The Social Construction of Race/White Privilege

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Question 5—2000 Census

5. Is this person Spanish/Hispanic/Latino? Mark the
"No" box if not. Spanish/Hispanic/Latino:
- No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
- Yes, Puerto Rican
- Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano
- Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino — print group.

Question 6—2000 Census

6. What is this person’s race? Mark one or more races to indicate what this person considers themselves to be.
- White
- Black, African American, 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
- Other Pacific Islander — print race.
- Some other race — print race.

History of census categories

- 1860: three categories: white, black, mulatto
- Mulatto split into three (octoroon, quadroon, mulatto) in 1890, recombined in 1900 and dropped after 1920
- American Indian added in 1870, tribal affiliation asked for beginning 1900, changed to American Indian or Alaska Native in 2000 (Alien 1960, 1980-90)
- Mexican added 1930, then dropped; Hispanic ethnicity added 1980
- Other race added in 1910

U.S. racial composition—U.S. Census

Total pop.: 281,421,906 (100.0%)
One race: 274,925,678 (97.6%)
White: 211,460,626 (75.1%)
Black: 34,658,190 (12.3%)
Indian/AN: 2,475,956 (0.9%)
Asian: 10,242,998 (3.6%)
Hawaiian/PI: 398,835 (0.1%)
Other: 15,359,073 (5.5%)

Two or more: 6,826,228 (2.4%)
Latino: 35,305,818 (12.5%)
Not Latino: 246,116,008 (87.5%)

Multiple racial combinations

Two races or more races: 6,826,228 (100.0%)-2.4% of pop.
Two races: 6,368,075 (93.3%)-15 combinations
White & other: 2,206,251 (32.3%)
White & Indian: 1,082,683 (15.9%)
White & Asian: 868,395 (12.7%)
White & Black: 784,764 (11.5%)
Black & other: 417,249 (6.1%)
Three races: 410,285 (6.0%)-20 combinations
White, black & Indian: 112,207 (1.6%)
Four races: 38,408 (0.6%)-15 combinations
Fives races: 8,637 (0.1%)-6 combinations
Six races: 823
White privilege

- White privilege: term coined by Peggy McIntosh to describe "an unearned package of unearned assets that I can count on cashing in each day, but about which I was 'meant' to remain oblivious."
- I can, if I wish, arrange to be in the company of people of my race most of the time.
- I can avoid spending time with people whom I was trained to mistrust and who have learned to mistrust my kind and me.
- I can be reasonably sure that my neighbors will be neutral or pleasant to me.
- When I hear about our national heritage or about 'civilization,' I am shown that people of my color made it what it is.
- Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance that I am financially reliable.
- I can easily buy posters, postcards, picture books, greeting cards, dolls, toys, and children's magazines featuring people of my race.

Racial transparency: tendency for the race of a society's majority to be so obvious, normative, and unremarkable that it becomes, for all intents and purposes, invisible (p. 397).