

## General Population Description

**T**ompkins County covers 476 square miles at the southern end of Cayuga Lake, the longest of New York’s Finger Lakes. Centered in the county and along the lake’s southern shore is Ithaca, the county’s seat and only city. Ithaca is approximately 24 miles west of the city of Cortland, and 55 miles south and west of Syracuse by road.

### Neighbors and Region

Tompkins County is bordered by 6 other counties (*see Figure 1, page 24.*) From the northern-most border, clockwise they are:

- Cayuga
- Cortland
- Tioga
- Chemung
- Schuyler
- Seneca

Even though Tompkins County residents and businesses — especially tourism-related businesses — often identify with the Finger Lakes region, for the purposes of many New York State statistical data sets Tompkins County is actually the southwest anchor of the Central New York (CNY) region. The 11-county CNY region includes:

- Cayuga
- Cortland
- Herkimer
- Jefferson
- Lewis
- Madison
- Oneida
- Onondaga
- Oswego
- St. Lawrence
- Tompkins

### Population Rank

U.S. Census July 2004 estimates, of 62 counties	
Cayuga.....	34
Chemung.....	52
Cortland.....	32
Schuyler.....	61
Seneca.....	57
Tioga.....	47
Tompkins.....	29

Throughout this report data for Tompkins County is frequently compared with 3 neighboring counties and with the CNY region. The 3 are Cayuga, Cortland and Tioga, the latter of which is not in the CNY region, but rather part of the “New York–Penn” region.

These counties were chosen over Chemung, Schuyler and Seneca because the border with Chemung is very short, and the populations of Schuyler and Seneca are very small, the combined populations of the two equaling just over half of that for Tompkins County.

### 2000 Census population

Cayuga.....	81,963
Cortland.....	48,599

The population of Tompkins County is 100,135 according to the US Census Bureau July 2004 estimate, an increase of 3.8 percent from the 2000 count of 96,501.

Tompkins .....	96,501
Tioga.....	51,784
CNY .....	1,251,561
NYS .....	18,976,457

From 1990 to 2001 Tompkins' population grew by 2.6 percent. By comparison, neighboring Cortland County lost 1.0 percent of population between 1990 and 2001; New York state gained 5.7 percent and the United States as a whole gained 14.5 percent.

#### Urban Population

Percent, 2000 census	
Cayuga .....	47.5
Cortland .....	55.2
Tompkins .....	58.4
Tioga.....	34.8
CNY .....	61.3

Tompkins County is subdivided into 9 towns and 6 villages. The Census Bureau classifies just over 58 percent of the Tompkins County population as urban and 42 percent as rural. Only one percent of the latter live on a farm. Cortland County's farm population is 1.8 percent of total while in Cayuga County the farm population is 2.5%. (See Figure 2, page 24 and Figure 5, page 26.)

The City of Ithaca is Tompkins' population center with close to one-third (30.3%) of the county total. The Town of Ithaca is home to nearly 19 percent of the county population; the Town of Dryden 14 percent; the Town of Lansing nearly 11 percent. The six least populated towns combined represent just over one-quarter (25.9%) of the population.

Tompkins County is home to three institutions of higher education: Cornell University, Ithaca College and Tompkins Cortland Community College with a combined population of just over 27,000 students. Many of these students live in the City of Ithaca; college dormitories and apartment complexes with high student populations are also located in the Towns of Ithaca, Dryden and Lansing. Much of the county's demographic profile reflects the weight of this sector, as will be shown by the following details.

#### Median Age (Years)

Percent, 2000 census	
Cayuga .....	37
Cortland.....	34
Tioga.....	38
Tompkins (all).....	27
Tompkins (excl-stu) .	39
NYS .....	36

Tompkins County's population is unusually young: more than one quarter (26%) are age 18 to 24 years. This segment accounts for only 16 percent of the population in Cortland County, 9 percent statewide, and 10 percent nationwide. While the proportion of other age segments trend lower when compared with Cortland, the state and nation, the differences are not as striking. (See Figure 5, page 26.)

The Tompkins County Planning Department has obtained U.S. Census 2000 data excluding students (Special Tabulation (Tab) #137.) The figures support the anecdotal evidence that Tompkins' youth stems from the large number of students attending local colleges. Median age for the Tompkins' entire population is 28.6 years. When students are excluded the median age for the remaining population rises to 38.9 years. The latter is very consistent with neighboring counties and the state as a whole.

#### Education.

##### Bachelor's Degree +

This is a highly educated population; 9-out-of-10 residents age 25+

Pct of pop age 25+, 2000	
<b>Tompkins</b> .....	<b>47</b>
Cayuga .....	16
Cortland .....	19
Tioga .....	20
CNY .....	22

years has a high school diploma. Nearly half (47%) of the age 25+ population has a 4-year Bachelor's degree, and the majority of that group holds a graduate or professional degree.

By comparison, bachelor's degrees are held by 19 percent in Cortland County, 27 percent for New York State, and 24 percent for the USA. (See *Figure 6, page 27.*)

#### Drop out rates

Another point which may be a reflection of the academic environment is that Tompkins' high school dropout rates are very low, at only 2.5 percent of the 2000 population age 16-19 years. Comparable rates are: Cortland County 5.1%, and New York State 8.8%. (See *Figure 7, page 27.*)

#### Management, professional & related job

Employed pop age 16+ yrs. Pct, 2000 census	
Tompkins .....	50%
NYS .....	37%

Likewise, Tompkins County's workforce is highly skilled: half (50%) of employed residents age 16+ years are classified, "Management, professional & related" according to the 2000 Census, and one-in-six (17%) are "Education, training & library." Figures for New York State are 37 percent for management and professional jobs, and just one-in-fourteen (7%) for educational jobs.

#### Local Industry

Pct. Local Gross Product by type of enterprise, '02	
Education .....	23.0
Manufacturing .....	12.0
Real Estate .....	9.2
Retail Trade .....	7.3
High-Tech .....	7.0
Health Services .....	4.8

Education accounts for 23 percent of Tompkins County's Local Gross Product (LGP), according to Tompkins County Area Development.<sup>1</sup> Other sectors with more than 5 percent of the LGP include manufacturing, real estate, retail, high tech, government and utilities.

Among the county's largest private and public-sector employers, Cornell has by far the biggest workforce with 8600 employees — 43 percent of those employed at the 27 sites with 155 or more employees. (See *Table 2, page 28.*)

#### Unemployment

The unemployment rate has traditionally been low in Tompkins County — often the lowest in the state. The average unemployment rate for the years 2000–2002 was 3.0 percent in Tompkins, compared with 6.5 percent in Cortland County, 5.6 percent across the CNY region, and 5.2 percent statewide. (See *Figure 8, page 29.*)

Though the numbers are lower, the pattern of unemployment ups and downs across recent years in Tompkins County is similar to that of the region and state, as illustrated in *Figure 9 on page 29.*

Discussions among some professionals suggests that Tompkins' low unemployment rate is skewed by students taking part-time jobs and low paying work-study jobs at the college they are attending. Among those out of school, jobs that utilize the full potential of an individual's educational attainment are not always available, leaving many frustrated by

<sup>1</sup> Tompkins County Area Development Web site <http://www.tcad.org/employers.htm>. Accessed 12/29/03.

*underemployment.*

Job growth in Tompkins County has been favorable in comparison with bordering counties. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that Tompkins non-farm employment gained by 3 percent from 2000 to 2001. By comparison, Cortland County gained only 1.3 percent and the state as a whole only one percent. Extremes in our neighborhood were a 4.2 percent loss in Schuyler County, and a 4.4 percent gain in Tioga. *(See Figure 10, page 30.)*

**Living together.**

**Family Households**

Household type in Tompkins County is also indicative of the large student population. Only 53 percent of the full Tompkins County population lives in a family household, as compared to 64 percent in Cortland County and 66 percent statewide.

