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Population Update, Report Number 2

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South Dakota's Population at Mid-Decade—1975 *

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During the later part of 1973, population growth in the United States took a turn toward rural and small town America. Growth in these areas was entirely unanticipated.

Demographers everywhere have sought the cause of this shift; several explanations have merit, but it must be emphasized that no single theory is definitive.

The advantages of urbanization are limited. Dr. Andrew Sofranko* at the University of Illinois suggests that many urban dwellers are moving to the country because they find it pleasant and attractive. States in the North Central Region with retirement centers in or near recreation areas have shown the greatest rural growth; the Ozark Mountain areas of Missouri and the northern region of Wisconsin are typical of this trend.

But reasons other than recreational entice people to the countryside. A desire to leave high crime rates, pollution problems, and the fast paced lifestyles of cities may be more important than the pleasures of rural existence.

South Dakota, though not without beauty, is not often thought of as a state that draws in-migrants for aesthetic reasons. Yet South Dakota is experiencing some rural growth.

*Telelecture interview delivered to students of demography at South Dakota State University, Nov. 13, 1978.

Most demographers are stressing non-economic factors as instrumental in this rural rebirth. Often cited are improved transportation, communication, and modernization of rural life. If these factors generate a return to the countryside, it must be asked why the shift didn't occur sooner. Rural areas in the United States were not primitive during the decade of the sixties, when states like South Dakota were suffering population losses.

It might be suggested that economics are important in a reverse sort of way. No longer can urban centers offer economic opportunity to potential rural out-migrants, and these people are simply staying at home.

Between 1960 and 1970, 53 of South Dakota's 67 counties were losing population. At an extreme, Stanley County dropped 40%; Fall River 30%; and Clark, Harding and Jackson lost nearly one fourth of their inhabitants.

In the next 5 years (1970-1975) these same counties had not only stopped losing, but were actually gaining population. While only 14 counties gained population between 1960 and 1970, 38 showed gains between 1970 and 1975. Of the 29 counties still losing population, 19 lost a smaller percentage from 1970 to 1975 than in the decade from 1960 to 1970. Only two counties that gained population between 1960 and 1970 (Yankton and Lawrence) lost population between 1970 and 1975.

North Dakota is included in Table 1 because its population characteristics are similar to those of South Dakota, exemplifying the nature of the overall trend. From 1950 to 1960, both North and South Dakota showed modest population gains, while the North Central Region and the United States as a whole were increasing in great numbers. The birth rate in the Dakotas was not lower than elsewhere, but out-migration caused overall net increases to be smaller.

Table 1. Average annual percentage population change in the United States, the North Central Region including Kentucky, North Dakota, and South Dakota.[1]

	U.S.	Region[2]	ND	SD
1950-1960	1.69	1.42	0.20	0.41
1960-1970	1.25	0.89	-0.23	-0.21
1970-1975	0.89	0.41	0.61	0.48

[1] Percentages reduced to annual rate of change to make 10-year and 5-year periods comparable.
[2] The Bureau of the Census includes 12 states in the North Central Region. Five are in the East North Central Division east of the Mississippi, including Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin. The seven others in the West North Central Division are Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas.

From 1960 to 1970, the birth rate in the Dakotas dropped, but out-migration did not. Heavy population losses followed.

Significantly, since 1970, both North and South Dakota have grown at a rate less than the U.S. but greater than the Region as a whole. For example, the rate of increase in South Dakota is greater than the rate of increase for highly urbanized states such as Illinois and Ohio.

The state map was constructed to show patterns of population change. It would appear that those counties west of the Missouri River consistently reflect current population shifts. (See Map).

No county that lost population between 1960 and 1970 lost a greater percentage in the half decade from 1970 to 1975. With the exception of Lawrence and Yankton, the counties that gained population between 1960 and 1970 continued to gain through 1975.

