The Wealth and Health of the Delta

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In 1992

A Social and Economic Portrait of the Mississippi Delta

Edited by:
Arthur G. Cosby
Mitchell W. Brackin
T. David Mason
Eunice R. McCulloch
The Project had a Substantial Delta State University Presence

Mr. Hugh Smith
Dr. Kent Wyatt
Dr. Frank Allen Dennis
Dr. Reid Jones
Dr. John Thornell
Dr. Gene Hamon
Dr. Larry Hailey
Dr. W. Ross Story
“No matter what the future brings, it will always be a place where the land, the soil, with all that this implies in human intercourse, are prized over all else. The Mississippi Delta will be the last place on earth to be paved over.”

Willie Morris
A Social and Economic Portrait of the Mississippi Delta 1992
Chapter 19
Framing the Future: Views on the Future of the Mississippi Delta

Arthur G. Cosby
Major Themes

• Global trend toward free market, decentralization and democratic solutions
• Increasing international/global competition
• Market based approaches to social based problems – awareness of the limits of government
• Increased concern for environmental quality
• A national shift from a biracial to multi-ethnic society
A Sixth Theme to be Added Tonight:

The Wealth and Health of the Delta
An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations

1776

Adam Smith
My Nominee for the Noble Prize in Economics (if I could)

David E. Bloom, Ph.D.

Clarence James Gamble Professor of Economics and Demography
Department of Population and International Health
Harvard University
The Wealth and Health of Nations
Health and Income: Traditional View

Health

Income

Capital
From Wealth to Health:  
One Part of the Story

• Better nutrition  
• Better access to clean water  
• Better sanitation  
• More access to better health care  
• Better psycho-social resources
Factors Affecting the Growth of Per Capita Income Include:

- Education
- Natural resource endowments
- Policy and institutional environment
- Stock of physical capital and infrastructure
- Geography
- Initial level of income per capita
- To these factors we can add health
Health to Wealth – Lots of Oomph!

A 10-year gain in life expectancy translates into nearly 1 additional percentage point of annual income growth
Bloom’s Research Leads to Two Additional Questions

Can the Wealth, Health of Nations be expanded to:

1) The Wealth of Regions (sub-national)

2) The Wealth of Communities
Healthy and Unhealthy Places

An Ongoing Program of Research at the Social Science Research Center
Healthy and Unhealthy Places in America:
Average Years of Lost Life
(80 – Average Life Expectancy, 1990)

Source: U.S. Department of Health and Human Resources, HRSA
Community Health Status Indicator Project
Persistence of Healthy and Unhealthy Places
1990 Average Life Expectancy

Years of Life

- 65.6 – 73.7
- 73.8 – 75.1
- 75.2 – 76.0
- 76.1 – 76.9
- 77.0 – 79.9

Source: 2000 Community Health Status Report (HRSA)
1997 Average Life Expectancy

Years of Life
- 65.1 – 74.2
- 74.3 – 75.5
- 75.6 – 76.5
- 76.6 – 77.5
- 77.6 – 80.9

Source: 2000 Community Health Status Report (HRSA)
2000 Average Life Expectancy

Years of Life
- Red: 62.9 – 74.0
- Deep Blue: 74.1 – 75.4
- Dark Blue: 75.5 – 76.6
- Light Blue: 76.5 – 77.6
- Very Light Blue: 77.7 – 81.6

Source: 2000 Community Health Status Report (HRSA)
Figure 8. Local Moran's I Scatterplot of Persistent Mortality in the US: 1968-97

Produced by: Troy Blanchard, Wes James
Social Science Research Center
Mississippi State University
Source: CDC Compressed Mortality File
Healthy & Unhealthy Places

Migration Effects
Research by Cossman et al.

- Unhealthy places have low in-migration
- Unhealthy places have low out-migration
Divergence

(National versus Unhealthy Places)
Life Expectancy at Birth, United States

All Races - Both Sexes

Source: National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol. 52, No. 14
Life Expectancy at Birth, United States

Source: National Vital Statistics Reports, Vol. 52, No. 14
Age Adjusted Mortality Rates
3-Year Averages
1968 – 2001

Age Adjusted Death Rate
Per 100,000 Population

Delta Metro
Nation

68-70  71-73  74-76  77-79  80-82  83-85  86-89  90-92  93-95  96-98  99-01

800  900  1000  1100  1200  1300  1400
Difference in Age Adjusted Mortality Rates

3-Year Averages
1968 – 2001

Age Adjusted Death Rate
Per 100,000 Population

Delta Non-Metro Minus Nation
Additional Deaths in Delta Non-Metro Area
3-Year Averages
1968 – 2001

Delta Non-Metro Minus Nation / 100,000 * Population
More Questions than Answers

• Are we dealing with a temporary or sustained trend?
• What role does racial disparity play?
• What would an analysis of causes of death tell us about the trend?
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1985
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1986
(*BMI ≥30, or ~30 lbs overweight for 5’4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1987
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1988

(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
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BRFSS, 1992
(*BMI ≥30, or ~30 lbs overweight for 5’4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1993
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Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 1994
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)

[Map showing obesity trends with states color-coded based on percentage of obesity: No Data, <10%, 10%-14%, 15%-19%]
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Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 2001
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)
Obesity Trends* Among U.S. Adults
BRFSS, 2002
(*BMI ≥30, or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5’ 4” woman)

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, CDC
“Obesity has roughly the same association with chronic health conditions as does 20 years of aging.”

Julie L. Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
“The speed with which obesity has increased can be explained by changes in society that have increased calorie intake and reduced energy expenditure.”

Julie L. Gerberding, M.D., M.P.H.
Director, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Mississippi State University
More Questions…

• Is the trend a consequence of the obesity epidemic?
• Is the trend the leading edge of a more widespread problem for the United States?
• What are the implications for the health and wealth of the Delta Region?