

## METROPOLITAN POPULATION: PROSPECT AND CHANGE, 1960-1980

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I have been asked to discuss some aspects of the changing character of the metropolitan population as projected to 1980. This is a tough assignment, and for reasons that I will detail later I am going to try to avoid it at all costs.

Perhaps we can begin to see the dimensions of the problem of metropolitan population characteristics in 1980 by looking at the national context. We are much confronted with references to a "population explosion" both in the United States and, of course, in the world at large. I suggest that through the nearly two hundred years of this country's history a similar pattern of "explosive" growth could be noted. At our first census in 1790, we registered about four million inhabitants; for 1980—fifteen years hence—we will probably have a population of about 244 million persons. In all but two decades of the history of this country, each decennial increase in population has exceeded the increase registered in the previous ten years. For this country, explosive growth is not new. Looking at the present situation and glancing ahead, for the nation as a whole the first half of the 1960's showed a smaller increase than the last half of the 1950's. But in the 1970's, population growth is expected to reach levels which exceed any that we have so far experienced. Between 1970 and 1975 we will probably add some 17 million persons; between 1975 and 1980 we will grow by an additional 19 million persons.

These are numbers—and big numbers—but they don't suggest that the United States is unusual. Our growth rate amounts to an average of about 1.5 percent per year in this present decade; that rate will rise slightly, to 1.6 percent, during the 1970's. The world average is now about 1.8 percent—not too far different from our own. In general, North American population is growing at a faster rate than that of the industrial countries of Europe, but it is growing somewhat more slowly than that of countries of South America, Africa, and Asia.

Now these are general figures, and they conceal the fact that different segments of our population are growing at different rates. For example, the non-white segment is growing more rapidly than the white population. In the 1950's non-white population increased by 27 percent, white population by about 17-1/2 percent. The same pattern of differential growth is expected to continue for some time in the

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future. Projections indicate an increase of some 25 percent for non-white population in the decade 1970 to 1980, as opposed to a 16 percent increase for white population. The net result is that by 1980 about 12.8 percent of the total American population is expected to be non-white, compared with about 11.2 percent non-white in 1960.

Again, as an example of differential, there are now, and will continue to be, more females than males in the United States. There was about a 50-50 split between the sexes in 1940; but by 1980 there will be only about 96 men for each 100 women. At the present time the excess of females over males is found in every section of the United States except the Far Western states and, additionally, the excess of females is greatest among non-whites and within the urban areas of the country.

Because of differential growth patterns from a standpoint of age, the age composition of the American population is changing in the present decade. The largest numerical increases are expected in the groups 14-19 and 20-24 years of age—about 12.7 million in the two groups combined, or 45 percent of our projected over-all gain. The challenges the nation has faced in the field of higher education, technical training, and job provision for these young adult populations is well known in the present decade. On the other hand, almost one-third of our population increase during the 1970's is expected to be in the age group 25-34. The 1970's, therefore, will see the beginnings of an increase in the number of persons who already have had labor experience and who are approaching their peak earning period.

Population age 65 and over is increasing at a slower rate in the 1960's than it did in the 1950's, and this reduction in rate of growth is expected to continue until the latter part of the 1970's. On the other hand, the number reaching age 18 has been rising very steadily since 1952, but this number will increase sharply in 1965 as a result of the boom in births in 1946-1947. The numbers of 18 year olds will continue to grow, after leveling off for about three years, but at a lesser rate.

These latter two trends make it apparent that the nation is going to have a younger population—on average—in 1980 than it does at the present time. In 1960 the median age of American population was 29.4 years; in 1980, because of increase in births, the median age should be about 26.4 years.

Now, with these comments on national population trends as background, let me move on to my specific assignment: the metro-politan population. And just at this point is where I start to hedge. It is relatively easier to make projections and generalizations about a national population as a whole than it is about particular segments of that population, and particularly about the metropolitan segment of it. This is true because the metropolitan population is highly aggregated in a number of individual units, each of which has its individual growth characteristics, age characteristics, and economic base and growth

potential. To be meaningful and useful, a projection of metropolitan population should be made on the basis of individual metropolitan areas or it should be confined to particular size classes or particular regional clusterings of metropolitan areas. Nonetheless, with these limitations in mind, let me try to go ahead with the job that was set for me.