When the student population is excluded from the Tompkins County count the proportion of family households increases to 63 percent, more in line with the comparison counties. *(See Figure 11, page 30.)*

More than one quarter (27%) in Tompkins County live in nonfamily households (19% Cortland, 15% NYS) and 11 percent live in noninstitutionalized group quarters (6% Cortland, 2% NYS,) most likely reflecting college dormitory living.

**Population transience**

Pop that lived in a different state 5 years ago. Percent, 2000 census

Tompkins .....	19%
Cortland .....	3%
NYS .....	4%

And the population is highly transient: more than half of Tompkins' residents (2000 population age 5+ years) had lived in a different county or in a different state just five years earlier (34% moved in from a different county and 19% from a different state.) By comparison, just over one-in-five of Cortland County's 2000 census had lived in a different county or state 5 years earlier (19% and 3%, respectively.)

Across New York State between 1995 and 2000, only one-in-six moved from a different county or state of residence (12% and 4%, respectively). *(See Figure 12, page 31.)*

**Diversity.**

**Foreign born**

Percent, 2000 census

Tompkins .....	11%
Cortland .....	2%
Broome .....	5%
NYS .....	20%
U.S. ....	11%

Thanks to the influences of Cornell University, a world renowned institution, Ithaca and Tompkins County are anecdotally considered to cradle diverse populations. More than one-in-ten (11%) of Tompkins' population is foreign-born and 14 percent speak a language other than English at home. While these groups are not unusual compared to state (20% and 28% respectively) or national (11% and 18%) statistics, they do contrast markedly with neighboring Cortland County (2% foreign-born and 4% foreign language.)

**Asian population**

Cornell's influence has also had a role in building Tompkins

Percent, 2000 census	
Tompkins.....	7.2%
Tompkins Ex.Stu ..	3.5%
Cortland.....	0.4%
Cayuga.....	0.4%
Tioga.....	0.6%
NYS.....	5.5%
U.S. ....	3.6%

County's Asian population, which accounts for 7.2 percent of the 2000 census. This tops both the state (5.5%) and national (3.6%) proportion of Asian residents. Less than one percent of Cortland County residents are Asian.

Evidence of the University influence in building the Asian population can be seen when students are factored out of the population data using the U.S. Census Bureau's Special Tabulation #137 of the 2000 census.<sup>2</sup> The proportion of persons of Asian race in Tompkins County is halved when students are excluded from the sample, from 7.2 to 3.5 percent. This is still high compared to surrounding counties, but more consistent with national figures. (See Figure 13, page 31.)

### Black and Hispanic population

With respect to Black and Hispanic or Latino populations, Tompkins County's rural setting appears to trump the influence of Cornell and its neighboring colleges. Eighty-six percent of the population is white, 3.6 percent Black, and 3.1 percent of Hispanic or Latino heritage. When the sample excludes students, Tompkins County's population is 3.4 percent Black and 2.0 percent Hispanic.

Statewide, the figures are 68 percent white, 16 percent Black and 15 percent Hispanic or Latino.

The anecdotal sense of Tompkins' diversity is not without merit, though. Neighboring Cortland County is 97 percent white. The average of the six counties bordering Tompkins County is 95 percent white. (See Figure 14, page 32.)

### Income.

Median HHD Income	
..... (\$ ,000)	
Tompkins.....	37.3
Tompkins ex. Stu ..	43.7
Cortland.....	34.4
Cayuga.....	37.5
NYS.....	43.4
U.S. ....	42.0

At first blush, higher education has not made Tompkins a high income county by statewide standards. Median household income all of New York State is more than 16 percent above that for all Tompkins residents (\$37,272). The national median is nearly 13 percent higher than for Tompkins County. Regionally however, median household income for neighboring counties is as much as 10 percent below Tompkins County (see Table 3, page 32.)

However, the U.S. Census Bureau's Special Tabulation #137 of the 2000 census presents a different picture. Special Tab 137, which was requested by the Tompkins County Planning Department, generates statistics from a population sample that effectively removes the county's college students. This shows the median household income for Tompkins County exclusive of college students is \$43,730, which is 0.8 percent

<sup>2</sup> In 2003, the Tompkins County Planning Department requested and received a Special Tabulation from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. This Special Tabulation (#137) provided separate sets of the 2000 Census data for "college students" and "non-college students" for Tompkins County (by municipality). "College student" was defined as those answering "yes" to question 8a of the Census 2000 "long" form questionnaire ("at any time since February 1, 2000, has this person attended regular school or college?" — for ages 17+ years.)

higher than the state as a whole and 27 percent higher than Cortland County. (See Figure 15, page 33.)

#### Poverty level

Individuals with Income below poverty level	
Tompkins .....	17.6%
Tompkins ex stu ..	8.9%
Cortland .....	15.5%
Tioga .....	8.4%
NYS .....	14.6%
U.S. ....	12.4%

The student population in Tompkins County exerts an influence on the rate of those with income below the poverty level. While among neighboring counties, the state, and the nation, Tompkins County has the highest rate of population with income in 1999 below the poverty rate, the age distribution of those with income below poverty is quite different from the region, state or nation.

In Tompkins County the rate of population in 1999 with income below the poverty rate is more than one-in-six (17.6%.) Yet, in Tompkins more than 4-out-of-5 (83%) of those below poverty are between age 18 and 64 years. Just under 14 percent are children under age 18 years.

Among Cortland County's 15.5 percent of population below poverty, just over 3-in-5 are ages 18–64 years, and 27 percent are children younger than age 18 years. Statewide, 14.6 percent of individuals are below poverty, and of these 56 percent are age 18–64 and 34 percent are under age 18. (See Figure 16, page 33.)

Data from Special Tab #137 supports the interpretation outlined above. When students are excluded from Tompkins' sample population the rate of individuals below poverty is just about halved, falling to 8.9 percent. (See Figure 17, page 34.)

The student influence may also contribute to the patterns seen when poverty level is sorted by household type and by jurisdiction. (See Figure 19, page 35.) Poverty rates among households of unrelated individuals age 15+ years vary widely between jurisdictions in Tompkins County. The highest rates of poverty among these non-family households are found in the City of Ithaca and the Towns of Ithaca and Dryden, all jurisdictions where Cornell students are likely to reside.

Poverty rates among individuals is highest in the City of Ithaca, where 4-in-10 individuals lives below the poverty level. The Town of Enfield shows the next highest level of poverty among individuals. Enfield, located in the southwest corner of Tompkins County, is not convenient to any of the college campuses and therefore less likely to attract a significant student population. Therefore, the numbers for Enfield are more likely to be reflective of the town's long-term residents.

Among selected household types, single moms with young children have the highest rate of living below poverty. (See Figure 20, page 35.) Poverty strikes these families especially hard in the Town of Dryden where nearly 80 percent of families with children under age 5 years and where no husband is present live below poverty. In Enfield, over 60 per-

cent of this family type lives below poverty.

In Enfield, female householders with no husband present and kids under age 18 years make up 8.8 percent of all households (see Table 4, page 36.)

