like. Do disparities exist and if so, do these disparities speak to discrimination? This picture includes the prison population, the number and types of arrests and convictions, the death penalty, and "driving while black."

Prison Population

In 1870, inmates started building North Carolina's first prison, Central Prison, completing

Table 11. North Carolina Prison Population, 1998-2002

Race	1998	1999	2000	2001	20	02
White	10,515	10,255	10,182	10,540	10,854	(32.8%)
African American	20,515	19,792	19,913	20,083	20,347	(61.5%)
Native American	609	609	565	609	639	(1.9%)
Asian	47	55	73	96	93	(0.3%)
Other	526	603	788	895	1,096	(3.3%)
Unknown	19	19	13	30	75	(0.2%)
Total	32,231	31,333	31,534	32,253	33,104	

Source: N.C. Department of Correction, Office of Research and Planning Statistical Abstract http://crmis42.doc.state.nc.us/cgi-bin/hsrun.exe/crmis42haht/SimpleAbstractQuery/SimpleAbstractQuery/htx;start=HS_AbstractSubmit.

the structure in 1884. 105 Over the next century, the state built more prisons across the state, eventually numbering 57 by the 1990s. 106 During the past decade, the state has both consolidated and expanded, closing 34 prisons to streamline operations and improve efficiency, but making up for those closings by building 18 new prisons and increasing the prison system's standard operating capacity by 63 percent. 107 Three additional prisons are currently under construction, which will increase the standard occupancy capacity by 2,592, or another nearly 15 percent more. 108 Legislation passed in the 2003 session of the N.C. General Assembly allowed for the construction of three more prisons. 109

The state's prisons were desegregated in 1965. In 2002, minorities made up 67 percent of the prison population in North Carolina (see Table 11), with the white prison population at 10,854 (32.8 percent) and the African-American prison population at 20,347 (61.5 percent).110 Considering that the state's overall population is 71.3 percent white and only 21.6 percent African American with the remainder being comprised of other minorities (see Figure 1, p. 22), the make-up of the state's prison population appears off kilter. What is responsible for such an imbalance? Some would argue that minorities simply commit crimes at a higher rate than whites, a notion supported by the raw data on offenses and arrests. However, others challenge this contention with arguments about socioeconomic differences and with allegations of discrimination and racial profiling. "I've been very concerned about the spiraling incarceration of black men and to some extent, black women," says James Ferguson II, a civil rights lawyer in Charlotte.¹¹¹ "It means that something racial is going on in the system that needs to be corrected."

Alfred Blumstein, a professor at Carnegie Mellon University and an expert on crime statistics, says racial discrimination explains only part of the reason for disproportionate incarceration rate of African Americans. Blumenstein says that African Americans are more likely to commit certain crimes and those happen to be crimes that receive more severe punishments such as jail time or even the death penalty. "We are more severe on the kinds of crimes that blacks commit," says Blumenstein. "And there's an open question about how much of that difference is attributable to a concern about the seriousness of the crimes, and how much those policies are a subtle reflection of discrimination," Blumenstein adds. 112

National studies show that some law enforcement officers believe race provides a legitimate basis to suspect a person of criminal behavior. Some advocates for criminal justice reform in the state argue that law enforcement officers in North Carolina believe the same. "Whites also commit crimes in this community (Durham)," said Durham community activist Victoria Peterson in preparation for an April 2001 meeting in Durham to discuss why

Table 12.
Total Arrests in North Carolina, 1993–2002

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Arrests	488,918	491,714	492,327	506,944	526,702	524,795	508,071	517,239	533,577	519,046

Source: N.C. State Bureau of Investigation, Division of Criminal Information.

Table 13.
Arrests by Race in North Carolina, 1998–2002

					American				
Year	White	% of Total	African American	% of Total	Indian/ Alaskan Native	% of Total	Asian/ Pacific Islander	% of Total	Total
1998	258,560	49.27	255,581	48.70	5,903	1.12	5,237	1.00	524,795
1999	250,307	49.27	240,893	47.41	6,381	1.26	4,043	0.80	508,071
2000	259,794	50.23	240,364	46.47	7,349	1.42	3,228	0.62	517,239
2001	276,002	51.73	241,667	45.29	7,488	1.40	3,180	0.60	533,577
2002	275,976	53.17	233,046	44.90	7,142	1.38	2,882	0.56	519,046

Source: N.C. State Bureau of Investigation, Division of Criminal Information.

Table 14.

Rape Offenders by Race in North Carolina, 1998–2002

					American	l					
					Indian/		Asian/				
		% of	African	% of	Alaskan	% of	Pacific	% of		% of	
Year	White	Total	American	Total	Native	Total	Islander	Total	Unknown	Total	Total
1998	967	36.89	1,367	52.16	19	.72	18	.68	250	9.54	2,621
1999	965	40.09	1,714	48.77	22	.91	12	.50	234	9.72	2,407
2000	933	38.02	1,310	53.38	20	.81	16	.65	175	7.13	2,454
2001	932	38.54	1,269	52.48	36	1.49	12	.50	169	6.99	2,418
2002	999	39.71	1,325	52.66	13	.51	22	.87	157	6.24	2,516

Source: N.C. State Bureau of Investigation.

Note: The number of offenders will not necessarily match the number of offenses due to cases where one rape occurred with more than one offender.

http://sbi2.jus.state.nc.us/crp/public/2002/IndOffState/Rape/RapeOffRacAgeTrd/RapeOffRacAgeTrd.htm.

many of the Durham County inmates are African American. "Could it be that the police force only works the poor community?" Peterson asks. "We don't see the police going out in Black Horse Run and Croasdaile harassing young white boys like they do in the African-American community." 114

"What is often overlooked in these discussions are the victims of crime. Statistics show a vast majority of victims in our community are African-American or Hispanic," says Durham District Attorney Jim Hardin in response to Peterson's question. However, Hardin agrees that, "Statistics also show the vast majority of suspects charged are African American."

Testifying before a 2001 legislative study committee, Charlotte attorney Henderson Hill said he has found that the most difficult part of the (trial) process occurs in jury selection—when decisions are made to exclude members of the community from participating in trials based upon race, particularly when the juror and the defendant are both African American. According to Hill, the jury selection process is less than fair and impartial. "Although the decision is made to exclude you (the jury candidate) because of your race," says Hill, "we [are going to] pretend that race does not impact on this decision." Hill says this disregard for reality wears away at the integrity of the system. 116

In 1996, the North Carolina Bar Association joined with the N.C. Association of Black Lawyers to conduct a study of race relations in the legal profession. The study concluded that the state's courtrooms are susceptible to racial strife. "The behavior of some white judges, attorneys, and court personnel toward attorneys and judges of color, as well as toward other persons of color who use the court system, evidences attitudes of discrimination and undermines the effectiveness of these judges, attorneys, and others in the courtroom," says the report. The study also concludes that people of color are underrepresented at all levels of the bench, appellate and trial courts, and on the legal staff of the Attorney General.117

Arrests and Convictions

according to the State Bureau of Investigation, law enforcement officers made nearly 520,000 arrests in North Carolina in 2002. Despite the state's growing population, the number of annual arrests has remained relatively stable over the last six years (see Table 12, p. 54). Over half of those arrested in 2002 were white

(53.2 percent), while the majority of the other half were African American at 44.9 percent (see Table 13, p. 54). Since 1998, the number of white arrests has increased slightly, while African-American arrests have actually decreased. But higher percentages of African Americans continue to be sent to prison. Of the nearly 24,000 individuals who began serving prison time in 2002, 58.2 percent were African American compared to 36.3 percent who were white (see Table 17, p. 59). Does this differential confirm a disparity? Examining offenders and arrests by type of crime may lend more insight. For example, if more African Americans are arrested for and commit crimes that warrant prison time, such as felonies, one would expect the African American prison population to be greater.

The North Carolina Department of Correction groups crimes resulting in a prison sentence in one of three categories: public order, property, and crimes against a person. Of these categories, the most frequent crimes for prison admissions are public order crimes, which accounted for 44 percent of all admissions in 2001-2002. Of that total, 63 percent were felonies. 119 Public order crimes include drug offenses, Driving While Impaired (DWI), traffic violations, and habitual felons. Property crimes accounted for 30 percent of all prison admissions, 78 percent of which were felonies. 120 The most frequent offenses in this category are larceny and breaking and entering. Other offenses include fraud, forgery, and burglary. Crimes against a person accounted for 26 percent of all prison admissions in fiscal year 2001–2002. The majority of these (74 percent) were felonies, and nearly half (44 percent) were assaults.121 This category also includes robbery, sexual offenses, and homicides.

Overall, 71 percent of the 2001–2002 prison admissions in North Carolina in fiscal year 2001–02 were for felony crime convictions. According to the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission's "Structured Sentencing Statistical Report for Felonies and Misdemeanors," in Fiscal Year 2000–2001, 58 percent of the felony offenders were African American, 37 percent were white, 3 percent were Hispanic/Latino, and 1 percent were either American Indian or "Other." These statistics provide some explanation as to why African Americans are overrepresented in North Carolina's prisons. And, according to the State Bureau of Investigation's data on rape offenders (individuals actually convicted of

the crime), African Americans committed 52.7 percent of the rapes in the state in 2002 compared to 39.7 percent for whites (see Table 14, p. 54).

Likewise, of the convictions for murder, African Americans represented 46.8 percent of the offenders compared to 31.6 percent for whites (see Table 15 below). Looking at the number of arrests for murder and non-negligent manslaughter in 2002, there were 263 arrests among the white population and 442 arrests among the African American population, 35.4 and 59.6 percent of the total, respectively (see Table 18, pp. 60–61).

Examining prison population by crime (see Table 16, p. 58), it is clear that African Americans were convicted of crimes warranting prison time at a higher rate than whites, especially in the areas of murder, robbery, drug offenses, and habitual felons. The prison entries in 2002 alone support this notion as well (see Table 17, p. 59).125 However, the arrests by crime do not seem to reveal as much of an overrepresentation in some of the crime categories and offenses that most often result in a prison sentence (see Table 18, pp. 60-61). For example, under "public order" crimes, there were slightly fewer arrests for the various drug offenses among whites (20,138) than there were for African Americans (20,509) and whites were arrested more than three times more often for driving while impaired than were African Americans. 126 Likewise, in the "property crimes" category, whites were arrested more often for larceny and breaking and entering. Finally, whites were arrested for assaults (which falls into the "crimes against a person" category) only slightly less often than African Americans, and whites were actually arrested one and a half times more often for sexual offenses.

Ultimately, it is the convictions that come from these arrests that people who allege disparities in the state's criminal justice system on racial/ethnic grounds question. However, simply comparing arrests to convictions does not take into account a number of factors that may exacerbate or mitigate the nature of the crime, even a serious crime. With this in mind, the N.C. Sentencing and Policy Advisory Commission, created by the General Assembly in 1990 to make recommendations concerning the state's sentencing laws and policies, conducted a study using a multivariate regression analysis that examined "emerging sentencing practices and their impact on one of the more important facets of justiceevenhandedness in handing down convictions and meting out penalties."127 The analysis included legal factors such as seriousness of offense, offense type, and criminal history. Extra-legal factors such as age, sex, race, and defense attorney type were also included.

Based on a sample of 27,015 felony conviction cases, 65 percent being non-white, the North Carolina Sentencing and Policy Advisory Com-

Table 15.

Murder Offenders by Race in North Carolina, 1998–2002

					American	į			•		
					Indian/		Asian/				
		% of	African	% of	Alaskan	% of	Pacific	% of		% of	
Year	White	Total	American	Total	Native	Total	Islander	Total	Unknown	Total	Total
1998	238	30.99	386	50.26	19	2.47	2	.26	123	16.02	768
1999	190	27.47	354	51.23	17	2.46	2	.29	128	18.52	691
2000	182	26.07	368	52.72	13	1.86	8	1.15	127	18.19	698
2001	176	27.46	301	46.96	14	2.18	2	.31	148	23.09	641
2002	206	31.60	305	46.78	11	1.69	2	.31	128	19.63	652

Source: N.C. State Bureau of Investigation, Division of Criminal Information

Note: The number of offenders will not necessarily match the number of offenses due to cases where one murder occurred with more than one offender.

http://sbi2.jus.state.nc.us/crp/public/2002/IndOffState/Murder/MurOffRacTrd/MurOffRacTrd.htm.





mission's study found that overall, 32.1 percent of the offenders received active sentences or prison time. White offenders received prison terms 27.5 percent of the time—less often than non-white offenders at 34.6 percent. Overall, the average prison term was 36.7 months for white offenders and 34.1 months for non-white offenders. The Commission's study, however, found no differences in the way whites and non-whites were processed in the courts, from charging to conviction and sentencing, when controlling for all the legally relevant factors in a case, such as seriousness of offense and prior criminal convictions. 129

The Death Penalty

s of March 18, 2004, there were 191 people on death row in North Carolina and nearly two-thirds (62.8 percent) were minorities (see Table 19, p. 62). ¹³⁰ Based on these statistics, some people assert that racial bias influences who receives the death penalty as a sentence. This argument comes from both those who believe bias occurs based on the race of the *offender* and those who believe bias surfaces depending on the race of the *victim*.

A 2001 study conducted by Isaac Unah and Jack Boger, professors at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, indicated that racial dis-

parities plague North Carolina's capital punishment system-especially discrimination against defendants of whatever race whose murder victims are white. 131 Analyzing all homicide cases between 1993-1997, 132 the study found that when a white is the murder victim, the perpetrator of the crime is nearly twice as likely to get the death penalty as when there is a non-white victim (3.7 percent versus 1.9 percent). Looking beyond the race of the victim to that of the defendant, further racial disparities appear. When non-white defendants murdered white victims, the deathsentence rate was 6.4 percent. However, when white defendants murdered white victims, the rate fell to 2.6 percent. In perhaps the study's most telling finding, when non-whites were both the defendant and the victim, death sentences dipped even more, to only 1.7 percent of the cases.133 The study also revealed that some aggravating factors, such as murdering more than one person, count less than race.

Finally, Unah and Boger's research addressed whether class plays a role in who gets the death penalty. They found that while class may have some influence, it alone does not explain racial differences. "Sadly, this study shows that skin color still plays a major role in deciding who lives and who dies in our criminal justice system," says Boger. "Despite a generation of legal and cultural

Table 16.

North Carolina Prison Population by Crime, 2002

Offense/Crime Class	White	Black	Indian	Asian	Other	Unknown	Totals
Murder First Degree	612	946	57	11	23	1	1,650
Murder Second Degree	934	1,946	72	11	105	3	3,071
Manslaughter	109	235	13	0	27	1	385
Robbery	809	3,575	43	24	72	7	4,530
Assault	805	1,819	58	10	62	4	2,758
Sexual Assault	1,563	1,552	61	4	107	11	3,298
Other Sexual Offense	540	290	9	2	34	3	878
Kidnapping and Abduction	228	439	12	10	25	2	716
Other Offense Against Person	18	16	1	0	2	0	37
Burglary	322	608	31	1	24	1	976
Breaking, Entering	937	832	93	0	26	2	1,890
Larceny	649	663	31	2	12	1	1,358
Auto.Theft	52	64	2	1	3	0	122
Burnings (Includes Arson)	95	87	10	0	6	0	198
Fraud	369	352	8	1	9	1	740
Forgery	137	151	8	. 0	2	0	298
Worthless Checks	6	7	0	0	0	0	13
Other Property	14	29	0	0	1	0	44
Drugs Trafficking	368	886	24	10	420	34	1,742
Drugs—Non Trafficking	441	2,219	25	2	41	2	2,730
Driving While Impaired	599	308	14	1	65	2	989
Other Traffic Violations	166	288	6	1	11	0	472
Not Reported, Undefined	8	14	0	0	0	0	22
Other Public Order Crimes	196	424	14	2	11	0	647
Habitual Felon	877	2,597	47	0	8	0	3,529
Total Percent of Total	10,854 32.8%	20,347 61.5%	639 1.9%	93 .3%	1,096 3.3%	75 .2%	33,093 100.0%

Source: N.C. Department of Correction, Statistical Abstract Query

efforts to eliminate discrimination, these results show that racial bias still dramatically affects the most final of judgments—who gets the death penalty."¹³⁵ James Exum, a former legislator and former Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court, agrees. "It's powerful evidence that race does play

a part in the administration of the death penalty that the legislature never intended," says Exum. "I think the legislature needs to take a really close look at our system." ¹³⁶

The potential racial influence in death penalty cases concerned some legislators even before the

Table 17.

Prison Entries by Offense and by Race in North Carolina, 2002

Offense/Crime Class	White	Black	Indian	Asian	Other	Unknown	Totals
Murder First Degree	133	165	7	5	6	. 0	316
Murder Second Degree	82	119	8	0	14	1	224
Manslaughter	58	76	5	0	11	0	150
Robbery	307	1,114	18	6	30	7	1,632
Assault	917	1,633	62	3	49	5	2,669
Sexual Assault	212	183	4	2	20	7	428
Other Sexual Offense	295	210	6	2	30	4	547
Kidnapping and Abduction	. 85	124	3	1	20	1	234
Other Offense Against Person	69	55	6	0	5	0	135
Burglary	88	163	12	0	14	1	278
Breaking, Entering	1,099	1,094	85	2	44	4	2,328
Larceny	1,033	1,416	58	3	26	2	2,532
Auto Theft	89	137	7	2	4	0	239
Burnings	58	60	6	0	7	0	131
Fraud	417	456	10	3	11	2	899
Forgery ·	219	271	12	0	3	0	505
Worthless Checks	28	37	0	0	0	0	65
Other Property	64	121	4	2	0	0	191
Drugs—Non Trafficking	864	3,384	40	2	66	5	4,361
Drugs Trafficking	179	262	4	7	176	29	657
Driving While Impaired	1,397	876	38	2	170	10	2,493
Other Traffic Violations	449	783	17	3	32	0	1,284
Habitual Felon	165	485	. 13	0	1	0	644
Other Public Order Crimes	265	530	12	2	12	0	821
Not Reported, Undefined	23	37	0	0	0	0	60
Total Percent of Total	8,597 36.3%	13,791 58.2%	437 1.8%	47 .2%	751 3.2%	78 .3%	23,701 100.0%

Source: N.C. Department of Correction, Statistical Abstract Query

dispiriting results reported in Unah and Boger's study. In fact, there have been efforts by several state legislators to enact a "North Carolina Racial Justice Act" that would establish pre-trial and post-trial procedures to determine if race were the basis of the decision to seek the death sentence.¹³⁷

Former state Senator Frank Ballance (D-Warren), now a congressman, first introduced the state legislation in April 1999, but it never made it out of committee. A study committee co-chaired by Ballance convened between legislative sessions in February 2000 to debate the merits of the

Table 18. Arrests by Offense and by Race in North Carolina, 2002

					American Indian/		Asian/		•
Offense	White	% of Total	African American	% of Total	Alaskan Native	% of Total	Pacific Islander	% of Total	Total
Arson	297	59.3%	192	38.3%		1.6%	4	0.8%	501
Assault—Aggravated	8,480	45.6%	9,633	51.8%	400	2.2%	73	0.4%	18,586
Other Assaults— Not Aggravated	31,504	51.2%	28,780	46.7%	1,046	1.7%	261	0.4%	61,591
Burglary—	-					2.5%	44		
Breaking and Entering	8,696	53.2%	7,215	44.1%		0.0%		0.5%	16,359
Curfew/Loitering		100.0%		0.0%		0.0%		0.0%	3
Driving Under the Influence	47,926	75.7%	13,732	21.7%	781	1.2%	842	1.3%	63,281
Disorderly Conduct Drunk & Disorderly	9,219	48.5%	9,247	48.7%	460	2.4%	78	0.4%	19,004
Embezzlement	1,546	58.6%	1,074	40.7%	10	0.4%	8	0.3%	2,638
Forcible Rape	401	48.3%	414	49.8%	. 9	1.1%	7	0.8%	831
Forgery and Counterfeiting	ng 2,713	57.4%	1,921	40.6%	90	1.9%	5	0.1%	4,729
Fraud	23,188	55.3%	18,383	43.8%	274	0.7%	110	0.3%	41,955
Gambling—Bookmaking	164	62.4%	90	34.2%	4	1.5%	5	1.9%	263
Gambling Numbers and Lottery	9	75.0%	3	25.0%		0.0%		0.0%	12
Gambling All Other	59	40.4%	86	58.9%		0.7%		0.0%	146
Larceny—Theft	22,508	50.7%	20,829	46.9%		1.7%	324		44,403
Liquor Laws	11,802	71.5%	4,357	26.4%		1.0%	177		16,506
Manslaughter by Neglige		75.5%	11	22.4%		0.0%	1	2.0%	49
Murder and Non-negliger									
Manslaughter	263	35.4%	442	59.6%	25	3.4%	12	1.6%	742
Motor Vehicle Theft	1,164	46.7%	1,283	51.5%	32	1.3%	14	0.6%	2,493
Offenses Against the Fan and Children	nily 3,938	43.9%	4,823	53.8%	183	2.0%	23	0.3%	8,967
Possession—Marijuana	11,776	59.0%	7,890	39.5%	192	1.0%	102	0.5%	19,960
Possession—Opium or Cocaine	3,163	32.8%	6,388	66.2%	75	0.8%	21	0.2%	9,647
Possession—Synthetic Narcotics	421	81.1%	96	18.5%	1	0.2%	1	0.2%	519
Possession—Other Dangerous Drugs	2,758	61.9%	1,661	37.3%	20	0.4%	19	0.4%	4,458

Table 18, continued

					American				
					Indian/		Asian/		
		% of	African	% of	Alaskan	% of	Pacific	% of	
Offense	White	Total	American	Total	Native	Total	Islander	Total	<u>Total</u>
Prostitution and									
Commercialized Vice	852	58.0%	563	38.3%	37	2.5%	18	1.2%	1,470
Sale/Mfg. Marijuana	1,008	40.3%	1,466	58.6%	20	0.8%	9	0.4%	2,503
Sale/Mfg. Opium or Coca	ine 750	20.3%	2,922	79.3%	7	0.2%	8	0.2%	3,687
Sale/Mfg. Synthetic									
Narcotics	52	76.5%	16	23.5%		0.0%		0.0%	68
Sale/Mfg. Other									
Dangerous Drugs	210	74.5%	70	24.8%	1	0.4%	1	0.4%	282
Robbery	1,204	25.3%	3,467	72.9%	73	1.5%	10	0.2%	4,754
Stolen Property: Buy,									
Receiving, Possession	2,691	37.4%	4,413	61.3%	68	0.9%	30	0.4%	7,202
Runaways	505	49.9%	492	48.6%	7	0.7%	9	0.9%	1,013
Sex Offenses	1,283	60.1%	814	38.1%	20	0.9%	17	0.8%	2,134
Vagrancy	163	66.8%	80	32.8%	1	0.4%		0.0%	244
Vandalism	5,583	54.5%	4,420	43.2%	198	1.9%	34	0.3%	10,235
Weapons: Possessing, etc	. 3,390	46.4%	3,803	52.1%	81	1.1%	31	0.4%	7,305
All Other Offenses	66,250	47.2%	71,970	51.2%	1,702	1.2%	584	0.4%	140,506
Total	275,976	53.2%	233,046	44.9%	7,142	1.4%	2,882	0.6%	519,046

Source: N.C. State Bureau of Investigation, Division of Criminal Information http://sbi2.jus.state.nc.us/crp/public/2002/Arrests/ArrOffRac02/ArrOffRac02.htm

legislation. In December 2000, after six meetings and hearing testimony from several attorneys and legal experts, the committee recommended the same "North Carolina Racial Justice Act" that Ballance introduced in 1999, as well as legislation establishing a moratorium on use of the death penalty.¹³⁸ The committee recommended that the moratorium last until the General Assembly addresses "the fair and impartial administration of the death penalty in accordance with due process, and limiting, to the degree practicable, the risk that innocent persons may be executed" and studies "whether there is discrimination in capital sentencing on the basis of the victim's or the defendant's race," among other things.¹³⁹

Based on the committee's recommendations, in February 2001, legislators in both the Senate and the House introduced the "Racial Justice Act." Legislators in the state Senate, but not the House, also introduced the legislation recommended by the committee to establish a death penalty moratorium. Neither the "Racial Justice Act" nor the death penalty moratorium legislation passed in the 2001–2002 session. Notably, in October 2001, Gov. Mike Easley commuted the sentence of Robert Black, whose case some believe was marked with racial bias. This was one of only two cases Easley has commuted since he took office.