As we all know, the population of the United States has become increasingly urban in nearly any way we wish to interpret that term. The proportion of the nation's people living in urban places grew from some 40 percent in 1900 to about 63 percent in 1960, using the Census Bureau's "old" urban definition. Under more liberal classification standards of recent years, almost 70 percent of the 1960 population resided in places statistically recognized as urban. In general, the United States Bureau of the Census recognizes as "urban" incorporated places of 2,500 or more inhabitants. Such units are not necessarily, however, "metropolitan" in any usual meaning of the term. In addition to "urban places" the Census Bureau has recognized 213 major physical concentrations within the country as "urbanized areas"—each composed of a central city of 50,000 or more plus contiguous areas which meet specified standards of urban density. In 1960 these urbanized areas contained 54 percent of the American population and 76 percent of the urban population.

This rapid urbanization of the American population is a result of two distinct growth patterns: first, it is the consequence of total growth of American population which has tended to increase average densities and to raise formerly rural places to the status of urban; second, and more important and dramatic, has been a pattern of internal migration closely related to the increasing industrialization of the American economy with, as a corollary, an increasing concentration of that population in the larger urban units.

But even the urbanized area does not include all of the populations normally considered as "metropolitan." Populations in outlying areas physically removed from the contiguous urbanized area may be functionally incorporated within a larger metropolitan complex dominated by the central city. In order to take account of the functionally urban character of these populations, the Census Bureau has additionally established the "Standard Metropolitan Statistical Area," which is made up of the entire county in which the central city is located and includes all contiguous counties which are "essentially metropolitan in character and are socially and economically integrated with the central city county." Two hundred and twelve such areas were designated in 1960; they contained 113 million inhabitants, or about 63 percent of the population of the United States. Included in the SMSA population were 13 million inhabitants officially designated as rural, but the other 100 million constituted almost 80 percent of the entire urban population of the nation.

In these figures we have an insight into significant patterns of population movement and development within the United States since the end of the second World War. The post-war era has been characterized by two distinct and related trends: a pronounced metropolitanization of the American population and, within the expanding metropolitan areas, a most prominent suburbanization of urban inhabitants. Not only did metropolitan areas grow substantially faster than the non-metropolitan sections of the country during the twenty year period 1940 to 1960, but the metropolitan area growth rate was higher in relation to the rest of the county during the second than during the first decade of that period. Metropolitanization of the population, therefore, has been increasing at an increasing rate.

Metropolitan population growth during those twenty years was most notable in the largest of the nation's SMSA's—with a distinct correlation 1940 to 1960 between decreasing size of area and decreasing growth rate. It is the largest and most complex urban clusters that are becoming dominant in the American scene.

As an aside, the growth of individual Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas in different regions of the country has resulted gradually in a coalescence of the outer margins of those individually recognized SMSA's. The result has been to create elongated "city series" which, if not physically, at least functionally and statistically must be considered continuously urban. The most prominent of these urban regions is that which was recognized by Jean Gottman under the term "Megalopolis"—a sprawling, 600-mile city series stretching along the Atlantic Coast from Bangor, Maine, to Norfolk, Virginia. Although the most famous, it is not the only example of the emerging supercity within the United States. The steel district stretching from Pittsburgh through Youngstown, Canton and Akron westward to Cleveland is another developing urban region with a similar string shape; still another is growing up with Chicago as its center stretching north toward Milwaukee and southward around Lake Michigan to southern Michigan, with evidence of a further extension eastward to Detroit. Other examples are beginning to emerge.

The increasingly metropolitan domination of the American urban scene is primarily the result of rapid suburbanization of population and functions, not of the growth of the central cities themselves. Again, here is encountered a pattern of accelerating change. During the decade 1940 to 1950 suburbs grew three times as fast as they had from 1930 to 1940, and they accounted for nearly one-half of the total United States population increase. Nearly two-thirds of the population growth between 1950 and 1960 occurred outside the central cities but within SMSA's.

