

HATE GROUPS & POVERTY: 1998-2004

Saturday November 24, 2007

In what types of communities do hate groups arise? Are there any characteristics that communities with an active hate group (hate group communities or HGCs) have that communities with no active hate group (nonHGCs) do not have? Or, do hate groups find themselves functioning in random communities across the United States?

If it is true, as social psychologists¹ have often claimed, that the bigotry and prejudice that can give rise to hate groups occurs because of competition for economic resources—an ingroup versus outgroup competition for jobs, land, and other economic resources—then one might reasonably postulate that hate groups ought to be found in communities that are relatively poorer than communities without hate groups. Scarce resources and few employment possibilities ought to create the kind of competition that would, or could, give rise to a hate group. Relatively economically well-to-do communities, on the other hand, ought to be more or less immune from a hate group from forming, if we assume that the competition for economic resources is a relevant factor in the creation and maintenance of bigotry and prejudice.

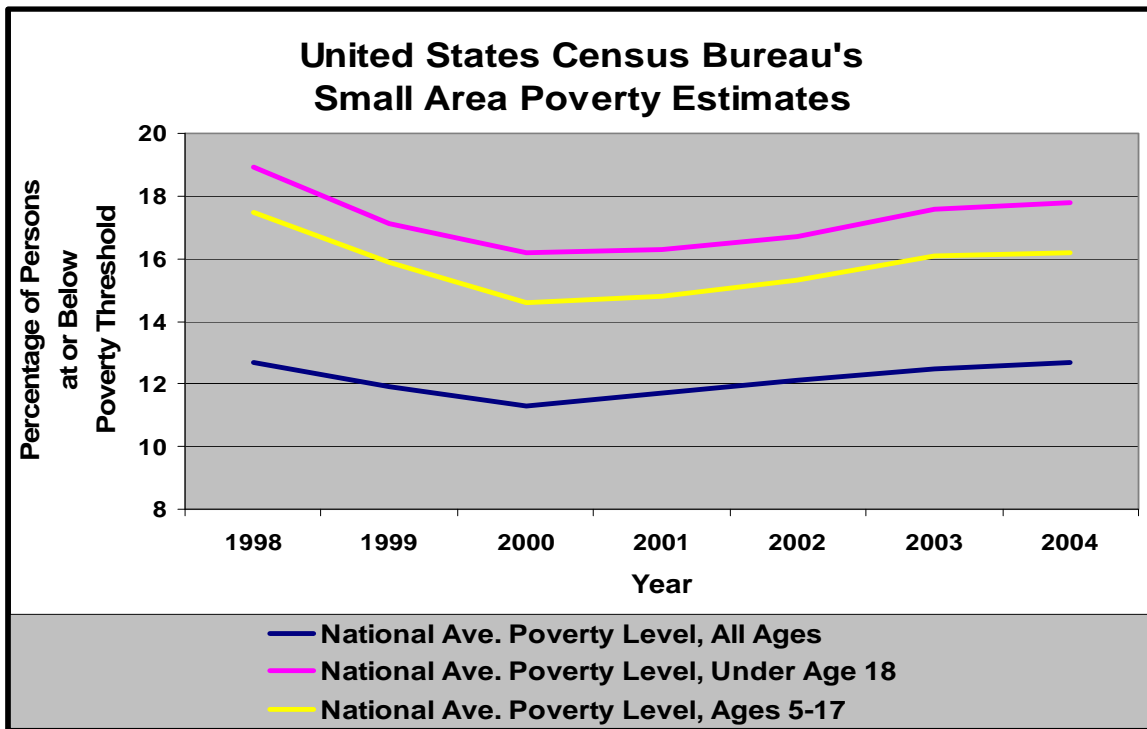
To examine these possibilities, data were collected and analyzed from every available county or county-equivalent in the United States from 1998 through 2004, inclusive. Governmental websites' reports of economic information on a county-by-county basis and on a statewide basis were used², and the county-equivalent locations of active hate groups were identified. Specifically, the hate groups active from 1998 through 2004 as identified by the Southern Poverty Law Center's (SPLC) *Intelligence Reports* were pinpointed to the county or county-equivalent in which they were operating by trendsinhate.com (only 3.12% of SPLC-identified hate groups were unable to be pinpointed to a particular community between 1998 and 2004, inclusive, and this was because the SPLC identified these hate groups as occurring on a non-localized regional or statewide basis). These identifiable locations constituted the HGCs (hate group communities) from 1998 through 2004, inclusive. Of note is that most hate groups operated for only a portion of the timeframe examined; only some hate groups operated for the entire seven-year period analyzed here. That is, a community might be an HGC for one year, but not in subsequent years. Thus, each year from 1998 through 2004, inclusive, was examined separately. This also allowed for trends to be examined. Communities without an active hate group, the nonHGCs, comprised the rest of the nation's communities. Once communities were bifurcated, sociometric measures of poverty collected by the government were then compared between the nation's HGCs and the nonHGCs from 1998 through 2004^{3,4}.

Although HGCs are found throughout the United States, there are a disproportionate number of hate groups found in the South. In 2004, for example, twelve southern states accounted for almost half (47.9%) of the country's active hate groups. In addition, there are well-known regional economic differences with the east and west coasts being more prosperous than the South (particularly, the so-called plantation belt of the Deep South; southern border counties of Texas; and, the Allegheny and Cumberland Plateau region of Kentucky and Tennessee), the Plains/Midwest (particularly, Native American and White regions of the Upper Plains, but also areas of the Missouri Ozarks), and areas of the mid-

Atlantic region (namely, specific Appalachian areas of West Virginia and Virginia). Additionally, rural areas tend to be poorer than urban areas. Because of these realities, *state-relative poverty* levels were first used to examine whether HGCs were more impoverished than nonHGCs as might be expected if hate groups arise and are maintained in substantial part because of economic reasons. Examined were whether a community's poverty level was above its state's poverty rate (i.e., relatively poorer), or at/below its state's poverty rate (i.e., relatively less poor). Had county poverty levels been used and compared against the nation's poverty level for the seven-year timeframe (instead of state-relative poverty), a finding that HGCs are more impoverished than nonHGCs might likely have been due to regional economic differences and the location of HGCs. In other words, such a finding might be spurious and due to the South's over-abundance of hate groups and high poverty.

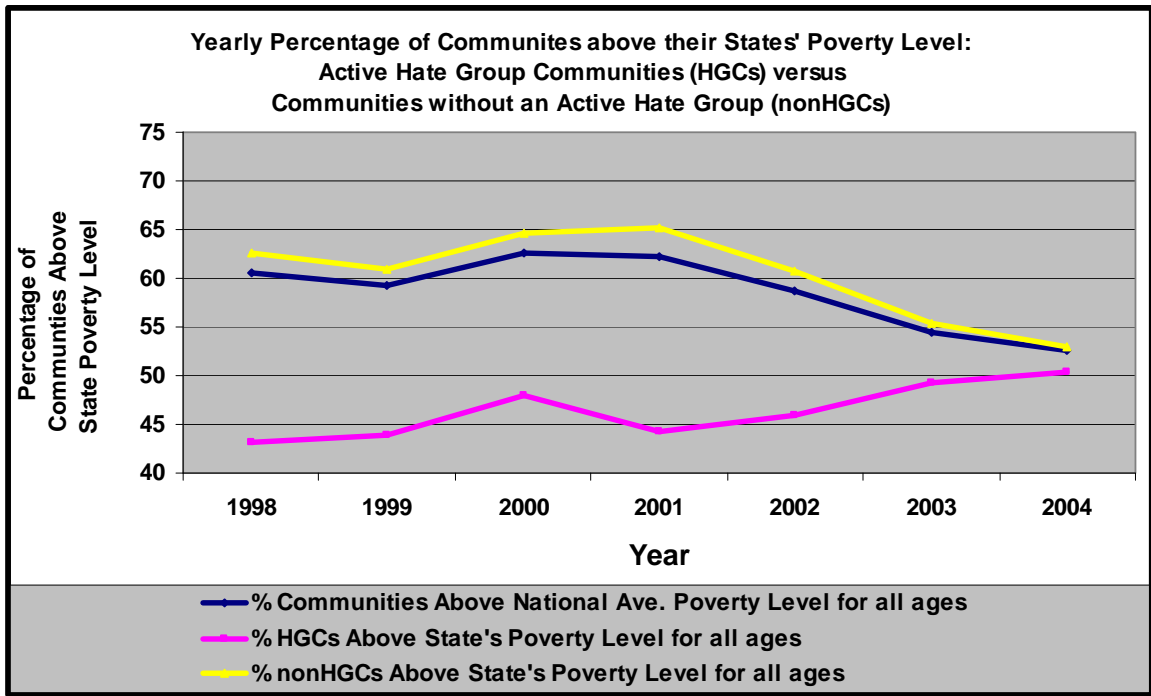
Yearly state and community poverty data from 1998 through 2004 were obtained from the *Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates* of the U.S. Census Bureau's website which details the poverty levels for every county and county-equivalent (such as Virginia's independent cities, Louisiana's parishes, and Alaska's boroughs) as well as state and national poverty levels². The U.S. Census Bureau determines three different poverty level estimates for each county/county-equivalent, for each state, and nationally: (1) poverty rates for all ages; (2) poverty rates for those under 18 years of age; and, (3) poverty rates for those between 5 and 17 years of age. As shown in Graph One infant/childhood and childhood poverty rates in the United States are consistently higher when compared against poverty rates for all persons. Poverty rates for all ages were used in the data analyses in this study; and, the number of communities in a given state (or region) were used. These communities (the HGCs and the nonHGCs) were then bifurcated for state relative poverty:

