

Comment # [1k2-91f7-q2fj](#)

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Re: American Community Survey 2019 Question Format

Should the 2020 Census Link Questions About “Race” [Color/Physical Appearance] to “Ethnicity” [National Origin/Ancestry]? Why We Need to Keep these Questions Separate for Protecting Vulnerable Communities

Census designers argue that the reason that they want to include a space for entering “ethnicities” under each race box is that this will provide everyone, not just Hispanics, an opportunity to recognize their unique ethnic origins, thereby ensuring “equitable” treatment of all groups. This justification is puzzling since a SEPARATE question on ancestry already exists and it could have been easily included in the testing that took place of the separate question formats for the 2010 Alternative Questionnaire Experiment and the 2015 National Content Test.

Why would it be problematic to juxtapose “ethnicities” or “origin” under a given race box for the 2020 Census? The potential harms caused by this association far outweigh any potential benefits. Linking national origins to races may inadvertently contribute to oppressive racist, nativist and eugenicist ideas, policies and practices about who should be considered an “authentic” racial representative of a nation. If we want to create a more perfect union for all, we need to decouple the idea that certain ethnicities are ideal types or the most accurate representations of races.

And finally, while government bureaucrats mull over the 2017 Department of Justice request to add a citizenship question to the 2020 Census, civil rights advocates have decried this move as another attempt to dampen the numbers of racial and ethnic minorities counted in the 2020 Census congressional redistricting, which will negatively impact distribution of resources for the most vulnerable.

Where do we go from here? What should the testing for 2030 Census look like? What type of research protocol do we need? How can we center the color line and social inequalities faced by visible minorities--those most likely to suffer injustice and punitive discrimination while voting, seeking housing, employment, health care, education and other civil rights? Test at least three separate questions on Hispanic origin, Race and Ancestry. Below are my suggestions.

POTENTIAL QUESTION FORMATS FOR 2030 CENSUS TESTING

1. HISPANIC ORIGIN:

___Are you of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin? (check all that apply)

___No, not of Hispanic or Latino origin

___Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano

___Yes, Puerto Rican

___Yes, Cuban

___ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino or Spanish Group (e.g. Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spaniard, etc.)
Enter Specify Group (s):

2. RACE: What is your race or color?

(Note: This question is used to detect if there is discrimination and civil rights violations in voting rights, housing, employment, education, etc. along the color line. While you may mark more than one box it would be most helpful if you marked only one. Consider answering this question by reflecting on this question: If you were walking down the street, what race do you think others that do not know you would automatically assume you were based on what you look like?)

___ White (Non Hispanic/Latina/o/x)

___ Black, African American, or Negro (Non Hispanic/Latino/a/x)

___ American Indian or Alaska Native (Non Hispanic/Latino/a/x): Write Name Of Enrolled Tribe: ___

___ Asian or Asian American (Non Hispanic/Latino/a/x) Write Name of National Origin: _

___ Hispanic/Latina(o) White

___ Hispanic/Latina(o) Afro-Latina(o)/Black

___ Hispanic/Latina(o) Mestiza(o)/Brown

___ Hispanic/Latina(o) Indígena / Indigenous Pueblo of Latin America/Brown

___ Middle Eastern/Arab/Brown (Non Hispanic/Latino/a/x) Write Name of National

Origin: _____

___ Some other Race: (Please write in: _____)

IF WE WANT ANCESTRY DATA THEN WE NEED A SEPARATE QUESTION AS THE LAST QUESTION ON THE CENSUS

ANCESTRY:

What is your ethnicity, national origin (s) and/or or distant ancestry?

(Write in: _____ For example: Mayan, Polish, German, Haitian, Italian, Arab, Chinese, Somali, Italian, etc.) You may write in more than one origin. **NOTE A VERSION OF THIS QUESTION ALREADY EXISTS ON THE AMERICAN COMMUNITY SURVEY

REFERENCES AND OTHER BIBLIOGRAPHY ON WHY WE SHOULD NOT FLATTEN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RACE AND ETHNICITY OR ANCESTRY AND WE SHOULD NOT LINK RACE TO ETHNICITY OR ANCESTRY

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