

# *South Dakota Legislative Research Council*

## *Issue Memorandum 97-11*

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### **A South Dakota Statistical Collection**

#### **Introduction**

Statistical information concerning South Dakota has been compiled and presented to legislators in the past by such individuals as Harold Hodgkinson of the Center for Demographic Policy of Washington, DC, and Dr. Jim Satterlee of South Dakota State University. Though not as comprehensive as these earlier reports, the following collection of statistics is presented in hopes of demonstrating in a simple and concise format the statistical status of South Dakota in areas which most often relate to legislative action. This report is not meant to be a scientific or comprehensive source of data, but rather a broad-based and hopefully thought-provoking view of the issues faced by South Dakota.

South Dakota is a highly rural and sparsely populated state. Though South Dakota is not unusual in the high percentage of its population which is white, it does maintain an unusually high percentage of Native Americans, as well as an unusually low percentage of Blacks, Asians, and Hispanics. It is important to remember, however, that despite the high percentage of Native Americans within our state, the actual number of Native Americans is relatively low, only 2.4% of the total Native Americans in the United States.

South Dakota's birthrate is somewhat lower than national averages, and therefore age groups are not as heavily weighted towards the young as in some states. Also, the percentage of South Dakotans living under the poverty level is slightly higher than the national average.

#### **Population Statistics**

1. Total Population (July 1996)<sup>1</sup>: **732,000**

Rank in U.S.: **45th**

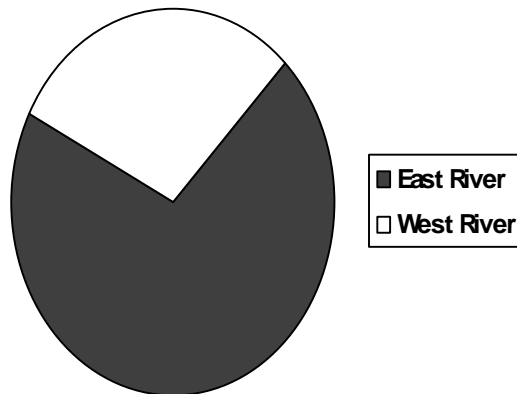
Percent of U.S. Population: **0.28%**

2. Racial Breakdown<sup>2</sup>:

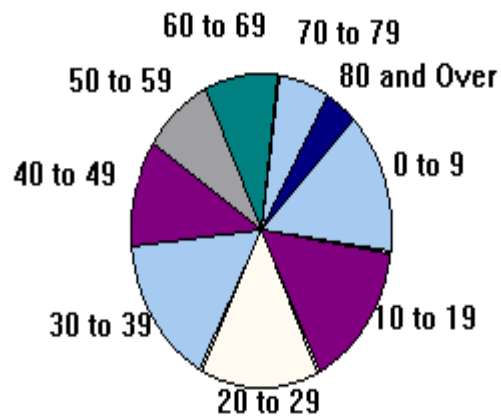
<b>White:</b>	<b>637,515</b>
<b>Native American:</b>	<b>50,501</b>
<b>Black:</b>	<b>3,258</b>
<b>Asian:</b>	<b>3,123</b>
<b>Other:</b>	<b>1,533</b>

3. East River versus West River:

**East River 70%**  
**West River 30%**

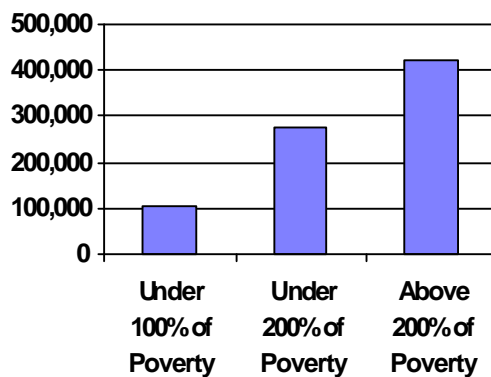


4. Age Distribution<sup>3</sup>:



5. South Dakotans in Poverty<sup>4, 5</sup>:

Population under 100% of poverty level = **106,305**  
 Population under 200% of poverty level = **274,285**



Poverty Rate, Rank in U.S.: **17th**

## Health Statistics<sup>6</sup>

For the most part, the health of South Dakotans is better than national norms. The state does fall behind in access to care, especially in rural areas where physicians and hospitals are few and far between. South Dakota experiences a higher than

normal mortality rate through unintentional injuries, suicides, and infant mortality. South Dakotans are unusually reluctant to use seat belts (last in the nation), but their survival rate when using them is unusually high (best in the nation).

