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Census

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part of an Institute for Cuban Studies conference on Cuban soil, in the midst of the last stages of the Mariel boatlift. It was a difficult, tense, and poignant experience for everyone attending.

Reflections

Casal died prematurely in Havana at age forty-three on 1 February 1981, after a long and painful struggle with various serious diseases. Those who cherish the gift of her friendship and who walked with her through the journey and challenge of life appreciate her blend of brains, wits, and tenderness. She would argue strongly without hurting others in their views or feelings. She showed an ability to lubricate debates while also enriching them.

In an anthology by María Cristina Herrera, Casal explained her own trajectory in this way:

And how and why one returns to Cuba? And what happens to us upon coming back? In my case, I returned to Cuba in an attempt to face a number of questions which through years had become an obsession. What was, after all, the Cuban Revolution? Was it possible for me to experience a living reencounter with the most radical and convulsing event in the history of my country? Could I reencounter Cuba, not already at the physical level, but at another level...?

Perhaps Casal's poem "Siempre he vivido en Cuba" (I've always lived in Cuba) best summarizes the difficulty of her rapport with her homeland and the United States:

I live in Cuba.
I've always lived in Cuba,
even when I believed to dwell
faraway from the alligator of agony
I've always lived in Cuba...

See also Brigada Antonio Maceo; Cuban Americans; and Diaspora and Exiles.

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MARÍA CRISTINA HERRERA

CASTRO, FIDEL. *See* Bay of Pigs; Marielitos; and Right-wing Violence in Miami.

CATHOLICISM. *See* Religion, Politics of.

CENSUS. How many Latinas and Latinos were in the United States in the early twenty-first century, and where did they come from? In the year 2010 the US Census indicated that 50.5 million residents of the United States reported they were Spanish, Hispanic, or Latina or Latino. (Brazilians were not included in this count because they are Portuguese-speaking.)

This meant that 16.3 percent of the total US population, or one out of every six US residents, was "some kind of" Latina or Latino. If one added the 3.7 million Latinos and Latinas resident in Puerto Rico to the above total, the number would increase to approximately 54.2 million Latinas and Latinos in 2010 or 17.5 percent of the total US population. As the president of the National Institute for Latino Policy (NILP), Angelo Falcón, has stated, of the 50.5 million, 9.2 percent checked a box indicating they were Mexican, 6.3 percent Puerto Rican, and 3.5 percent Cuban, and 24.3 percent said they had some other Hispanic or Latina/Latino national background. This last category was called "All Other Hispanic or Latino" in the census, and included people who came from (or whose ancestors had come from) the remaining Spanish-speaking countries. According to the 2009 American Community Survey, many of these groups had grown substantially since the 2000 census. For example, Salvadorans, who were then the fourth-largest group, grew by 152 percent since 2000 and numbered 1.649 million in 2010. Next in size were Dominicans, who grew by 85 percent since the 2000 census, numbering 1.415 million. They were followed by Guatemalans (1.044 million, 180 percent growth rate), Colombians (909,000, 93 percent growth rate). These groups were in turn followed in size by Hondurans (633,000), Ecuadorians (565,000), and Peruvians (531,000).

There were also smaller groups from other countries in Latin America in this category as well as from Spain. In addition, there were individuals who indicated they were "Spanish," "Hispanic," or some other generic Latina or Latino term, but did not provide their country of origin; or, they indicated elsewhere in the census that they may be of Hispanic or Latino descent, noting, for example that they had a relative in the household that was headed by one or more Latino/as.

