

# “Youth Emigration and Reasons to Stay”

## Linking Demographic and Ecological Change in Bristol Bay

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Photographer: Jeanine Littau

## Questions of Interest

- How does ecological change impact the migration patterns and educational outcomes of Bristol Bay graduates?
- How do gender and ethnic identity influence young people's life-paths?
- Interplay?

# List of Variables

## Independent

- Time Period  
1994 to 1998 (pre-fishing disasters)  
(n = 66)  
  
1999 to 2003 (post-fishing disasters)  
(n = 75)
- Gender
- Ethnic Identity

## Dependent

- Out-migration  
(Who Left?)
- Return Migration  
(Who came back?)
- College Attendance Rates
- College Drop Out Rates

## Changes in the Demographic Profile of the Bristol Bay Borough

	<u>1990</u>	<u>2000</u>	<u>2003</u>
<b>Total Population</b>	1410	1258 (-10.8%)	1099 (-12.6%)
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.2%	11.5%	11.2%
<b>Persons Below Poverty Line</b>	5.1%	9.5%	12.4% (2004)
<b>Population 20 to 34 years</b>	36.8% (519)	14.8% (187)	
<b>Population 35 to 59 years</b>	29.95% (422)	44.43% (559)	

*Source: Bristol Bay Economic Overview - Alaska Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development; U.S. Census Bureau, Census 1990; U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000*

## The selective force of out-migration...

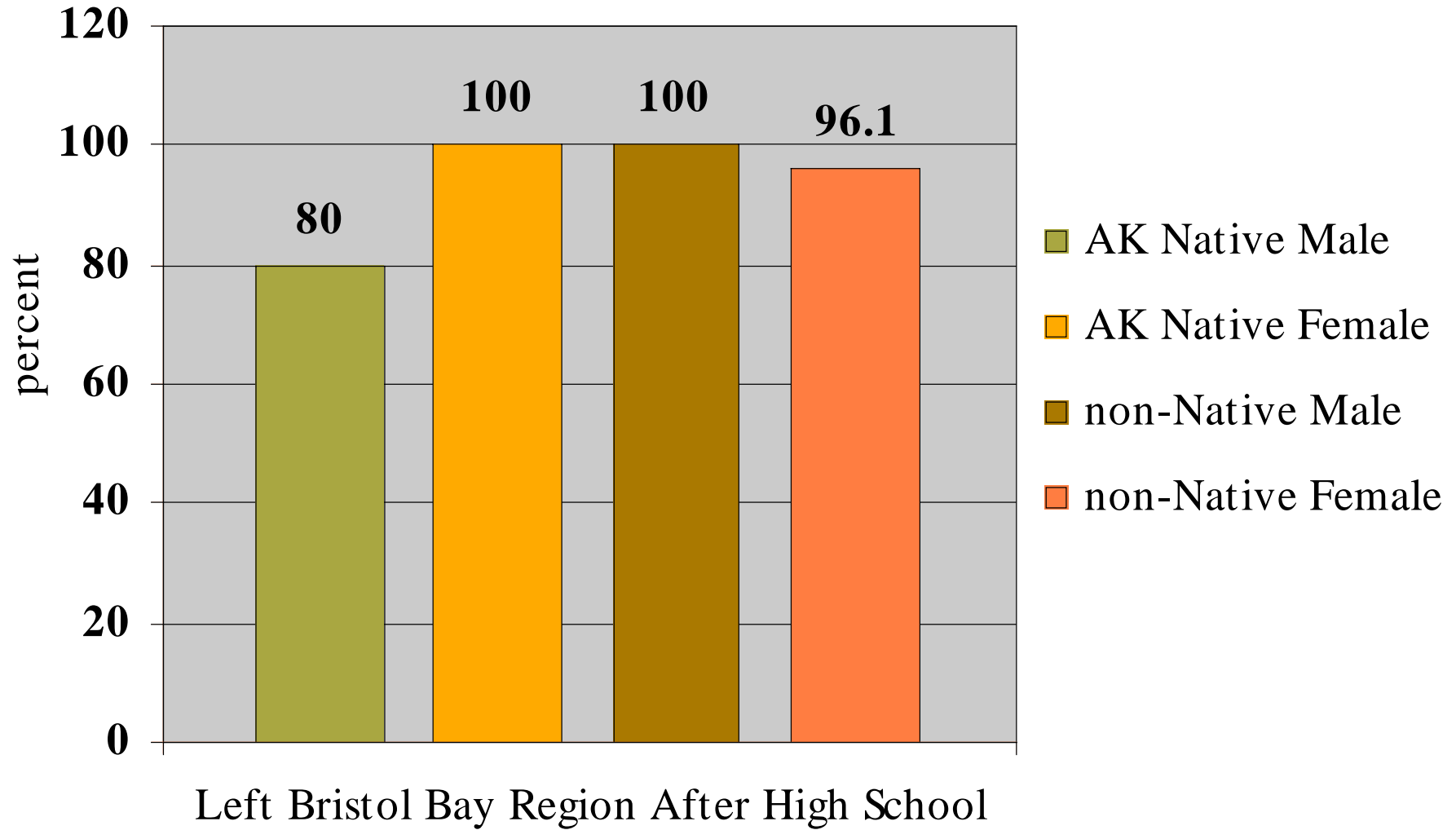
- **“Female Flight”** – Alaska, Canadian Arctic, Iceland, Norway, Newfoundland, Faroes, and Greenland.
- “Pull factors” - limited employment and educational opportunities in rural regions vs. urban areas.
- Stresses, pressures and constraints of rural life felt more strongly by young women than young men.
- **“Brain Drain”** or **“Skill Drain”**  
Studies suggest it is the brighter and more ambitious young people that leave rural NRDCs.