### 1. Mortality Rate:

	<i>South Dakota</i>		<i>National</i>
<b>All Causes</b>	466.4/100,000	<	508.4/100,000
<b>Cancer</b>	120.9/100,000	<	132.1/100,000
<b>Cardiovascular Disease</b>	167.3/100,000	<	185.0/100,000
<b>Unintentional Injuries</b>	39.0/100,000	>	29.8/100,000
<b>Suicide</b>	14.1/100,000	>	11.6/100,000
<b>Infant Mortality</b>	9.6/1,000	>	8.5/1,000

### 2. Percent of Children with Appropriate Immunizations by Age Two: **61.5%**

National Average: **64%**

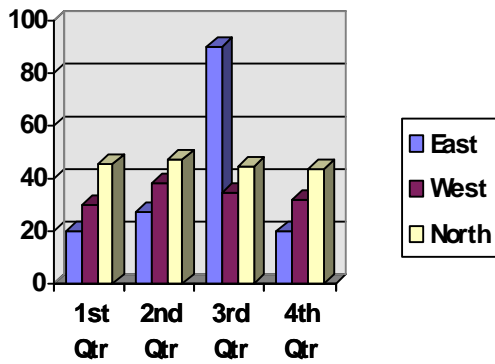
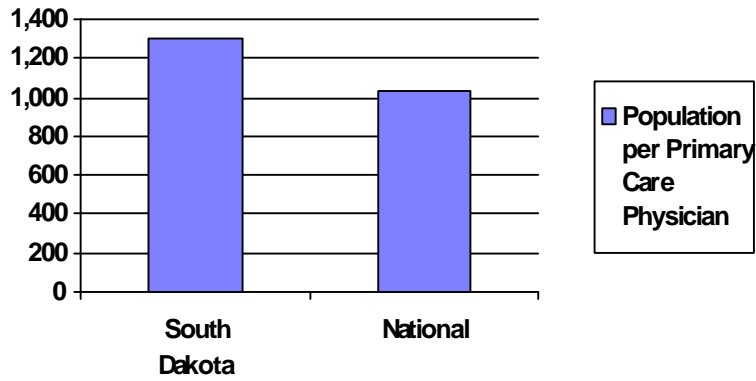
### 3. Teenage Pregnancy Rate<sup>7</sup>:

**42.8/1,000**

Rank in U.S.: **37th**

National Average: **58.9/1,000**

### 4. Ratio of Population to Primary Care Physicians:



5. Safety Belt Usage Rate in 1995<sup>8</sup>: **40%**

Rank in U.S.: **48th (of 48 states reporting)**

National Average: **68%**

6. Percent of Passenger Car Occupant Fatalities Where Victim Used a Seat Belt in 1995: **16.7%**

Rank in U.S.: **50th**

National Average: **36.2%**

## Labor Statistics

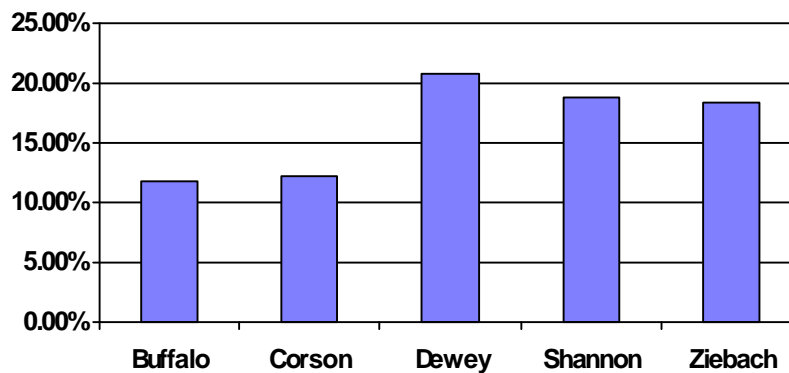
South Dakota presents some very interesting labor-related statistics. The state has a very low unemployment figure, and many counties have unemployment figures below 2%. Nevertheless, a few counties, especially those containing

reservation lands, have unusually high unemployment, as high as 20+%. At the same time, South Dakota's average annual wage is the lowest in the nation, at nearly \$8,000 less than the national average, and \$15,000 less than top-ranking states.

