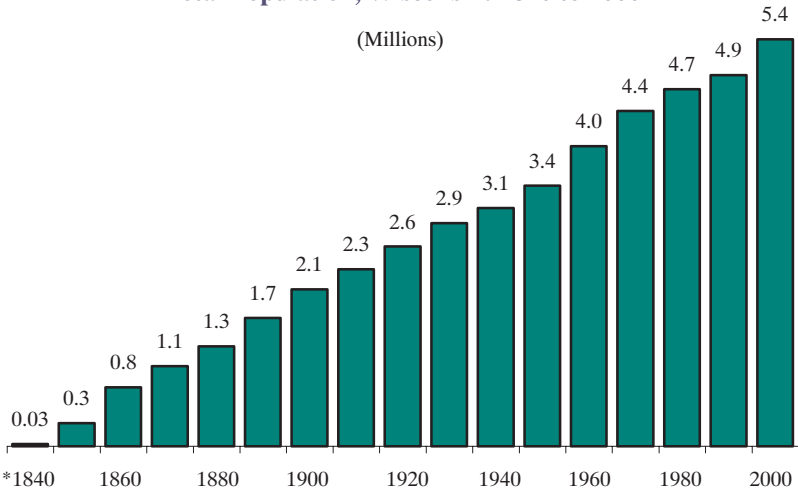


process because the number of residents leaving the state exceeded the number arriving by 49,000. By contrast, in the 1990s, the demographic exchanges were balanced very differently. Between 1990 and 2000 growth from net in-migration to the state accounted for almost half of total growth.

Figure 1
Total Population, Wisconsin: 1840 to 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census of Population, 1840 to 2000

* 1840 population count is reported for the Wisconsin Territory.

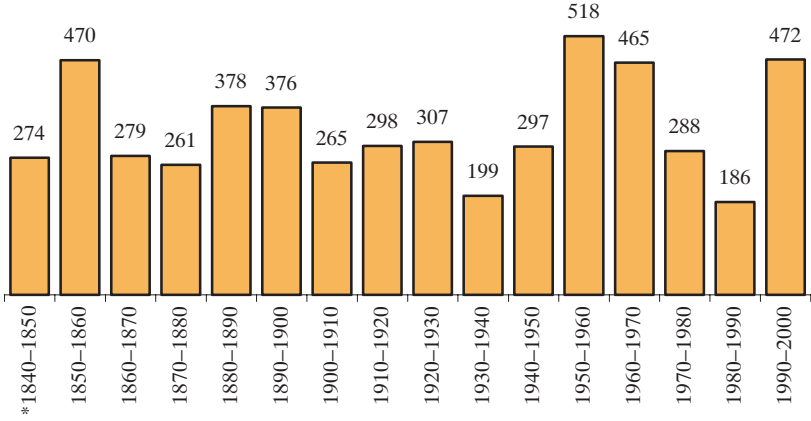
Numerical growth in the 1990s was surprisingly robust, exceeding the growth anticipated by demographic projections made in the early 1990s. Wisconsin's overall *rate* of growth, however, was a somewhat modest 10% for the decade (Fig. 3). This contrasts with a rate of growth of more than 13% for the U.S. as a whole. Thus, Wisconsin's share of the national population continued a decline begun approximately a century ago (Fig. 4). As a consequence, Wisconsin joined nine other states, primarily in the Midwest and Northeast regions of the country, in losing a seat in the Congress in the reapportionment of the House of Representatives based on the final census counts. These seats went to eight states in the faster growing South and West regions (Fig. 5). The 2000 Census reapportionment took effect when the 108th Congress was elected in November 2002. Because each state is allotted votes in the Electoral College based on the sum of their U.S. senators and representatives, the new census numbers also mean that Wisconsin will have one less electoral vote in the 2004 and 2008 presidential elections than it did in 2000.