With Ballance moving to Congress in 2003, legislators did not re-introduce the Racial Justice

Table 19.

Demographics of North Carolina's Death Row Population,
March 2004

	Male	Female	Total (%)
White	69	2	71 (37.2%)
Black	107	1	108 (56.5%)
Native American	6	1	7 (3.7%)
Other	5	0	5 (2.6%)
Total	187	4	191

Source: N.C. Department of Correction

Act during the 2003 session of the General Assembly, but legislators in both the Senate and House introduced bills to enact a moratorium on death penalty executions.¹⁴¹ Not surprisingly, possible racial bias is one premise for proposing the moratorium. The "whereas" clauses introducing the reasons for the bill include the following: "Whereas, factors that may have affected the fair and impartial administration of the death penalty include ... possible discrimination in death penalty sentencing based on either the victim's race or the defendant's race as well as possible discrimination with regard to other aspects of capital case processing." The House Bill did not make it out of committee, while Senate Bill 171 passed the Senate and may be taken up by the House in 2004. Meanwhile, the execution date arrived for William Quentin Jones on Aug. 22, 2003, for the 1987 shooting death of Ed Peebles in a convenience store robbery. As Gov. Mike Easley deliberated over whether to grant Jones clemency, House Co-Speaker Jim Black (D-Mecklenburg) reportedly contacted him and told him several House members wanted to vote on the death penalty moratorium.142 The governor denied Jones' clemency request, and Jones was executed by lethal injection on August 22, 2003.

Race on the Roads: "Driving While Black"

Yet another criminal justice issue with racial and ethnic overtones is enforcement of the state's traffic laws. The charge here is that law enforce-

ment officers engage in "racial profiling" on the state's highways. This concern, caustically referred to as "driving while black," became a national issue in the mid- to late 1990s.

Minorities believe that law enforcement officers single them out for more traffic stops and investigations because of their race or ethnicity. For example, in 1996, *The News & Observer* of Raleigh, N.C., found that members of an anti-drug unit of the Highway Patrol stopped black males twice as often as other troopers patrolling the same roads.¹⁴³

Responding to constituent concerns, then-state Sen. Frank Ballance introduced legislation in February 1999 that was enacted into law and requires N.C. Highway Patrol state troopers to keep more detailed statistics on the people they stop while on patrol to determine whether troopers are unfairly targeting African-American or other minority drivers for violations, despite policies against that. 144 North Carolina thus became the first state in the country to pass a data collection law to assess racial profiling on the highways. Before the legislation even passed, the N.C. Highway Patrol had decided to initiate its own study to prove that troopers don't target drivers based on race.

"It's scary that we can have groups of minority citizens who feel like they have to look over their shoulder," says Matt Zingraff, a social sciences professor at N.C. State University and the lead researcher on the Highway Patrol study, "Law enforcement has to convince people that's not the case. They have a responsibility to respond, even if they are squeaky clean," Zingraff adds. 145

Table 20.

Reason Driver Stopped by

Driver's Ethnicity in North Carolina, 2002

Purpose	Hispanic	%	Non Hispanic	%	Total
Speed Limit Violation	35,159	34.0%	549,022	45.4%	584,181
Stop Light/Sign Violation	6,123	5.9%	60,738	5.0%	66,861
Driving While Impaired	4,383	4.2%	17,374	1.4%	21,757
Safe Movement Violation	7,016	6.8%	59,357	4.9%	66,373
Vehicle Equipment Violation	11,624	11.2%	102,854	8.5%	114,478
Vehicle Regulatory Violation	11,594	11.2%	146,821	12.2%	158,415
Seat Belt Violation	7,948	7.7%	128,513	10.6%	136,461
Investigation	9,145	8.8%	59,687	4.9%	68,832
Other Motor Vehicle Violation	10,433	10.1%	83,927	6.9%	94,360
Total	103,425	100.0%	1,208,293	100.0%	1,311,718

Source: N.C. Department of Justice

Table 21.
Enforcement Action Taken After Vehicle Stopped by
Driver's Ethnicity in North Carolina, 2002

Action	Hispanic	% of Total	Non Hispanic	% of Total	Total by Ethnicity
Verbal Warning	14,653	14.2%	176,944	14.7%	191,597
Written Warning	9,616	9.3%	181,463	15.0%	191,079
Citation Issued	70,408	68.2%	790,763	65.5%	861,171
On-View Arrest	6,479	6.3%	33,723	2.8%	40,202
No Action Taken	2,139	2.1%	23,739	2.0%	25,878
Total	103,295	100.0%	1,206,632	100.0%	1,309,927

Source: N.C. Department of Justice

Table 22.

Drivers and Passengers Searched After Traffic Stop
by Ethnicity in North Carolina, 2002

Туре	Hispanic	%	Non Hispanic	%	
Driver	7,506	68.5%	49,262	64.6%	
Passenger	3,447	31.5%	27,046	35.4%	
Grand Total	10,953	100.0%	76,308	100.0%	

Source: N.C. Department of Justice



"While I'm checking your license and registration, and searching your car for drugs, here's a brochure to help you consider a career with The New Jersey State Police..."

Initial results from the Highway Patrol's study based on 1998 data did show that African-American men older than 23 were more likely than white men to get a traffic citation or written warning. However, while the number of tickets issued to minorities compared to the number of minority licensed drivers may show some level of disparity, Zingraff says it's more relevant to look at who is driving on the roads and at driving patterns by race as opposed to the racial breakdown of licensed drivers. The study did have some surprising results. For example, young whites were more likely to be stopped than young African Americans in 1998, a finding that researchers used to caution against making too many assumptions. "That finding alone points out that we have to be very careful about the assumptions we make," Zingraff says. "Certainly there are disparities. The issue is to identify the source of the disparities," adds Zingraff.146

Still, the study of the 1998 data was only a starting point. "The Highway Patrol has a firm and solid stance that we don't condone or practice racial profiling," said Sgt. Everett Clendenin of the North Carolina State Highway Patrol. "It is not fair, and it's not smart to say an agency like the Highway Patrol is racial profiling by looking at data that occurred over an eight-month time

period, which is a small picture, a small piece of the puzzle. You have to look at the whole puzzle before you can make such a serious allegation of racial profiling."¹⁴⁷

At the request of lawmakers and with a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice, Zingraff and his research staff conducted more in-depth research on additional years of traffic statistics and included in their study whether race plays a role in how a person drives. Including this component aroused the ire of civil rights groups and police groups alike. However, Zingraff held that it was a necessary component of the racial profiling conversation and in determining whether the state Highway Patrol engaged in such profiling.

As Zingraff describes it, there is a fine but crucial line between enforcement and profiling. "For example, if troopers are deployed to certain parts of the state where there are high traffic patterns, poor road conditions, et cetera—their presence there is to meet the goal of highway safety," says Zingraff, "but in conjunction with that policy, it's possible that that's an area that's disproportionately driven by minority groups, so you could have a disparity. You are there for understandable reasons, but a disparity results. If the policy or practice is based on tradition or habit, or 'This is an area where the fishing is good,' then that's not a reasonable policy.

Table 23.
Initial Purpose of Traffic Stop by Driver's Race in North Carolina, 2002

					Native						
Purpose	White	%	Black	%	American	%	Asian	%	Other	%	Total
Speed Lin	nit Violat	tion									
	400,777	47.1%	144,811	39.4%	3,733	37.3%	6,417	49.6%	28,443	40.3%	584,181
Stop Ligh	nt/Sign Vi	iolation									
	42,291	5.0%	19,426	5.3%	353	3.5%	1,179	9.1%	3,612	5.1%	66,861
Driving V	Vhile Imp	aired				,					
_	14,162	1.7%	4,755	1.3%	206	2.1%	190	1.5%	2,444	3.5%	21,757
Safe Mov	ement Vi	iolation		-							
	43,219	5.1%	17,936	4.9%	518	5.2%	829	6.4%	3,871	5.5%	66,373
Vehicle E	Equipmen	t Violatio	on								
	67,583	7.9%	38,786	10.5%	824	8.2%	1,011	7.8%	6,274	8.9%	114,478
Vehicle F	Regulatory	y Violatio	on								
	93,818	11.0%	56,426	15.3%	. 780	7.8%	1,226	9.5%	6,165	8.7%	158,415
Seat Belt	Violation	1									
	96,154	11.3%	31,757	8.6%	1,432	14.3%	814	6.3%	6,304	8.9%	136,461
Investiga	tion										
	37,813	4.4%	22,596	6.1%	1,367	13.6%	494	3.8%	6,562	9.3%	68,832
Other Mo	tor Vehic	le Violat	ion								
	54,587	6.4%	31,263	8.5%	803	8.0%	772	6.0%	6,935	9.8%	94,360
Total											
	850,404	100.0%	367,756	100.0%	10,016	100.0%	12,932	100.0%	70,610	100.0%	1,311,718
					· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·						

Source: N.C. Department of Justice

"What criminal justice agencies need to do is look at outcomes of what they do," Zingraff adds. "If the outcomes are a result of a rationally based policy with goals in mind, then [if there is a disparity] at least they can present that to the community."

Zingraff completed his study in late 2002, and the results were released in February 2004 after extensive review by the National Institute of Justice. The findings: "no conclusive evidence of current institutional or systemic racial profiling" by the North Carolina Highway Patrol, ¹⁴⁸ though the study could not rule out bias on the part of individual officers that in some instances could lead to greater scrutiny of vehicles driven by African Americans.

Despite the finding of no institutional racial profiling, Zingraff observes that law enforcement

agencies may need to have more dialogue with the public about what tougher law enforcement may mean in their communities. "All communities want to be safe and protected, but I'm not sure that law enforcement agencies have sufficiently engaged the community in what that might mean. I'm not sure the community understands all of the ramifications," says Zingraff. "Have they explained to a grandmother that they might pull over her granddaughter if she is driving in a high-crime area? The grandmother might ask, 'Can't you tell the difference between a good girl and a bad girl?' But the answer is, 'no.' I don't think the conversation has taken place in many areas. I don't think a law enforcement officer should stop a car simply because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time, but there is not enough conversation about

Table 24.
Enforcement Action Taken
in North Carolina by Driver's Race, 2002

Native											
Action	White	%	Black	%	American	1 %	Asian	%	Other	%	Total
Verbal Warning	120,875	14.2%	60,218	16.4%	1,015	10.1%	2,626	20.3%	6,863	9.7%	191,597
Written Warning	131,259	15.5%	49,256	13.4%	1,404	14.0%	1,490	11.5%	7,670	10.9%	191,079
Citation Issued	559,610	65.9%	234,533	63.8%	7,122	71.2%	8,301	64.3%	51,605	73.2%	861,171
On-View Arrest	22,103	2.6%	14,271	3.9%	330	3.3%	222	1.7%	3,276	4.6%	40,202
No Action Taken	15,309	1.8%	9,081	2.5%	135	1.3%	270	2.1%	1,083	1.5%	25,878
Total	849,156	100.0%	367,359	100.0%	10,006	100.0%	12,909	100.0%	70,497	100.0%	1,309,927

Source: N.C. Department of Justice.

Table 25.
Drivers and Passengers
Searched in North Carolina by Race, 2002

Matiro

Action	White	%	Black	%	American	%	Asian	%	Other	%	Total
Driver	30,548	66.9%	22, 162	62.0%	424	57.4%	318	66.3%	3,316	71.7%	56,768
Passenger	15,112	33.1%	13,592	38.0%	315	42.6%	162	33.8%	1,312	28.3%	30,494
Total	45,660	100.0%	35,754	100.0%	739	100.0%	480	100.0%	4,628	100.0%	87,262

Source: N.C. Department of Justice.

what police do, why they do it, and how they do it." Tables 20, 21, and 22 show the 2002 traffic statistics in North Carolina by driver's ethnicity, while Tables 23, 24, and 25 show traffic statistics by race, with the initial purpose for the stop, the enforcement action taken, and whether the officer searched the driver or passenger.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Population statistics illustrate that North Carolina's demographic picture has changed,

coming a more diverse landscape of various racial and ethnic groups. Statistics also show that there are disparities in certain areas between the majority white population and minority groups and even among the minority groups themselves. Minorities have substantially lower per capita and household incomes and higher poverty rates than the white population. Per capita income for whites was \$23,237. African Americans, American Indians, and Hispanics earned as little as 47.8 percent of that amount at \$13,548, \$13,441, and \$11,097

is changing, and will likely continue to change, be-

respectively. As for poverty rates, the percentages were 8.1 percent for whites and 10.1 percent for Asians, but 25.2 percent for Hispanics, 22.9 percent for African Americans, and 21 percent for Native Americans.

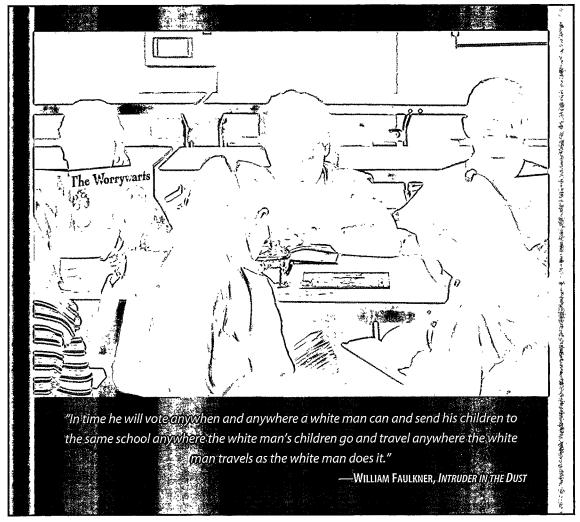
Having inadequate or barely adequate financial resources may limit these groups' abilities to provide basic needs, including housing, for themselves and their families, not to mention that having low income limits access to health care, attending college, or having access to computers or the Internet. Limited incomes may also result in a feeling of powerlessness that contributes to a lack of civic participation, such as voting. In other words, inequalities with regard to economic well-being may ultimately lead to other societal ills, including many of the reported health disparities in the United States and North Carolina. Addressing these disparities is a long-term process, and

progress will be incremental. However, the Center believes it is critical to begin the process. Thus, the Center offers the following recommendations:

To Close the Racial/Ethnic Gap in Educational Attainment: Beyond the achievement gap apparent in the K-12 public schools in North Carolina,

schools in North Carolina, minorities have a lower rate of educational attainment in terms of graduating from high school and completing college. Among whites, 81.2 percent are high school graduates, compared to 79.3 percent of

Asians, 70.7 percent of African
Americans, 62.7 percent of Native Americans, and
44.5 percent of Hispanics/Latinos. As for those
who have completed high school, 43.9 percent of



Asians and 25 percent of whites are college graduates, compared to 13.1 percent of African Americans, 10.5 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, and 10.4 percent of Native Americans.

Determining all the factors that contribute to these disparities is a challenge for policymakers, but income and economic differences may be one of the culprits. In some instances, there may be a missing ingredient that prevents individuals from reaching their full potential. That missing ingredient is hope. Young people who see their parents struggle in low-wage jobs and their own dreams of self-improvement deferred by tuition costs at public or private universities may reach the conclusion that the struggle is not worth it and drop out of high school to take a low-paying job with little future. North Carolina has an obligation to provide these students the opportunity to succeed. In-state tuition for the children of immigrants who do not meet the state's residency requirements is one way to achieve this, but hope should not be restricted to just the Hispanic/Latino community. And, merely providing low, in-state tuition is not enough. After all, the college-going rates of both African Americans and Native Americans, as well as Hispanics. trail that of whites by large margins, and the lack of financial resources for all of these groups is well documented. Even the state's college-going rate for whites is inadequate for the state's future needs. Thus,

(1) The Center recommends that the Governor propose and the N.C. General Assembly enact a Hope College Tuition Assistance Program to pay part of the cost of college for all students from households earning 200 percent or less of the federal poverty level and who graduate from high school with a B average. The assistance program would be modeled on Georgia's popular Hope Scholarship Program with a few well-justified modifications. First, Georgia's Hope Scholarship Program is a merit scholarship for all students who graduate from high school with a B average. North Carolina's Hope Tuition Assistance Program would be need-based for qualifying students who have the credentials to gain acceptance into the state's public universities. The federal poverty level is \$18,750 in income per year for a family of four, so families earning up to \$37,700 annually would be eligible for this assistance. Second, North Carolina's program should be funded by appropriations from the state's General Fund, rather than from a state lottery that takes a larger percentage of the income of the poor than of those with greater financial means (for more on state lotteries, see John Manuel, "13 Ways of Looking at a State Lottery," *North Carolina Insight*, Vol. 19, Nos. 1–2, October 2000, pp. 2–57). Third, the program would pay only a portion of the tuition, leaving it to students to contribute to their own education through work study, academic scholarships, loans, or some other means.

But if there are strong areas of difference, the North Carolina Hope College Tuition Assistance Program also would share some common ground with its neighbor to the South. One key similarity is that it would be available to all North Carolina households who meet the income restrictions—not just minorities. After all, the notion of white privilege may seem cruel irony to the victims of white poverty, and there are plenty of them in North Carolina. A second major similarity is that the program would provide hope to thousands of North Carolina's young people in a state where the dream of college has been eroded by recent multiple tuition and fee increases despite a guarantee in the state constitution that tuition at the public universities will be "free of expense . . . as far as practicable." And, a Hope College Tuition Assistance Program would represent a major step toward the promise Governor Mike Easley made in his inaugural address of "one North Carolina" in which "every child-whether born in the mountains of the west, the beaches of the east or the sandhills and foothills between-will have a fair opportunity to reach his or her full potential."149

To Close the Racial/Ethnic Gap in Voting Participation: Voter registration among all minorities trails that of whites, as does actual turnout on election day. The percentage of Hispanics/Latinos who cast ballots on elec-

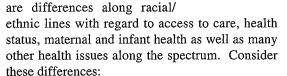
tion day amounted to a dismal 8.4 percent of the voting age population in 2000, and only 12.1 percent of the population was registered. Among African Americans, 47.7 percent of the voting age popu-

lation cast ballots compared to 58.9 percent of whites. Little wonder that issues of importance to these minorities receive scant attention in the General Assembly. But the reality is that too few North Carolinians of *all* races and ethnicities bother to vote. Only 36.4 percent of the voting age population cast ballots in the 2002 general election. As the Center recommended in its 2003 study, "Improving Voter Participation and Accuracy in North Carolina's Elections,"

(2) The state should launch a massive voter registration campaign and a Get Out The Vote drive to get more North Carolina residents registered to vote and actually voting, with particular emphasis on reaching those who historically have been less inclined to participate, such as young people and minorities. The drive should be coordinated by the Governor and the State Board of Elections and should include publication of a Voter Education Guide published in both English and Spanish. Such nonpartisan guides typically include lists of candidates on the ballot, statements of their positions on the issues, and information on the various options for voting. They are used to good end in a number of states, including Alaska, California, Oregon, Washington, and some parts of Minnesota, New York, and Texas. Besides these publications, the voter education drive should deploy persons with broad contacts in the Hispanic/Latino communities of North Carolina, as well as focusing on African Americans and other minorities who have been less inclined to vote. Better voter education and increased political participation likely will produce state government policies that ultimately could result in better outcomes for minorities on a wide range of indicators.

