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Concentration of Children in Poverty in Milwaukee County Neighborhoods

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Employment & Training Institute

Concentration of Children in Poverty in Milwaukee County Neighborhoods

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN • MILWAUKEE
UNIVERSITY  OUTREACH

November 1995

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Findings

The University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Employment and Training Institute was asked to provide a detailed demographic analysis of the population on public assistance and the working poor not on public assistance in Milwaukee County. Computerized records of families and individuals receiving Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), food stamps and medical assistance in 1990, 1993 and 1994 were used to construct a picture of Milwaukee County children on public assistance. The Milwaukee County "working poor" population, including families both on and off public assistance, was examined using 1993 income tax data especially generated by the Wisconsin Department of Revenue, detailing the earnings of single parents and married couples. These data were compared to 1990 U.S. census data for Milwaukee County, while recognizing that the significant census undercount in central city Milwaukee may exaggerate the level of AFDC concentration in some neighborhoods.

1. According to 1993 Wisconsin Department of Revenue income tax returns, working poor families, that is, families with adjusted gross income below the poverty level, are located throughout Milwaukee County. However, in two central city Milwaukee zipcode areas (53205 and 53233) over half of all working families had income below the poverty level. In four additional zipcode areas (53204, 53206, 53208 and 53212) over 40 percent of working families had income below poverty.
2. Among Milwaukee County income tax filers, employed single parents were most likely to be poor. Nearly half (49 percent) of single filers with children had adjusted gross income below \$15,000 and 37 percent had income below the poverty level. A total of 19,800 single parents out of 52,888 filing 1993 Wisconsin income tax returns showed adjusted gross income below the poverty level.
3. Over 200,000 women, men and children in Milwaukee County lived in households which received AFDC, food stamps or federal medical assistance from May 1993 through April 1994. The total of 107,105 children living in these families comprised 44 percent of all Milwaukee County youth under age 18, as counted in the 1990 census.
4. In sixteen zipcodes which are predominantly in the City of Milwaukee, nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of all children were in families receiving public assistance in 1993-94, as compared to the total youth counted in the 1990 census. In the central city neighborhoods targeted by the Community Development Block Grant program, three-fourths (76 percent) of the children were in families receiving public assistance.
5. The highest concentrations of poverty are shown for AFDC families with very young children. Within the City of Milwaukee, 64 out of the 218 census tracts showed 90 percent or more of children under age one living in families receiving AFDC the month of March 1990, when compared to the U.S. census count.
6. While teens are far less likely to receive AFDC than young children, 43 Milwaukee census tracts still showed more than half of the teens (ages 15 through 17) receiving AFDC in March 1990. Two census tracts showed 90 percent or more of the teens on AFDC.
7. Nearly all African American women heading families receiving AFDC were concentrated in northside Milwaukee census tracts where 50 percent or more of female-headed households with children were receiving AFDC in March 1990. Hispanic women heading households receiving AFDC in March 1990 were concentrated in two Milwaukee neighborhoods -- the near southside and west of the river on the eastside. Ten census tracts (all but one on the near southside) showed 90 percent or more white female-headed households receiving AFDC in March 1990.

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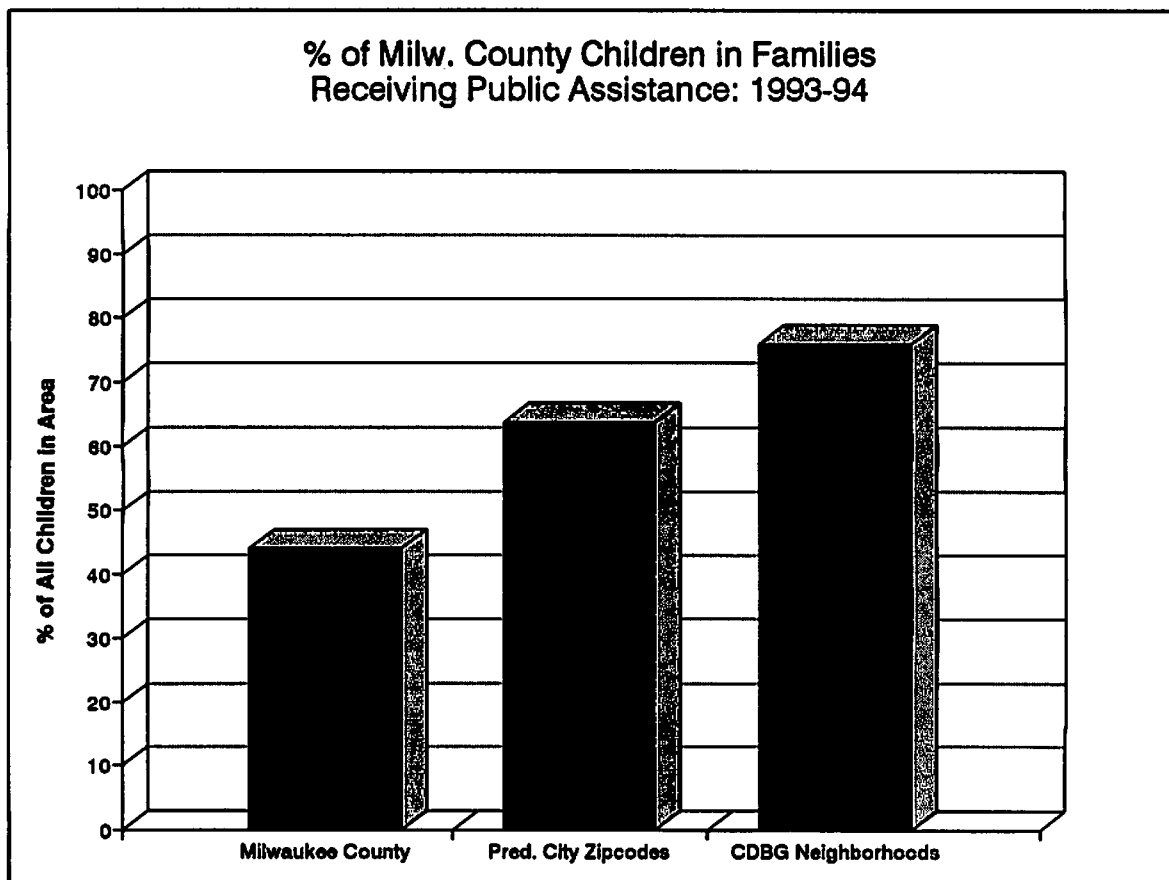
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Concentration of Children in Poverty in Milwaukee County Neighborhoods

Over 200,000 women, men and children in Milwaukee County live in households which received AFDC, food stamps or federal medical assistance in 1993-94 (May 1993 through April 1994). A total of 107,105 Milwaukee County children were in these families receiving public assistance. These children comprised 44 percent of all Milwaukee County youth under age 18, as counted in the 1990 census. In the sixteen zipcodes which are predominantly in the City of Milwaukee,¹ nearly two-thirds (64 percent) of all children were in families receiving public assistance and in the central city neighborhoods targeted by the Community Development Block Grant program, three-fourths (76 percent) of the children were in families receiving public assistance.



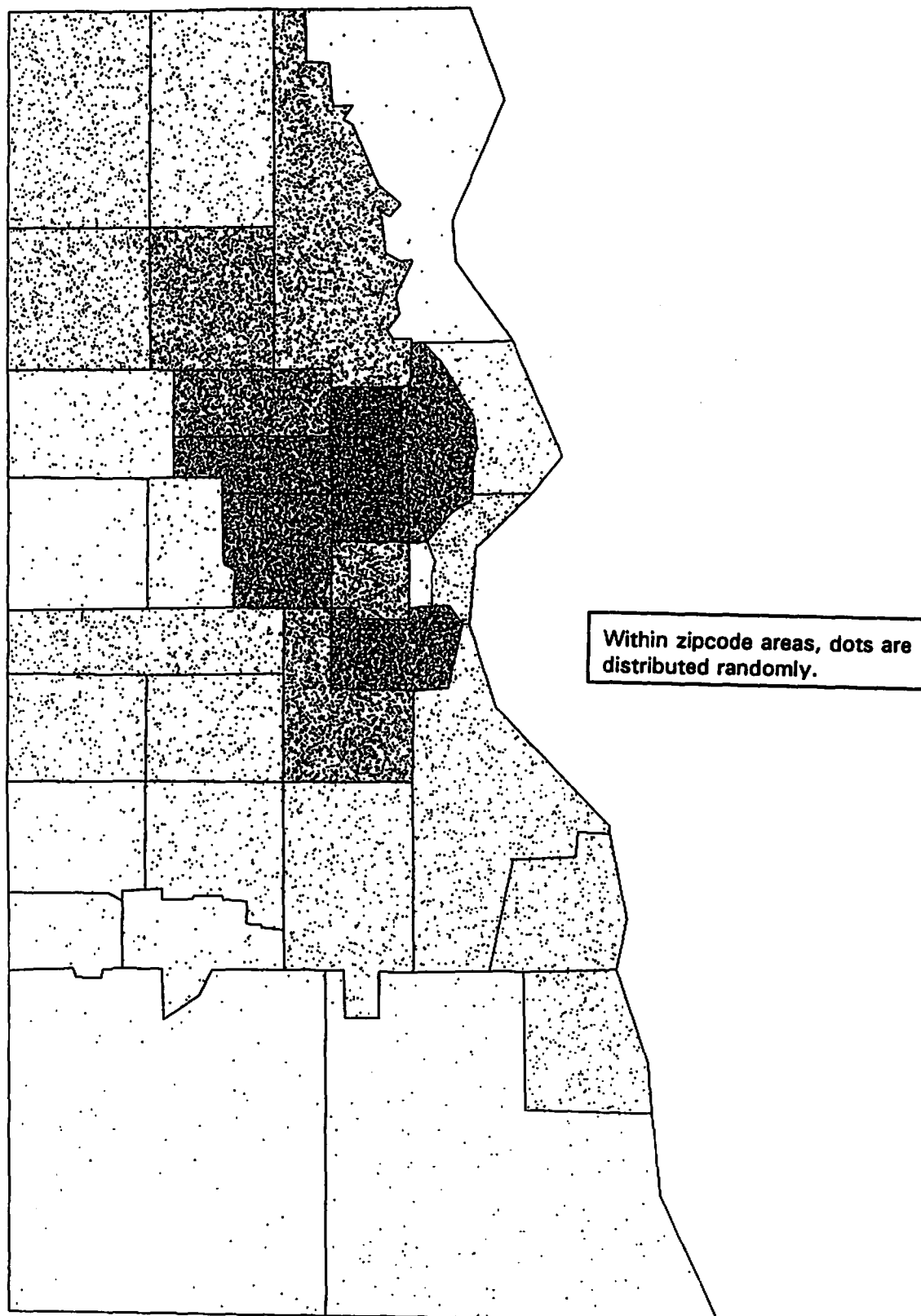
The two maps below show the concentration of AFDC families and of children receiving AFDC in the month of April 1994 by zipcodes in Milwaukee County.