Components of Population Growth

Net change in Wisconsin's population results from the addition of births and in-migrants and the subtraction of deaths and out-migrants. For most of the decades during the 20th century, the principal contribution to growth came from what demographers call natural increase (difference between births and deaths) (Fig. 6).

Figure 2
Population Increase by Decade, Wisconsin: 1840 to 2000

(Numeric Increase – Thousands)

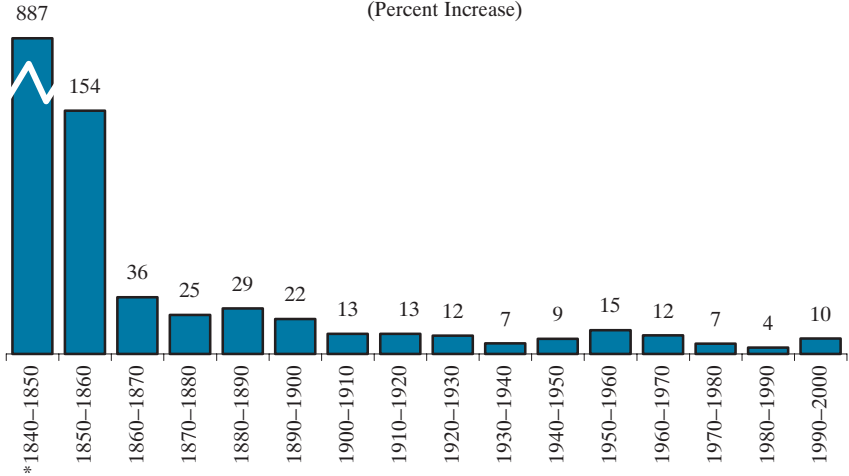


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census of Population, 1840 to 2000

* 1840 population count is reported for the Wisconsin Territory.

Figure 3
Population Increase by Decade, Wisconsin: 1840 to 2000

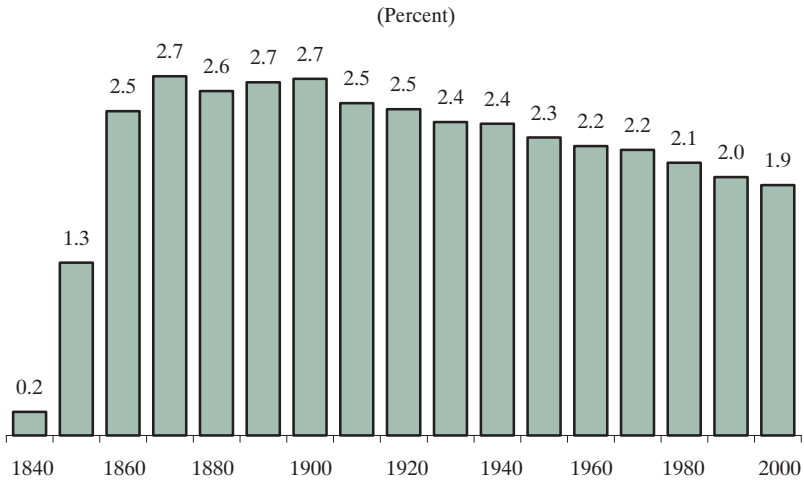
(Percent Increase)



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census of Population, 1840 to 2000

* 1840 population count is reported for the Wisconsin Territory.