GRAPH ONE



above their state's poverty level for each of the seven years examined; or, at or below their state's poverty level. As shown in Graph Two, slightly more than half of the communities in the United States had poverty rates higher than their state's poverty level (blue line) for the seven-year timeframe examined. Contrary to what social psychologists would predict, hate group communities (HGCs) as a whole consistently have had *lower* relative poverty than the states out of which they operate as shown in Graph Two (fuchsia and blue lines). On the other hand, communities without an active hate group have had remarkably similar state-relative poverty compared to the states where they are found (Graph Two; blue and yellow lines). In addition, while poverty has been rising overall nationally from 2000 through 2004 (Graph One) the percentage of communities with higher than state-average poverty during this same timeframe has been declining (Graph Two; blue line), suggesting that poverty became more widespread and less unequally distributed across the country from 2000 through 2004. This national trend belies an opposite trend that occurred in communities with one or more active hate groups; namely, from 1998 through 2004, inclusive, HGCs have shown an increase in their state-relative poverty, such that by 2004 there was little difference between HGCs and nonHGCs in terms of relative poverty (Graph Two).

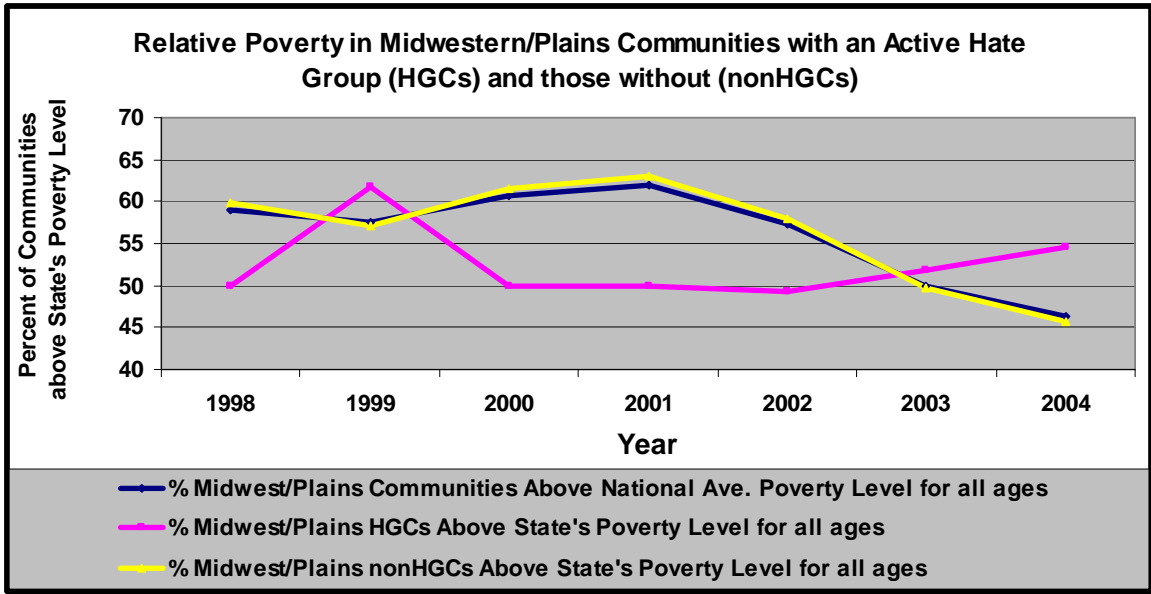
GRAPH TWO



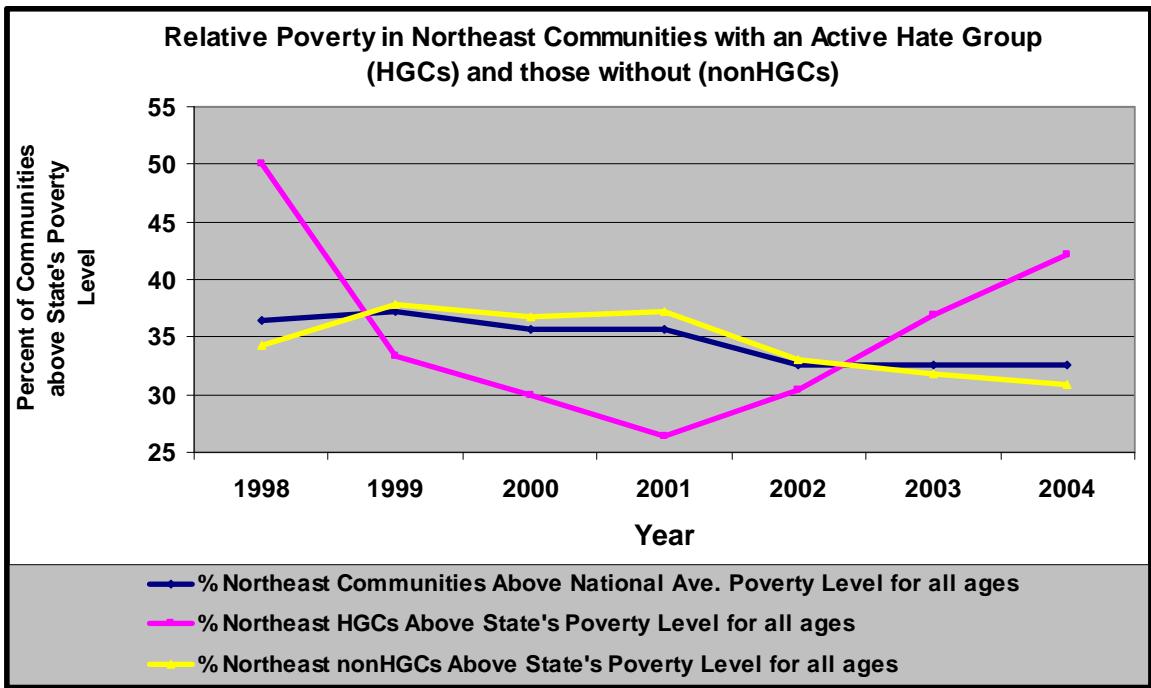
Because of the previously mentioned, well-known regional economic differences that exist, we next examined state-relative poverty of HGCs and nonHGCs for five different geographical regions of the United States. The geographic regions include: the Northeast (comprised of Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, and New York); the Mid-Atlantic (New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland, West Virginia, and Delaware); the South (Alabama, Georgia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Arkansas, Mississippi, Louisiana, Oklahoma and Texas); the Midwest/Plains (Illinois, Ohio, Indiana, Michigan, Wisconsin,

Minnesota, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Missouri, and Kansas); and the West (Hawaii, Alaska, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Arizona, Nevada, Montana, Utah, Wyoming, New Mexico, and Colorado). The District of Columbia was excluded because there are no separate communities within Washington, D.C., about which economic information is gathered by the Census Bureau. Our results are shown in the following five graphs (Graphs Three through Seven).

