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Puerto Rico Focus Groups on the Census 2000 Race and Ethnicity Questions

FINAL REPORT

This evaluation reports the results of research and analysis undertaken by the U.S. Census Bureau. It is part of a broad program, the Census 2000 Testing, Experimentation, and Evaluation (TXE) Program, designed to assess Census 2000 and to inform 2010 Census planning. Findings from the Census 2000 TXE Program reports are integrated into topic reports that provide context and background for broader interpretation of results.

Dr. Susan Berkowitz, Author
Westat

Linda Brudvig, Project Manager
Planning, Research, and Evaluation Division

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

For the first time, in Census 2000, households in Puerto Rico were asked to answer questions on race and ethnicity. These were the same questions used in the stateside questionnaire. Hispanics, including some Puerto Ricans living in the U.S., had participated in prior studies on the census race and Hispanic origin questions. However, to date, this research had not included residents of the Island.

To help address this gap in the research base, this evaluation explored the views and perceptions of 86 residents of Puerto Rico on the Census 2000 Puerto Rico short-form mailback questionnaire items on race and Hispanic origin. We conducted focus groups in 12 sites across the Island selected for geographic and socioeconomic diversity, recruiting participants of diverse ages and educational levels, including some who had lived in the U.S. for an extended period. Although these results are based on a relatively small, purposive sample and cannot be generalized to the Puerto Rican population as a whole, they provide an interesting jumping off point for additional thinking and further research.

Key findings include:

<u>On the question on race:</u>

- There was unanimous agreement that the question on race is inappropriate to the Puerto Rican context. Participants could not find themselves reflected in the available answer categories, which they viewed as foreign to the Puerto Rican history and culture of mixing or blending across racial groups. Some also felt the question was inherently racist, discriminatory, and divisive, and suspected a hidden political agenda.

- Most participants reluctantly settled for what they believed was a wholly inadequate definition of race as skin color. To point out the problems with such a narrow definition, they gave examples of people exhibiting "mixed" phenotypic characteristics (e.g., kinky hair with African features and light skin) and siblings who would be regarded as belonging to different races. These counter examples were cited as the rule rather than the exception. Consequently, many participants indicated they had given their race as "White" on the questionnaire only because they could not find a category appropriately reflecting their in-between, café-au-lait color and/or mixed racial status.

- Taking their lead from the national origin terms in the second half of the question, some participants chose to define race as nationality. However, they were bothered that "Puerto Rican" did not appear as a preprinted category and were unsure if it would be considered a legitimate answer to the question. Some wrote in "Puerto Rican" under "Some other race" or "Other Asian or Pacific Islander." This was often done in a self-conscious way, and not as an oversight. Several people said that by writing in "Puerto Rican" they were hoping to send a message that the existing categories were inadequate.

- Participants were not satisfied with the option of checking off multiple racial categories for an individual, because they did not perceive themselves as biracial or multiracial, but rather, as mixed. They pointed out that in school they are taught Puerto Ricans are all an admixture of Spanish, African, and native Indian blood, adding that people do not "apportion" their ancestry as they do in the U.S. (e.g., half black and half white). For the most part, they also eschewed the "Some other race" write-in category as too demanding and as unclear. They preferred preprinted answer categories, such as trigueño (tan) or Creole, that explicitly recognized their distinctively mixed background and did not treat Puerto Ricans as an "afterthought."

- Participants who had lived for extended periods in the U.S. grounded their understanding of the question on race in the perceived contrast between the segregated and "absolutist" racial and ethnic environment in the U.S. and the more fluid social and racial dynamics of the Island. But even if racial dynamics are different in the U.S., discussion revealed that race is a still a somewhat sensitive subject on the Island.

On the question on Hispanic origin:

- The presence of a preprinted "Yes, Puerto Rican" answer category rescued this question from the same fate as the question on race. Many participants simply "fast forwarded" through the question and the answer categories until reaching this response, and never gave the question any further thought.

- Quite a few participants were under the mistaken impression that by answering "Yes, Puerto Rican" they were also saying they were not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino. Several were disturbed by being placed in what they thought was a position of having to choose between two applicable (if not equally compelling) answer categories.

- In general, participants' interpretations of this question were highly context-dependent. They disagreed as to whether the terms "Spanish," "Hispanic," and "Latino" all meant the same thing and in their assessments of its uses as a blanket category. "Origin" was variously understood as birthplace, ancestry, nationality, and self-identification. In the end, participants decided this question was not nearly as simple and straightforward as it had first appeared.

On the relationship of the two questions:

- The largest cluster of participants saw the questions on Hispanic origin and race as so redundant that it made no sense to ask both. Most favored eliminating the question on race, as the more offensive and less informative of the two.

From these findings come our recommendations for improvements and for further research and exploration. However, the recommendations are only tentative and suggestive, pending further research with a statistically representative sample. Key recommendations:

- **Include residents of Puerto Rico (in addition to persons of Puerto Rican origin living in the U.S.) in any subsequent cognitive testing or efforts to field test**

different versions and formats of questions and questionnaires for future censuses.

- **Provide more extensive public education to the Puerto Rican population on the larger mission of the census, the rationale for asking questions about race and ethnicity, and the intended uses of the data.**

- **Consider using the results of this study, along with the results of the "Puerto Rico Focus Groups on Why Households Did Not Mail Back the Census 2000 Questionnaire," to create a survey to be administered to a probability sample of residents on the Island. The survey could seek the respondents' views of different approaches to data collection and their reactions to any new materials developed, including any allowable changes made to the structure and content of the questions on race and Hispanic origin.**

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1. BACKGROUND

For the first time, in Census 2000, households in Puerto Rico were asked to answer questions on race and ethnicity. These were the same questions used in the stateside questionnaire. The Puerto Rican government chose to use the same questionnaire content as was used stateside. The update/leave procedure was applied for data collection. Despite the decision to ask the same race and Hispanic origin questions as were asked stateside, Puerto Rico does not require a race question by law, as it does not have an Equal Employment Opportunity law.

Although residents of the Island have not participated in any of the cognitive research conducted on the census race and Hispanic origin questions over the past decade, several such studies included Hispanic respondents, including some Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. Therefore, it is worthwhile to briefly review this research to see how our findings may compare to the results of these prior studies.

1.1 Overview of research on race and ethnicity questions

In the 1990s, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted or sponsored a number of studies examining the content and format of the race and ethnicity questions. One consideration was whether to alter or expand the racial and ethnic categories in place through the 1990 Census. As established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines in 1977, these recognized four options for racial identification—White, Black, American Indian or Alaskan Native, and Asian or Pacific Islander. Respondents were allowed to choose only one response category. Some researchers criticized this approach for failing to capture the increasing racial diversity in the U.S.; others argued that changing the categories would complicate the ability to compare Census 2000 results with data from previous decades.

The 1977 guidelines also established two ethnic categories—of Hispanic origin and not of Hispanic origin. One challenge faced by the Census Bureau in this regard was that many respondents viewed the race and ethnicity questions as essentially the same, and because of this, tended to answer only the race question. In the 1990 census questionnaire, the Census Bureau placed the Hispanic origin question several questions after the race question in the hopes that respondents would more clearly recognize the differences between the two, and answer both. However, when 1990 Census results still showed a lower response rate for the ethnicity question, the Census Bureau decided to investigate other potentially more effective ways of requesting information on race and ethnicity looking ahead to Census 2000.

1.1.1 The race and ethnic targeted test and the National Content Survey

In 1996, the Census Bureau conducted the Race and Ethnic Targeted Test (RAETT) and the National Content Survey (NCS) to evaluate and test possible changes to race and ethnicity questions. These two studies evaluated formats in which information about race and ethnicity might be requested on Census 2000, and examined the effects on item non-response of different ways of sequencing the race and Hispanic origin questions in relation to one other.

Several scenarios were tested in which the ethnicity question was located immediately before or after the race question. Placing the Hispanic origin question before the race question significantly reduced non-response to the former. Doing so also reduced reporting in the "Other Race" category and increased reporting by Hispanics in the White category of the race question (Harrison, et al., 1996: 2).

The Census Bureau also wanted to determine the effects of allowing respondents to choose more than one racial category. Some of the scenarios gave respondents the opportunity to use the multiracial option on the race question. Although these findings are based on very small numbers, the number of Hispanics who identified themselves as Black decreased in cases where the multiracial category was included and the Hispanic origin question came first. (Harrison, et al., 1996:17). Use of the "other race" category also decreased when there was no multiracial option, but the Hispanic origin question came before the race question. In this case, however, although more Hispanics used the White category on the race question, the historically high proportion of Hispanics who did not answer the race question was not reduced (Harrison, et. al., 1996: 19, 21).

1.1.2 Cognitive research on perceptions of race and ethnicity among Hispanics

Cognitive research suggests that Hispanics tend not to differentiate among the concepts of race, national origin, and ancestry, and often use these terms interchangeably. Perhaps as a consequence, they are more likely than other groups to find the race question difficult to answer and to find no acceptable preprinted category in the question. Research conducted by the Census Bureau in 1996 indicated that, "Some Hispanics view themselves racially as Hispanic and do not identify with one of the specific racial categories (that is, White, Black, etc.) or they find the race question confusing"(Harrison, et. al., 1996:5). Other Census Bureau researchers conducting cognitive interviews similarly noted that "Hispanic effectively functions as a race" when respondents of Hispanic origin answered the race question (Gerber and de la Puente, 1998: 9).

Development Associates, in cognitive interviews carried out in 1997 and 1998 with individuals of varied backgrounds, also found that respondents of Hispanic origin did not see themselves accurately represented in the answer categories in the race question. Many wanted to report their 'nationality' as 'Mexican', 'Puerto Rican,' 'Latin,' 'Hispanic' and so forth, in the race question. Some left the Hispanic origin question blank and wrote their Hispanic identity in the race question. (Davis, et al, 1998b: 6-7). Hispanic respondents also preferred to see the Hispanic category as a pre-printed category on the race question (Davis, et. al., 1998a: 8).

Many Hispanic and non-Hispanic respondents in the Development Associates studies were confused by the combination of "color" terms ("White," "Black") and national identities (e.g., "Korean," "Filipino") in the race question, and found the question lacking in clarity and internal logic (Davis, et.al, 1998a: III-6). Hispanic respondents also differed in their definitions of race, although most opted for "nationality" over "skin color," and none suggested adding a new skin color category as a way of ameliorating the problem (Davis, et. al., 1998a: III-23-24).

Because of their tendency to equate "race" and "nationality," many respondents of Hispanic origin interpreted the race and Hispanic origin questions as redundant, preferring the latter because it was clearer and more direct (Davis, et al., 1998a: 27). In fact, Gerber and de la

Puente (1998:19) found respondents of all backgrounds in their study perceived the race and ethnicity questions as redundant as well as socially divisive.

Hispanic respondents in the Development Associates studies also reported feeling pressure to use the "White" category, even though they did not consider themselves "quite White", or might not be so considered in their countries of origin. Several felt as though they were "expected" to answer this way (Davis, et al.,1998a:III-19), as did a number of Hispanic respondents in Gerber and de la Puente's (1998: 16) study. Foreign-born individuals in both studies also had to adapt their "native" views about racial identification to fit the census categories and conform to their newfound awareness of how other groups now perceived them (Gerber and de la Puente, 1998; Davis, et al., 1998a: III-10).

Development Associates also found that Hispanics who considered themselves to be racially mixed, although not multiracial or biracial, did not know whether or where to report this in the race question. Respondents from Central and South America who recognized having an Indian background also did not record it in the race question, because they considered themselves mixed and were unsure about whether to mark or write in "Indian" (Davis, et al., 1998a: III-14, 19).

1.1.3 The 1997 OMB Standards

In 1997, drawing on the results of the RAETT and the NCS and other research, as well as extensive public input, the Office of Management and the Budget issued "Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity." These revisions, based on recommendations from an interagency review committee established by OMB in 1994, formed the basis for the questions on race and ethnicity that appeared in Census 2000.[1]

The major revisions directly relevant to the concerns of this study were:

- When racial self-identification is used, the revisions called for adoption of a method for reporting more than one race that takes the form of multiple responses to a single question and not a multiracial category.

- The term Hispanic was changed to Hispanic/Latino, although the two primary ethnic categories–"Hispanic/Latino" and "Not Hispanic/Latino" remained the same.

2. METHODS

The evaluation used a primarily qualitative method. Focus groups were conducted between November 2000 and February 2001, with a purposive sample of household heads in 12 communities across the Island, to explore the participants' reactions to the questions on race (Question 9) and ethnicity (Question 8) on the Census 2000 questionnaire. Each participant received $25 for taking part in a group.

[1]The Census 2000 questions on Hispanic origin/ethnicity and on race appear in Appendix E.

Focus groups are well suited to achieving the purposes of this evaluation for two main reasons:

First, as a form of qualitative research, focus groups allow in-depth probing of the respondents' views in their own terms, rather than having the terms assumed, or imposed on them. While these benefits apply to any group, this open-ended approach is particularly appropriate to groups "whose assumptions may differ from those of the mainstream culture, and who, therefore, have a particular need to speak, and be heard, 'in their own voices'" (Berkowitz, 1996: 54). Because of their status as citizens of a U.S. commonwealth, as well as a distinctive history of cultural mixing, residents of Puerto Rico may well have perspectives on these questions that differ even from those of other Hispanic groups in the U.S.