¹ To obtain some idea of which public assistance clients lived in the City of Milwaukee, those sixteen zipcodes which were predominantly city (80 percent or more of the population) were designated "predominantly City of Milwaukee." Predominantly city zipcodes include 53202, 53203, 53204, 53205, 53206, 53207, 53208, 53210, 53212, 53215, 53216, 53218, 53222, 53224, 53225 and 53233. City zipcodes cover the central city, downtown, and much of the northwest and south side of the city. City zipcodes were further analyzed for the Community Development Block Grant target areas designated by the City of Milwaukee. Ten selected zipcode areas were used to approximate the Community Development Block Grant target area boundaries: 53203, 53204, 53205, 53206, 53208, 53210, 53212, 53216, 53218 and 53233. Individual dots representing AFDC cases and children in families receiving AFDC are distributed randomly on the maps within zipcode areas.

AFDC Cases

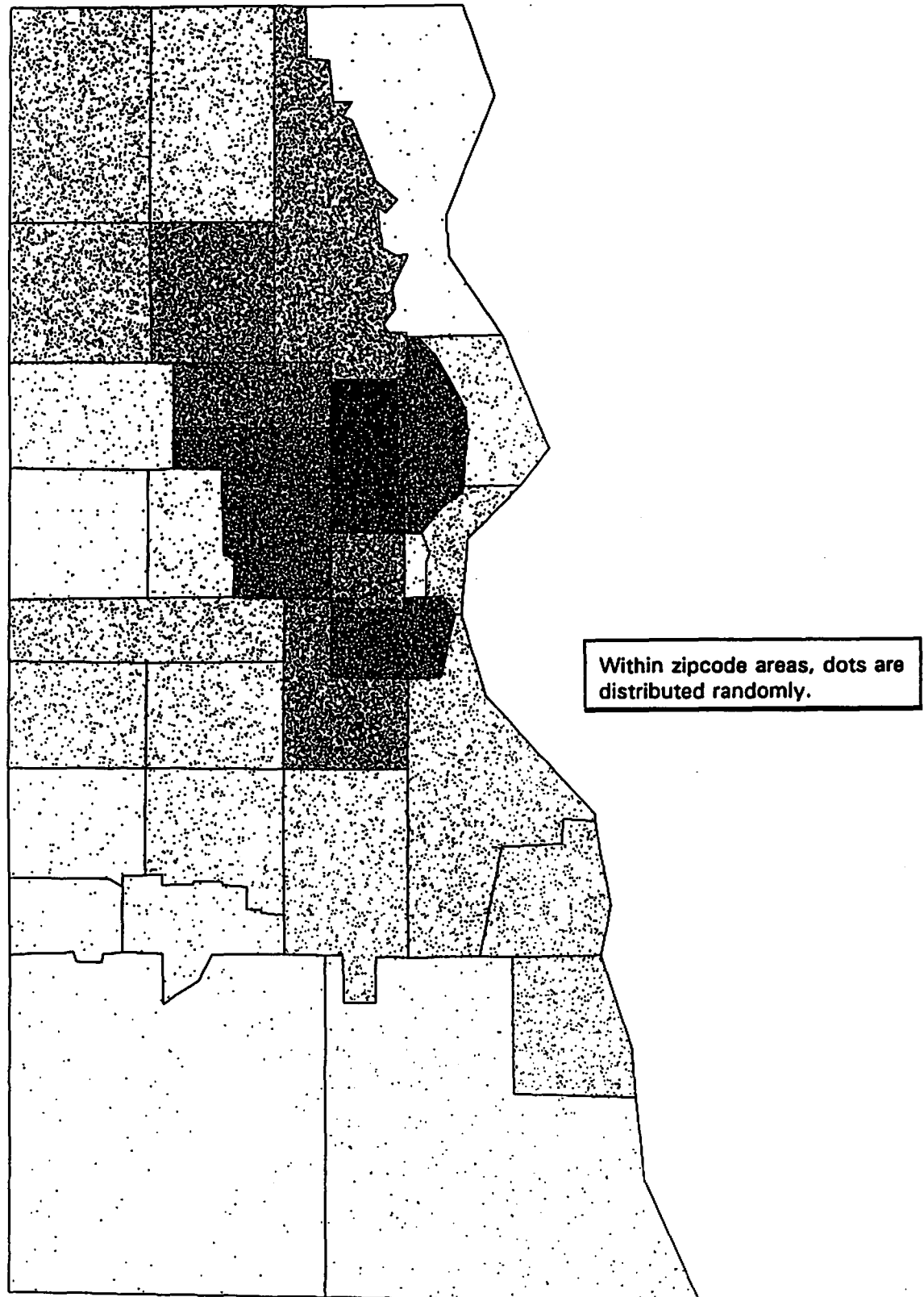
Milwaukee County

Source: Computer Reporting Network, April 1994



Children on AFDC Milwaukee County

Source: Computer Reporting Network, April 1994



MILWAUKEE COUNTY PUBLIC ASSISTANCE POPULATION AS OF APRIL 1994

	IN CASES ON AFDC AS OF 4/94					IN CASES ON FOOD STAMPS ONLY AS OF 4/94					CASES ACTIVE IN LAST 12 MONTHS, NOT CURRENTLY ON AID				
	CASEHEADS AND SPOUSE		OTHER		TOTAL CASES	CASEHEADS AND SPOUSE		OTHER		TOTAL CASES	CASEHEADS AND SPOUSES		OTHER		TOTAL CASES
	FEMALES	MALES	SUM OF CHILDREN	RELATED ADULTS		FEMALES	MALES	SUM OF CHILDREN	RELATED ADULTS		FEMALES	MALES	SUM OF CHILDREN	RELATED ADULTS	
53110	241	44	433	50	248	91	58	50	21	138	177	107	220	40	228
53129	38	6	63	21	40	30	10	10	13	37	44	19	52	7	50
53130	13	3	17	6	14	19	5	2	3	22	21	8	24	4	24
53132	62	17	106	25	63	23	20	19	13	38	89	44	109	19	104
53154	127	22	242	48	132	79	37	37	27	104	133	70	165	37	158
53172	235	39	471	53	239	78	45	46	27	108	149	78	223	38	181
53202	188	22	295	40	193	498	436	38	26	834	253	313	99	31	545
53203	3	1	13	1	4	12	28		0	40	7	22	4	2	29
53204	3516	818	9001	715	3587	949	884	684	290	1563	1226	954	1832	382	1736
53205	1826	194	4961	354	1865	639	1386	166	185	1994	514	1263	512	144	1743
53206	4663	395	11813	1116	4767	1123	1385	515	522	2447	1214	1037	1542	539	2159
53207	569	98	1177	121	585	259	144	139	67	363	430	237	551	111	538
53208	3605	526	9937	680	3696	895	1073	481	331	1883	1040	942	1415	293	1868
53209	2975	263	6315	690	3031	741	541	420	238	1240	1089	575	1389	381	1516
53210	2804	206	7006	587	2857	549	553	385	238	1058	833	550	1213	280	1276
53211	124	21	198	21	126	225	128	27	28	282	187	138	120	46	275
53212	3511	358	8947	690	3604	1021	1048	446	333	1994	1068	848	1315	371	1824
53213	73	9	128	17	73	51	24	34	5	70	95	52	84	27	121
53214	452	59	828	91	456	201	99	113	22	272	367	205	474	66	480
53215	2063	435	4626	395	2111	762	454	498	140	1071	968	580	1298	270	1223
53216	2062	194	4436	475	2121	538	405	301	176	918	774	403	975	268	1084
53217	28	9	46	14	28	41	24	19	11	55	60	40	53	21	82
53218	2241	213	5019	481	2267	475	286	385	152	708	800	379	1167	275	1040
53219	228	27	396	60	232	138	71	51	24	190	228	121	257	37	267
53220	155	31	286	51	159	110	32	31	26	137	146	76	172	39	183
53221	350	53	645	94	356	220	83	107	38	276	276	143	315	63	344
53222	111	12	179	44	112	58	30	12	17	85	93	43	81	18	121
53223	413	53	825	90	419	181	82	78	44	241	261	128	336	98	326
53224	756	60	1832	152	788	142	64	150	29	188	284	96	471	79	330
53225	751	83	1557	146	784	162	105	130	63	247	342	143	483	89	426
53226	30	5	45	21	30	24	11	6	6	33	61	42	44	12	470
53227	193	23	356	46	195	98	44	46	14	126	179	77	183	54	208
53228	38	4	58	19	39	20	13	9	9	30	57	29	73	17	64
53233	711	104	1621	127	733	322	470	82	60	767	285	363	241	43	611
53235	54	9	81	14	56	26	11	10	4	33	42	27	48	14	51
ALL	35234	4417	84013	7580	36017	10804	10080	5526	3208	19611	13834	10171	17566	4220	21746

A. Concentration of Children on AFDC by Census Tract

In order to examine the concentration of poverty within Milwaukee County, the U.S. Census counts for 1990 were compared to the population of families receiving AFDC in March 1990. This one-time analysis required conversion of AFDC client street addresses to census tracts, after corrections were made for spelling variations and misspellings of Milwaukee County street names. The analysis revealed a significant census undercount of low-income families in central city neighborhoods. (In 52 city census tracts the number of children receiving AFDC exceeded the number of children counted for at least one of the age cohorts.) The maps below display estimates of poverty concentration by census tract, recognizing that the census undercount may exaggerate the level of AFDC concentration in some neighborhoods.

Children Under Age 1: The highest concentrations of poverty were shown for AFDC families with very young children. Within the City of Milwaukee, 64 census tracts showed 90 percent or more of children under age one living in families receiving AFDC the month of March 1990. Eighteen suburban census tracts showed 10 to 30 percent of children under age one receiving AFDC in March.

