Why Diversity Matters

Mike Stout, Ph.D.
Dept. of Sociology and Anthropology
Missouri State University

“Demography is destiny.”

—Auguste Comte

Community Focus on Diversity

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE WHY IT MATTERS

FIELD GUIDE 2030
A STRATEGIC PATH TO SPRINGFIELD'S FUTURE

DIVISION FOR DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

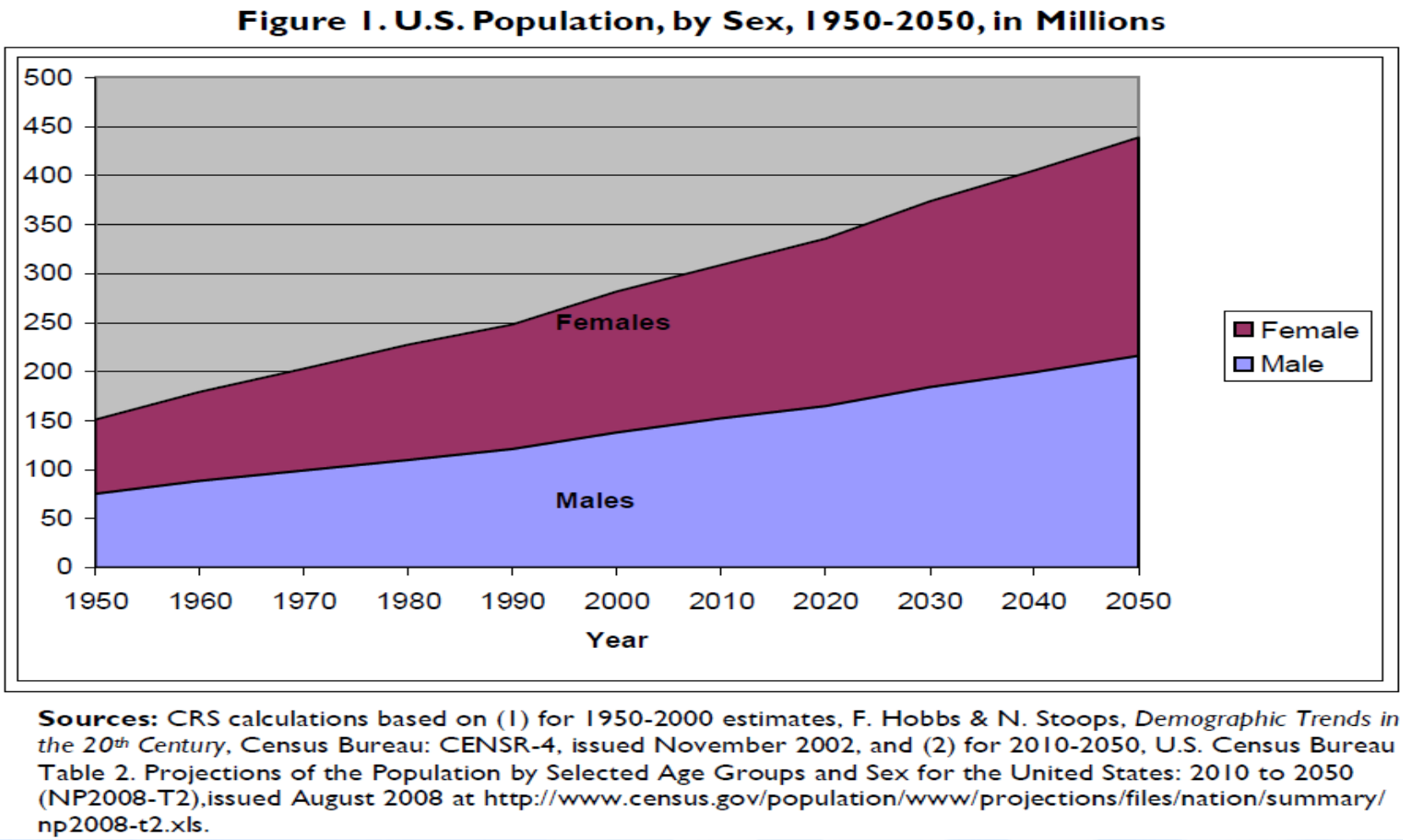
GREATER SPRINGFIELD Race & Faith COLLABORATIVE

CENTER FOR DIVERSITY & RECONCILIATION

What do we mean by “diversity”?

