



and there are still some in town who refer to it as such (Nickens 2000). Atlantic was incorporated in 1905 but no longer has a municipal government (Carteret County Schools 2007).

### Demographics<sup>3</sup>

According to Census 2000 data, Atlantic NC had a total population of 817, up 23.8% from the reported population of 660 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990). Of this 2000 total, 51.0% were female and 49.0% were male. The median age was 44.2 years and 77.8% of the population was 21 years or older while 23.3% were 62 or older.

The age structure for Atlantic (Figure 1) shows that the community had a slightly aging population, with the greatest numbers of both men and women in the 50-59 age category. There was a slight decline in the number of males for the 20-29 year old category, indicating that some may have left in search of jobs or to go to college, but this trend is not observed in women, and the out-migration of young people observed in many communities is not as apparent here.

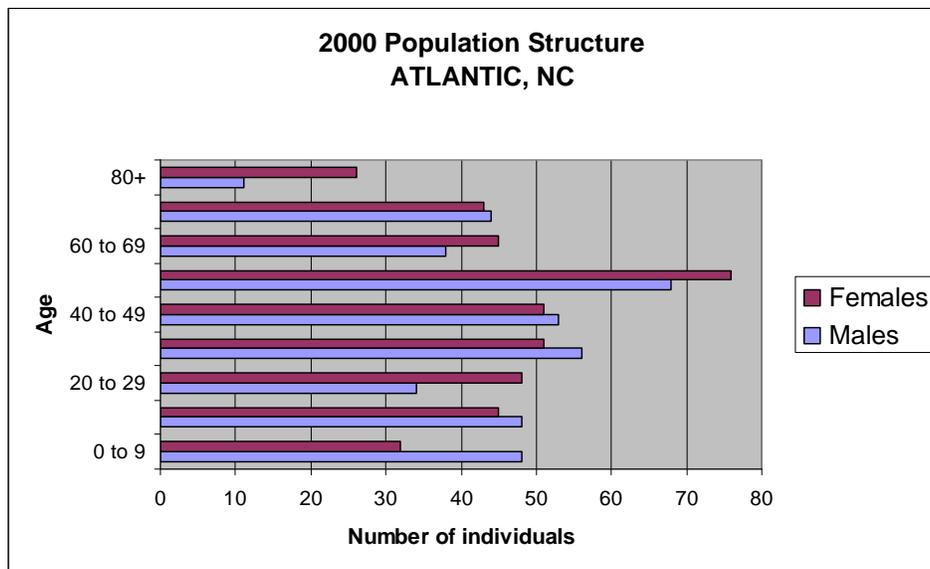


Figure 1. Atlantic's population structure by sex in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

The majority of the population of Atlantic was white (97.5%), with 0.1% of residents Black or African American, 0.2% Asian, 1.9% Native American, and 0.1% Pacific Islander or Hawaiian (Figure 2). Only 1.3% of residents identified themselves as Hispanic/Latino (Figure 3). Residents linked their heritage to a number of different ancestries including: English (19.5%), Irish (6.7%), and other ancestries (5.2%). With regard to region of birth, 81.4% were born in North Carolina, 17.0% were born in a different state and 1.6% were born outside of the U.S. (including the same 1.6% who were not United States citizens).

<sup>3</sup> While mid-term estimates are available for some larger communities, data from the 2000 Census are the only data universally available for the communities being profiled in the Northeast. Thus for cross-comparability we have used 2000 data even though these data may have changed significantly since 2000 for at least some communities.

