

Planned Parenthood: A Spatial Analysis of Locations

Los Angeles County, California



Introduction

Planned Parenthood, a nonprofit organization whose mission statement is dedicated to providing reproductive health services and education to women in the United States, has recently faced escalating controversy and threats of defunding after a variety of anti abortion “sting” videos were released in the fall of 2015. While the Senate blocked a bill passed by the House of Representatives on September 18th that would have defunded Planned Parenthood as a title x provider and implemented a federal abortion band, investigations into the organization’s services and mission statement has brought Planned Parenthood to the center stage of scrutiny. Planned Parenthood’s services include access to birth control, comprehensive sex education, STI testing, and cancer screenings, as well as abortion services.

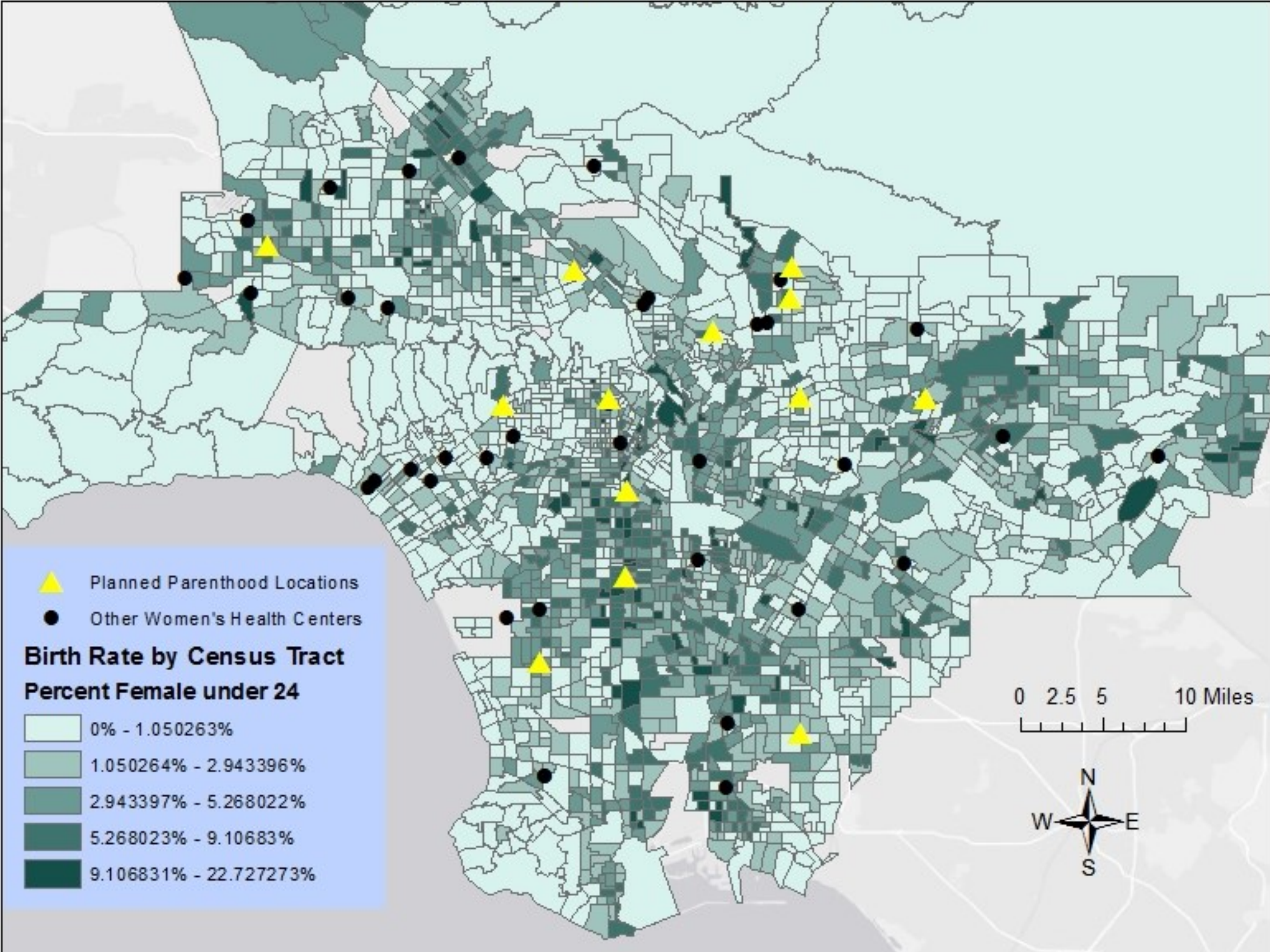
Questions about who has access to these services have been addressed in a variety of different ways. Most sources believe that Planned Parenthood is one of the only options for women’s health care for impoverished women, and that the effects of defunding would be catastrophic. Still other sources have stated that Planned Parenthood targets minority areas and areas with low educational attainment for monetary gain. In order to begin to answer some of these questions, it is important to see what populations are near Planned Parenthood locations, and to compare these populations to the locations of other women’s reproductive health centers. By visualizing the locations of Planned Parenthood and other health centers in relation to certain demographic features, as well as using spatial analysis to look at averages in order to differentiate between the different locations, this project hopes to answer some of the above spatial questions.

