Iowa. Aged and aging
1960

THE AGED IN IOWA

TRENDS

AND

RESIDENTIAL

DISTRIBUTION

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Introduction

Much concern has been expressed over the increasing number of aged in the population of Iowa and the U.S. This report has been prepared with the view of presenting the trends in the proportion 65 and over as well as the present distribution of the elderly within the state of Iowa.

This material was originally presented at the conference on "Housing Iowa's Aging Citizens" co-sponsored by: Iowa Chapter of the A.I.A., the Architectural Department of ISU, The Governor's Committee on Housing the Aged and with the Cooperation of Engineering Extension.

TRENDS

1. The Trend in Age Profiles of the United States Population (Table 1)

   A. The 1880 profile indicates a large proportion of children and a low proportion of aged.

   B. The 1950 profile indicates relatively fewer children and more persons 65 and older.

   C. The 1960 profile shows a continuing trend for a higher proportion 65 and over, but the proportion of children in the population registered an increase from 1950.

TABLE 1

PERCENTAGE OF U.S. POPULATION IN AGE CLASSES FOR

1880, 1950, and 1960

Stage of Life Cycle	1960	1950	1880
Childhood (0-8 yrs.)	19.9	14.4	24.4
Youth (9-17 yrs.)	16.4	16.1	19.4
Adulthood (18-64 yrs.)	55.0	62.5	52.8
Old Age (65 and older)	8.7	6.8	3.4

TRENDS

11. Iowa's long-term trend in the percent of total population 65 and over has been upward. (Table 2)

TABLE 2

TOTAL POPULATION, POPULATION 65 AND OVER, AND PERCENT

OF TOTAL POPULATION 65 AND OVER FOR IOWA, 1880-1960

CENSUS YEAR	TOTAL POPULATION	POPULATION 65 AND OVER	% OF TOTAL 65 AND OVER
1880	1,624,615	46,728	2.8
1890	1,912,297	77,953	4.1
1900	2,231,853	105,916	4.8
1910	2,224,771	125,400	5.6
1920	2,404,021	144,392	6.1
1930	2,470,939	184,239	7.5
1940	2,538,268	227,767	8.9
1950	2,621,073	272,998	10.4
1960	2,757,537	327,685	11.9

TRENDS

III. Another way of looking at the age structure is to examine the median age of the population. (That age which divides the population into two equal groups, one-half being younger and one-half older than the median). (Table 3)

   A. The long-term trend has been towards a higher median age, but this trend was reversed during the 1950-1960 decade.

   B. This reversal occurred in Iowa as well as the Nation.

   C. In one sense, then, the Nation's and Iowa's population is getting younger.

IV. Historical differences in the fertility rate explain much of the trend in age composition for the United States.

   A. Fertility in the U.S. underwent a long decline from 1820 to 1930 thus causing the median age to climb steadily during those years.

   B. The cumulative effect of the baby boom caused a reversal of this trend in the 1950 to 1960 decade.

TABLE 3

MEDIAN AGE OF U.S. POPULATION 1880 TO 1960, AND IOWA 1950 TO 1960

YEAR	MEDIAN AGE	
	U.S.	Iowa
1880	20.9	
1890	22.0	
1900	22.9	
1910	24.1	
1920	25.1	
1930	26.5	
1940	29.0	
1950	30.2	31.1
1960	29.5	30.4

