

The Socioeconomic and Demographic Characteristics of Pope County and Southern Illinois

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Established in 1938 under operation of the University of Illinois, the Dixon Springs Agricultural Center (DSAC) has played a unique and important interfacing role between Southern Illinois and the main campus college of ACES several hours to the north. The center serves as a source of local employment and facilitator of agricultural and natural resource research and outreach.

This report describes the economic and demographic processes and interactions between 1990 and 2005 in the region colloquially referred to as “Little Egypt.” This report focuses on Pope County due to the location of DSAC. The broader scope, however, includes all of the Southern Illinois counties included in the Mississippi Delta Regional Authority, plus Edwards, Jefferson, Edwards, and Wabash Counties. The additional four counties were added so that the study region would overlap with the region working with ConnectSI. The Delta Regional Authority includes many counties from other states, but here we focus on the Southern Illinois region. The Delta Regional Authority counties were selected as a regional definition because the Authority was established to promote distressed counties within the delta region. Pope County is at the heart of a distressed Southern Illinois.

Summary: The Story of Pope County and Southern Illinois

Pope County first appears in the 1820 Census. In 1840, Pope’s population was similar, in size and racial composition only, to today’s population, and it was growing. Unlike today, virtually everyone who worked, worked in agriculture. Agriculture was doing well—the land was still fertile and had not yet been overworked. By 1890, Pope was booming. The population peaked around 14,000. In 1890, the Census recorded about 1,700 farms, which annually produced \$8.25 million (2002 dollars) of output. As chronicled in “Redeeming a Lost Heritage,” agriculture yields and incomes had begun to decline by the Great Depression. By 1930, the population had fallen by 57%. Agriculture employed 70% of workers, and was continuing to decline. Around this time, the DSAC was initiated, as, among other things, a method of researching methods in farm productivity and soil conservation. Maintaining the income potential of Pope County agriculture was paramount to maintaining the quality of life. Life as they knew it was fundamentally changing in other ways, too. Women had entered the formal workforce. Industries were diversifying. The service sector was the largest non-agricultural sector in the county.

By 2000, agricultural employment (jobs held by local residents) had dropped to 120 jobs¹, higher than it had been in 1990 but still drastically lower than its more historic levels (Census). Agriculture was producing less output, too; in 2002, county farms produced \$4.3 million of output. Agriculture was the smallest income-producing sector in the county in 2000. By employment numbers, agriculture ranked fifth to health care and social assistance (part of the service sector), manufacturing, retail trade, and public administration. The only export-oriented industry of these, manufacturing, has been in Pope County just 20 years, and has been losing employment regionally for some time. The service sector, the largest source of private employment job growth since 1969, has lost 41% of per job real income since 1969. In reality, today Pope County has very little industry. The jobs held in Pope County, by and large, serve the needs of the local residents, and are not returning increasing quality of life to the region.

As a consequence, the majority of people who live in Pope County and work commute to other regional counties. Less than 300 people commute into Pope to work. Pope has become dependent upon its region for jobs. The economic history and current industrial composition of the other regional counties vary greatly from Pope County. Consequently, it is reasonable to guess that the employment characteristics (industry, occupation, wage, etc.) of Pope's out-commuters vary considerably from Pope's non-commuters (those who work and live in Pope County), which may have implications for community cohesiveness. Incomes are lower in Pope County and unemployment is higher, relative to both the state and the Southern Illinois region. The Southern Illinois region trails the state in most economic indicators. Pope County consistently trails the region.

Almost certainly as a consequence of the economy, career-aged persons tend to out-migrate. All age cohorts between 30 and 49 years are underrepresented in Southern Illinois, relative to their proportion of the state population. With out-migrating parents, Southern Illinois also has a small population of children (under the age of 15) relative to the state. Young adults are reasonably represented because they are not leaving for college (education attainment is fairly low in the region), but rather staying home to begin careers, then out-migrating later. On the other hand, the age structure suggests that Southern Illinois is a great place to retire. With few children, many older residents, and a fleeing middle-aged group, the region is ripe for graying.

International migration might save Southern Illinois from a significant aging. First generation international migrants tend to reproduce at the rate normal for their home nation, which is almost always significantly higher than WASP fertility rates in the US. Incidentally, international migration is also the only component of population change that is bringing in net positive population growth to the shrinking region. Regionally, between 2000 and 2005, deaths outnumbered births and domestic migration, on net, lured residents away. The components of population change vary widely among counties, but the positive significance of international migration is fairly consistent. It is not

¹ Note that this employment figure varies substantially from the figures presented in the section "Historic Employment by Industry," since those figures represent employment by place rather than by residence.

immediately clear what draws international migrants to some parts of the region, especially where agriculture and manufacturing employ relatively few people.

With a decreasing population in most parts of the region, there is little new housing construction. In 2005, Alexander, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Johnson, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Saline and White Counties collectively issued just 20 housing permits. Between 2000 and 2005, Pope County issued three. No homes were sold in the first quarter of 2006 in Pope County. In the less populated parts of the region, most new housing construction probably accommodates replacement of homes.

Homeownership in the region is extremely high, which is fairly typical of rural regions. Regionally, homeownership is 73.6%. Among whites, three-quarters of households own homes. Among black or African-American households, 40% own homes. Regionally, the calculated median household income in 1999 was \$30,846 for all households; for black households, the calculated median was \$16,659. Regionally, poverty was 15.8% among all people (compared to 10.7% statewide). Among blacks, it was 39%. Pope County recorded a slave population in 1840 and “free blacks” thereafter. When Pope revoked slavery, the black population grew quickly to about 125, and has remained incredibly stable for well over a century. This history may not be true for the region, but it probably is.

In general, as a consequence of the economic structure of Pope County, incomes are lower than region-wide incomes. Naturally, younger households earn less than households in the prime earning years. Among the working-aged population, incomes are not alarming. Few young households earn less than \$20,000. Incomes improve with work experience, up until retirement. Post-retirement, incomes lose stability. Among those ages 75+, nearly two-thirds (64%) earned less than \$20,000 in 2000. Especially considering the graying of Pope County and the region, the quality of life of retirees and the elderly must be diligently guarded.

For most people, housing quality is the single largest material part of quality of life. In Pope County, over 5% of housing units lack complete plumbing. Countywide, 17.2% of homeowners and 26.7% of renter households encountered housing problems in 2000. The means to combat housing problems, again, tie directly to incomes, the cost of long commutes, the availability of the Federal, county and local governments to provide housing assistance, and the enforcement of codes (to landlords) for rental properties. Regionally, large family households have particular trouble with housing quality.

Once upon a time, agriculture ruled Pope County. When agriculture dwindled, the economy became at first a service-oriented economy, then later, and to a lesser extent added manufacturing and mining. Both manufacturing and mining have had unsteady employment levels regionally. Service sector workers have experienced significant decreases in wages. The majority of Pope workers out-commute. Do the people of Pope County want to find another industry to rule? Is it already there and still growing up? Does Pope County want to become a set of quaint, lovely bedroom communities for Carbondale, Marion, and Paducah? Or perhaps center on a resort-style retirement

industry? Pope County is ripe for graying, or ripe for growing up. The following chapters review the above statistics in greater detail, and set the stage for the next phase of research.

Population

History

Illinois counties first appear in the Census in 1820, after Illinois's admission to statehood in 1818. The 1820 Census found 2,610 persons living in Pope County. The population grew modestly over the next ten years, expanding to 3,291 free and 25 slaves in 1830. Although other Illinois counties continued to record slave populations in later Censuses (nearby Randolph County had the largest slave population in the state in 1840), in Pope County all blacks were recorded as free in the 1840 Census and afterwards. Judging by population alone, Pope County is not markedly different today than it was in 1840. In 1840, 4,094 persons lived in Pope. Today (2005), 4,211 people call the county home. In 1840, the population included 58 "free blacks." The 2000 Census recorded 166 persons who are black or African American alone. In 1840, 884 county residents were employed. In 2000, 1,011 male residents were employed (females omitted here for purpose of comparison). That is where the likeness ends.

The 1840 employment composition by industry, and even the industries themselves, are not found anywhere in the United States today. In 1840, 852 of the 884 employed residents worked in agriculture. The remainder was split between commerce, manufacturing and trade, navigation of the ocean, lakes, or rivers, learned professions and engineers, and Revolutionary War pensioners.

Pope County's population peaked around 1890. The Census that year recorded 14,016 people. Agriculture was booming. In 1890, there were 1,715 farms in Pope County, occupying an average of 107 acres each. In 2002 dollars, these farms collectively produced about \$8.25 million of output. In 2002, the Census of Agriculture reported 341 farms with an average size of 226 acres. The output from these farms was \$4.3 million. Everyone knows this story. Smaller farms were bought by larger ones and aggregated. Other farms and farmers converted to other industries and never looked back. Over time, the difficult soils of Pope County began to yield less output. Consequently, some people moved away to find a better life. Others stayed and shifted into other lines of work.

By 1930 the population had dwindled to 57% (7,996) of its peak size. The black population was 167, about what it is today. The white population was 7,829, significantly higher than the 2005 population. By 1930, the percentage of the working population employed in agriculture had decreased to 70% (1,864 workers in agriculture). Thirty men worked in coal and mineral extraction, 56 in construction, 37 for the railroads, 130 men and women in wholesale and retail trade, 146 in professional and semi-professional services (which have remained a large part of local employment), and a few hundred others worked in various, diverse industries. Finally, in the 1930 Census, the government

chose to canvass both genders for employment by industry, which in 1840 was probably assumed to be a moot question.