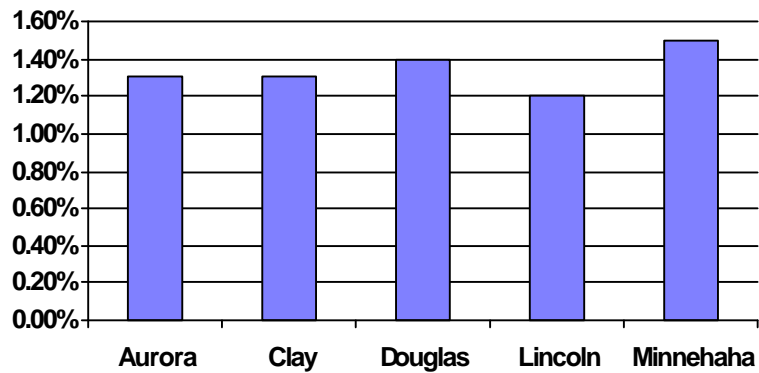
1. State Unemployment Rate<sup>9</sup>: **2.7%**

Current National Unemployment Rate: **4.8%**

2. Five Counties With Highest Unemployment:



3. Five Counties With Lowest Unemployment:



4. Average Annual Wage in South Dakota<sup>10</sup>: **\$19,931**

Rank in U.S.: **50th**

National Average: **\$27,845**

## Welfare Statistics

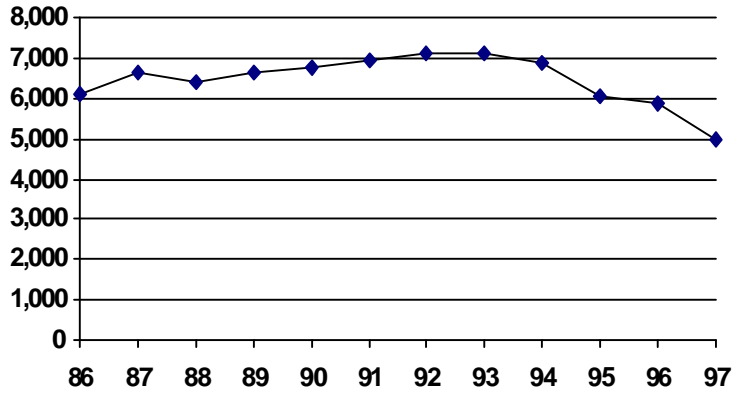
Much has been done in recent years to lower the AFDC (now TANF) caseloads in South Dakota, and these efforts have been succeeding. South Dakota has experienced some of the country's highest caseload reductions in recent years, and this process continues now in the wake of last

year's welfare reform legislation. The fact that over half of South Dakota's welfare clients live on reservations does present special issues, however.

Medicaid and food stamp eligibility figures have not experienced the same remarkable trends as welfare caseloads have, but both have declined slightly in the last year.

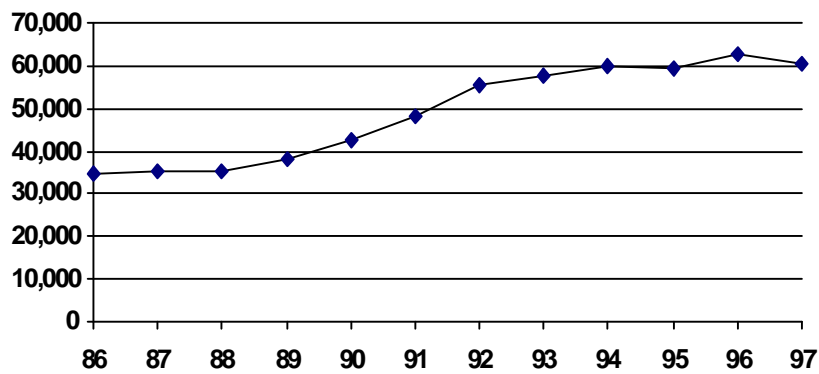
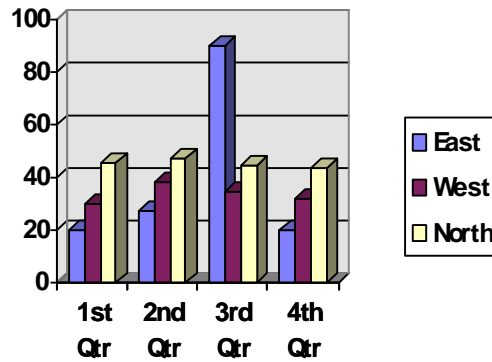
1. Number of TANF Cases in South Dakota<sup>11</sup>: **5,003**