These numbers point to the diversity of the Latina/Latino population in the United States in terms of national origins. There are also some fairly clear patterns. Because of history and migration, the Latina/Latino group is geographically more Mexican and Central American in the West and Southwest, more Caribbean in the Northeast and parts of the South, and a mixture of both in the Midwest. However, the census shows that the Latina/Latino populations are becoming larger and more heterogeneous in each region. For example, in the area historically known as "Little Havana" in Miami, non-Cuban Latinas and Latinos outnumber

Cubans. William Frey reports that in many areas of the country, towns that previously never had Spanish-speaking communities now have shops, restaurants, and schools that service (predominantly) Spanish-speaking communities. Some states have seen their Latina/Latino populations increase over 200 to 300 percent, for example, Alabama, Georgia, Nevada, North Carolina, and Tennessee. Although Latinas/Latinos are still concentrated in a few states (California, Texas, New York, Florida, Illinois, Arizona, and New Jersey), there are substantial concentrations in all states. According to the census, the growth of Latina/Latino populations is also fueling the growth of the US population as a whole. Between 1990 and 2000 Latinas and Latinos accounted for 40 percent of US population growth, and between 2000 and 2010 the nation's Hispanic/Latino population grew four times faster than the total US population (or 43 percent versus 9.7 percent for the United States as a whole) leading to the increasing Latinoization of the United States.

How Does the Census Arrive at These Numbers?

Data on Latinas and Latinos is collected by many agencies, but the US Census Bureau collects the most comprehensive and most extensively used data on Latinas and Latinos. They do so by asking the whole population whether or not they are Latinas/Latinos. In the year 2010 the census question read as shown in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1. US CENSUS BUREAU

8. Is Person 1 of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano

Yes, Puerto Rican

Yes, Cuban

Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin — *Print origin, for example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, and so on.* ↴

9. What is Person 1's race? Mark one or more boxes.

White

Black, African Am., or Negro

American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.* ↴

Asian Indian Japanese Native Hawaiian

Chinese Korean Guamanian or Chamorro

Filipino Vietnamese Samoan

Other Asian — *Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.* ↴

Other Pacific Islander — *Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on.* ↴

Some other race — *Print race.* ↴

The data on the number of Colombians, for example, comes from write-in responses to this question. The US Constitution requires that, in order for the people of the United States to be accurately represented within their politically elected bodies, a count of the population, that is, a census, must be taken every ten years. Over the years the census has expanded to count not only individuals but also a multitude of other characteristics, such as gender, age, and housing conditions.

Latino and Latina Responses to the Race Question

The census also asks everyone in the country what his or her race is. The race question in the 2010 census is shown in Figure 1.

The census does not include Latinas/Latinos as a race category because the census position is that Hispanics can be of any race. When one looks at how Latinas and Latinos answered this question, one sees some interesting results. Latinas and Latinos did not answer the question the same way non-Latinos and non-Latinas did. For example, whereas less than 1 percent of the non-Latino population reported they were of “Some other race,” 36.7 percent of Latinos chose this category in the 2010 census. (In fact Latinas and Latinos constitute the overwhelming majority in this category, between 95 and 97 percent.) The policy analysts Karen R. Humes, Nicholas A. Jones, and Roberto R. Ramirez report that 53 percent of Latinos said they were “White”; 2.5 percent reported they were “Black, African Am., or Negro”; 1.4 percent said “American Indian or Alaska Native”; 0.5 percent indicated they were in one of the Asian or Pacific Islander categories; and another 6 percent chose two or more groups.

Data from the 2010 census for each Latina/Latino national origin group was not yet publicly available by 2011; however, analysis of 2000 census figures indicates that Latina/Latino national origin groups differed with regard to their racial self-classification patterns. For example, as the scholar Rogelio Saenz notes, of the largest groups, only 7 percent of the Cuban group chose the “other race” category, whereas 45 percent of Mexicans, 38 percent of Puerto Ricans, 59 percent of Dominicans, 48 percent of Central Americans, 30 percent of South Americans, and 41 percent of all other Latinas/Latinas did. However, whereas the different Latina/Latino groups varied in the extent to which they chose the “other race” category, all of them chose this category to a greater degree than did non-Latinos (less than 2 percent).