- Diversity is about more than just race (though race still matters too)
- People’s identities, behaviors, access to opportunities, and experiences in society are shaped in complex ways:
  - Race/ethnicity
  - Gender
  - Sexual orientation
  - Disability status
  - Age
  - Social class

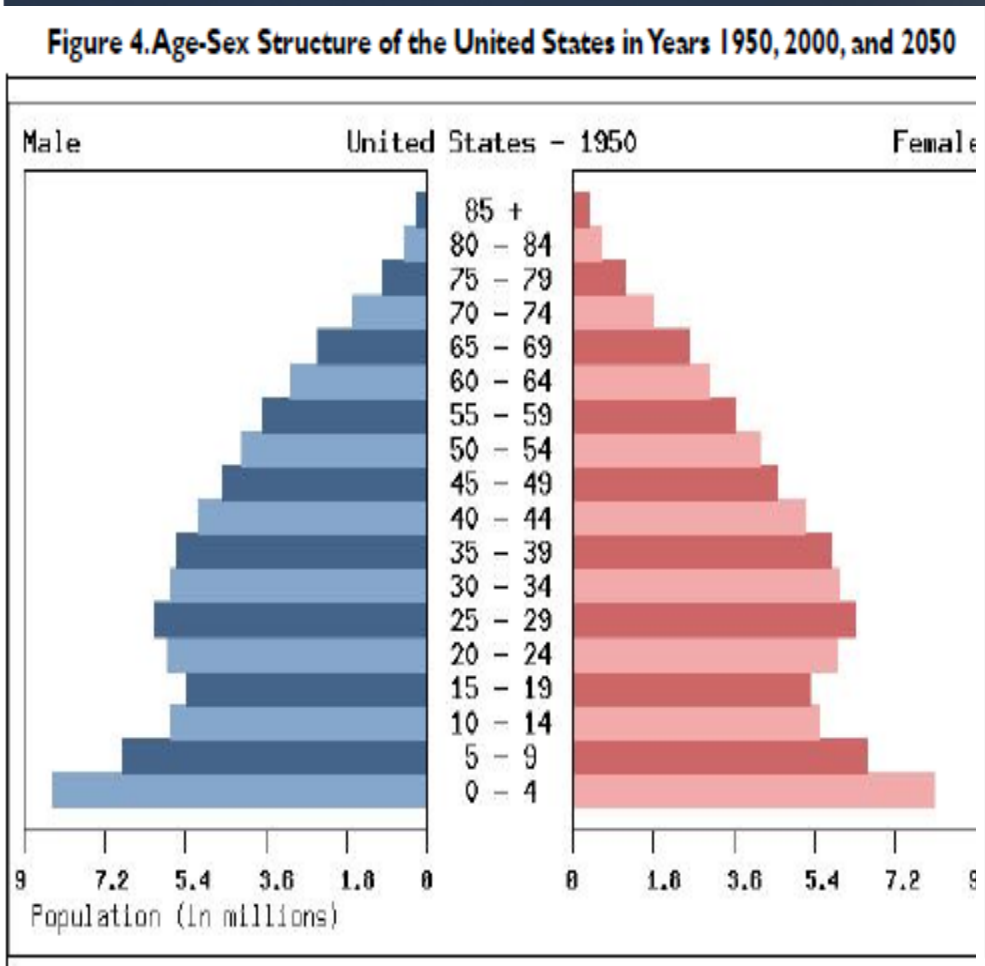
Changing Demographics of the U.S.: Gender