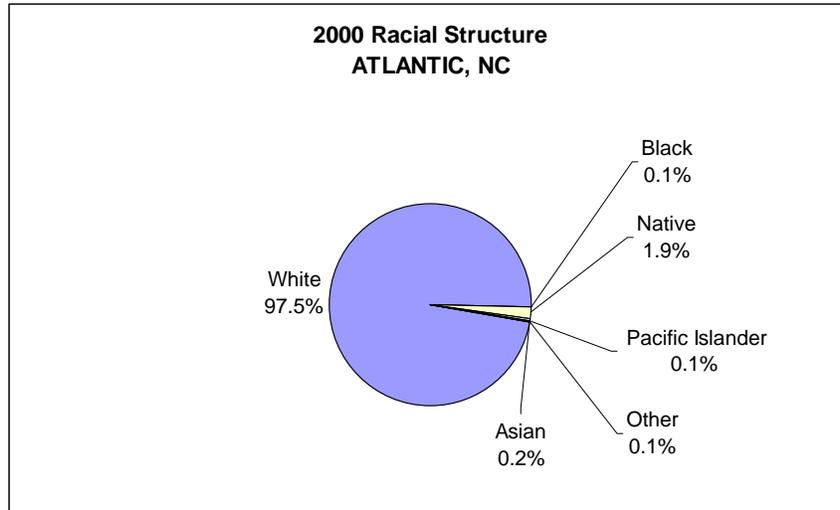


Figure 2. Racial Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

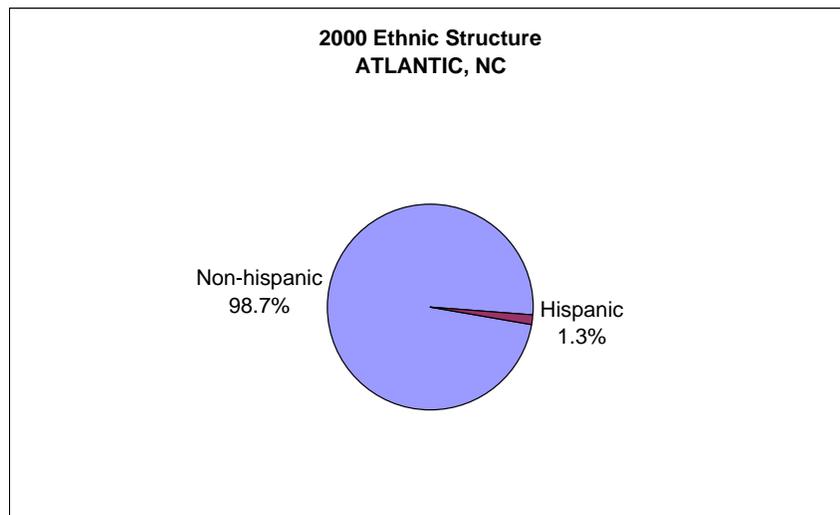


Figure 3. Ethnic Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

For 88.7% of the population 5 years old and higher, only English was spoken in the home, leaving 11.3% in homes where a language other than English was spoken, and including 1.6% of the population who spoke English less than “very well.”

Of the population 25 years and over, 72.5% were high school graduates or higher and 7.5% had a bachelor’s degree or higher. Again of the population 25 years and over, 8.1% did not reach ninth grade, 19.4% attended some high school but did not graduate, 39.2% completed high school, 22.4% had some college with no degree, 3.5% received an associate’s degree, 4.3% earned a bachelor’s degree, and 3.2% received either a graduate or professional degree.

Although religious percentages are not available through the U.S. Census, according to the Association of Religion Data Archive (ARDA) in 2000 the religion with the highest number of congregations and adherents in Carteret County was Southern Baptist Convention with 20 congregations and 7,079 adherents. Other prominent congregations in the county were United Methodist (22 with 6,057 adherents), Catholic (1 with 1,798 adherents), and Original Free Will Baptists (13 with 1,662 adherents). The total number of adherents to any religion was up 1.0% from 1990 (ARDA 2000).

## **Issues/Processes**

Concerned that clam leases in this area would restrict water access to commercial and recreational fishermen and others using the waters recreationally, a group of residents fought for 14 years to prevent the waters of Core Sound from being leased for clam harvesting. A bill was passed in 2004 after 14 years of lobbying by Atlantic residents that prevents the leasing of clam beds in Core Sound (Sea Grant North Carolina 2005).

Shrimp fishermen along the North Carolina coast have suffered because of decreasing prices of shrimp, resulting from an increase of foreign farmed shrimp on the market. North Carolina shrimp fishermen are working to promote their wild-caught shrimp to create a niche market and higher prices for their product (Sea Grant North Carolina 2005). The North Carolina Division of Marine Fisheries was discussing minimum size limits for the shrimp that could be taken by trawlers, noting that foreign imports have cornered the market on small shrimp (Smith 2005).

Hurricane Isabel in 2003 had a big impact on the commercial fishing industry in this area, destroying some fishing equipment and vessels, and polluting the area waters, closing them to fishing for months (Insiders.com).