By 1990, the county population had decreased to 4,373. Of the population over the age of 16, 1,440 people were employed. Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries was the fourth largest industry, at 154 workers and 10.7% of total employment. It was third to retail trade (233), public administration (201), and health services (159). In 1990, 277 people claimed farm proprietor employment in Pope County, although not all of those proprietor's are necessarily Pope County residents. Between 1990 and 2000, agricultural employment dropped slightly, to 120 employees. Overall employment grew more, to 1,885 employed residents, therefore making agricultural employment a smaller percentage of total employment. Four other industries had higher employment of local residents: health care and social assistance (292), manufacturing (202), retail trade (200), and public administration (183).

At its beginning, Pope County was a patchwork quilt of local farms. As the Midwest became the center of American agriculture, Pope County blossomed, enjoying nearly 2,000 moderately sized local farms. As yields began to drop and surpluses became problematic, farms consolidated, residents out-migrated, and others changed occupations. In the early part of the twentieth century, while the population diminished, employment diversified. Agricultural employment met its sharp decline after 1930, during the rise of manufacturing in World War II-era America. Over the next seventy years, local residents moved first into service positions, then later, and to a much smaller extent, into export-producing industries, like manufacturing and mining. Today, most employed Pope County residents commute to other counties for work. The inverse is not true; residents of other counties do not generally commute to Pope for work. Although incomes in Pope County have grown considerably over the past fifteen years, incomes remain lower than incomes in Southern Illinois, which in turn are lower than statewide incomes. The sources of incomes, poverty, housing, and other aspects pertaining to quality of life in Pope County and the region are discussed in greater detail below.

General Demographic Characteristics

The 100% survey data from the 2000 Census found 423,670 residents in the 20-county Southern Illinois region. The most inhabited Census tract in the region is Tract 107 in Jackson County, which covers part of Carbondale. The least populated tract is 113 in Jackson County, which lies to the north of the Carbondale Reservoir. Across the region, the population density in 2000 was 54.3, or approximately one-fourth of the statewide population density of 223.4 persons per square mile. Of the 423,670 residents in 2000, only 38,371 (9.1%) were non-white. By comparison, 26.5% of Illinois' population and 24.9% of the U.S. population is non-white only. In Southern Illinois, the Index of Dissimilarity for 2000 is 0.635, meaning that 63.5% of the African American population would have to move to achieve a uniform density of African Americans (in other words,

100% integration) across the region². Table 1, below, shows the racial composition of the region.

Table 1: Racial Composition of Region, 2000

<i>Race</i>	<i># People</i>	<i>% of Total</i>
White alone	385,299	90.9%
Black or African American alone	27,209	6.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	1,114	0.3%
Asian alone	3,016	0.7%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	155	0.0%
Some other race alone	2,252	0.5%
Two or more races	4,625	1.1%
Total population	423,670	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Over the long term, Southern Illinois has grown somewhat, up 9.0% from 388,666 in 1969 to 423, 670 in 2000. In the more recent past, population has been stable. Population estimates for 2005 put the region’s population at 420,993, an inconsiderable decrease from 2000. Although several counties lost population and several gained, the largest decrease by far was a 1,658 person decline in Jackson County. Probably nothing outstanding has happened in Jackson County to cause this decrease; a 1,658 person decline represents a loss of only 2.8%. Among the counties that lost population, the average decline was 3.2%. Williamson County claimed the largest population growth in both number and percent. County populations in 2000 and 2005, and the interim change, are shown in Table 2.

² Computed as $D=0.5 \sum | (P_{ig}/P_g)-(P_{ih}/P_h) |$, sum from $i=1$ to r . Computed using Census 2000 data at the Census tract level (i =tract), where g =white alone population, h =black or African American alone population. For more information see Plane & Rogerson (1994), *The Geographical Analysis of Population*.

Table 2: Regional Population Change, 2000 to 2005

<i>County</i>	<i>2000 Population</i>	<i>2005 Population</i>	<i>Difference</i>	<i>Percent Change</i>
Alexander	9,590	8,927	-663	-6.9%
Edwards	6,971	6,784	-187	-2.7%
Franklin	39,018	39,723	705	1.8%
Gallatin	6,445	6,152	-293	-4.5%
Hamilton	8,621	8,301	-320	-3.7%
Hardin	4,800	4,718	-82	-1.7%
Jackson	59,612	57,954	-1,658	-2.8%
Jefferson	40,045	40,434	389	1.0%
Johnson	12,878	13,169	291	2.3%
Massac	15,161	15,348	187	1.2%
Perry	23,094	22,815	-279	-1.2%
Pope	4,413	4,211	-202	-4.6%
Pulaski	7,348	6,794	-554	-7.5%
Randolph	33,893	33,122	-771	-2.3%
Saline	26,733	26,072	-661	-2.5%
Union	18,293	18,202	-91	-0.5%
Wabash	12,937	12,570	-367	-2.8%
Wayne	17,151	16,796	-355	-2.1%
White	15,371	15,284	-87	-0.6%
Williamson	61,296	63,617	2,321	3.8%
Region	423,670	420,993	-2,677	-0.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, Population Estimates

Table 3 shows the cumulative components of change between 2000 and 2005 for the region. Please note that the population change for the region between 2000 and 2005 varies slightly from the change shown in Table 2, above, due to slight variations in the time period considered (March versus July of 2000). Our earlier suspicion that international migration is driving Southern Illinois is substantiated by this data. Over five years, the region lost 2,703 residents. Deaths outnumbered births regionally to the tune of 645 people. Of domestic migrants, 3,575 more left the region than moved to it. International migration, however, netted 2,108 new residents. While the components of population change vary widely among counties, international migration is a fairly consistently positive component regionally.

Population change throughout the region varies considerably. Franklin and Williamson Counties, two of the larger counties in the region, had the only dramatic positive net internal (domestic) migration. Yet even among similarly sized counties, the components of population change vary widely. Jackson and Williamson, for example, are all over the board in terms of size and components of change. Williamson County gained population (and did so handsomely) and Jackson charted the largest loss in the region. Williamson

has the largest gain from internal migration; Jackson has the largest population loss due to internal migration. In short, the region is very difficult to assess for data patterns at the county level.

Southern Illinois University would seemingly explain the high international migration into Jackson County. Demographic data from SIU, however, does not support that idea. County and city websites do not address the high international immigration. Nor is Jackson County particularly specialized in agricultural production, a usual suspect industry for international labor. In fact, the only agricultural industry that is highly specialized in Jackson County is fluid milk production, which employs ten times the national average for that industry. Aluminum and plastic bag manufacturing and coal mining are also highly specialized in the county. The draw for international immigration is not immediately clear.

Table 3: Cumulative Estimates of the Components of Population Change, 2000-2005

<i>Geographic Area</i>	<i>Total Population Change*</i>	<i>Natural Increase</i>			<i>Net Migration</i>		
		<i>Total</i>	<i>Births</i>	<i>Deaths</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Net International Migration</i>	<i>Net Internal Migration</i>
Illinois	343,724	406,425	959,470	553,045	-63,011	328,020	-391,031
Alexander	-663	63	741	678	-704	-4	-700
Edwards	-187	-9	423	432	-171	-4	-167
Franklin	694	-521	2,459	2,980	1,276	20	1,256
Gallatin	-293	-95	369	464	-190	8	-198
Hamilton	-320	-49	461	510	-253	-4	-249
Hardin	-82	-99	231	330	23	45	-22
Jackson	-1,670	1,097	3,536	2,439	-2,702	1,644	-4,346
Jefferson	389	285	2,467	2,182	150	70	80
Johnson	291	51	674	623	262	36	226
Massac	187	-53	1,004	1,057	267	-	267
Perry	-279	-93	1,292	1,385	-158	33	-191
Pope	-202	-44	170	214	-145	1	-146
Pulaski	-554	23	519	496	-551	-	-551
Randolph	-771	-56	1,976	2,032	-673	27	-700
Saline	-661	-557	1,629	2,186	-74	47	-121
Union	-91	-212	1,133	1,345	144	89	55
Wabash	-367	33	720	687	-380	5	-385
Wayne	-355	-29	1,015	1,044	-300	6	-306
White	-87	-329	842	1,171	269	6	263
Williamson	2,318	-51	3,849	3,900	2,443	83	2,360
Region	-2,703	-645	25,510	26,155	-1,467	2,108	-3,575

Source: US Census Bureau, Population Estimates

Table 4, below, reveals an even distribution of population over age cohorts. Accounting for the fact that the first four age brackets shown cover five years rather than ten, the age groups from ten to fifty years are fairly uniform regionally. Smaller percentages of 50-69 year olds reflects natural population attrition. The slightly higher population in the oldest age group reflects the much broader age range that is accounted for. Relative to the state, Southern Illinois is shy on children and prime income earners, yet abounds in retirees and the elderly. In Southern Illinois, 11.8% of the population is under age ten, compared to 14.5% statewide. Young teens are also underrepresented. Older teens and young adults are adequately represented in the region likely because they are not leaving home to go to college at rates equal to their statewide counterparts. The prime income earners (people ages 30-49), after having started careers in the region, have gone elsewhere to earn more.

Meanwhile, 20.8% of the population is aged 60+, compared to just 15.8% of the state's population. Keep in mind that the age cohorts shown below reflect 2000 data; a great deal of in- and out-migration has happened since then.