GRAPH THREE

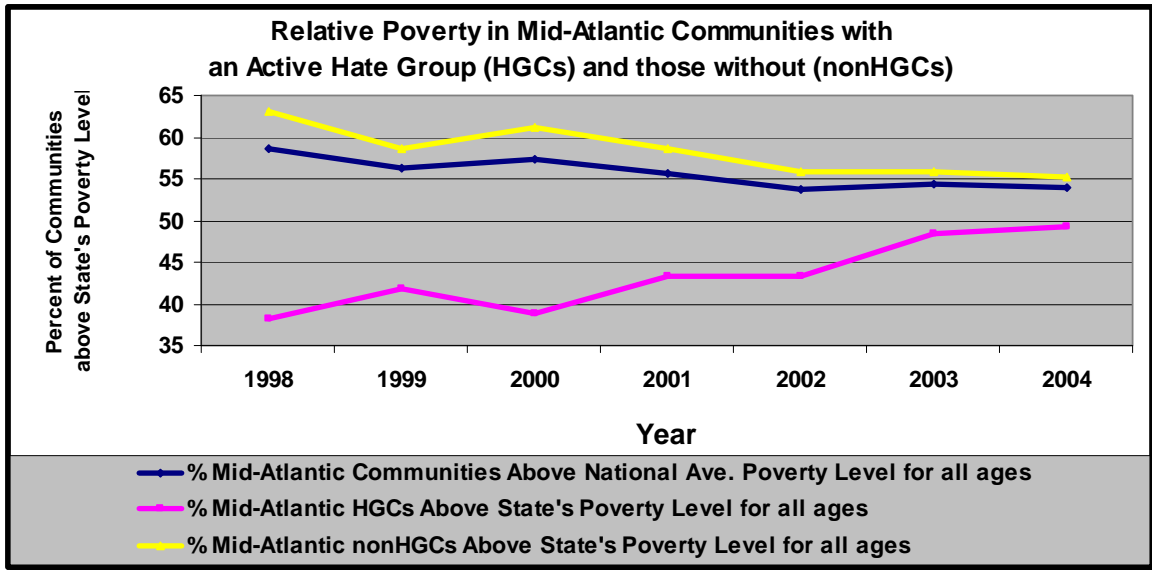


GRAPH FOUR

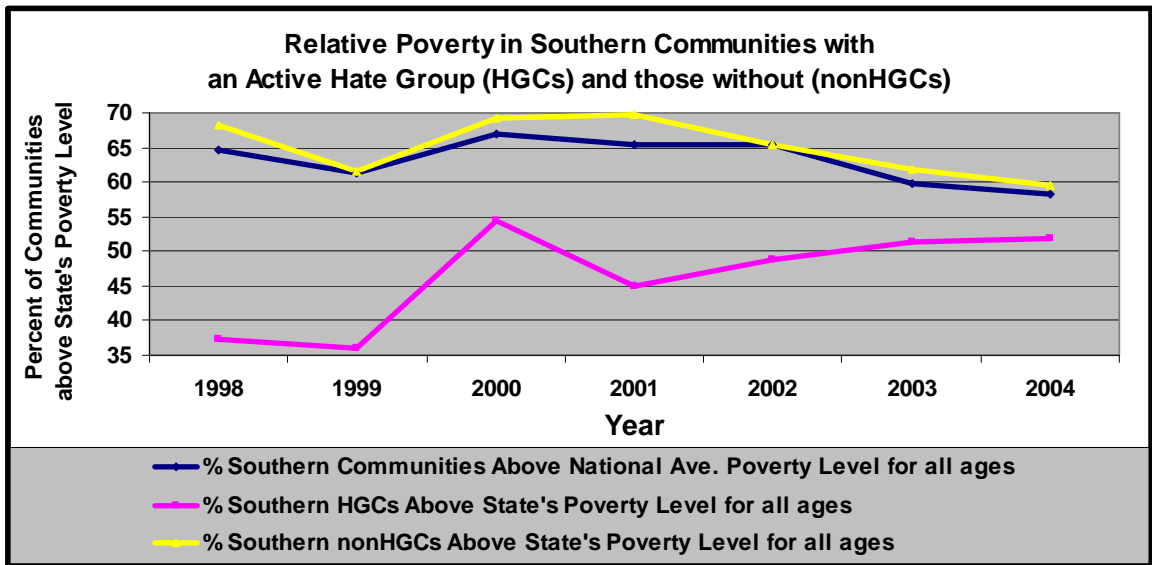


In addition to the expected regional differences of state-relative poverty (Graphs Three through Seven, blue lines), what seems apparent upon inspecting these regional data are that regional differences between HGCs and nonHGCs also exist. Namely, the Northeast and the Plains/Midwest regions show hate groups located in relatively poorer communities than nonHGCs in 2003 and 2004, whereas in the four previous years (1999-2003) HGCs were generally relatively less impoverished (Graphs Three & Four, fuchsia and yellow lines).

GRAPH FIVE



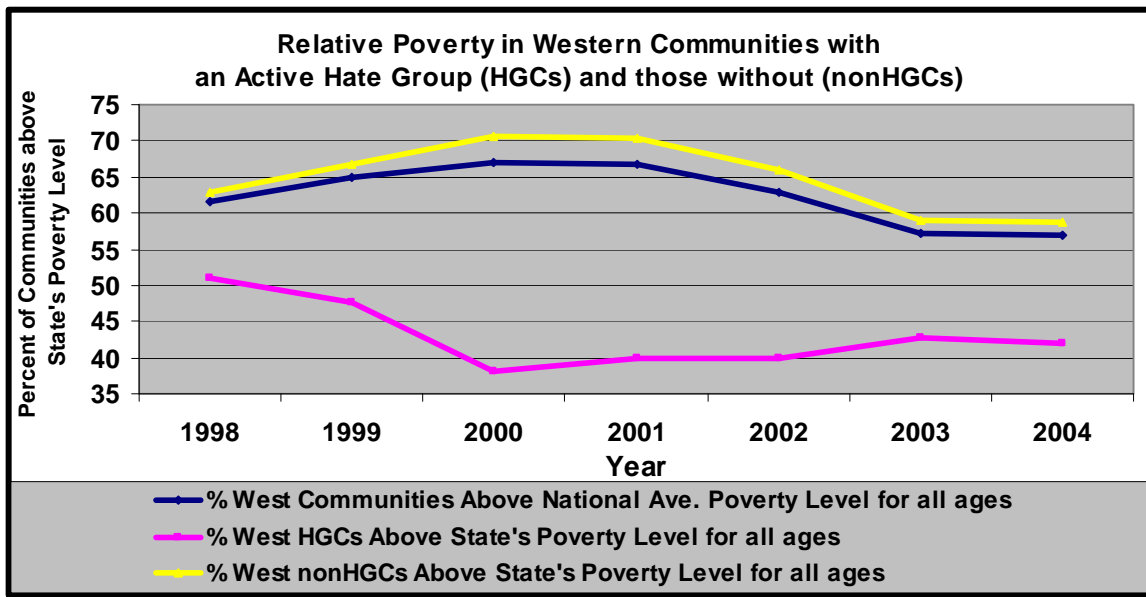
GRAPH SIX



While these findings are not inconsistent with the national trend shown in Graph Two, what is different is that in the Northeast and the Midwest/Plains, HGCs have not only caught up to but have surpassed nonHGCs in terms greater state-relative poverty. The

remaining three geographical regions—the Mid-Atlantic, the South, and the West—also show the same national trend. However, unlike the Midwest/Plains and the Northeast, the HGCs in these three geographical regions remain—as of 2004 and as a whole—less impoverished than the nonHGCs. That is, in those three regions HGCs did not show higher rates of state-relative poverty compared to the rates found in nonHGCs in those same regions, as would be expected using the poverty hypothesis of hate group formation and maintenance. Instead, they showed slightly lower levels of state-relative poverty (Graphs Five, Six & Seven). What is apparent in all regions is that nonHGCs are dramatically similar in state-relative poverty than the state in which they are located (Graphs Three through Seven, yellow and blue lines), mirroring the nation as a whole (Graph Two).

GRAPH SEVEN

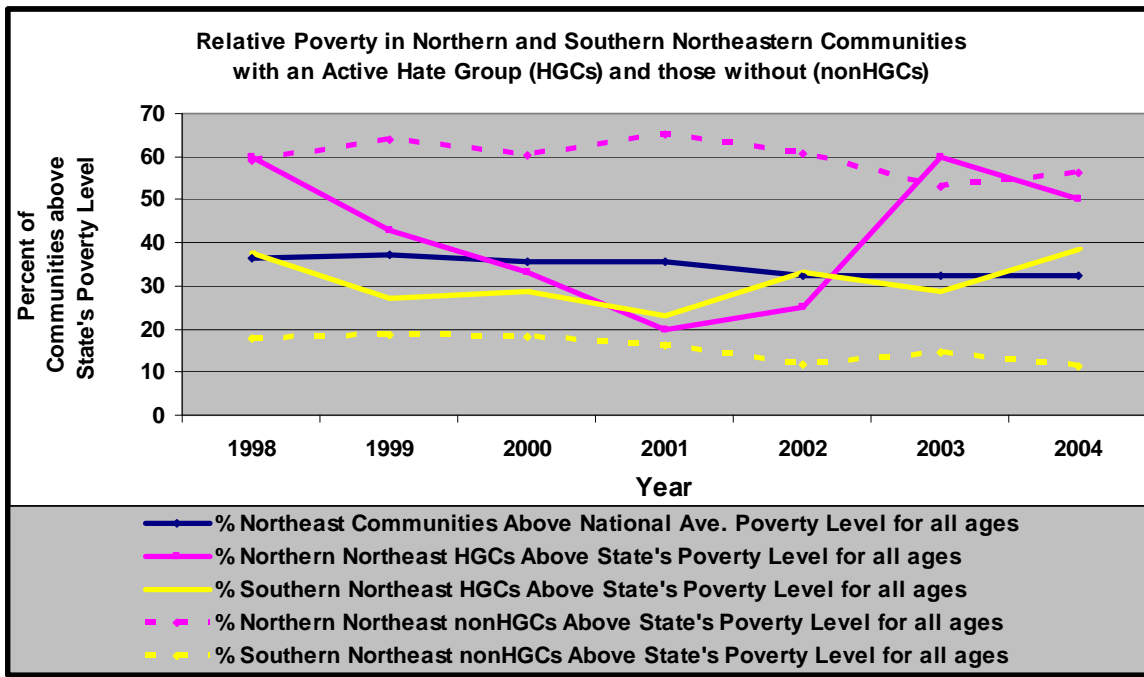


What is not apparent from the regional data presented in the five previous graphs is that there were differences *within geographic regions*. Specifically, analyses of the 54 communities in the northernmost Northeastern states (i.e., those communities found in Maine, Vermont, New Hampshire, and Massachusetts) showed that in communities with an active hate group (HGCs) state-relative poverty was generally equal to or lower than poverty in similarly located communities without a hate group (Graph Eight, fuchsia lines). On the other hand, in the 75 communities in the southern Northeastern states (i.e., the communities in New York, Connecticut, and Rhode Island) HGCs had state-relative poverty that was equal to or higher than poverty in nonHGCs in that region (Graph Eight, yellow lines).