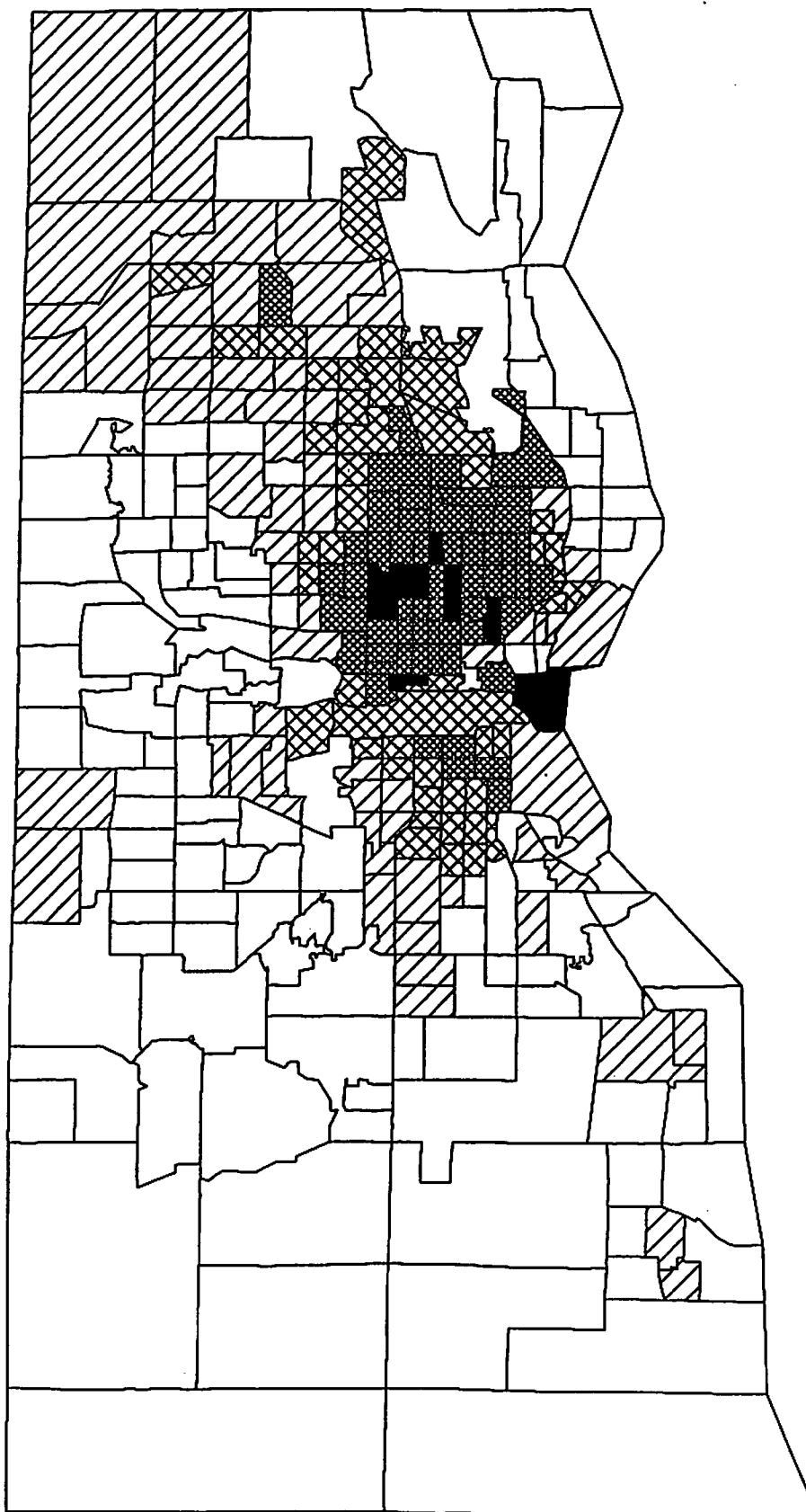
Children Under Age 5: Over half of pre-school children in central city neighborhoods were living in families receiving AFDC in March 1990. A total of 48 city census tracts showed 90 percent or more of the children under age five receiving AFDC in March.

Children Ages 5 Through 9: A smaller proportion of Milwaukee County families with school-age children receive AFDC than families with very young children. However, the analysis still identified 17 census tracts where 90 percent or more of the children in this age cohort were receiving AFDC in March 1990 and 76 tracts where more than half of the children ages 5 through 9 were receiving AFDC.

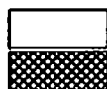
Youth Ages 10 through 14: Five Milwaukee census tracts showed 90 percent or more youth ages 10 through 14 receiving AFDC in March 1990 and 64 tracts showed more than half of the youth of these ages receiving AFDC that month.

Youth Ages 15 Through 17: Teens are far less likely as a group to receive AFDC than young children. In March 1990, 43 census tracts still showed more than half of the teens (ages 15 through 17) receiving AFDC and 2 census tracts showed 90 percent or more concentration of teens on AFDC.

AFDC Dependents Under Age 17
As Percent of Cohort Population
Milwaukee County, March 1990

