

The Daily Tar Heel

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IN DEPTH

Orange County whites have safety edge

By ELIZABETH MURRAY
Staff Writer

Analysis

Non-white residents in Orange County are more likely to die of heart disease, cancer, car accidents and homicide than white residents, according to a new report released by the Orange County Health Department in March.

The "Community Diagnosis" report, prepared every two years for the state, was given to the Orange County Board of Health last month and includes statistics for 1984 to 1988.

"There is a gap between those who have and those who don't," Health Director Dan Reimer said, adding that white Orange County residents have the fifth highest per-capita income in the state.

"We have this illusion that everybody that needs to go to Memorial (North Carolina Memorial Hospital) can go there," he said.

According to the report, the total population of Orange County was about 85,000 in 1986—81 percent white and 19 percent non-white. Statewide, North Carolina's approximately 7 million people include 76 percent whites and 24 percent non-whites.

That shows the gap between the number of whites and non-whites in the county is greater than the statewide gap, health board chairman Ruth Royster said.

In Orange County, the death rate—the number of people who die per

100,000 people—for non-whites was higher than that for whites in most categories measured, including the following:

■ Heart disease: The death rate for white males was 184.2 compared to 232.6 for non-white males; 87 for white females compared to 145.3 for non-white females;

■ Cancer: The death rate was 156.1 for white males compared to 207.4 for non-white males; 91.3 for white females compared to 119.5 for non-white females;

■ Car accidents: The death rate was 19.7 for white males compared to 63.0 for non-white males; 4.3 for white females compared to 9.8 for non-white females;

■ Homicide: The death rate was 9.8 for white males compared to 22.7 for non-white males; 2.6 for white females compared to 5.8 for non-white females.

The only categories in which whites had a higher death rate were pneumonia and influenza, chronic lung disease and suicide.

The report did show that Orange County's death rate was lower overall than the state average. But at the same time, the death rate for non-white people was higher than the state average in certain categories.

Royster said poverty and a lack of education were perhaps the greatest

reasons for a higher death rate among non-whites than whites.

She said car accidents were an excellent example. The rate for non-white men in Orange County was 39 percent higher than the state's average and twice that of white men, white women and non-white women in Orange County.

"It has something to do with education," Royster said. "I feel certain everyone is not using seat belts as they ought to. I think there has been an increase in alcoholism, and when people drive impaired, this of course is going to increase the number of accidents."

Although the strength in the disparity of the races shown by the report was surprising, some statistics were not, she said. Figures on teenage pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases have been kept from year to year, and figures in both these areas have increased.

"The sexual climate is much freer now," she said. "One would think with the onslaught of the AIDS epidemic there would be a lot of caution taken sexually, but this does not seem to be the case."

James Porto, clinical assistant professor in the health policy and administration department, said the report should be used as an assessment to orient and prioritize the county dollars. "It is an indicator of the kind of priorities the county ought to address. The state has identified a problem, and I feel the county commissioners are con-

cerned with it."
 But minimizing and alleviating these problems may create budgetary chaos, Reimer said. "I don't think the county can handle it with existing resources. The revenues say it would be difficult."

Porto said the county needed additional resources to use for sexually transmitted diseases. "There are mandates that say services need to be available seven days a week. If we only have staff for five days a week, we may need additional personnel to help in health and education."

The health department has requested funding for additional nurses in its new budget, which will go to the county commissioners. "I know that we do have a sizable percentage increase, which really is needed to meet these needs," Royster said.

Transportation and proximity have been identified as problems in administering health care, Reimer said, because many people who want to seek help are unable to get it. In order to meet the needs of the county properly, something has to give, he said. "This is like an invisible problem. We need to raise consciousness that it is a problem."

He said he hoped Orange County residents would support tax increases, if necessary, in order to meet the needs of the county. "This is not a problem of the political body; this is the problem of the body politic."



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Courageous AIDS patient Ryan White, 18, dies

From Associated Press reports
INDIANAPOLIS—Ryan White, who won a long court battle to attend public school and overcame prejudice against himself and other AIDS victims, lost his five-and-one-half-year struggle with the deadly disease on Sunday. He was 18.

White died shortly after 7 a.m. at Riley Hospital for Children, where he had been hospitalized since March 29 with an AIDS-related respiratory infection. He had been heavily sedated and on a ventilator.

White's mother, Jeanne, and sister, Andrea, 16, had kept a bedside vigil, joined at times by celebrities such as singer Elton John and the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

Dr. Martin B. Kleiman, White's physician throughout his illness, said death followed a slow deterioration that

had begun Saturday.

"At the end, his family and a few of the others who loved him were close at his side," Kleiman said. "He never regained consciousness, and I am confident that he suffered no pain at the end." Carrie Van Dyke, a spokeswoman for Mrs. White, said the family needed "time to be alone, to recover, to grieve." Elton John, who stayed at the hospital with the Whites nearly a week, dedicated the song "Candle in the Wind" to White during the Farm Aid IV concert Saturday night at the Hoosier Dome, about a mile from the hospital.

"This one's for Ryan," John said to the cheers of 45,000 fans at the concert to raise funds for financially troubled farmers.

President Bush, who last week planted a tree in White's honor in downtown Indianapolis, said he and his

wife, Barbara, were "deeply saddened" by White's death.

