

fifty pages recorded from the narrative of John Fornsby, a famous old Salish shaman. In his ninety-two years this man has experienced almost the entire period of Northwest Coast contact with white civilization. This narrative is largely concerned with events, myths, shamanistic power, and ways of doing things in the old days. As such a document it has its value, but as a personal history it leaves much to be desired, for Fornsby never stands forth very clearly as a personality.

Other contributors to the book are Erna Gunther, Paul S. Wingert, George Herzog, Arden King, Morris Swadesh, Dorothy Leadbeater, June Collins, Eleanor Leacock, Joanne Schriver, and Betty U. Randall. The volume is well illustrated and it contains a glossary of tribal names and an extensive bibliography.

GUY B. JOHNSON

• • •

THE PEOPLE OF ATLANTA¹

IN HIS preface, the author states: "It should be pointed out that this study is not a treatise on urban demography in general, but consists of an elementary population study within a particular frame of reference." The value of the book, as the author sees it, is that ". . . . no investigator to the present time has focused attention directly upon the demographic study of a single large southern city. This study attempts to fill that gap." On page 26 he adds that ". . . . as far as the writer can ascertain, never have all the modern demographic techniques been applied to the population of one city and particularly to a southern city." After a careful reading, this reviewer feels that the study falls short of the mark.

Generally speaking, McMahan's accomplishment is in the reworking of some census data pertinent to Atlanta, some registration statistics for the State of Georgia, and the presentation of these in graphic form. There is an occasional comparison of the data of Atlanta with those of Nashville, Dallas,

¹ McMahan, C. A.: *THE PEOPLE OF ATLANTA*. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1950. Pp. xxiii, 257. \$4.00.

New Orleans, and the urban population of the United States. In organization, a little less than a fifth of the book is devoted to an introduction which reviews some of the current elementary techniques of describing population data, and to a brief review of the literature. This is followed by a treatment of the standard categories of race and nativity composition, age composition, sex composition, marital status, educational status, occupational status, religious composition, fertility, mortality, migration, and growth of population, and a very brief summary and conclusion.

The population of Atlanta as enumerated in the Sixteenth Census of the United States consisted of 302,288 persons, of which 64 per cent were classed as native white, 1.4 per cent foreign-born white, and 34.6 per cent Negro. The age distribution is urban in character; there is a high concentration of persons in the working ages and a low concentration of persons among the young and the old, especially the old Negroes. The sex ratio is the lowest (79) for large cities. Marriages occur earlier in Atlanta than the average of comparable cities, and the proportion of marriages is higher than average. In terms of making a living, there are proportionately fewer self-employed in Atlanta than in other southern cities. A relatively high proportion of males are in service occupations, and a very large proportion of Negro women are in domestic service. The fertility rates of Atlanta are lower than those of the urban population of the United States, and the fertility rates of the Negroes are apparently lower than those of the whites. The reported crude death rate of the whites is lower (6.9 in 1947) than the national average and than most southern cities, but the death rate of the non-whites is more than 25 per cent higher than the national average.

McMahan points to the use of charts as a great virtue of his work. In the reviewer's opinion, however, some of the charts are not very helpful. The use of spheres is not the best technique of indicating size of population. Further, when one uses spheres to indicate size as well as another characteristic (e.g. density of the population), the spheres, especially the solid black ones, obliterate the map boundaries (*see* pages 53 and 76). The intervals of discrimination for the characteris-

tics in these charts are not always well chosen. Figure 18, "Distribution of the Atlanta population aged 65 years and over, by census tracts," has solid black spheres in well over half the tracts, the black spheres indicating 4.0 per cent or over in the 65 years and over category. It is indicated in the text that 4.8 per cent of the population of Atlanta was 65 years and over in 1940, while 3.4 per cent were in this category in 1930 (for which a WPA chart is reproduced). A revision of the older chart was in order, either choosing new intervals that would have given a better breakdown in the highest category of the 1940 chart, or, at least, adding more intervals.

Again in terms of the charts used, McMahan reproduces a number of WPA charts, ostensibly for comparative purposes in considering the data. Since he uses a different technique of charting, comparisons are not easy. The WPA charts are generally easier to read. For example, the concentration of the population is best gotten from a straight density chart. It is not necessary to indicate the size of the population within each tract to show the concentration of the population.