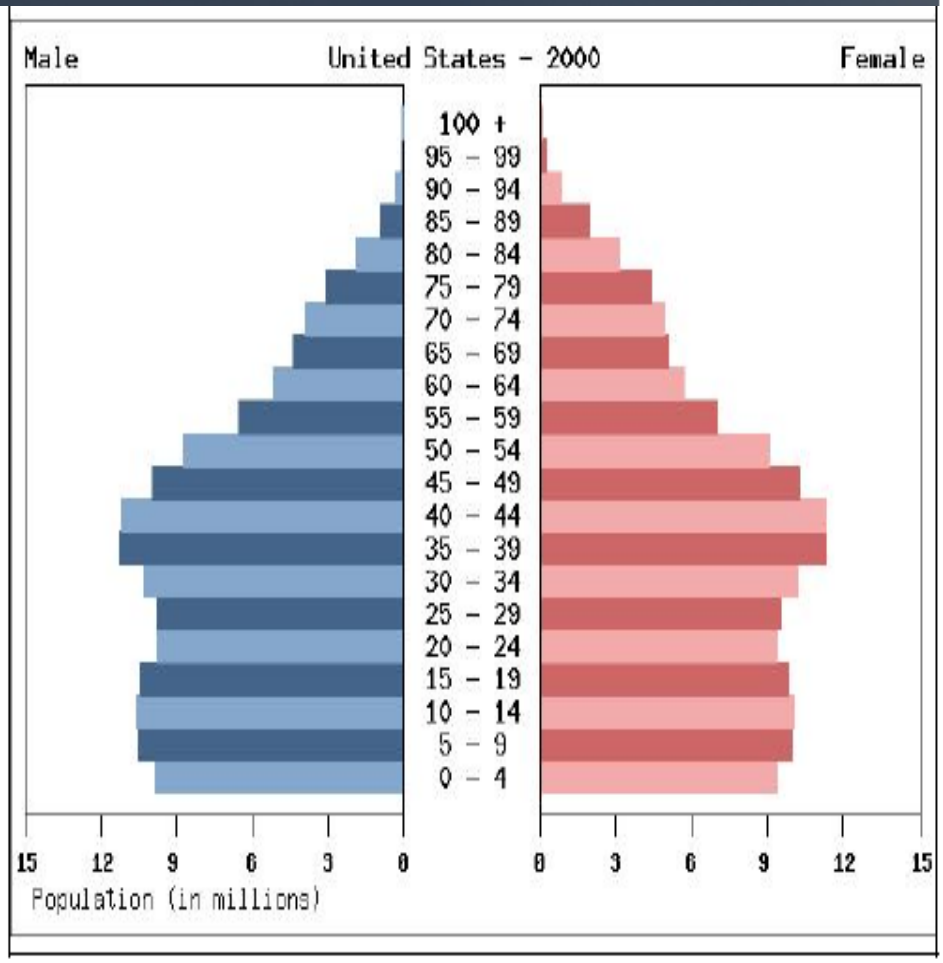


Sources: CRS calculations based on (1) for 1950-2000 estimates, F. Hobbs & N. Stoops, *Demographic Trends in the 20th Century*, Census Bureau: CENSR-4, issued November 2002, and (2) for 2010-2050, U.S. Census Bureau Table 2. Projections of the Population by Selected Age Groups and Sex for the United States: 2010 to 2050 (NP2008-T2),issued August 2008 at http://www.census.gov/population/www/projections/files/nation/summary/np2008-t2.xls.