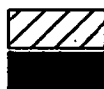


0-17



Under 10%

60-90%



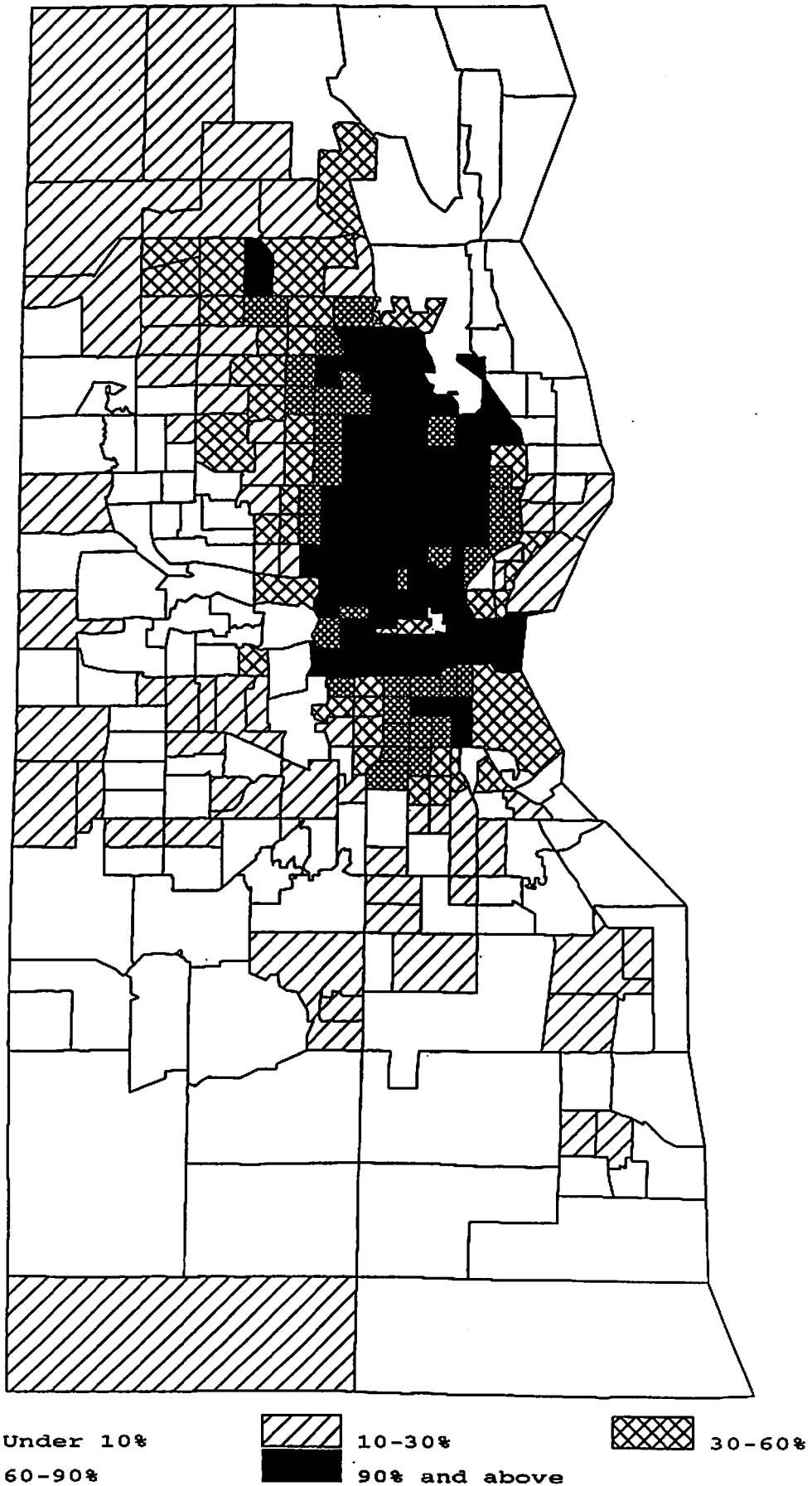
10-30%

90% and above

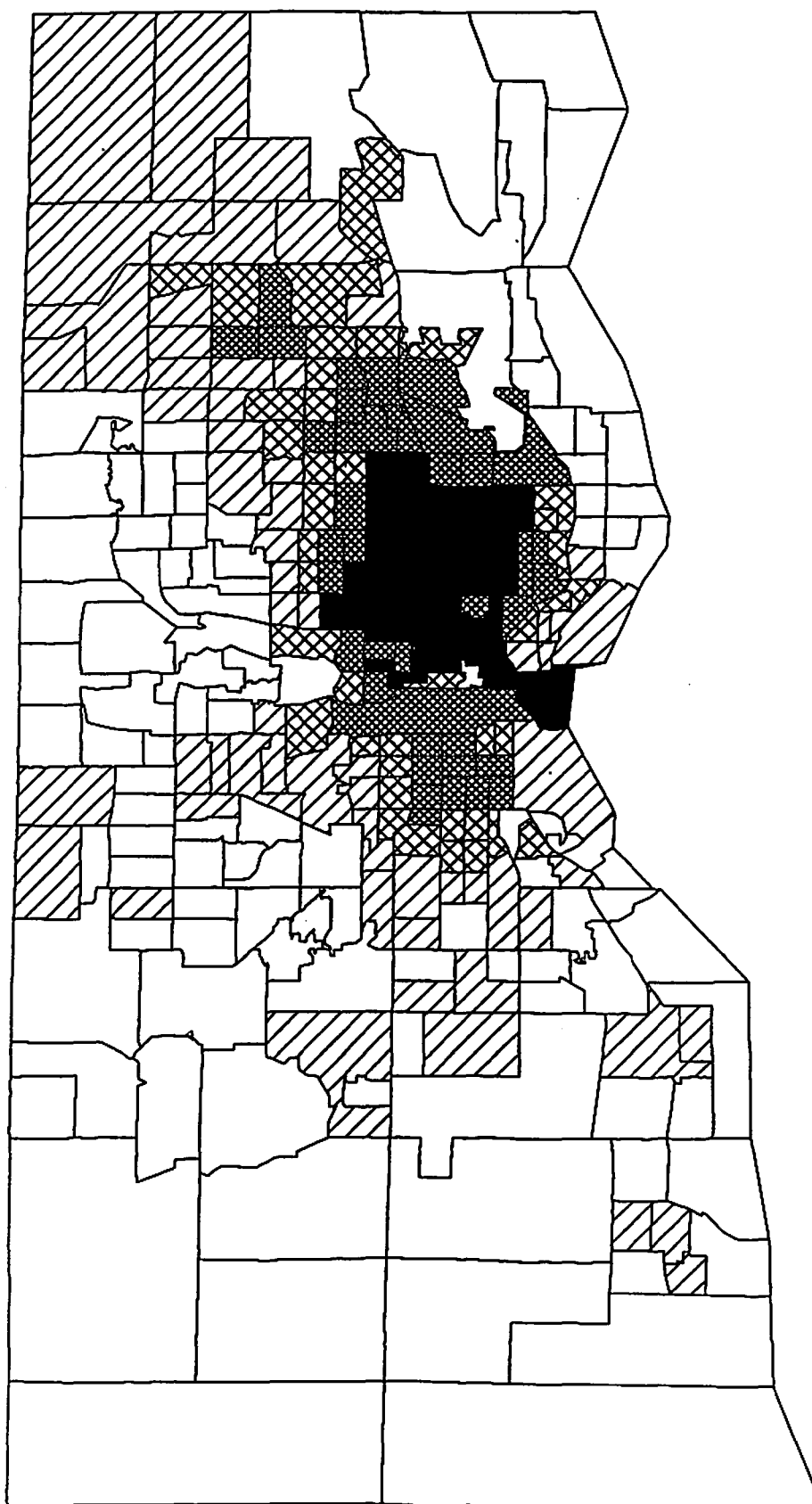


30-60%

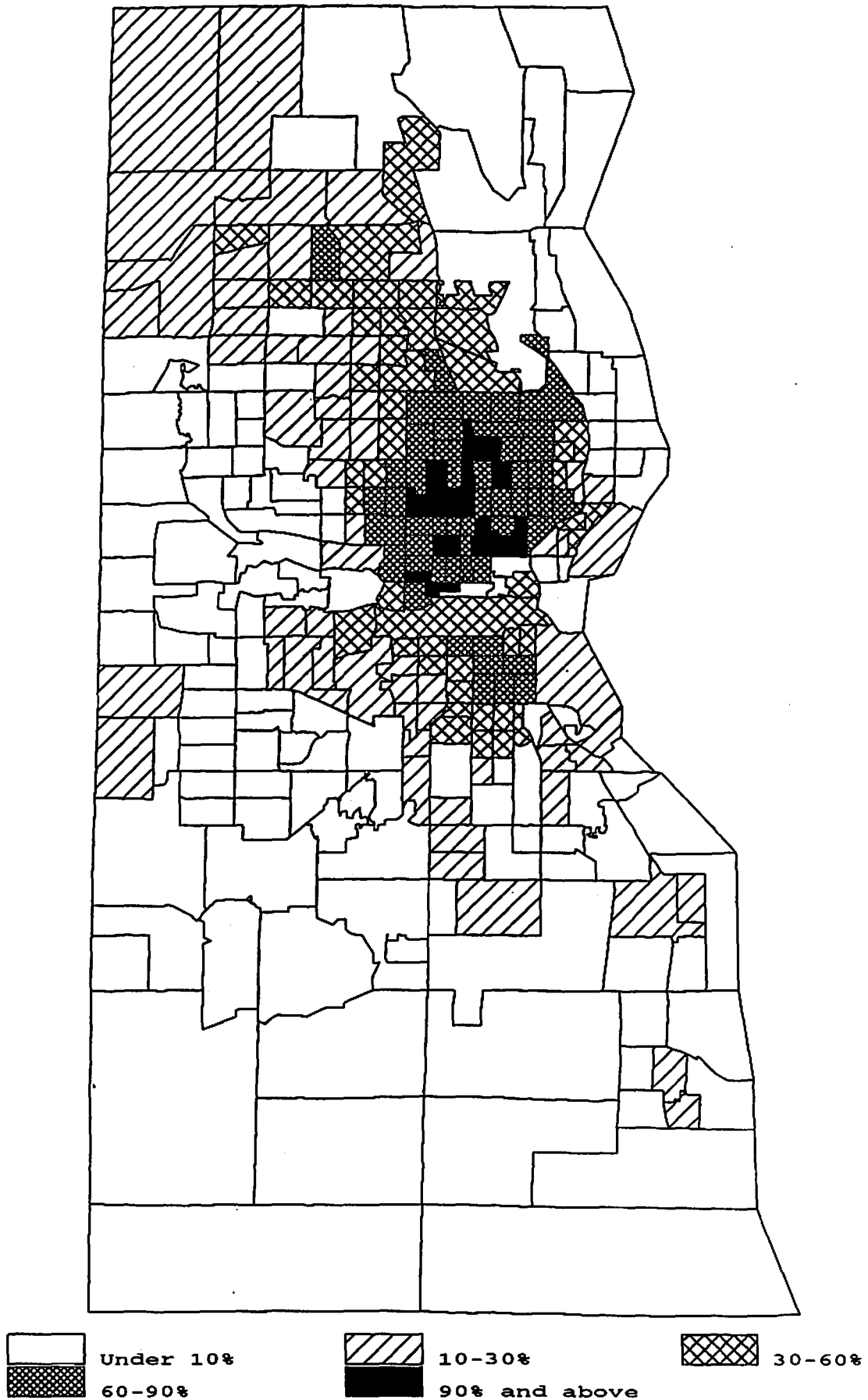
AFDC Dependents Under Age 1
As Percent of Cohort Population
Milwaukee County, March 1990



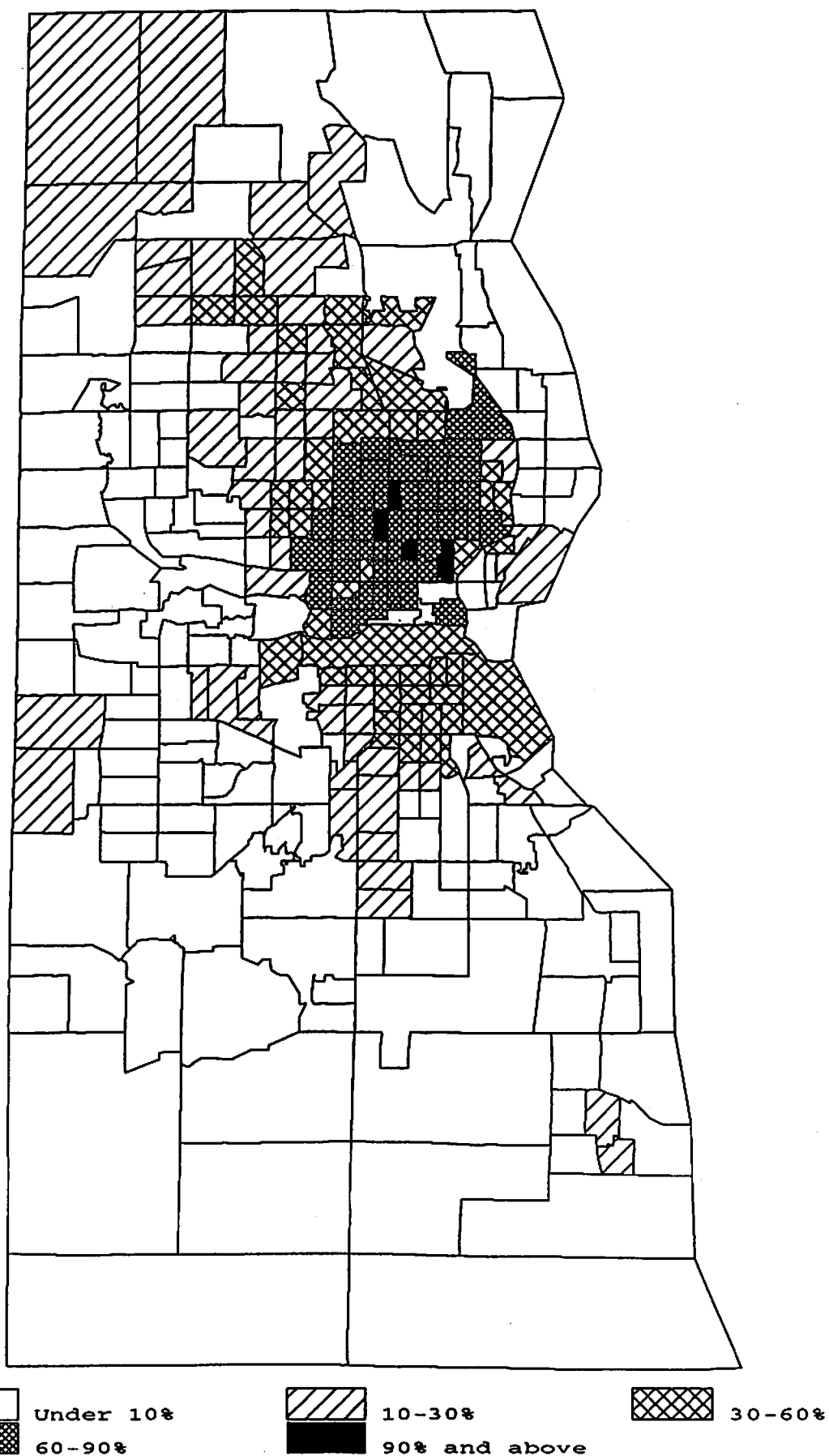
AFDC Dependents Under Age 5
As Percent of Cohort Population
Milwaukee County, March 1990



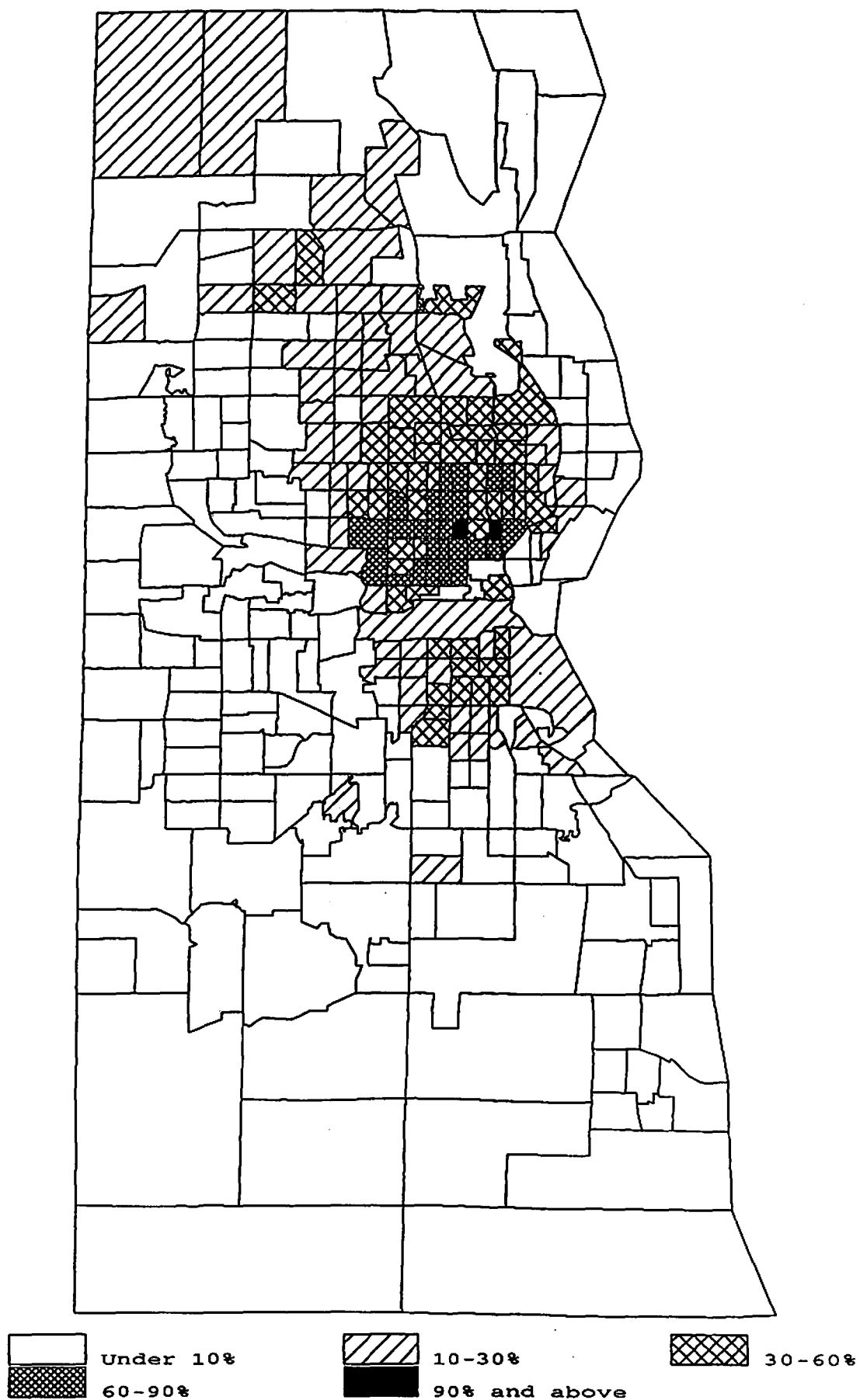
AFDC Dependents Age 5 Thru 9
As Percent of Cohort Population
Milwaukee County, March 1990