The different Latina/Latino national origin groups also varied in the extent to which they chose the other racial categories in 1990, when the Census Bureau restricted respondents to selecting only one racial category. Again focusing first on the largest groups, 84 percent of Cubans chose the “White” category as compared with 51 percent of Mexicans, 46 percent of Puerto Ricans, and 52 percent

of the All Other Hispanic/Latino (AOHL) group. Self-classification as “Black” varied from 0.9 percent in the Mexican group to 7 percent in the Puerto Rican group, with 6.5 percent of the AOHL group and 3.7 percent of the Cuban group reporting they were “Black.” Among the smaller groups, the Panamanian group reported the highest percentage “Black” (36 percent), Colombians the highest percentage “White” (64 percent), Panamanians the highest percentage “American Indian” (2.94 percent), and Salvadorans the highest percentage “other race” (59 percent).

Large numbers of Latinas and Latinos also chose the “Some other race” category for the last four censuses. Moreover many Latinas and Latinos, when they checked off the “Some other race” category, wrote in the box that explicitly asked for race the name of a Latina/Latino country or group to “explain” their race or their “otherness.” For example, they wrote in that they were “Dominican,” “Honduran,” or “Boricua” (Puerto Rican). The fact that these Latina/Latino referents were, in the main, cultural or national-origin terms suggests that many Latinas and Latinos viewed the question of race as a question of culture, national origin, and socialization rather than simply biological or genetic ancestry or color. Indeed, studies have found that for many Latinas and Latinos “race” is understood to be national origin, nationality, ethnicity, culture, or a combination of these and skin color. When many (but not all) Latinas and Latinos use the term “race” or *raza*, they tend to consider it a reflection of these understandings. Studies have also found that Latinas and Latinos tend to see “race” as a continuum, not as a dichotomous variable in which individuals are either white or black. Although Latinas and Latinos tend to utilize cultural frames of reference when discussing race, “race” as understood by Latinas and Latinos has implications of power and privilege both in Latin America and in the United States.

What determines how Latinas and Latinos respond to questions of race? There are a lot of variables that influence how Latinas and Latinos respond. For example, there are contextual variables, such as who asks the question, who answers the question, and how and where the question is asked. In other words, is there an Anglo interviewer, a Latina/Latino category as a possible choice, or the presence of other cultural groups as categories? What is the purpose of the question? How is the question phrased, structured, and formatted, and where is the question placed, that is, after a question about national origin or before? Many other variables also appear to exert an influence on how Latinas and Latinos respond to questions of race. Some examples include a person’s phenotype or how others classify him or her; the physical variation within the person’s family, such as being the lightest or the darkest one within the family; the family’s class status; and the person’s age, generational status in the United States, or educational

attainment. Also important are whether the person speaks only English; significant experiences in schools, jobs, and social settings; neighborhood socialization; experiences of racial discrimination; the racial structure in different regions of the United States; and the racial formation process in his or her country of origin and the extent of anti-black racism therein. All of these influence how Latinas and Latinos respond to questions of race.

How Have Latinos Been Counted in the Past?

If one reviews the classification history of Spanish-origin or Spanish-speaking peoples in the United States census, one finds, first, that classifying Latinas and Latinos has been highly variable. Second, one finds that this fluctuation has involved not just “racial” classification changes but also the use of cultural criteria, such as language, surname, and “origin.” Both types of criteria have been used to determine whether or not a person is what one might call a Latina/Latino in the early twenty-first century. In many ways the history and experience of Latinas and Latinos with census enumeration highlights how multidimensional and fluid the concepts of race and ethnicity have been over time. In part because of these changing criteria, the experience of Latinas and Latinos in the United States illustrates that race is socially constructed.