Source: https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32701.pdf

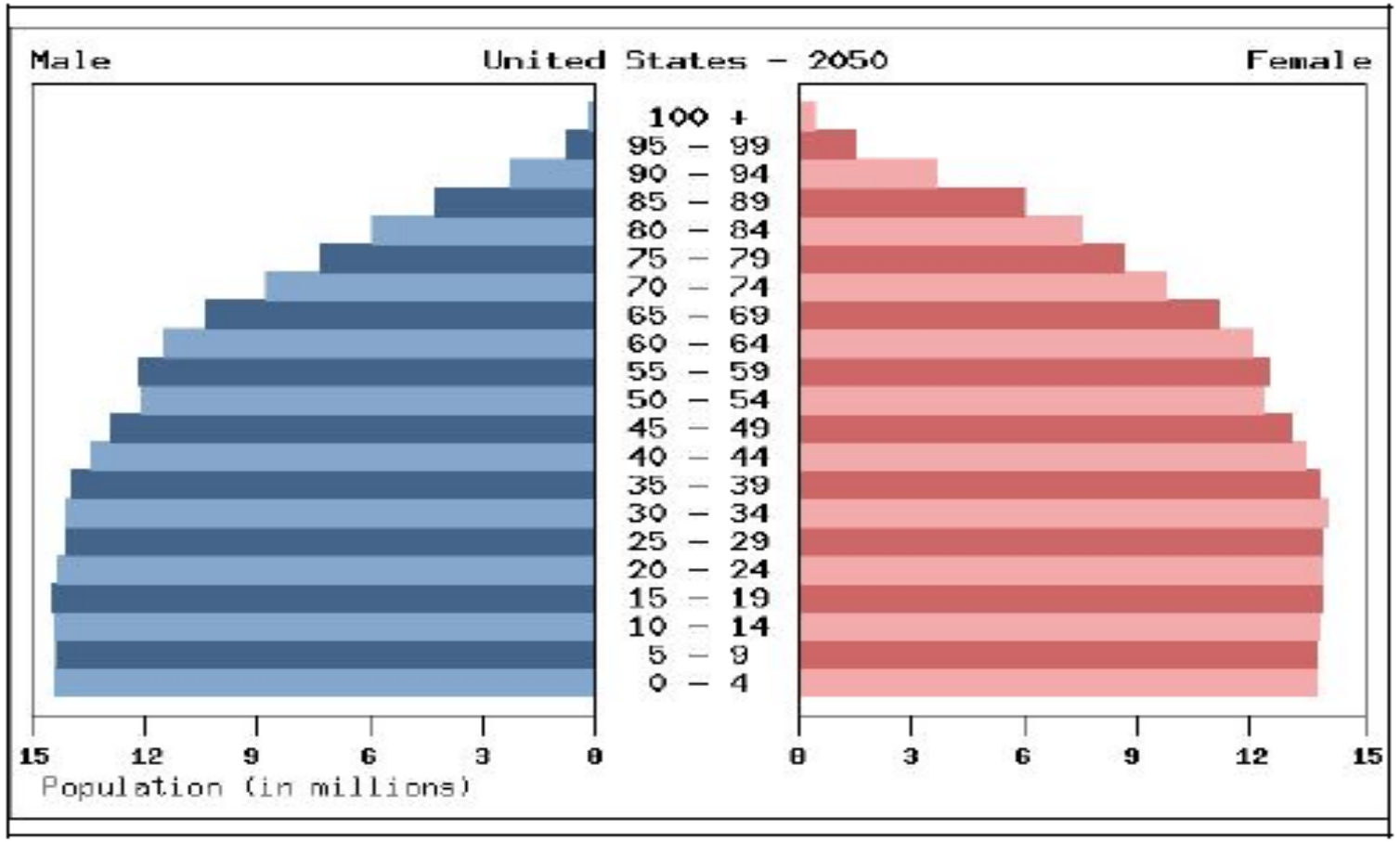
Changing Demographics of the U.S.: Age





Source: https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32701.pdf

Changing Demographics of the U.S.: Age

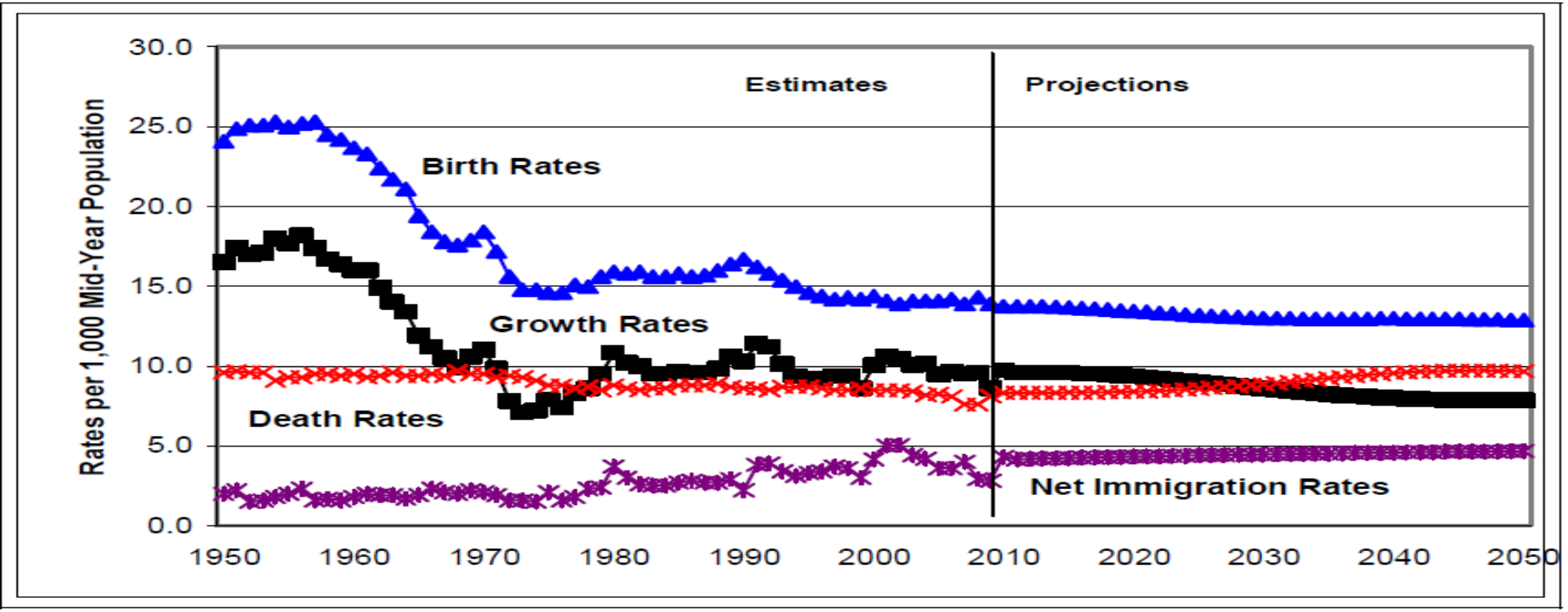


Source: CRS extractions from U.S. Census Bureau, International Data Base (IDB), http://www.census.gov/ipc/www/idb/country.php.

Source: https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32701.pdf

Changing Demographics of the U.S.: Population Growth, Births, Deaths, Immigration

Figure 2. Population Growth, Birth, Death, and Net Immigration Rates: United States, 1950-2050