Methodology

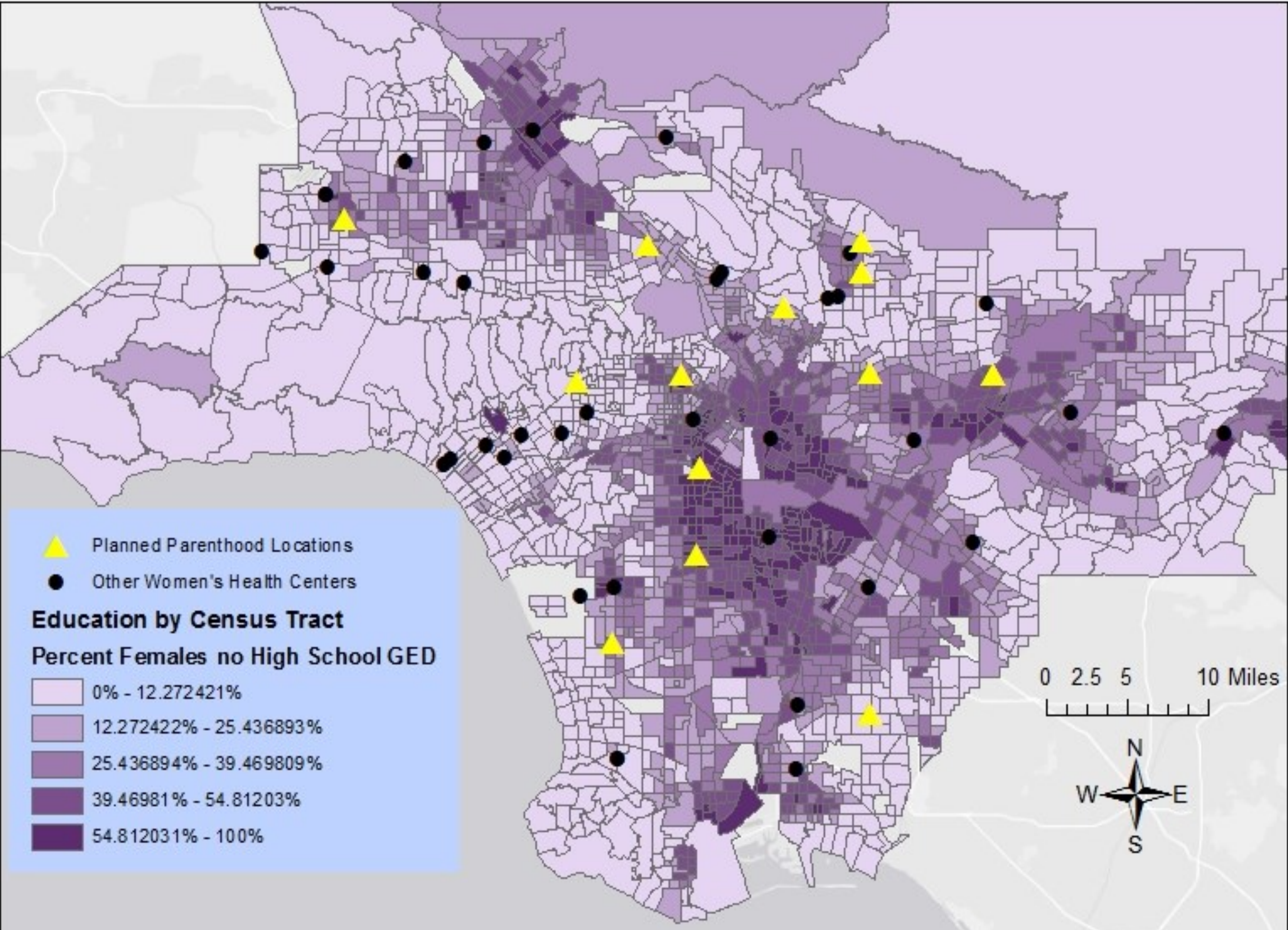
As California has the largest number of Planned Parenthood clinics, specifically centered in the Los Angeles area with high numbers of minority populations, Los Angeles county was chosen as the location in question for spatial analysis. Census data for ethnicity, educational attainment, birth rate, and income from the 2010 Census were downloaded from the US Census Bureau to Excel spreadsheets, which were then joined to census tracts for Los Angeles county in specific maps using ArcGis. Census data was quantified using colored gradients to represent percentage ranges for each census tract, after using the field calculator to sum relevant fields in the attribute table. All new values were normalized by total population. Locations of Planned Parenthoods, as well as other women’s reproductive health centers, were downloaded from Reference USA and Geocoded in ArcMap using Latitude/Longitude data. These four maps show visually the locations of Planned Parenthood centers in contrast to other women’s reproductive health centers as compared to relevant demographic data.