Second, focus groups bring together a small group of persons with certain common characteristics making them particularly suitable for discussing a given topic. Focus groups differ from intensive interviews and other types of group interviews in their emphasis on interaction and interchange within the group. "What emerges from a focus group session is a group-generated response—presumably something different than the sum of what participants would have said if each had been interviewed separately" (Berkowitz: 60). The delicate subjects of this evaluation—views and perceptions of race and ethnicity in the Puerto Rican context—are eminently suitable for group discussion.

2.1 Developing a survey and protocol

We developed English and Spanish versions of two instruments: 1) a brief survey, used to screen for participants and 2) a protocol, used in conducting the focus groups. In addition, we designed an observation and summary form to be used to describe the context and dynamics of the focus group as well as to summarize the main themes of the discussion.

2.1.1 Survey to identify focus group participants

The screener survey served to identify those persons who met our eligibility criteria and were willing and able to participate in the focus groups, and to collect basic demographic data about these persons to use in selecting a balance of focus group participants. Copies of both the English and Spanish versions of this survey are shown in Appendix B.

The survey began with an introduction explaining the purpose of the study, posed in terms of wanting to explore reactions to certain Census 2000 questions, without identifying the race and ethnicity questions in particular. It then went on to ask the individuals if they had mailed back their Census 2000 questionnaires; the type of work they did; whether and for how long they had ever lived in the U.S.; their age; and the highest level of education they had completed. The final section provided further information about the focus groups, asked if the respondent was willing to participate, and collected contact information from those indicating they were interested in taking part. About 85 percent of those contacted initially expressed an interest in participating.

2.1.2 Protocol for guiding focus group discussions

The focus group protocol helped guide focus group discussions. It asked a series of open-ended questions about the participants' perceptions of and reactions to the Census 2000 questions on Hispanic origin/ethnicity and race. The protocol questions built on one another chronologically and thematically. Spanish and English versions of the protocol appear in Appendix C.

- After taking a few minutes for everyone to read through the short-form Census 2000 mailback questionnaire, participants were asked to comment on their reactions to the questions over all, and to identify any specific questions they found difficult to understand or answer. By starting this way, we wanted to give participants a chance to voice their reactions to any or all parts of the questionnaire before focusing on the ethnicity and race questions. We also wanted to see if participants would "spontaneously" identify the race or ethnicity questions as troublesome, without being in any way prompted to do so. In fact, at least one participant in all 12 focus groups raised problems with the question on race at this early point in the discussion. This was the only question on the questionnaire that consistently drew this response.

- The next set of questions (II-VII) probed the participants' reactions to various aspects of Census 2000 questions on Hispanic origin and race. They were asked to discuss their recollections of how they had perceived and reacted to these questions when they first saw them; any difficulties they had or would have answering these questions for themselves or other family members; and whether the different parts of the question—including the instructions, the phrasing, and the response categories—made sense. Participants were also asked if they had been aware of and had considered using the "Some other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino group" and "Some other race" write-in categories and had understood that they could give multiple responses to the race question.

- The final two questions asked the participants about the nature of any differences they perceived between the questions on race and Hispanic origin, and how they thought they would respond in the future, supposing the questions were to remain unchanged. Finally, we solicited any suggestions participants could offer for improvements to either or both of the questions.

The protocol was developed as a tool for facilitators to use in guiding the discussion and ensuring that all the relevant areas were covered. Recognizing that the discussion would almost certainly flow differently in different groups, the protocol wasn't meant to be followed rigidly. Facilitators had room to rearrange the order of the questions, reformulate questions, or forego asking a question if the participants had already discussed the issue in enough depth. In fact, because many participants spontaneously voiced problems with the question on race at the very beginning of the group, it was discussed first in a number of the focus group sessions.

2.1.3 Focus group observation and summary form

The focus group observation and summary form served two main purposes.

- First, it provided the analyst important contextual data about each focus group session that couldn't be obtained from just listening to the tape or reading the transcript. The form, filled out by an observer during the session, focuses on collecting information about the physical setting and about observed verbal and non-verbal behaviors (patterns of exchange, body language, facial expressions, tone of voice) among participants. Such information, absent from a verbatim transcript, can be crucial for properly interpreting the verbal statements.

- Second, in a section designed to be completed after their post-session debriefing, data collection team members could summarize overall observations on the group, major themes that seemed to emerge, and any methodological or procedural lessons learned. Thoughtful completion of this part of the form allowed the data collection teams some input into the initial analysis of the data. It also provided a useful way to refine methods and procedures during the nearly 4 months of data collection.

A copy of the observation and summary form appears in Appendix D.

2.2 Training data collectors

Before data collection began, senior and junior data collectors attended a comprehensive 1 ½-day training session in San Juan led by Dr. Susan Berkowitz of Westat and Dr. Walter Díaz of the Center for Applied Social Research (CAIS) at the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguëz. Dr. Berkowitz summarized the objectives of the study and explained differences between recruitment criteria for this study and the Census 2000 mail nonresponse study. (All but two of the data collectors were the same for both studies and there was also a small time overlap between studies.) She outlined changes in the organization of this project as compared with the prior project on nonresponse. She pointed out that Dr. Díaz and the CAIS would now be responsible for managing all data collection activities. Dr. Berkowitz also provided a brief synopsis of focus group research and facilitation techniques. The whole group reviewed the Spanish versions of the screener survey and focus group protocol in detail and recommended changes. Several of the data collectors also shared lessons learned from conducting the nonresponse study which they believed could also be applied to this effort.

Dr. Díaz presented the criteria used in selecting the 12 study sites (Census tracts) and 24 alternate sites (two additional Census tracts for every selected site) to be used as back-ups if the original sites did not work out. He distributed maps of selected and alternate sites to the appropriate data collection teams. He also outlined the procedures to be followed in recruiting participants; arranging for and conducting the focus groups; and submitting invoices (for those working under contract to CAIS).

2.3 Collecting the data

Data collection had three main components: 1) selecting sites and creating maps; 2) identifying and recruiting focus group participants; and, 3) conducting the focus groups. Each component is discussed below.

2.3.1 Selecting sites and creating maps

We selected 12 census tracts across the Island from which to recruit focus group participants. The tracts represent a range of geographic and socioeconomic characteristics, and include urban coastal as well as rural mountainous interior sites in the San Juan area and the western, southern, eastern and northwestern parts of the Island. For each site, we also selected two nearby census tracts demographically similar to the original site. These alternate sites were to serve as back-ups in the event any of the original sites proved unworkable.

Dr. Walter Díaz of the CAIS selected the 36 sites, using Geographic Information Systems (GIS) software and 1996 data to produce maps of the specified census tracts. The maps for each tract showed the boundaries of the tract and gave coordinates for landmarks and other information (such as street names, where available). The maps helped to orient the field researchers who canvassed areas to recruit focus group participants.

Appendix A presents a map of Puerto Rico showing the 12 municipalities (municipios) with tracts that were finally selected.

2.3.2 Identifying and recruiting focus group participants

The next major challenge was to locate persons in the selected tracts who met the eligibility criteria and were willing and able to participate in the focus groups. For each group, we sought a mix of participants of varying ages and socioeconomic/educational levels, on the premise that these differences might affect perceptions of race and ethnicity. For example, we thought younger persons in their 20's and 30's might be more likely to categorize themselves as Black as a statement of racial identity politics. In addition, whenever possible, we tried to recruit one or two individuals who had lived in the U.S. for an extended period of time. Such persons, we believed, might be more conversant, and possibly more comfortable, with the Census 2000 categories. Whenever possible, we also tried to include one or two participants who had not returned their Census 2000 questionnaires by mail, to see if their perceptions seemed to differ from those of participants who had mailed back their forms. We also anticipated that we might encounter persons not born in Puerto Rico (especially individuals born in the Dominican Republic) and decided to include them in the participant pool.

In each tract, researchers sought to obtain the names, relevant demographic data, and contact information for 10-15 eligible and willing individuals, with the goal of getting five or six who would come to the focus group at the appointed time and place. With no names or address lists to work from, our approach was to canvass residential portions of the designated census tracts door-to-door to screen for persons who met the criteria for participation and were willing to take part. Researchers administered the screener survey to as many willing persons as they could find at home in the designated areas. Across the 12 sites, we contacted a total of 147 potential participants, of whom 124 were invited to participate in the focus groups. Eighty-six, or about 70 percent, of the 124 invitees participated in the groups.

Over all, recruitment went relatively smoothly, especially when compared to the difficulties experienced recruiting participants for the mail nonresponse study. This is true mostly because the eligibility criteria for this study were much less restrictive than those for the nonresponse

study (which required locating household heads who said they had not returned their Census 2000 questionnaires by mail). Greater ease of recruitment in this effort also reflects lessons learned from the prior effort. During the nonresponse study, a focus group in a poor, mountain community had to be canceled because the researchers could not overcome the suspicion of most of the invited participants. When similar situations started to develop in the present study, researchers used a strategy, suggested by the Task Manager, of enlisting the help of trusted individuals known to the residents of the community.

At one site, when initial efforts showed community residents were suspicious of outsiders, one team member contacted her sister, who has a friend living in a neighborhood that adjoins the selected census tract. With her sister's friend's help, the data collection team was able to recruit six participants, all of whom appeared at the appointed time and place. Interestingly, not one of the three other individuals who team members managed to recruit on their own showed up to participate in the focus group. At another site, when contacted residents proved recalcitrant at first, the team enlisted the support of a community resident who had already agreed to participate, and was strongly committed to the project because it was sponsored by his former employer, the University of Puerto Rico at Mayaguëz. Although recently retired from his job of many years, he remained strongly loyal to the UPRM, and as a respected member of the community, after much convincing, managed to persuade several of his neighbors to take part.

While this approach of using trusted individuals to gain entry may have drawbacks (e.g., skewing participation towards those linked to certain social networks), it is quite effective, and certainly preferable to having to cancel a group or change sites. The data collection team members should be commended for their creative adaptations to these potentially problematic situations.

2.3.3 Handling logistics

Besides recruiting eligible, willing participants, the data collection teams also had to arrange for refreshments, find and schedule suitable places to hold the focus group, and, in some cases, arrange for transportation and for babysitting for participants' children.

In many of these communities, getting a suitable place for a focus group was no mean feat. The ideal was a cool, comfortable, quiet place close to the participants' homes with as little extraneous noise as possible and a separate space for the children and babysitter. In some sites, the researchers were able to arrange to use community centers or other buildings that had most of these features. In others, they had to improvise. In one case, the day before the scheduled group, team members learned that the community center they had been promised would not be available after all. Rather than cancel or attempt to reschedule the group, they decided to hold the group in a participant's home. They selected the residence that seemed most suitable and would have the fewest distractions. In the end, the group went well, although it is impossible to know for certain how the dynamics of the discussion may have been affected by the location.

At another site, the focus group was held in a non-air-conditioned room in a community center that did not seem at all noisy when visited by the research team prior to the focus group. Unfortunately, however, as the summary form reads,

> "We did not have the same luck on the day of the focus group, perhaps because it was a weekend. There were many different kinds of loud noises coming from the outside. We tried to minimize the noise by closing the doors and most of the windows, but we couldn't drown it out or eliminate it. On several occasions, we had to stop the discussion and hope the noise would end. Among the noises that could be heard throughout the focus group were: children from the house next door crying and shouting; mountain bikes; lawn mowers; constantly barking dogs; and a carpenter intermittently hammering very hard."

The need to conduct some focus group in less than ideal conditions may have affected the quality of the data (as addressed in Section 3, Limits). But these community realities can also help us to better understand the participants' responses. In any event, the data collectors deserve considerable credit for their creative improvisations in locating (and relocating) venues for these groups.

2.3.4 Conducting the focus groups

There were four data collection teams, each comprised of one senior and one junior member. The senior members of each team served as the facilitators of the focus group discussions. The junior members acted as observers and notetakers. They also helped see to the refreshments and made sure that the room was set up adequately and the tape recording equipment and microphones were functioning properly.

The focus groups varied in size from five to eleven participants; most had six to eight. The sessions lasted 60-120 minutes, not counting the time for breaks and refreshments. Of the 86 participants, 57 (2/3) were women and 29 (1/3) were men. They ranged in age from 18 to 70, with 51 (roughly 60 percent) under 45 years of age. The thirty-eight 26-45 year olds accounted for nearly half the participants; those 26-65 represented almost 80 percent of the participants. Participants reported a wide range of occupations, including 16 housewives, eight teachers or other school-related personnel, ten students, and 12 retirees. Thirty-nine of the participants (about 45 percent) had a high school education or less, whereas 47 (55 percent) had some university, a Bachelors Degree, or more. In other words, despite all our best efforts to achieve balance, participants were disproportionately female, older, and better educated than the Puerto Rican population as a whole.

All but eight of the focus group participants were born in Puerto Rico (six in the U.S., one in Chile, and one in the Dominican Republic). Over 2/3 reported having returned their Census 2000 questionnaire by mail. Slightly over half (48) had never lived in the U.S., although about one-third (28) had lived in the U.S. for 4 years or more, with eight having resided there for more than 20 years, including three for 40 years or more. As shall be seen, we were wise to ensure that this group was reasonably well represented, since their perceptions of the race and ethnicity questions and the broader issues surrounding these questions did tend to differ in meaningful ways from those of their compatriots without stateside experience.

The focus group sessions were tape-recorded. Team members met as soon as possible after the sessions to debrief on both content and process, collaborating to finalize the observation summary forms, which they then sent to Westat, along with the tapes.

2.3.5 Reviewing the data

Dr. Susan Berkowitz and Mr. Mervin Ruiz, of Westat, reviewed each of the tapes before sending it on for transcription and translation. Dr. Berkowitz sent the research team members detailed comments on both the process and content of the taped sessions, including suggestions for improvement. She also reviewed and commented on the observation summary forms for each focus group session. This process supported an ongoing dialogue between the Westat task manager and the data collectors, and facilitated the early stages of data analysis. It also helped to build facilitation skills and awareness over the course of the data collection period.