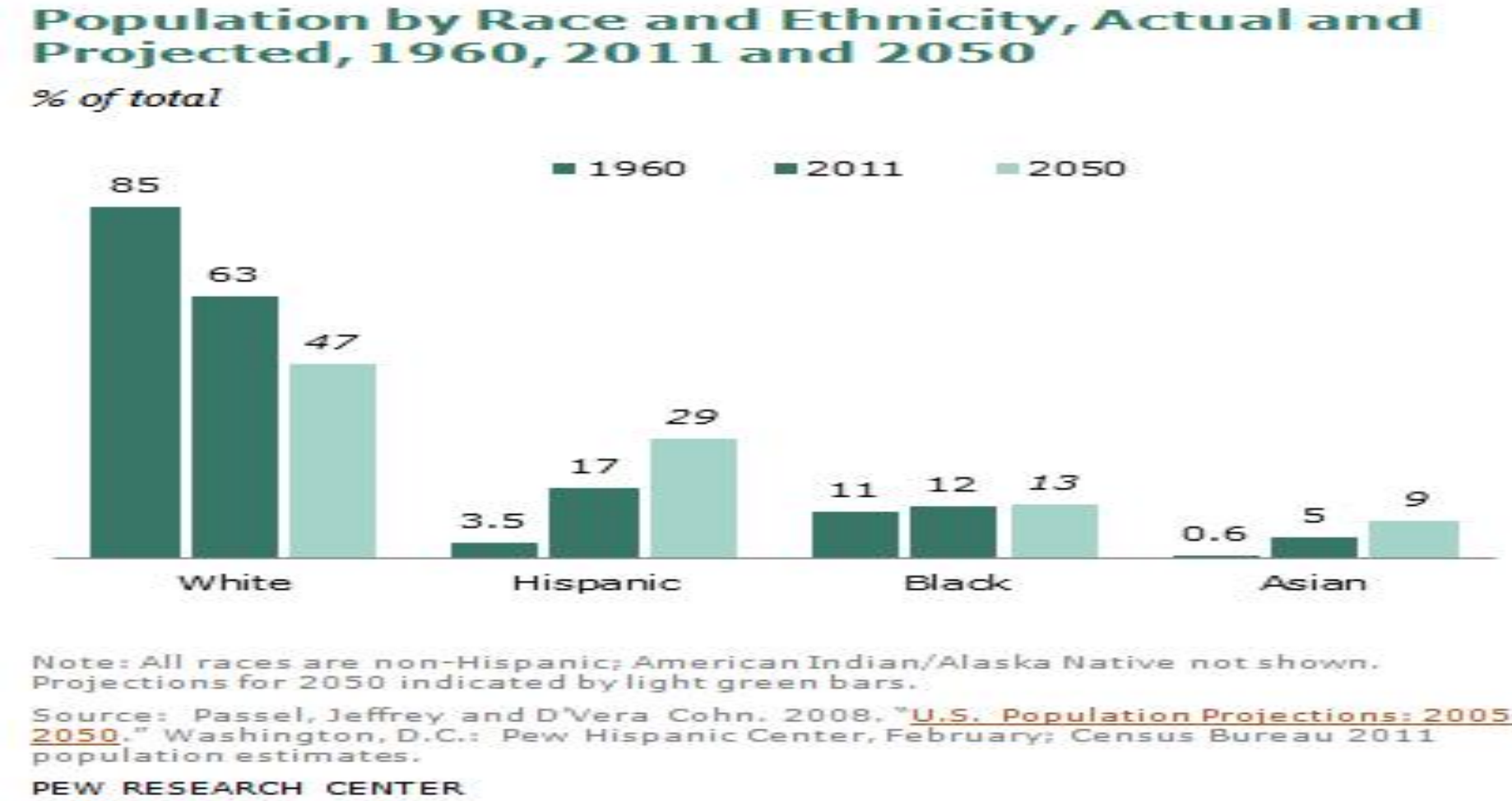


Source: Congressional Research Service (CRS) compilation based on historical and projected figures from the U.S. Census Bureau and the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). See the **Appendix** for more information on sources and data used to derive this figure.

Notes: (1) Crude birth rate (CBR): the number of live births per 1,000 total population. Estimates for 