"All Americans are impressed by his courage, strength and his ability to continue fighting," Bush said in a statement. "Ryan's death reaffirms that we as a people must pledge to continue the fight, his fight, against this dreaded disease." White was 13 when he was diagnosed with AIDS in December 1984. He had contracted acquired immune deficiency syndrome through a blood-clotting agent used to treat his hemophilia. It is estimated that more than half of the nation's 20,000 hemophiliacs were infected with the AIDS

virus before better blood donation screening procedures were adopted, and 1,200 have developed AIDS.

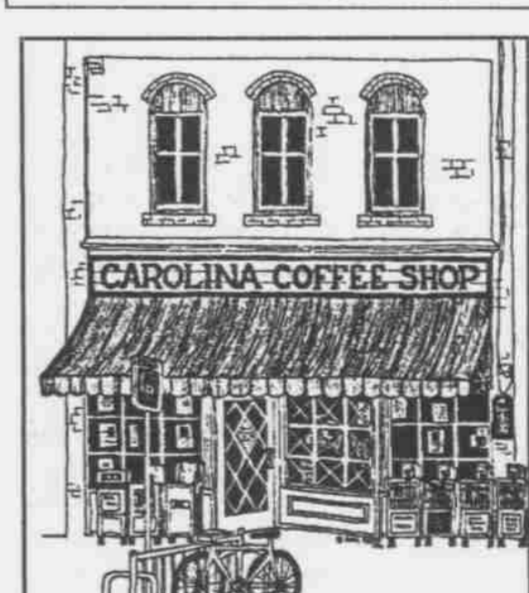
In 1985, White was barred from Western Middle School near Kokomo after school officials and parents rejected health authorities' reassurances that AIDS cannot be spread through casual contact.

After months of school board battles and court hearings, White won the right to attend school. However, pressures on his family later drove the Whites to the town of Cicero, and he enrolled at Hamilton Heights High School in nearby Arcadia.

Campus Calendar

MONDAY
 11 a.m.: CUAB Performing Arts Committee announces a Sculpture Class: Installation in the Pit until 2 p.m.
 The Peer Advising Program reminds freshmen that they are available to help you with pre-registration and course selection until 2 p.m. in Suite B, Room 216 of the Union.
 12:15 p.m.: CUAB Performing Arts Committee presents "Les flutes du Jour" in the Union Gallery until 12:45 p.m.
 UNC Cognitive Science Program presents "Is There a Language Module? If So, What Does it do for a Living?" with Jerry Fodor of Rutgers, in 011 Sitterson until 1:45 p.m. Call 962-5038 for more info.
 3:30 p.m.: UNC Statistics presents Jagers from

Sweden, in 324 Phillips. Call 962-2307 for more info.
 Career Planning and Placement Services will hold a Summer Job Workshop in 306 Hanes.
 4 p.m.: The Lab Theater presents Christopher Marlowe's "Dr. Faustus," in 06 Graham Memorial until 6 p.m. Another showing at 8 p.m. Admission is free and tickets are available 45 minutes before each performance.
 6 p.m.: The Presbyterian Campus Ministry will have a graduate dinner at 110 Henderson St.
 7 p.m.: The Office of Leadership Development will hold a seminar on decision making with groups in 215 Peabody until 8:30 p.m. Open to all members of a recognized student organization.
 CUAB Performing Arts Committee presents Brandon Wiles: Junior Degree Recital in Poursion Recital Hall.
 7:30 p.m.: Student Government offers free tutoring for Math, Econ., French, Spanish, Italian and Stat. until 9:30 p.m. on 3rd floor Bingham. Get help in time for exams!
 SEAC National Network Committee will meet in the Campus Y Lounge. We are on the verge of an extraordinary national movement. Come be a part of history. No experience necessary.
 The Carolina Indian Circle will meet at the Campus Y. All members should be present!
 Cubb-Henderson-Joyner Residence Halls present "What do Chocolate, Bananas and Dean Boulton Have in Common?" an informal talk and social with Dean Boulton and chocolate fondue in Alexander dorm T.V. lounge. All are welcome.
 8 p.m.: The Carolina Women's Self Defense Club will hold a self defense clinic at Granville Towers West until 8:40 p.m. All are welcome to come.
 The Cellar Door will have poetry and prose readings featuring William Harmon and Paul Lyons in the Cabaret.
 9:30 p.m.: CUAB Performing Arts Committee presents Jerry Smith: Saxophone Jazz with piano accompaniment, in the Cabaret.



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ITEMS OF INTEREST
 The Hunger Elimination Project will be collecting cans, second-hand clothing and cleaning up local areas for 3 hours. Sponsors and volunteers are needed and all money will be donated to the food pantry of Orange County. Come by the Campus Y for info.
 Seniors and grad students still seeking jobs may call University Career Planning and Placement Service's Job Hot Line to hear up-to-date job listings if registered with UCPPS. 962-CPPS on a touch-tone phone. Students may also complete a "connection" data sheet available in 211 Hanes to enter a nationwide database of job applicants.
 Bear, Stearns and Co. is recruiting financial analysts to start in August. Any major may apply. Strong applicants will have an outstanding academic record and quantitative skills or aptitude. See UCPPS Two-Year Analyst Notebook in 208 Hanes for more details.
 The Writing Center will offer workshops this semester on Taking Essay Exams on April 16 and 19, 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. in 317 Greenlaw.

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