RESIDENTIAL DISTRIBUTION

I. Differences in residence and area reveal varied patterns in the percent 65 and over within the state of Iowa.

A. Differences among counties (See Map).,

1. The counties of Iowa varied from a low of 8.3% 65 and over to a high of 19.4%.

2. Generally, the counties containing a large city or near a large city, had the lowest proportion of 65 and over.

B. Differences among residence classes

1. The proportion of 65 and over in each residence class (Table 4) reveals that the smaller urban places and the rural places of 1000-2500 contain the highest proportion of 65 and over.
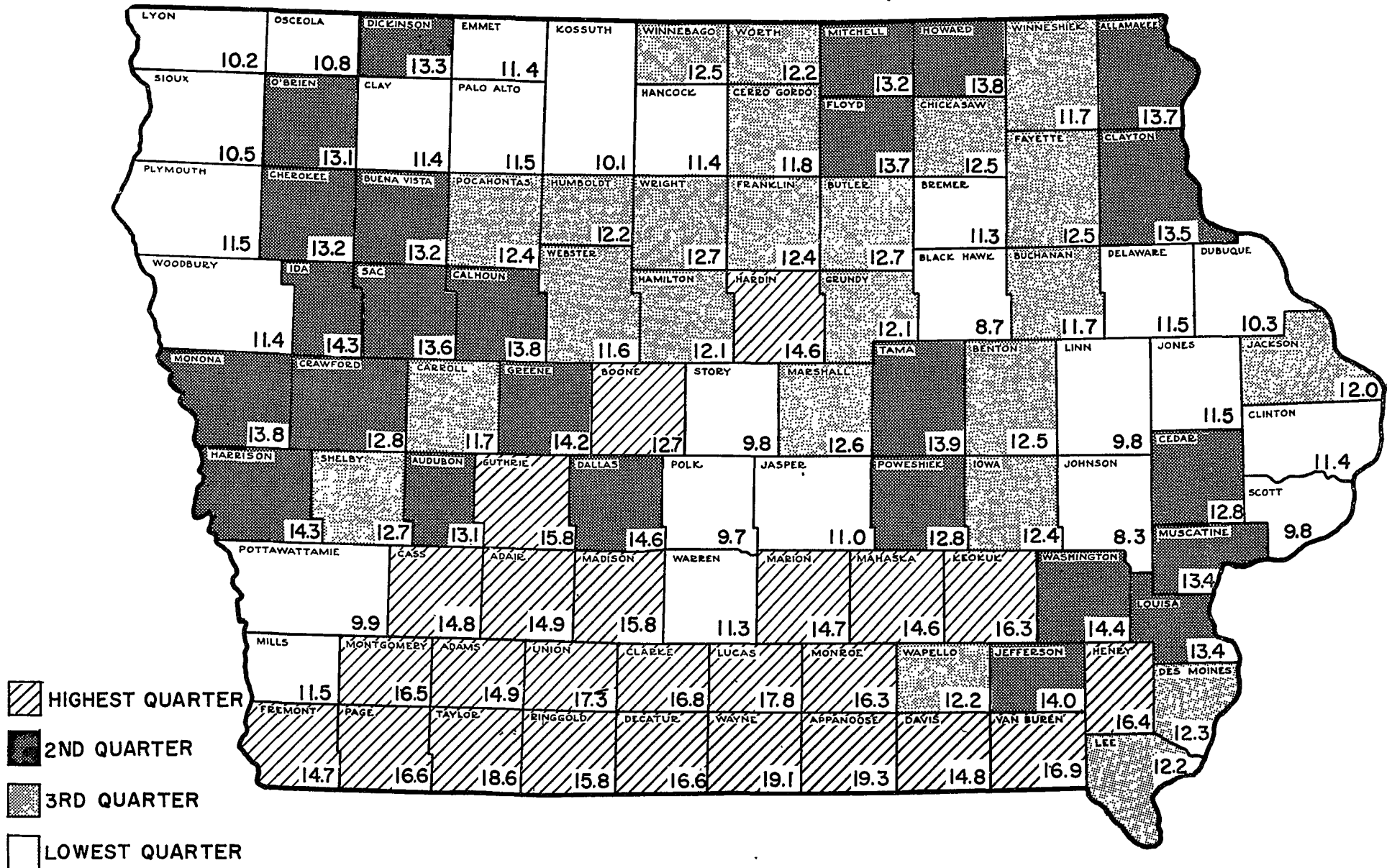
TABLE 4