Figures and Tables

Figure 1 — Map of Tompkins County towns and bordering counties

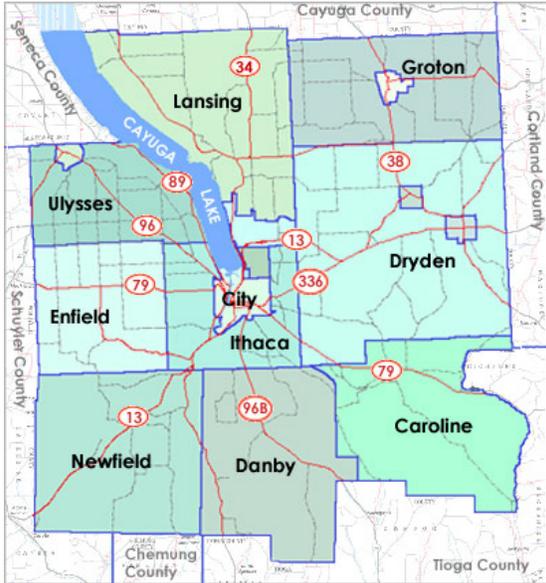


Figure 2 — Urban population, regional comparison

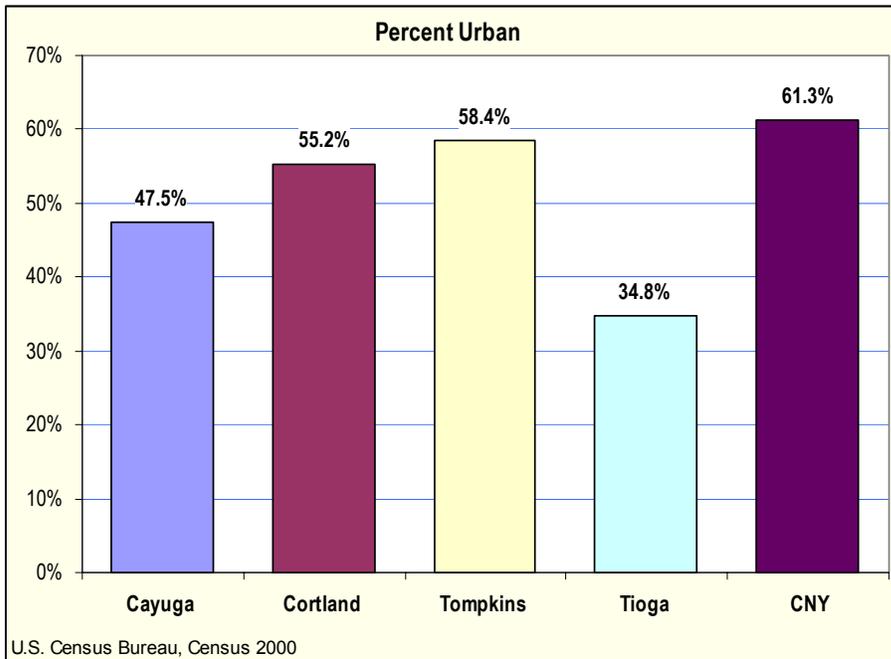


Figure 3 — Urban, farm and nonfarm rural populations, regional comparison

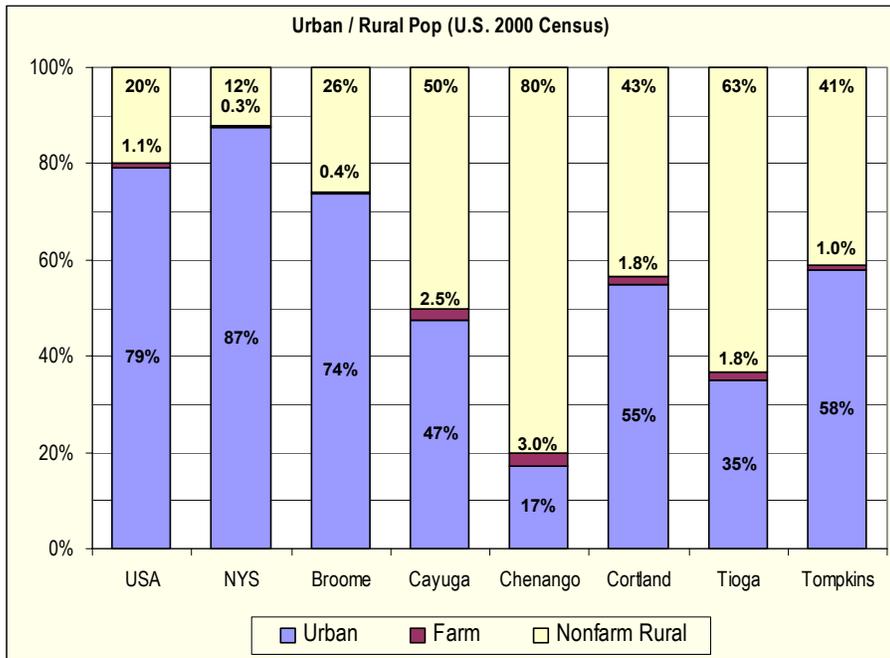


Figure 4 — Median age, regional comparison and Tompkins excluding students

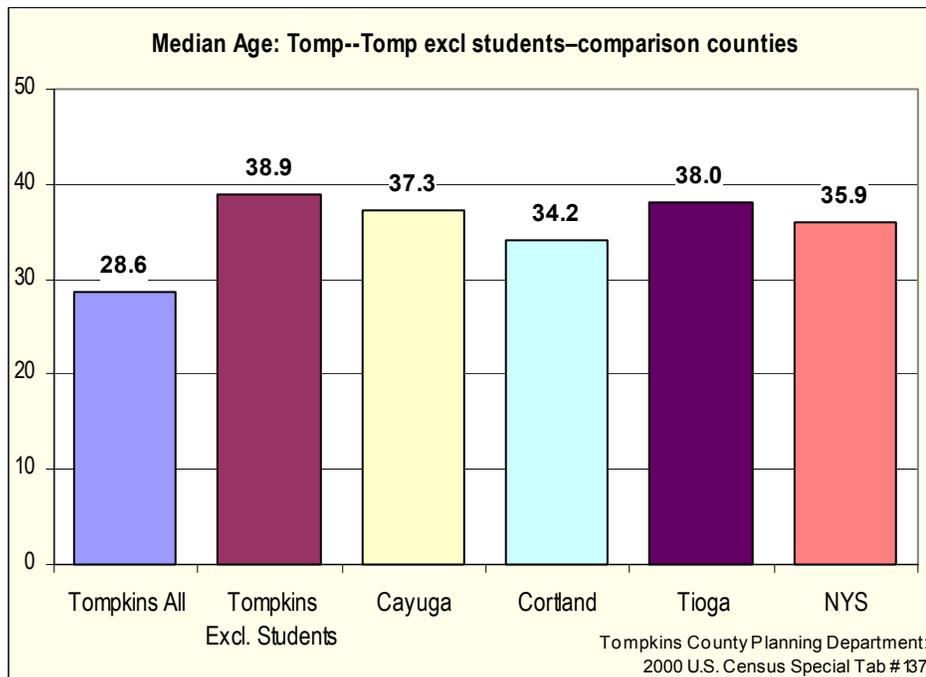
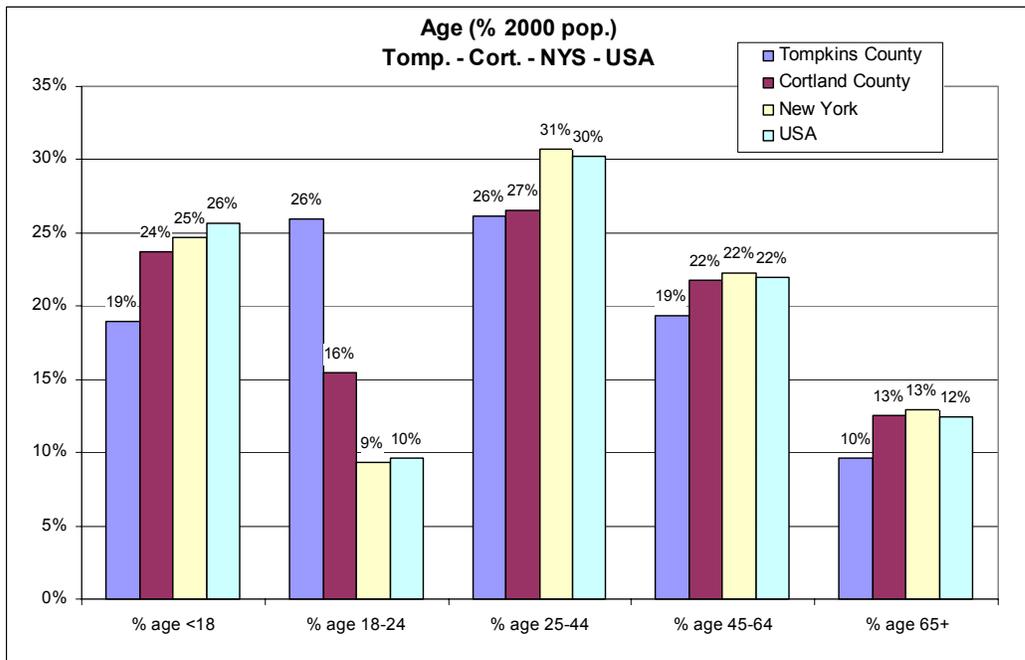