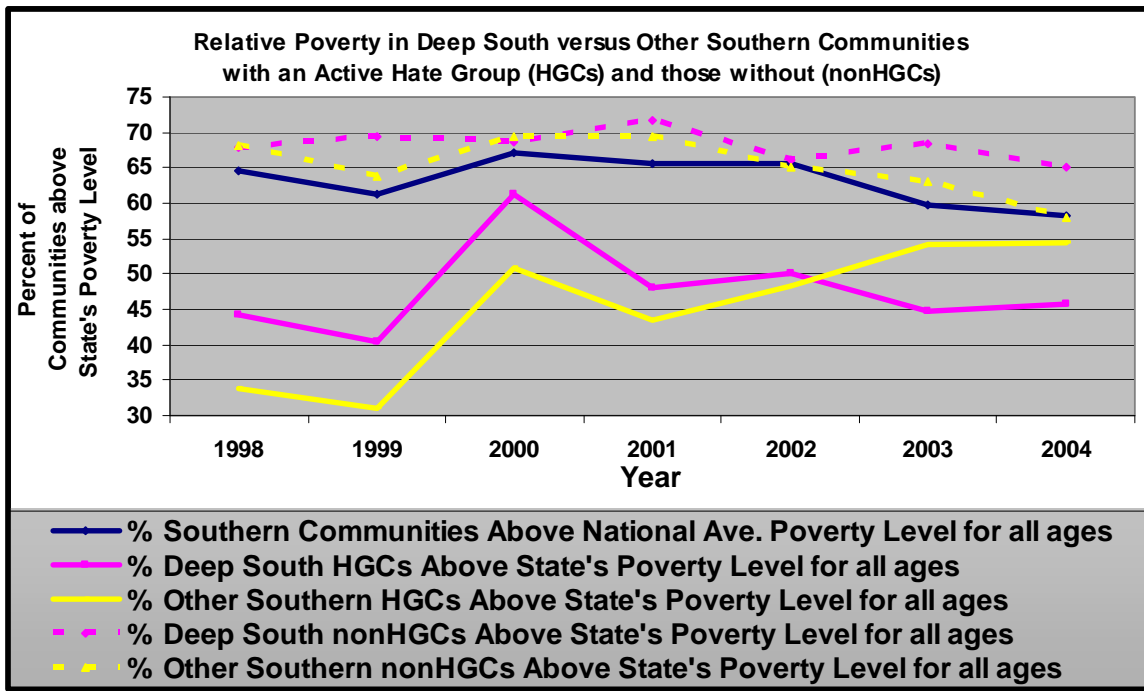
Thus, while HGCs in both the northern and southern areas of the Northeast often had similar rates of state-relative poverty from 1998 through 2004, inclusive (Graph Eight, solid yellow and solid fuchsia lines), the northern section of the Northeast showed consistently higher rates of state-relative poverty in the nonHGCs (Graph Eight, broken yellow and broken fuchsia lines). HGCs in the southernmost Northeastern states were, overall, generally similar to the region as a whole (Graph Eight, blue and yellow lines).

Differences were found within Southern areas of the United States as well. The so-called Deep South (Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, and Mississippi) consistently has had hate

GRAPH EIGHT



GRAPH NINE

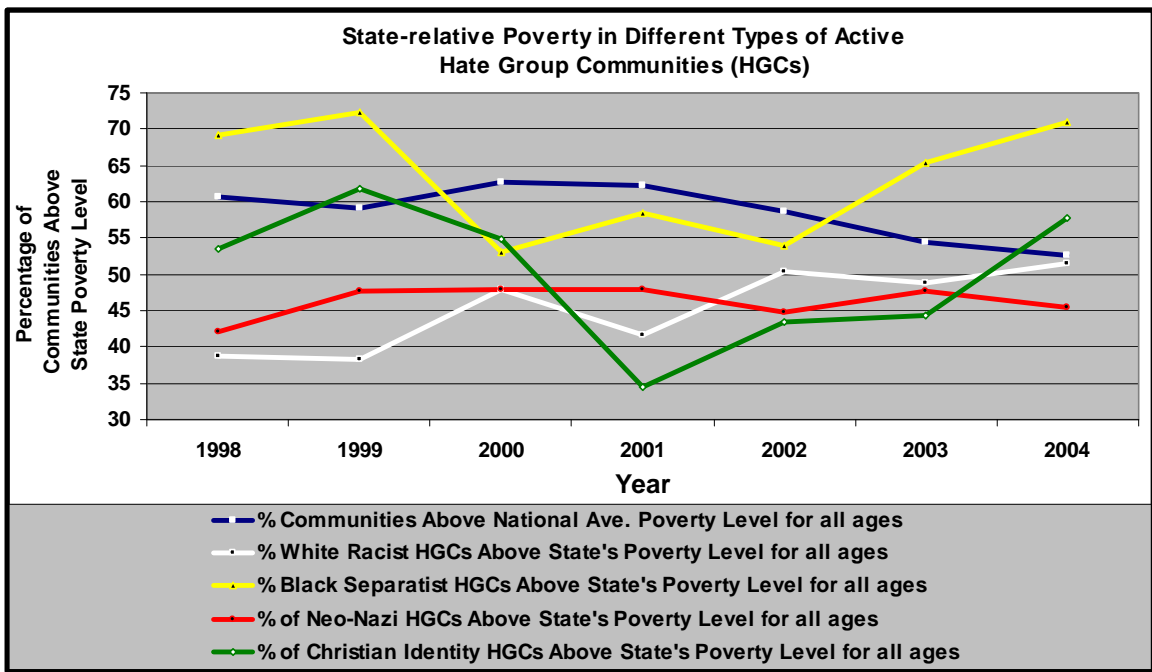


groups operating from relatively less poor communities (Graph Nine, solid fuchsia line versus broken fuchsia and solid blue lines) over the seven-year period for which data were available. While this had been true for the rest of the South from 1998 through 2002, that

gap has virtually closed in those southern sub-regions such that by 2004 southern hate group communities *not* in the Deep South (i.e., the so-called Other Southern communities) were essentially on par with the entire southern United States in terms of relative poverty (Graph Nine, solid yellow line and solid blue line). Conversely, Graph Nine also reveals that 1998 and 2004 had virtually identical rates of state-relative poverty in the Deep South HGCs (approximately 45%), pointing to an absence of an impoverishing trend in that sub-region of the South.

We next examined poverty and communities with specific types of hate groups. The Southern Poverty Law Center’s (SPLC) *Intelligence Reports* have classified active hate groups by a group’s type of hateful ideology, when known (those not classifiable are labeled “General Hate” groups by the SPLC). Trendsinhate.com combined these classes of hate groups into distinct groups consistent with the groups’ ideologies: White Racist (of which trendsinhate.com included the League of the South, the Council for Conservative Citizens, the Ku Klux Klan, the National Association for the Advancement of White People, and various racist skinhead groups); Black Separatist (including the Nation of Islam and the New Black Panther Party); Neo-Nazi; and Christian Identity (of which trendsinhate.com included the Westboro Baptist Church, a hate group labeled a “General Hate” group by the SPLC). If a community had, for example, both a White Racist type of hate group *and* a Black Separatist hate group in any given year, then that community was tallied as an HGC in *both* the White Racist and the Black Separatist classes of hate groups.

GRAPH TEN



Thus, our four classifications of hate group communities are not mutually exclusive. In addition, the small percentage of so-called “General Hate” groups was excluded from the following analysis. Comparing state-relative poverty of HGCs of each of these classes of hate groups revealed that all four classes of hate groups have been trending in the direction of increased relative poverty (Graph Ten; white, yellow, red, and green lines versus the

blue line) when examining data from 1998 through 2004. The largest of these classes of hate groups in terms of specific numbers of hate groups is the White Racist category; Graph Ten shows that whereas the White Racist groups as a whole had been less relatively impoverished from 1998 through 2002, more recently they have been found in more relatively impoverished communities such that by 2004 the White Racist HGCs were indistinguishable from the rest of the country in terms of relative poverty (white line versus blue line). The much smaller categories—the Black Separatist and the Christian Identity classes of hate groups—show a similar upward (impoverishing) trend such that by 2004 both of these categories of hate group communities actually had *higher* percentages of relative poverty than the nation (Graph Ten; yellow and green lines versus the blue line). Only the communities that have had a Neo-Nazi hate group operating from them have remained relatively less impoverished than the entire nation, although the gap has narrowed from 1998 to 2004 (Graph Ten; the red line versus the blue line) from about an 18 percentage point difference in 1998 to about an 8 percentage point difference in 2004.