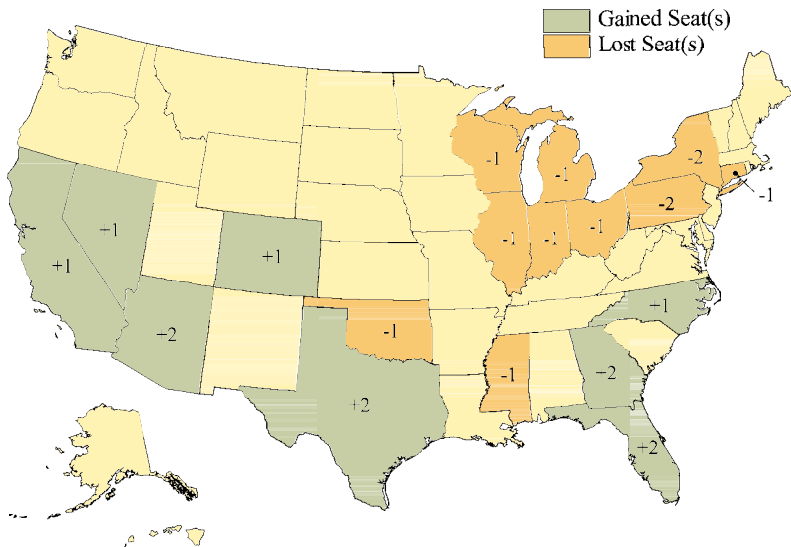
Figure 4
Wisconsin's Share of U.S. Total Population by Decade: 1840 to 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Decennial Census of Population, 1840 to 2000

*1890 population count is reported for the Wisconsin Territory

Figure 5
US Congressional Seat Gainers and Losers: 2000

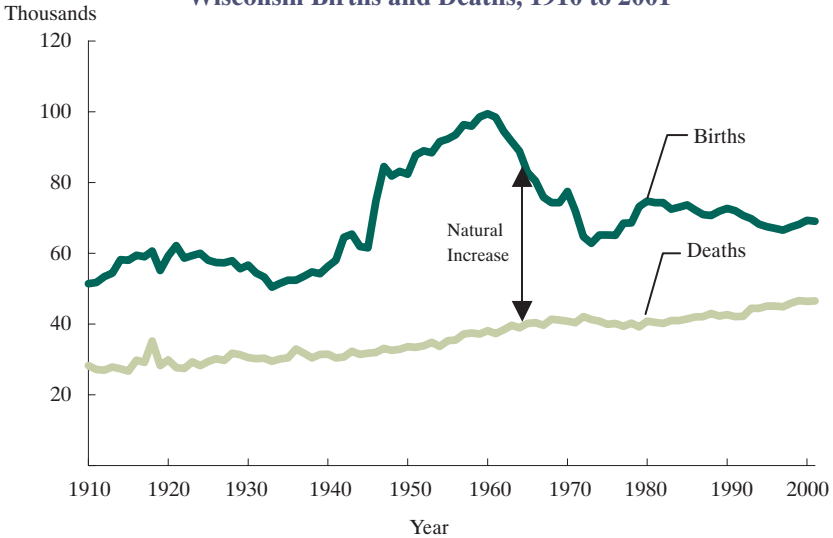


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Brief, Congressional Apportionment

Figure 7 shows that the 1990s witnessed almost equal contributions to growth from natural increase and net migration (the latter being the difference between in-migrants and out-migrants). It is likely that an equal contribution from net migration and natural increase has not occurred since the early years of Wisconsin statehood, although data to test this assumption are not available.

Figure 6

Wisconsin Births and Deaths, 1910 to 2001



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Wisconsin Vital Statistics Reports, Various years

Many social and economic factors contributed to the relatively strong growth of Wisconsin's population during the 1990s. Declining mortality and improvements in medical technology, generally, has meant that Wisconsin residents are living longer, healthier lives. Nevertheless, the fact that Wisconsin's population is getting larger and, importantly, the fact that the population has a higher proportion of elderly (ages where the impact of mortality is disproportionately felt) means that the number of deaths is slowly rising. Meanwhile, birth rates (and numbers) have remained relatively steady over the past three decades. As a consequence, contributions to growth arising from natural increase are diminishing over time. A strong state economy during the 1990s, coupled with economic distress in the Southwest and Northeast during the early 1990s, led to unprecedented levels of migration to the state.

Increasing Density

With a fixed land area and a growing population, Wisconsin's population density has increased with the passage of time. Overall population density almost tripled from approximately 37 persons per square mile (of land area) in 1900 to 99 persons per square mile in 2000 (Fig. 8).