Figure 5 — Population age distribution, regional comparison



Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Table 1 — Population age distribution by Tompkins County towns

	Percent total population						Media Age
	<18 yrs	18-24 yrs	25-44 yrs	45-64 yrs	65+ yrs		
Tompkins Cty	100.0%	19.0%	26.0%	26.2%	19.3%	9.6%	28.6
Caroline town	3.0%	27.1	6.6	28.5	27.9	9.9	37.5
Danby town	3.1%	24.5	6.7	30.0	28.9	9.9	39.7
Dryden town	14.0%	25.5	10.0	30.8	24.6	9.2	35.1
Enfield town	3.5%	27.5	7.2	30.3	26.3	8.8	36.4
Groton town	6.0%	28.1	6.4	28.7	23.9	12.8	37.4
Ithaca city	30.3%	9.2	53.8	20.1	10.6	6.3	22.0
Ithaca town	18.9%	15.1	30.1	24.8	17.1	12.9	28.1
Lansing town	10.9%	26.1	7.7	32.7	23.5	10.1	34.8
Newfield town	5.3%	27.2	7.6	31.5	24.9	8.8	35.7
Ulysses town	4.9%	24.7	5.5	25.7	29.5	14.6	41.7

Figure 6 — Educational attainment, regional comparison

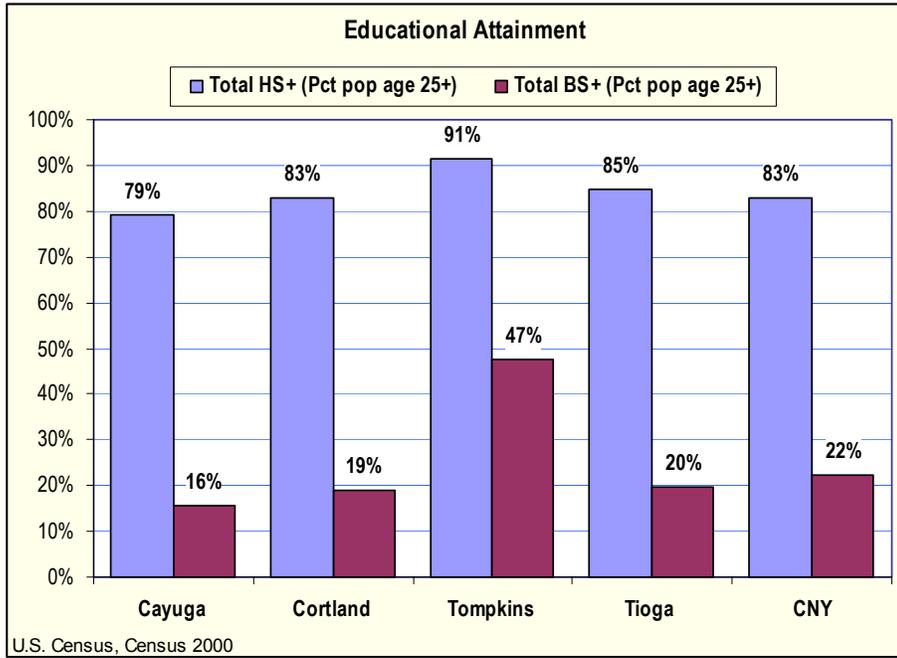


Figure 7 — High school dropout rate, regional comparison

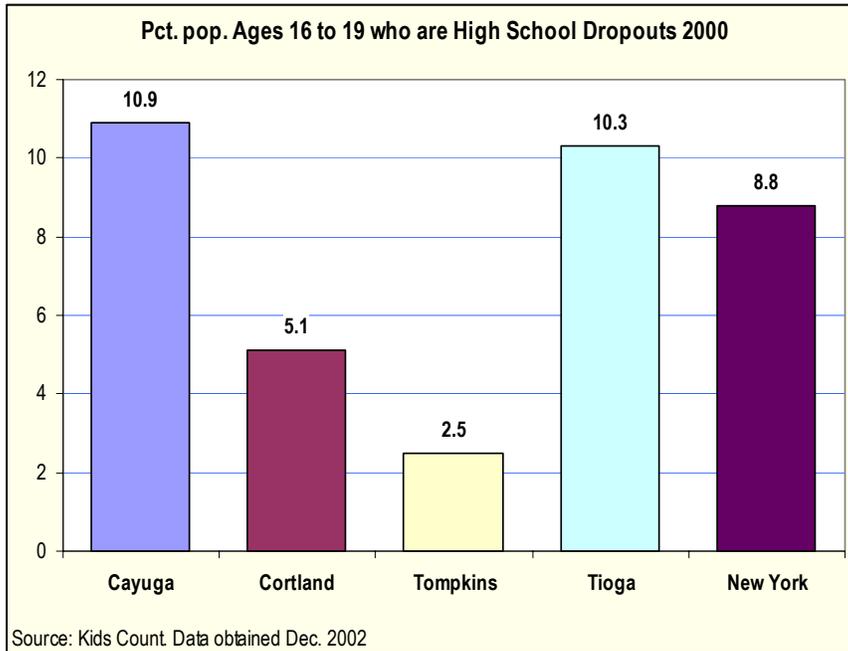


Table 2 — Top employers in Tompkins County (155+ employees)

Source: TCAD 2002		<i>Pct employees of this list of top 27 employers</i>	
1	Cornell University	8,600	Ed 42.7%
2	Borg Warner Automotive	1,460	Mfr 7.3%
3	Ithaca College	1,300	Ed 6.5%
4	Ithaca School District	1,050	Ed-PS 5.2%
5	County of Tompkins	760	Gov 3.8%
6	Cayuga Medical Center at Ithaca	700	Health 3.5%
7	Wegmans	640	Retail 3.2%
8	New York State Electric & Gas	575	Utility 2.9%
9	Emerson Power	550	Mfr 2.7%
10	Axiohm, Inc.	480	Mfr 2.4%
11	City of Ithaca	475	Gov 2.4%
12	TST BOCES	325	Ed-PS 1.6%
13	Lakeside Nursing Center	295	Health 1.5%
14	Wilcox Press	260	Mfr 1.3%
15	George Junior Republic	250	Ed 1.2%
16	Cargill, Inc.	243	Mfr 1.2%
17	Tompkins County Trust Co.	224	Fin 1.1%
18	Tops Supermarket	220	Retail 1.1%
19	Therm, Inc.	219	Mfr 1.1%
20	Tompkins Cortland Comm. Col.	210	Ed-PS 1.0%
21	Trumansburg Schools	210	Ed-PS 1.0%
22	CBORD Group	207	Mfr 1.0%
23	Challenge Industries	205	Mfr 1.0%
24	Dryden Schools	191	Ed-PS 0.9%
25	P&C Market	170	Retail 0.8%
26	H&E Machinery	160	Mfr 0.8%
27	Groton Schools	155	Ed-PS 0.8%
Total for this list of the top 27 employers		20,134	100.0%