1950-58 were adjusted by NCHS to correct for under-registration of births. (2) Crude death rate (CDR): the number of deaths per 1,000 total population. (3) Net immigration rate: number of immigrants less number of emigrants per 1,000 total population.

Source: https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/RL32701.pdf

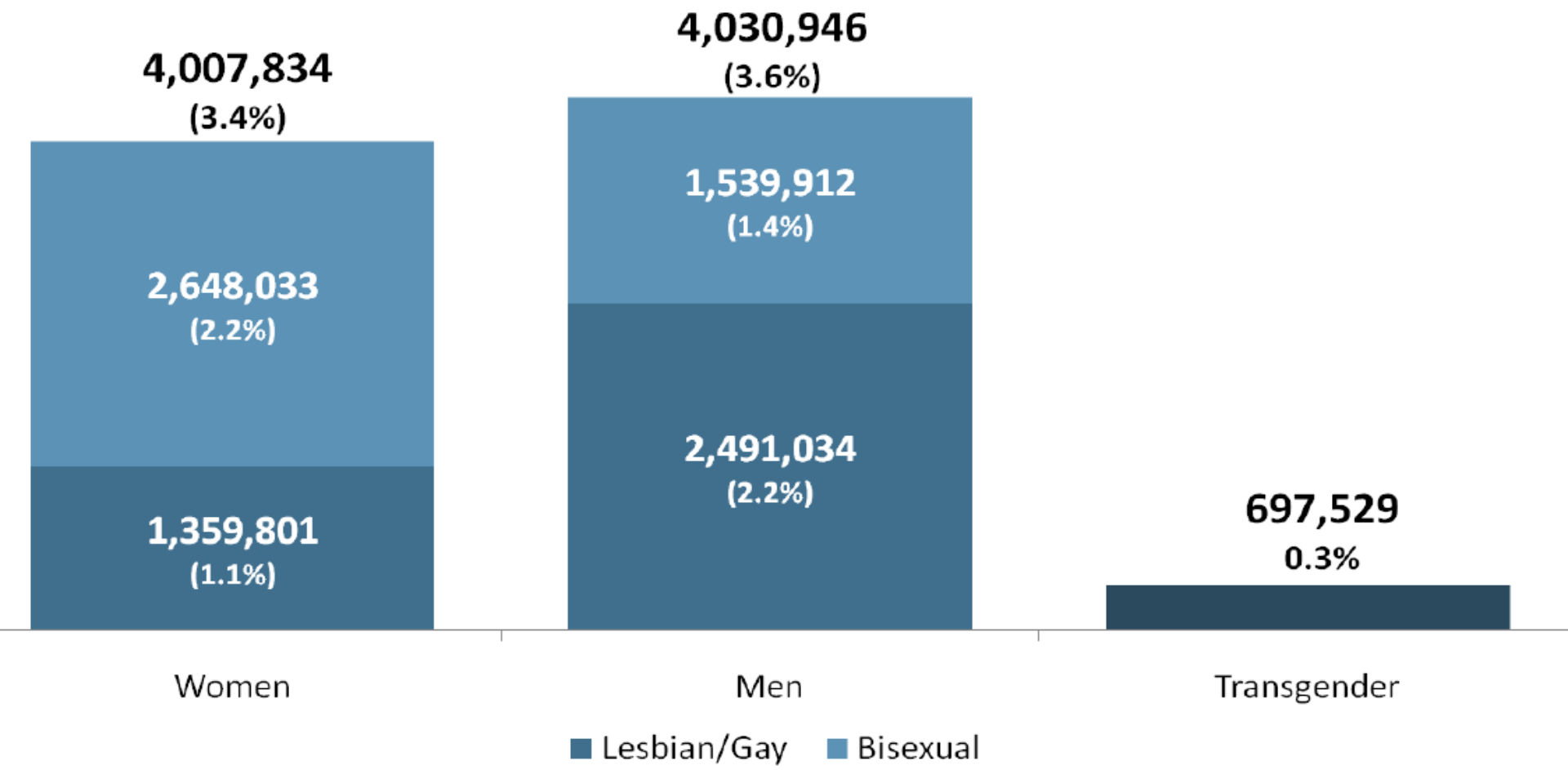
Changing Demographics of the U.S.: Race/Ethnicity