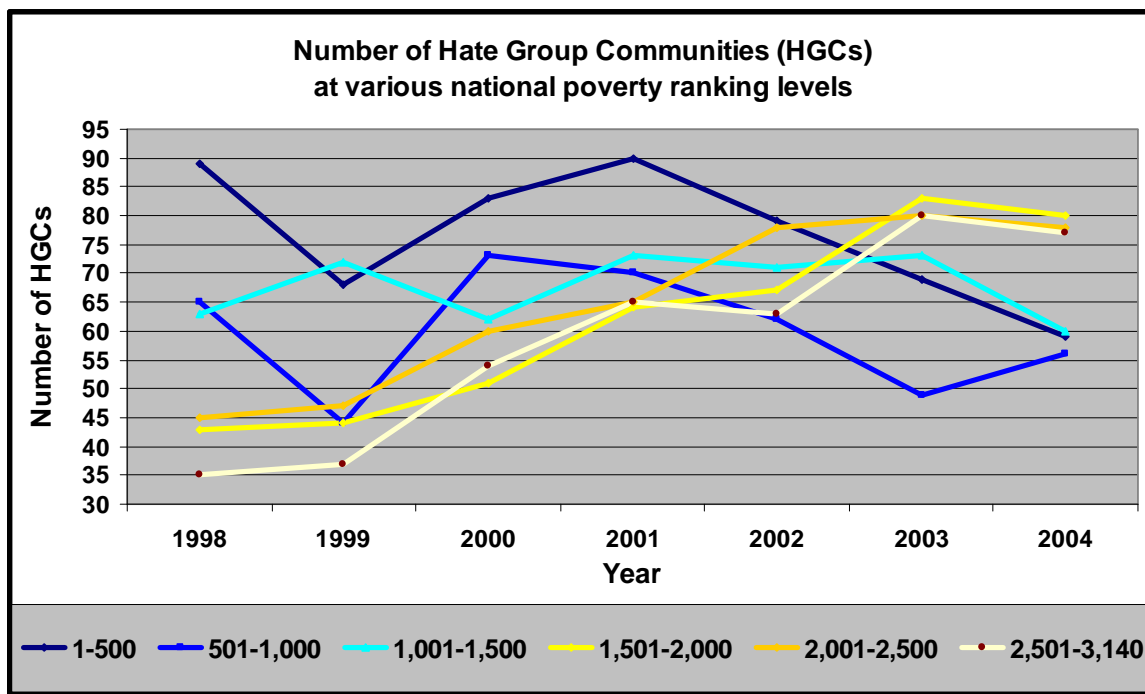
To summarize thus far, we have shown that communities that have had an active hate group (HGCs) between 1998 and 2004 were economically diverse. Some HGCs had higher than average state poverty rates, but mostly, these communities had lower poverty rates than the state in which they were located. This finding stands contrary to the notion that the bigotry and prejudice that is likely to give rise to the formation of a hate group is due in substantial part to a competition for scarce economic resources. We have also shown that there is a national trend for HGCs as a group to have rising levels of state-relative poverty in the most recent years analyzed such that they have become virtually indistinguishable from communities without an active hate group in terms of state-relative poverty. We have further shown that there are regional differences, sub-regional differences, and differences between types of hate group communities in terms of state-relative poverty. For example, in the Northeast and in the Plains/Midwest regions of the United States HGCs as a group have surpassed in recent years nonHGCs in terms of their state-relative poverty, whereas in the Deep South they have not. As another example, communities with a White Racist hate group had on the whole lower rates of state-relative poverty until around 2004 when they became indistinguishable from communities across the nation in terms of state-relative poverty. Communities with a Neo-Nazi hate group, on the other hand, have shown to have on the whole relatively lower rates of poverty over the seven-year period examined.

One shortcoming of our just described data analyses of state-relative poverty is that we did not examine the *range* of poverty found among HGCs, or the range of poverty within communities. The latter issue—the range of poverty found within a community—cannot be answered, because we know of no data source that compiles information about the range of wealth and poverty within communities across the United States. However, we believe that the issue of the range of poverty found among HGCs is both important and answerable. We believe it is important because by examining the range of poverty among HGCs we will have a better picture of one aspect of the larger environments in which hate groups operate. Another shortcoming is that we did not examine the number of hate groups in each HGC with respect to poverty; we merely identified and examined HGCs. We address both of those shortcomings now.

By rank-ordering communities across the United States (including the District of Columbia) based on their government-estimated poverty level (for all ages) for each year

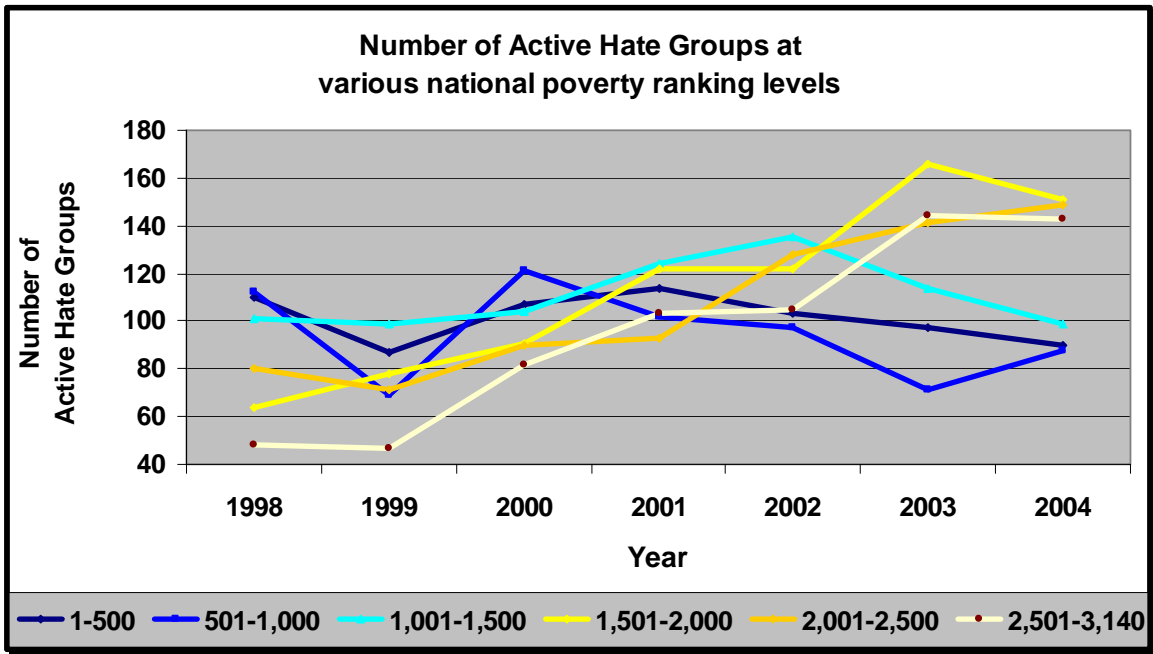
from 1998 through 2004, inclusive, we found that many communities with an active hate group had relatively low rates of poverty and that a substantial number of hate groups have

GRAPH ELEVEN



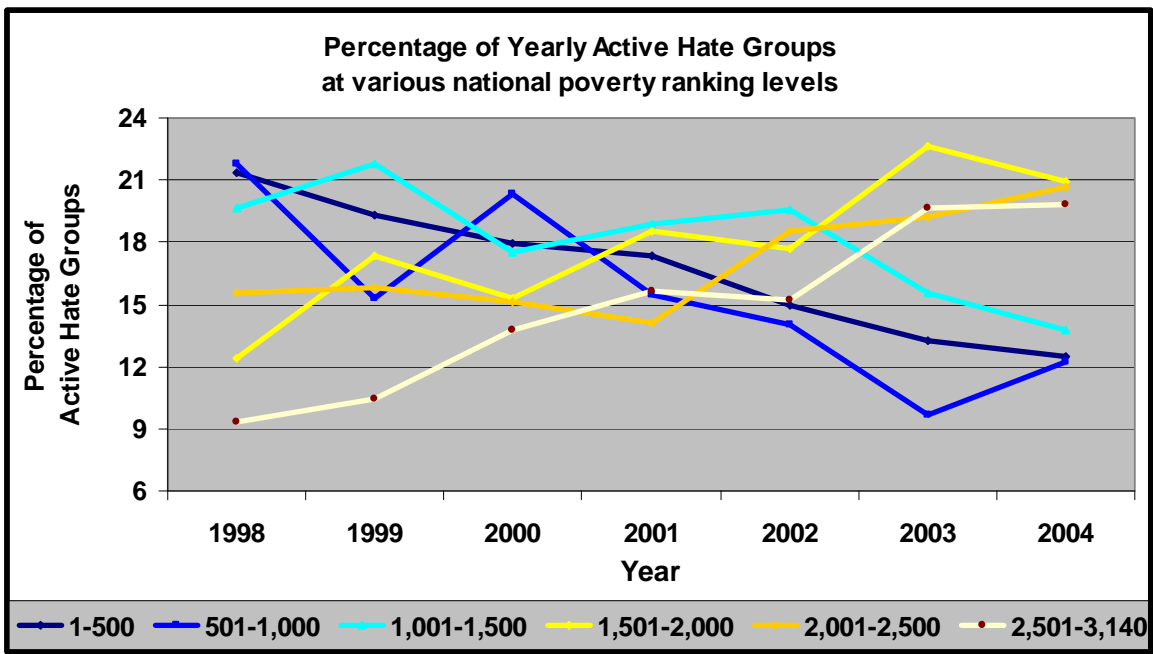
been active in communities with lower-than-average rates of poverty, although as previously shown, HGCs are found in both relatively poor and relatively non-poor communities. Specifically, Graphs Eleven and Thirteen show that between 1998 and 2004, inclusive, between 12% to 21% of all HGCs were part of the 500 *least* impoverished communities in the United States. These are communities whose poverty levels for all persons ranged from 1.7% to 2.6% on the low end (i.e., the top-ranked community) to 8.1% to 9.0% on the high end (those communities ranked at 500). Conversely, between 10% to 20% of all HGCs comprised part of the 640 most impoverished communities during that same timeframe. These are communities whose poverty levels for all persons ranged from 22.6% to 24.9% on the low end (i.e., those ranked at 3,000) to a staggering 36.4% to 49.1% on the high end (the bottom-ranked community). Graph Eleven also shows both a trend of *decreasing* rates of relatively wealthy communities having an active hate group, and an *increasing* percentage of relatively impoverished communities having an active hate group from 1998 through 2004. Graph Twelve shows a rise in the number of active hate groups found in America's more impoverished areas. Keep in mind too that during this timeframe there was an increase in the total number of active hate groups nationally (i.e., an increase of about 42%); yet, there was a decline (of 19.8%) in the number of hate groups active in the 1,000 *least* impoverished communities (Graph Twelve, navy blue and royal blue lines). The three poorest ranking groups of communities had the least number of active hate groups in 1998, but the most by 2004 (Graph Twelve, yellow,