POPULATION 65 AND OVER AS A PERCENTAGE OF THE

TOTAL POPULATION OF IOWA, BY RESIDENCE CLASSES, 1960

RESIDENTIAL CLASSES	POPULATION 65 AND OVER	POPULATION ALL AGES	PERCENTAGE OF POP. 65 & OVER
IOWA TOTAL	327,685	2,757,537	11.9
Urban Total	176,042	1,462,512	12.0
Central Cities	64,846	607,518	10.7
Urban Fringe	11,504	150,462	7.6
Places 10,000 or more	39,960	333,360	12.0
Place 2,500 to 10,000	59,732	371,172	16.1
Rural Total	151,643	1,295,025	11.7
Places 1,000 to 2,500	36,852	196,680	18.7
Other Rural	114,791	1,098,345	10.5

Source: 1960 Census

PERCENT OF IOWA POPULATION AGE 65 AND OVER
BY COUNTIES, 1960

LYON 10.2
OSCEOLA 10.8
DICKINSON 13.3
EMMET 11.4
KOSSUTH
WINNEBAGO 12.5
WORTH 12.2
MITCHELL 13.2
HOWARD 13.8
WINNESHIEK
ALLAMAKEE

SIOUX 10.5
O'BRIEN 13.1
CLAY 11.4
PALO ALTO 11.5
HANCOCK 10.1
CERRO GORDO 11.4
FLOYD 13.7
CHICKASAW 12.5
FAYETTE 11.7
CLAYTON 13.7

PLYMOUTH 11.5
CHEROKEE 13.2
BUENA VISTA 13.2
POCAHONTAS 12.4
HUMBOLDT
WRIGHT 12.2
FRANKLIN 12.7
BUTLER 12.4
BREMER 12.7
11.3
BUCHANAN 12.5
DELAWARE 13.5
DUBUQUE

WOODBURY 11.4
IDA 14.3
SAC 13.6
CALHOUN 13.8
WEBSTER 11.6
HAMILTON 12.1
HARDIN 14.6
GRUNDY 12.1
BLACK HAWK 8.7
11.7
11.5
10.3

MONONA 13.8
CRAWFORD 12.8
CARROLL 11.7
GREENE 14.2
BOONE 12.7
STORY 9.8
MARSHALL 12.6
TAMA 13.9
BENTON 12.5
LINN 9.8
JONES 11.5
JACKSON 12.0
CLINTON

HARRISON 14.3
SHELBY 12.7
AUDUBON 13.1
GUTHRIE 15.8
DALLAS 14.6
POLK 9.7
JASPER 11.0
POWESHIEK 12.8
IOWA 12.4
JOHNSON 8.3
CEDAR 12.8
SCOTT 9.8
MUSCATINE 13.4
11.4

POTTAWATTAMIE 9.9
CASS 14.8
ADAIR 14.9
MADISON 15.8
WARREN 11.3
MARION 14.7
MAHASKA 14.6
KEOKUK 16.3
WASHINGTON 14.4
LOUISA 13.4

MILLS 11.5
MONTGOMERY 16.5
ADAMS 14.9
UNION 17.3
CLARKE 16.8
LUCAS 17.8
MONROE 16.3
WAPELLO 12.2
JEFFERSON 14.0
HENRY 16.4
DES MOINES 12.3

FREMONT 14.7
PAGE 16.6
TAYLOR 18.6
RINGGOLD 15.8
DECATUR 16.6
WAYNE 19.1
APPANOOSE 19.3
DAVIS 14.8
VAN BUREN 16.9
LEE 12.2

LEGEND:
HIGHEST QUARTER
2ND QUARTER
3RD QUARTER
LOWEST QUARTER

RESIDENTIAL DISTRIBUTION

2. When these residence categories are compared on the basis of this proportion of the total population of Iowa, against the proportion of the total population 65 and over, it may be seen that the same residences classes (C above) contain a disproportionate number of Iowa's aged. (Table 5)

3. Age differentials in migration as well as differentials in fertility probably account for these differences. Cities tend to attract youthful immigrants from the rural areas and smaller urban towns.