Source: http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/11/07/a-milestone-en-route-to-a-majority-minority-nation/?src=rss_main

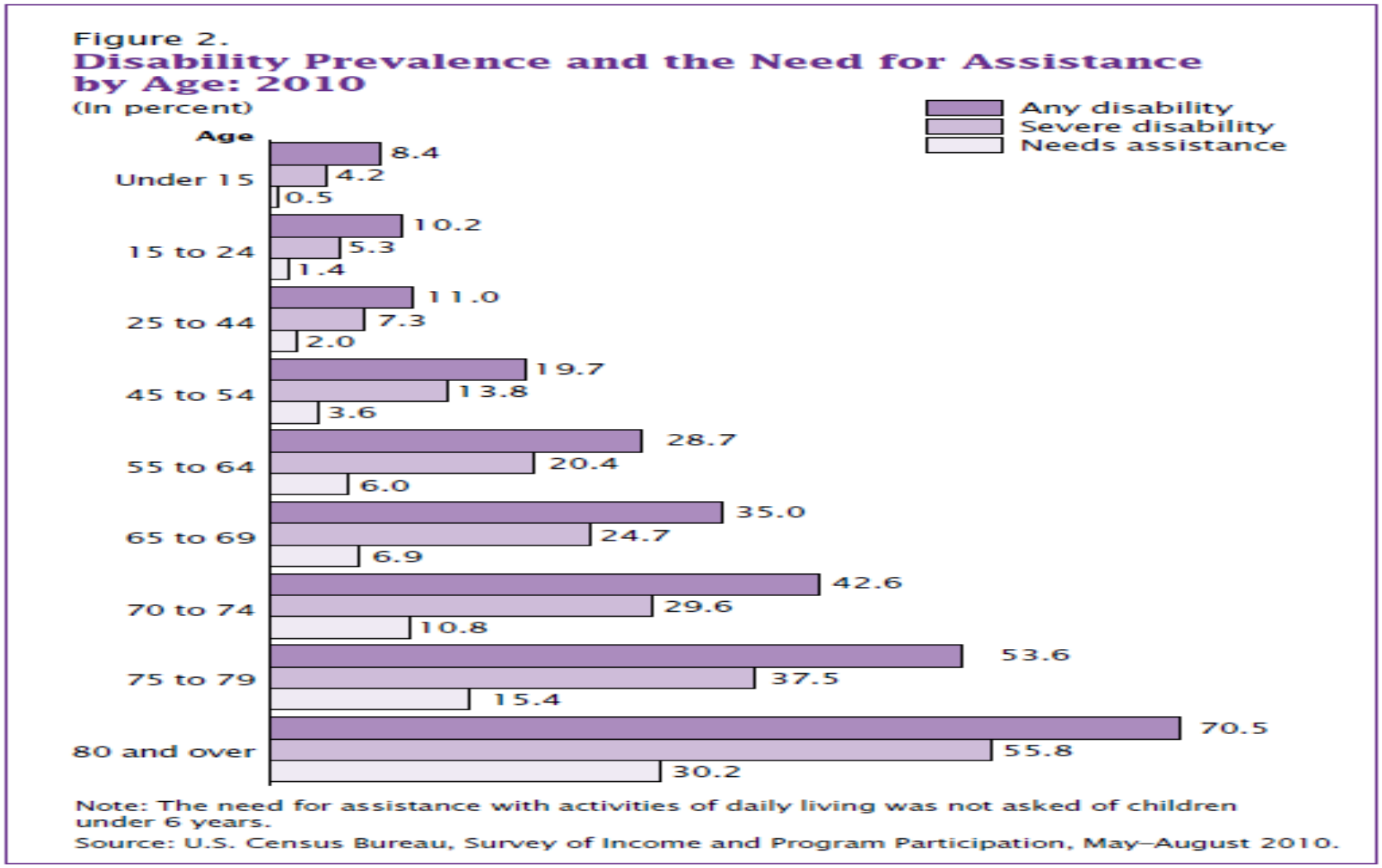
Emerging Trends: LGBT Population

Figure 5. Percent and number of adults who identify as LGBT in the United States.



Source: http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Gates-How-Many-People-LGBT-Apr-2011.pdf

Emerging Trends: Disability Population



Source: http://www.census.gov/prod/2012pubs/p70-131.pdf

So, Why Does This Matter?

- The changing demographics of the U.S. will have an ever-increasing impact on a wide range of social, economic, and political issues in coming years
  - Work, retirement, pensions
  - Private wealth and income security
  - The federal budget and intergenerational equity
  - Health, healthcare, and health spending
  - Immigration Policy

Work, Retirement, and Pensions

- Aging population and declining labor force participation of older men
  - Increasing pressure on public pension systems (e.g., social security)
- Labor force is projected to grow at a slower rate than in recent decades

Private Wealth and Income Security

- Aging of the population presents two challenges:
  - Insure sufficient income security in retirement years
  - Providing protection against periods of poor health and/or disability

Federal Budget and Intergenerational Equity

- As population has aged conditions for children have deteriorated but they have improved dramatically for older Americans
- Wealth and income are significant issues for retiring minorities and for social mobility for younger, more diverse members of society

Health, Healthcare, and Health Spending

- Changes in population size, racial and ethnic composition, and age structure affect the healthcare resources needed, spending levels, and health conditions observed

Other Benefits and Challenges

- Political
  - Policies oriented toward cultural integration and public support for programs that provide opportunities for mobility
- Economic
  - Access to quality jobs and training to improve incomes and to promote equity in wealth attainment
- Civic
  - Enhance the benefits of increasingly diverse communities and reduce the challenges

Benefits of Diversity

- Creativity
- Immigration is generally associated with more rapid economic growth.
- In countries with aging populations, immigration is important to offset the impending fiscal effects of the retirement of the baby-boom generation.

Challenges of Diversity