With regard to the history of racial classification, one finds the following set of changes. Perhaps in response to increasing numbers of Mexican immigrants at the time, the first time Latinas and Latinos were specifically counted in the national decennial census was in 1930, when a separate category for “Mexicans” appeared in the race question. The data gathered as a result of this “Mexican” category was reported subsequently with the “other races” data. As the census report indicated at the time, “Persons of Mexican birth or parentage who were not definitely reported as white or Indian were designated Mexican” and included with “other races” (United States Bureau of the Census, 1932, p. 1). Thus in 1930 Mexicans were placed in a “Mexican race” category unless interviewers determined they were white or Indian. (No other Latinas and Latinos were separately counted.) At the time, instructions for census takers stated: “In order to obtain separate figures for Mexicans, it was decided that all persons born in Mexico, or having parents born in Mexico, who were not definitely White, Negro, Indian, Chinese, or Japanese, would be returned as Mexicans (Mex)” (United States Bureau of the Census, 1989, p. 60). One can only imagine the difficulty census takers, who in all likelihood were predominantly non-Latino whites, must have had in excluding in this highly physically heterogeneous Mexican population those who were “definitely White, Negro, Indian, Chinese, or Japanese” from the “Mexicans.” In 1930 there was also apparently some concern that Mexicans who were “definitely not White” might have been

counted previously with the white population. In the 1930 census there was a table that estimated the number of Mexicans that had been included in the white population in the 1920 census. The intent of this table was to provide an estimate of the number of Mexicans who had been miscounted as “Whites” in the previous census. A chart of the number of Mexicans in selected states accompanied this table. It also included the nativity status of Mexicans and whether they were of foreign or mixed parentage. In essence, since there had been no Mexican racial category in the previous 1920 census, the concern was that some Mexicans might have been counted in the white category, and this was a belated attempt to determine how many had been placed in this category.

The subsequent 1940 census dropped this Mexican racial category. The census did not indicate why this change occurred, but the 1940 census noted, “Persons of Mexican birth or ancestry who were not definitely Indian or of other nonwhite race” were to be counted as white in 1940 (United States Bureau of the Census, 1943, p. 6). Thus in the space of a decade Mexicans went from having a separate race category into which they were placed—unless of course it could be proved they were white, Indian, or of another nonwhite race—to being included in the white category—unless determined to be Indian or another nonwhite race. Moreover whereas in the 1930 census “Mexicans” were counted as part of a generic “other races” category, in 1940 Mexicans were counted as “White”—unless they had been classified into another nonwhite category.

The criterion established in 1940 was used to classify Mexicans racially for the next two censuses. This definition of Mexicans was explicitly stated in the introductions to the decennial censuses of 1950 and 1960. The same criterion was also applied to other Latinas and Latinos who came in greater numbers after World War II—for example, Puerto Ricans in the late 1940s and 1950s, Cubans during the 1960s, and Dominicans and Central and South Americans in the late 1960s and 1970s. In the 1960 census the instructions given to census takers for determining race or color by observation directed that “Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, or other persons of Latin descent would be classified as ‘White’ unless they were definitely Negro, Indian, or some other race” (United States Bureau of the Census, 1989, p. 78). Prior to 1970 a census enumerator visited people in their homes and recorded their race and other census information. However, it was in a sample of the 1970 census that enumerators first asked Latinas and Latinos to choose a category for race from standard race categories (such as those in Figure 1). However, if respondents chose a response, such as “Mexican” or “Puerto Rican,” they were reclassified, depending on their appearance, by the census enumerators into the racial categories that were listed, that is, white, black, and so forth. As a result of this practice, most Latinas

and Latinos were classified as “White” prior to 1980. Indeed, in 1970, 93.3 percent of Latinas and Latinos were classified as “White.” The US census first used mail-back questionnaires on its decennial census in 1980. In this and subsequent censuses everyone (including Latinas and Latinos) determined his or her own race from the categories listed. This was the beginning of self-reporting for the whole population. Also in 1980 the US census first introduced what it called the “Hispanic identifier,” that is, a question that specifically counted people of Spanish language or origin. A generic term was sought to count the various Spanish-origin populations, and the term “Hispanic” was created for this purpose.