To Close the Racial/Ethnic Gap in Health Outcomes: State agencies, nonprofits, including the Center, and interest groups have discussed the disparities

in outcomes on morbidity and mortality among racial and ethnic groups in North Carolina for a number of years. There is no question that there



Among children, the infant mortality rate (or number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births) remains far higher for African Americans, at 15.1 per 1,000 live births than other racial and ethnic groups. For Native Americans, the rate is 11.9; while for whites, the number is 6.4 per 1,000 live births, for Asians, 6.1, and for Hispanics/Latinas, 5.8. Yet another important disparity is deaths of children ages 1–17 (per 100,000 population). Here, Native Americans have the highest rate, at 53.8. For African Americans, the rate is 37.5 per 100,000 population, while the white rate is 30.4, the Hispanic/Latino rate 29.2, and the Asian rate is

28.7. Teen pregnancies are yet another area where stark differences between racial and ethnic groups emerge. Here, the annual rate of pregnancies per 1,000 Hispanic/Latina girls is 90.0. That compares to an African-American rate of 72.4, a Native-American rate of 63.2, and a white rate of 38.0.

As for adult health, again strong discrepancies in outcomes emerge between racial and ethnic groups. In annual heart disease deaths per 100,000 population, Native Americans had the highest rates at 312.3, followed by African Americans at 308.7; whites at 249.6, Asians at 83.1 deaths per 100,000 population, and Hispanics/Latinos at 78.5 heart disease deaths per 100,000 population. Similar patterns emerge in stroke deaths per 100,000 population. African-American stroke deaths are highest at 98.9 per 100,000 population, followed by Native Americans at 74.6, whites at 70.1, Asians at 42.2, and Hispanics/Latinos at 31.4. Diabetes-related deaths are yet another area where strong racial and ethnic discrepancies emerge. The death rate for African-Americans is 169.5, followed by 154.6 for Native Americans, 78.1 for whites, 41.6 for Asians, and 41.2 for Hispanics/ Latinos.

In the area of sexually transmitted diseases, African Americans have the highest reported rates of gonorrhea and chlamydia, while Native Americans have the highest rates of early syphilis. African Americans have the highest rates of HIV and AIDS infection among racial and ethnic groups, and by far the highest AIDS death rates. Hispanics/Latinos, while a younger population due to the large number of immigrants and thus less likely to have elevated death rates in such areas as heart disease and cancer, have high rates of traffic fatalities and homicides. In addition, Hispanics/ Latinos face long-standing access barriers due to both the language barrier and the fact that this ethnic group is the least likely of any racial or ethnic group to have health insurance.

To address broad-ranging discrepancies in health outcomes, the Center offers recommendations both general and specific. Given the high level of AIDS deaths in among African-Americans,

(3) The Center recommends that the General Assembly increase funding for AIDS prevention and treatment. AIDS has been a long-standing issue in the African-American community, yet prevention and treatment programs are chronically short on funding. Not only would increased funding for AIDS prevention and treatment benefit African Americans, but also Native Americans, Hispanics/Latinos, and any others who

are infected or threatened by this pernicious disease that, while more prevalent among African Americans, knows no racial or ethnic boundaries.

* * *

Yet another immediate need in the health arena—this one primarily but not exclusively of benefit to Hispanics/Latinos who do not speak fluent English—is for interpreter services in local health departments and for more bilingual providers of health care. The Center has long advocated for funding to provide interpreter services at local health departments as one small step in addressing the health needs of Hispanics/Latinos, who in many instances rely on health departments for basic health services. Prevention and early detection of disease depends upon the patient's being able to communicate effectively with the health care provider. And, while disease prevention and treatment primarily benefits the patient, it also carries benefit for the larger public placed at reduced risk of communicable disease. Though legislation has been introduced in every legislative session since our 1999 study, so far no funds for interpreter services have been appropriated. 150 Thus,

(4) The Center recommends the General Assembly appropriate \$2.5 million in recurring funds to pay for 85 interpreters in counties with medium (500 to 1,500), high (1,501 to 2,999), and very high density (more than 3,000) Hispanic/Latino populations. The Governor should ask for these funds in his 2004 budget request and the General Assembly should provide the money. The failure to communicate health needs and cures has been allowed to continue far too long.

* * *

Another specific area that needs immediate attention is staffing for the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force. While legislators were looking for savings in the 2003 \$15 billion budget, they inexplicably left the staff for this important commission on the cutting room floor. The savings? A grand total of \$64,000. Child fatalities are elevated for both Native Americans and African Americans. and are a problem for all races and ethnicities. Nonetheless, the Child Fatality Task Force has had success moving issues such a mandatory bicycle helmet law for children and a graduated license law for young drivers. The number of child deaths has declined by 31 percent in the 12 years of the Task Force's existence—evidence of its value and the need to restore funding for the administrative staff. Thus,

(5) The Center recommends that \$70,000 be appropriated by the 2004 session of the North

Carolina General Assembly to restore funding for the administrative staff of the North Carolina Child Fatality Task Force.

* * *

Given the broad-ranging disparities in health outcomes discussed above, the Center sees a need for increased support for the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities within the N.C. Department of Health and Human Services. The Office should continue to research and highlight differences in health outcomes between racial and ethnic groups, promote best health practices through its grantmaking and leadership, and press for cultural change at the state and local level to address the root causes of disparities in health outcomes. Meanwhile, the Department of Health and Human Services should step up efforts to put this information to use. Armed with this strong data,

(6) The Center recommends that the Department of Health and Human Services mount a major campaign to address the leading health disparities for all races and ethnicities, revisiting the need for community-based preventive health strategies and replicating those that have been found to be effective.

To address disparities in criminal justice

outcomes: Yet another area where the Center found significant disparities among races and ethnicities is in criminal justice outcomes. There is no debate around whether a disproportionate number of minorities, espe-



cially African Americans, pass through North Carolina's criminal justice system. However, there is great debate around whether this imbalance is a result of racial discrimination and particular policies, programs, or attitudes ultimately leading to needless disparities. If the imbalanced statistics are indeed disparities rooted in bias, then eliminating such disparities and the underlying bias will be one of the greater and long-term challenges the state faces. Nevertheless, sufficient doubt particularly has been raised regarding racial bias and the death penalty that a moratorium is in order.

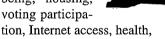
Research by Isaac Unah and Jack Boger, law professors at the University of Chapel Hill, indicates that when whites are murder victims, the perpetrator of the crime is nearly twice as likely to get the death penalty as when there is a non-white victim (3.7 percent of the time versus 1.9 percent).

Further, non-white defendants who murdered whites were more likely to get the death penalty (6.4 percent of the time) than were whites who murdered whites (2.6 percent of the cases). When non-whites were both the defendant and the victim, death sentences dipped even more, to only 1.7 percent of the cases. The study also revealed that some aggravating factors, such as murdering more than one person, count less than race. These data are difficult to ignore no matter how one feels personally about the death penalty. Therefore, until research can determine why these disparities exist,

(7) The Center recommends that the N.C. House of Representatives enact legislation in 2004 implementing a moratorium on the death penalty. This legislation was passed by the Senate in 2003 and is eligible for consideration in the 2004 session. (7A) The Center also recommends that Governor Mike Easley delay any further imposition of the death penalty until the executive, legislative, and judicial branches can consider this matter. While disparities in the prison population are disturbing, at least injustices that arise after conviction can be addressed. Such is not the case with the death penalty.

To address disparities as they touch state government generally: Based on the data presented here, it is clear that various groups and individuals in North Carolina experience disparities in the areas of education,

economic wellbeing, housing, voting participa-



and criminal justice. Less clear is what the state can and should do to eliminate these disparities. The recommendations outlined above address only a few of the issues that emerge from the research. Whether and how the state should intervene further is a matter for careful debate. To give a full airing to issues surrounding racial disparities as they touch state government in North Carolina,

(8) The Center recommends that Governor Mike Easley convene a Governor's Summit on Racial and Ethnic Disparities in North Carolina. In keeping with the "one North Carolina" theme Easley established within the very first days of his administration in 2001, such a summit would set out to examine the causes and potential solutions to racial and ethnic disparities across a broad range of indicators. These differences, discrepancies, and outright injustices present a muddled picture as to what the role of the state ultimately should be.

What is clear, however, is that North Carolinians must recognize the state's shifting demographics and the disparities associated with this shift, with the aim of advancing *all* of the state's residents.

FOOTNOTES

¹ Census 2000 Redistricting Data (P.L. 94-171) Summary File and 1990 Census. U.S. Census Bureau, Washington D.C., Table 3. States Ranked by Percent Population Change: 1990 to 2000 http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t2/tab03.xls

² According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a person having origins in any of the black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as "Black, African Am., or Negro," or provide written entries such as African American, Afro-American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian.

³ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a person having origins in any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent, including, for example, Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Philippine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam. It includes "Asian Indian," "Chinese," "Filipino," "Korean," "Japanese," "Vietnamese," and "Other Asian."

⁴ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. It includes people who classified themselves as American Indian, American Indian tribe, or Alaskan Native. The American-Indian category includes people who indicated their race as "American Indian," entered the name of an Indian tribe, or reported such entries as Canadian Indian, French American Indian, or Spanish American Indian. Respondents who identified themselves as American Indian were asked to report their enrolled or principal tribe. Therefore, tribal data in tabulations reflect the written entries reported on the questionnaires. Some of the entries, for example, Iroquois, Sioux, Colorado River, and Flathead, represent nations or reservations. The information on tribe is based on self-identification and therefore does not reflect any designation of federally or state-recognized tribe. The Alaska-Native category includes written responses of Eskimos, Aleuts, and Alaska Indians, as well as entries such as Arctic Slope, Inupiat, Yupik, Alutiiq, Egegik, and Pribilovian. The Alaska tribes are the Alaskan Athabascan, Tlingit, and Haida. The information for Census 2000 is based on the American Indian Tribal Classification List for the 1990 census, which was expanded to list the individual Alaska Native Villages when provided as a written response for race.

⁵Table 2. Percent of Population by Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin, for the United States, Regions, Divisions, and States, and for Puerto Rico: 2000. White alone, not Hispanic or Latino. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data (P.L. 94-171) Summary File for states and Census 2000 Redistricting Summary File for Puerto Rico, Tables PL1 and PL2.

⁶ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the Asian population in North Carolina consists mainly of Asian Indians, Chinese, Filipino, Japanese, Korean, and Vietnamese.

⁷ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, most of the Hispanics/Latinos in North Carolina were Mexican (246,545), Puerto Rican (31,117), Cuban (7,389), and other Hispanics or Latinos (93,912).

⁸ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "White" means a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who indicate their race as "White" or report entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Near Easterner, Arab, or Polish.

⁹ "The Achievement Gap 2002: An Update," N.C. Justice and Community Development Center, Raleigh, N.C., July 2002, p. 7.

¹⁰Long Range Planning—IV. Strategic Directions, University of North Carolina System Board of Governors, Chapel Hill, N.C., January 14, 2000, available at www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/aa/planning/reports/longplan/stratdir.htm.

11 "Office of the President Initiatives," The University of North Carolina System, Chapel Hill, N.C., available at www.northcarolina.edu/content.php/pres/initiatives/initiatives.htm#access.

¹² Maury Gittleman and Edward N. Wolff, "Racial Wealth Disparities: Is the Gap Closing?" The Jerome Levy Economics Institute, Annandale-on-Hudson, New York, Working Paper No. 311, August 2000, p. 1.

¹³ "Dynamics of Economic Well-Being," U.S. Census Bureau, Washington, D.C. at www.census.gov/population/www/socdemo/wellbeing.html

¹⁴ According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, personal income is defined as the income that is received by persons from participation in production, from both government and business transfer payments, and from government interest (which is treated like a transfer payment). It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, other labor income, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and transfer payments to persons, less personal contributions for social insurance. Per capita personal income is calculated as the personal income of the residents of an area divided by the population of that area.

¹⁵ According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, household income is the sum of money income received in the previous calendar year by all household members 15 years old and over, including household members not related to the householder, people living alone, and others in nonfamily households. The median household income value is calculated by determining the midpoint of the household incomes.

¹⁶ Eric Grodsky and Devah Pager, "The Structure of Disadvantage: Individual and Occupational Determinants of the Black-White Wage Gap," *American Sociological Review*, Wisconsin, Vol. 66, No. 4, August 2001, pp. 542–568.

¹⁷ According to the U.S. Census Bureau, poverty is based on income in the previous year. Poverty thresholds are defined by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and vary by family size and composition. In 2000, the poverty threshold for a family of two adults and two children was \$17,463. The poverty thresholds are the same for all parts of the country—that is, they are not adjusted for regional, state, or local variations in the cost of living. The poverty level is based on money income and does not include non-cash benefits such as food stamps.

¹⁸ Bureau of the Census, Census of Population and Housing.

¹⁹ According to the U.S. Census, complete plumbing facilities include: (1) hot and cold piped water, (2) a flush toilet, and (3) a bathtub or shower. All three facilities must be located inside the house, apartment, or mobile home, but not necessarily in the same room. Housing units are classified as lacking complete plumbing facilities when any of the three facilities is not present.

²⁰ According to the U.S. Census, a unit has complete kitchen facilities when it has all of the following: (1) a sink

with piped water; (2) a range, or cook top and oven; and (3) a refrigerator. All kitchen facilities must be located in the house, apartment, or mobile home, but they need not be in the same room. A housing unit having only a microwave or portable heating equipment, such as a hot plate or camping stove, is not considered as having complete kitchen facilities. An ice box is not considered to be a refrigerator.

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²² As measured by gross rent as a percentage of household income after excluding households for which such a measure was not computed. Gross rent as a percentage of household income in 1999 is a computed ratio of monthly gross rent to monthly household income (total household income in 1999 divided by 12). U.S. Census Bureau.

²³ Adam Bell, Jim Morrill, and Ted Mellnik, "Racial Gap in Voting Still Prevails," *The Charlotte Observer*, Charlotte, N.C., June 18, 2001, p. 1A.

²⁴ Mike McLaughlin *et al.*, "Improving Voter Participation and Accuracy in North Carolina Elections," *North Carolina Insight*, Vol. 20, No. 3-4, April 2003, pp. 2-57.

²⁵ Ibid. ²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ James G. Gimpel, "Latinos and the 2002 Election—Republicans Do Well When Latinos Stay Home," *Backgrounder*, Center for Immigration Studies, Washington, D.C., January 2003, p. 1.

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²⁹ Pew Hispanic Center and Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation, "National Survey of Latinos," *The Polling Report*, Vol. 19, No. 2, Jan. 27, 2003, pp. 1 and 6. The 2002 telephone survey of 2,929 Hispanics/Latinos was conducted between April 4 and June 11, 2002. Margin of error for Hispanics/Latinos was plus or minus 2.41 percent.

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The Secretary's Council on National Health Promotion and Disease Prevention Objectives for 2010 also provided leadership and advice in the development of national health objectives. "Healthy People 2010: Understanding and Improving Health, 2nd ed.," U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, November 2000, pp. 1–2 at www.healthypeople.gov/Document/Word/uih/uih.doc.

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⁴¹ The National Institutes of Health defines disparities as "the differences in the incidence, prevalence, mortality, and burden of disease and other adverse health conditions that exist among specific population groups in the United States. See "Addressing Health Disparities: The NIH Program of Action. What Are Health Disparities?", National Institutes of Health, available at healthdisparities.nih.gov/whatare.html.

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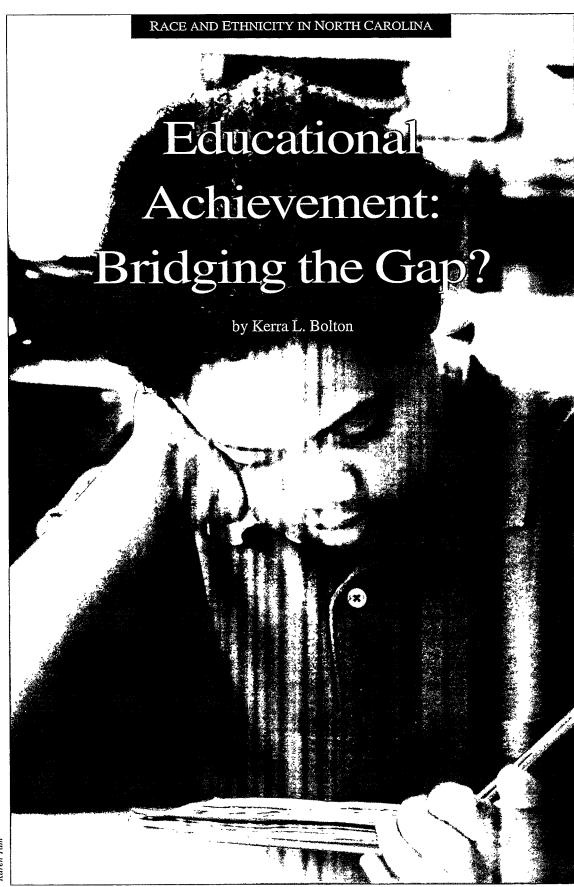
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We have so much in common, so much that should unite us But every time we look up, there's somebody new to divide us Separate and conquer, all for the touch of Midas And it's a lonely rancor, pour on the fuel to incite us

—SINGER JOHN GORKA,
"LOOK THE OTHER WAY"



Tith the exception of Asians, many minority students do not perform as well as their white peers in the public schools. The results of North Carolina's 2002–2003 end-of-grade tests confirmed the continued existence of a gap between the races in educational achievement, though the gap has narrowed. Nearly nine out of 10 white students (88.8 percent) achieved a passing score (at or above grade level) in both reading and math for grades three through eight. That's compared to only 66.9 percent of African-American students scoring at or above grade level in combined reading and math—a difference of 21.9 percent. While the gap is most pronounced for African Americans, it also exists for other racial and ethnic minorities. Among Hispanic/Latino students, the passing rate in 2002–2003 was 70.2 percent, while Native Americans passed at a rate of 72.3 percent. Asian students are the exception among minorities, with their performance on end-of-grade tests being similar to whites at 87.4 percent.

The educational achievement gap is not limited to performance on end-of-grade tests. African Americans traditionally have lagged behind white peers on Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores—by 211 points in 2003. The test is required for college admissions in North Carolina and is an indicator of college readiness. African Americans also are under-represented in classes for gifted students and among students who take advanced placement exams. African-American male students are overrepresented among students suspended, expelled for disciplinary reasons, or placed in alternative schools. White male students and Hispanic/Latino male students also are overrepresented, though to a lesser degree.

In addition, African Americans are more likely to be identified as needing special education, particularly in somewhat subjective categories such as behaviorally or emotionally disabled or mentally disabled. Indeed, North Carolina has a higher percentage of African-American students labeled mentally disabled than any of its neighboring states.

Experts point to a range of possible causes for this phenomenon of lower school achievement among minorities compared to the white majority—everything from less support for learning in the home to bias among a predominantly white teaching corps to reluctance to perform well among black students for fear of "acting white." Whatever the cause, North Carolina has pledged to address the achievement gap and has made some progress. Yet it is clear that more progress must be made if students in North Carolina's public schools are to have the opportunity to reach their full potential.

It's a spool of thought that reels in the minds of many African-American parents with children enrolled in North Carolina's public schools: Is my child getting a high-quality education? I know he (or she) can do better. But why isn't that happening? Do the teachers and principals who don't look like me care about what happens to my child in the classroom?

African-American students in North Carolina and the nation consistently score below their white peers on standardized tests. That means that they are less likely than their white peers to read, write, or solve math problems at their grade level.

Regardless of one's vantage point, the consequences of the minority achievement gap are the same. African-American students are more likely to be under-represented in academically gifted or challenging classes that prepare students for college and overrepresented among the ranks of suspended, expelled, or disabled students.

Education attainment helps determine whether African-American students earn a living wage, have access to quality health care, enter the prison system, or tumble into cycles of poverty and dependency on the public welfare system.

Central to closing the achievement gap is a communal process of answering uncomfortable questions. Why are African-American children under-represented in academically gifted classes and overrepresented among suspended, expelled, or special education students? What roles do a teacher's expectations, race, and quality play in student achievement? Do poverty and re-segregated schools lead to poor student performance? Or are they excuses to pour more money into failing schools? What responsibility do parents have as the co-creators of their child's academic success? Are black children intentionally performing poorly to fit in with their peers?

Achievement Gap in Black and White

Despite the multiplicity of theories, the minority achievement gap is confirmed every year in the black and white data of: (1) the state's ABCs school accountability system; (2) Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) scores; (3) the disproportionate share of long-term suspensions, expulsions, and placement in alternative schools among African-American students; (4) under-representation of African Americans in classes for gifted students and

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"Sometimes [racial prejudice] is like a hair across your cheek. You can't see it, you can't find it with your fingers, but you keep brushing at it because the feel of it is irritating."