2.4 Applying quality assurance procedures

Quality assurance procedures were applied to the design, implementation, analysis, and preparation of this report. The procedures encompassed methodology, specification of project procedures and software, computer system design and review, development of clerical and computer procedures, and data analysis and report writing. A description of the procedures used is provided in the "Census 2000 Evaluation Program Quality Assurance Process."

3. LIMITS

When considering the results of the evaluation, keep in mind several limits:

- These results aren't generalizable to any larger population. The results reported here derive from focus groups carried out with 86 individuals (57 women and 29 men) in 12 purposively selected sites across Puerto Rico. While every effort was made to select sites representing a range of geographic characteristics and to choose participants with diverse demographic characteristics, we can't claim to have spoken to a representative sample of Island residents. Thus, the results of these groups are only suggestive. They provide a useful jumping off point for additional thinking and further research.

- At several of the sites, as noted above, the focus groups were conducted in less than ideal conditions. In three or four sites, loud street noise (ambulances, police cars, motorcycles) sometimes interrupted the flow of the discussion. For the most part, however, this noise does not seem to have created a major obstacle, as most participants remained engaged in the subject. Moreover, such noise was probably more distracting to the person

transcribing the tape than to the participants, for whom it would be a normal backdrop to conversation.

- Some parts of a few (three or four) tapes are inaudible or indecipherable, probably due to poor placement of the microphone and tape recorder. While we were able to glean the gist of the discussion from all these tapes, some of the finer points may well have gotten lost. We were able to compensate for this somewhat by asking the data collection teams to provide an especially detailed summary of the discussion.

4. RESULTS

While the race question generated the most immediate and heated discussion, participants also had a good deal to say about the Hispanic origin question once they had a chance to examine it more closely. As expected, perceptions of the two questions and their associated concepts of race and ethnicity are closely interrelated. Most participants felt strongly about these subjects, which spoke to their sense of identity as Puerto Ricans.

Over all, the content and tenor of the responses varied surprisingly little by place or social class. The single most powerful factor differentiating responses turned out to be whether the participant had lived in the U.S. for an extended period. However, if those who had lived in the U.S. generally had a better grasp of the presumed underlying rationale for asking these questions in the way they were asked, they did not necessarily accept these assumptions any more than the others did.

Below we first separately discuss perceptions of the race and Hispanic origin questions and then consider interrelations between the two.

4.1 Participant reactions to the Census 2000 question on race[2]

As noted above, at each of the twelve focus group sessions at least one participant spontaneously brought up the question on race as problematic or difficult to answer. In several groups, these initial, sometimes offhand remarks opened the floodgates to an outpouring of commentary on the topic. To put it bluntly, almost no one in any of the groups had a good word to say about this question. Uniformly, participants viewed it as poorly constructed, ill conceived, and, at the very least, highly inappropriate to the Puerto Rican context.

[2]On the Puerto Rico mailback short form questionnaire, the question on race was Question 9. Consequently, when participants referred to Question 9 they were talking about the question on race. The English version of this question appears in Appendix E.

4.1.1 What was the perceived inappropriateness of the question on race to the Puerto Rican context?

Across all groups, participants said they did not see themselves reflected in the available response options and could not identify with any of the categories as given. Said one male participant in a poor community, "I did not know what to answer because I am not (just) Black or White or Spanish or Indian." Said another male participant in a middle-class urban neighborhood, "We Puerto Ricans are unique and we can't even answer this question because we don't have a race." A woman in an interior community, like many other participants, reported that she had left this question unanswered "because I could not identify with any of the answers they had there." Another woman in this same town had at first been very excited about filling out the Census 2000 questionnaire, but "when I came to this question I was very upset because Puerto Ricans were not represented…and it made me realize it had been translated without us in mind." This sense that this question is fundamentally inappropriate to the Puerto Rican context applies regardless of how the participant defined race.

4.1.2 Why was the question on race seen as discriminatory?

Beyond the assertion that it does not fit with the realities of Puerto Rico, quite a few participants went further to say that the race question is inherently racist, discriminatory, and divisive. Said one woman in an interior community, "This (asking about race) is racism, because the census is being done to count the population of Puerto Rico and not to separate the population according to
color." A male participant in another rural interior community reported that his friends and neighbors had widely disliked the census in large part because of this question:

> "People were feeling discriminated against with Question 9. I remember hearing people talk that this question was discriminatory. One deduces that Question 9 intends to divide people into ethnic groups. Many people talked a lot about this and would ask each other why the Census had to ask this question. People did not trust and thought they were being asked this race question so the government could take some action, positive or negative."

Echoing the theme of a possible hidden political agenda for asking about race, one woman in a coastal town commented, "I don't know why they ask for race because we now live in a time when supposedly there is no discrimination by race or color. It is not right to ask a person for his skin color." Making a related point, a woman in an interior community also expressed confusion as to why knowing skin color could possibly influence disbursement of government aid, which she understood as the main purpose of the census.

> "I continue to ask myself why the Census wants to know the number of White and Black people in Puerto Rico. Here we do not need to know whether we are White or Black or tan or Indian in order to receive help. We are all children of God. When we are looking for work we know there are rules that prohibit rejecting a person because of his race. So I ask myself the same question. I want to know—I have searched for the answer. Why does the Census need to know skin color?"

4.1.3 What were the participants' contrasting conceptions of race in Puerto Rico and the U.S.?

Participants who had lived in the U.S. generally had a better understanding of why Question 9 would make more sense in the American context, stressing key differences in race relations between Puerto Rico and the U.S. Said one middle-class male participant, "In the U.S. that question makes a lot of sense because they have more racial segregation than we have here. The U.S. tends to have communities that are predominantly White and others that are only Black, only Asian, etc. I think for Puerto Rico this question could be improved."

A woman in a rural interior town echoed the thought that social divisions are very different in the U.S. and Puerto Rico:

> "We Puerto Ricans do not divide ourselves between White and Black, but rather between Puerto Ricans and foreigners. In the U.S., there are more differences. In the U.S., there are Puerto Rican neighborhoods, Black neighborhoods, Chinese neighborhoods. Here in Puerto Rico we have none of that. Why are we being divided in this census if we are not used to such division? I just don't feel right with all these questions that cause divisions!"

A male participant from an interior community observed that Puerto Ricans living in the U.S. tend to get caught up in American assumptions about race, and as a result usually want to disassociate themselves from African-Americans. "One thing I learned living in the U.S. is that the Puerto Rican there is not considered Black and wants to be seen as Puerto Rican because we are a mixture of everything. The Puerto Rican living in the U.S. does not like the term "Black" because that term is used for he who is purely Black African, one whose previous generations never mixed."

4.1.4 What were views of the complexities of defining race as skin color?

Participants hotly debated this question's intended definition of race, which is not surprising given that the question does mix the concept of race as conventionally presented (White, Black, American Indian/Native American, Asian-American/Pacific Islander) with terms that connote nationality (Korean, Vietnamese). Many participants, though not all, opted for a definition of race as skin color, even as they recognized this as a gross oversimplification. Here is one woman's account of the complicated thought processes she went through in deciding to mark herself as White and her husband's race as Black:

> "I received the census via mail. I did not understand some of the questions and so I went to my neighbor across the street so she would help me fill out the form. One of my doubts was Question 9…I answered "White" for myself. My neighbor helped me to get to that answer. I told her I understood my skin to be white and that my neighbor's skin was darker than mine, so that her skin would be black. She has the profile of a White person but her skin is black, very dark, maybe due to the sun. My neighbor and I had a long discussion about that question. When I filled out the census for my husband, I answered "Black" for my husband even though he is not pure black and I told him how I had answered. His hair is very straight but his skin is very black. And he asked me why

> I had answered "Black" for him. I answered that way because my neighbor said that a person's race is defined by the skin color and type of hair. In this case, my husband's hair is not typical of a Black person, but his skin is black. The Black option was the closest answer because this census had only White or Black as possible options for me."

As for many other participants, this woman needed to resolve inconsistencies caused by using skin color as the only phenotypic marker of race. Both her husband and her neighbor have very dark skin but other features (profile, hair) not generally associated with being Black. Participants constantly referred to cases of persons with "contradictory" or "inconsistent" features—such as white skin and green eyes with kinky hair— to underline their point that skin color alone is a poor basis for categorizing people.

Even using just the narrow criterion of skin color, participants felt that none of the response categories fit with their reality. Most categorized themselves as somewhere between White and Black—trigueño,[3] or "café au lait" was the term that came up most often. Said one participant in an interior town, "We Puerto Ricans have no valid response category to choose from. I am 'coffee with milk.' And those of us who are here now are not pure white or black. So then what are we to answer?" Commented another participant in the same community, "The option of trigueño is missing here, which is not the same as Black African." A woman in another interior town echoed this thought:

> "I also left this question blank because I could not identify myself with any of the answers they had there. They should have included the option of trigueña. I called the Census office about this question and did not get an answer…The Census people should have thought about us because I believe the race of trigueña exists and that is my race. I am not Black African even though I do have my hair African type. I am not White either."

Two central themes emerged in all the discussions: 1) as a result of generations of mixing, Puerto Ricans are not one "pure" race, but a mixture; and 2) following the definition of race as skin color leads to the apparently counterintuitive result that siblings and other close family members are reported as being of different races.

Many participants said that they had been taught in school that the Puerto Rican "race" was, by definition, a distinctive admixture of Spanish, Indian and African. Several schoolteachers among the participants reported they still teach this to their students. Given that this is the received cultural wisdom taught to children by their teachers and parents, participants were offended that no such answer category existed in the census questionnaire. One participant in a coastal town noted that, "The instructions are clear but we do not know how to answer this question because since we were young we were taught we are a mixture of races: White, Black, Indian, etc. So we have learned that instead of (being a) race, we are Puerto Ricans." Said a woman in an interior town: "When we were in school, we were taught that Puerto Ricans are descendants of the Indian, African, and Spanish races and none of this is part of those answer categories. We are Puerto Rican "Boricuas" and none of that is there (in the response options).

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[3]Trigueño is a term that means "tan" or somewhere in between white and black.

How can they ask Puerto Ricans a question about a tribe? Whoever designed that question is far from knowing Puerto Ricans and does not know our culture."

Participants also talked about the perceived absurdity of splitting families down the middle racially according to the skin color of the individual family member. Said one man in a coastal town, "In my home there are three whites and three blacks. I just don't find any logic to this question. We at home continue to be the same family and continue to be Puerto Rican." A woman in the same community concurred:

> "We are ten siblings. There are several who are black and you would not believe they are my siblings. Others are white but with black hair and eyes. And some of us have brown hair and green eyes. I would not know how to classify these people with the options given in Question 9."
>
> Asserted one man in a rural community: "We are a mixture. That is why a couple with six children, for example, have children that all look different: some white like a rabbit, another brown like coffee, and so on. Sometimes this even leads to marital discussions. The kids are so different from one another, it does not seem possible to the husband that the child could be his."

Given these phenotypic differences, what are the implications for answering the question on race? It means that some siblings would be characterized as "Black" and others as "White" depending on the "accident" of how dark their skin happened to turn out. One man indicated that he had marked down that some of his children were White and the others Black. When asked how he had established the "cut off point," he replied that the line of demarcation was self-referential: those lighter than he is, were considered White, and those with skin tones the same as or darker than his were reported as Black. Said one woman, "To answer Question 9 for the whole family, I would need to respond that I am trigueña, my daughter is White, my husband is Black, my other daughter is White and my son is trigueño." The idea that members of the same family could be arbitrarily separated in this way by the Census categories clearly bothered many people and also seemed to contradict common sense.

4.1.5 Why did so many participants categorize themselves as White, but not really mean it?

Many participants expressed the view that Americans define races as "pure" categories that do not entail any mixing across groups. Said one female participant in an urban center, "What happens is that Americans see 'Black' as the African who has never mixed. And they see 'White' as the pure white with skin the color of milk, who has not mixed with other races." Given the obvious discrepancy between these assumptions and the mixed realities of the Island, it is always problematic to try to apply American-derived concepts of race to the Puerto Rican population. Moreover, commented one woman in an interior town:

> "One feels excluded with this question. For us in Puerto Rico it is very common for all races to mix. And for us it is normal and acceptable by all. And this Question # 9 gives me the impression that our behavioral style of mixing among the different races and thus

> resulting in a mixed race, is not being considered, as one can see from the answer categories included here."

Some of those who felt that the categories in the question on race did not apply to them simply chose not to answer. Others did answer, but were very unsatisfied with their responses; many said they had answered the question "incorrectly." Most participants had reluctantly, and sometimes a bit shamefacedly, given their race as "White." One woman in a coastal town reported she had answered "White" for the race question, "but now that I am having all this discussion, I realize I answered incorrectly." When asked why she had marked herself as White, she replied, "Because of my color, but not all of my family is White since we all come from different mixed races." Another participant in the same group who also categorized herself as White on the questionnaire confessed, "When I filled out the census I did not consider myself White, but not African Black either. I automatically did not see it as race but looked at my skin color." Echoed others in the same group, "I studied all my options and the only one I could fit into was the White race, even though I am not completely white;" "I was not comfortable answering my race to be White, but it was the best answer among the alternatives available."