Cultural criteria have also been used to define and classify Latinas and Latinos in the US census, and, like racial classifications, these cultural markers and categories have also changed over time. In 1940 the census used a linguistic definition to determine who was Latina/Latino, and “Persons of Spanish mother tongue” were reported. In 1950 and 1960 the census’s language criterion was dropped and “persons of Spanish surname” were reported. In the 1970 census individuals were asked about where they “come from,” or, as the census put it, “about their ‘origin,’” and respondents could choose among several Latina/Latino origins listed on the questionnaire. Thus between 1940 and 1970 Latinas and Latinos were enumerated according to three different cultural criteria, that is, linguistic (1940), surname (1950 and 1960), and “origin” (1970). In sum, the classification of Latinas and Latinos in the US census has involved major variation and flux, including varying cultural and racial criteria over time.

Race and Citizenship Rights

Latinas and Latinos have not been the only group to experience shifts in racial placement and labeling both in the census and in the legal realm. The classification and legal experiences of Asian Indians, Native American Indians, African Americans, and Pacific Islanders, for example, illuminate the historical difficulty the United States has had dealing with mixture and with groups who have not folded neatly into discrete categories of color.

These groups’ experiences also underscore the extent to which classifications have been influenced by, and in turn have influenced political considerations. In the past, one’s racial classification often determined citizenship and other rights. Because of legislation passed in 1790 and in existence until 1952, nonwhites were not allowed to become naturalized citizens. In some states, for example, noncitizens were not allowed to own land at certain points. Also under Jim Crow laws, native-born persons of color were routinely relegated or channeled into segregated, generally inferior facilities or denied (through formal and informal means) basic rights of citizenship, such as voting. Consequently

many individuals went to court in an attempt to be classified as “White” so as to be entitled to all the rights and privileges of “White” citizens in the United States.

The Latina/Latino experience has been less legally contentious than that of other groups because Latinas and Latinos were not generally denied citizenship. Citizenship issues for Latinas and Latinos have been more a matter of defining what citizenship means, rather than securing it. Citizenship was granted to many Spanish-speaking persons as a result of the treaties signed after US conquests of Florida, the Southwest, and Puerto Rico. However, many questions about this citizenship have been and are still raised, such as whether this citizenship by conquest was full or a second-class citizenship; the extent to which citizenship rights were denied after conquest; and whether this citizenship included cultural citizenship, that is, the right to speak Spanish and maintain one’s culture.

It is difficult to say to what extent census classifications have influenced the racial identity of Latinas and Latinos; more research is needed in this area. Clearly Latina and Latino responses influenced the new policy of the census, of allowing people to choose more than one race, for which parents of biracial children and multiracial individuals had lobbied. This was a significant departure from the census’s previous 200-year policy. It is also clear that historically Latinas and Latinos have confounded and continue to confound the basic bipolar (white or nonwhite) racial structure that evolved in the United States. In part this is because they are not easily accommodated into the bipolar structure—nor in some cases do they wish to be—because of their varying phenotypes, mixtures, and perspectives on race. This group, perhaps more than other groups, illustrates the permeability and shifting lines of the bipolar structure.

Increasingly the research from all fields argues against the existence of biologically based race groups and for the concept of socially constructed races. What the experience of Latinas and Latinos in the census shows most clearly is the extent to which concepts of race and ethnicity overlap, just as they do in real life.

See also Afro-Latino/as; Asian Latinas/os; Blanqueamiento; Central Americans; Chicanos and Chicanas; Citizenship; Cuban Americans; Demography; Dominicans; Jim Crow; Language and Identity, Politics of; Mexican Americans; Native Americans/Mexicanos; Puerto Ricans; Race and Racialization; South Americans; and Whiteness and White Privilege.

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CENTRAL AMERICANS. Although Latino Central Americans (Guatemalans, Hondurans, Salvadorans, Costa Ricans, Nicaraguans, and Panamanians) have been migrating to the United States since the nineteenth century, their presence has only been noticed since the 1980s, when a political and economic crisis destabilized several countries in that region, and many of their citizens were forced to abandon their homes. Many (mostly Guatemalans, Nicaraguans, and Salvadorans) went to adjacent Central American countries; others (mostly the Maya Guatemalans) settled in refugee camps in southern Mexico, and many have since returned to their homelands. Others made their way farther