-Singer Marian Anderson

among students who take advanced placement classes; and (5) the overrepresentation of African Americans among "mentally disabled" and "behaviorally emotionally disabled" classifications of students receiving special education services.

North Carolina measures the achievement and academic growth of its students primarily through the ABCs of Public Education, although other barometers such as the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) and Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT) scores also are used. Based on end-of-grade tests in reading and math given to third through eighth-graders, state education officials determine whether students can read or solve math problems at or above their grade level and whether test scores show improvement from the previous year. Public schools also must report the progress of minority students as part of a new requirement under the federal No Child Left Behind law.¹

Now in its seventh year, the ABCs of Public Education is a system of carrots and sticks that carry tremendous consequences. Test results help determine whether students are promoted, whether teachers and principals get performance bonuses, and whether schools get remedial assistance from the state to improve test scores.² For African-American students, the test scores paint shades of a complex portrait of the role of race in North Carolina's public schools.

White and minority students perform differently on **end-of-grade tests** on every level. In 2002–2003, nearly nine out of 10 (88.8 percent) white students scored at or above grade level in both reading and mathematics in grades three through eight (see Table 1, p. 79). This is up from the 84.4 percent of white students who scored well in 2001–2002.

There were 407,550 African-American students attending North Carolina's traditional public

Table 1.
N.C. End-of-Grade Test Results by Race and Ethnicity,
2000–2001 through 2002–03*

	White	African- American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native American	Asian	Multi- racial	All
2002–2003	88.8%	66.9%	70.2%	72.3%	87.4%	83.9%	88.8%
Percent Change from Prior Year	+4.4	+13.3	+8.1	+9.6	+5.3	+6.3	+4.0%
2001–2002	84.4	56.6	62.1	62.7	82.1	77.6	84.8%
Percent Change from Prior Year	+2.4	+4.7	+3.4	+2.7	+3.4	+2.4	+13.1
2000–2001	81.9	51.9	58.7	60.0	78.7	75.2	71.7%

^{*} Results represent percentage of children achieving at grade level or above based on combined math and reading scores on end-of-grade tests for grades 3 through 8.

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction

and charter schools in 2002–2003, representing 31.2 percent of the state's 1,304,325 students.³ However, only two-thirds, or 66.9 percent of the African-American students could read or solve math problems at or above grade level, according to 2002–2003 ABCs results. This is a considerable improvement from the 2001–02 school year, when slightly more than half, or 56.6 percent of African-American students performed at or above grade level. The 2002–2003 gain for African-American students was the most improvement shown by any racial or ethnic group.

Latino, Native-American, Asian, and multiracial students all outperformed their African-American peers. About 70.2 percent of Latino students scored at or above grade level in 2002–03, up from 62.1 percent the previous year.

For American-Indian students, 72.3 percent performed at or above grade level in reading and math, up from 62.7 percent in 2001–02. Asian students' performance on end-of-grade tests improved to 87.4 percent, up from 82.1 in 2001–2002. For multiracial students, 83.9 percent performed at or above grade level on the tests, an improvement from 77.6 percent in 2001–2002.

The widest and most persistent gap among

ethnic groups occurs between white and African-American students. White students outperformed their African-American peers by 21.9 points in 2002–2003. This is down from 34.3 points in 1996–97, the first year the ABCs program was implemented.⁵

The Gap in Scholastic Achievement Test Scores

This trend continues even among African-American students who plan to attend college. Average scores for African-American students lagged behind those of their white peers by 211 points in 2003 on the Scholastic Achievement Test (SAT), an indicator of college readiness (see Table 2, p. 81).

The average total SAT score for African-American students remained the same at 839 out of a possible score of 1,600. This is lower than the national average for African-American students of 857 and the average score for white students in North Carolina of 1,050. The gap in the average SAT score between whites and African Americans widened by three and four points respectively in 2003 in North Carolina and the nation.⁶

Under-Representation in Academically Gifted Classses and Advanced Placement Exams

frican-American students make up 31.2 percent of the overall student population in North Carolina's public schools. But they account for only 10 percent of the students **enrolled in academically gifted classes** compared to 35.5 percent of the total population of students who are not in academically gifted classes. In raw numbers, there were 144,662 students enrolled in academically or intellectually gifted classes. Only 14,558 of them were African Americans (see Table 3, p. 81).

Black students also continue to be under-represented among North Carolina students who take Advanced Placement (AP) examinations relative to their proportion of the general school population. Students can earn college credit and/or placement if they do well on the AP exam. White students represented 78.8 percent of the 24,084 North Carolina youth taking AP tests while black students accounted for 10.1 percent⁷ (see Table 4, p. 82). By contrast, white students represented 59.4 percent of the overall student population in 2002–2003, while black students represented 31.2 percent of the student population.

Over-Representation of African Americans in Long-Term Suspensions, Expulsions, and Mentally Disabled and Emotionally Disturbed Classifications

While African-American children are underrepresented among students who are in academically gifted classes or score well on end-ofgrade and SAT tests, they are overrepresented in the ranks of students who are suspended, expelled, and identified as "mentally disabled" or "behaviorally or emotionally disturbed," according to state and national studies.

African-American male students are more likely than children of any other ethnic group to be suspended from school for long periods of time, expelled—or permanently excluded from the school population, placed in alternative schools, or identified as mentally disabled or emotionally disturbed, according to a study by the North Carolina Justice and Community Development Center's Education and Law Project.⁸

African-American male students accounted for the highest percentage of **long-term suspensions** in both 1999–2000 and 2000–01, 38 and 40 percent respectively, though they represented only 15.7 percent of the overall school population in 2000–2001.

African-American male students are the most overrepresented group among students with long-term suspensions, accounting for 2.5 times more than their representation in the general student population.⁹

Almost half of the students **expelled from** school from 1999 to 2001 were African-American male students, though, again, they accounted for only 15.7 percent of the overall student population. However, white and Latino male students also were slightly overrepresented among expelled students when considering their presence in the overall student population.

African-American males were also more likely to be **placed in alternative schools** and are overrepresented there. While African-American male students accounted for 15.7 percent of the overall student population in 2000–2001, African-American males made up 41 percent of all students sent to alternative schools that year.

In comparison, white males constituted 25 percent of all alternative school placements but about 30 percent of all children enrolled in North Carolina's public schools. The study also found that African-American students, male and female, and Native-American males also were overrepresented among the alternative school population relative to their presence among the overall student population.

This trend extended to charter schools as well. About 66 percent of all students transferring from charter to alternative schools in 2000–2001 were African-American male students. They also accounted for about two-thirds of all charter school students who were given long-term suspensions. Most of the students expelled from charter schools from 1999 to 2001 were African American.

Alternative learning schools are one option for providing an alternative learning program for students who have been suspended or expelled, are at risk of juvenile crime, have dropped out of school and desire to return, are returning from a juvenile setting or psychiatric hospital, or whose learning styles are best served in an alternative setting, according to the State Board of Education, which adopted alternative program and school definitions in January 2000. While these guidelines set a broad framework for alternative education, actual programs vary by school district. Students typically are referred to an alternative school, though some parents request them as a better fit for the learning style of a particular child.

Minority children, specifically African-American and American-Indian students, also are significantly more likely than white students to be **identi-**

Table 2. Mean SAT Scores by Race and Ethnicity for North Carolina and the Nation, 1994–2003

	White	African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Native American	Asian	N.C. Avg.	U.S. Avg.
2003	1050	839	961	923	1052	1001	1026
2002	1046	839	961	· 914	1025	998	1020
2001	1041	835	975	891	1031	992	1020
2000	1035	835	970	897	1024	988	1019
1999	1031	837	966	900	1026	986	1016
1998	1026	839	984	906	1014	982	1017
1997	1023	834	956	900	1023	978	1016
1996	1018	840	*	887	1017	976	1013
1995	1012	830	*	887	1016	970	1010
1994	1008	826	*	860	1021	964	1003

^{*} Data not available

Source: SAT Report: North Carolina 2003, N.C. Department of Public Instruction, Accountability Services Division, Reporting Section, August 2003, p. 8.

Table 3. Number and Percentage of Students in North Carolina Identified as Academically Gifted by Race or Ethnicity and Gender, 2003

Race or Ethnicity	Number a	and Percent	_ ,	Number and Percent of Overall Enrollment		
White	120,784	(83.5%)	774,635	(59.4%)		
African American	14,558	(10.1%)	407,550	(31.2%)		
Hispanic/Latino	2,187	(1.5%)	77,485	(5.9%)		
American Indian	1,029	(0.7%)	19,081	(1.5%)		
Asian	4,151	(2.9%)	25,574	(2.0%)		
Multicultural	1,953	(1.4%)]	N.A.		
Total	144,662	(100.0%)	1,304,325	(100.0%)		

N.A. = Data not available.

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction, Exceptional Children Division, April 2003.

Table 4.

Number and Percentage of Students in North Carolina Taking
Advanced Placement (AP) Examinations
by Race or Ethnicity, 1999–2002

	White	African- American	Hispanic/ Latino	. American Indian	Asian
2002	18,984 (78.8%)	2,438 (10.1%)	494 (2.1%)	115 (0.5%)	1,147 (4.8%)
2001	16,942 (80.5%)	2,005 (9.5%)	350 (1.7%)	113 (0.5%)	953 (4.5%)
2000	15,622 (81.2%)	1,677 (8.7%)	297 (1.5%)	94 (0.5%)	943 (4.9%)
1999	14,169 (79.0%)	1,524 (8.5%)	247 (1.4%)	101 (0.6%)	802 (4.5%)

Source: N.C. Department of Public Instruction, State of the State: Educational Performance in North Carolina —2002, p. 20.

fied as being mentally disabled or emotionally disturbed and in need of special education services that may separate them from the general student population in self-contained classes, and the trend is not peculiar to North Carolina. Indeed, in most states, African-American children are more likely to be identified as mentally disabled or emotionally disturbed than are whites, according to a study conducted by researchers from Harvard University's Civil Rights Project, published in June 2002.¹²

The Harvard researchers found that the process of identifying students as mentally disabled is rife with subjectivity. Educators decide whom to test, what test to use, when to use alternative tests, and how to interpret the results. Southern states, including North Carolina, constituted nearly three-quarters of the states with unusually high incidence levels, where between 2.75 and 5.41 percent of African-Americans enrolled in public schools were labeled as mentally disabled.¹³

North Carolina had the highest rate among neighboring states of African-American children labeled as "mentally disabled" during the 2000–01 school year at 3.58 percent. This compares to South Carolina at 3.51 percent, Georgia at 2.80 percent, Tennessee at 2.66 percent, and Virginia at 1.80 percent.¹⁴

Removing special education students from the regular classroom has devastating consequences, the Harvard University researchers note. "Once identified, most minority students are significantly

more likely to be removed from the general education program and be educated in a more restrictive environment," the report says. "Given that students with special needs benefit most when they are educated in the least restrictive environment to the maximum extent appropriate, the data on educational settings raise serious questions about the quality of special education provided to Latino, black and other minority students compared to whites." 15

The implications of these trends are three-fold. One is that more African-American male students are identified as behaving in ways that result in long-term suspension or expulsion. The definition of misconduct varies in each school district. But the reasons for suspension or expulsion can range from truancy and disruptive behavior, to chronic discipline problems, to violence and even criminal acts.

For some African-American parents, charter schools hold the promise of the individualized attention and positive reinforcement that they think traditional public schools lack and troubled youth need. But the high rates of suspension, expulsion, and alternative placements for African-American males in charter schools suggest that such parental expectations fall short.

Most importantly, the less time a student spends in the classroom, the more difficult it is for that student to catch up when he or she returns. Long bouts of suspension, expulsion, or displacement can force some students to drop out altogether. For some troubled students, dropping out of school can lead to criminal behavior.

Does Tracking Slow African-American Students Down?

Students don't have to be considered disciplinary problems or mentally disabled in order to be placed in certain groups. Based on teacher observations and test scores, students are labeled in the early elementary grades. The consequences of the labels, often called "tracking," stay with the child throughout his or her academic career, some education experts say.

"We say that doctors think they are God, but teachers think they can look at a child and decide what that child will be," says Michael Wynn, an educator and motivational speaker who works with teachers in the Triangle and abroad. 16 "We stereotype the minute they walk in the door. It's not because we are mean-spirited. It's because we do what was done to us."

A 15-year case study of Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools followed the careers of students who scored in the top 10 percent of their class in the second

grade. More than seven of every 10 white children who scored well in second-grade were taking advanced English classes by the eighth grade. But less than two out of every 10 African-American children who scored equally well on the second-grade test were taking advanced English classes by the eighth grade.¹⁷

Once a student is labeled as a slow-learner or identified for special education, it may be difficult to catch up. "In theory, remedial classes are designed to help students fill in particular knowledge gaps," say the authors of a national study of racial discrimination in the public schools.¹⁸ "Once remedial work is completed, students are supposed to rejoin the mainstream classes. In practice, remedial classes usually act to permanently deny students access to more advanced subject matter." Rather than catch up with mainstream classes, students in remedial classes tend to fall further behind their peers every year.

Ronald Ferguson, a Harvard University scholar, found that grouping children into different classes by ability and varying the pace, but not the curriculum or instructional methods, had little effect on achievement. Ferguson also found that in high

Brenda Alderón, Saydi Alderón, Estefani Hernández and Evelyn Morales (left to right) of Siler City, at the March 2004 Latino Forum.



Karen Tam



schools the black-white differences in curriculum track placement are smaller than in the past. But African-American students remained under-represented in the most challenging classes.

"This is not necessarily evidence of bias," Ferguson says. "Blacks are represented in rough proportion to what one would predict, given the proficiencies with which they enter high school. The potential consequences of making classes more heterogeneous in terms of student preparation or motivation are unclear." In other words, African Americans are being channeled into the high school classes based on their elementary and middle school preparation. Ferguson says he isn't sure what the impact would be on individual student achievement of broadening the mix of students in more challenging classes to include those with less proven abilities.

The Impact of Teacher Expectations and Perceptions on Black Student Performance

E ducators are fond of saying that "every child can learn." But how much do a teacher's expectations and beliefs influence student performance?

Harvard professor Ronald Ferguson cites research that shows teachers, including black ones, have different perceptions and expectations for African-American students than white students.²⁰ Those differing expectations lead to teacher behaviors that, in turn, reinforce lower student performance, says Ferguson.

"Stereotypes of black intellectual inferiority are reinforced by past and present disparities in performance, and this probably causes teachers to underestimate the potential of black children more than that of whites," Ferguson says. "My bottomline conclusion is that teachers' perceptions, expectations and behaviors probably do help to sustain, and perhaps even expand, the black-white test score gap."²¹

In one experiment, teachers were asked to listen to a tape of a student's response to a question about their favorite television show. They were shown a photograph of the student who was speaking. Students varied in gender and race. The teachers were then asked to rate the student responses for personality, quality of response, current academic abilities, and future academic potential.

The outcome of the experiment showed a highly significant relationship between the race of the student in the photograph and the teacher's estimation of the student's response and academic abilities. Ferguson said that the teachers weren't necessarily racist, but may have been conditioned by previous experiences with different types of students.

Such assumptions can have a negative impact, depending on how a student responds to teacher attitudes. Some students are influenced by their teacher's expectations of them while other students seem less influenced by teacher expectations. However, Ferguson says that there is evidence that suggests that African-American children are more likely than whites to want to please their teacher.

If a teacher's previous experience is that African-American students don't perform as well academically as white students, then a teacher is likely to use that experience in forming expectations of new students, Ferguson asserts. A student's past performance may also influence a teacher's predictions of how well the student will perform.

Teachers also may perceive low performing African-American students as "difficult students." Rather than spending time with the difficult students who cause disruptions, teachers might prefer to spend time with students who appear eager to learn.

Ferguson also observes that both black and white teachers tend to be less supportive of African-

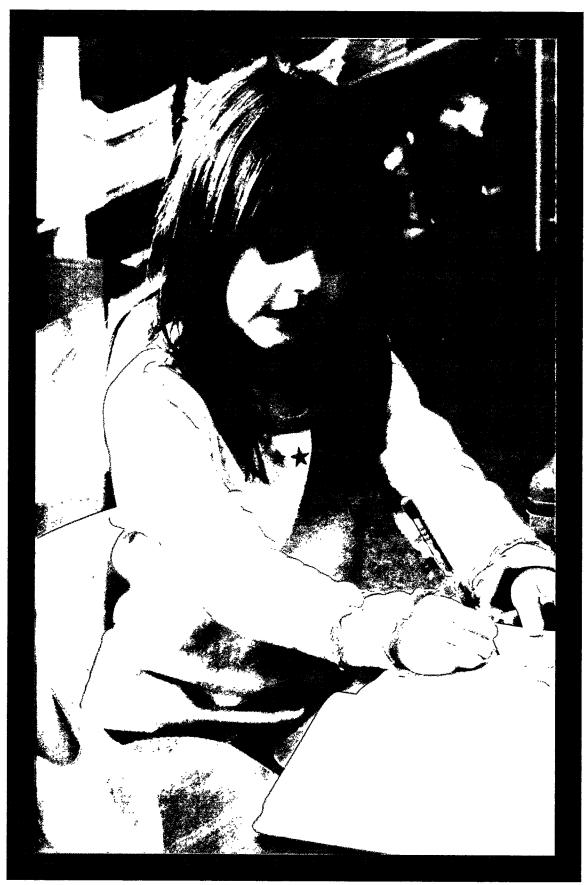
American students, on average, perhaps because they have lower expectations. The shrinking support may actually breed the low performance they expect, causing a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Wake County Schools Superintendent Bill McNeal, national schools superintendent of the year in 2004, told *The News & Observer* of Raleigh, N.C., that many white teachers compound the problem by promoting unprepared African-American students, partly to show they aren't racist. "The message to the child was clear," he said. "You don't have to do much. Then you had what I call the missionary complex, which was that these downtrodden children need all the help they can get. 'Poor things, they'll never be able to do this work, so if they behave, I'll just give them a C.'"²²

McNeal's position is reiterated by Elaine Tutterrow, principal at Valmead Basic School in Lenoir, N.C. Tutterrow's school has the distinction of having more than 90 percent of students score at grade level or above on end-of-grade tests despite having 90 percent of students receiving free or reduced price lunches—a basic measure of school poverty. As for the achievement gap, African-American students at Valmead Basic were more likely to pass end-of-grade tests in reading and math in 2002–2003 than were whites. Tutterrow



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Karen Tam

attributes most of this success to hard work and innovations such as accelerated reading, accelerated math, smaller classes, and interventions for students who fall behind. "We've tried a lot of different things," says Tutterrow. "There is not one answer, but one of the big things we did was raise expectations. For years and years, we just patted them on the heads and said, 'Bless your heart,' but you get what you expect."

Does a Teacher's Race Matter in the Classroom?

The typical North Carolina teacher is a 42-year-old white female. The current teaching force is less racially diverse than the student population they teach. Thirty-eight percent of North Carolina's students are ethnic minorities, while only 16 percent of the teachers are minorities, according to the N.C. Department of Public Instruction's latest annual report.²³ Of these minority students, 31.2 percent are African American, 5.9 percent are Hispanic/Latino, 2 percent are Asian, and 1.5 percent are American Indians.

There is conflicting research about the impact of the teacher's race in assessing student performance. One study, for example, found that African-American and white students scored higher on reading and math tests when their teachers were of the same race as the students, according to the survey of 6,000 Tennessee students.

Thomas S. Dee, author of the study, re-analyzed the landmark Project STAR (Student Teacher Achievement Ratio) experiment conducted in the 1980s that was used to determine whether students learned more in smaller classes during their early elementary years. The STAR study followed children from kindergarten through third grade. Ninety-four percent of the white students and 45 percent of the African-American students were assigned to teachers of their own race.

Dee's analysis found that students who had a teacher of their own race for at least one of the four years of the study tended to score an average of three- to four points higher on standardized reading and math tests than their peers who had teachers of different races. This advantage gained steam each year a student had a teacher of the same race. African Americans, poor children, those with inexperienced teachers, and children attending segregated schools benefited most from having a teacher of the same race.²⁴

However, the study did not pinpoint the reasons for the improvement. Did students blossom when

they viewed a same-race teacher as a role model? Do same-race teachers have higher expectations for students that become a self-fulfilling prophecy?

"All these findings suggest is that race in the classroom appears to matter," says Dee, an associate professor of economics at Swarthmore College in Swarthmore, Pa. "But we still don't understand the nature of that dynamic."

Teacher Quality Counts in Boosting Student Achievement

Come researchers argue that the quality of the teacher is more important than his or her race. Roslyn Mickelson, a sociology professor at the University of North Carolina-Charlotte and an expert on the effects of segregation and resegregation on school performance, has performed indepth studies of the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Public Schools. She says elementary students who are educated in schools with disproportionate numbers of minorities and poor students are more likely than those at racially balanced schools to be taught by teachers who are uncredentialed, who got into the classroom through a lateral-entry program, or who were long-term substitutes. As for middle and high school, African-American students are more likely to be tracked into lower-level courses regardless of standardized test performance, and these classes

I wonder if it's that simple?
I am twenty-two, colored, born in
Winston-Salem.
I went to school there, then Durham,
then here
to this college on the hill above Harlem.
I am the only colored student in my class.
...
So will my page be colored that I write?
...
You are white—
yet a part of me, as I am a part of you.
That's American.
—FROM "THEME FOR ENGLISH B"
LANGSTON HUGHES

are "more likely to have teachers teaching out of field who are not credentialed."²⁵

Like a snowball rolling down a hill, the effect of unqualified teachers accumulates over time. Students who were assigned ineffective teachers for three consecutive years scored 50 percentile points below their peers who were taught by competent teachers, according to the analysis of William Sanders, a statistician and researcher for the education division of SAS Institute in Cary. And, at least one study concluded that teachers of color are more likely than white teachers to continue teaching at hard-to-staff urban schools, where teacher turnover is a major barrier to high-quality education.