Figure 8 — Unemployment rate, regional comparison

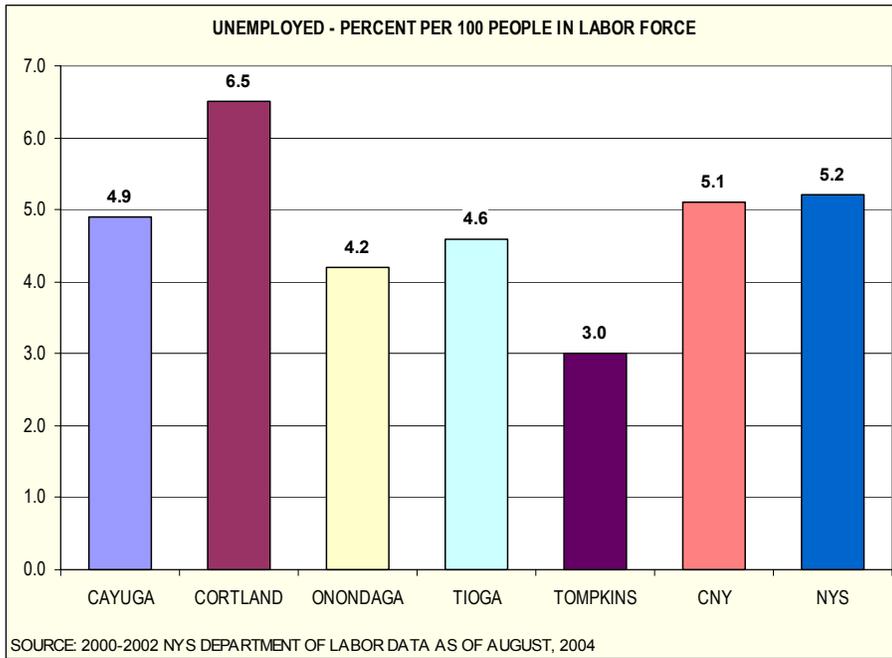


Figure 9 — Unemployment rate, 4-year trends

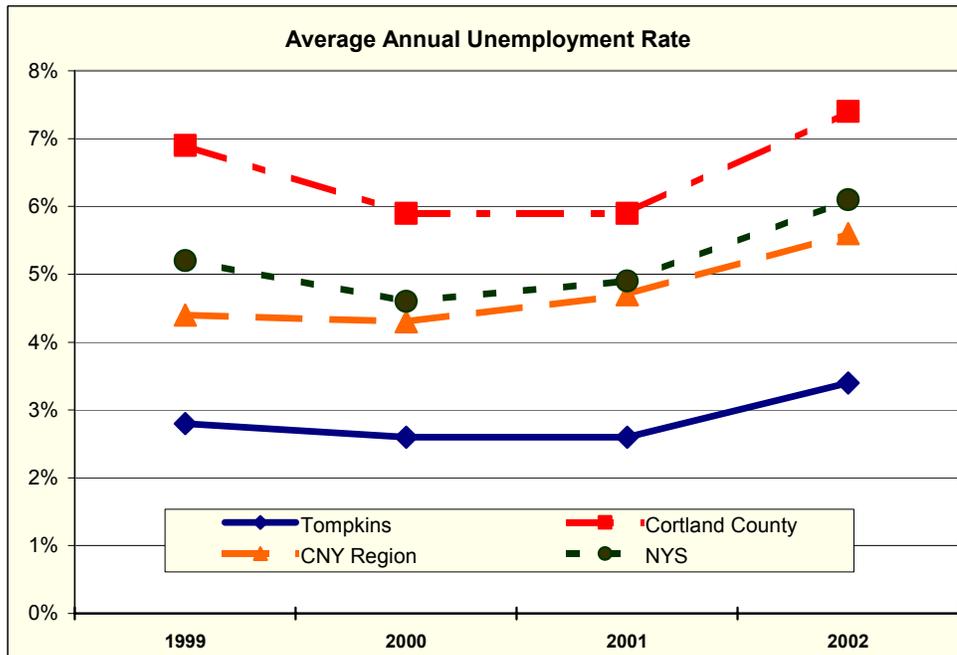


Figure 10 — Change in private nonfarm employment, regional comparison

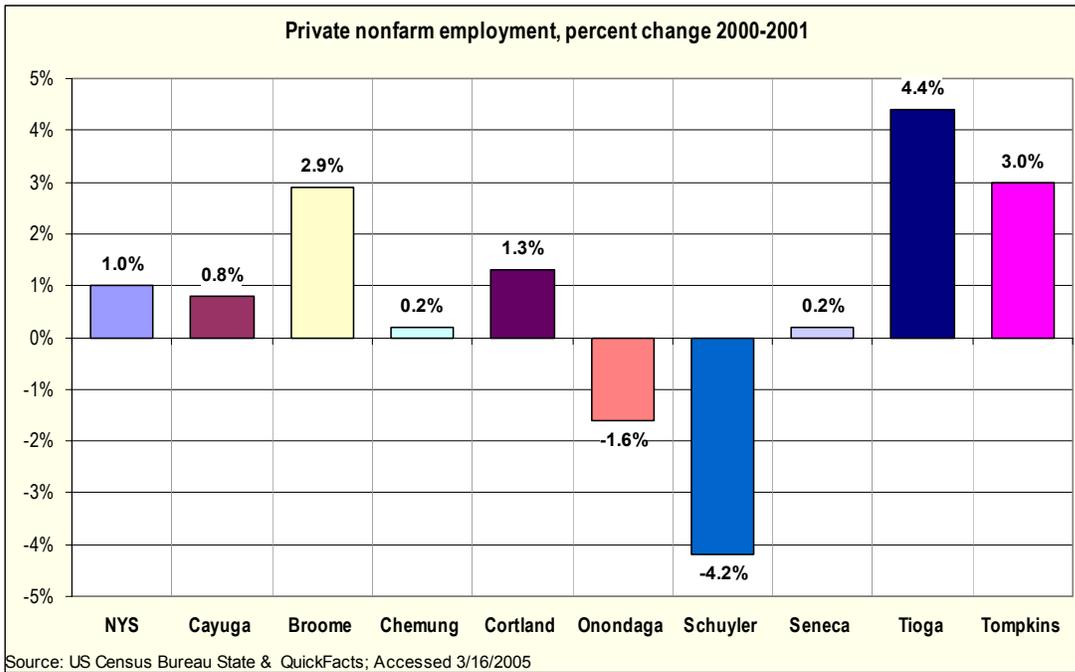


Figure 11 — Percent family households, regional comparison and Tompkins excluding students

