

New York City Losing Blacks, Census Shows - Correction Appended

The New York Times

April 3, 2006 Monday, Late Edition - Final

 **Correction Appended**

Copyright 2006 The **New York** Times Company

Section: Section A; Column 3; Metropolitan Desk; Pg. 1

Length: 1266 words

Byline: By SAM ROBERTS

Body

An accelerating exodus of American-born **blacks**, coupled with slight declines in birthrates and a slowing influx of Caribbean and African immigrants, have produced a decline in **New York City's black** population for the first time since the draft riots during the Civil War, according to preliminary **census** estimates.

An analysis of the latest figures, which **show** the **city** with 30,000 fewer **black** residents in 2004 than in 2000, also revealed stark contrasts in the migration patterns of **blacks** and whites.

While white **New** Yorkers are still more likely than **blacks** to leave the **city**, they are also more likely to relocate to the nearby suburbs (which is where half the whites move) or elsewhere in the Northeast, or to scatter to other **cities** and retirement communities across the country. Moreover, **New York** remains a magnet for whites from most other states.

In contrast, 7 in 10 **black** people who are moving leave the region altogether. And, unlike **black** migrants from Chicago, Philadelphia and Detroit, most of them go to the South, especially to Florida, the Carolinas and Georgia. The rest move to states like California, Ohio, Illinois and Michigan with large **black** populations.

Also, **New York** has a net loss of **blacks** to all but five states, and those net gains are minuscule.

"This suggests that the **black** movement out of **New York City** is much more of an evacuation than the movement for whites," said William Frey, a demographer for the Brookings Institution, who analyzed migration patterns for The **New York** Times.

The implications for a **city** of 8.2 million people could be profound. If the trend continues, not only will the **black** share of **New York's** population, which dipped below 25 percent in 2000, continue to decline, particularly if the overall population grows, but a higher proportion of **black New** Yorkers will be foreign-born or the children of immigrants.

Many **blacks** are leaving for economic reasons. Jacqueline Dowdell moved to North Carolina last year from Hamilton Heights in Upper Manhattan in search of a lower cost of living. Once an editor at the Schomburg Center for Research in **Black** Culture in Harlem, she now works as a communications coordinator for a health care company in Chapel Hill.

"It was a difficult decision, but it was a financial decision," said Ms. Dowdell, 39, adding that the move also gave her time to research her family's roots in Virginia.

New York City Losing Blacks, Census Shows - Correction Appended

"I just continued to spend so much money trying to live without thinking about the future," she said. "I was focused on surviving, and I wanted to make a commitment to more quality of life."

The analysis of migration from 1995 to 2000 also suggests that many **blacks**, already struggling with high housing costs in **New York City**, are being priced out of nearby suburbs, too.

Among **black** married couples with children, only about one in three who left the **city** moved to nearby suburbs, compared with two in three white married couples with children. More **black** married couples with children moved to the South than to the suburbs.

Over all, more **black** residents who left **New York City** moved to Florida than to **New** Jersey.

But **black** residents who left the **city** were more likely to remain in the region if they had higher incomes and were college educated. And while **black** migrants to the South include some aspiring professionals, a larger share were lower income, less educated and elderly.

"All this suggests that **New York City** out-migration of **blacks** is unique in its scope -- net losses to most states -- and pattern -- especially destined to the South," Dr. Frey said.

Reversing a tide from the South who altered the complexion of the **city** earlier in the 20th century, the number of American-born **blacks** leaving the **city** has exceeded the number arriving since at least the late 1970's.

"You have older people who leave the North just to go back to a place that is kind of slower, or where they grew up or went on vacation when they were younger -- and when you retire, your money doesn't go very far in **New York**," said Sylviane A. Diouf, a historian and researcher at the Schomburg Center and co-author of a study of **black** migration. "You also have young college-educated people who find that the South has lots of economic potential and a lower cost of living."

The slower pace appealed to Gladys Favours, who worked for a **city** councilwoman from Brooklyn and moved from East **New York** seven years ago to a town of fewer than 1,000 people near Charlotte, N.C., after she was unable to find another job.

"I lived in **New York** for almost 50 years and loved what it offered in schools, entertainment and convenience, but I **lost** my job and finding one at my age would pay half of what I was making," she said. "I was divorced and moved here with my 11-year-old -- I was afraid of the crime, and **black** boys don't fare too well in **New York**."

Her son is now in college and she is working for the county emergency services department.

"I'm 60 now," she said. "I think I was ready for the quietness."

While residential segregation persists, racial and ethnic minorities, including immigrants, have become more mobile, with lower-skilled workers lured to growing **cities** in the South and West for construction, retail and service jobs and professionals applying for the same opportunities that had been previously open mainly to whites.

"Some foreign-born **blacks** are moving out, too -- to the suburbs as well as to other parts of the country, particularly South Florida," said Nancy Foner, a distinguished professor of sociology at Hunter College.