## **Cultural attributes**

[The Core Sound Waterfowl Museum](#) on nearby Harker's Island has numerous educational exhibits dedicated to the history of fishing in this area, including displays on various forms of commercial fishing in the region.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Current Economy**

[Clayton Fulcher Seafood Co.](#) and the [Luther Smith and Son Fish House](#) are two of the largest seafood dealers on the east coast. Clayton Fulcher Seafood has 5 full-time employees and 4-5 part-time seasonal employees,<sup>4</sup> and Luther Smith and Sons employs 4 people full time.<sup>5</sup> [The Marine Corps Outlying Field](#) in Atlantic is a 1,500-acre military training field. Atlantic is also home to part of the [Mid-Atlantic Electronic Warfare Range](#), a 10,000-acre electronic practice range at the eastern tip of Carteret County. The Cherry Point Marine Corps Air Station is about 50 miles from Atlantic, and employs 1,770 Carteret County residents, or about 30% of the civilian population (Insiders.com 2007a), in addition to the roughly 7,500 marines and sailors stationed there. While many people in this area still rely on the water to make a living, an increasing number are commuting to Beaufort and Morehead City or to the Cherry Point station for employment (Insiders.com 2007a).

According to the US Census 2000, 46.0% (311 individuals) of the total population 16 years of age and over were in the labor force (Figure 4), of which 2.2% were unemployed, none were in the Armed Forces, and 43.8% were employed.

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<sup>4</sup> Personal Communication, Ann Fulcher, Clayton Fulcher Seafood Co., 1050 Seashore Dr, Atlantic, North Carolina 28511, July 22, 2005

<sup>5</sup> Personal Communication, Luther Smith and Sons, 1023 Sea Shore Dr., Atlantic, NC, July 22, 2005

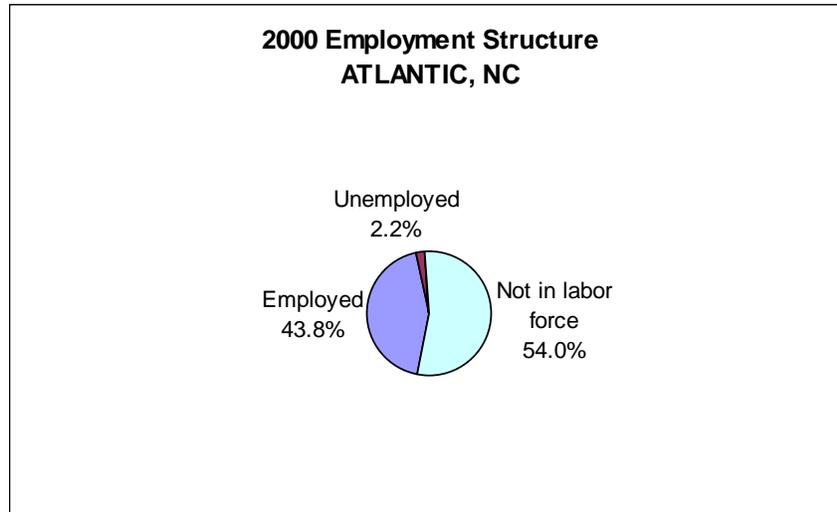


Figure 4. Employment Structure in 2000 (US Census Bureau 2000)

According to Census 2000 data, jobs in the census grouping which includes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining accounted for 38 positions or 12.8% of all jobs. Self employed workers, a category where fishermen might be found, accounted for 44 positions or 14.9% of jobs. Education, health, and social services (25.0%), public administration (13.2%), and retail trade (8.4%) were the primary industries.

Median household income in Atlantic was \$26,550 (up 62.8% from \$16,307 in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990a)) and per capita income was \$17,374. For full-time year round workers, males made approximately 36.6% more per year than females.

The average family in Atlantic consisted of 2.75 persons. With respect to poverty, 18.1% of families (up from 12.6% in 1990 (US Census Bureau 1990a)) and 23.1% of individuals were below the U.S. Census poverty threshold. This threshold is \$8,794 for individuals and ranges from \$11,239 through \$35,060 for families, depending on number of persons (2-9) (US Census Bureau 2000b). In 2000, 64.5% of all families (of any size) earned less than \$35,000 per year.

In 2000, Atlantic had a total of 436 housing units, of which 80.1% were occupied and 77.3% were detached one-unit homes. Over ten percent (11.9%) of these homes were built before 1940. Mobile homes accounted for 22.7% of the total housing units; 92.7% of detached units had between 2 and 9 rooms. In 2000, the median cost for a home in this area was \$80,200. Of vacant housing units, 76.7% were used for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use. Of occupied units 14.6% were renter occupied.

## **Government**

Atlantic is an unincorporated community within Carteret County. The county Board of Commissioners is made up of seven commissioners elected in staggered 4-year terms (Cartaret County NC 2005).

### *Fishery involvement in the government*

Carteret County has a Marine Fisheries Advisory Board (Cartaret County NC 2005a).