TABLE 5

DISTRIBUTION OF POPULATION 65 AND OVER BY RESIDENCE COMPARED

TO DISTRIBUTION OF TOTAL POPULATION BY RESIDENCE, IOWA 1960

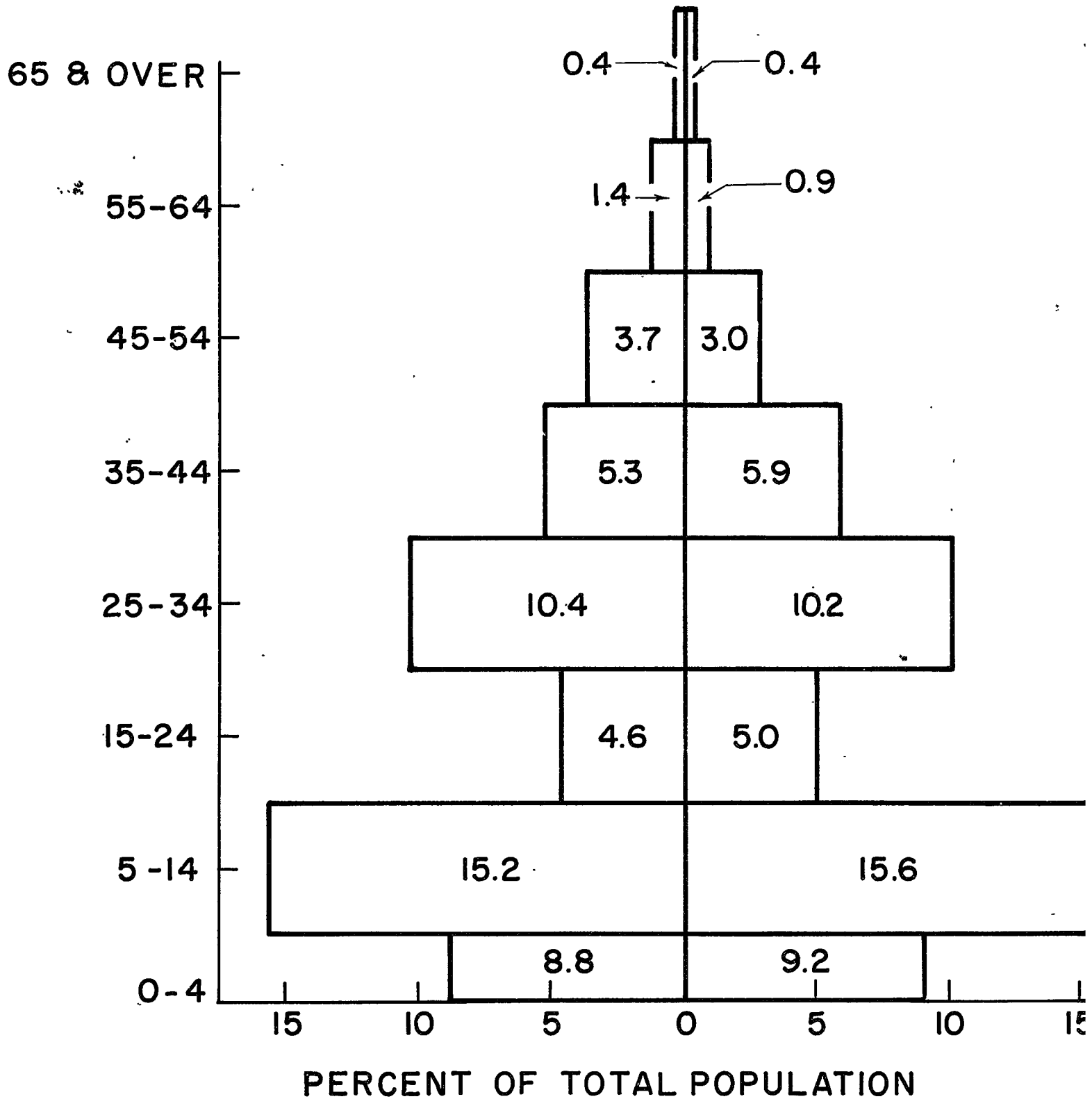|	% of Total Population	% of Total Population 65+
Urban Total	53.0	53.7
Central Cities	22.0	19.8
Urban Fringe	5.5	3.5
Places 10,000 or more	12.1	12.2
Places 2,500 to 10,000	13.5	18.3
Rural Total	47.0	46.3
Places of 1,000 to 2,500	7.1	11.3
Other Rural	39.8	35.0