Parents As Co-Creators of Their Child's Educational Success

Parents, education experts say, are the child's first teachers. Numerous studies suggest that a parent's attitude toward education, his or her parenting habits, and a child's home environment greatly influence student performance.

Surveys show that African-American parents are deeply concerned about whether their child gets a good education. One study found that African-American children (64.5 percent) were more likely than whites (57.8 percent) to report that their parents telephone teachers and/or attend school meetings.²⁸

African-American parents also say they're disturbed by a social and cultural climate that discourages young people from working hard to get good grades and excel in school.²⁹ But African-American parents often communicate more ambivalence and less commitment to the school's mission than white parents. If African-American parents are ambivalent about education, then the expectations of their children's teachers may take on a special significance.³⁰

Anecdotal evidence of dismal attendance by African-American parents at school functions, Parent-Teacher Association (PTA) meetings, and one-on-one conferences frustrates teachers and fuels speculation that African-American parents just don't care. "Most of my parents would be on board if I called them in and told them we needed to set something up to help their child," says Bob Lindquist, a seventh-grade math teacher at Carrington Middle School in Durham. "But I don't know how many would follow through. We have a lot of parents who talk a good game, but the next day at school nothing has changed." ³¹

Debbie Pethel, a math teacher at East Millbrook

Middle School in Raleigh, made a direct connection between parental involvement and student achievement when she confronted a classroom of students, mostly African-American girls, who failed the state math test and had to retake it. "These were the kids whose parents I never saw," Pethel says. "They were the ones who didn't sign the papers that went home or return phone calls. They were the ones who didn't send things in when asked."

Hugh B. Price, president of the National Urban League, a national civil rights organization, argues that parents have a responsibility to continue their child's learning experience long after the bell rings, signaling the end of another school day. "Remember-children spend most of their waking hours outside of school," Price writes in his book, Achievement Matters: Getting Your Child the Best Education Possible. "As your children's first teacher, you set the tone at home. To turn your youngsters on to school, you have to take the time and expend the effort to salute them for doing the right thing and publicly celebrate their academic success. You must remain steadfast and unwavering in order to provide a supportive and encouraging environment for the youngsters you are raising."32

Young, gifted and black
How I long to know the truth
There are times when I look back
And I am haunted by my youth
Oh but my joy of today
Is that we can all be proud to say
To be young, gifted and black
Is where it's at.

Γ.

——"To Be Young, GIFTED & BLACK"

SINGER NINA SIMONE, BORN IN TRYON, NC

But the environment in an African-American child's home is likely to be dominated by television and other entertainment media, according to a study by the Kaiser Family Foundation of Menlo Park, Calif., which found that African-American children watch, on average, nearly two hours more television per day than whites. A greater percentage of African-American children live in homes with three or more television sets and subscribe to premium cable channels.

Fifty-six percent of African-American children report that the television is on "most of the time" and are more likely to live in homes where the television is on during meals. They also are more likely to have some type of media such as a television, radio, CD player, or video game system in their bedrooms. Interestingly, more African-American children than whites say they learn things when watching television.

Despite this access to technology, African-American and/or low income children have less access to computers each day. Seventy-eight percent of white children come from homes with at least one computer, compared to 55 percent of African-American children and 48 percent of Hispanic youngsters. But they average the same

amount of time using computers each day as their white and Hispanic classmates because those who do have computers tend to spend more time at the keyboard each day than do whites.³³

The Economics of Parental Involvement

Many of these differences in parenting habits between whites and African Americans may come down to dollars and cents. The national average income for white families is \$46,305, compared to \$29,470 for blacks. The history of racial discrimination in the United States, especially as it pertains to education and jobs, makes African-American children more likely to live in single-parent families or families where both parents work to make ends meet, according to Jacob Vigdor, an assistant professor of public policy studies and economics at Duke University whose research centers on the economic impact and causes of minority student achievement.

"In low-income families, a parent faces a choice between helping the kids with schoolwork and working so they can put food on the table," Vigdor says. "People on a higher rung on the economic



Karen Lam

State Working Hard To Address the Achievement Gap While Balancing the Needs of All Students

North Carolina education officials have their sights firmly set on closing the achievement gap between racial and ethnic groups. At the same time, they are keenly aware of the perils of focusing exclusively on the needs of one group of students versus another—no matter the cause of differences in education outcomes.

"We expect all students to make growth each year," says Marvin Pittman, director of the Division of School Improvement in the N.C. Department of Public Instruction. "You cannot close the gap by holding one group stagnant."

Pittman says one concern state education officials have is that white parents will be alienated by what they perceive to be excessive focus on traditionally underachieving minorities. For both practical and pragmatic reasons, that is not likely to happen. That's because of the formula undergirding the state's testing program—Accountability, Basics, and Control (ABCs). Besides stipulating that a certain percentage of students perform at grade level or above, the program requires that students register a certain level of academic growth each year, or teachers fail to qualify for bonus money. "If you do that [focus only on minorities], you won't meet your growth goal."

At the same time, State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Ward has adopted a 10-point plan to close the achievement gap (see p. 101). That means educators must hit a moving target as they attempt to bring minority achievement levels up to match the performance of a white majority that also continues to improve.

Still, Pittman believes the performance of African-American and American-Indian students on end-of-grade tests in recent years proves the goal of closing the achievement gap can be achieved. In 1996–97, for example, whites registered a combined 72.7 percent passing rate on end-of-grade tests in science and math, while only 38.4 percent of African-American students scored at grade level. By 2002–2003, the pass-

ing rate for whites had improved by 16.1 percent to 88.8, but African Americans had registered far greater gains to an overall passing rate of 66.9 percent—an improvement in the number of children passing of 28.5 percent. Meanwhile, the passing rate for American-Indian children improved from 62.7 percent to 72.3 percent in a single year—from 2001–2002 to 2002–2003.

"Everybody is going up," says Pittman, who uses the example of lines on a graph to illustrate. "They are converging, which is what we wanted to happen. The line for African-American students is steep. That's what has to happen. It's much steeper than the white line. Of course, we've got a lot more work to do."

Nonetheless, much of what Ward set out to achieve in his 10-point plan is accomplished or is well underway. Students at every performance level are showing improvement on end-of-grade tests. A permanent advisory committee, called the Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps Commission, has been formed and issued its first report in 2001. "We use that report as a framework for our work," says Pittman. "It guides everything we do."

The School Improvement Division has added a Closing the Gap Section with a section chief, two consultants, and six educators on loan. Modeled on the Assistance teams that aid failing schools under the ABCs program, these educators help local school systems address the needs of minority students through training and technical assistance and conduct an annual conference where exemplary methods of educating minority students are highlighted.

In addition, local school systems are required to prepare annual plans that outline how they intend to address the achievement gap, while challenging all students to improve their achievement levels. Students who are performing below grade level at grades three, five, and eight must receive remediation and have a personal education plan before they can be pro-

moted. The plan travels with the child to help guide instruction at the next grade level. The intent is that the "receiving teacher" has a better understanding of the educational needs of the child, says Pittman. "What has the school done before for the child? What are the weaknesses? What are the strengths?"

The plan also becomes important if a child is retained—or asked to repeat a grade. "If you are retaining a child, you don't want to just give the child more of the same," says Pittman. "It didn't work the first time. It's probably not going to work this time." Pittman describes the personal education plan as "focused intervention" to help struggling students improve.

Pittman says the state also has put in place dual language sites for Hispanic/Latino students who struggle to learn in English, set up a center in the Closing the Gap Section where people across the state can call to learn about best practices and resources, and encouraged school systems across the state to create their own local task forces to examine what can be done to close the achievement gap for minority students.

But despite a clear focus on improving minority achievement, Pittman says it's also important to remember what the effort is not about. "It's not about taking resources from certain groups and focusing all our resources on minorities and the poor," says Pittman. "It's about targeting to where the needs are. When lower performing students perform better, the whole school performs better."

Keeping a watchful eye on the progress is the appointed State Board of Education, chaired by former state legislator Howard Lee of Orange County. "There are numerous efforts that are being made to move the gap closer," observes Lee. "Different systems are trying different things with varying results. In addition to looking at the gap between ethnic groups, we need to look at the gap within ethnic groups. If we cure the intra-ethnic group gap, we will have made huge steps toward curing the inter-ethnic group gap.

"Looking back five years ago to now," says Lee, "I think we have had incredible results. Blacks and American Indians have made the most remarkable growth. The gap between white and black students seems to be the one that is closing the fastest. If we look within groups, the gap between groups will close even faster."

But Lee, an African American who has been elected to offices ranging from mayor of Chapel Hill to multiple terms in the state Senate, believes there is danger in focusing too much on race as it relates to school achievement. "We need to put more emphasis on socioeconomics as opposed to ethnicity," says Lee. "If we are not careful, we will assume that all white students are functioning well when they are not."

Lee believes a three-pronged approach to addressing the gap will yield the best results: (1) base work more on socioeconomics rather than ethnicity, focusing on high income, middle income, and low income students; (2) address the gap within each ethnic group, causing the group as a whole to rise; and (3) last, put the focus on the gap between ethnic groups.

-Mike McLaughlin

ladder never have to make that choice."

Growing numbers of children in North Carolina live in low-income families. About 20 percent of North Carolina's children live below the poverty line, according to a September 2003 census survey.³⁴ That's up from 18.5 percent in 2000. It also means that in a playground of 100 children from various economic backgrounds, one in every five would come from families that struggle to meet the basic needs of their children.

"Solving the family resources problem is very difficult," Vigdor says. "We can try to give parents

more guidance on what it takes to keep their kid performing well in school. But talking at them is not going to relieve the economic pressure they feel. You have to be cautious about expecting very large changes in the way parents behave."

Low-income African-American parents may feel uncomfortable at school, may distrust the teacher or staff, or may have had a difficult time themselves when they were in school. That has as much to do with socio-economics as race, says Nancy Hill, an associate professor of psychology at Duke University.

Research shows that poverty concentration at a school doesn't have to be extreme in order to negatively affect student achievement.³⁵ Schools in low-income communities tend to have high teacher and student turnover rates, which often slows down the curriculum. Since minority students are much more likely to be poor or to attend schools with high concentrations of poverty than white students, poverty takes a greater toll on the education achievement of poor and non-poor minority students.

"We can try to steer the best teachers toward the schools that serve disadvantaged students," Vigdor says. "But the best way to ensure that disadvantaged kids and wealthy kids have the same resources is to put them in the same room."

However, the racial and ethnic achievement gap persists across socioeconomic lines. For example, the mean total SAT score (931) in 1999 for African-American students from families whose income was more than \$70,000 a year was 51 points lower than white test takers from families who earned less than \$20,000 a year.³⁶ Researchers say the difference in test scores by race-independent of income differences—suggests that other factors may have had a larger effect on children's test scores. However, education demographer Harold Hodgkinson argues that children of low socioeconomic status arrive at kindergarten already behind their more affluent peers in terms of school readiness.37 Without adequate support at home, they stand little chance of catching up. Hodgkinson advocates broadly available public preschool programs as part of the answer.

There also are differences in cultural values and communications styles that could account for the troubling relationship between African Americans and the school system, according to professor Nancy Hill, who studies the way diverse parenting and family socialization influence student performance. "The school culture is often different from the home culture," she says. "In some ethnic cultures, you're not supposed to talk back to adults. The child may end up in a classroom where questioning authority is part of the learning dynamic. If the child doesn't respond accordingly, the teacher might assume they are not really engaged. But the child may be interacting in a way that's consistent with their ethnic background."

Hill gives another instance of a child who doesn't respond according to the teacher's expectations and thus may be perceived as disruptive or ill-behaved. But the difference could be cultural communication styles. A teacher may say, "Why don't you sit down?" instead of making a command.

However, an African-American child may be used to hearing directives, such as, "Sit down."

Another study found that African-American parents are more likely than other ethnic groups to place greater importance on ensuring that the classroom is friendly and accepting. It is less important to them that their children can master letters and numbers in preschool, according to a study by Oscar Barbarin, a Preyer Distinguished Professor at the University of North Carolina Chapel Hill School of Social Work.³⁸ "There appears to be more of a belief among black parents that once their child acclimates to the classroom, they can catch up quickly if they are behind," Barbarin says.

True to parental expectations, the children did catch up on simple skills such as recognizing numbers or sounding out letters one at a time. But by the end of kindergarten, a clear gap emerged when looking at higher-level skills such as adding, subtracting, or identifying the sound of a letter at the end of a word. These skills indicate a child's readiness to handle more advanced challenges in first grade.

But the best way for parents to offset the achievement gap is to become a stronger presence in public schools, Hill says. "When African-American parents can volunteer at school, it increases student achievement," Hill says. "All families are busy. They send their children to school and go to work. But it seems to make a bigger difference for African-American students when their parents can visit the classroom." Hill's research did not examine the reasons behind this phenomenon, but she surmises that this is because both the teacher and the student see that education is important to the child's parents. This prompts the teacher to raise expectations and the child to work harder.

The Impact of Re-Segregation on Black Students

Public schools across the state are becoming more racially diverse. However, "white flight," the dismantling of mandatory school busing, and support for neighborhood schools and school choice as reflected in charter schools and school vouchers is creating a re-segregated system of schools.

An analysis by *The News & Observer* of Raleigh, N.C., found that the number of North Carolina schools with minority enrollments of 80 percent or more has doubled in the past seven years to 226 out of roughly 2,100 schools. "Of the 226 schools with minority enrollments of at least 80 percent, fewer than a dozen can claim the



Karen Tam

achievement levels typically found in middle-class suburban schools," writes Tim Simmons. "Most are in rural counties or small towns where teachers who want to stay in the profession have little choice about where to work." The racial balance in 302 other schools throughout the state has shifted and produced enrollments that are 60 to 80 percent minority, triggering white flight among parents. 40

But the most watched school system is in the City of Charlotte and Mecklenburg County, with its emphasis on school choice and neighborhood schools. A federal judge declared in 1999 that Charlotte-Mecklenburg schools no longer had to bus students outside of their communities to achieve integration. In 2002, the school system began its first year operating under a plan that does not include race in assigning students to schools. A *Charlotte Observer* analysis showed that the plan resulted in schools with high concentrations of poverty, as well as black majority schools.

"There is a very strong correlation between the percent poor in a school and its average test score," says Gary Orfield, a professor of Education and Social Policy at Harvard University. "Therefore, minority students in segregated schools, no matter how able they may be as individuals, usually face a much lower level of competition and average preparation by other students. Such schools tend to have teachers who are themselves much more likely to be teaching a subject they did not study and with which they have had little experience."

However, not all African-American parents are bemoaning re-segregation. Some black parents of a certain age romanticize their own days in segregated schools. Despite the lack of adequate text-books and resources, they say teachers at all-black schools cared about students and took a personal interest in their achievement.

"Too many times, what is missing is the sort of bond between the teacher and the student that makes a child want to excel," says Henry Johnson, a former associate state superintendent in North Carolina who now serves as Mississippi's statewide public schools superintendent.⁴²

Frustrated with plodding education reforms that take too long to trickle down to black students, some parents are seeking alternatives to traditional schools such as: all-black charter schools; vouchers to attend specialized private schools; or homeschooling. Parents say these choices offer students smaller class sizes and individualized attention, factors in improving test scores.

But Helen Ladd, an economics professor at

Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy, contends that widespread use of school vouchers will not generate substantial gains in student achievement. Ladd argues that a large voucher system would result in large numbers of disadvantaged students being grouped together in schools that more motivated and/or talented students fled.

"At the same time, there are good arguments for giving families, especially those who are economically disadvantaged, more power to choose the schools their children attend," Ladd said. "The challenge for policymakers is to find ways to expand parental choices without excessively privileging the interests of individual families over the social interests that justify the public funding of K-12 education."

Keeping It Real: Peer Pressure and Student Response to the Minority Achievement Gap

rap recording artists use to signify that they have remained true to their racial identity despite achieving financial success in mainstream society. But some education experts say that the pressure to "keep it real" could create a false sense of identity for African-American students who equate getting good grades with "acting white."

"Many rappers couple biting social commentary with positive lyrics about how to improve things," says National Urban League President Hugh Price. "Still, there's no question that some rappers see only the dark side of life and dismiss trying to succeed on society's terms. That message is ruinous and leads nowhere."

Cheryl, a fifth-grader from Detroit, told Price about the tug of war African-American students feel between keeping it real and acting white. "Some black kids will shoot you down if you're smart in school and accuse you of having 'airs' and thinking you're better than anyone else. I love school, but I don't want people to say stupid things about me or leave me out. It's hard to know what to do."44

Such feelings have real world consequences, says Ferguson, who disputes a study that discounts the "acting white" phenomenon. "Black students may hesitate to raise their hands in class, to participate in class discussions, or to seem eager to learn because they fear social ostracism by their peers," Ferguson says. "Some blacks may moderate their speech because they worry about sounding too much like an 'Oreo.' Others may try to 'act ghetto' in an effort to assert their racial authentic-

Now I see the importance of history
Why my people be in the mess that they be
Many journeys to freedom made in vain
By brothers on the corner playing ghetto games.
-FROM "TENNESSEE"
BY RAP GROUP ARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

ity, but as a consequence may convince teachers that they are disruptive and uncommitted to academic matters."45

The history of racial discrimination in the United States has led some African-American students to value education less than other groups and to associate academic success with acting white, according to John Ogbu, a recently deceased University of Berkeley at California researcher who devoted much of his career to studying minority achievement. "The equation of the school curriculum, the standard classroom behaviors and instructional language, the standard English, with white American culture and language results in conscious or unconscious opposition or ambivalence toward learning and using instrumental behaviors to make good grades and obtain the school credentials that the students say they need and want," Ogbu said. "This phenomenon, which has to do with identity choice, is a dilemma that cuts across class lines. It may partly explain the low school performance of some middle-class students."46

Some students have a strong inner drive or community/parental support that causes them to succeed despite the taunts, while other students who grapple with their racial identity are more vulnerable.

"Once students have figured out their African-American identity, it is actually positively associated with achievement," says Duke University professor Nancy Hill. "When you look historically at African-American people's experience in the United States... the message was clear that getting an education was an important key to getting ahead."

Philip Cook of Duke University and co-author Jens Ludwig of Georgetown University find that high-achieving African-American students are no more likely to be unpopular than other students. They find that high-achieving African Americans, overall, have similar attendance rates and spend almost as much time on homework. African-American students also tend to frame certain types of peer pressure in racial terms while white students taunt over-achieving peers as "nerds" or "geeks."

"Newspaper accounts of African-American valedictorians and honor students who are elected officers in student government provide some support for our view that high-achieving blacks are not particularly socially isolated," Cook and Ludwig say. "It seems unlikely that these high achievers would have been elected class president or vice president had their popularity been limited to one small clique within the school."⁴⁷

Beyond Black and White: Educational Achievement Gap Also Affects Hispanics/Latinos and Native Americans

hile it's tempting to lump all minorities into a single category when discussing the educational achievement gap, there are differences among ethnic groups that call for targeted solutions and strategies.

Latino Achievement Gap

Latinos are quickly replacing African Americans as the nation's largest minority group, according to recent U.S. Census data. And, the number of Latino students enrolled in traditional North Carolina public schools increased in the past decade from

1.1 percent (12,641) of the overall student population of 1,146,657 students during the 1992–1993 school year to 5.9 percent (77,485) in 2002–2003.

About 70 percent of Latino children enrolled in North Carolina's public schools could read and solve math problems at or above their grade level, according to the 2002–2003 ABCs of Education results. "It amazes a lot of people that with language being a barrier, they are making that kind of progress," says Charlotte Hughes, section chief in the N.C. Department of Public Instruction's Effective Practices Section. Despite significant language barriers, Latino children outscored their African-American peers.

No exceptions are made for Latino or other limited English proficiency students when it comes to state and federal education testing. Latino students are tested for their language abilities once they are enrolled in school. They are given one type of test if their English is limited and another type of test if they are fluent. Alternative testing is available for students who score below "intermediate/high" in the IDEA Proficiency test, which was initially created to allow disabled children to be tested.⁴⁸

The average SAT score for Latinos in 2003 was 961.⁴⁹ North Carolina Latino students scored 122 points higher than black students in the state and 49 points higher than their national counterparts. But the Latino average score dipped by nine points (970) from 2000. In that year, Latino students in North Carolina scored 52 points above their national counterparts.

But Latinos still lag behind white students. The Latino-white achievement gap reached its narrowest in 1992, but widened thereafter. They trailed white students by 18.6 points on the 2002–03 end-of-grade tests. On SAT tests in 2003, there was a 89-point gap between Latino and white students in North Carolina.

The Latino achievement gap can be measured in other ways. By the end of high school, Latino students nationwide had skills in both reading and math that are comparable to an eighth-grade white student. A 1999 study revealed that only 1 in 50 Latinos could read and gain information from specialized texts, such as the science section in the newspaper, compared to 1 in 12 whites by the end of high school.⁵⁰

A consistent pattern emerged in mathematical ability. About 1 in 30 Latinos and 1 in 100 African-American students could comfortably do multi-step problem-solving and elementary algebra, compared to 1 in 10 white students. Less than one-quarter of Latinos could read complicated but less specialized texts that more than half of white students could read. Only 4 in 10 Latino 17-year-olds and 3 in 10 African-American 17-year-olds had mastered the usage and computation of fractions, commonly used percents, and averages, compared to 7 in 10 white students.