AFDC Dependents Age 10 Thru 14
As Percent of Cohort Population
Milwaukee County, March 1990



AFDC Dependents Age 15 Thru 17
As Percent of Cohort Population
Milwaukee County, March 1990



B. Concentration of Female-Headed Households Receiving AFDC by Census Tract

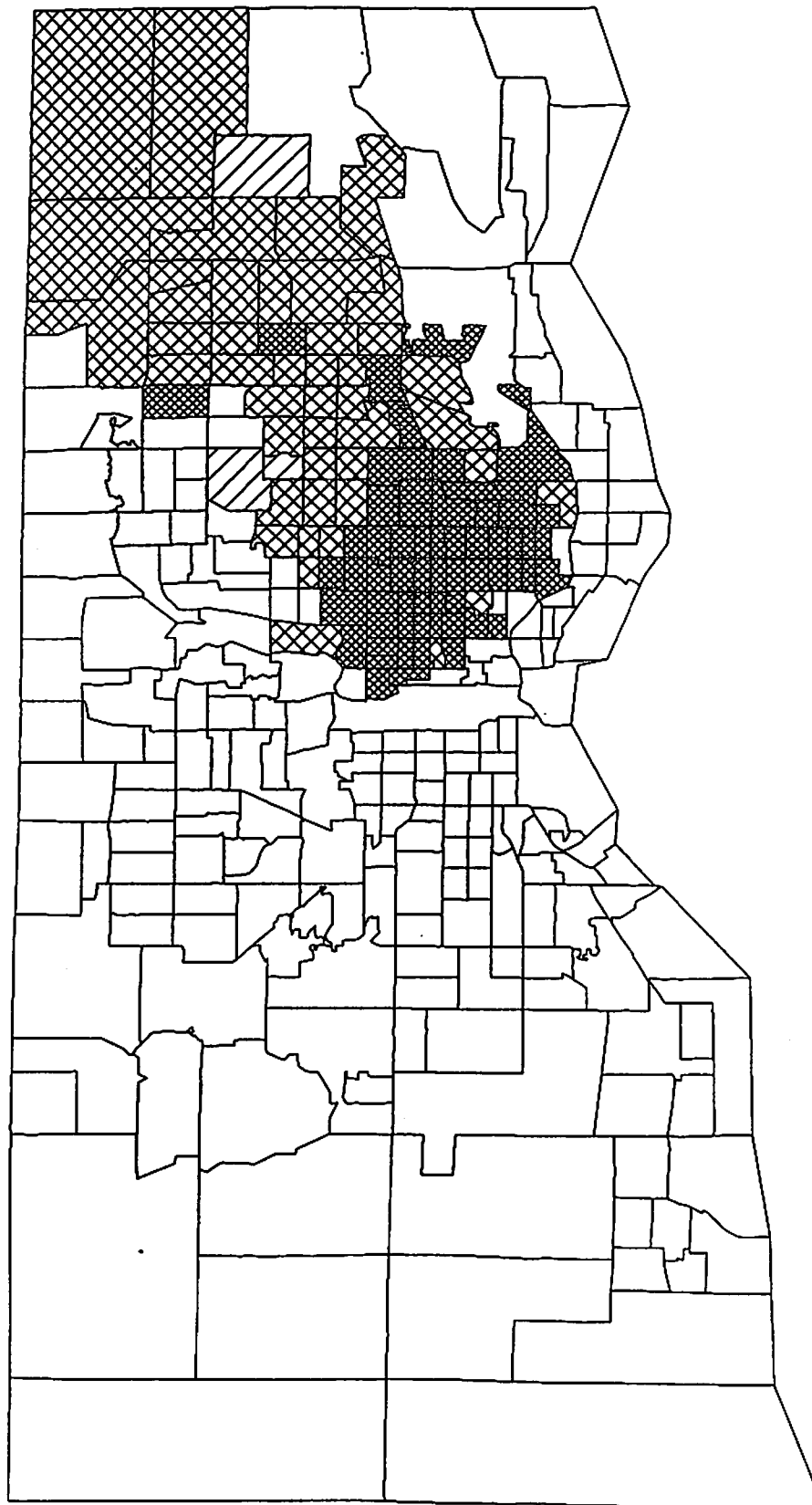
March 1990 AFDC records on single-parent families headed by women were compared to 1990 U.S. census counts of female-headed households with children. Patterns differed substantially by racial group.

Black Female-Headed Households: Nearly all black women heading families receiving AFDC were concentrated in northside Milwaukee census tracts where 50 percent or more of female-headed households with children were receiving AFDC in March 1990. Sixty-one tracts showed 90 percent or more of black female-headed households receiving AFDC that month.

Hispanic Female-Headed Households: Hispanic women heading households receiving AFDC in March 1990 were concentrated in two Milwaukee neighborhoods -- the near southside and west of the river on the eastside. Hispanic women receiving AFDC in March made up 90 percent or more of Hispanic female-headed households with children in 11 city census tracts.

White Female-Headed Households: White children living in female-headed households were far less likely than black or Hispanic children to live in neighborhoods with heavy concentrations of other children of their race receiving AFDC. Ten census tracts (all but one on the near southside) showed 90 percent or more white female-headed households receiving AFDC in March 1990.

Black Female-Headed Households on AFDC
As Percent of Black Female-Headed Households
Milwaukee County, March 1990