Source: 1960 Census

VI. The function and geographic location of communities are important factors in age composition as well as size of community.

A. Young suburban communities are likely to be characterized by young couples with young children and few old people. (See Elk Run Heights Age--Sex Pyramid.)*

B. Older small towns are likely to be top heavy with senior citizens. (See Ackley Age-Sex Pyramids.)

* An age-sex pyramid is a graphic device for presenting the age composition of a population. Each rectangle represents an age group of one sex as a proportion of the total population. In a normal age distribution the figure approximates a section of a pyramid.
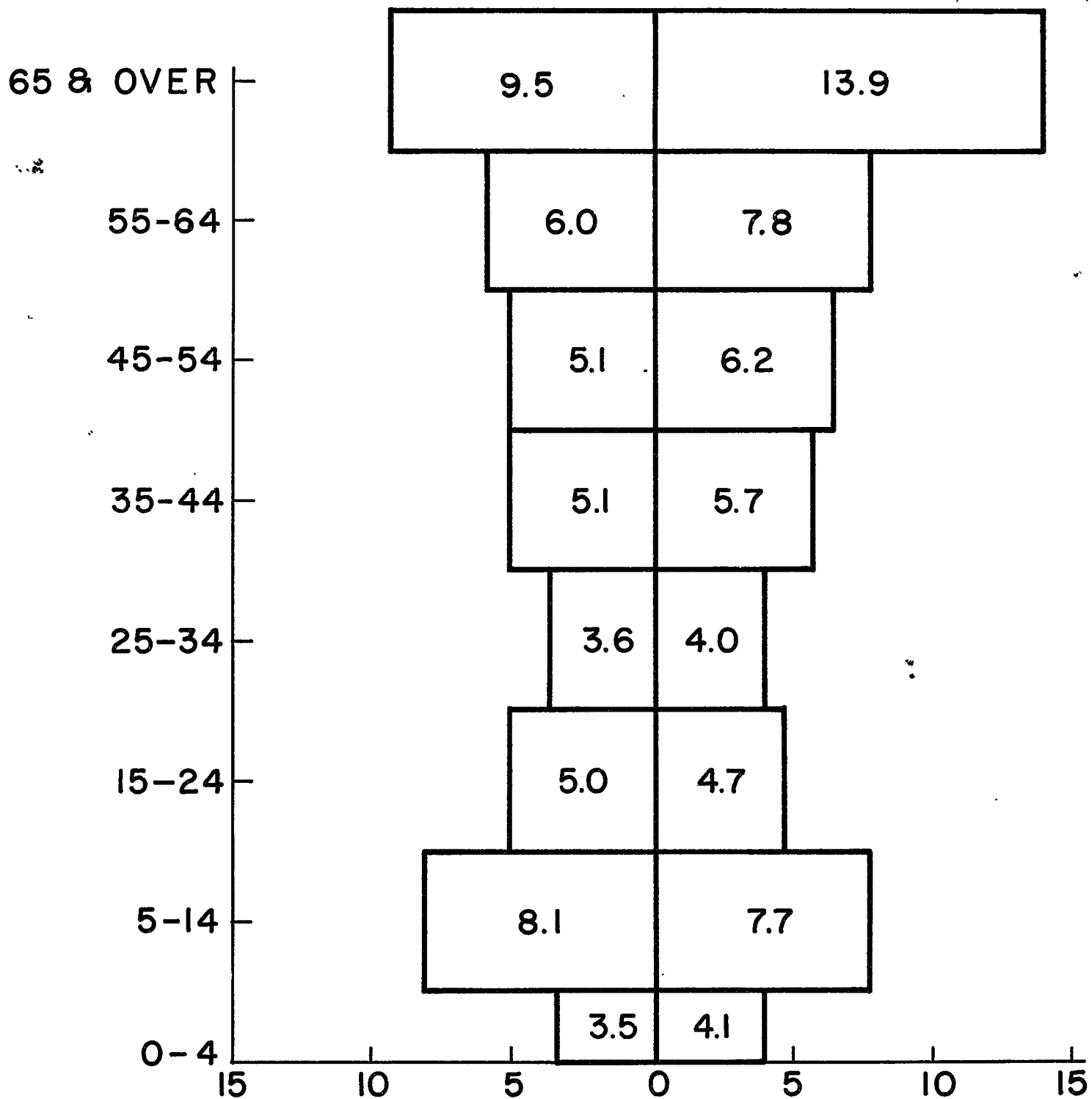
ELK RUN HEIGHTS