A male participant in a mainly middle-class community was initially uncertain about how to answer and asked for the enumerator's advice. He ended up reporting himself and all his family members as White because, he said, the trigueño option was not given. Although he had toyed with the idea of answering "Black," he believed that only very, very dark people—people who are "pure violet black"—would truly qualify as such.

> "We are all white in my home. We are not Black—pure, violet black—but rather, very mixed. And in the U.S., I understand that a White person is purely white. Someone who is Black is purely black. And he who has been born in Latin America is known as 'Hispanic.' That is how it is in the U.S."

Another participant in this group reported that she, too, had been very confused when considering the various options, and although she had finally opted for "White," would have preferred to answer Hispanic. "For this census we all ended up answering as White, including my grandparents, parents, siblings, but none of us felt like a white race, but rather, as Hispanic."

Others, including enumerators, had sometimes encouraged participants to select the White option. In a coastal community, the enumerator classified as White a woman whose parents are Mexican. However, this woman never felt sure about this answer. "Anyway," she quickly added, "I just don't think it is necessary to ask the race question. It actually offends me. Because we talk about the race of a dog, and that is how we identify a dog, but not the race of a person." A woman in an interior community had answered that her whole family was White "even though we are all trigueños," on the advice of a clerk in her town's municipal offices, who had apparently similarly advised all those who sought guidance on how to answer this question.

The enumerators' role in this process was somewhat murky. Several participants observed that the enumerators never asked them the race question. From this they surmised either that the Census Bureau had instructed enumerators not to ask this question or that the enumerators, perhaps out of embarrassment, had marked down whatever category they thought applied to the

person. One man was angry when he saw the enumerator marking him down as White when he identified as Black.

Several participants indicated that they had classified themselves as White because they weren't "taking any chances." One woman in a middle-class community—described by the facilitator as not "evidently" Black, but with the darkest skin tone of the group—said she had done so "just in case." This woman as well as all the other participants laughed every time she said this, apparently recognizing the irony. Exactly what she thought might happen if she had categorized herself as Black was never made clear. One man flatly acknowledged that he had lied and given his race as White on the belief that U.S. aid to Puerto Rico would be lowered if too many Puerto Ricans were to declare as Black.

Some participants were critical of this tendency for everyone to report as White, though they tended to deflect their criticism away from specific individuals and onto a more general plane. One participant commented she was "almost certain" that 90 percent of all Puerto Ricans had put down they were White. (Indeed, her prediction was fairly accurate: recently released figures show that 81 percent of Puerto Rican respondents reported themselves as White only.) A woman in another group observed "We'll soon see everyone calling himself White, when in fact we're all actually Black," and another participant opined that "If we were honest, we should mark ourselves down as mestizos."[4]

A number of participants in different groups observed that many people who "are not really white" report themselves as such because it is still a stigma to be identified as Black in Puerto Rico:

> "I think there are people who do not like to be described as being of a Black race, and so they classify themselves as some other race, according to convenience."
>
> "There will be people who will classify themselves as White when in reality they're mixed, because they don't wish to be seen as they really are."
>
> "There are many people in Puerto Rico who believe they are White, but they are not."
>
> "There are many people who have a complex about being Black. Maybe these people are Black or trigueñas, but they respond as being White."

Their comments suggest that, even if not as highly charged an issue as in the U.S., race is still a sensitive subject for many Puerto Ricans. The fact that nervous laughter and considerable joking often accompanied discussions of the topic in nearly all the focus groups would seem to support this view. Of course, it is also important to keep in mind that this is the first time in a very long while that Puerto Ricans have been asked to answer questions about race. Until recently, talking about race has not been part of the public discourse. So the issue is not only the inapplicability of American racial categories in the Puerto Rican setting, but also the hesitation of venturing onto somewhat new and sensitive terrain.

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[4]Mestizo is a word that refers to being of mixed blood.

The signs of racial sensitivity were subtle. In one group, when a woman reported she had finally decided to classify her husband as Black (because despite having what would be considered white facial features, his skin is very dark) a man in the group said, jokingly, "Ah—so you killed him, then." In this same group, a man commented that a person will sometimes say "I am Black but I have the heart of a White man" as a way of trying to say that they are a good person. He added that in his view this was silly, because "skin color does not define what a person is in the inside. I can be white but have a very bad heart. Another person can be trigueña with a noble and good heart. I hate racism because before God we are all the same. I have many Negro friends who are wonderful people."

In another group, an older man told a story about being involved with a white woman in the U.S. who claimed he was the father of a black baby. He told the other participants what a disgrace this would have been for him, and referred to the baby as "un carbonsito"—a little piece of charcoal. The other participants laughed, but covered their faces or mouths with their hands, and seemed to be embarrassed by the comment. Although they may well have disagreed with the sentiments this man expressed (as the researchers believed), it is still revealing that no one directly challenged him on this.

In only one of the focus groups did participants discuss issues of racial identity politics. Not surprisingly, this group was primarily composed of well educated, young urbanites in San Juan, where such issues are part of the public discourse, at least in artistic and intellectual circles. In this group, more people discussed racial identification as connected to history and culture and not as a matter of skin color or other physical characteristics. "Race is more than skin color," argued one man. "Race also includes experience, the history of our past." Participants also discussed that racial identity is a complex mixture of how people see themselves, how others see them, and how they wish to be seen. To "whitewash" a Black identity, then, is to deny history and culture. "If we are Black we should feel proud of who we are since we have a history of our past." Thus, the participants in this group who had identified themselves as Black on the census questionnaire had taken care to write in "Black—Puerto Rican" rather than be assimilated into the broader Black/African-American category.

4.1.6 Why did some participants interpret race as referring to nationality?

As noted earlier, many participants were confused by the way the question on race mixed racial categories such as "Black" and "White" with terms connoting nationality. This made them wonder what the Census was really after in this question. Said one participant in an interior town, "A problem I had with Question 9 is that the first options there are races. But then the response categories turn into nationalities. That confuses me. This question is really about races and nationalities." Trying to infer what the Census must have meant by race, one man in an interior community observed, "In the U.S. they consider race as skin color, but also nationalities, such as Japanese, etc., from what I see in the answer categories for Question 9."

Since many participants considered the "color terms" in the first part of the question inappropriate, an obvious solution would be to add 'Puerto Rican' to the list of nationalities in the second part of the question. Noted a man in an interior community: "This question is confusing since it mixes race with nationality. If they added some nationalities there, they should have added 'Puerto Rican' as well so that we could have answered Question 9 more easily." A woman in another interior community seconded this view: "My question is what is the Puerto Rican's race? The options here read 'Japanese,' for the Koreans there is the option of 'Korean.' If we are from Puerto Rico, are they going to count Puerto Rico as a race?" Another participant in the same group reported that even though he believed the best solution would be to include the category of Puerto Rican with the other national groups, he did not write in this answer for fear it would be disqualified. "I did not know if by writing in 'Puerto Rican' I would be counted as a statistic or if my answer would not be counted because 'Puerto Rican' is not considered a race for this question." Several people commented it was an injustice that other national groups were given their own preprinted categories, whereas Puerto Ricans were not.

One woman indicated she had written in "Puerto Rican" where it says "Other Pacific Islanders." Another participant queried, "Why did you answer 'Puerto Rican' if you were being asked your race?" The woman replied (setting aside the error of having written her response on the wrong line), "Well, because if you read all the categories they have there, they do have nationalities such as Asian Indian, Chinese, Japanese, Filipino, Korean, etc. Those answer categories are nationalities, not races. I am none of those nationalities or races that appear there—I am Puerto Rican." The other participant continued to insist on her interpretation that the question refers to skin color and not to nationality. On the face of it, however, either interpretation is credible given how the question is constructed. Moreover, given the ongoing debate about "national identity" and statehood, it is not surprising that some people chose to interpret the question in this fashion—not in error, or as an oversight, but as an assertion of a unitary identification as "Puerto Rican."

4.1.7 What were reactions to, and use of, the "Check one or more races" and "Some other race" options?

For the first time, Census 2000 allowed respondents to check off more than one racial category for each person in the household. As seen, this was done to ensure that Census 2000 would more accurately reflect the growing racial diversity of the U.S. population and in response to lobbying efforts by organizations representing biracial and multiracial individuals. Quite a few of the focus group participants had not realized they could have checked off multiple racial categories for each person in their household. Some knew they could designate different persons as of different races—for example, one child as Black and another as White—but not that they could have assigned multiple races to each individual. Nevertheless, for most, learning that they could have exercised this option did not resolve the essential dilemma of answering the question on race.

To some, it just felt wrong somehow to check off more than one racial category for an individual —it seemed to run counter to an intuitive notion of race as a unitary concept. Said one man, "I see that it says here that one can answer with one or more races, and this confuses me even more. Two or more races?" Echoed a woman in an interior community: "It doesn't make sense to be told that one can respond with more than one answer because a person cannot have more than

one race!" Several of those who found this option intuitively unappealing made the interesting point that in Puerto Rico, people do not trace out lines of descent as they do in the U.S. They do not think of themselves as "half White and half Black" or "one quarter Irish and three quarters Italian." Rather, they think of themselves simply as "Puerto Rican"—a notion that assumes continuous mixture.

A young man in a coastal town posed the issue this way:

> "Since my grandfather was black and my grandmother was white, what is my race? Maybe I could have answered my race to be both White and Black, but I did not realize I could answer Question 9 with more than one choice. But in any case, in Puerto Rico it is not customary to know our past origins and race. For example, I do not know if my ancestors were exactly white or black, since they could have been white and Indian and not black at all. Here in Puerto Rico we just don't keep track of that. In the U.S., people do know if they're half Irish, one fourth Italian, another quarter French, etc."

One of his co-participants agreed, arguing that for this very reason, the question will never produce accurate results for Puerto Rico. "In Puerto Rico, we all have the same Spanish descent, as well as Black-African and local Indian and then a bit of many other countries. Here in Puerto Rico, nobody keeps track of their lines of descent…We just don't have knowledge of our ancestors…It (Question 9) is valid only for someone who knows all his ancestry, so he can mark off all the races."

Instead of the individualistic solution of allowing each person to check off as many races as desired, many participants would have preferred a single response option that specifically acknowledged their mixed ancestry: Creole, trigueño, Caribbean were all suggested as fitting possibilities. As one man declared, " I come from a mixture of races. In other words, I am Creole." Others noted that, at the very least, the question should have offered a wider range of answer choices, rather than forcing respondents into the three categories, none of which seemed quite right for Puerto Rico. One man had thought of answering that he was "Indian," because this best fit with his physical looks and sense of identity. However, once he saw the instruction for filling in the name of his tribe, he realized the category was not meant for him. Similarly, another participant left the answer blank, because: "I am a Black Puerto Rican. It is not the same to be a Black Puerto Rican as to be a Black African, as is stated on the census form." Commented one participant: "To improve this question, one could add a variety of options, and not present it in such a limited way with only the options of White, Black, and Indian."

The race question also allowed respondents to write in a response of their own choosing under "Some other race." Quite a few participants had not known about this option, often because they had not read that far into the question. However, again, few of those who had known about it had used it. A handful of participants had written in "Black Puerto Rican" because, like the man quoted above, they wanted to differentiate themselves from what they perceived as American concepts equating Black with African-American. "Here in Puerto Rico, said one participant in an interior community, "there are no Africans. There are blacks or 'prietos,' Dominicans or Cubans, but they are not Africans." One man in an urban center reported, "Since this question had a blank space to fill out, I wrote in 'Black Puerto Rican.' I had to create a new variable for the Census."

Some participants wrote in "Puerto Rican" based on reading the question as asking for nationality. A few indicated they had written in "Puerto Rican" because they felt the term "said it all." Whoever read the answer, they believed, would understand ipso facto that a Puerto Rican is a mixture of races. In an interior community, a participant commented: "If I write in 'Puerto Rican,' then someone will understand all the mixture we are." Said another man in another interior community, "For the race question, I did not answer it for my family members because I do not believe we Puerto Ricans have a race as such, but rather, I wrote in 'Puerto Rican' for each member. And I thought when these census answers are seen in the U.S., they will realize this question should not be asked of Puerto Ricans because it is not applicable to us."

As with the option of checking off more than one race for an individual, once having discovered the write-in option, some, but not an overwhelming number of participants claimed they would now be inclined to use it. In one group, almost everyone said they would now use the option to write in "Puerto Rican." Some people said, quite simply, that writing in a special category was too much bother. One man joked that they should award a prize to anyone who went to that much trouble. Quite a few participants said that, quite frankly, in the absence of any better guidance from the Census Bureau, they still wouldn't know what to write. Said one man in a coastal community, "Even though there is a blank space at the end to write in, how do we know what needs to go there? Do we write in 'Puerto Rican?' How do we know this is an acceptable race answer for the purposes of this census?"

Many participants across different groups thus reported that, given the chance to answer the question now, they would still give the same "mistaken" response all over again. Said one participant in a coastal community, "I would make the same mistake of answering 'White' race for myself for lack of better options." A co-participant added, "And I would do the same mistake of answering 'Indian' for myself." A third echoed, "I would again also answer 'White' even though I am totally trigueña." These comments serve to underline the important point that the major objections to the race question were substantive. Participants simply did not see themselves in the answer categories, and did not regard the "Some other race" option as a real solution to their difficulties. Several expressed the view that, if the Census Bureau truly wanted to be sensitive to Puerto Ricans' needs, it should have included an option—whether "Puerto Rican," trigueño, or some other—in which Puerto Ricans would be able to immediately recognize themselves.