Table 4: Population by Age, 2000

Age Bracket	# Persons,			
	Region	% of Region	% of IL	% of US
Under 5 years	23,629	5.6%	7.1%	6.8%
5 to 9 years	26,178	6.2%	7.5%	7.3%
10 to 14 years	27,570	6.5%	7.3%	7.3%
15 to 19 years	31,884	7.5%	7.2%	7.2%
20 to 29 years	59,729	14.1%	14.0%	13.6%
30 to 39 years	57,209	13.5%	15.4%	15.4%
40 to 49 years	60,572	14.3%	15.0%	15.1%
50 to 59 years	48,563	11.5%	10.7%	11.0%
60 to 69 years	36,577	8.6%	6.9%	7.2%
70 and older	51,759	12.2%	8.9%	9.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000

Income

This section begins with a brief overview of income in Pope County and in the region, then goes on to look at income by age, by race, and by source, and poverty. There are two Census Tracts in Pope County, 9712 and 9713. The northern roughly half of the county is Census Tract 9712. Bound to the north by Route 145 (a nearly due east-west road from Golconda), the Southern roughly half of the county is Census Tract 9713.

Among other sources, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Census Bureau, and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) all publish income data for counties. Unfortunately, the data represent different units of analysis or different definitions of income. It is easy to make a week's worth of work interpolating and interpreting between the data sources. For simplicity, only the Census and HUD statistics are reported here.

The 2000 Census reports a median household income of \$30,048 and a median family income of \$37,860 in Pope County. A discrepancy of this scale between household and family income is not unusual. Pope County falls just below both the calculated median³ household and family income for the region, as shown in Table 5.

³ Tables P52 and P76 provide the number of households/families in each of many income brackets. Assuming that households are distributed evenly across each income bracket, the median for the aggregated region was determined.

Table 5: Median Family and Household Income

	Pope County	Region
Median family income, Census (1999)	\$37,860	\$39,260
Median household income, Census (1999)	\$30,048	\$30,846
HUD 1999 median family income	\$34,100	NA
HUD 2005 median family income	\$41,950	NA

Source: Census Bureau and HUD

HUD data, which is not ideal for rural counties, reports a median family income of \$41,950 in 2005. A HUD median for the region cannot be readily or reasonably calculated using available data.

Income by Source

Of the region's total personal income in 2004, a full 60% came from net earnings by place of residence. One-sixth (16.5%) of total personal income stemmed from dividends, interest, and rent in both Southern Illinois and Illinois—the percentages match exactly. The remaining 23.3% in the region came in the form of personal current transfer receipts.

After accounting for inflation, regional per capita personal incomes increased by \$8,801 (from \$14,952 to \$23,753) between 1969 and 2004. The composition of income by the three general sources of income (personal current transfer receipts, dividends, interest, and rent, and net earnings by place of residence) also changed substantially. The percent of personal income deriving from personal current transfer receipts increased the most, by \$3,569, or from 13.1% of personal income in 1969 to 23.3% in 2004. Net earnings by place of residence accounted for far less of the total personal income in 2004 than it did in 1969—about 14% less. These changes reflect an aging population, and a stronger reliance on transfer payments rather than traditional employment. Further research indicates that medical payments account for a considerable portion of the increase in transfer payments. Changes over the 35-year period are shown in Table 6. The population grew 8.3% over this period, from 388,666 in 1969 to 420,972 in 2004.

Table 6: Components of Per Capita Personal Income (PCPI), 1969 and 2004, Southern Illinois

Source	1969 (in 2004 dollars)		2004	
	Per Capita Income Amount	Percent of Total PCPI	Per Capita Income Amount	Percent of Total PCPI
Personal current transfer receipts	\$1,956	13.1%	\$ 5,525	23.3%
Dividends, interest, and rent	\$1,868	12.5%	\$ 3,916	16.5%
Net earnings by place of residence	\$11,133	74.4%	\$ 14,312	60.3%
Total Per Capita Income	\$14,952	100.0%	\$ 23,753	100.0%

Source: BEA-REIS Table CA05

Income by Age

Although there is a significant difference in household incomes between the youngest households and the prime income earners, the disparity is not so great as to cast the young into poverty or the older into great wealth. Among Pope County's young (householders age 25 years and younger), households are fairly normally distributed over the income brackets from less than \$10,000 (14.5%) to over \$75,000 (10%). The largest pool of young households (40%) earned between \$20,000 and \$30,000 in 2000. There is not an extreme disparity between young households in the northern (and much less densely populated) half of the county and the Southern half. Among residents in prime earning years, ages 35 to 54, households are also distributed over many income brackets, with no alarming percent at either end of the distribution. As expected, however, a larger share (26.3%), relative to young households, earned between \$50,000 and \$74,999. There is no significant difference between the two Census Tracts for this age cohort.

In the cohort ages 55-64, a concerning trend begins. In the group ages 55-64, 27% of households earned less than \$20,000. Among households ages 65-74, that statistic is 37%. Among the elderly, those aged beyond 75 years, 64% of households earned less than \$20,000. Incomes tend to be lower, though not drastically so, among retirees and the elderly in the southern half of the county (relative to the northern half). While it is true that retired householders often live on savings or accumulated wealth, the low incomes are cause for concern. Among residents who are truly living on small incomes, without sufficient savings medical attention, housing upkeep (which would not be shown in HUD's "housing problems" data, shown in a later section), and mobility may be insufficient.

Income by Race

For Pope County, there are only 12 households in which the householder is black or African American alone (meaning one race only). Because Census data relies on sampling, the small sample size makes the data unreliable. However, for some of the larger counties in the region, and for the region as a whole, income by race can be reliably estimated.

In neighboring Williamson County, for example, where 471 black or African American householders lived in 2000, 47% of African American households earned less than \$20,000. Among all of Williamson's population, just 33% of households earned less than \$20,000. Among blacks, 3% of households earned in the top four income brackets (\$100,000 or more), while 6% of total households earned as much. In Massac County the same story is true. In the total population, 34% of households earn less than \$20,000, but among blacks (375 households) the statistic is 50% of households. Among the general population, 3% earned over \$100,000. Among black or African American households, this figure is just 1%.

Across the region, the calculated median household income is \$30,846. Among black or African American households, the calculated median is \$16,659. Regionally, 34% of

black households earn less than \$10,000, while among all households, only 15% fall into this income bracket. Among black households, 56% earn less than \$20,000. Only 33% of total households earn less than \$20,000. Among black households, 2.6% earn over \$100,000 regionally. Among all households in the region, 4.5% earn over \$100,000.

Poverty

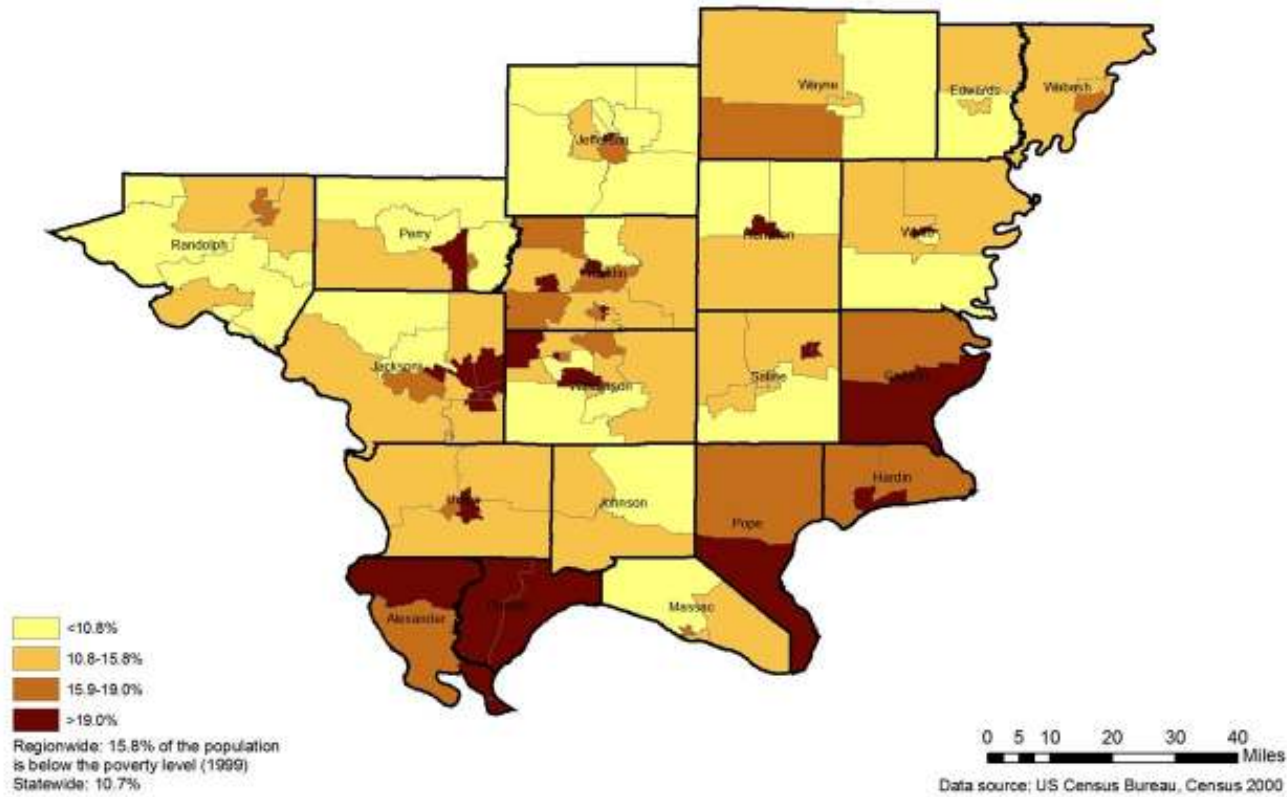
Globally, poverty is among the most difficult phenomena to measure. Difficulties caused by changing definitions, measurement techniques, sampling errors, and other problems have long riddled demographers, sociologists, and economists. In the United States, beginning in 1963, poverty thresholds were set based on family food budget data. Thresholds have been updated to vary according to family size and age. Thresholds do not vary geographically. Some individuals are excluded from poverty calculations.⁴

Pope County has a higher poverty rate (18.2%) than the region (15.8%). In Pope County, 29.2% of children ages 0-11 are in poverty. Regionally, 21.9% of such young children are impoverished. Figures 1 and 2 illustrate poverty among the entire population and among children. Poverty data shows that Pope County still has a large opportunity to promote equal access to living wages. Among the black or African American population (166 persons, a small sample size), poverty in Pope County breaks 70%. The regional poverty rate among blacks is 39%. Mapping of this data promotes premature conclusions, because the black or African American population in some Census tracts or counties is too small to confidently report sample-based statistics for.