MALE   FEMALE

Age	Male	Female
65 & OVER	0.4	0.4
55-64	1.4	0.9
45-54	3.7	3.0
35-44	5.3	5.9
25-34	10.4	10.2
15-24	4.6	5.0
5-14	15.2	15.6
0-4	8.8	9.2

15 10 5 0 5 10 15

PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION

ACKLEY

	MALE	FEMALE
65 & OVER	9.5	13.9
55-64	6.0	7.8
45-54	5.1	6.2
35-44	5.1	5.7
25-34	3.6	4.0
15-24	5.0	4.7
5-14	8.1	7.7
0-4	3.5	4.1

PERCENT OF TOTAL POPULATION

VII. Some questions for the future:

    A. Will our communities continue to be stratified by age?

    B. Can communities with an old age structure continue to serve their aged?

Discussion

The U.S. and Iowa have experienced a long term increase in the percent of persons 65 and over. The cause of this rise in the proportion of elderly may be found in declining birth rates, lowered death rates, and the reduction of immigration from abroad. Probably the most significant factor is the long term decline in fertility which caused our population to be deficient in children and youth relative to the numbers of adults and aged. Increased fertility since about 1940 has tended to reverse the trend in that the median age of Iowa's population has begun to decline. Regardless of trends, Iowa now has a large absolute and relative population of persons 65 and over and is faced with the economic and social problems related to populations with such a top-heavy age distribution.

The distribution of the aged within Iowa is uneven with respect to geography and residence. Cities and their suburbs tend to attract the young while smaller towns not functionally associated with cities are left with a deficiency of productive adults. In addition, small towns have traditionally been the locus of retirement for farmers. The results of these movements can be seen in the map, which shows the distribution of the aged by county, and the tables (4 & 5), which show the residential distribution of the aged.

Vast differences in age structure occur even among towns of the same total population. To illustrate this difference the age-sex pyramids of two towns of the same approximate size were presented. One, Elk Run Heights, is closely associated with a large city and shows the typical suburban type of age-sex structure characterized by young couples and their young children. The other, Ackley, is not close to a large city and shows a disproportionate number of aged. It can be seen that women outnumber men in the older age categories in Ackley. In a society such as ours where entrance into the labor force is late and early retirement is becoming customary if not mandatory, a greater burden of support falls upon the productive adult segment of the population. An uneven age distribution causes strains to be placed on the smaller productive segments. This poses problems for those counties which are deficient in an adult population and which have a high proportion of aged.

On the community level it is apparent that the aged tend to cluster in the smaller towns not functionally related to cities. One cannot help but wonder if these towns can continue to support services which will be adequate for the care of their aged.