Although not as readily discernible, patterns are evident in the eastern portion of the state. For example, in the northeast corner, the contiguous counties of Roberts, Grant, Clark, Codington, Deuel, and Hamlin have turned the corner and are reversing losses incurred during the previous decade.

On the other side of the ledger, the contiguous counties of Faulk, Hyde, Hand, and Beadle continue to lose inhabitants at a rate equal to or greater than the losses incurred between 1960 and 1970.

The map shows trends, and does not necessarily delineate the dynamics of current population phenomena.

The breakdown in Table 2 of population change by county should be useful to planners. For example, planners in Lincoln County should be prepared for the consequences of a population growth of nearly 1½ % per year. On the other hand, planners in Campbell County may have to face problems associated with continuous substantial population loss.

In the past, redistribution of population has been associated with urbanization. Recent population shifts indicate that the extent of out-migration from rural areas has lessened so that it does not affect natural population gains due to births. Whether these trends will continue or be short lived is yet unknown, but population growth appears less directly related to urbanization.

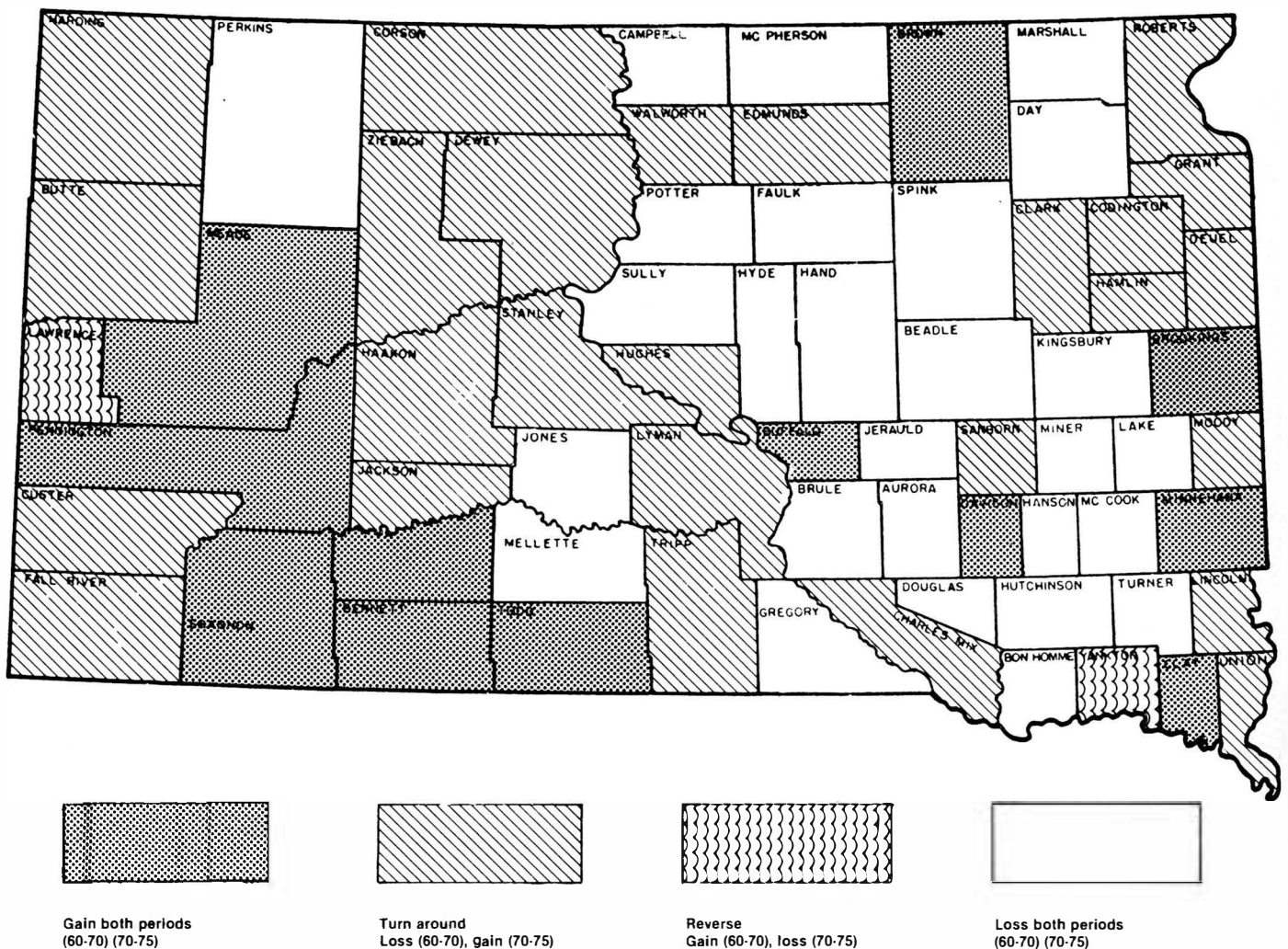Population change by county, South Dakota, for 1960-1970 and 1970-1975.