2. AFDC/TANF Caseload History:



3. Number of Medicaid Eligibles in South Dakota: **60,315**

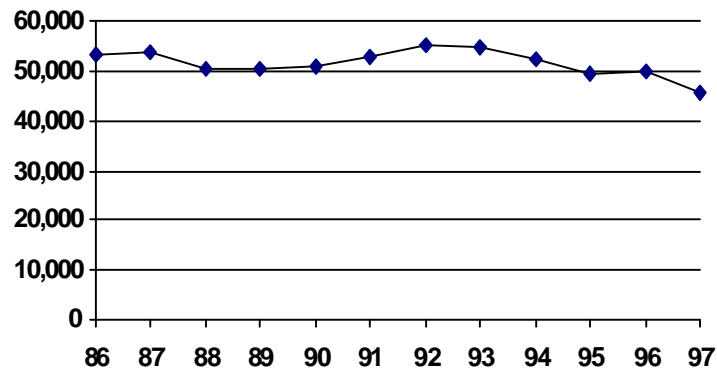
4. Medicaid Eligibility History:



5. Food Stamp Recipients in South Dakota: **45,813**



## 6. Food Stamp History:



## Political Statistics

voters, consistently ranking first in the nation in voter participation.

South Dakotans are unusually active

1. Voter Participation in 1994<sup>12</sup>:

**63.9%**

Rank in U.S.: **1st**

National Average: **44.6%**

2. Voter Registration:

***Percent of Eligible Voters Reported Registered in 1994: 75.4%***

**Rank in U.S.: 5th**

## Crime Statistics

Overall, South Dakota is a rather safe place to live. Our state's crime rate is one of the lowest in the nation, well below the national average. When

broken down by specific crimes, it is notable that South Dakota's rape rate is higher than the national average, a statistic quite out of sync with the rest of the state's crime figures.

1. Adult Prison Population<sup>13</sup>: **2,117**

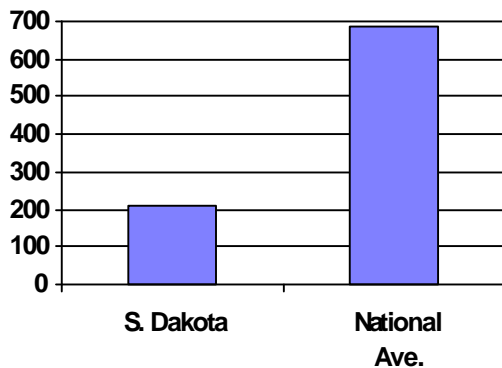
2. Crime Rate in 1995<sup>14</sup>: **3,060.6 per 100,000 Population**

Rank in U.S.: **47th**

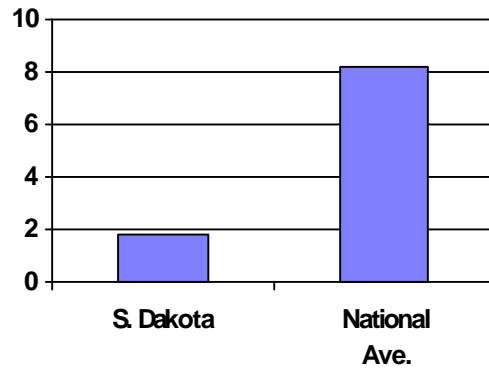
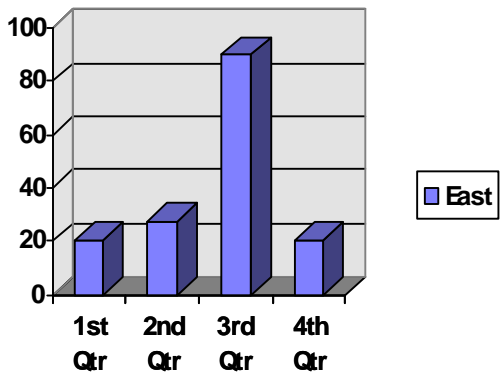
National Average: **5,277.6**