Analysis consisted of making spatial joins between the center locations and the census tracts, as well as the Planned Parenthood locations and the census tracts, and using the statistics function to get a summary of average data per location. The results table showcases the numbers from this analysis.

Birth Rate: Percentage of Females Under 24 Who Gave Birth in the Last Year



Education: Percentage of Females With No High School Degree



Discussion

The analysis results show that Planned Parenthood centers are located in areas with much higher averages of women under 24 who gave birth in the last year, higher averages of minority populations, higher averages of populations without a high school GED, and higher averages of populations with an annual income of less than \$35,000. The difference in numbers are fairly significant; for instance, there are an average of 1776 residents that identify as a minority for each Planned Parenthood location (using the information from the spatial join of Planned Parenthood to the census tracts in which Planned Parenthood centers are located), and an average of 1246 residents that identify as a minority for other women’s health centers. The maps show these results visually, with Planned Parenthood centers often located inside poor and impoverished areas.

Conclusion

This project has shown that Planned Parenthood Centers in Los Angeles County are located in areas with higher numbers of poor, impoverished, and minority populations in comparison to other women’s reproductive health centers. Creating a spatial representation and argument for this fact is a first step towards understanding whether or not Planned Parenthood is a vital resource for women of these populations, who do not have access to more expensive clinics with locations that are less accessible to their neighborhoods. As stated in the introduction, supporters of Planned Parenthood use spatial arguments like this to show the dedication of this non-profit organization towards all women. However, opposition forces argue that Planned Parenthood is a racist institution, targeting minority areas for monetary gain through abortion services. This project was merely meant to address the question of where Planned Parenthood centers are located, and what populations have access to these resources, compared to other women’s health centers. Further research on health outcomes for those with access to Planned Parenthood could begin to address the necessity of Planned Parenthood’s for the well being of impoverished populations, and to assess the scale of benefit (or harm) that Planned Parenthood places on these populations.