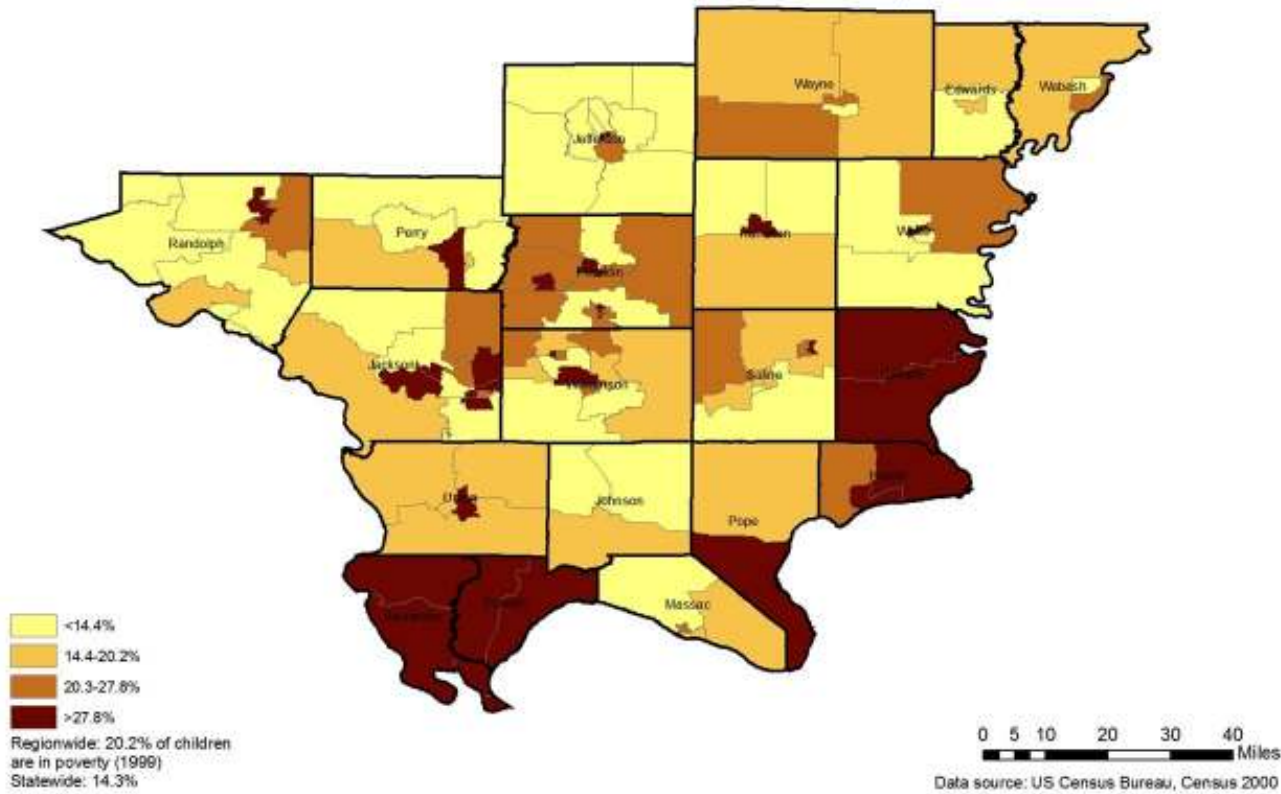
As a point of comparison, the national poverty rate in 2000 was 12.4% and Illinois's state rate was 10.7%. The region's poverty level (15.8%) is comparatively high.

⁴ For more information, see <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty/povdef.html>. Accessed 6/13/2006. Data shown is from Census 2000 and has not been updated since.

**Figure 1: Percent of the Population
Below the Poverty Level,
Southern Illinois Census Tracts, 2000**



**Figure 2: Percent of Children (Age<18)
Below the Poverty Level,
Southern Illinois Census Tracts, 2000**



Employment

The employment section will cover current and historic employment by industry, unemployment, and commuting patterns. Data comes primarily from the Bureau of Economic Analysis, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the Census Bureau.

Historic Employment by Industry

Between 1969 and 2000, total full- and part-time employment increased by 60%, and private employment by 128% in Pope County. Population grew by 13.7%, from 3,880 to 4,413. Employment by sector for both years is shown in Table 7⁵. The more than doubling of private employment was propelled by gains in the service sector and in mining. Construction employment also grew, though with the sector's trademark fluctuation throughout the period (data not shown). In fact, all sectors gained employment over the period. Perhaps more interestingly, manufacturing charted its first employees in 1981, beginning with fewer than ten employees and growing slightly to 35 in 2000. Large gains are not expected in manufacturing, as this is not an industry that is thriving regionally or nationally. Between 1969 and 2000, employment in the US grew by 83%, but manufacturing employment declined by 7%. Manufacturing also declined within the region over that period. The largest part of that decline occurred between 1980 and 1990, just when manufacturing made its modest debut in Pope County.

⁵ On Tables 1 and 2, employment in some sectors is estimated based on total employment and historic employment levels. This is necessary due to non-disclosure regulations.

Table 7: Pope County Employment by Sector, 1969 and 2000

<i>LineTitle</i>	<i>1969</i>		<i>2000</i>	
<i>Total full-time and part-time employment</i>	1,025		1,636	
Wage and salary employment	535		964	
Proprietors employment	490		672	
Farm proprietors employment	269		320	
Nonfarm proprietors employment	221		352	
Farm employment	317		343	
Nonfarm employment	708		1,293	
<i>Private employment</i>	418	<i>Percent</i>	955	<i>Percent</i>
Agricultural services, forestry, fishing and other	5	1.2%	49	5.1%
Mining	11	2.6%	110	11.5%
Construction	34	8.1%	71	7.4%
Manufacturing	0	0.0%	35	3.7%
Transportation and public utilities	20	4.8%	65	6.8%
Wholesale trade	5	1.2%	11	1.2%
Retail trade	131	31.3%	183	19.2%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	50	12.0%	56	5.9%
Services	162	38.8%	375	39.3%
<i>Government and government enterprises</i>	290		338	
Federal, civilian	104		97	
Military	13		10	
State and local	173		231	
State government	(N)		41	
Local government	(N)		190	

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, Table CA25, using SIC data⁶

Every politician wants to stand at a podium and declare a 128% growth in jobs. Were all jobs equal, with equal pay, equal health risks, equal quality of life, job growth could always be unequivocally esteemed. However, in the case of the service sector, growth might challenge the quality of life in Pope County. In 1969 the average service sector employee in Pope County earned \$5,383. Had that income kept up with inflation, each of those workers would have earned \$25,256 in 2000. But the BEA data from 2000 shows that the average service sector worker in the county earned \$14,784—a 41% decrease in the real wage. A similar analysis of mining incomes may or may not reveal the same trend among mining jobs; the analysis cannot be completed due to a lack of income data.

Also of particular interest are the gains in agricultural employment and mining, due to their obvious links to the DSAC and environmental quality. The two sectors moved from a total of 16 employees in 1969 to 159 in 2000. The bulk of that gain occurred in the mining sector. Mining jobs in West Virginia, which mirrors rural Southern Illinois economically, paid around \$40,000 in 2000. The high pay comes with little job security,

⁶ For more information, see <http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/reis/CA25fn.cfm>. Accessed 4/6/07.

as Southern Illinois has painfully experienced, as well as certain health and environmental risks. It will be of equal interest to determine the source of growth in the agricultural sector, and any role that the DSAC has played or could play in the growth. Table 8 shows regional employment by sector in 1969 and 2000. Both Tables 7 and 7 reflect employment by place of employment, rather than by place of residence.

Table 8: Regional Employment by Sector, 1969 and 2000

<i>LineTitle</i>	<i>1969</i>		<i>2000</i>	
<i>Total full-time and part-time employment</i>	150,251		211,210	
Wage and salary employment	114,849		161,202	
Proprietors employment	35,402		50,008	
Farm proprietors employment	12,262		11,006	
Nonfarm proprietors employment	23,140		39,002	
Farm employment	14,282		12,739	
Nonfarm employment	135,969		198,471	
<i>Private employment</i>	107,294	<i>Percent</i>	157,057	<i>Percent</i>
Agricultural services, forestry, fishing and other	611	0.6%	2,088	1.3%
Mining	8,823	8.2%	5,538	3.5%
Construction	7,841	7.3%	10,587	6.7%
Manufacturing	24,218	22.6%	22,166	14.1%
Transportation and public utilities	8,387	7.8%	8,868	5.6%
Wholesale trade	4,366	4.1%	5,499	3.5%
Retail trade	23,361	21.8%	37,461	23.9%
Finance, insurance, and real estate	6,888	6.4%	11,783	7.5%
Services	22,806	21.3%	53,022	33.8%
<i>Government and government enterprises</i>	28,675		41,414	
Federal, civilian	2,044		3,264	
Military	1,317		938	
State and local	25,314		37,212	
State government	N/A		15,975	
Local government	N/A		21,237	

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, REIS Table CA25. Some missing values estimated.