GRAPH TWELVE



gold and beige lines). The most impoverished group of communities (i.e., the communities with national poverty rankings starting at the 2,501st rank down to the poorest community in the United States ranked at 3,140th) had an almost threefold increase in the number of active hate groups during the seven-year period from 1998 through 2004. Similarly, the percentage of all active hate groups that operated in the poorest ranking group shot up threefold from 1998 through 2004 while falling twofold in the least poor ranking group (Graph Thirteen, navy and beige lines).

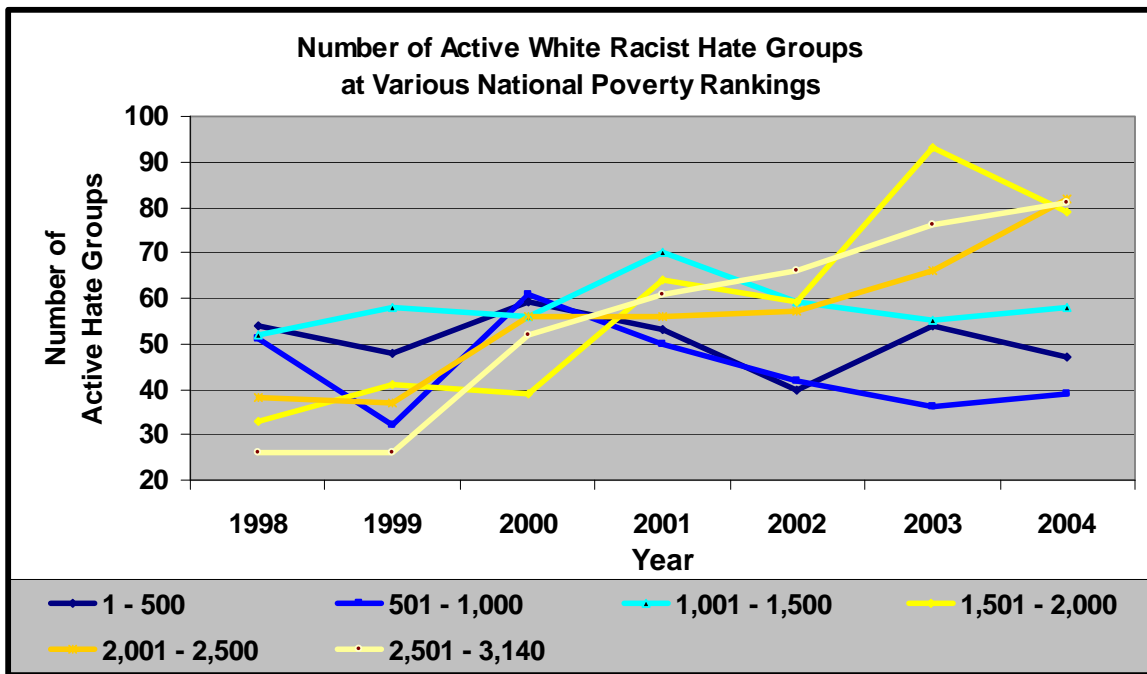
GRAPH THIRTEEN



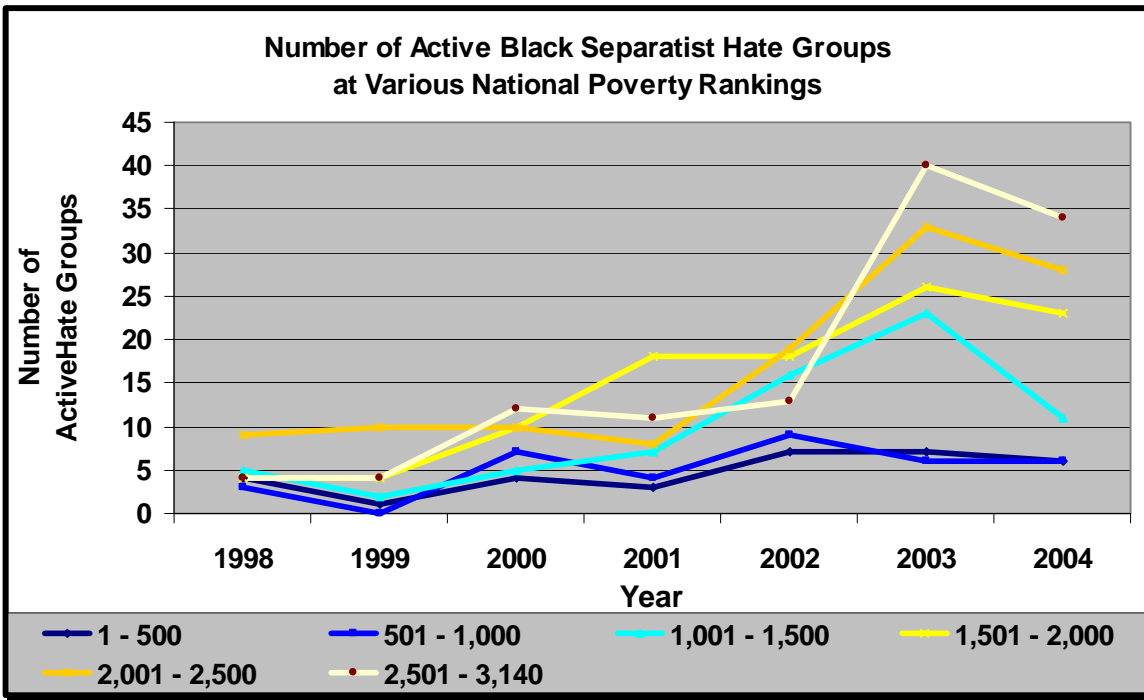
Given the trend toward more active hate groups in more impoverished communities, we wondered if any specific type or class of hate group accounted more for this trend than other types of hate groups. Graphs Fourteen through Seventeen show that White and Black racist hate groups as well as Neo-Nazi hate groups have significantly contributed to the rise in the percentage of all active groups found in the most impoverished American communities. Among the poorest group of United States communities (i.e., those with poverty rankings lower than the 2,500th rank) we found that from 1998 to 2004 there was about a 300% rise in the number of White Racist hate groups (Graph Fourteen), about a 700% jump in the number of Black Separatist hate groups (Graph Fifteen), and about a 700% increase in the number of Neo-Nazi hate groups (Graph Sixteen).

In addition, we also found that communities that have multiple types or classes of active hate groups (e.g., those that have a White Racist type of hate group *and* those that have a Neo-Nazi hate group) versus those that have just one type of active hate group have not only increased steadily from 1998 through 2004 (Graph Eighteen) which is consistent with the national upward trend of hate groups uncovered by the Southern Poverty Law Center (SPLC) (see our *Trends*), but these multiple-type hate group communities have trended toward the more impoverished communities (Graph Nineteen). This trend suggests a