## **Institutional**

### *Fishing associations*

Until recently, Atlantic had a Fishermen's Legal Fund, which was set up primarily to fight a clam lease issue in Core Sound. The fund is no longer active because a bill was passed prohibiting the use of clam leases in this part of Core Sound.<sup>6</sup>

[The North Carolina Fisheries Association](#) has been supporting fishing families since 1952, with the goal "to celebrate and preserve commercial fishing families, heritage, and seafood" in North Carolina. This is achieved through lobbying federal, state, and local legislators and through public awareness projects.

### *Fishery Assistance Centers*

The Fishermen's Legal Fund, primarily used to fight loss of access in Core Sound because of clam leases, was set up to help commercial fishermen stay in business, but is no longer active.<sup>7</sup> The Trade Adjustment Assistance for Farmers (TAA) program has provided business education to shrimpers in the state to assist them in recent changes in the market of shrimp, and also provided some training to shrimpers to exit the business if they chose (Sea Grant North Carolina 2005).

### *Other fishing related organizations*

Information on other fishing-related organizations was unavailable through secondary data collection.

## **Physical**

The community of Atlantic is located at the end of a peninsula that sticks out into Pamlico Sound. Core Sound separates this section of the mainland from [Cape Lookout National Seashore](#) on the Outer Banks. A [ferry](#) runs between Atlantic and Portsmouth Island on North Core Banks. Atlantic is located at the very end of Interstate 70, which travels from here to Raleigh. It is 30 miles to Beaufort, 35 miles to Morehead City, and 175 miles to Raleigh from here. The nearest airport is 20 miles away in Beaufort (MapQuest 2005).

There are two marinas in Atlantic: [Morris Marine](#) services recreational vessels, and Drum Inlet Seafood and Marina has 30 dock slips used by both commercial fishermen and recreational vessels.<sup>8</sup> Clayton Fulcher Seafood and Luther Smith and Sons each have their own docks used to pack out by fishermen. The Roger Harris Net Shop, located in Atlantic, employs four people and makes and repairs shrimp nets and other nets for fishermen throughout the Southeast (CCEDC 2005).

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<sup>6</sup> Personal Communication, Lynn Saunders, Fishermen's Legal Fund, July 22, 2005

<sup>7</sup> Personal Communication, Lynn Saunders, Fishermen's Legal Fund, July 22, 2005

<sup>8</sup> Personal Communication, Drum Inlet Seafood, Highway 70, Atlantic, NC 28511, July 26, 2005

## INVOLVEMENT IN NORTHEAST FISHERIES<sup>9</sup>

### Commercial

Carteret County consistently leads the rest of North Carolina in seafood landings (CCEDC 2005). The fleet in Atlantic generally catches shrimp in the summer and clams in the winter. One Atlantic resident interviewed by Bonnie McCay and Marie Cieri said that all people do in Atlantic is “fish and clam (McCay, Cieri 2000).” At the time there were an estimated 30 clambers in Atlantic (McCay, Cieri 2000). Clayton Fulcher Seafood and Luther Smith and Sons Inc. are both large fish processing plants located in Atlantic. According to Clayton Fulcher III, the two businesses have always gotten along well, despite being competitors. Each of these businesses runs an additional facility somewhere else (North Carolina Fisheries Association 2002). Luther Smith and Sons Inc. has operated since 1940 (Insiders.com 2005a). The boats belonging to Fulcher, fish inshore in Core Sound and Pamlico Sound, while the Smith vessels fish offshore and travel further for their fish. Clayton Fulcher Seafood owns only one boat now, and has 7-8 shrimpers that pack out there, and an additional three small boats fishing with pound nets that sell their catch to Fulcher. They also have their own ice plant.<sup>10</sup> Luther Smith and Sons has around 10 vessels unloading at their facility, none of which are owned by the company anymore. The vessels unloading at both of these facilities are local.<sup>11</sup> Drum Inlet Seafood packs clams purchased from a number of local clambers and taken from their own clam boats.<sup>12</sup> Atlantic also has an aquaculture facility growing clams, Cox Clam Farms, Inc., which are sold locally by Clams, Inc. and [Drum Inlet Seafood](#).

In 2003, Hurricane Isabel polluted the waters around Atlantic, closing the area to commercial fishing for many months (Insiders.com 2005). This may be responsible for the lack of landings of any kind in Atlantic from 2002 to 2006. The most valuable catch in Atlantic has been in the “other” category, which would include both shrimp and clams (Table 1). Landings in Atlantic completely dropped to zero in 2006 (although both fish houses indicated they had vessels landing there now), and there is now only one vessel whose owner lives in Atlantic. However, the value of fishing to vessels listing Atlantic as their home port, who must be landing their catch elsewhere, has remained relatively constant (Table 2).