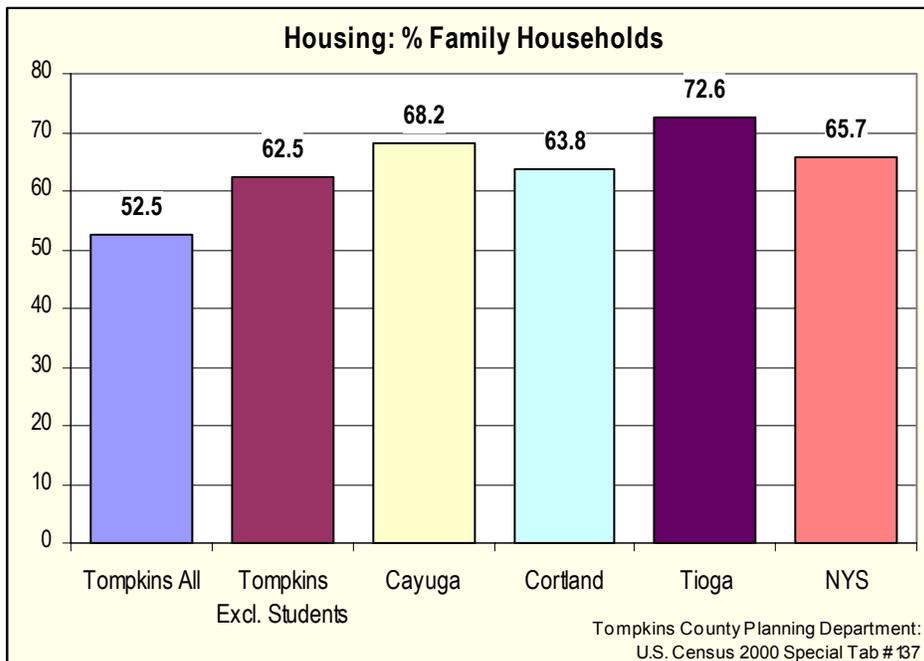


Figure 12 — Population transience, regional comparison

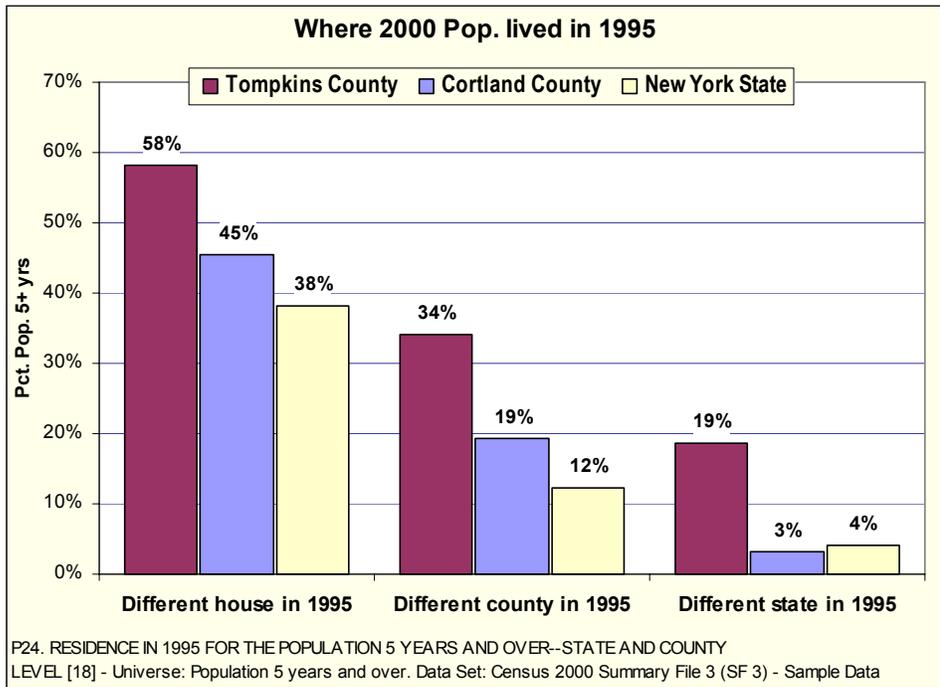


Figure 13 — Asian population, regional comparison

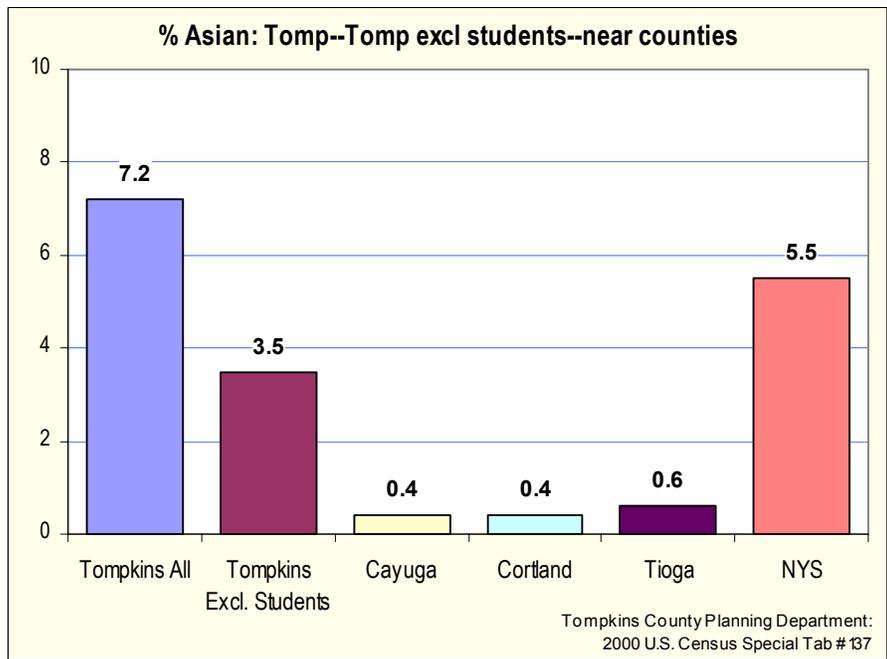


Figure 14 — Black and Hispanic population, regional comparison

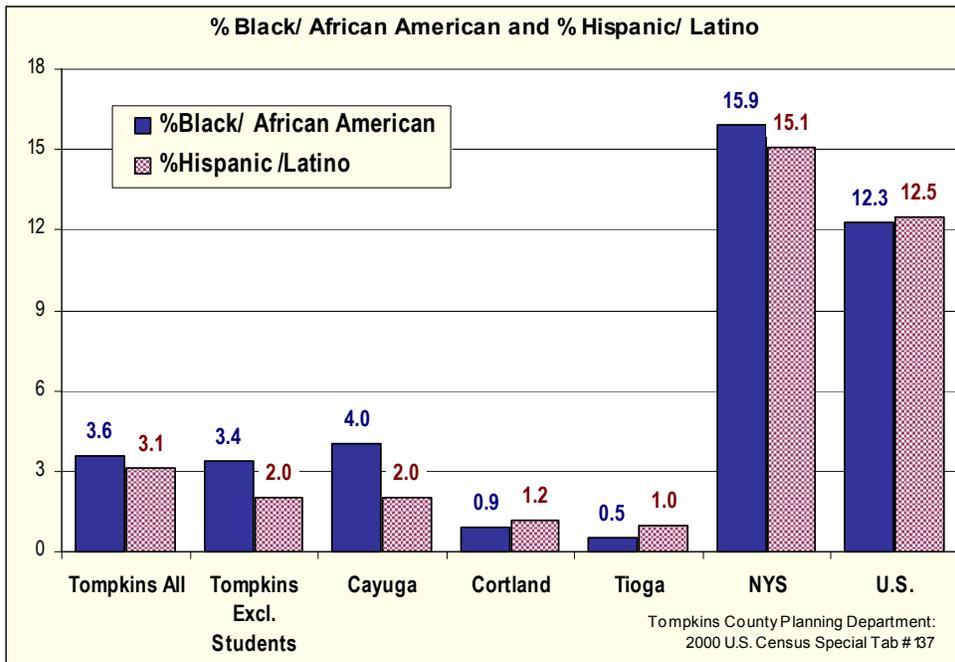


Table 3 — median household income. Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.