3. Crime Rates by Type of Crime (per 100,000 pop.)<sup>15</sup>:

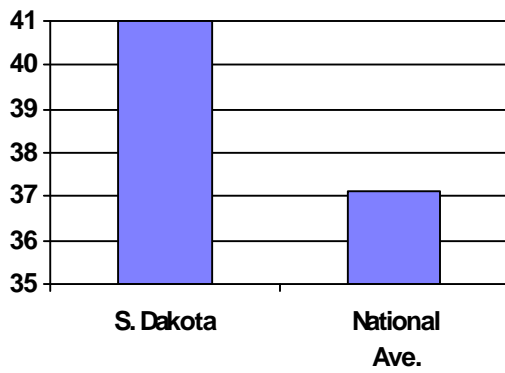
### Violent Crime



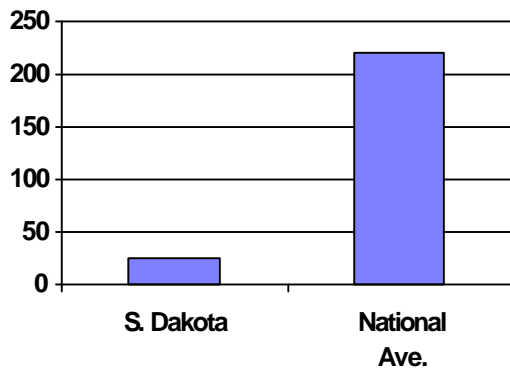
### Murder



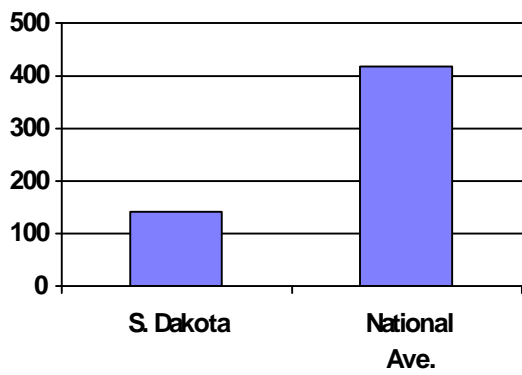
### Rape



### Robberies



### Aggravated Assault



## Educational Statistics

Most of South Dakota’s public school districts are very rural and cover large areas of land. However, South Dakota boasts a very low high school drop-out rate.

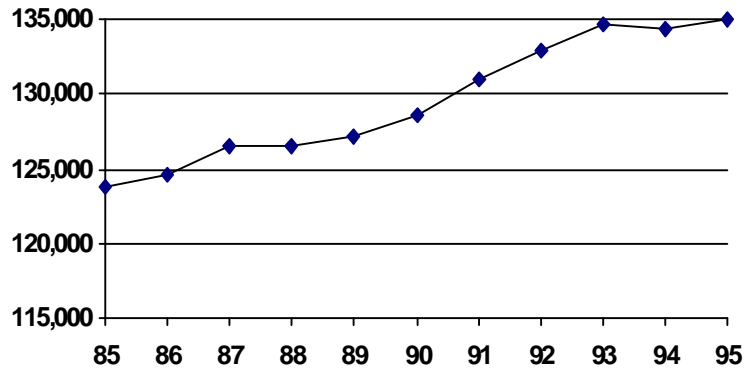
universities, of varying sizes placed throughout the state geographically. The percentage of the state’s population with a college degree, however, is rather low compared to the rest of the nation (though our high school graduate rate is higher than normal).

