

Exploring and Examining Racial and Ethnic Diversity

Handout 2: Race and Ethnicity Categories in Selected Decennial Censuses

Census	1860	1890	1900	1970	2000
Race	White	White	White	White	White
	Black	Black	Black (Negro descent)	Negro or Black	Black, African American, Negro
	Mulatto*	Mulatto* Quadroon Octoroon			
		Indian	Indian	Indian (American)	American Indian or Alaska Native
		Chinese Japanese	Chinese Japanese	Chinese Japanese	Chinese Japanese
				Filipino Korean	Filipino Korean Asian Indian Vietnamese Other Asian
				Hawaiian	Native Hawaiian Guamanian or Chamorro Samoan Other Pacific Islander
				Other	Some other race
Hispanic Ethnicity				Mexican	Mexican, Mexican American or Chicano
				Puerto Rican Cuban	Puerto Rican Cuban
				Central/ South American	
				Other Spanish	Other Spanish/Hispanic/ Latino
				(None of these)	Not Spanish/Hispanic/ Latino

*Note: In 1890, mulatto was define as a person who was three-eighths black. A quadroon was one-quarter black and octoroon one-eighth black. In the 2000 census, people were allowed to select more than one race. Questions about Hispanic origin were asked of a sample of Americans in 1970 and of all American beginning with the 1980 census.

Source: Kelvin Pollard and William O'Hare. "America's Racial and Ethnic Minorities," *Population Bulletin*. 42, 3, (Washington, DC: Population Reference Bureau, September 1999).