Student achievement also affects **dropout** rates and college attendance. Hispanics made up 5.9 percent of North Carolina's student population and 6.9 percent of students who dropped out of school in 2002–2003. Nationally, in the 18 to 24-year-old group, 63 percent of Latinos have completed high school or earned a GED (General Education Development) credential. This compares to

the 81 percent of African Americans, 90 percent of whites, and 94 percent of Asians who finish high school. Among high school graduates, nationally, some 71 percent of Hispanics/Latinos go directly to college, a figure similar to that of African Americans but less than the 76 percent of whites, and 86 percent of Asian high school graduates who go directly to college. Young Latinos are only one-third as likely as whites to earn a bachelor's degree by age 29, with 10 percent earning a degree compared to 28 percent for whites. Young African Americans, at 16 percent, are a little more than half as likely as whites to earn a bachelor's degree by age 29.51

Overcoming the language barrier is often the first and most significant hurdle that Latino students encounter when entering the classroom. Depending on the student's level of language proficiency, it could take from one to seven school years for students to learn English. The first two years are often spent developing social language and the next three to seven years for academic language development.

Language affects learning in overt and subtle ways. Spanish-speaking students, for example, are able to recognize English letters. But they will have different names for the letters and may associate different sounds with perhaps a third of the letters. This will interfere with their oral reading and spelling abilities. In mathematics, students from South America use a period instead of a comma when writing large numbers. Students from South America and the Caribbean may mentally solve arithmetic problems while U.S. students write out long division problems. Overcoming these barriers could help Spanish-speaking students improve their math skills in U.S. schools.⁵²

Latino immigrants come willingly to the United States to seek a better life and often earn more money in the U.S. than they do at home. But in North Carolina, 25.2 percent of Latinos live in poverty, according to the U.S. Census, and per capita income is less than half that of whites.

Nationally, Latinos tend to be in more segregated schools. In 1968, 54.8 percent of all Latino students in the nation attended segregated schools, but almost half went to majority white schools, according to Gary Orfield, a Harvard University professor of education and social policy.⁵³ By 1998, 75.6 percent of Latinos were in predominantly minority schools and less than one-fourth in majority white schools. Latinos are substantially more segregated and have less contact with whites than black students since 1980, Orfield found.

Latinos, like black students, often attend schools with the highest levels of students who qualify for free or reduced lunch, a measure of family poverty. "Minority students in segregated schools, no matter how able they may be as individuals, usually face a much lower level of competition and average preparation by other students," writes Orfield in his article, "Consequences of a Decade of Resegregation." ⁵⁴

Latino students in schools with high concentrations of poor students tend to suffer, Orfield says, because such schools have more inexperienced teachers and teachers instructing in subjects they have never studied. Fewer students are ready for advanced courses, and opportunities are eliminated for those students who are because of their relatively low numbers.

Latino students also face possible stereotypes by teachers regarding student achievement and parental involvement. School administrators and teachers misread the reserved, non-confrontational manners and non-involvement of Latino parents as a lack of interest in their child's education. But like African-American parents, Latinos care deeply about their child's education and have high goals for their children.

A review of literature regarding Latino parents found that they view their role in school involvement differently than the school or the teacher.⁵⁵

Parents, according to this study, think their role is to nurture their children and teach them such lessons as proper behavior, good character, and respect for adults. They think the role of the school is to instill knowledge. When parents are asked to take on some of the responsibilities of the school, such as going over lessons at home, Latino parents may feel they are doing the job of the school.

"In the Latino culture, teachers are highly respected and any interference from parents may be considered rude and disrespectful," says Barri Tinkler, admissions coordinator at the University of Denver in a paper that summarizes Hispanic/Latino Parent Involvement in K-12 Education. 66 "Therefore, though teachers view parents asking questions about assignments and grades to show caring for their child's education, Latino parents may view this as a sign of disrespect."

Native-American Achievement Gap

Ative-American students have made up 1.5 percent of the state's average student membership in recent years. In 2003, that totaled 18,651 of 1,332,140 students. While Native-American students often test well among ethnic groups on the end-of-grade and SAT tests, they are still overrepresented among students who serve long-term suspensions or leave high school.



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About 72.3 percent of Native-American students in the state could read and solve math problems at or above their grade level in 2003. This is up from 62.7 percent in 2001–2002. Following Asian students, Native Americans had the second-highest test scores among ethnic groups on end-of-grade tests.

Only 115 Native-American students in North Carolina took the Advanced Placement (AP) test in 2002 compared to 494 Latinos and 2,438 blacks. But of the Native-American students who took the AP test, 45.1 percent scored a "3" (qualified) or better.⁵⁷ Most institutions use a "3" or higher as a benchmark for awarding credit or advanced placement.

The average SAT score for Native-American students in North Carolina in 2003 was 923. This is up nine points from 2002. Nationally, Native-American students achieved an average score of 962 in 2003. North Carolina's American-Indian students reduced the gap between their performance and that of American Indians nationally from 48 points in 2002 to 39 points in 2003.⁵⁸

Education advocates say they are deeply concerned about the significant dropout rate among American-Indian students relative to their small presence among the state's overall student population and relative to the dropout rate among white students. "The overall achievement of Native-American students is complicated by their diverse cultural context," writes Louise C. Maynor, chairman of the State Advisory Council on Indian Education in its annual report. "These students expressed some tension in maintaining their identity as Native Americans and succeeding in achieving the goals of the mainstream culture." 59

That tension causes some Native-American students to fall behind in classes or drop out all together. Native Americans represented 1.5 percent

"It is a great shock at the age of five or six to find that in a world of Gary Coopers you are the Indian."

—Novelist James Baldwin

Table 5.

Percentage of Dropouts by Race and Ethnicity
Compared to Overall Public School Membership
by Race and Ethnicity, 2002–2003

	% of All Dropouts, Grades 1–12*	% of Average Public School Membership
Whites	54.75%	59.4%
African Americans	33.42%	31.2%
Hispanic/Latino	6.87%	5.9%
American Indian	2.48%	1.5%
Asian	1.38%	2.0%
Multiracial	1.00%	N.A.

^{*} Because North Carolina law requires school attendance from grades 1–12, students who attended school at some point during the prior year and do not show up for school within 20 days of the beginning of a new school year without transferring to a school in another district, a home school, a private school, or any other state or district approved educational program, are counted as dropouts.

N.A. = Data not available.

Source: North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, Dropout Data Report, 2002–2003, p. 11.





of the average student membership in 2002–2003, but they accounted for 2.48 percent of total dropouts (see Table 5, p. 98). The dropout rates among Native Americans had dipped since 2000, but turned up again in 2002–2003. Moreover, Native Americans continue to have the highest dropout rates per ethnic population, with 3.21 percent for males and 2.45 percent for females.

In one student account documented in the State Advisory Board's annual report, Native-American students expressed weariness from refuting pervasive stereotypes about their culture. They felt disconnected from the school and weighed down by changing school policies about graduation requirements. In some cases, entire Native-American families dropped out of school.

"Well, back to Donnell, it was like he just didn't have a connection with anybody," a student said in a personal account. "I mean he couldn't even pick the guidance counselor out of a line-up. I know he kind of felt like I did—classes were boring a lot of the time, and a lot of our teachers just didn't seem to care all that much whether we learned anything or not."

Some strategies proposed at a May 2003 meeting of the State Board of Education to help Native Americans stay in school included: increasing the demand and use of textbooks that

fairly and accurately represent Native Americans, creating boards or commissions within the state Department of Public Instruction to address issues affecting Native-American students, reviewing policies on use of Native-American images as mascots for sports teams, diversity training for teachers, and recruiting more Native Americans to become teachers.⁶⁰

According to current State Board of Education Policy, schools must review the use of Indian mascots and imagery each year to "educate themselves on the educational, curricular, and psychological effects of using sports mascots and logos." Currently, 42 North Carolina schools retain Indian mascots despite this requirement.⁶¹

North Carolina's Search For Solutions

Closing the educational achievement gap is a high priority on the federal and state level. Federal education reforms under the "No Child Left Behind" law require school systems to meet yearly education targets for minorities and other groups. ⁶² Still, there is a nagging sense among some segments of the public that minority students count for less. "I feel like teachers pay more attention to white children . . . and that's why black children are having a hard time in school," says

Brenda Valines, a black resident of Alamance County.

North Carolina educators are working hard to dispel that notion. State Superintendent of Public Instruction Mike Ward initiated a 10-step plan to raise achievement levels and close achievement gaps by 2001 (see "State Superintendent of Public Instruction's 10-Point Plan," page 101, for more). The N.C. Department of Public Instruction instituted a new section, Closing the Achievement Gap, within the Division of School Improvement to address this issue.

An Advisory Commission on Raising Achievement and Closing Gaps was appointed in the summer of 2000 to make recommendations to the State Board of Education, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, and local school systems. The group published its first report in December 2001 and held a series of town hall meetings in the fall of 2003 to solicit input.

Some solutions include teacher training in understanding multicultural differences, smaller classes, requiring early identification for students who are at risk of failure, improving services for students with limited English proficiency, and using more than just test scores when making promotion decisions.

Other solutions attack internal causes of the minority achievement gap. They include encouraging more minorities to take challenging classes, establishing mentoring programs for public school students with minority students at historically black colleges and universities, and creating events to better integrate parents with schools.

While these efforts have made some headway as indicated by the shrinking of the existing gap, there remains significant ground to cover. Howard Lee, chairman of the State Board of Education, advocates focusing on improving the performance of students with low socio-economic standing in the effort to raise overall achievement. Mike Ward, the state superintendent, advocates redoubling efforts to educate minorities while attending to the needs of all students.

Both are undoubtedly correct. The long-term health of public education depends upon meeting the needs of all students, rather than a select few-but in the short run, educators must strengthen their efforts to attend to the needs of minorities who have been the victims of past neglect.

Image of Indian warrior in Louisburg High School cafeteria. Such Native American imagery has become controversial in the public schools.



Lisa Lauck, The News & Observer

State Superintendent of Public Instruction's 10-Point Plan To Close the Achievement Gap Between Whites and Minority Students:

- 1. Children at every performance level should improve academically. Students experiencing difficulty should be helped to reach proficiency and beyond. High-performing students should reach even higher levels of achievement. The goal should be growth across all levels—with performance lines converging. The most immediate goal is closing the gap in percentages of students who are achieving at grade level.
- 2. Create a permanent advisory committee to the State Superintendent/Department to address the issues of higher standards and closing performance gaps by race, gender, and socioeconomic status. This group's actions will include issuing an annual report on the status of and progress to close gaps and challenge all students to higher levels.
- 3. Establish a section within the department to provide technical assistance to schools and school systems to help close the gaps. The ABCs assistance team approach will be used as the model for this section. These staff members and teachers-on-loan will work with other department staff to address best practices, alternative education, dropout prevention, instruction and testing, parent and community involvement, staff development and other areas.
- 4. Require local school systems to develop annual plans for closing gaps and challenging all students to higher levels. Conduct random reviews of these plans.
- 5. Develop budget requests for the short session and the next biennium and subsequent years of the legislature for funds for DPI, local school systems, and local schools to use in closing gaps and challenging all students to higher levels of performance.
- 6. Direct \$4 million in Goals 2000 funds to assist local school systems in closing the gaps. Also, coordinate with other state, federal, and private agencies and groups to secure funding and services that can help close gaps and challenge students.
- 7. Calculate each school's progress under the ABCs accountability program based on the second and third retests for students in grades 3, 5, and 8 (gateway years under the student accountability standards). This change will reward the schools for making progress with students who need extra help. Also, work with the five local districts participating in the ABCs pilot program that rewards schools for improving performance of subgroups of students.
- 8. Seek funding and legislation to pilot dual language demonstration sites to help meet the needs of English language learners.
- 9. Develop a resource center for schools and school systems for information on best practices in closing gaps. This center would include information on available training in multicultural issues, what's working in high-performing schools, and other resources.
- 10. Encourage local collaboration of school leaders, parents, the faith community, students, historically minority colleges and universities, other higher education institutions, and other stakeholders to hold community forums and take action to support closing gaps and challenging students to higher levels of performance.



FOOTNOTES

¹ PL 107-110, The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001.

² North Carolina's multi-year commitment to the ABCs of Public Education defies a tendency on the part of the state to flit from reform to reform in its approach to educating young people. For more on this topic, see S.D. Williams and Joanne Scharer, "Random Acts of Public School Reform—Will New Elections and Budgets Undo Current Reform Efforts Again?" North Carolina Insight, Vol. 12, No. 1–2, October 2000, pp. 58–107. The ABC program is discussed on pp. 84–97.

³ N.C. Department of Public Instruction, "North Carolina Public Schools Statistical Profile 2003," p. 18.

⁴ "The ABCs of Public Education: 2002-2003," N.C. Department of Public Instruction at http://abcs.ncpublic schools.org/abcs/.

5 Ibid.

⁶N.C. Department of Public Instruction press release "North Carolina's SAT Score Increases Three Points; Breaks Thousand-Point Threshold," Aug. 26, 2003, at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/news/03-04/082603.html.

⁷N.C. Department of Public Instruction, "State of the State: Educational Performance in North Carolina, 2002," pp. 19–20, at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/news/03-04/082603.html.

⁸ Sheria Reid, *The Achievement Gap 2002, An Update—How Minority Students Are Faring in NC's Public Schools, Education and Law Project, North Carolina Justice and Community Development Center, Raleigh, N.C., July, 2002, pp. 5–6.*

9 Ibid.

¹⁰ For more on charter schools and their appeal for African-American students and their families, see John Manuel and Mike McLaughlin, "The Charter School Experience in North Carolina," North Carolina Insight, Vol. 20, Nos. 1–2, July 2002, pp. 42–47.

¹¹ Public Schools of North Carolina, State Board of Education, Department of Public Instruction, Office of Instructional and Accountability Services, Division of Accountability Services report, Annual Study of Suspensions and Expulsions: 2000–2001.

¹² Racial Inequity in Special Education, Daniel J. Losen and Gary Orfield, eds., The Civil Rights Project, Harvard University and the Harvard Education Press, Cambridge, Mass., 2002, introduction, p. 5. Introduction to the book available on line at http://gseweb.harvard.edu/~hepg/introduction.html.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

¹⁴ U.S. Office of Special Education Programs, www.idea data.org, "Percentage (Based on 2000 Census Population) of Children Ages 6-21 Served Under IDEA, Part B, by Race/ Ethnicity During 2000-01 School Year."

¹⁵ Harvard University, The Civil Rights Project, "Racial Inequity in Special Education: Education Summary for Federal Policy Makers," June 2002, at http://www.civilrightsproject.harvard.edu/research/specialed/IDEA_paper02.php.

¹⁶ Tim Simmons, "Lower Expectations Limit Blacks' Potential," *The News and Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., November 22, 1999, p. 1B.

¹⁷Tim Simmons, "Success Hinges on Race, Class," *The News & Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., August 31, 2002, p. 1A.

¹⁸ Rebecca Gordon, Libero Della Piana, and Terry Keleher, "Facing the Consequences: An Examination of Racial Discrimination in U.S. Public Schools," Applied Research Center, Oakland, Calif., 2000, p. 16. The Black-White Test Score Gap, Christopher Jencks and Meredith Phillips, editors, Brookings Institution Press, Washington, D.C., 1998, pp. 394–395. Ferguson's findings are summarized on the Internet at http://www.ncrel.gap.smartlibrary.info/NewInterface/smart_guide.cfm?smart_guide_id=7.

²⁰ Ibid. at pp. 273-317.

²¹ Ibid. at pp. 312-313.

²² Tim Simmons, "A Sense of Estrangement," *The News & Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., Sept. 29, 2002, p. 19A.

²³ N.C. State Board of Education, "2000-2001 Annual Report—Strategic Priority 3: Quality Teachers, Administration, and Staff," at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/state_board/annualrpt/00-01/priority3.html.

²⁴Thomas S. Dee, "Teachers, Race, and Student Achievement in a Randomized Experiment," National Bureau of Economic Research, Cambridge, Mass., Working Paper 8432, August 2001, at http://www.nber.com. The improvement in test scores was only slightly smaller than the gains children made that were attributed to smaller class sizes. The study also found that race-based test score differences also disappeared when all children were assigned to smaller classes.

²⁵ For more on this topic, see Roslyn Arlin Mickelson, "Subverting Swann: First- and Second-Generation Segregation in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools," *American Educational Research Journal*, American Educational Research Association, Washington, D.C., Summer 2001, Vol. 38, No. 2, pp. 215–252.

²⁶ Tim Simmons, "State Targets Racial Gap," The News & Observer, Raleigh, N.C., August 19, 2001, p. 1B.

²⁷ Gordon, et al., note 18 above, p. 20.

²⁸ Smart Library on Closing the Achievement Gap, "Teacher Perceptions, Expectations and Behaviors May Put Black Students at a Disadvantage," http://qap.smartlibrary.info.

²⁹ Hugh B. Price, Achievement Matters: Getting Your Child the Best Education Possible, Kensington Publishing Corp, New York, N.Y., 2002, p. 3.

³⁰ "Teacher Perceptions, Expectations and Behaviors May Put Black Students at a Disadvantage," note 28 above.

³¹ Tim Simmons and Susan Ebbs, "Starting From Behind: The Relationship Between Black Parents and Schools Is Becoming a Focal Point for Efforts to Raise Minority Achievement," *The News & Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., September 29, 2002, p. 1A.

³² Price, note 29 above, p. 4.

³³ Donald F. Roberts and Ulla G. Foehr, Kaiser Family Foundation Report, "Kids & Media at the New Millennium," Menlo Park, Calif., pp. 14, 20, and 84 at http://www.kff.org/content/1999/1535/KidsReport%20FINAL.pdf.

³⁴ North Carolina Estimates from the Current Population Survey, State Data Center, Raleigh, N.C., September 2003, p. 6. Available on line at http://census.state.nc.us/.

³⁵ N.C. Department of Public Instruction, "Minority Achievement Report: Trends in Subgroup Performance, 2001," p. 3.
³⁶ Ibid., p. 4.

³⁷ Harold L. Hodgkinson, Leaving Too Many Children Behind—A Demographer's View of America's Youngest Children, Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C., April 2003, pp. 11–12, p. 16.

³⁸ Simmons and Ebbs, "Starting from Behind," note 31 above, p. 1A.

³⁹ For more on Hill's research, see Nancy E. Hill & Stacie A. Craft, "Parent-school involvement and school performance: Mediated pathways among socioeconomically comparable African American and Euro-American families," *Journal of American Psychology*, American Psychological Association, Washington, D.C., Volume 95, No. 1, March 2003, pp. 74–83.

⁴⁰ Tim Simmons, "Where Do We Go From Here?," *The News and Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., February 5, 2001, p. 1A.

⁴¹ Gary Orfield, "Consequences of a Decade of Resegregation," published in fall 2001 at http://www.rethinkingschools.org. ⁴² Tim Simmons, "A Sense of Estrangement," note 22 above. Barberin's research is discussed in more detail in Oscar Barbarin, Family Practices and Educational Success. Invited Presentation in Symposium, "Development of Children of Color: Reflections for Future Research," 2003 Society for Research in Child Development, Tampa, Fla.

⁴³ Helen Ladd, "School Vouchers and Student Achievement: What We Know So Far," *Education Reform*, Center for Child and Family Policy, Duke University, Vol. 3, No. 1, 2003.

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⁴⁵ Ronald Ferguson is commenting on a study featured in the book, *The Black-White Test Score Gap*, Christopher Jencks and Meredith Phillips, editors, Brookings Institution Press, 1998, Washington, D.C., pp. 394–395.

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⁴⁷ Philip J. Cook and Jens Ludwig, "The Burden of 'Acting White': Do Black Adolescents Disparage Academic Achievement?," *The Black-White Test Score Gap*, Christopher Jencks and Meredith Phillips, editors, Brookings Institution Press, 1998, p. 397.

⁴⁸ The information on Limited English proficiency testing was gathered from the "Data Collection for Students Identified as Limited English Proficient" in the *Processing Guide*. The guide was published in January 2003 by North Carolina's testing program division of the state education department.

⁴⁹ The North Carolina SAT Report, 2003, August 2003, p. 8. Available on line at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/Accountability/reporting/sat/2003/.

⁵⁰ Kati Haycock, "Closing the Achievement Gap," *Educational Leadership*, Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, Alexandria, Va., Vol. 58, No. 6, March 2001, pp. 6–11.

51 Ibid.

⁵² Elizabeth Claire and Judy Haynes, "Classroom Teacher's ESL Survival Guide," 1994, Prentice Hall Regents. But the information was taken from the "Closing the Achievement Gap" Section, Division of School Accountability, N.C. Department of Public Instruction at http://www.ncpublicschools.org/schoolimprovement/closingthegap/strategies/movement/survival.shtml.

⁵³ Gary Orfield, "Consequences of a Decade of Resegregation," Rethinking Schools: An Urban Education Resource, Rethinking Schools, Milwaukee, Wis., Vol. 16, No. 1, Fall 2001, p. 9. Available on line at http://www.rethinkingschools.org/archive/16_01/Seg161.shtml.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

55 Barri Tinkler, "A Review of Literature on Hispanic/Latino Parent Involvement in K-12 Education," University of Denver, Colo., March 25, 2002, p. 7. This paper was originally published by the youth advocacy organization, Assets for Colorado Youth, 2002, Denver, Colo., available on line at http://www.building assets.org/products/latinoparentreport/latinoparentrept.htm.

