

Geographic information systems (GIS) is more commonly used in analytical fields such as geography, natural resources and environmental science; however it also has many benefits to fields within the social sciences. Using GIS as a method of displaying historical data allows the researcher to view spatial patterns more easily. Through this process it is possible for historians to visualize or discover patterns of segregation, migration, gentrification etc. within cities during specific periods of history. This report focuses on the occurrence of kitchenette style apartments in the city of Chicago between 1920 and 1940. These apartments were single rooms, furnished with a small ice-box and small stove, in which an entire family would live. The living conditions were often horrific with extreme overcrowding. They were most commonly found in the part of Chicago densely populated by African Americans called the "black belt". For this report, census data for the city of Chicago between 1920 and 1940 were obtained through the National Historical GIS website. After mapping these data spatially it is possible to see patterns of demographics indicating kitchenettes. The demographics mapped for this report include percent of population that is black, number of families living in a dwelling, number of dwellings that own a radio set, employment, and monthly rent. The maps support the historical records of kitchenettes being located in a roughly thirty block section of the city along State Street; they also support the findings of previous studies and papers depicting the issues of severe overcrowding, high rent, and grim living conditions. Mapping certain variables was limited by access Census data and in many cases time-series were not possible due to the lack in consistency of census questions between years.