GRAPH FOURTEEN

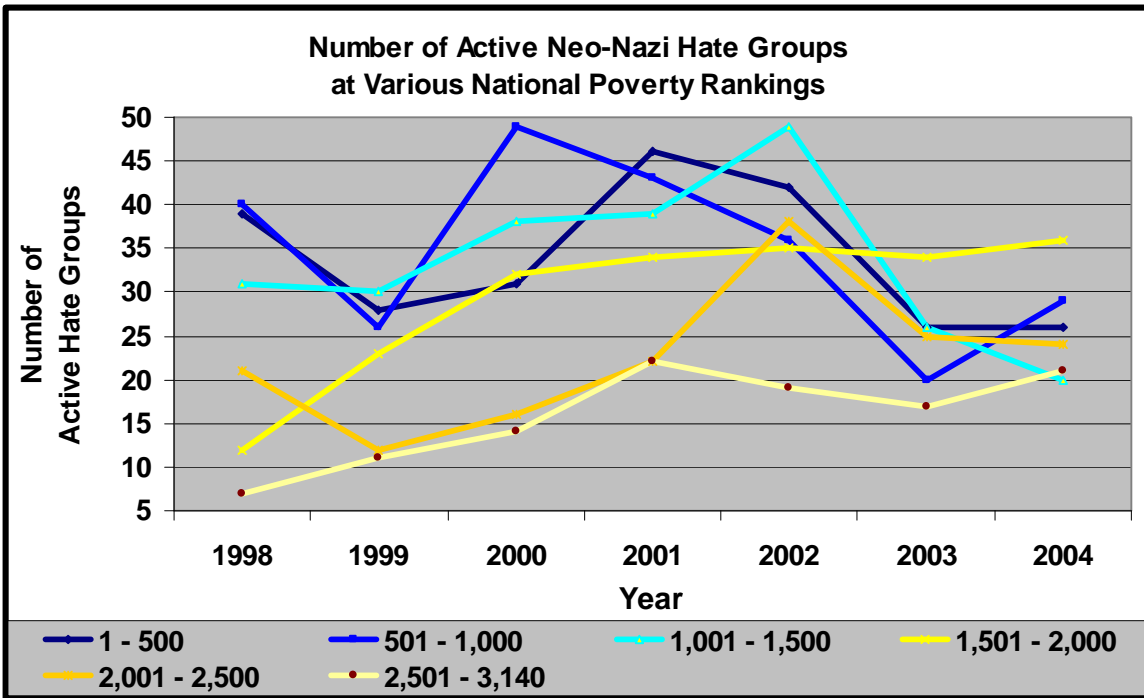


GRAPH FIFTEEN

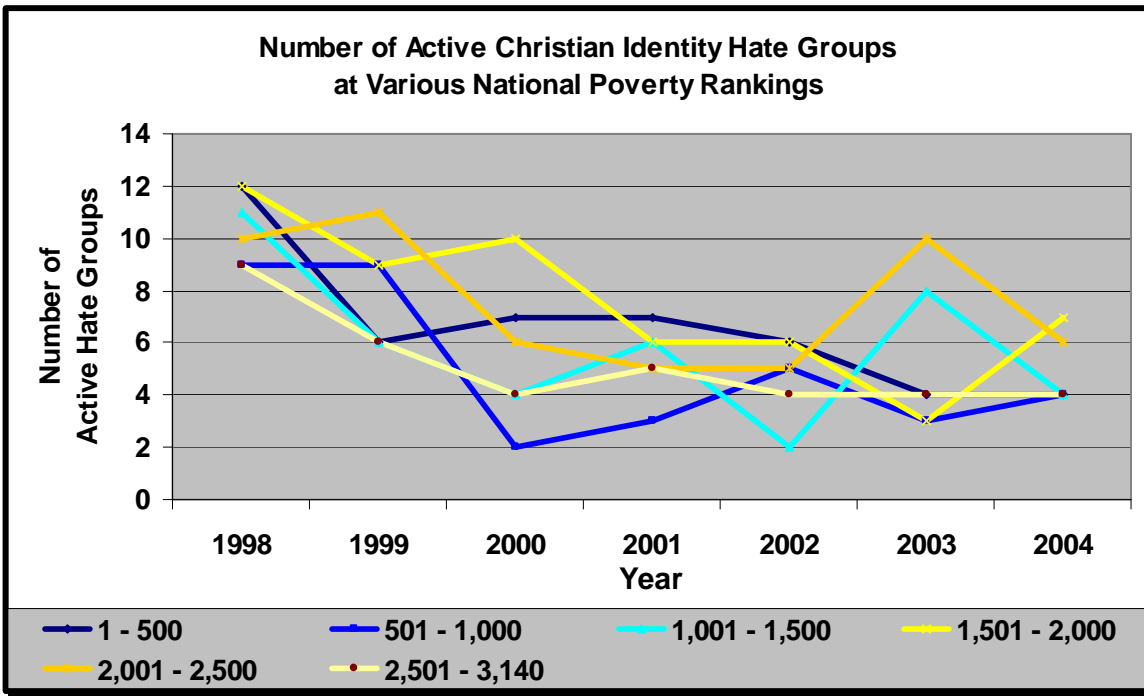


broad-spectrum of hate fomenting in poor communities in the United States. Three large, poor communities—Kings County, New York; St. Louis, Missouri; and, Orleans Parish, Louisiana—serve as examples. All three of these communities have ranked among the poorest communities in the country from 1998 through 2004. In 1998, these three HGCs

GRAPH SIXTEEN

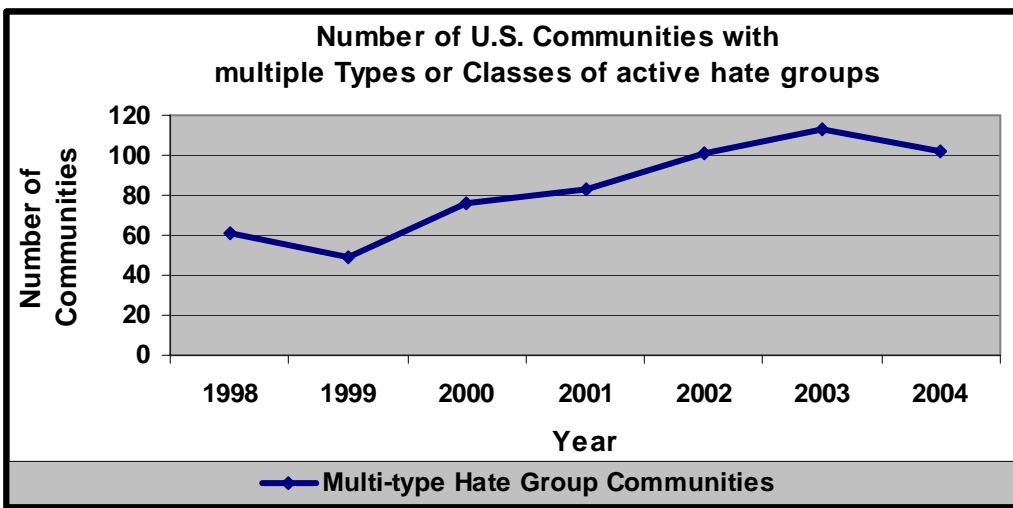


GRAPH SEVENTEEN

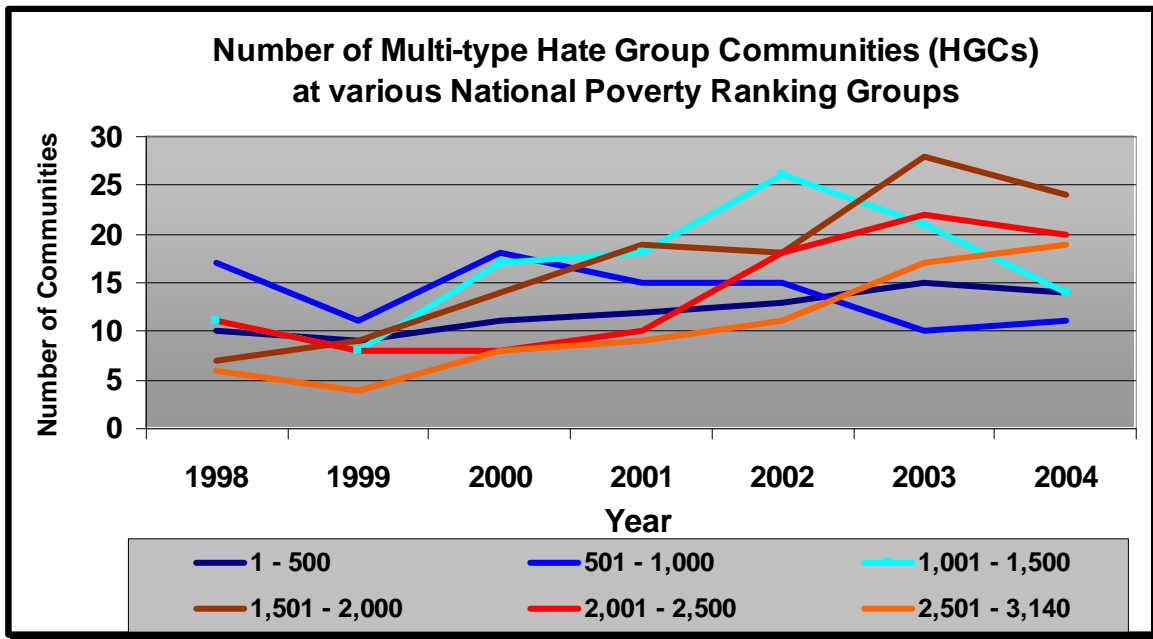


had a total of six active hate groups (and five of these were in St. Louis). However, by 2004, these same three HGCs had 20 active hate groups with various hateful ideologies. The finding that multiple-type hate group communities have trended toward the more impoverished communities by no means excludes the possibility that a specific hateful ideology has not played a significant role in the increase in hate group activity in these poor communities, however.