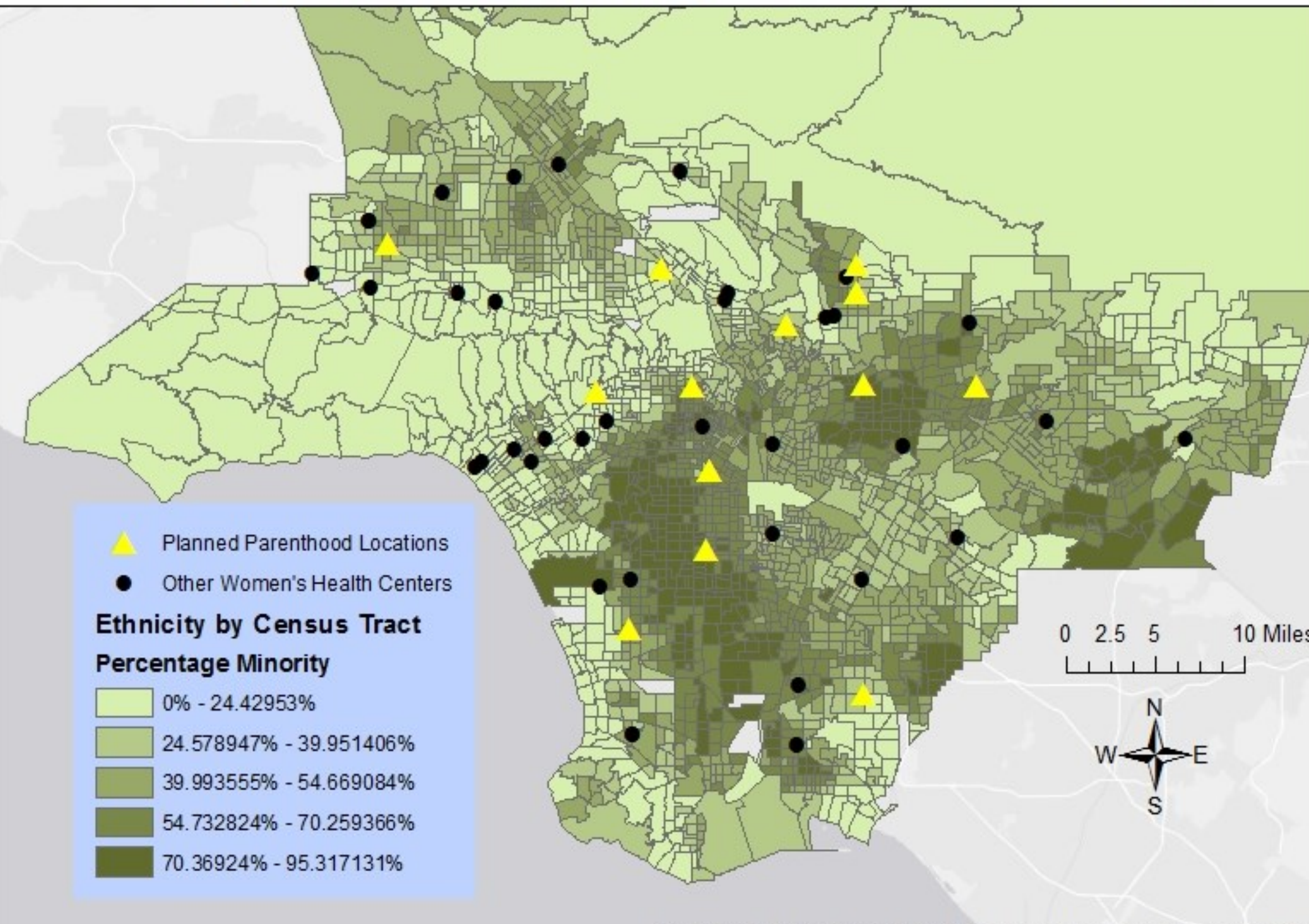
Cartographer:

Mary Claire Cross, 5/9/2016

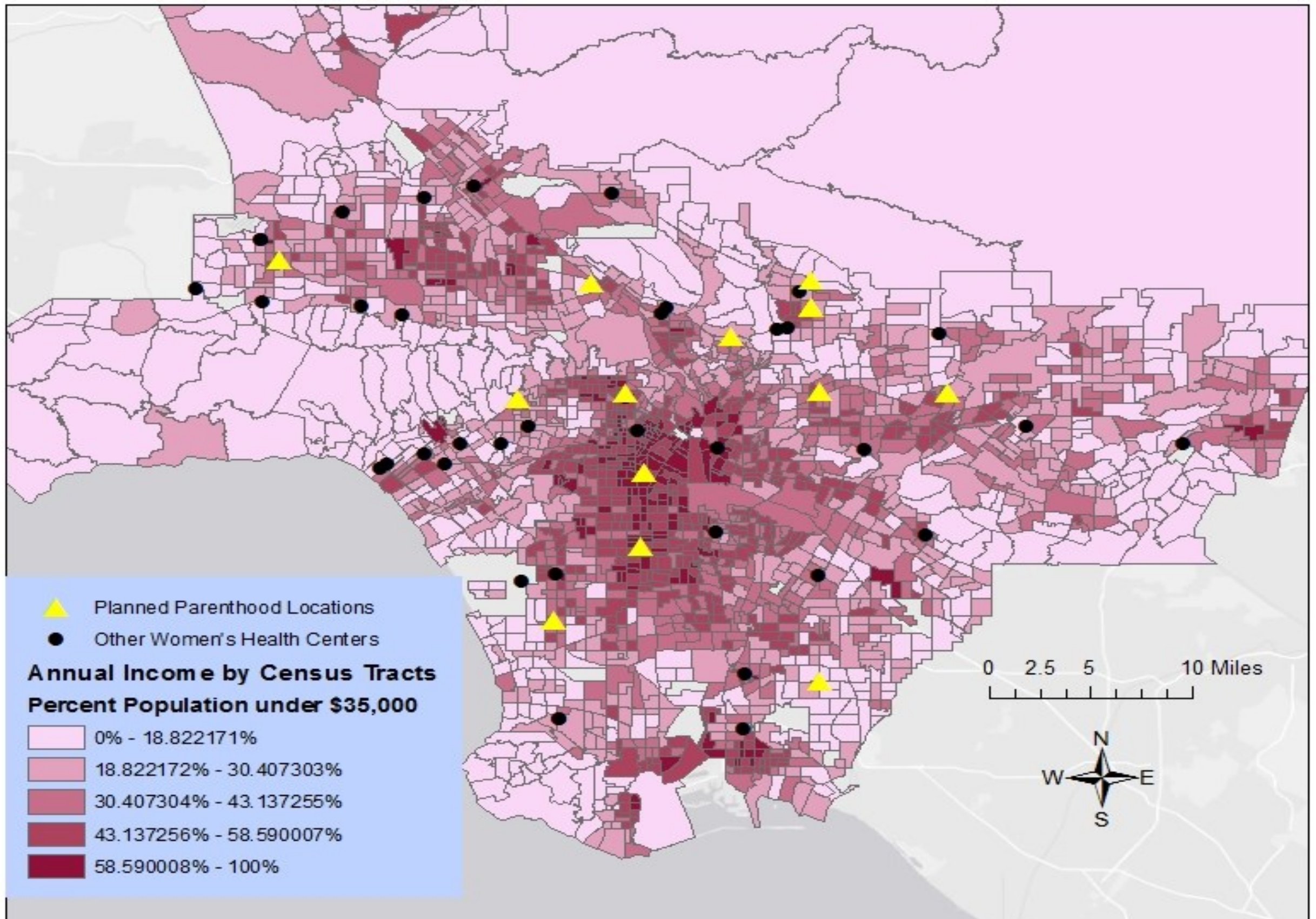
GIS 101 - Introduction to GIS, Sumeeta Srinivasan



Ethnicity: Percentage Minority out of Total Population



Income: Percentage of Households Under \$35,000 Annually



SPATIAL ANALYSIS RESULTS

	Planned Parenthood	Other Women's Health Centers
Average Number of Residents with Annual Income Under \$35,000	590	483
Average Number of Residents that Identify as a Minority	1776	1246
*Asian, African American, American Indian, Pacific Islander, Latin American		
Average Number of Resident's Without a High School GED	469	300
Average Number of Women Under 24 Who Gave Birth in the Last Year	41	23

References

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Rosenbaum, S. (2015, September 2). Planned parenthood, community health centers, and Women's health: Getting the facts right. Retrieved from <http://healthaffairs.org/blog/2015/09/02/planned-parenthood-community-health-centers-and-womens-health-getting-the-facts-right/>

Stevenson, A. J., Flores-Vazquez, I., Allgeyer, R. L., Schenck, P., & Potter, J. E. (2016). Effect of removal of planned parenthood from the Texas Women's health program. N Engl J Med, 374(9), 853-860. doi:10.1056/NEJMsa1511902

The Editorial Board. (2016, March 28). The state assault on planned parenthood. The New York Times

Wetzstein, C. (2014, July 10). Fewer abortion clinics in minority communities: Study. The Washington Post

Data Sources

US Census Bureau, Census.gov: Demographic data
SF1 Census 2010 Data - P10
ACS 2010 5 Year Summary Data - B15002, B13016, B19001

Reference USA: Planned Parenthood Locations and Women's Reproductive Health Center Locations (NAICS Code 621410).

Tufts M: Drive - Census Tract Base maps

Projection Information:
NAD_1983_2011_StatePlane_California_V_FIPS_0405