56 Ibid.

⁵⁷ State Advisory Council on Indian Education, "Remaining and Becoming: 2003 Report to State Board of Education," p. 74.

⁵⁸ N.C. Department of Public Instruction, "North Carolina's SAT Score Increases Three Points," August 26, 2003.

⁵⁹ State Advisory Council on Indian Education, note 57 above, p. 1.

60 Ibid, Executive Summary and pp. 14 and 23.

⁶¹ Current state policy on use of Indian mascots and a list of schools with Native-American mascots are found at: http://www.main.nc.us/wncceib/NCMEAGindex.htm. This is the website of the Western North Carolina Center to End Institutional Bigotry, in Asheville, N.C.

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What the Polls Show About Attitudes Toward Public Policy and Race Relations: Race Matters

by Lynn Bonner

ace and ethnicity have a clear impact on how North Carolinians view race relations and the role of government. Most polls on the topic have focused primarily on how blacks and whites view public issues, because other groups were too small to draw a representative sample. That's changing as the Hispanic/Latino population of both North Carolina and the nation continues to expand. However, polls over the past decade primarily have examined the perspectives of whites and African Americans. Here, there are broad areas of disagreement.

African Americans and whites hold differing views toward police and the criminal justice system. For example, in a poll of racial attitudes in North Carolina by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation of Winston-Salem, 64 percent of black respondents said law enforcement officers in their communities were generally tougher on blacks, while 65 percent of white respondents said officers treat blacks and whites the same. National polls show similar results. In a 2000 CBS News poll, 71 percent of African Americans said the criminal justice system was biased against blacks, compared to only 39 percent of whites and 44 percent of Hispanics/Latinos who felt the same way.

Job discrimination and affirmative action is another area where blacks, whites, and Hispanics/Latinos hold differing views. In the CBS poll, 90 percent of blacks and 87 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, but only 60 percent of whites said laws were necessary to protect minorities from discrimination in hiring and promotion.

A January 2003 ABC News/Washington Post poll asked, Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities preference over white men getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion?" A total of 65 percent of black respondents said they favor such programs, while only 24 percent of whites said they support them.

In yet another area of difference, African Americans are far more supportive of busing to achieve school integration than whites, and they are generally less satisfied with the public schools than whites.

Finally, blacks take a dimmer view of race relations and of prospects for the future than do either whites or Hispanics/Latinos. For example, 77 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, 74 percent of whites, but only 55 percent of blacks agree that since the 1960s there has been "real progress" in getting rid of racial discrimination.

The Hispanic/Latino perspective is only beginning to emerge in public opinion polling, though recent polls have indicated concerns about immigration from the public generally. The state's other growing racial and ethnic populations remain too small to register on the public opinion radar screen. However, what is clear is that North Carolina has work to do if the state is to understand the varying policy perspectives of an increasingly diverse population.

frican-American and white North Carolinians hold demonstrably different views on whether and how race shapes society and, if so, how government should respond. People of different races don't see eye to eye even on the question of whether race relations are getting better or worse. The differences are evident in state and national polls results over the last decade. Blacks and whites have differing views on how blacks are treated when they look for jobs or seek promotions, how they are treated by the police and courts, and whether affirmative action is fair or needed.

And, blacks are not the only racial or ethnic group holding different views from white Americans on public policy issues. Hispanics/Latinos bring another perspective on the issues, though polls until recently had not separated them out as a distinct group due to their small numbers in North Carolina. Other racial and ethnic groups still represent too small a percentage of state's population to be separated out in analysis of polling data. However, the differences between African Americans and whites are evident and have been for some time.

Differing Views Toward Police and the Criminal Justice System

iews of police and the criminal justice system show some of the starkest differences. In poll after poll, majorities of black respondents say that law enforcement officers are tougher on blacks and that obtaining equal justice is a problem. Responding to those same questions, most whites say law enforcement treats blacks and whites the same, and that the criminal justice system is fair to all. The disparity extends to the death penalty, which has significantly more support among whites. In a 1993 poll of racial attitudes in North Carolina by the Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation of Winston-Salem, 64 percent of black respondents said law enforcement officers in their communities were generally tougher on blacks, while 65 percent of white respondents said officers treat blacks and whites the same.1

National polls show similar results. Seven years after the Reynolds Foundation poll, 71 percent of African Americans answering a 2000 CBS News poll said the criminal justice system was biased against blacks, compared to only 39 percent of whites and 44 percent of Hispanics/Latinos who felt

In this News & Observer photograph from September 7, 1960, Bill Campbell is escorted by his mother to his new public school in Raleigh (see page 104).

the same way.² A 1999 Princeton Survey Research poll for *Newsweek* asked respondents, "Why do you think so many young black men are in prison today?" Among black respondents, 40 percent chose "unfair targeting of blacks by police" compared to 13 percent of whites. On the other hand, 39 percent of whites chose the answer, "bad character of the convicts themselves," while 22 percent of blacks chose that answer.

Questions about race are interwoven in public policy debates on law enforcement. Over the past four years, members of the Legislative Black Caucus have been vocal in their support for measures before the North Carolina General Assembly that would examine the fairness of the state's criminal justice system. In 2001–2002, there were 25 African Americans among the 170 lawmakers, and there were 24 in 2003. In the 2003 session, the General Assembly debated a two-year moratorium on administering the death penalty while the state studied its fairness.⁴ In 1999, the legislature enacted a "driving while black" law requiring state law enforcement officials to collect demographic data on drivers they stop.⁵

African-American legislators championed both issues. These issues had the support of white legislators as well, but among the public in general, support for the death penalty is much stronger among whites than among African Americans. In a 1999 Carolina Poll, for example, 64.9 percent of adult North Carolinians said they favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder, 18.8 percent oppose it, and 16.2 percent said they didn't know or did not answer. Support among white respondents was slightly higher at 72.6 percent, but only 37.2 percent of black respondents said they favor the death penalty for persons convicted of murder, with 42.3 percent opposed.⁶

Martha Early, an assistant minister at a Durham church who pushed for the moratorium, says she couldn't help noticing that all the people who spoke at a public hearing against it were white. Some people who oppose the death penalty, as Early does, do so in part because they believe poor people and blacks are sentenced to death in greater proportions than whites found guilty of murder. "The criminal justice system, it's never been fair to us, us blacks," says Early.

Poll results also indicate blacks are far more likely to believe that black motorists are pulled over more often by police than are whites—the so-called

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Karen lam

"By 1970, the leaders of different movements were telling their followers what the recipe for authenticity was. Black people who didn't fit the bill were called "oreos" which meant black on the outside, white on the inside; Hispanics used the term "coconuts," for brown on the outside, Anglo on the inside; and we eventually heard about "the woman who thinks like a man." All of these people were seen as victims and, potentially, enemies of their movements because their allegiance was to those who oppressed them, who set the standards, who imposed definitions on them, who let them know when they were good and when they were bad. Such people were considered descendants of mission Indians and Uncle Toms—individuals so brainwashed by the oppressors that they had no love for their culture, for themselves, for their people."

. . .

"But by the start of the 1970s, I was on my way out of the separatist movements. By then, Black Power had destroyed the civil rights movement. Its exponents had called for throwing whites out of organizations that had provided integrated teams of workers against discrimination. They had rejected King's march-on-Washington vision in favor of a politics based on skin tone, an international black unity, a hatred of European and American culture, and a remarkably naïve conception of Africa as some kind of paradise lost. . . . We have yet to come out of that tailspin."

. . .

"The kids fear doing well in school because they might be accused of trying to be white, as if high-quality work were outside the province of Negro American engagement.

"This is remarkable because, in the past, Negroes protested against minstrelsy and the stereotypes of innate intellectual inadequacy by struggling up through the barriers of illiteracy and doing the very best jobs that they could. They knew that excellence is one of the highest forms of protest against charges of inferiority. It was also formerly understood that learning itself provided one with interior experiences that could not be taken away, regardless of how unfair the external world might be.

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"Americans... are trying to find out what it means to be authentic. Few of them would use the word "authentic," but the question is still there. That is because we are always being asked to add something new to the mix that might redefine us. This question of renewing or diluting the mix is the fundamental challenge at the heart of our democracy."

——STANLEY CROUCH
"IDENTITY" IN MARIANNE WILLIAMSON, EDITOR,
IMAGINE WHAT AMERICA COULD BE IN THE 21ST CENTURY

"driving while black" issue. In a poll of North and South Carolinians by KPC Research for *The Charlotte Observer*, 69 percent of black respondents said that blacks are pulled over by police more often than whites, while 63 percent of whites said blacks were not stopped by police more than whites.⁷

Differing Views on Job Discrimination and Affirmative Action

Job discrimination and affirmative action represent another area where polls show greater percentages of blacks than whites feel legal protections are necessary. In the 2000 CBS poll, 90 percent of blacks, 87 percent of Hispanics/Latinos, but only 60 percent of whites, said laws were necessary to protect minorities from discrimination in hiring and promotion. And, majorities of black respondents have shown consistent support for affirmative action, while whites have shown far less support. A January 2003 ABC News/Washington Post poll asked, "Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities preference over white men getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion?" A

total of 65 percent of black respondents said they favor such minority preference, while only 24 percent of whites said they support them.⁹

Probing further, the poll asked, "Do you think that blacks who live in your community do or do not have as good a chance as whites to get a job for which they're qualified?" Among white respondents, 80 percent answered yes, compared to only 39 percent of blacks. Additionally, a majority of black respondents said they or a friend or relative had been denied a job because of their race. In the same poll, 79 percent of black respondents said they support government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities assistance—but not preference—getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion. In

A January 2003 CBS News/New York Times poll found a majority of Americans (54 percent) favor continuing affirmative action programs in hiring, promoting, and college admissions, though support was far greater among blacks (94 percent) than among whites (47 percent).¹³ A June 2003 Gallup poll of adults nationwide asked the question, "Do you generally favor or oppose affirmative action programs for racial minorities?"¹⁴ Among black re-



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spondents, 70 percent said they were in favor of affirmative action while 21 percent were opposed. Only 44 percent of non-Hispanic whites said they favor affirmative action, with 49 percent opposed. Among Hispanics/Latinos, 63 percent were in favor, and 28 percent were opposed. The poll was taken a few weeks before the U.S. Supreme Court struck down an undergraduate admissions program at the University of Michigan that relied on a points system and automatically awarded extra points to minority applicants.¹⁵ The Supreme Court upheld, in a 5–4 companion decision, a narrowly tailored program designed to diversify enrollment at the University of Michigan Law School.¹⁶

The Gallup poll's findings regarding support for affirmative action showed some consistency with those taken over the past several years, though responses to questions gauging support for affirmative action depend greatly on the way the questions are worded. In the 1993 Reynolds Foundation poll in North Carolina, for example, 51 percent of black respondents said they opposed giving blacks preference over equally qualified whites in hiring and college admissions because of past discrimination, while 36 percent said they favored such preferences.¹⁷ Whites were still much more likely than blacks to be against giving blacks preferences over equally qualified whites, with 82 percent of whites opposing them and only 10 percent in favor.

Differing Views on Busing and School Quality

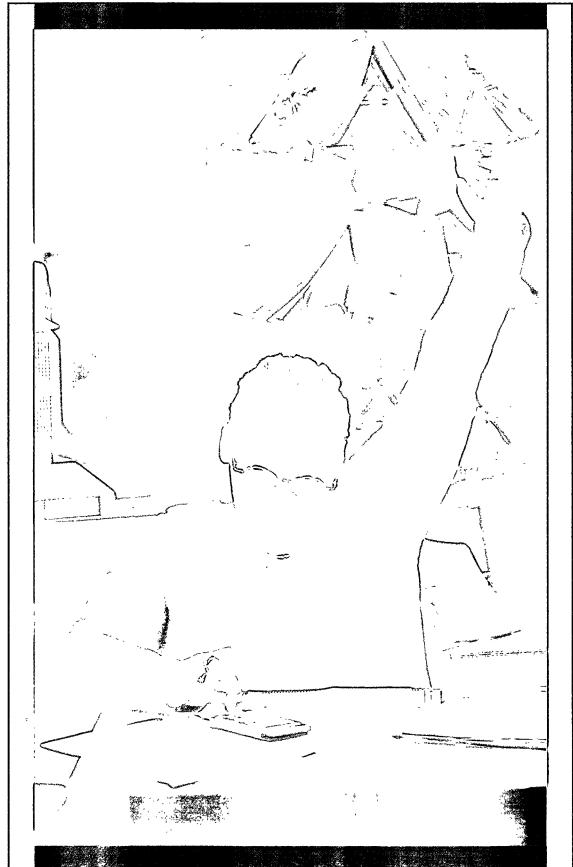
frican Americans and whites also hold diver-A gent views on issues such as busing to achieve racial integration of the public schools and on the quality of the schools generally. Polls show African Americans to be almost evenly divided about busing and whites strongly opposed. The Reynolds Foundation poll found that 47 percent of blacks opposed busing to achieve racial integration and 45 percent of blacks favored it, while 75 percent of white respondents opposed busing for racial integration and only 17 percent favored it.18 White parents' lawsuit overturning the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' system of integrating the public schools through magnet schools that use race as part of admissions criteria has resulted in the re-segregation of some schools in that district.19 For example, at Marie G. Davis Middle School in a predominantly black Charlotte neighborhood, the student body shifted from a near 50-50 split between whites and blacks to 95 percent black in one This house divided, we live inside it.
Hate's dwelling place is behind our
door in fitful nights. Hear it walk the
floor and hear it rave as it moans and
drags along its ball and chain, as it
moves through this house it can't escape. Now, inside this place we hide
away. We hear it near and hope it
turns away.

—SINGER NATALIE MERCHANT
"TOLERANCE"

year following the court's ruling.²⁰ Nearly a third of the schools in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg district wound up more than 80 percent minority, though the racial breakdown of the school district is 43 percent white, 43 percent black, and 14 percent other.

In Wake County, a group called Assignment by Choice was incorporated in May 2003 to challenge involuntary reassignment of students to maintain diversity in the public schools. Wake uses family income rather than race in its diversity policy in an attempt to avoid legal challenges. Despite pressure from some parents opposed to reassignment, Wake County has thus far managed to preserve its integrated school system.

While more supportive of busing, African Americans generally are less satisfied with their local schools than are whites. The Joint Center for Political and Economic Studies, a Washington, D.C., think tank that studies issues of particular concern to minorities, has tracked school satisfaction for six years. The group has consistently found that whites are much more likely to give their local schools a rating of good or excellent than are African Americans.²¹ In 2002, for example, 53.7 percent of white respondents ranked their local schools good or excellent compared to only 35.2 percent of black respondents. The difference in the ratings between the two population groups has been referred to as a "satisfaction gap." That gap has shrunk slightly since 2000, when 52 percent of whites, but only 30.4 percent of blacks, rated their school good or excellent.



Karen Tam

Differing Views on the State of Race Relations

B esides being less supportive of preferences and of busing to achieve school integration, whites in North Carolina and around the country have been much more optimistic than blacks about the state of race relations, the chances for future improvements in race relations, and the well-being of black people. In a 1999 ABC News/Lifetime television poll, 57 percent of blacks said blacks face a lot of discrimination, while 22 percent of whites held that belief.²²

Chuck Stone, a journalism professor at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the author of books on the black political experience, says there's a connection between the greater feeling of optimism among whites and their opposition to affirmative action. "One of the results of this optimism is whites' opposition to affirmative action, which they think is unnecessary," he says. "It's kind of a persistent, ubiquitous pattern of behavior between the races." Generally, says Stone, whites see less need for a focus on race and its impact on society, and they are more likely to believe that the government has done all it can to improve race relations.

These differing views on affirmative action and other public policy issues are based in the varied experiences of blacks and whites, says Stone. Whites don't experience rejection and alienation based on their race, Stone says, while African Americans experience it almost every day. "There

are vast inequities between treatment of blacks and whites. It's something that's alien to their [whites'] experience. They see it, of course. But it doesn't happen to them."

Some, however, take a dimmer view of white attitudes toward racial issues. Racism is pervasive throughout society, says Nettie Coad, director of the Partnership Project in Winston-Salem, an organization that sponsors anti-racism workshops. Race influences how people respond to and work with one another and is reflected in the laws of the state and nation. "All of these laws and policies are just outbreaks of what racism really is," she says.

How important is addressing these issues of race? Again, the race of the respondent seems to shape attitudes. In the 2000 CBS News poll, 64 percent of African Americans said that improving race relations was one of the most important things the United States needs to do for the future, compared to 29 percent of whites.²³ And, 65 percent of whites, but only 30 percent of blacks, said improving race relations is important, but so are other issues.

Francis J. Hale III, a white member of Raleigh's Human Relations/Human Resources Citizen Advisory Council, says the country would do better to focus less on race. People should concentrate on taking control of their own lives, he says. Laws have spawned a multimillion-dollar consulting industry and lawsuits alleging discrimination have been a drain on governments and business, he says.

"Why are we having a national argument about race? By all objective measures . . . race relations between blacks and whites have never been better."

"the achievements of the American people over the past half century in reducing racial prejudice and discrimination and in improving the socioeconomic and political condition of Afro-Americans are nothing short of astonishing."

Poll reported that low income blacks said that money, not racism, was their biggest problem.
— GALLUP POLL, JUNE 1997

BOTH QUOTES AND GALLUP POLL FROM ORLANDO PATTERSON,

THE ORDEAL OF INTEGRATION: PROGRESS AND RESENTMENT IN AMERICA'S RACIAL CRISIS
AS QUOTED FROM COLUMN IN THE NEWS AND OBSERVER OF RALEIGH, N.C., NOVEMBER 23, 1998



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All of the government imposition has been a poor replacement for good manners and treating people decently, Hale says. "It really does come down to the individual. When [President Ronald] Reagan was in office, we had a fair amount of prosperity. I don't recall racism being that much of a topic."

Cary resident Ann Seng worked with the YWCA in Raleigh to begin "study circles," or discussion groups for people of different backgrounds to talk about race. Seng, who is white, says whites are leaving the issue of race relations to black leaders, who have concentrated on creating self-help programs within the black community. That's left a void in public policy discussions on how government's priorities reflect the need for equal treatment, she says. "It's very easy for us to say, 'Well, I don't discriminate. This is not my issue. Things are really improving," says Seng. But when whites are inconvenienced by a public policy that has racial equality as a goal, they will resist, she says.

Differing Views on Progress

A frican Americans believe a range of personal and societal issues contribute to problems in black families. In a 1999 Princeton Survey Research poll for *Newsweek* magazine, majorities of blacks said teenage girls having children (78 percent), a lack of jobs paying decent wages (68 percent), not following moral and religious values (66 percent), drugs and alcohol (66 percent), reliance on welfare (63 percent), and crime in neighborhoods (60 percent) are big problems for black families, along with racism in society (56 percent).²⁴

Whites are more likely than blacks to think the situation for blacks is improving over time, though a majority of both demographic groups point to progress in eliminating racial discrimination since

the 1960s. Blacks tend more often to say they've seen little change. In the 2000 CBS News poll, 74 percent of whites, but only 55 percent of blacks, said that since the 1960s there has been "real progress" in getting rid of racial discrimination, while 43 percent of blacks, but only 23 percent of whites, said there had not been much real progress.²⁵

Meanwhile, a national survey of Hispanics/ Latinos found they too consider prejudice and discrimination to be a persistent problem, though one that is improving. In the 1999 Princeton Survey Research Associates poll for Newsweek, Hispanic adults were asked whether the situation for younger Hispanic or Latino Americans is better, worse, or about the same as their parents' situation was when they were the same age. Overall, 44 percent of respondents said things are better for the younger generation while 41 percent said they consider the situation worse.²⁶ Asked whether younger Hispanic or Latino Americans face more, less, or about the same amount of prejudice and discrimination as their parents did when they were the same age, 23 percent of respondents said more, 49 percent answered less, and 21 percent said the level of prejudice and discrimination is about the same.²⁷

Eunice Hawkins, another early organizer of study circles for the YWCA, grew up in segregated Raleigh but went north for school and work. When she moved back to Raleigh in 1994 after 40 years away, Hawkins says she saw vast changes in the city. But she says friends from childhood who remained in Raleigh from childhood and some of the black participants in the discussion on race had not seen the same transformation. "I would not be here today if I had not seen a change," says Hawkins. "I had some friends who were in the teaching field, and they don't see that much of a change. This is the view of quite a few who never left Raleigh."

Some of the biggest problems remain in the area of jobs and the economy, says Hawkins. Blacks, especially black men, have a harder time breaking into some areas, such as government contracting, because "good old boy" networks continue to thrive, she says.

In a 1995 Princeton Survey Research poll for *Newsweek* magazine, 34 percent of blacks said they had "a lot of common interests" with whites in their social class, while 18 percent of whites said the same of blacks.²⁸ A total of 41 percent of blacks and 48 percent of whites said they had "some common interests" with people of the other race in their same social class.

For Herb Dawkins, a real estate broker in Chapel Hill, thinking only in terms of race oversimplifies complicated social interactions. "We need to be able to talk about all the forms of discrimination," says Dawkins, who is black. "If you restrict it to racism, it doesn't give you the full picture of the problem, because so much of it has to do with money and what schools you attended and your exposure level."