4.1.8 Is the Census for the U.S. or just Puerto Rico?

Participants in several groups raised the question of whether Census 2000 had been designed for everyone in U.S. or just for Puerto Ricans, as in the past. The facilitator answered this question in some groups and in others said nothing one way or the other. But even in those where the facilitator clarified the issue, the discussion did not always reflect that understanding, as people tried to puzzle out the possible meanings and intentions underlying the questions on race and Hispanic origin.

Perhaps the staunchest proponent of the position that the census had to be approached as an American creation was a man in an interior community:

> "The first thing you read here is 'Commerce Department of the United States of America.' You notice this and realize this is made for the U.S. where there are a large variety of races. But we must realize this census was designed with the American population in mind, and we Puerto Ricans must adapt to this reality and do our best to answer this Question 9."

One of his co-participants countered with a statement expressing a sentiment widely held across all groups: "If indeed the U.S. has such a large variety of races, why is it that they do not include our race as an answer category to Question 9?"

A number of participants interpreted the question on race as asking about people living in Puerto Rico who were born elsewhere. "That part about Korea and some other island," said one participant in a working class community, "maybe this is being asked by Census people to find out how many people of these countries mentioned in the answer categories are coming to our country and are represented in our country." While this statement might lead one to believe that this person thought the census had been designed just for Puerto Rico, he then goes right on to say, "This question is directed to the U.S. and not to us who live here on the Island."

A participant in another group suggested that even if Census 2000 had been designed for the entire U.S., the version they received was written in Spanish, so one can assume it was being directed only to Spanish speakers. If so, he asks, "Why do all of these nationalities show up here when they have nothing to do with Hispanics in general?"

The consensus was that the racial categories in the question on race might have made sense for the U.S., but not for Puerto Rico or Puerto Ricans. Even if the Census Bureau had good reasons for not designing a census exclusively for Puerto Rico, something more should have been done to adapt the answer categories to the Puerto Rican context. Said one man, "If they don't want to design a different census form for Puerto Rico at least they could enclose a separate sheet with a more complete list of optional races to choose from. Because the options here are not enough." Others suggested that simply translating the questionnaire into Spanish, without also taking into account cultural differences separating the U.S. and Puerto Rico, was not going far enough.

4.2 Participant reactions to the Census 2000 question on Hispanic origin[5]

The Hispanic origin or ethnicity question elicited a less vociferous and outraged response than did the question on race. Although many participants found parts of it confusing, this question was "saved" by the presence of an answer category that read "Puerto Rican." Many participants simply "fast forwarded" through the question and answer options until they came to the "Yes, Puerto Rican" category, then gave the question no further thought because they had "found themselves" there. A man in an interior community contrasted his reactions to both questions: "I say with this question we don't have problems. Here we have the answer category of 'Puerto Ricans' which describes us perfectly." Said a man in a coastal community, "I did not have any difficulty (with the Question on Hispanic origin) because it says 'Puerto Ricans' there and I

[5]On the Puerto Rico short-form mailback questionnaire, the Hispanic origin/ethnicity question was Question 8. When participants referred to Question 8 this is the question they were discussing. The English version of the Hispanic origin question appears in Appendix E.

consider myself Puerto Rican first of all and that is how I answered." A woman in another interior community reported that she had not needed to discuss this question with anyone because, "To me this concept was not difficult because I did not even analyze it since the option of 'Puerto Rican' was right there for me to choose from."

In a sense, the availability of the preprinted category "Puerto Rican" in the Hispanic origin questionnaire short-circuited the kind of critical scrutiny the race question received because it lacked just such a category. However, once given a chance to examine it more closely, many participants found parts of the Hispanic origin question puzzling, and began to wonder about the intended meaning of its underlying constructs. In several of the groups, discussion was enlivened by the presence of participants who were not Puerto Rican or "entirely" Puerto Rican. Two groups included persons of Dominican origin (though one individual identified entirely as Puerto Rican); one had an individual of mixed Mexican-Puerto Rican parentage. Participants in other groups included a woman of Mexican parentage and a Chilean man who had married and settled in Puerto Rico. These individuals presented "anomalies" that served to sharpen debate about the meaning of "origin" and raised questions that might not have surfaced otherwise. Interestingly, similar issues arose in discussing individuals of Puerto Rican parentage born in and/or living in the U.S.

4.2.1 What were the confusions and concerns reading and interpreting the Hispanic origin question?

A few participants mentioned they were confused by the construction of the question, which asked persons who are not Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino to mark the first "No" box. Said one participant in a coastal town: "There is a question here that confuses me. It says to check off if one is not of Latino, Hispanic, or Spanish origin. Those questions that are asked in the negative sense, with a 'No' or a 'Not,' confuse me. I can't answer those types of questions."

A number of participants were put off by what they considered the overly complex construction of the answer categories. They felt the categories were too "encumbered" and it took too long to finally recognize the "Yes, Puerto Rican" option. Along with this, many thought that by answering "Yes, Puerto Rican" they were saying they were <u>not</u> Spanish, Hispanic, or Latino. They believed they were being asked to choose between the two, and felt this was wrong, since they identified with both categories. A woman in an interior community asked, "Are we Latinos or Hispanics? We Puerto Ricans <u>are</u> Latinos and Hispanics. I don't know how to answer Question 8 because I am Puerto Rican but I can also answer with another response category: Latino and Hispanic. In my case, there are two answers for Question 8." Said a man in a poor coastal community, "The alternative that confuses me there is 'Latino/Spanish/Hispanic.' Actually, the only alternative that is clear to me is 'Yes, Puerto Rican,' and 'Yes, Cuban.' But when answering 'Puerto Rican,' I am (saying I am) not Latino or Hispanic." One man in a poor interior community answered "Puerto Rican," but then had second thoughts when he noticed

there was a Latino option, which also accurately described him, and so "began to doubt if I was actually misunderstanding this question."

Said one woman in a coastal town, "I am very proud to identify myself as Puerto Rican. I do not like to identify myself only as Latina because Latinos are all those of us who speak Spanish, from the many different countries. I am Latina, but Puerto Rican." When push came to shove those who felt they had to choose one or the other usually opted for the more precise "Puerto Rican" over the more inclusive "Latino" or "Hispanic," though not always happily.

Although most participants did eventually make their way through the twists and turns of the question to reach the "Yes, Puerto Rican" category, some got lost along the way. Commented one woman in an interior community:

> "To have discussed here today this Question 8, I now understand it better and I think I wouldn't have so much trouble answering it now. I don't think I am as confused with this question, but before today (I was), because even though the option of 'Puerto Rican' was there, there were many other categories for Question 8 that just confused me and made me doubt my answer."

Interestingly, this woman is one of a very few participants who found the question less confusing after having discussed it; most had the opposite experience. One woman in a coastal town demanded to know the intent behind this question. "Whoever designed this form must definitely not be from Puerto Rico and is not Hispanic or Latino, I say that because these answer options under Question 8 are all very confusing!"

Finally, one man objected to the fact that only Hispanics are asked to provide any real information in this question, whereas Americans can get away without having to explain themselves further. "An American answers by checking the first option and no one knows more about his origin. We only know that this person is <u>not</u> Hispanic. That person does not have to do as much explaining as we do about his origin, nor is this question as confusing for him as it is for us. We, on the other hand, have to answer and explain. One asks oneself: why is this?"

4.2.2 Do Spanish/Hispanic/Latino mean the same thing?

While this question clearly intends that the terms Spanish/Hispanic/Latino be viewed as synonymous, or at least as forming an overarching common category, many participants in this study did not see it this way. Some felt, for example, that "Latino" applies just to Latin Americans, and that "Spanish" should be used only for those whose family comes from Spain. One woman in a coastal town commented that the term Latino is typically used for people who come from South America, whereas Puerto Ricans are Caribbean. Said one man in an interior town, "Spanish is a descendant of Spain. Hispanic is from any Hispanic country. Latinos are those from Chile, Argentina—different countries. I don't consider myself Latino, but rather 'Puerto Rican.'" A woman in the same group had a slightly different take on this, "When one grows up here, one is known as a 'Latino' and also as a 'Hispanic' because of our Spanish language. But we are not known as Spanish because we are not originally from Spain."

A man in a poor coastal community agreed that while Puerto Ricans can legitimately be

considered Hispanics and Latinos by virtue of speaking Spanish, "We are not Spanish because we are not pure Spanish." For him, as for several others, the terms "Hispanic" and "Latino" have connotations of racial intermixing, whereas the term "Spanish" does not. One man, for example, observed:

> "I say all of us are Latinos—all from Central America to South America, we are Latinos. And the Latino is a mixture of Indian, Spanish and African Black. Now there are certain Latin American countries that did not mix as much as Puerto Rico did. But a Latino can not answer he is purely white or black."

The notion that "Latino" is also implicitly a racial category was reinforced by several participants' observations that in the U.S., those with Latino surnames or who live in Latino neighborhoods are automatically disqualified from being viewed as White.

4.2.3 Why is the interpretation of the Hispanic origin question dependent on context?

A number of participants suggested that interpretation of the Hispanic origin question depends on context. The same terms do not necessarily mean the same thing in the U.S. and in Puerto Rico. Observed one man in an interior community, "If one receives this questionnaire while living in the U.S. then one does not have a problem answering it. So that's what I did with this form: I answered as if I were living in the U.S." Along similar lines, a woman in a middle-class urban community reported she was able to answer "correctly" only because she was already familiar with concepts like "Hispanic" through having lived outside Puerto Rico. Had she never left the Island, she confessed, the available answer categories would be all but incomprehensible.

Participants across all groups felt that the "blanket terms" Hispanic and Latino which embrace a range of groups, are more appropriate to the ethnic diversity of the U.S. than to the realities of the Island. Said one woman in an interior town, "Those who live in the U.S. and speak Spanish are called 'Hispanic' or 'Latino' but here in Puerto Rico we are only Puerto Rican." A woman in another interior community concurred: "Since I live here in Puerto Rico, I answer 'Puerto Rican' for Question 8. But if I were living in the U.S., I would answer 'Latino' instead of 'Puerto Rican.'" A man in a middle-class urban community also recognized the concept of "Hispanic" as an American creation: "Hispanic is a person who was born in a country where Spanish is spoken but is being raised in the U.S. It was in the U.S. where this concept of 'Hispanic' was born. 'Latino' is everyone who was born and raised in a Latin American country. Spanish is all who were born in Spain, Europe."

Participants also recognized that issues of nationality are submerged by categories that fail to differentiate among Spanish speakers from different countries. One man, for example, pointed out that the media lump together as 'Latinos' all major league baseball players with Spanish surnames without specifying what countries they are from. "Since all of us speak Spanish, we are all put together." Some accepted this categorization, because they believed it is rooted in a common linguistic and cultural foundation: "We Latinos come from different countries," said one man, "but we all understand each other."

Other participants, such as the woman quoted below, objected to these categories as reflections of ethnic stereotyping that provide an excuse to discriminate and segregate in the American

context:

> "The Americans, Italians, etc, call all of us who speak Spanish by the name of 'Latino' or 'Hispanic' and they do not identify us with the country we are from. To me that is discrimination—the fact that they collapse us all in one group. On top of that, they do not mix with us. In New York, for example, the different groups do not mix. Italians live in a certain section, the Hispanics live somewhere else, the Americans have their own area, and so forth."

In a similar vein, a woman in an interior community pointed out that lumping together all Hispanics obviates the necessity of considering the diversity of needs presented by different national groups covered by the term. "United States Americans do not realize that a Hispanic Cuban American who lives in the U.S. legally is not the same as a Hispanic Dominican who lives in New York illegally. One should not lump all Hispanics in the same category because their needs are not the same."

Shifting the frame of reference from the U.S. to Puerto Rico presents different dilemmas for interpreting and answering this question. Moving to an Island-centric perspective, many participants saw answering as unproblematic for a Puerto Rican born in Puerto Rico, but difficult for someone now living on the Island but born elsewhere. For example, how should someone born in the Dominican Republic answer this question? A number of participants commented that someone of Dominican origin living illegally in Puerto Rico would probably be too fearful to respond to the Census in any case. Several saw this question as a thinly veiled attempt to ferret out illegal immigrants to Puerto Rico. One woman commented that she would never truthfully answer a question about the origin of household residents for fear of being accused of sheltering illegal aliens. "We (Puerto Ricans) have a tradition of sheltering all groups. The U.S. does not understand this."

The consensus was that even when considerations of legality did not apply, answering this question still posed problems for persons not born in Puerto Rico. Participants' views turned on different interpretations of the meaning of the word "origin" as used in the Hispanic origin question.

4.2.4 What does "origin" mean?

For some participants, origin referred to country of birth. Said one man in a middle-class coastal community, "When they ask what is our origin, I understand they want to know where we were born. It would be easier to ask if we were born in Puerto Rico and to answer 'Yes," if so. That way, whoever is not from Puerto Rico can say where he <u>is</u> from." The participant who had been born in Chile agreed with that solution. He had written in the "Some other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" category.

However, equating origin with place of birth did not sit well with others. Several participants raised the issue of children born in the U.S. How would they answer for these children? Several considered that the most appropriate response would be to write in "American—Puerto Rican" under the "Some other" option. But that still did not satisfy everyone. One man reported that he had gone to the U.S. when he was 15 years old, married a Puerto Rican woman and had a child,

born in the U.S. "My son," he reported, "is American, of Puerto Rican origin or descent." However, he believed his son is not Latino. A woman commented that her second child was born and brought up in New York. "I consider him to be Puerto Rican, but I do not know what he considers himself to be." Another participant commented that, "Many Puerto Ricans who were born in the U.S. no longer consider themselves Latinos, but rather, Americans. That person is of Puerto Rican origin but his nationality is American."