	USA	NYS	Broome	Chenango	Cortland	Tioga	<b>Tompkins</b>
Median household income in 1999	\$41,994	\$43,393	\$35,347	\$33,679	\$34,364	\$40,266	\$37,272
As a percent of Tompkins	112.7%	116.4%	94.8%	90.4%	92.2%	108.0%	<b>100.0%</b>

Figure 15 — Median household income, regional comparison

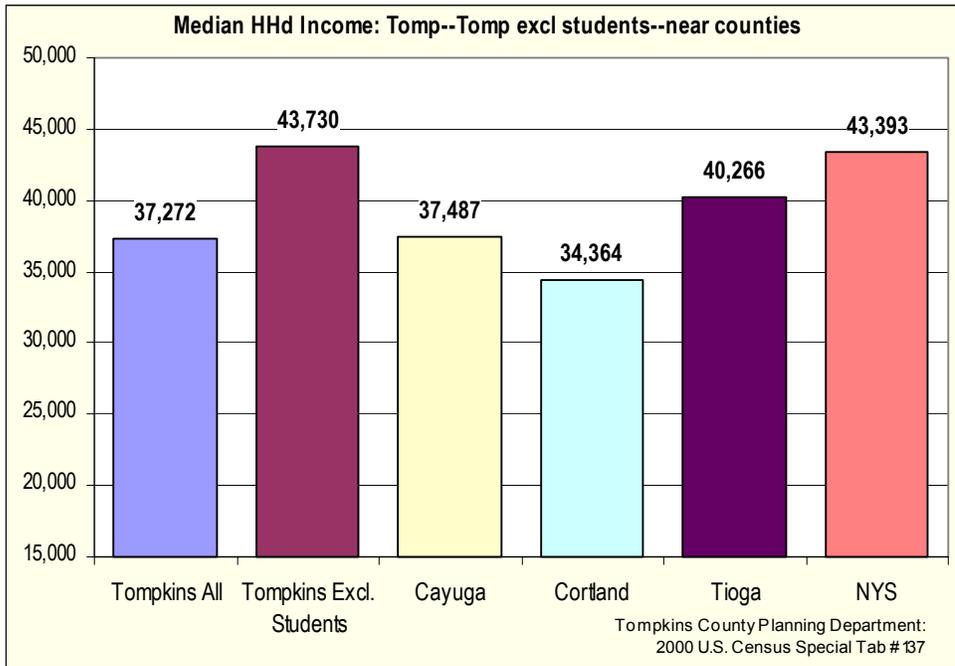


Figure 16 — Population below poverty by age, regional comparison

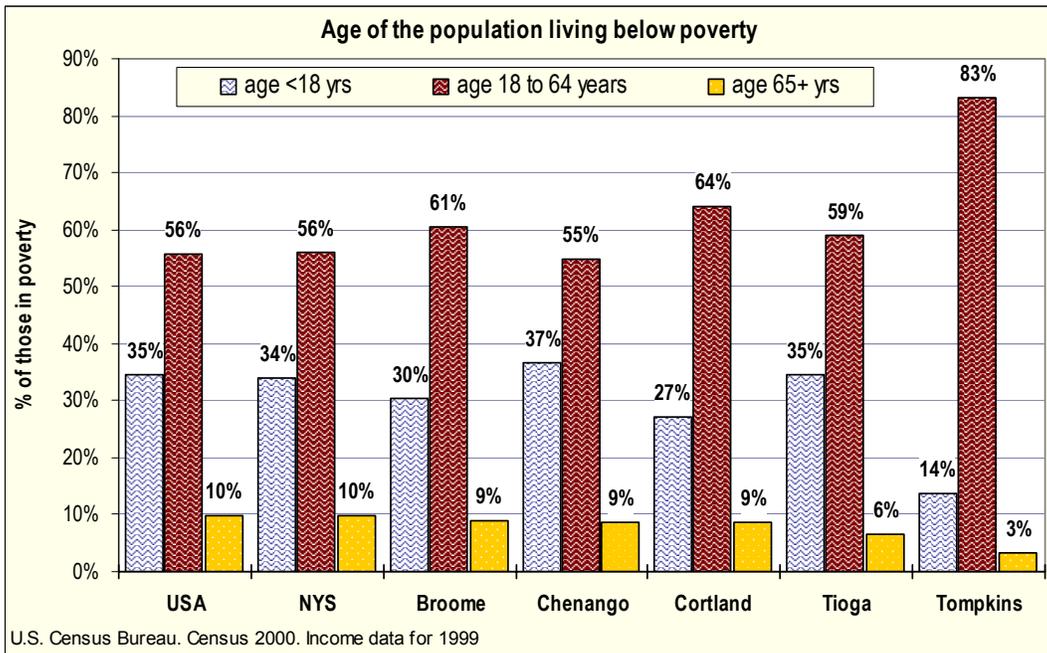


Figure 17 — Individuals below poverty, regional comparison

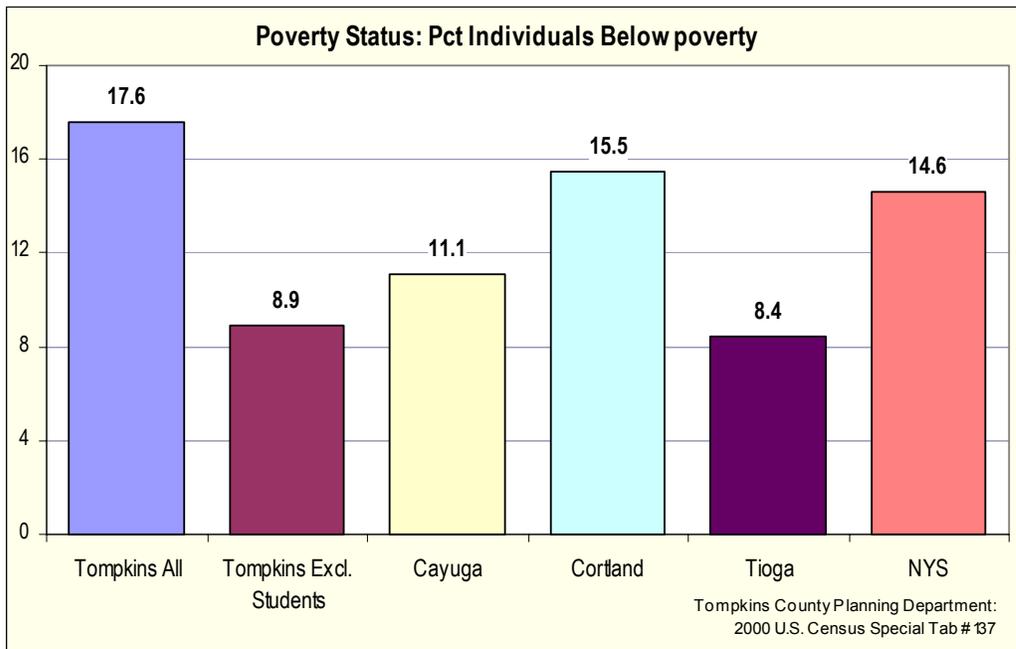


Figure 18 — Families below poverty, regional comparison