Under 10%

50-90%

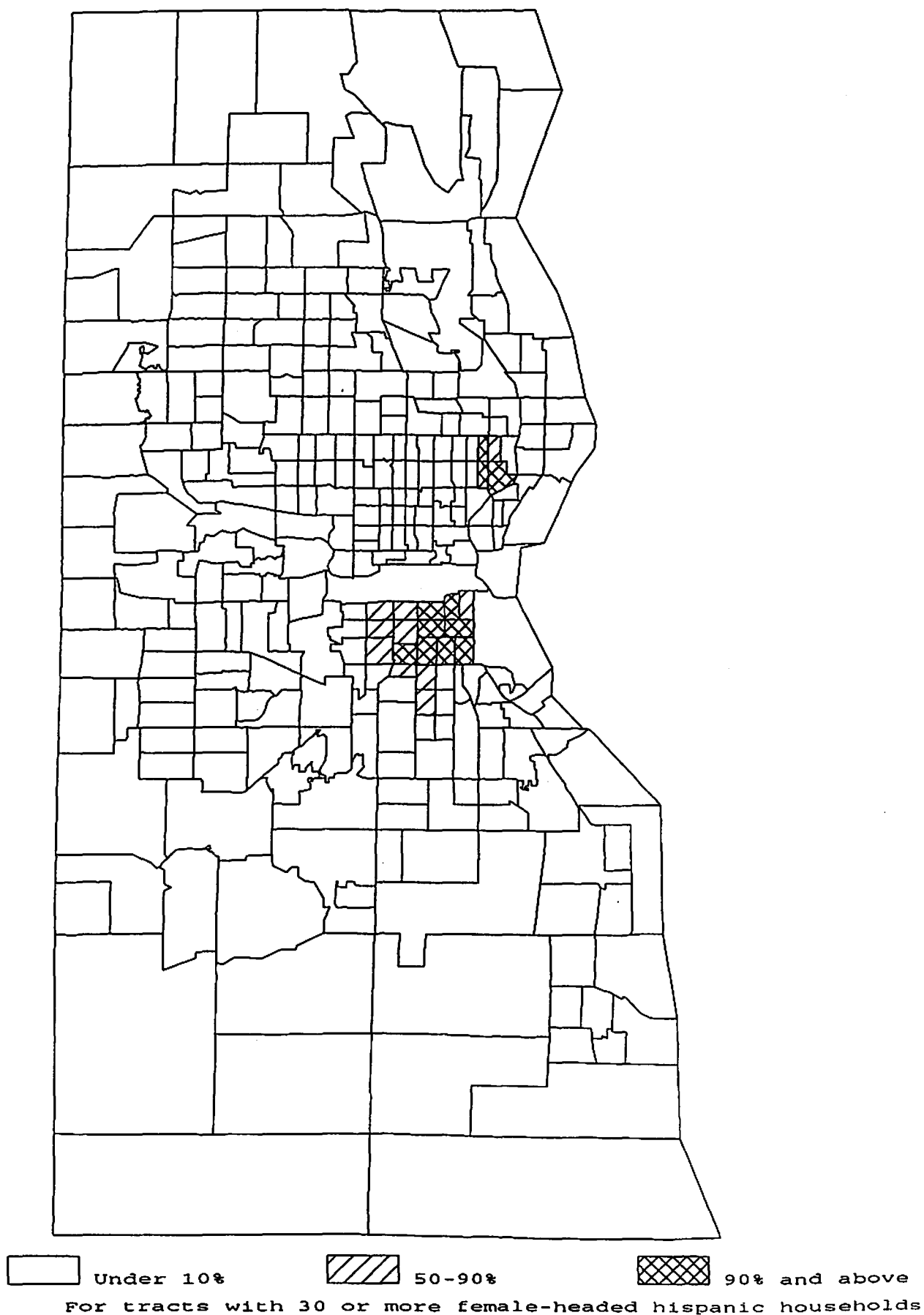


10-50%

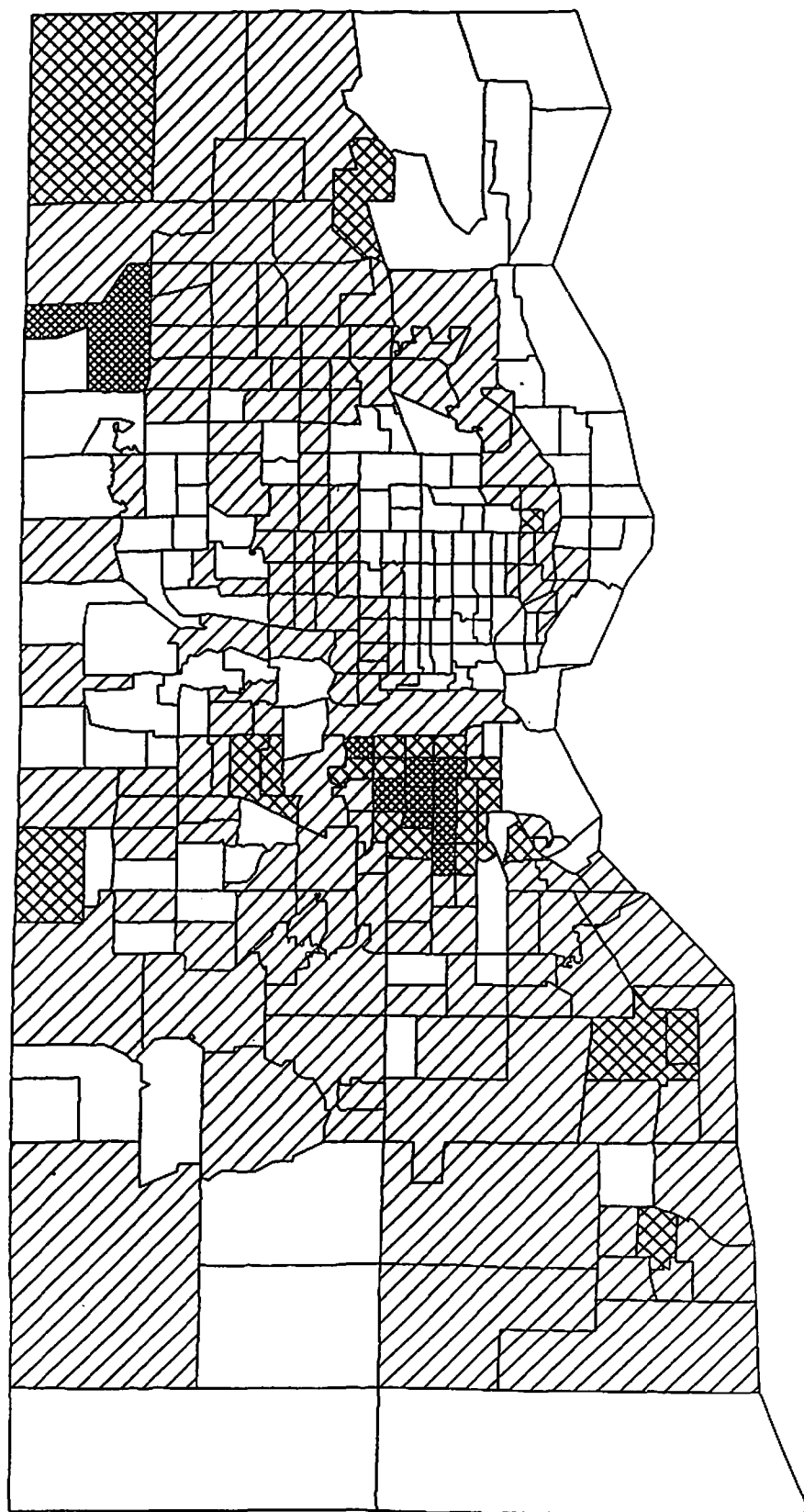
90% and above

For tracts with 30 or more female-headed black households

Hispanic Female-Headed Households on AFDC
As Percent of Hispanic Female-Headed Households
Milwaukee County, March 1990



White Female-Headed Households on AFDC
As Percent of White Female-Headed Households
Milwaukee County, March 1990



Under 10%

10-50%

50-90%

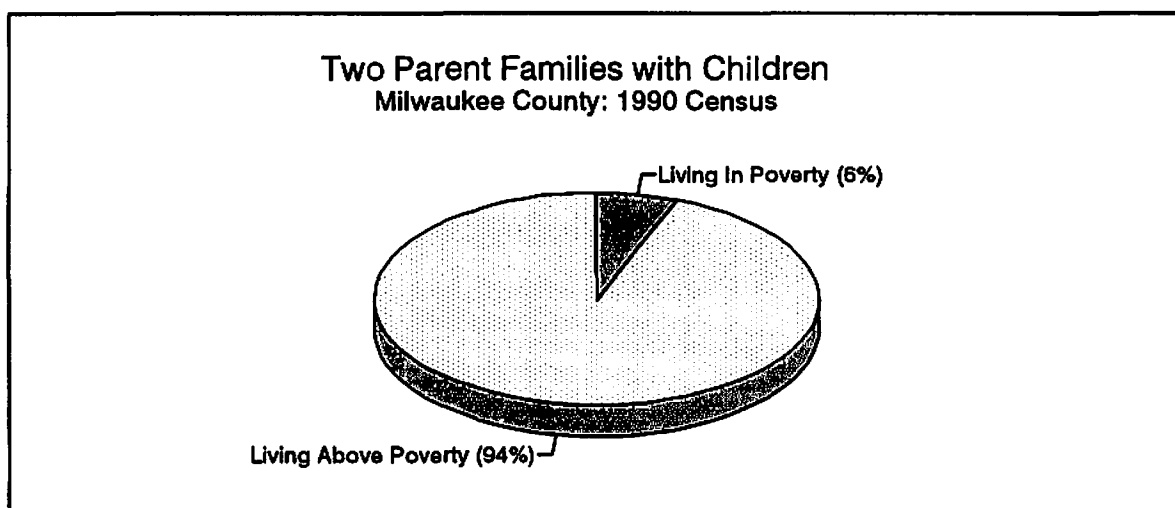
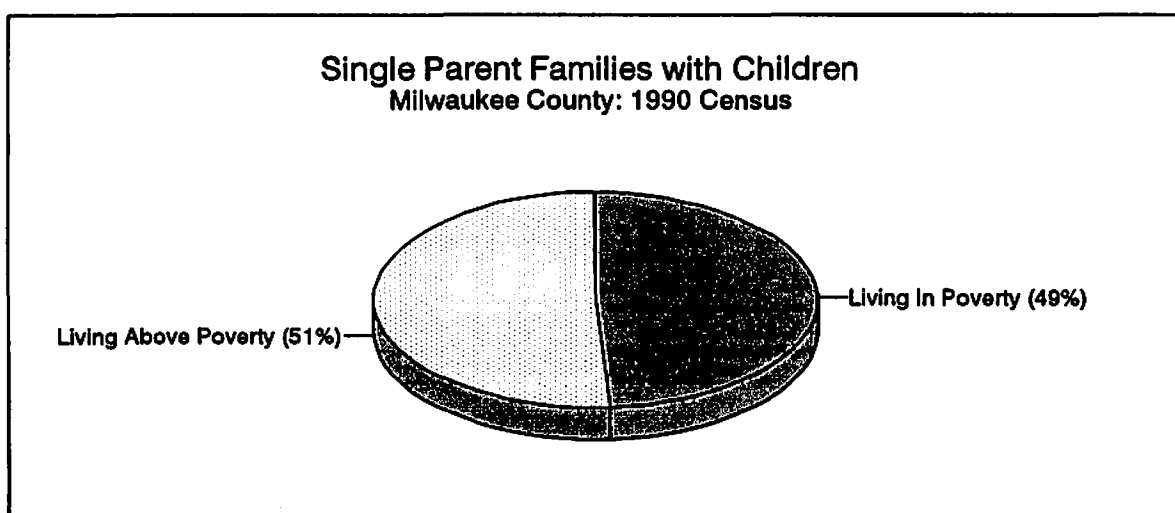
90% and above

For tracts with 30 or more female-headed white households

C. U.S. Census Data on Families Living in Poverty

The 1990 U.S. Census provided information on the number of families with related children under age 18 who had incomes below poverty in 1989. While subject to problems of undercount, the data provide useful information on the distribution of single-parent and two-parent Milwaukee County families living in poverty.

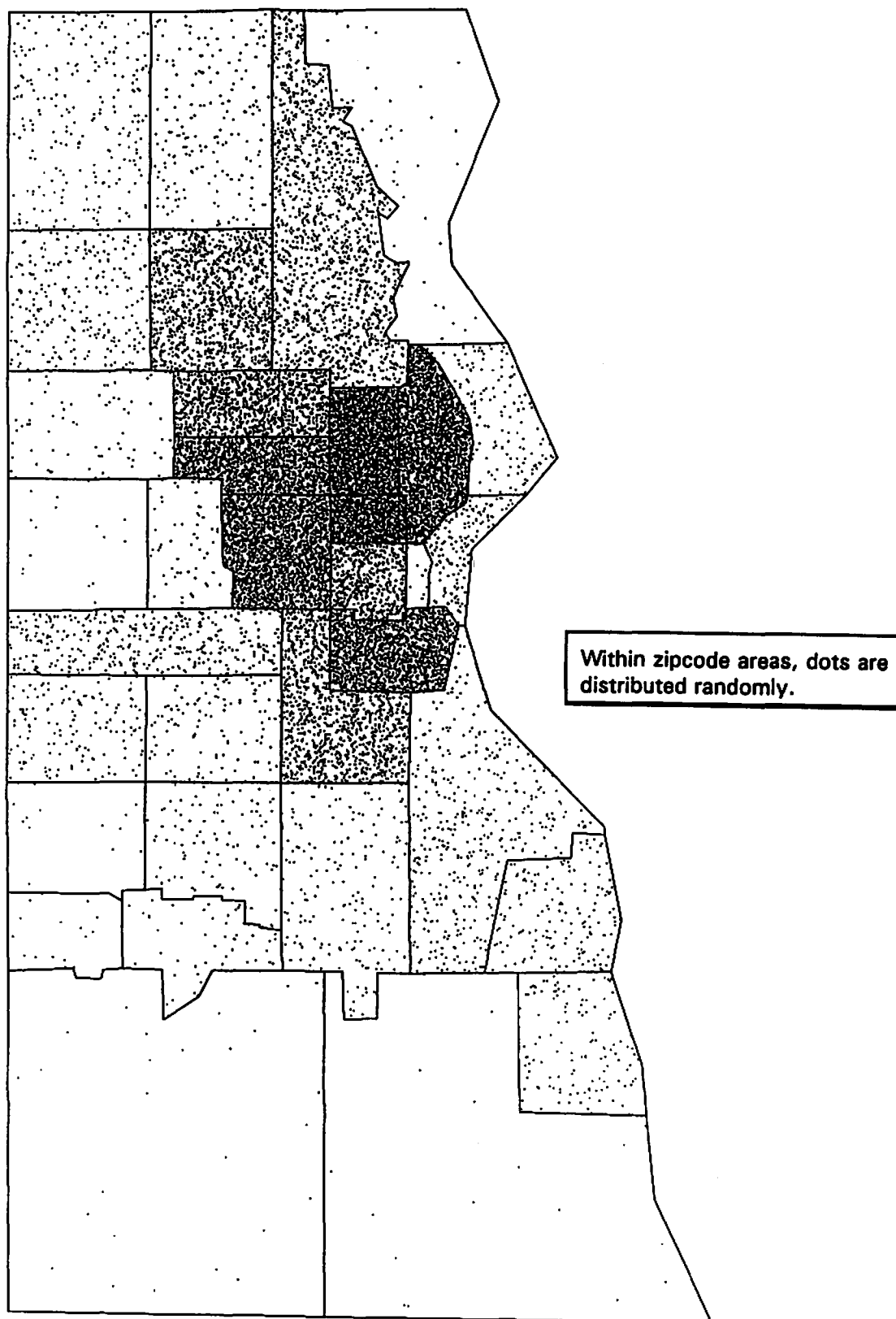
The Census reported that 27,163 of the 124,311 Milwaukee County families with children under age 18 lived in poverty. Of 46,315 single parent families with children, almost half (22,706, or 49 percent) lived in poverty. Only 6 percent of married couple families with children under age 18 lived in poverty (4,457 out of 77,996 married couple families). The maps below show the distribution of Milwaukee County families living in poverty by zipcode areas.