These comments suggest additional factors that need to be taken into account in understanding the issue. One is the subjective element of identity, or what the person considers himself or herself to be, regardless of place of birth. Another is ancestry, or the notion that "origin" extends beyond place of birth to the background or national origins of one's parents and forbears. Finally, comes the issue of nationality.

We noted earlier that one participant was born of Mexican parents. "My parents are Mexican," she said, "but I consider myself Puerto Rican…In my case, my great grandparents were Spanish and Italian. My parents are Mexican…. I (also) consider myself to be Spanish, Latino and Hispanic." However, she noted, despite having lived in Puerto Rico for many years, her mother still considers herself "completely Mexican." The concept of origin, then, is porous and somewhat situational; it may or may not include others in the branching out of the family tree.

Said one man, taking issue with the Chilean participant's view that origin equals place of birth equals nationality:

> "My origin is where I come from. Origin includes your ancestors also and not only the individual person. Ruben, who is Chilean, is of Chilean origin, and is married to a Puerto Rican. But his children, what origin will they be? His children will consider where they were born and the origin of their parents."

This participant raised the point that if origin is understood as ancestry, not everyone's background is homogeneous, which may create difficulties for those—such as the mixed Chilean/Puerto Rican children— forced to settle on one answer category. A woman in a coastal town similarly observed that the question only gives the possibility of answering with one response. "But his grandfather (referring to another participant in the group) who is Puerto Rican and who also has Italian origin, will find it difficult to answer even Question 8 because the grandfather has both Italian and Puerto Rican origins. Which should he choose for Question 8?"

Not surprisingly, the issue of nationality also arose in discussions of the Hispanic origin question, as it had in considering the question on race. For Puerto Ricans, this issue is complicated and highly politically charged. Those favoring statehood emphasize identification with the U.S. and downplay the notion of Puerto Ricans as a "people" or a nation. Those favoring independence take a different position. Mused one man in an interior community, "The politicians say we are not a nation. Other politicians say we are a nation. So then I wonder how I should answer Question 8, which asks about our origin—our nationality?" In one group, a woman's assertion that "We are all Americans" was greeted with a polite silence that the research team interpreted as disagreement.

It is clear that the concept of "origin" as expressed in the Hispanic origin question is complex

and has many possible meanings. Some interpret it as place of birth, others as nationality, still others as ancestry or a statement of ethnic or political identity. Given how ideas of origin may vary from person to person, one participant summarized the general sentiment that it should be up to the Census Bureau to clarify what it is seeking in this question. "If your parents are from Puerto Rico, but you were born in New York, what does origin mean? For me, origin means the place where I was born. But for others, origin is where they were brought up. And for others, origin is the place where their parents are from. What does the Census intend with this 'origin' question? The Census needs to define this clearly for us." A woman in another group argued that because Puerto Ricans are not generally familiar with these concepts, these issues should be addressed in school, so people will know what is being asked and how they should answer.

4.2.5 Are the Hispanic origin and race questions really different?

After they had been given the opportunity to discuss both questions separately, participants were asked to comment on whether they saw a real difference between the two. In general, as might be expected, participants' views on the subject varied according to their interpretation of the two questions.

The largest cluster of participants felt the two questions were close enough in meaning that it was unnecessary to ask the more offensive question on race. Commented one woman in a middle-class urban community: "We are all "prietos' (Blacks) for the Americans. If Question 8 asks if we are Latino, Spanish, etc, and I answered that I am Puerto Rican, then I should not be asked Question 9—my skin color—because I have already answered that I am Puerto Rican and we Puerto Ricans do not have one color or one pure race." Said another woman in the same group, "Question 9 wants to find out why you answered 'Puerto Rican" for Question 8. They want to get to 'deep waters.' If you are Puerto Rican, then tell me what color you are. But this is not necessary. Question 9 should not be asked at all."

Participants across all groups expressed variations on this same basic theme:

> "If you respond 'Puerto Rican' for Question 8, you will never be able to answer Question 9 on race since we Puerto Ricans do not have a race and we already know I am a Puerto Rican from Question 8. So Question 9 does not make sense for those who answered 'Puerto Rican' in Question 8. Question 9 needs to be eliminated altogether."
>
> "I think the average person will look at these two questions as if they were the same because if you answer 'Puerto Rican' for 8 and 'Some other race-Puerto Rican' for 9, what is the difference? I see this as being the case for most of the people who live in Puerto Rico"

> "If we already answered we are Puerto Rican for Question 8, then it is unnecessary to ask any more about the origin, race, or nationality of the Puerto Rican person. There is no need to look for more answers. That is all that defines us: Puerto Ricans."

One man went a step further and saw racist intent in the order of the questions:

> "First, asking me if I am Puerto Rican. Then asking me if I am a Black Puerto Rican, a White Puerto Rican or a mixed one. Here I start thinking they are causing divisions. And what are they going to do with me if I am unable to choose? Then I am asked the mortgage question. Why? Are they going to help me pay for it? Am I going to receive help according to my race/color? Who cares about color? I will not answer this type of question!"

Even those who wanted to argue for a difference between the two questions were hard pressed to clearly articulate the nature of that difference. Some asserted the two questions had to be different because they had different answer categories. One participant struggled valiantly to find a clear point of difference between the two: "They are different because Question 9 asks about race and Question 8 asks for nationality. But in another sense, they are the same because both questions refer to nationality, as can be seen from reading the answer categories for both. I would probably put these two questions together into one question."

For this participant, as for others, the two questions turn out to be essentially the same because the question on race appears to contradict itself (by asking for nationality). One participant in an interior town used the conflict as reason to doubt the entire Census enterprise: "If these questions are so complicated and are worded so badly, then what level of trust can we have in all the census questions?" Moreover, she added, "The answers Puerto Ricans give on Question 8 and Question 9, and maybe on other confusing questions, will not be accurate." Several other participants concurred, pointing out that the focus group discussions show that these questions are open to too many different interpretations, thus undermining the credibility of the responses.

Most participants argued that the race question should be eliminated altogether, at least for persons answering "Puerto Rican" to the Hispanic origin question. If the question on race should remain, several recommended that "Puerto Rican" be added to the answer categories in the second part of the question or that other efforts be made to expand the answer categories to include choices (like trigueño) more in keeping with the Puerto Rican context. While participants had fewer problems with the Hispanic origin question, some did suggest either that the word "origin" be removed from the question, or that the Hispanic origin question simply ask for nationality or place of birth. One participant summed up the overall sense of the focus groups when he asserted, "These two questions would confuse any Puerto Rican!"

4.3 Summary

Participants reacted more strongly and negatively to the question on race than to the Hispanic origin question, but found aspects of both questions problematic. Two broader points should be kept in mind in putting the findings into perspective.

Puerto Ricans are not accustomed to being asked for their race in official documents

The last time the Puerto Rican government asked questions of this sort was in the 1950s, before most of the focus group participants were born. For Census 2000, the Puerto Rican government chose to use the same questionnaire content on the Island as was used stateside. Those who have lived in the U.S., of course, tend to be more familiar with both the phenomenon of requesting racial information and the categories in which the Census Bureau asks for such information. Nevertheless, being asked these questions for the first time in so long without having been provided any prior "civic" preparation came as a shock to many Puerto Ricans. This may help to explain some of the concern expressed about the intended uses of the data on race as well as possible racist intent in the question.

Commented one participant in a coastal town, "This question made me think about racism and if the intention is to cause division. Maybe this census is racist." Said one woman in a middle-class urban community: "There are racism problems in Puerto Rico. What worries me is if this race concept is applicable to Puerto Rico. That really worries me. Here there is a reality of homeless people and immigrants who are not open to filling out the census. Since we are collecting this census information to understand the needs of the less fortunate groups, it would be a shame not to have data for these kinds of groups." One man in an urban community even worried that use of American-style race questions would bring on American-style racial problems: "Many years ago, we had racism problems here. In the U.S. when one says he is 'Negro," he may be taken for a robber, someone who is not worth anything. That is why this question really depresses me!"

In cognitive interviews, Gerber and de la Puente (1998: 19) found that respondents of all backgrounds thought about the social and political consequences of being asked, and of answering, certain questions in different ways. Moreover, the race question was itself "seen as part of an American dialogue about racism," and respondents believed "that asking it will add to the divisions between groups. The question's assumed divisiveness therefore decreases its perceived legitimacy." If this represents the perspective of persons living in the U.S., these issues are magnified all the more in the Puerto Rican context.

Issues of race, nationality, and identity are politically charged

If concepts of "ethnicity" and "national origin" are complex and somewhat ambiguous for most Hispanics, they are doubly so for Puerto Ricans, especially those residing on the Island. Puerto Ricans occupy a somewhat unique position as U.S. citizens living in a U.S. commonwealth. This perhaps helps to explain a tendency to see race, nationality, and ethnicity as closely linked, if not essentially the same, and to make identity statements that depend on context ("I am X here and Y there").

Moreover, questions about origin, identity, and nationality are at the very center of political debate. These focus groups were held in the immediate aftermath of an election that saw the pro-statehood party removed from power. Consequently, answers that may at first glance simply seem to indicate technical misunderstanding can take on a different meaning when viewed as political assertion. Participants frequently repeated the sentiment "I am Puerto Rican and that is all I am and I will write it in Question 8, Question 9, or wherever else I need to." This may

arguably be interpreted as a statement of identity, rather than an expression of confusion over how to follow the instructions. Gerber and de la Puente (1998: 2) similarly point out that understanding the social and political bases of responses to the race and ethnicity questions "helps to explain certain response patterns as reactions to the social context, and not as 'misunderstandings' of the intent of the question."

4.3.1 On the question on race

- Virtually everyone agreed that this question does not fit the racial dynamics or history of Puerto Rico. They were taught in school that Puerto Ricans are a mixture of Spanish, Indian, and African blood. Thus, participants could not identify with the available answer categories and felt they were being forced to choose among inappropriate alternatives corresponding to a foreign (U.S.) reality.

- Some participants considered the very idea of asking about race offensive, discriminatory and divisive, and suspected a hidden political agenda at work.

- Many participants settled on a definition of race as skin color, but found this wanting as the sole marker of race. They pointed out that Puerto Ricans are a mixture of races, which makes it difficult to draw clear-cut distinctions based on any single phenotypic characteristic. Moreover, siblings in the same family can and often do exhibit wide variations in physical characteristics. Do these siblings then belong to different races? The notion that family members could be arbitrarily divided in this way bothered many participants, and seemed to defy common sense.

- A number of participants reported they had answered the question on race "incorrectly" and would probably do so again. Many had categorized themselves as White because they were not "pure Black" or "African Black" and could find no answer category that properly captured their "mixed" status. Nevertheless, most reporting their race as 'White" felt uncomfortable with the choice, and would have preferred other options—such as trigueño or Creole—that would more accurately reflect their tan "café au lait" color and racially mixed background.

- Despite their expressed desire for more appropriate response categories, relatively few participants were satisfied either with the option of checking off multiple races for an individual, or of writing in an answer in the "Some other race" slot. Some were put off by the notion that an individual could be considered to have multiple races. Most wanted answer categories that explicitly acknowledged their distinctively mixed status and did not require creation of an anomalous category for Puerto Ricans.

- Some participants (though fewer than those defining it as skin color) defined race as nationality, and argued that 'Puerto Rican' should be added to the list of nationalities in the second half of the question on race.

- Participants who had lived in the U.S. for an extended period generally had a better understanding of the bases for the response categories in the question. They pointed to the greater racial and ethnic diversity in the U.S. and contrasted American racial and ethnic segregation with the more fluid pattern of social intermingling on the Island. Both those who had and who had not lived there tended to use the U.S. as a "counter example" of a harsher and more "absolutist" racial environment.

- Although less charged an issue on the Island than in the U.S., discussion made clear that race is not a benign subject in Puerto Rico. Some participants criticized or poked fun at Puerto Ricans who call themselves "White" when they really aren't, interpreting this as an unwillingness to admit to being Black. Remarks also suggested that, in some social circles, blackness is stigmatizing. Some part of the outrage expressed at being asked about race may reflect a discomfort with confronting these issues, as well as a relative lack of collective experience addressing questions of race in the public arena.

4.3.2 On the question on Hispanic origin

- For this question, participants were able to "find themselves" in the response categories. The presence of a preprinted "Puerto Rican" category made it more palatable than the question on race. Many participants simply "fast forwarded" through the question and the answer options until zeroing in on "Yes, Puerto Rican" as their response.

- A few participants were bothered by how the question asked respondents to check off a box if they were <u>not</u> Spanish/Hispanic/Latino. Many thought that by answering "Yes, Puerto Rican" they were saying they were <u>not</u> Spanish/Hispanic/Latino and were thus essentially being forced to choose between two applicable answer categories.

- Consistent with the question's intent, some participants felt that "Spanish," "Hispanic," and "Latino" all mean more or less the same thing. A few disavowed "Latino" as referring only to South Americans, not Caribbean peoples and so not Puerto Ricans. Quite a few accepted "Hispanic" and "Latino" as accurate and largely interchangeable labels, but argued that "Spanish" applies only to Europeans from Spain or those directly descended from them. Some thought "Latino" and "Hispanic" (but not "Spanish") also implied racial mixture.

- For many participants, especially those who had lived in the U.S., interpretations of this question depended on the context from which it was viewed. They believed that "blanket terms" like "Hispanic" or "Latino" are more appropriate to the U.S. than to Puerto Rico: the same person would be "Puerto Rican" in Puerto Rico but "Latino" or "Hispanic" in the U.S. Participants also recognized that use of these blanket terms submerges issues of nationality. Some accepted this because they felt a sense of cultural kinship with other Latinos. Others objected that this imposition obscures very real differences among the groups being lumped together and facilitates social and residential segregation of Hispanics in the U.S.