Regionally, employment grew by 44.8% between 1969 and 2000. During this period, the region's population grew by 9.0%, from 388,666 to 423,670. By a wide margin, the service sector contributed the most to employment growth (30,216 jobs). Growing by 14,100, retail trade comes in as a distant second to the service sector for growth. Given this information, it is of little surprise that wages constitute a much smaller proportion of per capita personal incomes in 2000 than in 1969. The agricultural and financial sectors also grew notably over the three decades.

While most sectors grew, two conspicuously did not. Mining employment fell by nearly half (in contrast to Pope County), while manufacturing lost a few thousand jobs. On-the-ground reconnaissance indicates that post-2000, manufacturing has likely continued its

decline, with the closures of the Maytag and other manufacturing centers. Finally, government employment has kept pace with total employment change, at about 45%.

Unemployment

In 1990, Pope County's 10.0% unemployment rate was higher than both the Southern Illinois region (9.3%) and the State of Illinois (6.3%). Although unemployment rates from 1990 cannot be compared to 2005 rates⁷, regionally, things seem to have turned around by 2005. In 2005, the regional unemployment rate no longer trailed the state's, but matched it at 5.7%. Although unemployment in Pope County is still higher than in the region, the gap is slightly smaller than it was in 1990. Both unemployment rates and employment numbers are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Annual Unemployment, 2005

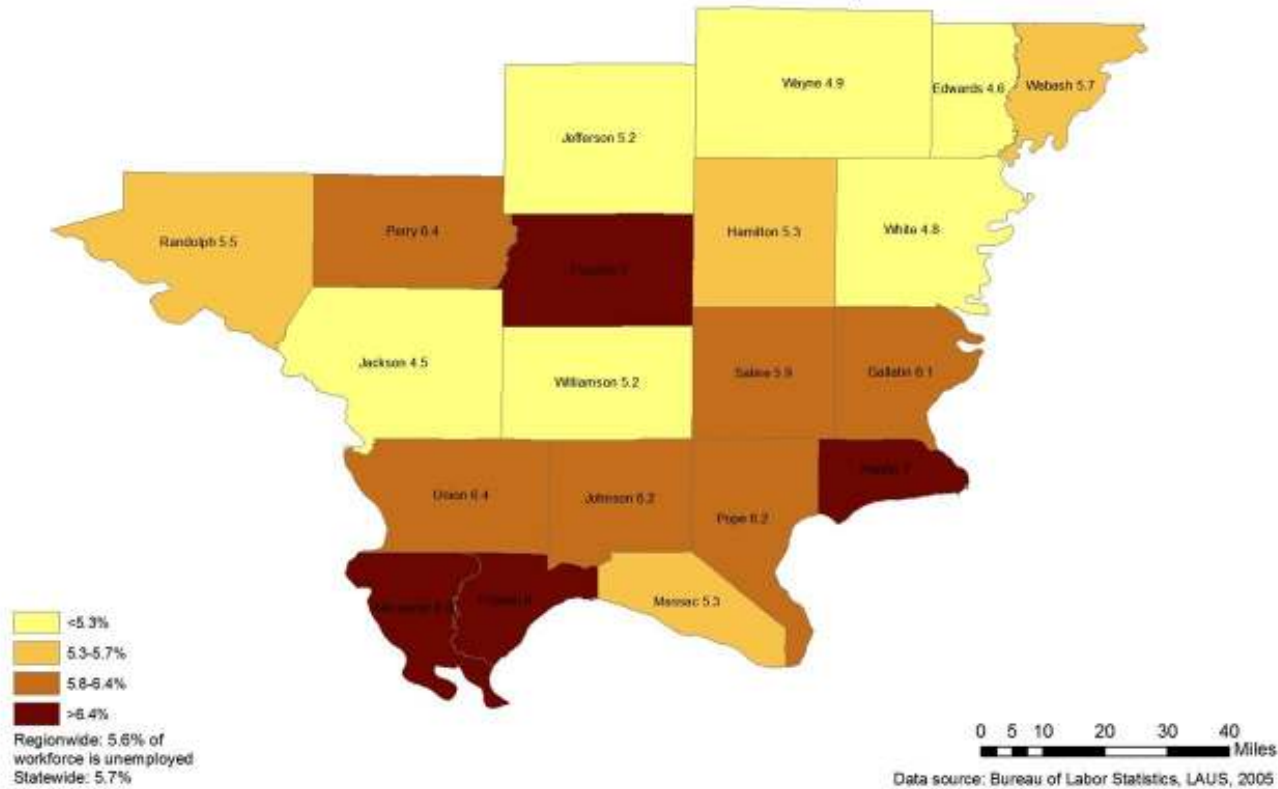
	<i>Labor Force</i>	<i>Employment</i>	<i>Unemployment</i>	<i>Unemployment Rate</i>
Alexander	3,432	3,131	301	8.8
Edwards	3,566	3,401	165	4.6
Franklin	17,757	16,509	1,248	7.0
Gallatin	2,788	2,617	171	6.1
Hamilton	4,147	3,929	218	5.3
Hardin	1,892	1,760	132	7.0
Jackson	32,664	31,198	1,466	4.5
Jefferson	20,400	19,348	1,052	5.2
Johnson	5,163	4,845	318	6.2
Massac	7,413	7,021	392	5.3
Perry	10,842	10,150	692	6.4
Pope	2,066	1,937	129	6.2
Pulaski	3,067	2,822	245	8.0
Randolph	15,472	14,627	845	5.5
Saline	12,425	11,693	732	5.9
Union	8,412	7,870	542	6.4
Wabash	6,740	6,358	382	5.7
Wayne	8,468	8,049	419	4.9
White	8,205	7,815	390	4.8
Williamson	32,782	31,070	1,712	5.2
Region	207,701	196,150	11,551	5.6
Illinois	6483791	6112981	370810	5.7

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS)

⁷ Between 1990 and 2005, the Bureau of Labor Statistics changed the methodology used to measure unemployment. Despite efforts to benchmark data, comparing between the two years is strongly discouraged. Changes in Pope County and the region are therefore discussed in relative terms.

In a spatial context, it is striking that the two most unemployed counties (in 2005) are neighbors. The low through mid-range unemployment rates are mixed together fairly thoroughly, as shown in Figure 3. Each county's unemployment rate is shown.

**Figure 3: Percent of the Workforce
 that is Unemployed,
 Southern Illinois Counties, 2005**



Commuting Patterns

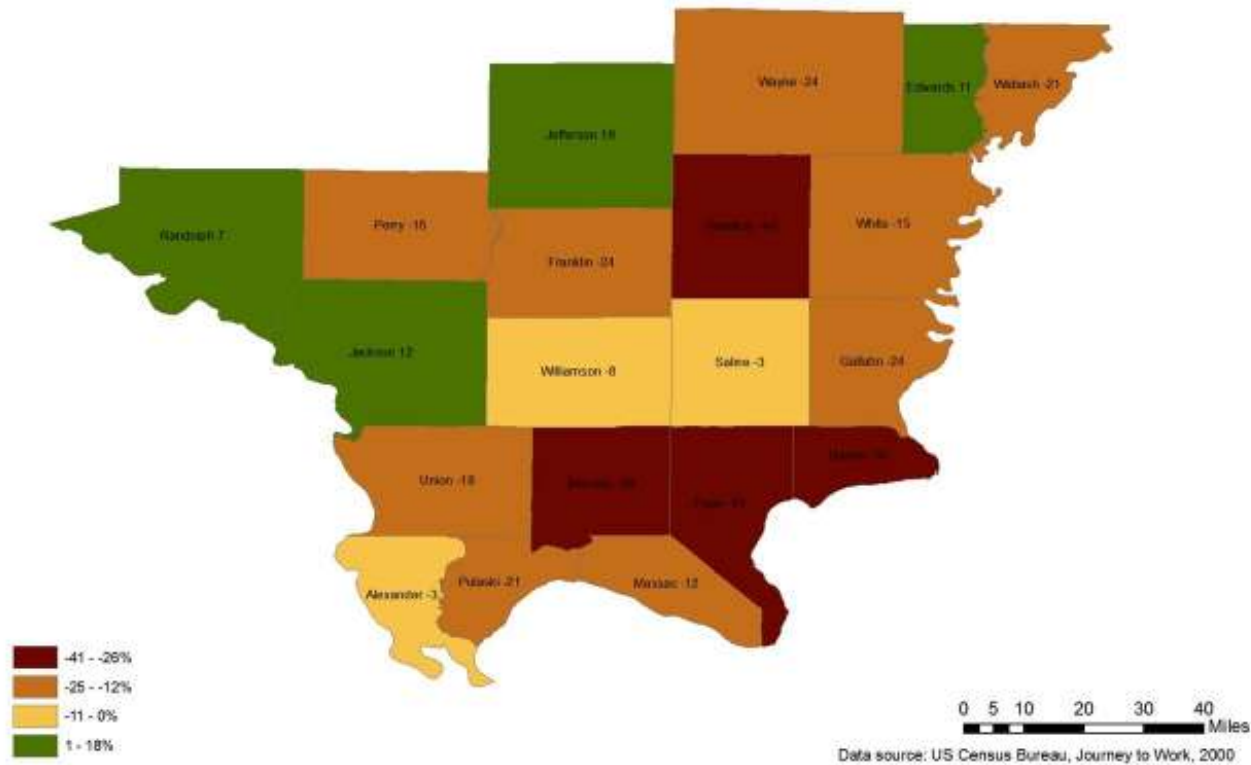
Although just forty percent of Pope County's 1,840 employed residents work in Pope County, over ninety percent work either in Pope or in neighboring counties. The fifty percent of workers employed in the adjoining counties is primarily comprised of: 14.5% of workers employed in McCracken County, KY, 11.8% employed in Massac County, IL, 7.3% employed in Saline County, IL, and 6.7% employed in Johnson County, IL. These neighboring counties cannot similarly rely on Pope County for employment. While regional counties provide 938 jobs for Pope's out-commuters, Pope County provides only 266 jobs for regional residents who in-commute to the county. The net effect, Pope County's reliance on regional counties, is shown in Figure 4. Note that because this figure shows net commuting⁸.