## Gender Disparities in Rural Alaska

- Studies focusing on rural Alaska adolescents suggest that high school girls, more so than boys, aspire to attend college and live most of the rest of their lives outside their home region.
- Specifically, Alaska Native women are much more likely than Alaska Native men to move to urban areas, pursue a college education, earn a college degree and enter into full-time employment.

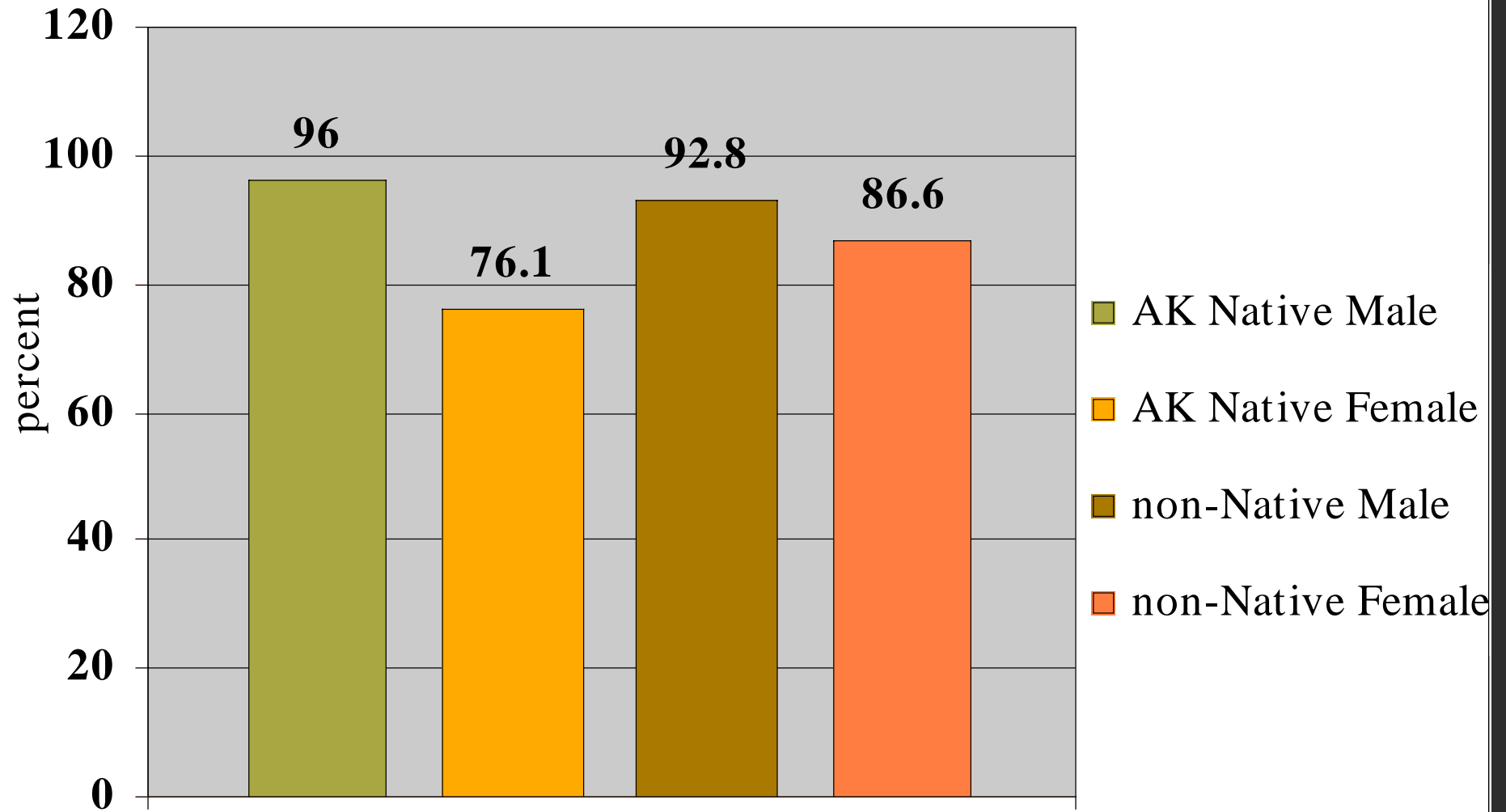
# Out-Migration of BB High School Graduates