- Readings of the question varied according to views of the meaning of "origin." Origin was variously interpreted as referring to birthplace, ancestry, nationality, self-

identification, or some combination thereof. Participants brought up examples of "difficult" or "anomalous" cases (e.g., persons not born in Puerto Rico) to tease out the different dimensions of what increasingly came to be recognized as a complex set of issues. Several expressed a desire for the Census Bureau to clarify its intended meaning of the term.

4.3.3 Relationship of the questions on race and Hispanic origin

- The largest cluster of participants saw the question on race and the question on Hispanic origin as so close in meaning that it made no sense to ask both. Most favored eliminating the question on race, since they found it the more problematic of the two, and could not see what additionally valuable information it could provide about a Puerto Rican respondent.

- Those who thought they saw some differences between the two questions had a difficult time saying why. They often argued "backwards" from the answer categories, on the assumption that if the answer categories were different, the questions must be. Some were foiled in their search for clear differences by the presence of the national origin terms in the question on race, which made the question appear to contradict itself by asking both for race and nationality.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

The focus groups with participants in twelve communities across Puerto Rico revealed strong negative reactions to the question on race. Reactions to the question on Hispanic origin or ethnicity were tempered by the presence of a response category—"Yes, Puerto Rican"—with which the vast majority of participants could identify. Although not generalizable to the larger Puerto Rican population, these results may still have potential implications for changes that might be made to improve response rates to these questions as well as the validity of the answers.

Moreover, despite being based on a relatively small purposive sample, our findings appear to accord with, and may even help to explain, recently released results of Census 2000 for the Island. For example, many of our participants said they had categorized themselves as "White," but only for want of a more fitting category. In fact, Census 2000 results reveal that 81 percent of Puerto Ricans reported themselves and their family members as White. When these data were released, several articles appeared in the Puerto Rican press with experts bemoaning the Puerto Rican population's "historical ignorance" and "confusion about what being Puerto Rican means." In fact, participants in our study recognized they are the product of a historical mixing of Spanish, Indian and African populations. They just felt they had no place to record the awareness of being "mixed," and so fell back on what they readily acknowledged to be an "incorrect" answer category. While this may not entirely explain the phenomenon of reporting as "White," it certainly deserves to be taken into account before jumping to global conclusions about the meaning of the results.

Consequently, while recognizing the tentative and suggestive nature of these findings, we offer the following recommendations for possible changes to these questions as well as overarching

recommendations designed to improve awareness and understanding of the census among the Puerto Rican population. We also suggest areas for further research and exploration necessary to put these findings on firmer footing.

5.1 Recommendations for the Question on Race

- For Puerto Rico, to avoid confusion, it is better that the race question not include "national origin" responses. In addition, it might be worthwhile to consider using a different or modified version of the race question for Puerto Rico rather than using the stateside version (see Overarching Recommendations). We recognize, of course, that the decision to use the same questionnaire content as in the stateside version was made by the Puerto Rican government.

- Some participants never read far enough into the race question to realize that the "Some other race" option existed. Admittedly, relatively few participants said knowing this would have been the solution to their difficulties with the question. Nonetheless, their remarks suggest that for some respondents the length and construction of the question detracted from commitment to give the most accurate response. This might suggest the advisability of developing and testing other ways of constructing this question.

5.2 Recommendations for the Question on Hispanic Origin

- Something about the construction of the question on Hispanic origin led quite a few participants to conclude that they had to choose between identification as Spanish/Hispanic/Latino and identification as Puerto Rican. The reasons why should be explored more fully in order to correct this misperception.

- For the Hispanic origin question, answer options should be clarified for respondents of mixed Hispanic or Hispanic/non-Hispanic origin as well as groups not specified in the answer categories. For example, consider the case of someone born in the Dominican Republic or Cuba who is residing in Puerto Rico.

5.3 Overarching Recommendation

- In discussing the questions on race and Hispanic origin, participants often voiced doubts and suspicions about the larger mission and purpose of the census and the intended uses of the data. For example, participants who understood the census's main purpose as collecting information to help the unfortunate wondered why the government needed to know how many of those people are Black or White. Lack of understanding of the reasons for collecting these data helped feed suspicions of a hidden political agenda. In addition, participants in several groups did not know if they were being asked to answer the same questions as other U.S. citizens or if the questions were particular to Puerto Rico, as in the past.

  To the extent that objections to the race and Hispanic origin questions are rooted in these larger concerns and uncertainties, doing a better job of educating the Puerto Rican public about the broader purposes for collecting census data would almost certainly improve the

responses to these questions. This is especially true given that Census 2000 was the first time in a long while that residents of the Island were asked to give information about race and ethnicity. While it would be naive to suppose that better public education alone will automatically sweep away all these concerns, which are intimately linked to wider social and political issues, it is hard to imagine this would not do some good. This recommendation is bolstered by similar findings from our prior study, "Puerto Rico Focus Groups on Why Households Did Not Mail Back the Census 2000 Questionnaire."

- On a more limited note, many participants expressed a desire for the Census Bureau to provide greater clarification of the intended definitions of key terms such as "race" and "origin." While recognizing that doing so might partly defeat the purpose of asking these questions, it would be useful to think about how this might be done without biasing or skewing the answers.

- Our findings suggest that while they have much in common with other Hispanics, residents of Puerto Rico look at these questions in somewhat distinctive ways even as compared to persons of Puerto Rican origin living in the U.S. Their perceptions shift according to context. Consequently, it would be important to include Island Puerto Ricans in any additional cognitive testing or efforts to field test different versions and formats of questions and questionnaires for future censuses.

- Consider using the results of this study, along with the results of the "Puerto Rico Focus Groups on Why Households Did Not Mail Back the Census 2000 Questionnaire," to create a survey with primarily fixed response or close-ended questions to be administered to a probability sample of residents of the Island. The survey could seek the respondent's views of different approaches to data collection for the census, as well as their reactions to any new materials developed. The survey could be used to test different versions of the race question in order to find a race question that will work better for residents of the Island.

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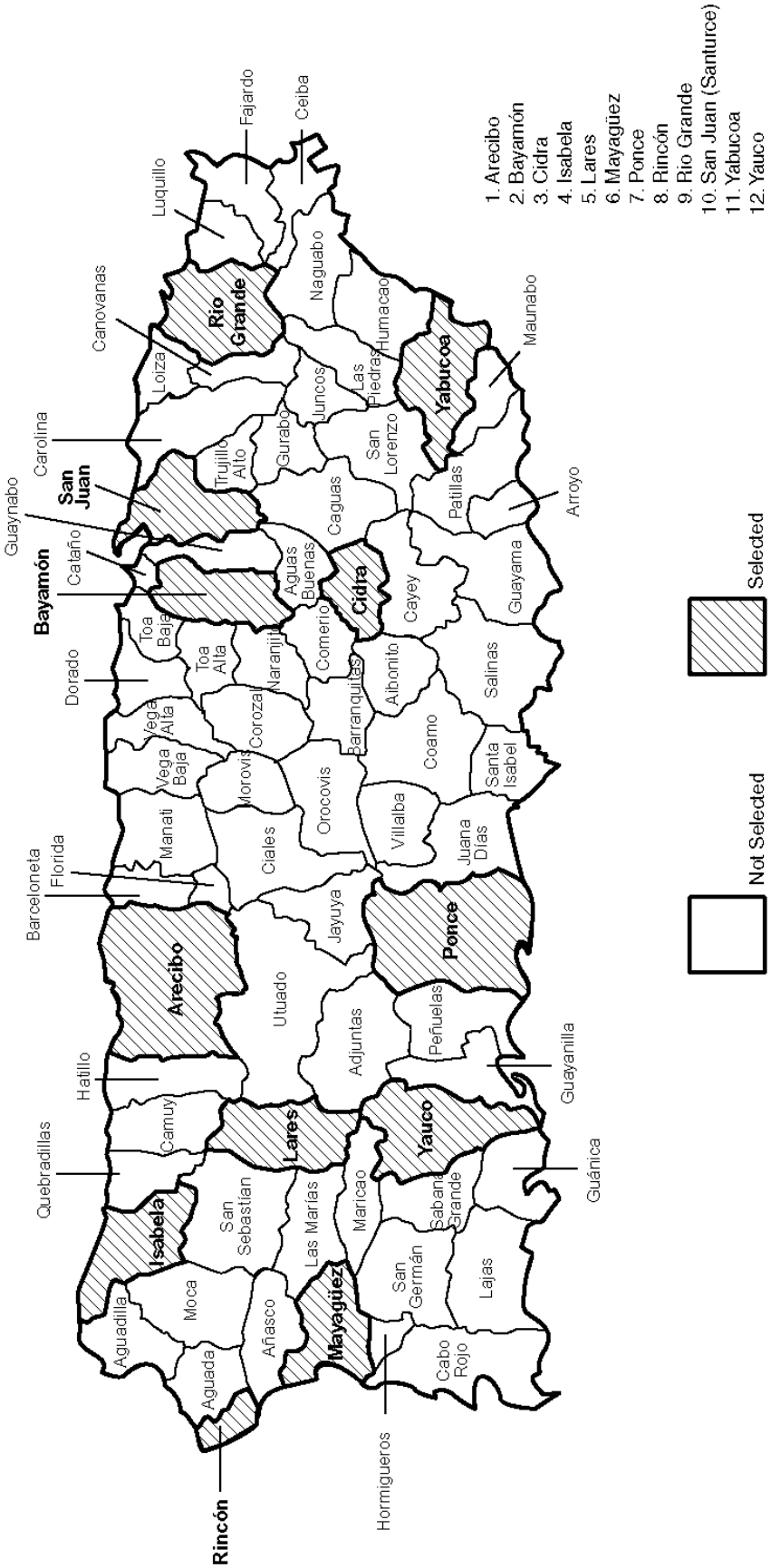
APPENDIX A:
RACE/ETHNICITY FOCUS GROUP SITES



APPENDIX B-1

PUERTO RICO EVALUATION
RACE/ETHNICITY COMPONENT
ENGLISH SCREENER

Hello. My name is (----------) and I work for the Center for Applied Social Research at the University of Puerto Rico. We are working with Westat, a research company located outside Washington, D.C., doing a study for the U.S. Census Bureau to find out more about what people across Puerto Rico think of certain questions asked in Census 2000. We will be conducting group discussions with about five to six people in 12 communities in different parts of the island, to talk about your views of and reactions to some of the questions that were asked on the 2000 Census. The other participants would also be persons from this community. We are interested in speaking with a variety of people of different ages and backgrounds. You are eligible to participate regardless of whether you were the person in your household who responded to or was supposed to respond to the Census, or if you mailed back the questionnaire or not. It will be an open-ended discussion in which you will be able to express and share your views freely. The group will last about 2 hours and will be held somewhere close by.

Your community has been chosen to be n the study and my job right now is to locate people here in (_____) who would be interested in participating in the group discussions. First, though, I'd like to ask you a few questions to find out a bit more about you.

1). If you are the head of your household, did you mail back your completed Census 2000 form?

_____

2) What type of work do you do? (*includes student, housewife, unemployed, occasionally employed)* _____

3) Have you ever lived in the United States for an extended period? _____ If so, for how long? _____yrs.

4) Where were you born? _____

5) Which of the following age categories do you fall into?

6) 18-25
7) 26-45
8) 45-65
9) 66-75
10) 75 +

11) What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

1) no formal schooling
2) elementary school (6thth grade or less)
3) middle school (7th-9th grade)
4) some high school
5) high school graduate
6) some college/Associates degree
7) Bachelors degree
8) Postgraduate degree

(Recruiters: Please indicate by observation gender of respondent in this space--Male, Female.)

Thank you for responding to these questions. Would you be interested in participating in the group discussion? If you were to be invited to participate, you would be paid $25. Babysitting will also be provided if you need to bring your children along, and refreshments will be served.

Do you think you would want to participate (*If answers yes*,) Can I have **your name,** as well as an **address** and **telephone number** where I may reach you in the next week or so? Also, what would be a good day of the week and time of the day or evening for you? *(Determine weekday or weekend, daytime or evening*). Thank you so much, and you may be hearing back from us very soon.

APPENDIX B-2
PUERTO RICO EVALUATION
RACE/ETHNICITY COMPONENT
SPANISH SCREENER

Buenos(as) días/tardes/noches. Mi nombre es (----------) y trabajo para el Centro de Investigación Social Aplicada en la Universidad de Puerto Rico. Estamos trabajando con Westat, una compañía de investigación, localizada en las afueras de Washington, D.C. Estamos haciendo un estudio para el negociado del Censo de los Estados Unidos para conocer más acerca de lo que piensan las personas en Puerto Rico sobre ciertas preguntas que se hicieron en el Censo 2000. Para ello, estaremos haciendo discusiones o entrevistas grupales con unas 5 ó 6 personas en 12 comunidades a través de todo Puerto Rico. El objetivo de estas entrevistas es conocer sus opiniones y reacciones sobre algunas de las preguntas que le hicieron en el Censo 2000 Los otros participantes también serán personas de esta comunidad. Estaremos invitando diferentes personas de la comunidad. Usted es elegible para participar independientemente de que usted haya o no haya llenado el cuestionario del Censo en su hogar, o el que lo haya enviado por correo o no. Esta será una discusión abierta en la que usted podrá expresar y compartir sus puntos de vista libremente. La reunión durará aproximadamente dos horas y será en algún sitio en o cerca de esta comunidad.