An analysis of the Census's 2000 Journey to Work data reveals other interesting facts about commuting in Southern Illinois. Only four counties have positive net in-commuting rates, as shown in Figure 4. Three of the four lowest net in-commuting rates (most negative rates) are neighbors in the southeastern corner of the region. Of pairs of counties within the region, Williamson and Jackson have a unique relationship. Williamson has a net negative in-commute rate; Jackson's rate is positive. More than half of Williamson's out-commuters work in Jackson County; more than half of Jackson's in-commuters come from Williamson County. These two counties have an exclusive and mutual focus on one another that is quite unique within the region.

Saline, Gallatin, and particularly Hardin Counties send their workers to counties that send their workers to other counties. In other words, workers from Saline, Gallatin, and particularly Hardin Counties do not work in regional employment center areas; they work in areas that rely on yet other areas for employment. Finally, 15 of the 20 counties in the region border counties in other regions. Of these 15 border counties, all but three (Hardin, Pulaski, and Jackson) send significant commuter streams out of the region. Jackson County, as has been mentioned, relies heavily on Williamson County workers. Hardin and Pulaski Counties rely predominantly on their intra-regional, immediate Illinois neighbors.

⁸ Net in-commuting is calculated as $100 * ((\text{Number of in-commuters}) - (\text{Number of out-commuters})) / (\text{County labor force})$.

Figure 4: Net In-Commuting Rate, as
Percent of Employed County Labor Force,
Southern Illinois Counties, 2000



Education Attainment

For a point of comparison, Table 10 provides education attainment rates for the population of the United States, the state of Illinois, and the region for persons ages 25+ in the year 2000:

Table 10: Education Attainment Rates, US, IL, and Southern IL, 2000

	<i>United States</i>	<i>Illinois</i>	<i>Southern Illinois</i>
High school diploma	80.4%	81.4%	76.6%
Bachelor's degree or higher	24.4%	26.1%	14.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

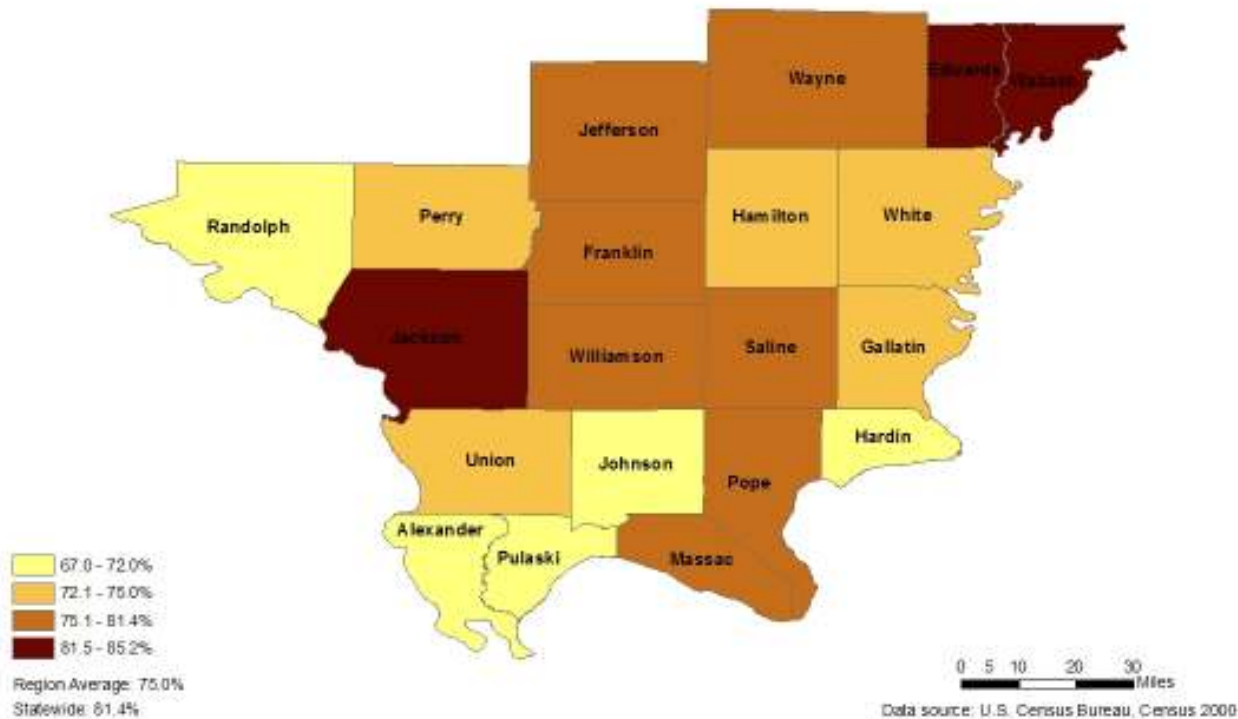
As shown in Figures 5 and 6, most of the region has not attained the state or national education rates. For high school graduation, the areas between Carbondale and Marion and around Harrisburg show higher attainment rates. For college education, only Carbondale tracts show attainments rates above the state and national level. Pope County graduates roughly the same percentage of high school students as do its neighbors. However, in the Southern, and more populated portion of Pope County, less than ten percent of the population has at least a bachelor's degree, which is low for the region.

Census tracts with high or low educational attainment values tend to concentrate in particular counties. For instance, tracts with the highest percentages of people with at least high school diploma are found in Jackson, Williamson, Jefferson, Edwards, and Wabash counties, while those with higher percentages of people with at least Bachelor's Degree are clustered around Jackson County. However, these areas are not spatial clusters in the true sense. The simple descriptive maps can only suggest potential locations of spatial clusters or outliers, which need to be tested by the more systematical spatial analysis techniques.

Significant positive spatial autocorrelation was found for both the percentage of population with at least high school diploma and the percentage of population with at least Bachelor's Degree in Southern Illinois. This suggests that the educational attainment level for a particular census tract is more similar to its neighbors' than would be the case under spatial randomness.

Census tracts in Jackson and Williamson Counties show a high-high cluster pattern, which is mainly due to the Southern Illinois University located in Carbondale, Jackson County. This suggests that the presence of a public university improves both the higher education and the secondary education level in the neighboring areas. Tracts with lower educational attainment level are concentrated in Alexander, Pulaski, and Randolph Counties. According to secondary socio-economic data, Alexander and Pulaski Counties are also characterized with the lowest per capita personal income and the highest unemployment rates in Southern Illinois. Given the adjacency of Randolph County to St. Louis and Carbondale, its low-low cluster pattern is somewhat unexpected and needs to be further studied.

Percent of High School Graduate or Higher (among population of ages 25+) Southern Illinois Counties, 2000



Percent of Bachelor's Degree or Higher (among population of ages 25+) Southern Illinois Counties, 2000



Housing

Homeownership

The regional homeownership rate is high compared to either Illinois or the nation. High homeownership is typical of rural regions. Regionally, 73.6% of occupied housing units are owner-occupied. In Illinois, this rate is 67.3%, which is still higher than the nation's 66.2% homeownership rate. The spatial pattern of homeownership in the region is consistent with the urban-rural differentiation; in areas of higher population density, homeownership is lower. The inverse is also true. The population centers of Carbondale and Marion have the lowest homeownership rates in the region. In contrast, the northern, less populated, half of Pope County has an 87% homeownership rate. High homeownership rates are often associated with low mobility. Measured by the percentage of persons over age 5 that lived in different houses in 2000 than in 1995, mobility in Southern Illinois (41.3%) is lower than it is statewide (43.2%), which is in turn lower than the national rate (45.9%).

Among households with white householders (158,447 households), three-quarters owned homes in 2000. Among households with black or African American householders (7,346), 41% owned homes. The homeownership rates among races are shown in Table 11. Note that the number of households is very small for some groups. The rates for those groups may be unreliable.

Table 11: Homeownership Rates by Race

<i>Race of Householder</i>	<i># Households</i>	<i>Homeownership Rate</i>
White alone	158,447	75.7%
Black or African American alone	7,346	41.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	421	57.2%
Asian alone	1,163	34.8%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander alone	23	91.3%
Some other race alone	403	46.2%
Two or more races	1,285	55.1%

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

In 2000, the homeownership rate by age of the households in Illinois nearly matched national rates (Table 12). Homeownership was slightly higher in Illinois (typically ~1%) among householders ages 25-44, 55-59, and 85+. There is greater variation between the state and the region (Table 12). Homeownership regionally is significantly higher than the state in every age bracket except the youngest (householder ages 15-24). The largest gap in homeownership rates between the state and region belongs to the young adults, ages 25-34 in 2000. It is tempting to speculate that the higher homeownership rate among

young adults (householders ages 25-34) stems from higher birth rates outside of urban areas, the idea that young families in Southern Illinois are having children and planting roots. The data, however, do not support this hypothesis. The region's crude birth rate (11.8) is actually substantially lower than the state's (14.2). It could be that by their mid-twenties, adults in Southern Illinois are less transient than elsewhere in the state and therefore buy homes more regularly. A more in-depth analysis of migration patterns could explore this hypothesis.