Andrew Hacker, a political scientist at Queens College, cited other factors. "After 15 or 20 years with, say the Postal Service or U.P.S., employees can put in for transfers to other parts of the country," he said. "As a result, more than a few middle-class **black New** Yorkers have been moving back to states like North Carolina and Georgia, where they have family ties, living costs are lower, neighborhoods are safer, schools are often better and life is less hectic."

In 1997, Christine Wiggins retired as an assistant bank manager after 25 years. She left Queens Village and followed her brother, who worked for **New York City** Transit, to the Poconos.

New York City Losing Blacks, Census Shows - Correction Appended

"It was hard for him, he had to commute," she said. "But we wanted to get away from the city."

The East Stroudsburg, Pa., area, where radio advertisements lured first-time homebuyers, was among the 15 top destinations for black residents leaving New York City. More black New Yorkers moved to Monroe County in the Poconos than to either the Rockland or Orange County suburbs of New York.

Over all, the city's black population grew by 115,000 in the 1990's, a 6.2 percent increase. (New Yorkers in the armed forces or who are institutionalized are not counted as residents.)

Those early estimates of the 30,000 drop in black population since 2000, a 1.5 percent decline, suggest that among blacks, the arrival of newcomers from abroad and higher birthrates among immigrants were not keeping pace with the outflow.

Last year, a study by the Pew Hispanic Center, a nonpartisan research group, found that while the gush of immigrants continued into the 21st century, it appeared to have slowed somewhat.

A net loss of black residents, even between censuses, would apparently be the first since the Civil War. In 1863, after mobs attacked blacks during the draft riots, many fled New York City. "By 1865," Leslie M. Harris wrote in "In the Shadow of Slavery," the city's black population had plummeted to just under 10,000, its lowest since 1820."

<http://www.nytimes.com>

Correction

A front-page article on Monday about census figures showing the first decline in New York City's black population since the Civil War misstated the proximity of Littleton, N.C., the new home of one black migrant, to Charlotte. Littleton is about 200 miles from Charlotte, not nearby.

A front-page article on Monday about census figures showing the first decline in New York City's black population since the Civil War misstated the proximity of Littleton, N.C., the new home of one black migrant, to Charlotte. Littleton is about 200 miles from Charlotte, not nearby.

Correction-Date: April 6, 2006

Graphic

Photos: Jacqueline Dowdell, in Carrboro, N.C. She left Manhattan last year. "It was a difficult decision," she said. (Photo by Mary Haggerty for The New York Times)

After Christine Wiggins retired as an assistant bank manager in Queens, she moved to the Poconos. (Photo by Jane Therese for The New York Times)

The slow pace in Littleton, N.C., attracted Gladys Favours from Brooklyn. "I think I was ready for the quietness," she said. (Photo by Mary Haggerty for The New York Times)(pg. B5)Chart/Map:Top destinations for blacks who moved from New York CityTo locations outside the New York metropolitan area. Figures are the number that moved from April 1995 to April 2000.Atlanta: 13,650Miami: 12,580Orlando: 4,390Virginia Beach: 6,450Washington: 8,070Philadelphia: 6,840Where New York City residents moved in the five-year period(TOTAL) BLACKS: 212,820 -- WHITES: 571,710BLACKSNew York suburbs: 30%Northeast: 14%South: 49%Midwest: 3%West:

New York City Losing Blacks, Census Shows - Correction Appended

4%WHITESNew York suburbs: 50%Northeast: 15%South: 20%Midwest: 4%West: 11%Map of the United States highlights the aforementioned cities and their respective figures.(Source by Analysis of Census Bureau data by William Frey, Brookings Institution)(pg. B5)

Classification

Language: ENGLISH

Publication-Type: Newspaper

Subject: POPULATION & DEMOGRAPHICS (90%); IMMIGRATION (89%); RESEARCH INSTITUTES (89%); BIRTHS & BIRTH RATES (89%); DEMOGRAPHIC GROUPS (78%); RACE & ETHNICITY (78%); TRENDS (78%); POPULATION SIZE (78%); CENSUS (77%); POPULATION GROWTH (72%); RELOCATIONS (69%); RETIREMENT & RETIREES (68%); COST OF LIVING (66%); MARRIAGE (61%)

Organization: BROOKINGS INSTITUTION (82%); US CENSUS BUREAU (59%)

Industry: HEALTH CARE (50%)

Person: Sam Roberts

Geographic: NEW YORK, NY, USA (91%); CHICAGO, IL, USA (79%); DETROIT, MI, USA (79%); NEW YORK, USA (97%); NORTH CAROLINA, USA (79%); MICHIGAN, USA (79%); OHIO, USA (79%); ILLINOIS, USA (79%); CALIFORNIA, USA (79%); FLORIDA, USA (79%); CARIBBEAN ISLANDS (78%); New York City, Florida; North Carolina; South Carolina; Georgia; California; Ohio; Illinois; Michigan

Load-Date: April 3, 2006