## Pre-Fishing Crisis Outcomes



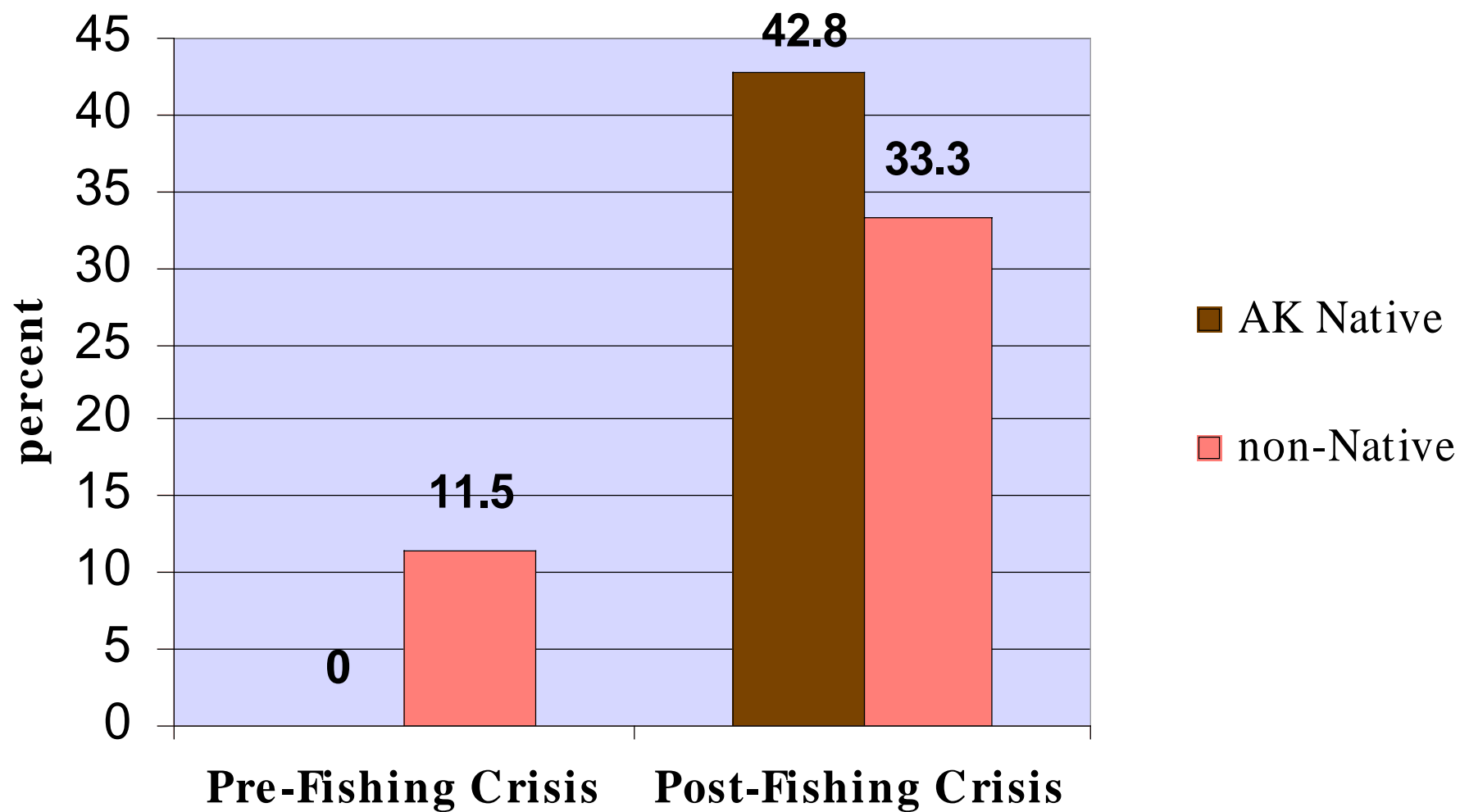
# Out-Migration of BB High School Graduates

## Post-Fishing Crisis Outcomes



Left Bristol Bay Region After High School

# Non-Marital Fertility Rates



## Return Migration

- 17 percent (22 out of 122) of graduates who left returned.
- 10 out of the 22 returnees are AK Native males.
- Only 2 AK Native females returned between 1994 and 2003.
- 31 percent (7 out of 22) return home after dropping out
- 54 percent (12 out of 22) have no college education.
- Only 1 female of the 7 that returned between 1994 and 2003 had been to college.

# So what's the point and why do we care...

- Staying/returning as an unintended consequence of failure to leave or 'make it' on the 'outside'?
- Artifacts of fisheries decline long-term, far-reaching and sometimes overlooked.



Photographer: Bruce Anderson