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<sup>9</sup> In reviewing the commercial landings data several factors need to be kept in mind. 1) While both federal and state landings are included, some states provide more detailed data to NMFS than others. For example, shellfish may not be included or data may be reported only by county and not by port. 2) Some communities did not have individual port codes until more recently. Before individual port codes were assigned, landings from those ports were coded at the county level or as an aggregate of two geographically close small ports. Where landings were coded at the county level they cannot be sorted to individual ports for those earlier years, e.g., prior to 2000. 3) Where aggregated codes were used, those aggregate codes may still exist and be in use alongside the new individual codes. Here the landings which are still assigned to the aggregate port code cannot be sorted into the individual ports, so port level data are only those which used the individual port code. 4) Even when individual port codes exist, especially for small ports, landings may be coded at the county level. Here again it is impossible to disaggregate these to a port level, making the port level landings incomplete. 5) In all these cases, the per port data in this profile may under report the total level of landings to the port, though all landings are accounted for in the overall NMFS database.

<sup>10</sup> Personal Communication, Ann Fulcher, Clayton Fulcher Seafood Co., 1050 Seashore Dr, Atlantic, North Carolina 28511, July 22, 2005

<sup>11</sup> Personal Communication, Luther Smith and Sons, 1023 Sea Shore Dr., Atlantic, NC, July 22, 2005

<sup>12</sup> Personal Communication, Drum Inlet Seafood, Highway 70, Atlantic, NC 28511, July 26, 2005

## Landings by Species

Table 1. Dollar value by Federally Managed Groups of landings in Atlantic

	Average from 1997-2006	2006 only
Other <sup>13</sup>	392,566	0
Summer Flounder, Scup, Black Sea Bass	43,200	0
Scallop	35,724	0
Squid, Mackerel, Butterfish	5,371	0
Bluefish	1,632	0
Monkfish	1,630	0
Skate	15	0
Largemouth Groundfish <sup>14</sup>	7	0
Tilefish	7	0

## Vessels by year<sup>15</sup>

Table 2. All columns represent vessel permits or landings value combined between 1997-2006

Year	# Vessels (home ported)	# vessels (owner's city)	Level of fishing home port (\$)	Level of fishing landed port (\$)
1997	6	6	1,974,705	1,231,056
1998	7	7	2,373,304	1,696,359
1999	8	2	2,718,786	1,003,298
2000	5	3	2,312,243	516,502
2001	4	1	2,480,670	354,298
2002	4	1	2,433,323	0
2003	4	1	2,789,624	0
2004	4	1	3,835,377	0
2005	6	4	4,521,452	0
2006	4	1	3,508,618	0

# Vessels home ported = No. of permitted vessels with location as homeport

# Vessels (owner's city) = No. of permitted vessels with location as owner residence<sup>16</sup>

Level of fishing home port (\$) = Landed value of fisheries associated with home ported vessels

Level of fishing landed port (\$) = Landed value of fisheries landed in location

## Recreation

Recreational fishing is a billion dollar industry in North Carolina (Stoffle nd). The [Core Sound](#) area is a popular region for angling. [Morris Marina](#) in Atlantic, which runs the ferry, advertises its access to fishing on nearby Portsmouth Island, part of North Core Banks, which they call “the best fishing on the Outer Banks.”

## Subsistence

Information on subsistence fishing in Atlantic was either unavailable through secondary data collection or the practice does not exist.

<sup>13</sup> “Other” species includes any species not accounted for in a federally managed group

<sup>14</sup> Largemouth groundfish: cod, winter flounder, yellowtail flounder, American plaice, sand-dab flounder, haddock, white hake, redfish, and pollock

<sup>15</sup> Numbers of vessels by owner’s city and homeport are as reported by the permit holder on permit application forms. These may not correspond to the port where a vessel lands or even spends the majority of its time when docked.

<sup>16</sup> The Owner-City from the permit files is technically the address at which the owner receives mail concerning their permitted vessels, which could reflect the actual location of residence, the mailing address as distinct from residence, owner business location, or the address at which a subsidiary receives mail about the permits.

## **FUTURE**

In 2006, Carteret County was considering a one-year moratorium on coastal development in order to plan for better environmental protection in fragile coastal habitats (AP 2006).

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