South Dakota maintains six state

1. Public School Fall Enrollment (K-12) in South Dakota in 1995<sup>16</sup>:

**134,972**

### Fall Enrollment 1985-1995



2. Number of School Districts: **177**

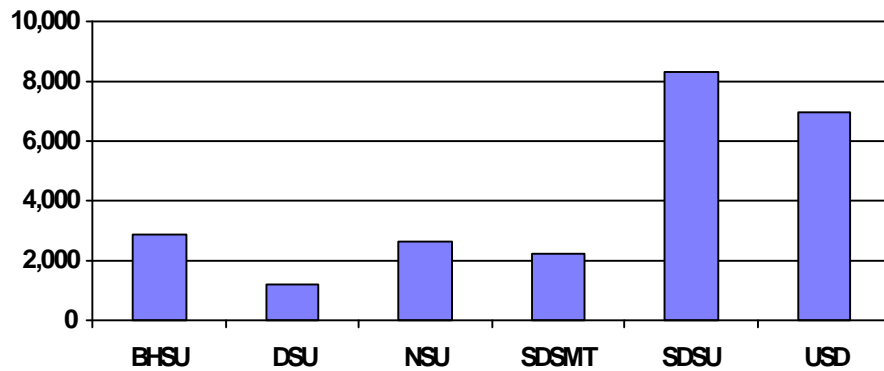
3. 1995-96 Public School Dropouts: **1,847**

Percent of Accumulative Enrollment: **2.73%**

Rank in U.S.<sup>17</sup>: **42nd**

4. Total Enrollment in Regental Universities<sup>18</sup>: **24,269**

### Enrollment by University



5. Percent of Population Graduated from High School as of 1995<sup>19</sup>:

**83.7%**

Rank in U.S.: **22nd**

National Average: **81.7%**

6. Percent of Population Graduated from College as of 1995<sup>20</sup>:

**18.9%**

Rank in U.S.: **42nd**

National Average: **23.0%**

## Conclusion

South Dakota faces a variety of challenges, mixed with a number of advantages, as these statistics show. Economically, the state enjoys low unemployment and decreasing welfare roles. Nevertheless, unemployment is exceedingly high in selected counties, and wages are low statewide. Overall, South Dakota is a

very safe place to live, and also a very healthy state. However, access to care is a major concern for much of this rural state. South Dakotans know the value of a high school diploma, but fewer South Dakota residents choose higher learning than the youth of most other states.

The above statistics only touch upon the many issues facing South Dakota

and its legislators. However, they do our state.  
help to demonstrate the most basic  
points, good and bad, which concern

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**This issue memorandum was written by William E. Pike, Fiscal Analyst for the Legislative Research Council. It is designed to supply background information on the subject and is not a policy statement made by the Legislative Research Council.**

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- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Press Release CB96-224, December 30, 1996.
- <sup>2</sup> <http://venus.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/872273083> August 22, 1997.
- <sup>3</sup> <http://venus.census.gov/cdrom/lookup/872277307> August 22, 1997.
- <sup>4</sup> Poverty thresholds change with number of family members and number of children. For a family of two adults and two children, the threshold is \$15,911. A complete listing can be found at <http://www.census.gov/hhes/poverty/threshld/thresh96.html>
- <sup>5</sup> *South Dakota Health Check-Up*. S. D. Department of Health. August 1996, p. 5.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>7</sup> *State Rankings 1997*. Morgan Quitno: Lawrence, KS, 1997, p. 339.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 555-556.
- <sup>9</sup> *South Dakota Labor Bulletin*. S. D. Department of Labor. August 1997.
- <sup>10</sup> *State Rankings 1997*. Morgan Quitno: Lawrence, KS, 1997, p. 158.
- <sup>11</sup> *Statistical Analysis Report*. S. D. Department of Social Services. June 1997.
- <sup>12</sup> *State Rankings 1997*. Morgan Quitno: Lawrence, KS, 1997, p. 500.
- <sup>13</sup> Department of Corrections Report, updated to January 31, 1997.
- <sup>14</sup> *State Rankings 1997*. Morgan Quitno: Lawrence, KS, 1997. p. 30.
- <sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pages 34, 38, 44, 47, 50.
- <sup>16</sup> *1995-96 Education in South Dakota: A Statistical Profile*. DECA, p. 5.
- <sup>17</sup> *State Rankings 1997*. Morgan Quitno: Lawrence, KS, 1997, p. 134.
- <sup>18</sup> *Fact Book: Fiscal Year 1997*. S. D. Board of Regents, p. 17.
- <sup>19</sup> *State Rankings 1997*. Morgan Quitno: Lawrence, KS, 1997, p. 135.
- <sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 152.