- Negative correlation between ethnic diversity and social solidarity
- In workgroups diversity associated with lower group cohesion, lower satisfaction and higher turnover
- Greater ethnic diversity is associated with lower investment in public goods
- Greater ethnic diversity is associated with lower social trust and social capital

Social Capital

- Social networks and the associated norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness
- Social networks are resources that have value for both individuals and communities
  - Health
  - Public safety
  - Education
  - Happiness
  - Government
  - Economic resilience

Bridging and Bonding Social Capital

- Bonding: ties to people who are like you in some important way
- Bridging: ties to people who are unlike you in important ways
  - Research suggests that increasing racial/ethnic diversity erodes both bonding and bridging social capital

Diversity and Social Capital

- In areas of greater diversity:
  - Lower confidence in gov't, local leaders, and local news media
  - Lower political efficacy
  - Lower voter registration, but greater participation in political protest
  - Lower expectations for cooperation
  - Less likelihood of working together to solve community problems
  - Lower charitable giving and volunteering
  - Smaller friendship networks
  - Lower happiness and QOL
  - More time spent watching TV

Becoming Comfortable with Diversity

- Social psychologists and sociologists found that people find it easier to trust one another and cooperate when the social distance between them is less
- 'When social distance is small, there is a feeling of common identity, closeness, and shared experiences. But when social distance is great, people perceive and treat the other as belonging to a different category' (Alba & Nee 2003, 32).

Becoming Comfortable with Diversity

- Diversity itself can only be conceived in terms of socially constructed identities.
- Thus, adapting over time, dynamically, to immigration and diversity requires the reconstruction of social identities, not merely of the immigrants themselves (though assimilation is important), but also of the newly more diverse society as a whole (including the native born).

Becoming Comfortable with Diversity

- "We need to respect people's ethnicity but also give them, at some point in the week, an opportunity to meet and want to be with people with whom they have something in common that is not defined by their ethnicity." —Trevor Phillips (Chair of the British Commission on Human Rights)