Single – Parent Families Living in Poverty

Milwaukee County

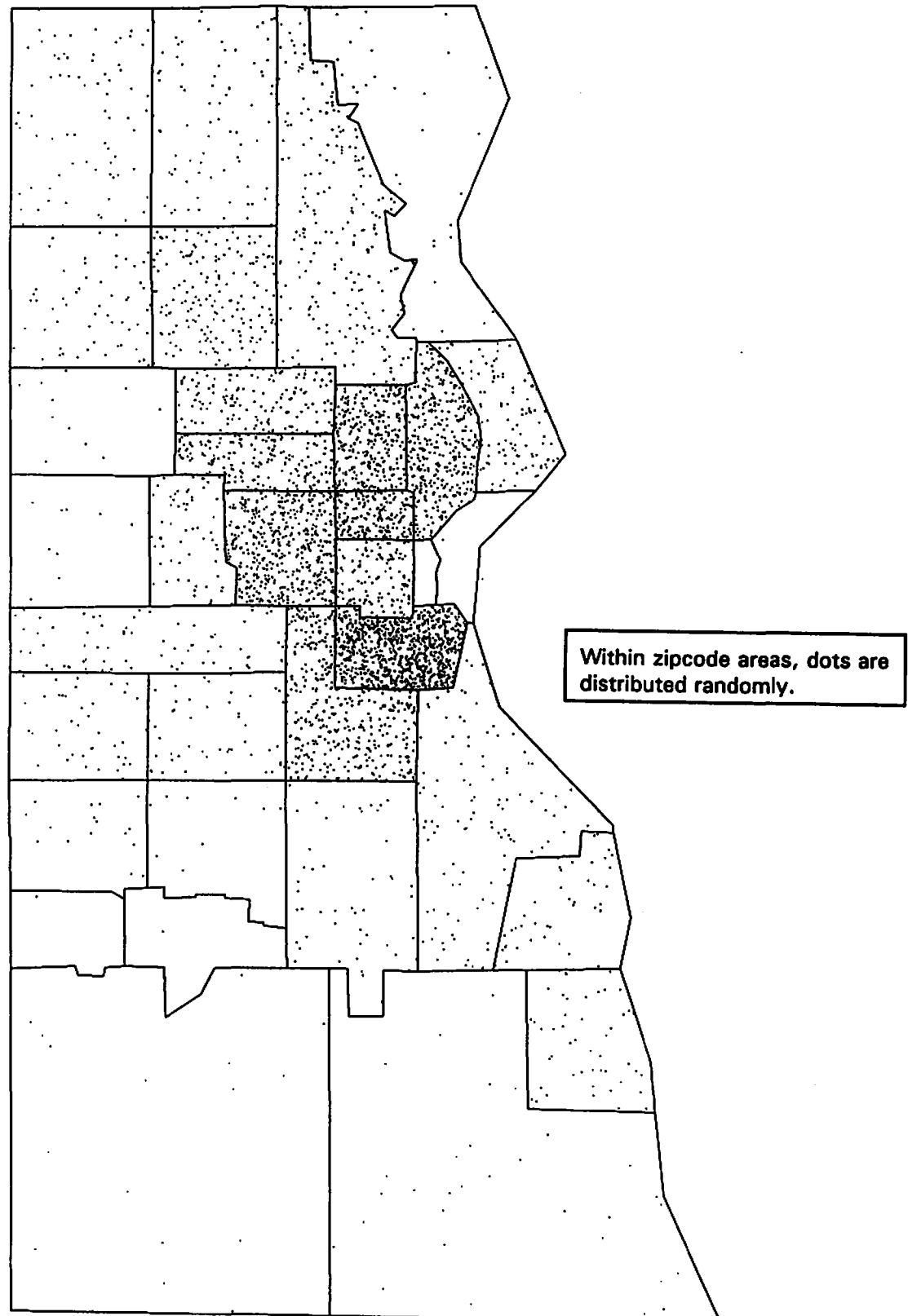
Source: 1990 US Census



Two-Parent Families Living in Poverty

Milwaukee County

Source: 1990 US Census



Employed Families and Individuals with Earnings Below the Poverty Level

To develop a more detailed and accurate profile of the income status of Milwaukee County families and individuals, a special tabulation of 1993 Wisconsin income tax returns was requested from the Wisconsin Department of Revenue. The tabulation provided ranges of adjusted gross income for Milwaukee County individuals filing tax returns as married couples or single persons and by the number of dependents claimed. Individuals filing returns and also claimed as dependents were considered separately. Returns by persons claiming the senior credit available to individuals 65 years and over were excluded from the special tabulations. Earned Income tax Credits (EIC) and aggregate EIC dollars claimed were also detailed by ranges of adjusted gross income (AGI). Results were tabulated by zipcode area, as well as for the City and County of Milwaukee.

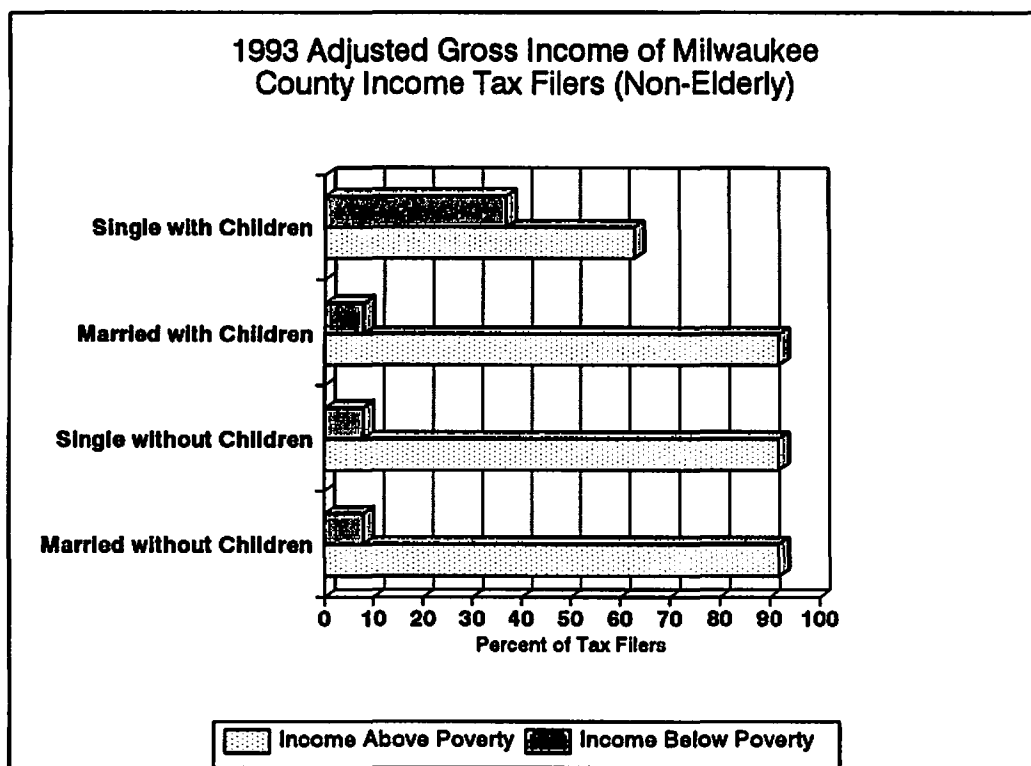
The characteristics of Milwaukee County filers are detailed below by type of family and adjusted gross income. Poverty levels were estimated by applying federal criteria for 1995 to adjusted gross income levels and number of dependents.

Profile of Milwaukee County 1993 Income Tax Filers
(Excluding Persons Claiming Senior Credit or Named as Dependent by Other Filer)¹

Type of Filers	Number of Total Filers	Number with Adjusted Gross Income Below Poverty Level	% of Total	Number with AGI Above \$0 and Below \$15,000	% of Total
Married with children	79,055	6,338	8%	6,268	8%
Married without children	50,441	3,972	8%	5,978	12%
Single with children	52,888	19,800	37%	26,094	49%
Single without children	<u>154,360</u>	<u>12,411</u>	8%	<u>66,791</u>	43%
Total	336,744	42,521	13%	105,131	31%

Among the Milwaukee County working population, employed single parents were most likely to be poor. Thirty-seven percent of single filers with children had adjusted gross incomes below the poverty level and nearly half (49 percent) had incomes below \$15,000. Only 8 percent of married filers with children had incomes below poverty, similar to the poverty rates for married couples and single persons without dependents.

¹ Department of Revenue numbers for single filers have limitations due to problems regarding both persons who are included and persons who are missing from the file. Included are those 1) elderly and estates filing returns as a matter of formality or for unearned income who did not file for the elderly credit, 2) those filing as non-dependents who were dependent, 3) students and other part-time non-residents. Those persons excluded from Department of Revenue file could typically: 1) have unreported income, or 2) claim an exclusion from tax due to income anticipated below the standard deduction (typically students, dependents). Milwaukee County single filers with no dependents and not claimed as a dependent on another form accounted for 154,360 tax returns. Single individual filers also claimed as dependents on another return tallied 27,475 with more than two-thirds of these single dependents showing adjusted gross incomes below \$5,000 and 88 percent below \$10,000.



Distribution of Working Poor Families by Zipcode Areas

Working poor families, that is, families with adjusted gross incomes below the poverty level, are located throughout Milwaukee County. In two central city Milwaukee zipcode areas (53205 and 53233) over half of all working families had income below the poverty level. In four additional zipcode areas (53204, 53206, 53208 and 53212) over 40 percent of working families had income below poverty. The problem is most serious for single parent families. Over half of all working single parents had incomes below poverty in zipcode areas 53204, 53205, 53206, 53208, 53212 and 53233. The three maps below show the concentration of working families by zipcode area for three populations. (Individual dots represent working families or working poor families. Dots are distributed randomly within zipcode areas.)

1. Working Single Parents: A total of 52,888 non-elderly Milwaukee County tax filers were single persons with dependents. One-third of these filers (32 percent) showed earnings below \$10,000; another third showed incomes from \$10,000 to \$19,999. Spatially, the heaviest concentrations of working single parents were found in central city zipcodes 53205 and 53206.

2. Working Single Parents With Adjusted Gross Income Below the Poverty Level: Thirty-seven percent (19,800 of the 52,888 total) single parents had income below the poverty level. The second map below shows the concentration of "working poor" single parent families by Milwaukee County zipcode area.