Gain both periods
(60-70) (70-75)

Turn around
Loss (60-70), gain (70-75)

Reverse
Gain (60-70), loss (70-75)

Loss both periods
(60-70) (70-75)

Table 2. Population characteristics of South Dakota, 1970-1975.[1]

	Census 1960	Census 1970	Census estimate 1975	Number change 1960-70	Number change 1970-75	AAPC[2] 1960-70	AAPC 1970-75
South Dakota	**680,514**	**666,257**	**682,704**	**-14,248**	**16,447**		
Aurora	4,749	4,183	4,040	-566	-143	-1.3	-0.7
Beadle	21,682	20,877	20,152	-805	-725	-0.4	-0.7
Bennett	3,053	3,088	3,306	35	218	0.1	1.4
Bon Homme	9,229	8,577	7,790	-652	-787	-0.7	-1.9
Brookings	20,046	22,158	22,324	2,112	166	1.0	0.1
Brown	34,106	36,920	37,870	2,821	950	0.8	0.5
Brule	6,319	5,870	5,784	-449	-86	-0.7	-0.3
Buffalo	1,547	1,739	1,871	192	132	1.2	1.5
Butte	8,592	7,825	8,324	-767	499	-0.9	1.2
Campbell	3,531	2,866	2,592	-665	-274	-2.1	-2.0
Charles Mix	11,785	9,994	10,545	-1,791	551	-1.6	0.5
Clark	7,134	5,515	5,633	-1,619	118	-2.6	0.4
Clay	10,810	12,923	13,118	2,113	195	1.8	0.1
Codington	20,220	19,140	19,860	-1,080	720	-0.5	0.4
Corson	5,798	4,994	5,087	-804	93	-1.5	0.4
Custer	4,906	4,698	5,196	-208	498	-0.4	2.0
Davison	16,681	17,319	17,725	638	406	0.4	0.5
Day	10,516	8,713	8,642	-1,803	-71	-1.9	-0.1
Deuel	6,782	5,686	5,689	-1,096	3	-1.8	0.0
Dewey	5,257	5,170	5,953	-87	783	-0.2	2.8
Douglas	5,113	4,569	4,489	-544	-80	-1.1	-0.4
Edmunds	6,079	5,548	5,663	-531	115	-0.9	0.4
Fall River	10,688	7,505	8,063	-3,183	558	-3.5	1.5
Faulk	4,397	3,893	3,662	-504	-231	-1.2	-1.2
Grant	9,913	9,005	9,837	-908	832	-1.0	1.8
Gregory	7,399	6,710	6,601	-689	-109	-1.0	-0.3
Haakon	3,303	2,802	2,809	501	7	-1.6	0.0
Hamlin	6,303	5,520	5,583	-783	63	-1.3	0.2
Hand	6,712	5,883	5,473	-829	-410	-1.4	-1.4
Hanson	4,584	3,781	3,723	-803	-58	-1.9	-0.3
Harding	2,371	1,855	1,882	-516	27	-2.4	0.3
Hughes	12,725	11,632	13,271	-1,093	1,639	-0.9	2.6
Hutchinson	11,085	10,379	9,816	-706	-563	-0.7	-1.1
Hyde	2,602	2,515	2,454	-87	-61	-0.3	-0.5
Jackson	1,985	1,531	1,626	-454	95	-2.6	1.2
Jerauld	4,048	3,310	3,075	-738	-235	-2.0	-1.5
Jones	2,066	1,882	1,743	-184	-139	-1.8	-1.5