Table 12: Homeownership Rate by Age of Householder

	<i>Region</i>		<i>Illinois</i>	
	<i>Number of Households</i>	<i>Percent Homeownership</i>	<i>Number of Households</i>	<i>Percent Homeownership</i>
Householder 15 to 24 years	10,838	21.8%	216,302	16.9%
Householder 25 to 34 years	24,493	57.2%	816,391	47.0%
Householder 35 to 44 years	31,848	74.0%	1,042,463	69.1%
Householder 45 to 54 years	30,123	81.9%	918,767	76.1%
Householder 55 to 59 years	13,080	84.8%	337,668	79.7%
Householder 60 to 64 years	11,643	83.9%	279,124	79.9%
Householder 65 to 74 years	22,508	85.3%	498,108	79.9%
Householder 75 to 84 years	18,028	82.8%	369,498	76.6%
Householder 85 years and over	6,527	74.8%	113,458	67.0%
Total	169,088	73.6%	4,591,779	67.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

When homeownership is sliced by household size, Southern Illinois surpasses Illinois in homeownership in every bracket (Table 13). Southern Illinois surpasses the state most notably among the smallest and largest households. These are households which traditionally face harder roads to affordability and, for the largest households, typically have difficulty finding adequately sized housing units. It is somewhat surprising that homeownership is highest among 2-person households rather than among households with children. Probably, the popularity of homeownership among 2-person households reflects the region's age structure and the propensity, for whatever reasons, for the elderly to remain in their homes.

That very large households own homes in Southern Illinois at a rate much greater than the state is also curious (Table 13). Large households may be encouraged to buy homes in markets (presumably Southern Illinois) that lack appropriately-sized rental properties. This, however, does not explain the group's high homeownership rate in Southern Illinois. Statewide, the ratio of rental properties with at least four bedrooms to the number of households with at least seven people is 0.74. Regionally, that ratio is 2.10. The Amish presence in rural Illinois is another tempting explanation, but seemingly inaccurate, given the group's stronger presence in east-central Illinois. More extensive analyses of the

long-run costs of renting versus owning large housing units could work to uncover a causal mechanism for this group’s high homeownership rate.

Table 13: Homeownership Rate by Size of Household

<i>Household Size</i>	<i>Southern Illinois</i>		<i>Illinois</i>	
	<i>#</i>	<i>Homeownership</i>	<i>#</i>	<i>Homeownership</i>
	<i>Households</i>	<i>Rate</i>	<i>Households</i>	<i>Rate</i>
1-person household	49,837	61.0%	1,229,781	52.3%
2-person household	59,063	80.3%	1,412,476	73.1%
3-person household	27,360	76.4%	734,590	70.2%
4-person household	21,262	79.6%	660,524	75.8%
5-person household	8,240	76.6%	334,274	74.0%
6-person household	2,344	74.3%	130,069	70.0%
7-or-more-person household	982	76.3%	90,065	64.4%

Source: Census 2000

During the first quarter of 2006, 495 single family homes were sold in the region.⁹ Of these, 158 were in Williamson County, 76 in Franklin County, and 74 in Jackson County. Among Pope County and all six of its immediate neighbors excluding Williamson County, only 20 homes were sold in the first quarter of 2006. Eleven of those twenty were in Johnson County. Zero sales occurred in Pope County. Among the 20 counties, the average home sale price was \$87,521 in the first quarter of 2006. Statewide, the average sale price was \$245,587.

Condition and Characteristics of Housing Supply

One of the most unusual qualities of housing in Southern Illinois is the frequency with which complete plumbing is lacking. Across the region, 1.7% of housing units lack complete plumbing. In Illinois, this rate is 1.1%; nationally the rate is 0.8%. These statistics alone are concerning, but not alarming. However, in Pope County, in excess of 5% of housing units lack complete plumbing. The same is true in Alexander County, half of Hamilton County, and significant portions of Perry and Randolph Counties. We have learned from talking with people in the region that community discussions do not focus on plumbing because the problem is not what it initially seems. Units designated by the Census Bureau as being incompletely plumbed likely fall into one of two groups. First, many homes have on-site septic that owners know fails town or county standards, and so the unit is advertised to anyone related to the government as incompletely plumbed. Second, “horse camps,” units occupied often for only a week or two during the summer,

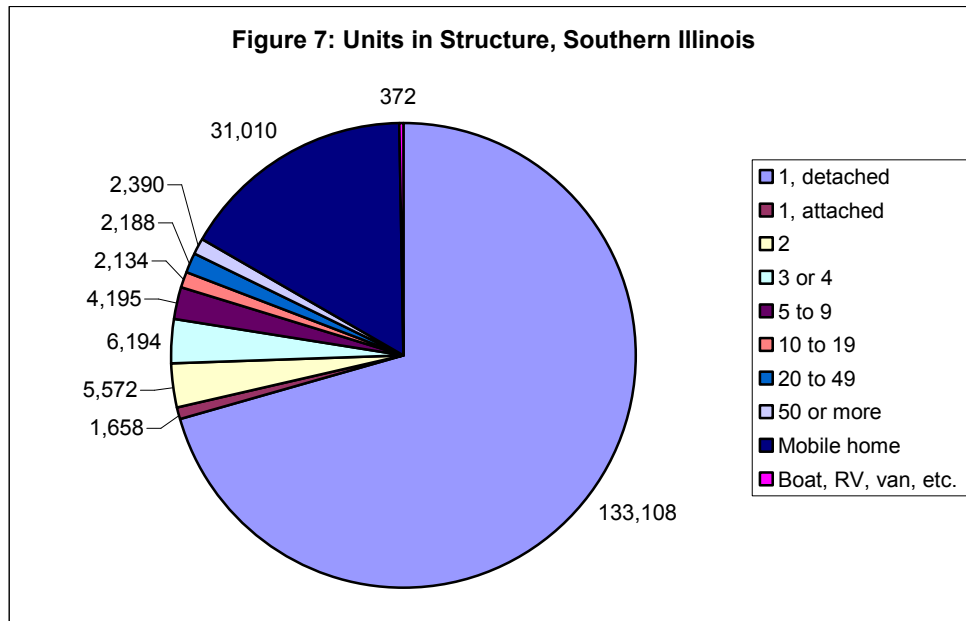
⁹ “Illinois Association of Realtors Quarterly Housing Survey by County.” Illinois Association of Realtors. 2006. Accessed online: <http://www.illinoisrealtor.org/iar/marketstats/quarterly/2006/1Q06chart.pdf>. Accessed 7/13/2006.

typically lack plumbing. Indeed, Census statistics corroborate the summer home-plumbing relationship¹⁰.

Among all housing units in the region (188,821), 10.5% (19,773 units) were vacant (for any reason) in 2000. Of those vacant units, 40% were for rent or sale. Nineteen percent stood vacant for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Eleven percent were rented or sold yet remained unoccupied. Less than one percent of vacant units awaited migrant labor. A full 30% stood vacant for other, unspecified reasons. Pope County has the highest vacancy rate in the region, at 24.8% of units in 2000. About half of the vacant units in that county are seasonal or recreational use housing units. In Pope County, the vacancy rate is 24.7%, with 61% of vacant units held for seasonal or recreational use. As a point of comparison, in a healthy market, a five percent vacancy rate is considered a natural, reasonable rate to accommodate turnover, renovation, and moderate population growth. Seasonal home vacancies do not adequately explain the high vacancy rates.

Overwhelmingly, the housing units in the region are single family units. A full 70% of housing units are single family detached units. Mobile homes account for another 16% of housing structures. Figure 7, below, shows the composition of housing structures by number of units per structure. Of the 26,605 occupied mobile homes in the region, only 308 were built before 1940. Another 177 were built in the 1940s. Though the percentage of antiquated mobile homes is low, still the region has nearly 500 mobile-home-dwelling households for which housing assistance is probably sorely needed. Only in Hamilton County is the percentage of mobile homes built before 1940 concerning—4% of mobile homes in that county are more than 65 years old. Almost six percent (5.8%) of mobile home units in Hamilton County are old enough (50+ years) to apply for listing on the National Register of Historic Places (age is not the only criterion for listing—the Register is referenced only to provide context).

¹⁰ In a linear regression model using only the natural log of the number of seasonally vacant homes in a Census tract as the independent variable, 37% of the variation in housing units lacking complete plumbing is explained. The sample size was the 89 Census tracts in Southern Illinois that have at least one seasonally vacant housing unit.



Among all occupied units, about 23% predate 1940 (see Table 14). World War II slowed residential construction, which is reflected here. Since the war, housing construction has been fairly constant, though particularly strong in the 1970s. Among renters, relative to owners, a greater proportion of households lives in units constructed between 1960 and 1989 and a lower percentage lives in either very new or very old units (data not shown). However, the difference between owners and renters is not overwhelming.