The attraction of suburban residence—fringe areas have been growing at a rate more than four times that of central cities—has been enhanced by the suburbanization of functions other than the residential.

The outward migration of shopping facilities is a commonly recognized facet of the new pattern of functional suburbanization, as has been the rapid development of industrial establishments outside of their older home—the central cities.

Now let us try to project this metropolitan picture forward, remembering the difficulties inherent in generalization about such a highly particular segment of the population. To begin with, we can expect continued metropolitan area development in the United States, with more people living in these than lived in the entire country in 1930. We can probably expect that some 80 percent of Americans will live on about 7 percent of the land by 1980.

To get more specific, let us look—as did a recent Rand Corporation report—at just the 52 largest SMSA's in the country. With a controlling assumption that there would be continuation of the migration flows that existed in the period 1950 to 1960, the Rand Corporation projected that the total population of the 52 largest SMSA's would grow at the rate of 23 to 24 percent per decade—that is, slightly faster than the population in the nation as a whole. In their study they found that the smaller SMSA's in this group of the largest 52 would probably grow more rapidly than the very largest ones. Further, those metropolitan areas which grew most rapidly between 1940 and 1960 are destined to lose considerable momentum between now and 1980.

Projections indicate that the total population of the 52 largest metropolitan areas will grow from about 80 million in 1960 to some 124 million in 1980. The largest of the lot—New York and Los Angeles—will each contain about 13 million people in 1980, as compared with 10.7 and 6.7 millions in 1960. While we had some 24 SMSA's with more than 1 million inhabitants in 1960, we should have some 40 in that size class by 1980.

Regionally, western SMSA's are projected to grow some 3 to 4 times more rapidly than those of the older, urbanized Northeast, while metropolitan areas of the North Central and the East South Central states will fall somewhere between the two extremes. Metropolitan areas of the South Atlantic and the West South Central regions will resemble more the western pattern.

While the racial composition of the metropolitan areas of the southern states seems likely to remain in balance (with immigration of rural non-whites matched by out-migration of urbanized non-whites to northern cities), the non-white populations of metropolitan areas in the East, North Central and Middle Atlantic states appears destined to grow rapidly—as indeed it is doing now. By 1980, non-whites will make up 20 percent or more of the populations of such places as New York, Chicago, Philadelphia, Detroit, Cleveland and Indianapolis.

These projections suggest that there will be continued pressure on our largest Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas—pressures of rapid growth in the South and West; pressures from changing racial

balances in the slower growing metropolitan areas of the Northeast and North Central states.

With these admittedly highly generalized metropolitan area projections as background, let us examine some of the patterns of population and economic change within individual idealized metropolitan areas and speculate a bit upon the implications of these changes in planning for public library facilities. Let me, of course, hasten to disclaim any professional competence in your field of special interest. However, I would view provision of library services for a changing metropolitan population as simply one facet of the whole complex problem of public facility provision that is facing metropolitan areas today. I, would therefore, suggest that the increasing size and complexity of our metropolitan areas as well as their changing character poses serious problems of direct concern in planning new and altered library facilities. The primary local population shift which has been often commented upon and which apparently will continue into the future is a general outward movement of families—particularly the younger families—from the central city to the suburban and fringe areas of our metropolitan districts. Let us look briefly at this developing new metropolitan structure.

First, the suburbanites are apparently primarily out-migrants from the central city itself. These fringe populations—amounting in 1960 to some 50 percent of all metropolitan area populations—are in the process of creating a substantially different way of life and attitude toward the city from that of their more urban predecessors. For one thing they are, in general, wealthier than the urban populations left behind. They have larger than average families, higher educational levels, a more informal style of life. They are more dependent upon the private automobile, and find to an ever greater extent in the fringe areas themselves not only the business districts, but also the employment opportunities which formerly only the central city could provide.