Kingsbury	9,227	7,657	7,177	-1,570	-480	-1.9	-1.3
Lake	11,764	11,456	10,654	-308	-802	-0.3	-1.5
Lawrence	17,075	17,453	17,004	378	-449	0.2	-0.5
Lincoln	12,371	11,761	12,633	-610	872	-0.5	1.4
Lyman	4,428	4,060	4,130	-368	70	-0.9	0.3
McCook	8,268	7,246	7,035	-1,022	-211	-1.3	-0.6
McPherson	5,821	5,022	4,749	-799	-273	-1.5	-1.1
Marshall	6,663	5,965	5,648	-698	-317	-1.1	-1.1
Meade	12,044	17,020	18,298	4,978	1,278	3.4	1.4
Mellette	2,664	2,420	2,382	-244	-37	-1.0	-0.3
Miner	5,398	4,454	4,150	-944	-304	-1.9	-1.4
Minnehaha	86,575	95,209	99,737	8,634	4,528	0.9	0.9
Moody	8,810	7,622	7,699	-1,188	77	-1.4	0.2
Pennington	58,195	59,349	65,917	1,154	6,568	0.2	2.1
Perkins	5,977	4,769	4,748	-1,208	-21	-2.2	-0.1
Potter	4,926	4,449	4,267	-477	-182	-1.0	-0.8
Roberts	13,190	11,678	11,885	-1,512	207	-1.2	0.4
Sanborn	4,641	3,697	3,476	-944	-221	-2.3	1.2
Shannon	6,000	8,198	9,228	2,198	1,030	3.1	2.4
Spink	11,706	10,595	10,196	-1,111	-399	-1.0	-0.8
Stanley	4,085	2,457	2,512	-1,628	55	-5.0	0.4
Sully	2,607	2,362	2,272	-245	-90	-1.0	-0.8
Todd	4,661	6,606	7,223	1,945	617	3.5	1.8
Tripp	8,761	8,171	8,285	-590	114	-0.7	0.3
Turner	11,159	9,872	9,483	-1,287	-389	-1.2	-0.8
Union	10,197	9,643	10,496	-554	853	-0.6	1.7
Walworth	8,097	7,842	7,911	-255	69	-0.3	0.2
Washabaugh	1,042	1,389	1,586	347	197	2.9	2.6
Yankton	17,551	19,039	18,276	1,488	-763	0.8	-0.8
Ziebach	2,495	2,221	2,375	-274	154	-1.2	1.3

[1]Percentages reduced to annual rate of change to make 10-year and 5-year periods comparable.

[2] The formula used to generate the average annual percent change (AAPC) is:

$$AAPC = \frac{P_1 - P_0}{i \ (1/2) \ (P_1 + P_0)} (100)$$

P_0 and P_1 equal the population at the beginning and end of the time interval, respectively, and i equals the time interval, either 10 or 5.25. (See Campbell, Bailey, and McNamara for further discussion of method, **Population change in the Ozarks Region 1970-1975.** Also see Shryock, Henry S., Jacob S. Siegel and Associates, **Methods and materials of demography,** Volume 2, Rev Ed. U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1973, pp. 337-380).