Table 14: Year of Construction for Occupied Housing Units

<i>Year Built</i>	<i>Number of units</i>	<i>Percent of units</i>
Built 1990 to March 2000	24,545	13.0%
Built 1980 to 1989	22,626	12.0%
Built 1970 to 1979	35,820	19.0%
Built 1960 to 1969	22,701	12.0%
Built 1950 to 1959	21,327	11.3%
Built 1940 to 1949	18,891	10.0%
Built 1939 or earlier	42,911	22.7%

Source: US Census Bureau, Census 2000

Affordability and Other Housing Problems

In data provided by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, incomplete plumbing is combined with incomplete kitchen facilities, overcrowding, and unaffordability to identify a universe of households encountering “housing problems.”

HUD's definition of housing problems does *not* include problems associated with maintenance, which can sometimes be quantified using county assessor's data. Among homeowners in Pope County, 17% of households reported a housing problem in 2000. The highest in the region is Alexander County, in which greater than one-quarter of owner households (27%) could show at least one housing problem. Housing problems are more common among renter households than among owner households, which is true of most regions. In Pope County, 26.7% of renter households reported housing problems. The highest rate among counties occurred in Jackson County, at 50.2%. The percentage of owner and renter households with housing problems is shown in Table 15. It is reasonable to assume that the majority of the housing problems reported deal with affordability. In larger households, overcrowding becomes a concern. And as already shown, in a few counties, or even just parts of counties, incomplete plumbing may play a role. However, for the most part, affordability is the most common housing problem.

Table 15: Owner and Renter Households with Housing Problems, 2000

<i>County</i>	<i># Owner Households with Housing Problems</i>	<i>% Owner Households with Housing Problems</i>	<i># Renter Households with Housing Problems</i>	<i>% Renter Households with Housing Problems</i>
Alexander	742	27.0%	362	34.0%
Edwards	358	15.2%	120	22.0%
Franklin	2535	19.9%	1233	33.7%
Gallatin	420	19.0%	148	28.7%
Hamilton	435	15.4%	195	30.5%
Hardin	257	16.1%	90	23.1%
Jackson	2469	19.1%	5669	50.2%
Jefferson	2349	20.5%	1160	29.5%
Johnson	761	21.4%	192	30.2%
Massac	1044	21.2%	435	32.5%
Perry	1150	17.2%	576	31.6%
Pope	250	17.2%	84	26.7%
Pulaski	492	22.5%	242	34.3%
Randolph	1554	16.2%	631	25.3%
Saline	1560	18.6%	863	33.3%
Union	973	17.7%	577	32.1%
Wabash	581	14.9%	371	28.8%
Wayne	1007	17.7%	328	22.5%
White	888	17.4%	364	25.3%
Williamson	3445	18.5%	2244	33.6%

Source: Housing and Urban Development (HUD), CHAS Files

In the housing problems data, HUD divides households into household type and income bracket. For Pope County, discussing frequency of housing problems by sub-group is difficult if not unadvisable, due to the small number of total households in the county. Regional analysis of sub-groups, however, is possible. Across the region, between owners and renters and across income brackets, large families suffer a high frequency of housing problems. This is particularly true among renters, where even in the highest income category 19% of large households suffer from housing problems (data not shown). Among all large family renters, 43% have housing problems.

Non-family households are also frequently burdened, according to Table 16. Nowhere else do non-family households fare worse than among renters in Jackson County, where 54.3% have housing problems. This is likely a consequence of having a student population, in relation to Southern Illinois University. Students with parental support almost always appear poorer (and thus their housing appears less affordable) in data than living standards reflect because housing is paid for by parents rather than from the residents' wages. Students without parental support often double up in apartments to save money. In either situation, with problems illusory or real, the housing problems among students would be high. Yet students do not explain away the housing problems for all counties.

Table 16: Percent of Low-Income Households with Housing Problems

<i>County</i>	<i>Owner Households</i>					<i>Renter Households</i>				
	<i>Elderly</i>	<i>Small Family</i>	<i>Large Family</i>	<i>Elderly</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Elderly</i>	<i>Small Family</i>	<i>Large Family</i>	<i>Elderly</i>	<i>Other</i>
				<i>Non-Family</i>	<i>Non-Family</i>				<i>Non-Family</i>	<i>Non-Family</i>
Alexander	13.4%	25.8%	45.7%	28.7%	35.0%	42.6%	25.8%	52.4%	43.4%	33.1%
Edwards	4.8%	15.3%	34.4%	11.1%	31.3%	25.8%	18.2%	25.0%	25.0%	24.8%
Franklin	11.4%	17.1%	32.8%	28.1%	25.1%	18.7%	30.3%	50.0%	35.4%	35.1%
Gallatin	7.1%	13.7%	50.4%	29.1%	25.2%	12.9%	18.7%	60.9%	21.3%	42.8%
Hamilton	9.0%	13.8%	24.0%	21.7%	17.9%	10.5%	14.0%	57.6%	37.0%	51.1%
Hardin	7.3%	15.7%	41.5%	18.5%	20.4%	17.4%	21.6%	22.2%	33.0%	22.2%
Jackson	10.4%	14.1%	31.5%	27.2%	32.4%	37.7%	41.6%	56.7%	47.5%	54.3%
Jefferson	14.9%	15.6%	33.7%	33.7%	28.1%	22.8%	26.9%	31.4%	35.9%	29.0%
Johnson	9.8%	20.6%	23.3%	25.4%	42.8%	22.7%	23.2%	30.8%	47.2%	25.2%
Massac	13.0%	15.8%	23.5%	35.6%	38.6%	8.2%	30.5%	36.4%	25.5%	43.3%
Perry	5.6%	14.1%	19.2%	34.6%	27.2%	13.2%	23.0%	40.2%	34.8%	39.8%
Pope	8.2%	10.6%	28.6%	32.2%	37.6%	14.3%	16.8%	26.7%	28.6%	39.7%
Pulaski	14.6%	18.4%	39.9%	28.6%	27.8%	17.0%	26.0%	65.1%	41.5%	34.9%
Randolph	9.0%	15.3%	20.4%	20.3%	25.2%	13.0%	19.4%	34.2%	36.1%	26.8%
Saline	11.6%	14.6%	25.9%	22.7%	36.2%	9.5%	29.3%	37.5%	36.7%	40.6%
Union	11.7%	15.5%	28.7%	21.3%	26.3%	31.3%	27.8%	56.1%	25.9%	37.6%
Wabash	7.2%	11.9%	22.6%	23.4%	27.0%	9.3%	27.6%	51.8%	22.5%	31.6%
Wayne	11.3%	16.5%	29.0%	21.1%	22.7%	0.0%	22.9%	15.4%	25.5%	24.5%
White	7.2%	15.9%	20.1%	25.3%	27.4%	19.4%	21.5%	42.4%	38.0%	21.2%
Williamson	10.7%	15.4%	26.3%	28.7%	27.3%	27.6%	29.9%	40.5%	40.7%	33.9%
Region	10.4%	15.5%	28.1%	26.7%	28.7%	21.4%	29.0%	43.2%	36.2%	42.0%

Source: Housing and Urban Development (HUD), CHAS files

New Housing—Permit Data

From 2000 to 2005, the twenty county governments issued 3,874 residential building permits. Of those, 2,637 were for single family homes. Of the remaining 1,237 housing buildings, 350 were 2-unit structures, 176 were 3-4 unit structures, and 711 buildings had 5 or more units.

Over the six-year span, Pope County issued only three building permits, all for single family homes. In 2005, Alexander, Gallatin, Hamilton, Hardin, Johnson, Perry, Pope, Pulaski, Saline, Wayne, and White Counties collectively issued just 23 housing permits. All but two were for single family homes. These 23 building permits were likely used to replace older housing units rather than break new ground. Only Jackson, Randolph, and Williamson Counties issued more than 100 permits each in 2005. Among those three counties and their collective 569 housing permits, 362 are for single family homes and

207 are for multi-family buildings. The higher ratio of multi-family to single family units in larger counties reflects a common association between tenure and population density.

Conclusion

At its beginning, Pope County grew around agriculture. While Pope County grew throughout the nineteenth century, practically everyone was employed in agriculture. Leading up to the Great Depression, agriculture started to languish in the region, due to overworked land, soil erosion, and the beginning of America's greatest market crash. Employment diversified, opening up labor markets for the service and retail sectors, then later more professional services, plus mining and manufacturing. Regionally, the service sector has driven more recent employment growth, though incomes within the sector have not kept pace with inflation over time.

Illinois outshines Southern Illinois across a range of socioeconomic and demographic indicators, like income, education attainment, poverty, and incomplete plumbing. However, Southern Illinois boasts very high homeownership rates and matched the state in unemployment in 2005. Furthermore, a great deal of heterogeneity exists within the region. Parts of the region have high education attainment, low poverty, and low unemployment, as the maps in this report show.

This report describes the demographic and socioeconomic picture in Pope County, and sets that picture against the backdrop of Southern Illinois. This report does not explore the heterogeneity found at the community level. Without research at the community level, this report may inform decisions regarding Dixon Springs from a few perspectives. First, it provides information on changing per capita incomes, and the employment structure that has prompted such changes. Dixon Springs was established to help an ailing sector regain strength. Today, the service sector is a threat to the Southern Illinois economy. Second, many quality of life statistics for the region have been reported. In areas such as housing quality and income by race and age, priorities might be set to which Dixon Springs could work.

In a note of closing, this report should be consulted in conjunction with the short reports produced through the Southern Illinois Community Assessment Project. The short reports offer greater detail and analysis for some of the variables considered in this report, and sometimes at a finer level of analysis. In short, this report is meant to serve as a regional backdrop before which, and with the reinforcement of community-level research, decisions regarding Dixon Springs might be made.