The data are not always treated in the best manner, even within the limitations of an elementary study. In his analysis of fertility the author restricts himself too much to the use of the crude birth rate and the fertility ratio (children under 5 years of age times 1,000, divided by women of child-bearing age). He states that "the fertility ratio is the most practical and most reliable of our measures of fertility." Evidence of this is lacking. In comparing the use of the birth rate with the fertility ratio, McMahan notes that there is underregistration of births, but he does not similarly note that there is underenumeration of children in the census.

Sex ratios among church membership in selected urban populations are presented in Table X, page 139. For purposes of comparison, the sex ratios among church membership are much more meaningful if they are standardized on the basis of the sex ratios of the populations under examination. In his discussion of educational status, McMahan does not consider sex ratios by educational achievement, ratios which are important in the examination of trends in education.

Having gathered the available data by census tracts in

Atlanta, the author leaves it at that. There is little attempt to find relationship between the various population characteristics examined. At the same time, the author introduces his chapters with reasons *why* the data considered are important. These statements are often irritating, and certainly many are not established facts. The author would have made a greater contribution as a sociologist and demographer if he had carried out a detailed examination of one or two of the statements he makes. Examples of such statements are: "From an institutional standpoint, a shortage of persons in the productive years means lack of leadership in the community." (page 61) ". . . . The very type of life, conservative or radical, depends largely on whether there are concentrations of old people or of young adults." (page 62) "Occupation also effects [sic] fundamentally such demographic phenomena as life expectancy, rates of reproduction, and marital status." (page 127) Further, one can find an occasional *non sequitur* such as: "The Atlanta population fails to reproduce itself by at least one-third each generation; this is true even though the white population replaces itself to a greater extent than the Negro population." (page 143)

In general, this book is the most elementary sort of consideration of the people of Atlanta. Migration, which evidently is an important factor in the character of the population of Atlanta, is treated in only a most superficial way. Indeed, superficiality pervades the entire book. One might even question the choice of three southern cities for the comparisons carried out. The significance of the present status of the population of Atlanta might be more evident in comparisons with cities of the midwest or the north. Possibly the shallowness of the study is the natural consequence of dealing primarily with the most available census data, and of treating it in the simplest ways.

This book will probably hold little or no appeal for demographers; little new is to be found in terms of data, and nothing new will be found in terms of development or use of techniques. Local governmental officials and private citizens may find the book of interest as an easy source of population data. The teachers of population courses may find the book useful

as a guide of what to expect, in terms of paper and pencil work, from their students in a one year course.

EDGAR F. BORGATTA

• • •

ESTIMATES OF DISABLING ILLNESS PREVALENCE IN THE UNITED STATES¹

ESTIMATES of the prevalence of disabling illness in the United States in February, 1949, are presented in a recent article by Theodore Woolsey. Statistics are given for the civilian non-institutional population 14-64 years of age. Data are based on results of special questions on illness added to the regular monthly schedule of the Census Bureau Current Population Survey. The Survey was made by interviews in a sample of 25,000 households in forty-two states and the District of Columbia.

On an average week-day in February, 1949, an estimated 4,569,000 persons were disabled by illness or some condition preventing anything but occasional part-time work. Woolsey indicates that the prevalence of disability in February was probably above the average for the year.

Morbidity differed with the occupation, residence, race, age, and sex of the individual. For example, the prevalence of disability was higher among male workers employed in agriculture than among male nonagricultural workers, among housewives than among employed females, and among non-white persons (especially females) than among white persons. Prevalence of disabling illness among males was about the same as for females at ages 14-19, less than among females for ages 20-44, and higher than among females at ages 45-64 years.

Prior to the interview, 45 per cent of the disabled had been disabled over six months. Only one-fourth of the disabled had suffered disability of not more than a week. Such statistics provide some indication of the extent of coverage that would be involved in a permanent disability insurance program providing

¹ Woolsey, Theodore D.: Estimates of Disabling Illness Prevalence in the United States, Based on the February, 1949, Current Population Survey. *Public Health Reports*, February 10, 1950, 65, No. 6, pp. 163-184.