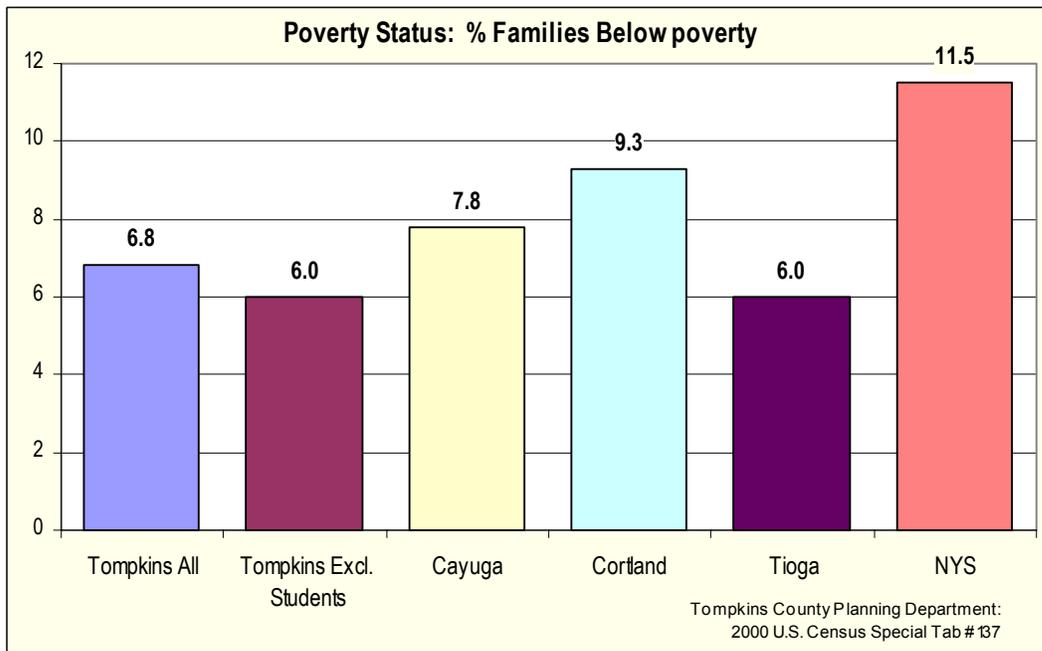


Figure 19 — Population below poverty by household type, regional comparison

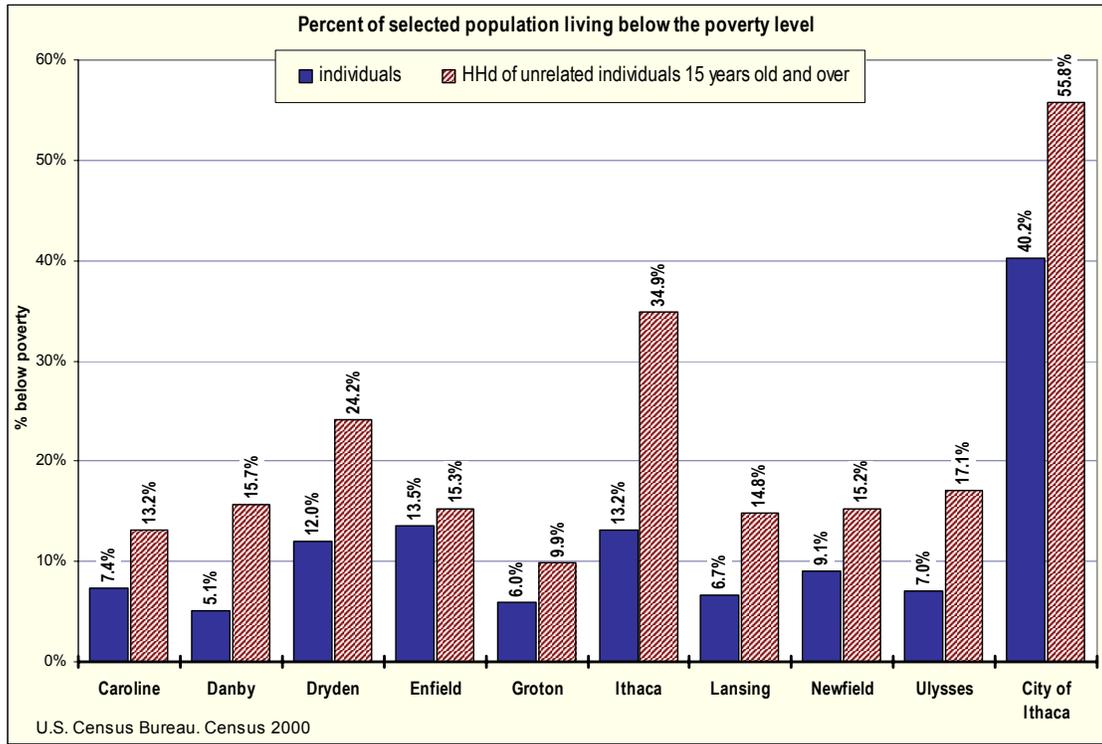


Figure 20 — Population below poverty by family type, regional comparison

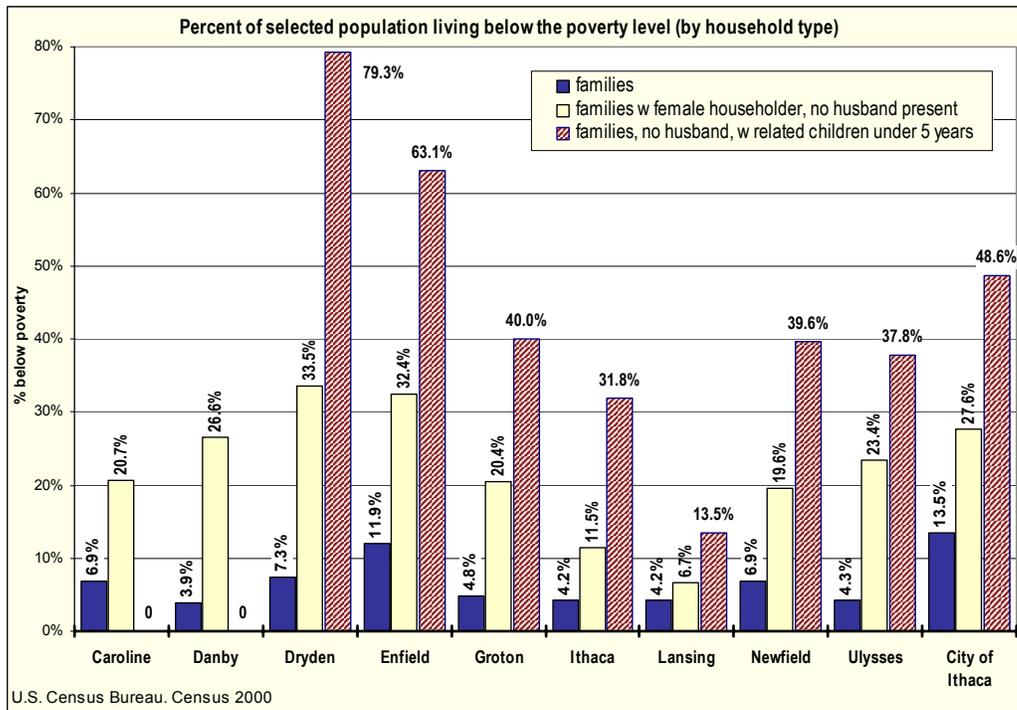


Table 4 — Female householder, no husband present, with own kids under age 18

	Pct all HHds
Tompkins County	5.6%
City of Ithaca	5.1%
T Caroline	6.8%
T Danby	5.6%
T Dryden	5.8%
T Enfield	8.8%
T Groton	7.8%
T Ithaca	3.7%
T Newfield	8.1%
T Ulysses	6.7%
Source: U.S. Census, 2000	