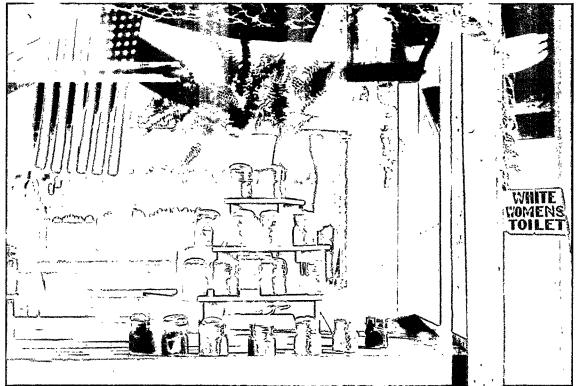
Dawkins sees society aligned more in terms of social class than race. Money determines where you can afford to live, he says, which in turn determines the quality of the schools your children will attend.

"Some of these issues that are still lingering and will continue to linger have a whole lot to do with class," Dawkins says.

Diane English, executive director of the Community Building Initiative in Charlotte, says class is an important factor, but there is a correlation between class and race. "In our community, you look at high incarceration, free and reduced lunch — you look at all of these kinds of things, and it has to be something other than the lack of initiative or bad luck that has made all of these factors break out by race."

Asking these pointed questions about differences in such areas as health, education, and incarceration rates is the best way to address questions related to race, says Van Kloempken, a Cary businessman and N.C. State University student. "Why more blacks die, why they get convicted, why they lag in education. These are objective things," he says. "Nobody can argue about that."

In the 1999 Princeton poll for *Newsweek*, 71 percent of whites said black Americans would one day close the income gap and earn as much money as white Americans, while only 42 percent of black Americans said they believed that would happen.²⁹ Similarly, in the 1993 Reynolds Foundation poll of North Carolinians, only 27 percent of blacks said



N.C. Division of Archives and History

blacks have as good a chance as whites of getting jobs for which they are qualified, while 68 percent of whites said blacks had as good a chance as whites of getting those jobs.³⁰ Seventy percent of blacks said their chances were not as good.

However, a 1995 poll by FGI Research of Chapel Hill for *The News & Observer* of Raleigh, N.C., found high percentages of both white and black respondents believe racial discrimination still occurs in employment in North Carolina, with 94 percent of black respondents and 73 percent of whites holding this belief.³¹ Asked how often such discrimination occurs, 67 percent of white respondents said "occasionally," while 19 percent responded "all the time." That compares to 50 percent of blacks who said discrimination in employment occurs "all the time" and 46 percent who responded "occasionally."

Such beliefs about an unfair labor market may help explain why North Carolina's black legislators have been the primary backers of "livable wage" studies and bills in past legislative sessions. Of the legislators who sponsored or co-sponsored bills in the 2003 General Assembly to raise the minimum wage to \$8.50 an hour in 2005, 12 of 16 were black.³³

No Longer Just Black and White

Though racial and ethnic divisions have for years been cast in terms of black and white, especially in the South, reality is more complex. Hispanics/Latinos have surpassed blacks as the nation's largest minority group. Though blacks still outnumber Hispanics/Latinos in North Carolina, the Hispanic

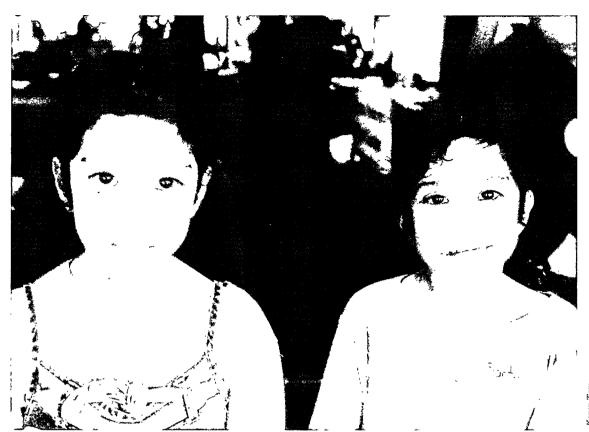
population jumped nearly 400 percent in the 1990s to 4.7 percent of the state's population. African Americans represent 22 percent of the state's population, while Native Americans comprise just over 1 percent. (For more on North Carolina's changing demographics, see pp. 2–11.) Polls are beginning to reflect these changes as respondents are broken out by race, but also by whether they are Hispanic or non-Hispanic.

In the Hispanic/Latino community, there is concern that North Carolina has been slow to expand its view to account for greater racial and ethnic diversity. The state has changed tremendously, says Aura Camacho Maas, director of the Latin American Resource Center in Raleigh. Not only has the population of Hispanics/Latinos expanded, but that of Asians and Indians as well. "At the policy level, we don't have the representation of all people," says Camacho Maas. "To a certain degree, it's almost like the system doesn't want, doesn't know how, to adapt to the change yet." Camacho Maas, who serves on a state committee looking for remedies to the achievement gap among school students, says it's difficult to push the conversation beyond black and white. (For more on the achievement gap in the North Carolina public schools, see "Educational Achievement: Bridging the Gap?," pp. 76–103.)

"A lot of people feel that only black people from the United States or from North Carolina, they are the only ones that address issues of race," says Camacho Maas. Yet it's clear from the state's rapidly changing demographics that the state will be pushed beyond black and white as it attempts to accommodate the concerns of an increasingly diverse society.

Sunday afternoon and it is one-thirty and all the churchgoing latinos fuse each other with love and the women dress so clean and pure and the children walk so straight and pure and the fathers look so proud and pure and everything so right and pure and even as I wake up to my nephew's voice coming through the window, there is pleasure in awakening....

---Miguel Algarín



aren 1am

Indeed, polling data indicate what could be construed as a backlash against North Carolina's rising tide of immigrants. A survey commissioned by The News & Observer of Raleigh, N.C., in November 2003 found 74 percent of respondents believe the number of immigrants admitted to the United States is too high.³⁴ Further, 73 percent of respondents said illegal Mexican workers should not be allowed to remain in the United States even if they are otherwise law-abiding citizens. Analysts say U.S. citizens have become more sensitive to immigration issues since the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York. Additionally, some questioned the use of the word "illegal" in the question wording as opposed to "undocumented." Nonetheless, the poll points to additional challenges as the state attempts to meld its many cultures and ethnicities.

And, as the data show, increasing diversity ofttimes brings a divergence of perspectives. North Carolina faces a growing challenge as the state attempts to reconcile these different views into sound solutions to pressing public issues. A good first step is simply attempting to understand the diversity of views that already exist.

FOOTNOTES

¹Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation survey of racial attitudes of North Carolinians. A telephone survey was conducted in September and October 1993. The total sample consisted of 403 whites and 409 blacks aged 18 and older. The margin of error for the total sample was 3.4 percent. The margin of error for the white and black samples separately was 4.9 percent.

Question: Do you think the law enforcement officers in your community are generally tougher on whites than blacks, tougher on blacks than whites, or do the officers treat them both the same?

	White	Black	Total
Tougher on whites	4%	0%	3%
Tougher on blacks	19%	64%	29%
Treat the same	65%	30%	57%
Not sure	12%	6%	11%

² CBS News poll, Feb. 6-10, 2000. Survey of 1,499 adults nationwide.

Question: In general, do you think the criminal justice system in the United States is biased in favor of blacks, or is it biased against blacks, or does it generally give blacks fair treatment?

All	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
2%	2%	1%	2%
43%	39%	71%	44%
43%	46%	17%	45%
12%	13%	11%	9%
	2% 43% 43%	2% 2% 43% 39% 43% 46%	2% 2% 1% 43% 39% 71% 43% 46% 17%

³ Princeton Survey Research Assoc. for *Newsweek* April 16–19, 1999. 751 adults nationwide with an oversampling of 200 blacks.

Question: Why do you think so many young black men are in prison today? Do you think the main reason is [see below]?

	All	Whites	Blacks
More arrests and tougher			
sentences in general	12%	12%	10%
Unfair targeting of			
blacks by police	16%	13%	40%
Failure of government social			
programs and policies	12%	12%	10%
Bad character of the			
convicts themselves	37%	39%	22%
Other (voluntary)	11%	11%	8%
Don't know	12%	13%	10%

⁴House Bill 1199 and Senate Bill 972 of the 2003 session. S.B. 972 passed the Senate and is alive for consideration by the House in the 2004 short session of the General Assembly.

 5 Chapter 26 (S.B. 76) of the 1999 Session Laws, now codified as G.S. 114-10.

⁶ Carolina Poll, Oct. 23–30, 1999. Survey of 717 adult North Carolinians. Margin of error plus or minus 4.5 percent for the total sample and larger for comparisons between groups.

Question: Do you favor or oppose the death penalty for persons convicted of murder?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Favor	65%	73%	37%
Oppose	19%	13%	42%
Don't know	16%	14%	21%

⁷ Charlotte Observer/WBTV News Carolinas Poll, July 23–Aug. 1, 1999. Survey of 913 North and South Carolinians. Margin of error 3.2 percent for entire sample.

Question: Do police officers stop black motorists more often than whites?

	Whites	Blacks
Yes	26%	69%
No	63%	19%
Don't know or refused to answer	11%	11%

⁸ CBS News poll, note 2 above.

Question: These days, do you think it is necessary to have laws that protect minorities from discrimination in hiring and promotion, or don't you think it's necessary?

	All	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
Necessary	66%	60%	90%	87%
Not necessary	30%	36%	6%	12%
Don't know	4%	4%	4%	1%

9 ABC News/Washington Post poll, Jan. 16-20, 2003.

Question: Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities preference over white men getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Support	30%	24%	65%
Oppose	66%	73%	29%

10 Ibid.

Question: Do you think blacks who live in your community do or do not have as good a chance as whites to get a job for which they are qualified?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Do	73%	80%	39%
Do not	24%	16%	60%

11 Ibid.

Question: Have you personally ever felt that you were denied a job you were qualified for just because of your race, or not? (if not) As far as you're aware, has that ever happened to a close friend or someone in your immediate family?

Blacks (asked only of black respondents)

Yes, self 34%
Yes, friend or family member 17%
No 49%

12 Ibid.

Question: Do you support or oppose government and private programs that give women, blacks, and other minorities assistance—but not preference—getting into college, getting a job, or getting a promotion?

	Ali	Whites	Blacks
Support	69%	67%	79%
Oppose	26%	33%	19%

¹³ CBS News/*New York Times* poll, Jan. 19–22, 2003. Survey of 997 adults nationwide.

Question: Should affirmative action programs in hiring, promoting, and college admissions be continued or abolished?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Continued	54%	47%	94%
Abolished	37%	42%	3%

¹⁴The Gallup Poll. A survey of 1,385 adults nationwide, including, with oversamples, 821 non-Hispanic whites, 241 blacks, and 266 Hispanics. The margin of error for the entire sample was 3 percent. The margin of error for non-Hispanic whites was 4 percent, for blacks it was 7 percent, and for Hispanics, 7 percent. Interviewing was June 12–15, 2003, for non-Hispanic whites and June 12–18, 2003, for blacks and Hispanics

Question: Do you generally favor or oppose affirmative action programs for racial minorities?

Favor	Oppose	No opinion
49%	43%	8%
44%	49%	7%
70%	21%	9%
63%	28%	9%
	49% 44% 70%	49% 43% 44% 49% 70% 21%

¹⁵ Gratz v. Bollinger (02-516) Reversed in part and remanded, or Gratz v. Bollinger, 539 U.S. 244 (2003).

¹⁶ Grutter v. Bollinger, 288 F.3d 732, affirmed, or Grutter v. Bollinger, 539 U.S. 244 (2003).

¹⁷ Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation survey, note 1 above.

Question: Do you favor or oppose giving blacks preference over equally qualified whites in such matters as getting into college or getting jobs because of past discrimination against blacks?

	White	Black	Total
Favor	10%	36%	15%
Oppose	82%	51%	74%
Not sure	8%	13%	10%

¹⁸ Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation survey, note 1 above, p. 8.

Question: There is much discussion about the best way to deal with racial problems. Some people think achieving racial integration of schools is so important that it justifies busing children to schools out of their own neighborhoods. Others think letting children go to their neighborhood schools is so important that they oppose busing. Do you favor or oppose busing to achieve racial integration?

	White	Black	Total
Favor busing	17%	45%	23%
Oppose busing	75%	47%	70%
Not sure	7%	8%	7%

¹⁹ Capacchione v. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools, F. Supp. 2d. 228 (W.D.N.C. 1999).

²⁰ The Associated Press, "Some fear Southern schools are resegregating," CNN Student News, www.cnn.com/2002/EDU-CATION/12/28/southern.segregation.ap

²¹ Catherine Gewertz, "Racial Gap Found to Persist in Public's Opinion of Schools," *Education Week*, Bethesda, Md., May 21, 2003, p. 9. The poll of 2,463 adults was conducted between September 17, 2002, and October 21, 2002.

²² ABC News/Lifetime Television Poll. Conducted Oct. 13–19, 1999 of 1,107 adults nationwide, including an oversample of 192 blacks. The margin of error for the total sample is 3 percent. Field work by ICR.

Question: Do you think blacks are discriminated against in this society a lot, somewhat, a little, or not at all?

	All	Whites	Blacks
A lot	26%	22%	57%
Somewhat	43%	46%	25%
A little	19%	21%	7%
Not at all	11%	11%	10%
No opinion	1%	1%	1%

²³ CBS News poll, note 2 above.

Question: How important do you think improving race relations is to the future of the United States? Do you think it's one of the most important things we need to do for the future, or is it important, but so are other issues, or it's not that important to the future of the United States?

	All	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
Most important	36%	29%	64%	61%
Important, but so				
are others	58%	65%	30%	36%
Not that important	4%	4%	4%	3%
Don't know	2%	2%	2%	0%

²⁴ Princeton Survey Research Assoc. for *Newsweek*, note 3 above.

Question: In general, how much of a problem do you think each of the following is for black families today? How about [see below]? Is this a big problem for black families today, somewhat of a problem, or not a problem?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Too many teenage girls having	children	l .	
Big problem	62%	61%	78%
Somewhat of a problem	29%	31%	16%
Not a problem	4%	2%	4%
Don't know	5%	6%	2%
Crime in their neighborhoods			
Big problem	61%	60%	60%
Somewhat of a problem	26%	27%	24%
Not a problem Don't know	6% 7%	5% 8%	11% 5%
		070	370
People depending too much on		52 <i>0</i> 7.	63%
Big problem Somewhat of a problem	55% 31%	53% 33%	24%
Not a problem	9%	8%	8%
Don't know	5%	6%	5%
People not following moral and	d religion	ıs values	
Big problem	52%	50%	66%
Somewhat of a problem	28%	29%	22%
Not a problem	13%	14%	10%
Don't know	7%	7%	5%
Drugs and alcohol			
Big problem	51%	50%	66%
Somewhat of a problem	37%	39%	24%
Not a problem	5%	4%	4%
Don't know	7%	7%	6%
Not enough jobs paying decen			
Big problem	50%	48%	68%
Somewhat of a problem	33% 12%	34% 12%	22% 9%
Not a problem Don't know	12% 5%	12% 6%	9% 1%
			170
Too many parents never gettin Big problem	g marrie 49%	u 49%	51%
Somewhat of a problem	29%	28%	29%
Not a problem	15%	15%	14%
Don't know	7%	7%	6%
Public schools not providing a	good ed	ucation	
Big problem	44%	42%	54%
Somewhat of a problem	27%	27%	27%
Not a problem	23%	24%	15%
Don't know	6%	7%	4%
Racism in society in general			
Big problem	36%	31%	56%
Somewhat of a problem	46%	50%	30%
Not a problem Don't know	12% 6%	13% 6%	6% 8%
	070	070	070
Racism in the workplace	28%	25%	46%
Big problem Somewhat of a problem	41%	43%	34%
Not a problem	21%	22%	12%
Don't know	10%	10%	8%
The government not spending	enough o	on social pro	ograms
Big problem	28%	24%	52%
Somewhat of a problem	32%	32%	31%
Not a problem	30%	33%	10%
Don't know	10%	11%	7%
Not enough successful blacks	for youn	g people to	look up to
Big problem	26%	24%	41%
Somewhat of a problem	34%	35%	31%
Not a problem	34%	35%	26%
Don't know	6%	6%	2%

²⁵ CBS News poll, note 2 above.

Question: Some people say that since the 1960s there has been a lot of progress in getting rid of racial discrimination. Others say that there hasn't been that much progress for blacks over that time. Which do you agree with more? Would you say there's been a lot of progress in getting rid of racial discrimination or hasn't there been much real progress?

	All	Whites	Blacks	Hispanics
Real progress	71%	74%	55%	77%
Not much real				
progress	26%	23%	43%	20%
Don't know	3%	3%	2%	3%

²⁶ Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*. Survey of 505 Hispanics nationwide, conducted June 25–30, 1999. Margin of error plus or minus 4.4 percent.

Question: All in all, do you think the situation for the younger generation of Hispanic or Latino Americans is better, worse, or about the same as their parents' situation was when they were the same age?

			35 &
	All	18-34	Older
Better	44%	49%	39%
Worse	41%	37%	45%
About the Same	12%	10%	13%
Don't Know	3%	4%	3%

²⁷ Ibid., Princeton Survey Research Associates for Newsweek, 1999.

Question: Do you think the younger generation of Hispanic or Latino Americans faces more, less, or about the same amount of prejudice and discrimination as their parents did when they were the same age?

			35 &
	All	18-34	Older
More	23%	23%	23%
Less	49%	55%	44%
About the Same	21%	18%	23%
Don't know	7%	4%	3%

²⁸ Princeton Survey Research Associates for *Newsweek*. Survey of 471 whites and 252 blacks nationwide, conducted Feb. 1–3, 1995.

Question: Do you feel you have a lot of common interests with whites/blacks in your social class, some common interests, or very few common interests?

	Blacks	Whites
A lot	34%	18%
Some	41%	48%
Very few	21%	28%
Don't know	4%	6%

²⁹ Ibid., Princeton Survey Research Associates for Newsweek, 1999.

Question: Do you think that black Americans will ever be able to close the income gap and earn as much money as white Americans, or not?

	All	Whites	Blacks
Will be able	67%	71%	42%
Will not be	23%	19%	49%
Don't know	10%	10%	9%

³⁰ Z. Smith Reynolds Foundation survey, note 1 above.

Question: Do you think blacks have as good a chance as white people in your community to get any kind of job for which they are qualified, or don't they have as good a chance?

	White	Black	Total
Have as good a chance	68%	27%	59%
Not have as good a			
chance	19%	70%	30%
Have better chance			
(voluntary)	10%	0%	8%
No blacks in community			
(voluntary)	0%	0%	0%
Not sure	3%	3%	3%

³¹ The News & Observer-FGI Poll. Nov. 8–12, 1995. Survey of 601 North Carolina residents. Margin of error plus or minus 4 percent.

Question: Do you think racial discrimination still occurs in employment in North Carolina?

	Whites	Blacks
Yes	73%	94%
No	18%	5%
Not Sure	9%	2%

³² Ibid., The News & Observer-FGI Poll, 1995.

Question: How frequently do you think this type of discrimination occurs?

	Whites	Blacks
All the time	19%	50%
Occasionally	67%	46%
Rarely	11%	3%
Not sure	3%	1%

33 House Bill 37 and Senate Bill 589 of the 2003 Session.

³⁴ Michael Easterbrook, "Welcome mat not out for immigrants, poll shows," *The News & Observer*, Raleigh, N.C., Nov. 24, 2003, p. 1A. The Research 2000 North Carolina Poll was conducted for *The News & Observer* November 10–13, 2003. A total of 600 likely voters were interviewed statewide for a margin of error of 4 percent. Quotas were assigned to reflect voter registration by county.

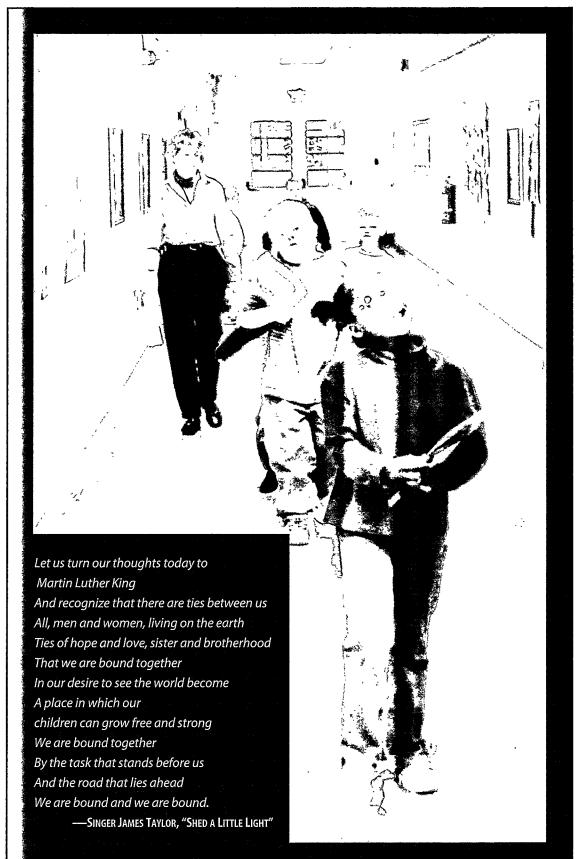
Question: Should Mexican workers who come into the country illegally but otherwise abide by the laws of the United States be allowed to remain here as legal residents?

Yes	22%
No	73%
Not Sure	5%

Question: Which comes closes to your view on how many legal immigrants should be admitted to the United States each year? The number of immigrants is too high, or the number of immigrants is about right?

Too high	74%	
Too low	1%	
About right	17%	





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