GRAPH EIGHTEEN



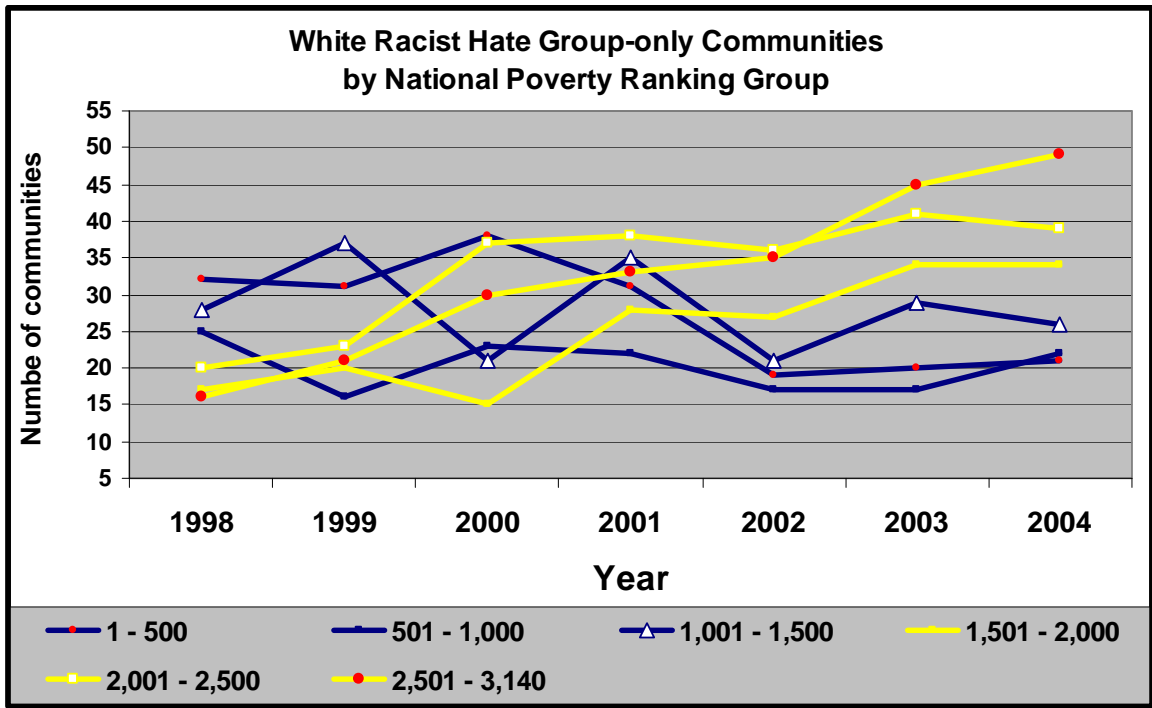
GRAPH NINETEEN



Keeping in mind that: (a) national poverty levels have shown modest increases since 2000 (Graph One); (b) the SPLC has reported a rise in so-called nativist hate groups (those that have targeted immigrants and Latino persons regardless of their immigration status or their citizenship status); and (c) the illegal immigration debate grew louder and more divisive since 2000, our findings lend support to the notion that impoverished communities may be more at-risk for hate group activity during times of increasing economic hardship (such as increasing poverty and/or increasing wealth disparity)—even very modest economic hardship—when that hardship is coupled with an increased national debasement and scapegoating of a particular class of people.

To add more support to this notion, when we examined only those communities that had at least one White Racist hate group *but no other type of hate group*, we found that from 1998 through 2004 there was a dramatic increase in hate group activity but only in the most impoverished of these communities. Graph Twenty shows that the less impoverished communities (the blue lines) had fewer White Racist hate groups in 2004 than they did in 1998, whereas there was a steady increase in the number of impoverished communities that had a White Racist hate group (yellow lines). Most dramatic of all national poverty ranking groups was the most impoverished group of American communities, that is, those 640 communities with a poverty ranking below the 2,500th ranking. These poor communities showed a threefold increase in the number of White Racist hate groups without any other type of hate group known to be operating in those same communities during the seven-year period examined (yellow line with red circle). This finding explains the trends shown in Graph Twelve, but we believe it also reflects a response among some poor whites to the immigration issue.

GRAPH TWENTY



Taken together, all of our findings about hate groups' locations and their poverty rates strongly suggest that *hate groups tend not to be found primarily in communities that are relatively impoverished*. This finding refutes the social psychological theory that such groups ought to arise out of competition for scarce economic resources. If economic resources play a role at all with respect to hate group formation, it could be argued that hate groups ought to be found, as they were generally over a seven-year period of time, in communities that are *less* impoverished overall compared to those communities without hate groups precisely because HGCs have desirable economic resources. That is, hate groups may serve to operate to keep economic resources in the hands of those who have them. It's not so much a matter of grabbing resources as it is holding onto them.

There is, however, another possible explanation for the findings that poverty is not generally associated with hate groups, and that a fair number of hate groups are found in relatively well-to-do communities. The data presented here are not inconsistent with the idea that hate group membership and activity is a leisure activity (albeit a community-terrorizing leisure activity), and having leisure time is a luxury not afforded the poor. Consistent with social psychological research on stereotyping⁵, individuals from poor communities may be more interdependent on one another (socially and economically) than are those from more affluent communities. Rather than competing for economic resources, poor people work together to sustain their lives and their communities. Through ongoing interdependence stereotyping is greatly reduced as citizens view one another as complex and useful individuals rather than viewing each other as one-dimensional prototypes of a specific characteristic (such as debasing stereotypes of one's race, religion, ethnicity, gender, national origin, or sexual orientation). This interdependence may serve as a protective factor: poor community members economically and socially interdependent on each other may prevent a hate group from forming in their area precisely because they significantly rely on each other. There is some government data⁶ showing that

occupational segregation exists such that lower wage-earning types of jobs in poorer communities have *more* racial diversity than is found in higher wage-earning occupations. That data supports the interdependence model of stereotyping⁵. And yet our findings have shown trends toward increased hate group activity in impoverished communities.

It is likely that different types of hate groups arise in specific communities due to various influences. One of these influences are very likely economic in nature. Our data analyses presented here illuminate the reality that hate groups are found in both relatively impoverished and relatively non-impoverished areas, so the role economics plays is neither a simple one nor a necessarily primary one. If different types of hate groups arise due to different regional-societal influences, it may be in large part because not all hate groups have the same target of their hatred. Different types of hate groups have different hateful ideologies. It is true that some hate groups tend to be intolerant of many and various groups of people (the Ku Klux Klan is as poorly tolerant of Jews, Latinos, and gays as it is people of color; and, they have a history of having targeted Catholics as well); however, hate groups tend to focus their hatred typically on one particular group of people (e.g., the KKK more frequently targets African-Americans than other racial minority group members; militia-type nativist hate groups almost exclusively direct their hatred toward Latinos and Latino immigrants; and, Christian hate groups are hatefully obsessed with homosexuality and/or Jews). Knowing this may help target different communities in different ways in order to prevent hate groups from forming. It might also help those whose commendable mission it is to fight already existing hate groups to use different strategies depending upon the type, location, and economic well-being of the hate group. The SPLC already does this. They have a successful track record of shutting down economically prosperous hate groups and economically prosperous members of hate groups via civil lawsuit litigation, although they have also won civil lawsuits whose defendants were not members of a hate group and who had few assets (e.g., the defendants in the Billy Ray Johnson civil lawsuit in east Texas in 2007). Brian Levin, director of the *Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism* at California State University in San Bernardino, has said in press interviews that civil lawsuits can significantly impede the leadership of hate groups and limit their orchestration of hate crimes. We agree, particularly in light of the SPLC's success in hindering the hateful cause of Tom Metzger and his white racist hate group, White Aryan Resistance. In 1990 the SPLC helped to win a \$12.5 million judgment against Metzger for his role in the race-based murder of an Ethiopian man killed in Oregon by White Aryan Resistance members. The result of this lawsuit was the decimation of this hate group. Yet we also understand that such litigation does not appear to have a deterring effect vis-à-vis the formation of new hate groups as shown by the growing number of hate groups in the United States. Therefore, understanding the complexities at play in hate group formation and hate group activity—including the complex role economics can play—is paramount to successfully fighting the society-destroying activities of hate groups and the attitudes that help to create them.

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Footnotes:

¹See M. Sherif's research in the 1960's culminating in Realistic Group Conflict Theory.

²Poverty estimate information was obtained from the *Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates* (SAIPE) of the U.S. Census Bureau. The Bureau's SAIPE poverty estimates

were used as source information. This information came from the U.S. Census Bureau's SAIPE website, <http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/saipe/index.html>.

³Over the relatively short period of the seven years analyzed, poverty levels were very stable within communities relative to the state's poverty level. For instance, if in 1998 a community had a higher rate of poverty compared with the poverty level for the state in which the community is located, then it was almost certain that its state-relative poverty was also higher from 1999 through 2004, inclusive. As one example, in 1998 Brazos County, Texas, had a poverty level for all ages (16.3%) above Texas' poverty level (15.6%). Brazos County also had poverty levels for all ages above Texas' poverty levels for 1999-2004 (1999: Brazos = 16.5%; Texas = 15.1%; 2000: Brazos = 17.6%; Texas = 14.6%; 2001: Brazos = 18.4%; Texas = 15.0%; 2002: Brazos = 18.6%; Texas = 15.4%; 2003: Brazos = 19.0%; Texas = 16.2%; and 2004: Brazos = 19.0%; Texas = 16.2%).

⁴Measuring poverty is an annually-adjusted income threshold of families and of non-institutionalized persons living either alone or with non-relatives based on family size and the value of the dollar. Poverty as a statistical measure is not new; it was developed in 1964 by the Social Security Administration.

⁵See the research of S. Fiske and her colleagues done in the 1980's.

⁶See Robert M. Gibbs' study "Trends in Occupational Status Among Rural Southern Blacks", in the USDA's *Economic Research Service's* "Racial/Ethnic Minorities in Rural Areas: Progress and Stagnation: 1980-1990" report edited by Linda L. Swanson (Agricultural Economic Report No. 731).

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