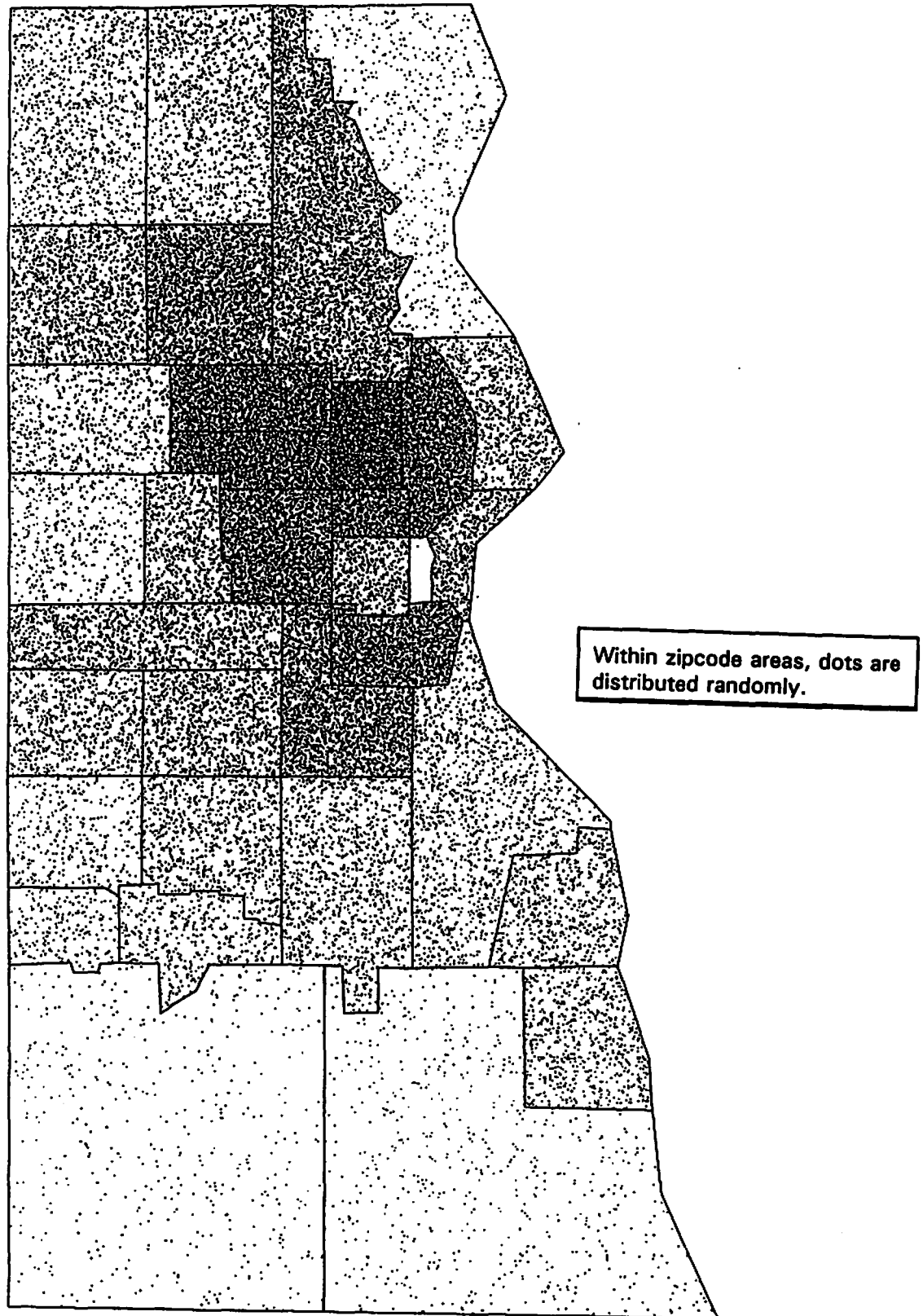
3. Two-Parent Working Poor Families: A total of 6,338 of the 79,055 married couples with dependents filing tax returns in Milwaukee County showed adjusted gross incomes below the poverty level. These "working poor" families were located throughout Milwaukee County, with heavy concentrations on the near southside and near northside of Milwaukee.

Working Single Parents, CY 1993

21

Milwaukee County

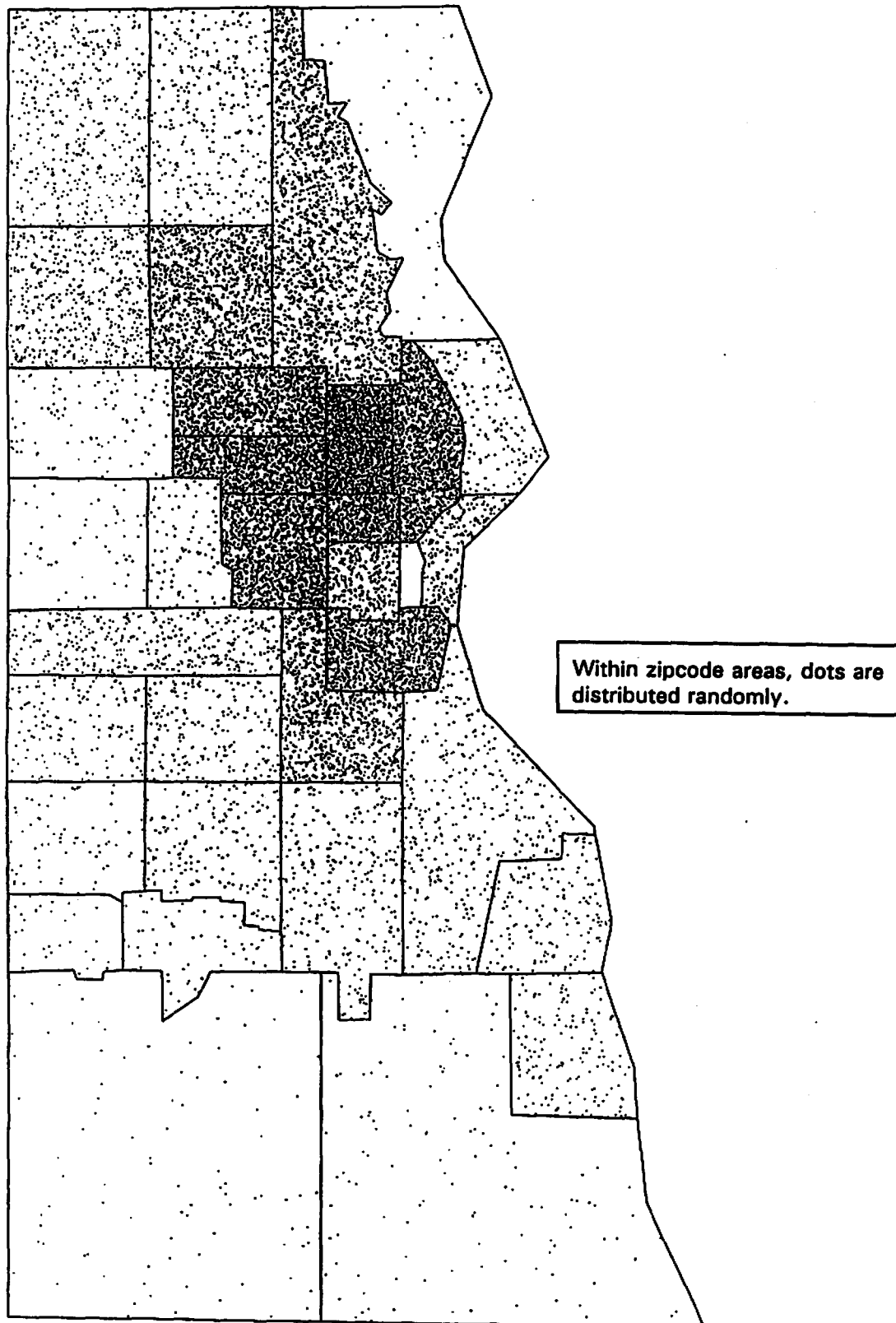
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue



Working Poor Single Parents, CY 1993

Milwaukee County

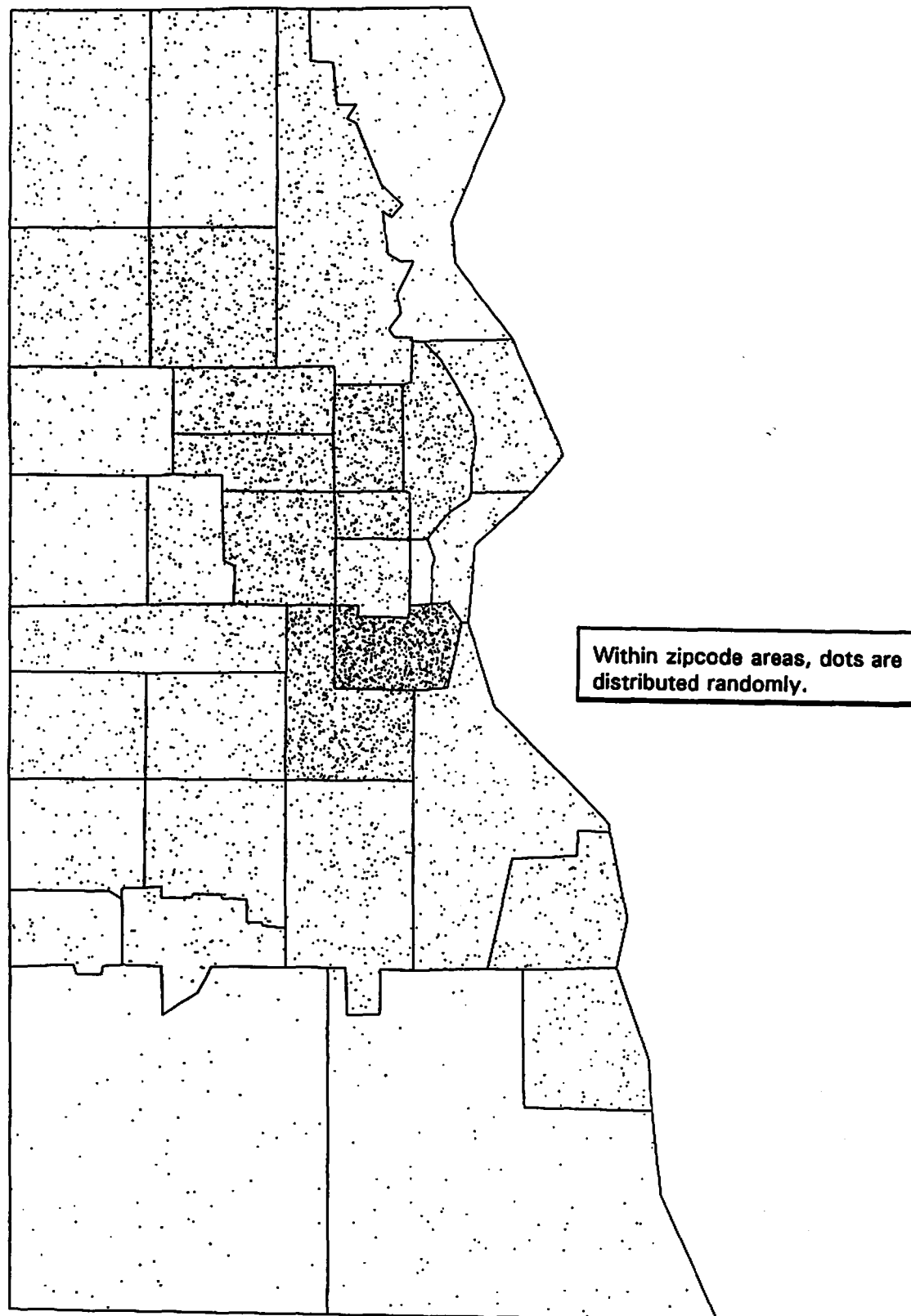
Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue



Two-Parent Working Poor Families, CY 1993

Milwaukee County

Source: Wisconsin Department of Revenue



ZIP Code Areas Milwaukee County