Along with the outward movement of population has come the suburbanization of commercial and manufacturing activities formerly dominantly located within the older central city areas. This acceleration of outward movement is accompanied by an increasing per capita demand for land. Metropolitan areas, in fact, are sprawling even faster than they are gaining in population. Thanks to modern subdivision control ordinances, each family acquiring a new house today uses about twice as much land as did a new family thirty years ago. Obviously, tremendous amounts of land are consumed by provision of parking lots and the massive one-floor clusters characteristic of commercial shopping centers. It is the automobile which has made possible and tolerable the vast dispersion of formerly concentrated activities to the sprawling margins of our metropolitan areas.

While these changes are occurring in the peripheral zone, the central city is undergoing different, although equally striking, changes of its own. With suburbanization of the formerly urban population the central city finds its youngest, wealthiest, most educated, and ablest citizens now dispersed. Behind, in the vacuum they have left, a new group is taking over—white and, particularly, non-white rural immigrants of much lower educational and economic standards. This new urban population places different and strikingly heavier demands upon the agencies of public service and support than the now departed group that they replaced; at the same time, of course, they are much less capable of contributing to the cost of those services. Their lack of ability to contribute, commensurate to their numbers, to the economic support of the city through property taxes is echoed by the out-migration of those heavy contributors, the commercial and industrial activities, which are also suburbanizing. The central city—facing an increasingly serious situation of economic, social, and physical deterioration—is forced increasingly to undertake massive programs of urban renewal in order to reconstitute itself as a viable unit.

Now what are the implications of these new metropolitan patterns for library planners? Here, of course, I can only suggest some of the things that have occurred to an observer of the urban scene and must leave the evaluation of suggestions to you.

First, for the suburban and fringe zone. Here is the active growth zone featuring the young, relatively well-to-do and educated group with large families, great mobility, and a new pattern of casualness. Obviously, among the public facilities of which they are in greatest need are more, better, and properly located libraries. But where, exactly, should those facilities be located; how large should they be; how are they to be paid for; what total area and population should they be designed to serve? Again, I do not pretend to know any of the answers; but we do know that people and activities have been moving outward and that the central business district—the traditional home of the public library in the large and small towns of the nation—is no longer effectively acting as the attracter, the focus, of the people the library is designed to serve. Indeed, in our sprawling fringe zones of growing metropolitan areas, the whole concept of municipally centered library facilities would appear to have lost its meaning with the proliferation of residential subdivisions and small towns, many without a natural focus of their own.

It would seem logical then that new library facilities should follow people and functions outward—perhaps retaining their traditional orientation towards commercial districts by becoming part of shopping center complexes where accessibility, convergence of clientele, and available parking would all be desirable locational factors. Since the technique of shopping center design includes rigorous analysis of population characteristics and numbers, driving times, etc., library

planners could conceivably benefit from the plans and data of the center promoters in evaluating the size and type of facility required. But, remember, these new outlying shopping centers are not oriented towards the market potential of a particular municipality but rather toward the potential of a segment of the entire metropolitan fringe area. Conceivably, therefore, cooperative library districts are going to be required in order to secure the financial support for these new facilities if they are to serve the population now existing in—or moving to—the peripheral areas.

At the same time, the central city also shows a changed situation with respect to public facilities and, here, particularly, library facilities. The new in-migrants—though theoretically desperately in need of the facilities and services of the municipal library—are not prepared to make full use of established library facilities. At the same time, the erosion of the economic base of the city has cut tax revenue and reduced the ability of the community to support libraries when it must increase and support public health services, police and fire protection, etc. As frequently happens, a desirable service must expect to play second fiddle to an imperative service.

The redevelopment of the city through some slum clearance and urban redevelopment also poses problems, for frequently such slum clearance is resulting in replacement of the older generation of users by apartment structures designed for middle and upper income families. These groups—"suburban" in their economic and educational levels—are not prepared to accept or tolerate the public library facilities that satisfied slum dwellers who preceded them on the same location. Provision must be made for the redevelopment of public facilities—including libraries—to correspond to the redevelopment of housing.

These, then, are the general patterns of metropolitan population change and urban development that appear likely over the next fifteen years, and a few of the problems and challenges for library planners that, to me at least, these changes would seem to imply.