Su comunidad ha sido escogida para participar en el estudio y mi tarea es localizar personas aquí en (_____) que estén interesadas en participar en nuestro estudio. Primero, sin embargo, necesito hacerle algunas preguntas para conocer un poco más sobre usted.

1) Si usted es el jefe o la jefe de hogar, ¿envió por correo el cuestionario completado del Censo 2000?

   _____

2) ¿A que se dedìca? (incluya categorías como estudiante, ama de casa, desempleado, empleado ocasionalmente*)* _____

3) ¿Alguna vez ha vivido en los Estados Unidos por un período de tiempo largo? _____
   ¿Por cuánto tiempo? _____años.

4) ¿En dónde nació (municipio o país)?: _____

5) ¿Qué edad tiene usted?

   1) 18-25
   2) 26-45
   3) 46-65
   4) 66-75
   5) 76+

6) ¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que usted haya completado?

1) No tuvo ninguna educación formal
2) Escuela elemental (sexto grado o menos)
3) Escuela intermedia (del séptimo al noveno grado)
4) Algo de "high school", algo de escuela superior (del décimo grado en adelante)
5) Se graduó de "high school", de escuela superior
6) Algo de universidad/grado universitario pero "Associado" (generalmente de 2 años)
7) Grado universitario "Bachillerato"(generalmente de 4 años)
8) Grado universitario mayor que "Bachillerato"(generalmente Maestría o Doctorado)

POR OBSERVACION:

GENERO DE LA PERSONA _____FEMENINO _____MASCULINO

Muchas gracias por responder a estas preguntas. Como le mencioné anteriormente, estamos identificando personas en la comunidad que estén interesados en venir a la entrevista grupal. Los participantes estarán recibiendo un cheque por $25 como agradecimiento por su participación y unos refrigerios. Se le cubrirán también sus gastos de transportación. Estaremos ofreciendo "babysitting" o cuido de niños para aquellas personas que necesiten traer a sus niños.

¿Cree que usted le interesaría participar? (*Si la persona contesta SI*,) ¿Podría darme su nombre**,** así como una dirección y número telefónico donde podemos localizarlo en las siguientes semanas? ¿Que día de la semana y a qué hora sería más conveniente para usted? *(Distinga día entre semana, fin de semana, durante el día, durante la noche*). Muchas gracias por su colaboración y posiblemente le llamaremos de nuevo muy pronto.

Nombre:_____

Dirección: _____

Tel:_____

APPENDIX C-1

RACE/ETHNICITY
FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL
ENGLISH—FINAL VERSION

INTRODUCTION--Thank you for coming here today/this evening. My name is (----------) and I will be leading the discussion. This is my colleague, _____. S/he will be helping by taking notes and making sure everything is functioning properly. We both work for the Center for Applied Social Research at the University of Puerto Rico, and are conducting this project with Westat, a private company that is doing research for the U.S. Census Bureau. (We re not Census employees and it is not really part of our job to answer questions about the Census.)

We are here to find out more about your overall impressions of the Census 2000 as well as your reactions to and opinions of certain questions. Our role is to find out what you think. We are not hereto tell what we think, or say what you should think. The most important thing for all of you to remember is that we are here to learn from you. You are the experts; there are no right or wrong answers. Please feel free to speak your mind.

I also want to assure you that your answers will be kept strictly confidential. The researchers working on this project are the only people who will know who said w*h*at. The report that will be written will bring together the views expressed by all the people participating in these discussions across Puerto Rico, and no one will be identified by his or her full name. We will be tape recording the session so we can be sure to get the most accurate information.

Are there any further questions about the study before I start to explain the rules for today's/tonight's session?

Has anyone participated in a focus group before? The rules are quite simple. Everyone has a name card in front of you, so I can call on you by name. First, we will go around the table and everyone will introduce himself or herself. Then I will start by asking a question. Whoever wants to can be first to answer. The first few times you answer please give your name before you talk. Once one person has finished, someone else can speak. If you have something to say, but someone else is still talking, please raise your hand, and wait until I call on you. Everyone will have a turn.

LET'S FIRST GO AROUND THE TABLE. CAN EACH PERSON GIVE HIS/ HER NAME AND OCCUPATION?

I'D LIKE TO START BY ASKING EACH OF YOU TO TAKE A FEW MINUTES TO READ THROUGH THE (short form) CENSUS QUESTIONNAIRE. (*If anyone seems to be having difficulty seeing or reading for any reason, the facilitators and/or junior staff can assist).* OVERALL, HOW DO THE QUESTIONS SEEM *TO YOU? ARE THERE ANY SPECIFIC QUESTIONS THAT STAND OUT FOR ANY REASON—FOR EXAMPLE, AS BEING HARD TO UNDERSTAND OR RESPOND TO?*

WE ARE ESPECIALLY INTERESTED IN HEARING WHAT YOU HAVE TO SAY ABOUT QUESTIONS 8 AND 9. FIRST, LET'S TAKE A LOOK AT QUESTION 8. **(Read the question aloud, including instructions**) THINK BACK TO LAST MARCH OR APRIL, WHEN THE CENSUS WAS DELIVERED. IF YOU WERE THE PERSON IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD WHO FILLED OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE, CAN YOU REMEMBER YOUR REACTION TO QUESTION 8 AT THE TIME? DID YOU DISCUSS IT WITH ANYONE ELSE? IF SO, WITH WHOM—AND WHAT WAS THE NATURE OF YOUR DISCUSSION? IF YOU WERE NOT THE PERSON WHO FILLED OUT THE QUESTIONNAIRE, DID ANYONE ELSE TALK TO YOU ABOUT THIS QUESTION, OR IS THIS THE FIRST TIME YOU'RE SEEING IT/HEARING ABOUT IT?

LOOKING AGAIN AT QUESTION 8—DO YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY ANSWERING THIS QUESTION—FOR YOURSELF? FOR OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY? WHY/WHY NOT? *(Probe on perceived nature of any difficulties—what specific issues it presents for participants and/or specific family members*)

LET'S LOOK AT THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE QUESTION. DOES THE PHRASE "ORIGEN ESPANOL/HISPANO/LATINO" MAKE SENSE TO YOU? DO YOU SEE ALL THREE TERMS—ESPANOL, HISPANO, LATINO—AS MEANING MORE OR LESS THE SAME THING, OR NOT? WHY/WHY NOT? (*Probe on any differences, even subtle, in how participants understand these 3 terms, as well as any differences in connotations of the word "origin")* WHAT ABOUT THE ANSWER CATEGORIES—E.G., "Si, mexicano, mexicano-americano,chicano," "Si, puertorriqueno"? DO THESE MAKE SENSE? IS THERE ANY TIME WHEN YOU MIGHT USE OR AT LEAST CONSIDER USING THE "Si, otro gruppo espanol/hispano/latino" RESPONSE FOR YOURSELF OR ANOTHER MEMBER OF YOUR FAMILY? WHEN/WHY?

NOW LET'S MOVE TO QUESTION 9. (**Read the question aloud, including instructions and all the response categories**) FIRST, LET'S THINK BACK AGAIN TO LAST MARCH OR APRIL, AT THE TIME THE CENSUS QUESTIONNAIRE WAS DISTRIBUTED? CAN YOU REMEMBER YOUR REACTION, OR OTHER PEOPLE'S REACTIONS TO QUESTION 9, AT THE TIME*? DID YOU TALK ABOUT* THIS QUESTION WITH ANYONE ELSE? IF SO, WITH WHOM, AND WHAT WAS THE DISCUSSION ABOUT? (*If answered question, probe on satisfaction with answer given; knowledge of how others might have answered; what happened if filled out by an enumerator)*

DO YOU HAVE ANY DIFFICULTY ANSWERING THIS QUESTION—FOR YOURSELF? FOR OTHER MEMBERS OF YOUR FAMILY? WHY/WHY NOT?

NOW LET'S LOOK MORE CLOSELY AT THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF QUESTION 9. ARE THE INSTRUCTIONS CLEAR? (P*robe on whether participants understan**d** they can check more than one response, and whether they understood that when they filled out the questionnaire)* WHAT ABOUT THE QUESTION ("de que raza se considera esta person) AND ANSWER CHOICES? D0 THOSE MAKE SENSE TO YOU? WHY/WHY NOT? WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THE LAST CATEGORY (SOME OTHER RACE)? (*If answered question on Census 2000 questionnaire, probe on whether participant knew at the time that s/he could use this category, and*

if s/he did use it, and how)

LOOKING AT BOTH QUESTION 8 ('origen Espanol/Hispano/Latino') and QUESTION 9 (Qual es la raza de la Persona?), DO YOU SEE ANY REAL DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE TWO? IF SO, WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MAIN DIFFERENCE? IF YOU DO NOT SEE ANY DIFFERENCE, WHY NOT?

IN THE FUTURE, SUPPOSING THE QUESTIONS WERE THE SAME IN THE NEXT CENSUS, HOW WOULD YOU ANSWER QUESTION 8? QUESTION 9? DO YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR HOW THESE QUESTIONS COULD BE IMPROVED?

APPENDIX C-2
PUERTO RICO EVALUATION
RACE/ETHNICITY STUDY
SPANISH FOCUS GROUP PROTOCOL
(VERSION 12/13/00)

INTRODUCCIÓN—Muchas gracias por haber venido en esta mañana/tarde/noche. Mi nombre es (_____) y voy a estar dirigiendo la discusión. Este(a) es mi compañero(a) de trabajo, _____, quien estará tomando notas y asegurándose de que todo esté funcionando adecuadamente. Ambos(as) trabajamos para el Centro de Investigación Social Aplicada del Recinto Universitario de Mayagüez y estamos realizando este proyecto en conjunto con una compañía privada llamada Westat. Westat está realizando este estudio para el Negociado del Censo de los Estados Unidos. (Queremos aclarar que nosotros no somos empleados del Censo por lo que no podemos contestar preguntas relacionadas al Censo.)

Estamos aquí para conocer más de cerca sus impresiones generales sobre las preguntas que se hicieron en el Censo 2000, así como sus reacciones y opiniones sobre ciertas preguntas. Nuestro rol es el de conocer o aprender lo que ustedes piensan. Nosotros no estamos aquí para decirles lo que nosotros pensamos o decirles lo que ustedes deben de pensar**.** Lo más importante que todos ustedes deben recordar es que estamos aquí para aprender de ustedes. Ustedes son los expertos por lo que no hay respuestas correctas o incorrectas. Por favor siéntanse en la libertad de expresar lo que piensen**.**

También quiero asegurarles que sus respuestas se mantendran estrictamente confidenciales. Los investigadores que están trabajando en este proyecto son las únicas personas que sabrán quién dijo qué. Al final se escribirá un informe el cual resumirá las opiniones expresadas por todas las personas que participen en estas discusiones en todo Puerto Rico, y nadie será identificado por su nombre completo (apellido). Estaremos grabando la sesión para asegurarnos de obtener la información lo más detallada posible..

¿Alguna otra pregunta sobre el estudio antes de comenzar a explicar las reglas para la sesión de hoy/esta noche?

¿Alguno de ustedes ha participado anteriormente en un grupo focal? Las reglas son simples. Cada persona tiene en frente una tarjeta con su nombre, para que de esa manera yo pueda llamarles usando su nombre. Primero, les voy a pedir que cada uno diga su nombre. Luego empezaré haciéndoles una pregunta. El que quiera ser el primero/a en responder, puede hacerlo. Las primeras veces que usted responda, por favor diga su nombre antes de hablar. Una vez que alguien termine de hablar, entonces otra persona puede hablar. Si usted quiere decir algo, pero otra persona aún está hablando, por favor levante su mano y espere hasta que yo le llame. Cada persona tendrá un turno.

VAMOS A IR ALREDEDOR DE LA MESA, POR FAVOR CADA PERSONA DIGA SU NOMBRE Y CUAL ES SU OCUPACIÓN.

PARA COMENZAR, ME GUSTARIA PEDIRLES A CADA UNO DE USTEDES QUE LEAN EL CUESTIONARIO (corto) DEL CENSO POR UNOS MINUTOS. (*En caso de que alguien muestre cierta dificultatd al leer, esta persona puede recibir ayuda del facilitador "senior" y/o el facilitador "junior")* EN GENERAL, ¿COMO LE PARECEN A USTED LAS PREGUNTAS*?* HAY ALGUNA PREGUNTA EN PARTICULAR QUE LE LLAME LA ATENCION—POR EJEMPLO, QUE SEA DIFICIL DE ENTENDER Y/O DE CONTESTAR?

II ESTAMOS SUMAMENTE INTERESADOS EN ESCUCHAR LO QUE USTEDES TIENEN QUE DECIR SOBRE LAS PREGUNTAS 8 Y 9. PRIMERO, DEMOSLE UN VISTAZO A LA PREGUNTA 8. **(Lea la pregunta, incluyendo las instrucciones, en voz alta.)** PIENSEN EN EL MOMENTO EN QUE EL CENSO FUE REPARTIDO ENTRE LOS MESES DE MARZO Y ABRIL. SI USTED FUE LA PERSONA EN SU HOGAR QUE LLENO EL CUESTIONARIO, RECUERDA USTED SU REACCION A LA PREGUNTA 8 EN AQUEL MOMENTO? HABLO O DISCUTIO ESTA PREGUNTA CON ALGUNA OTRA PERSONA? DE HABERLA DISCUTIDO, CON QUIEN?—QUE FUE LO QUE HABLARON? CUAL FUE LA NATURALEZA DE LA CONVERSACION? TUVO USTED ALGUNA DIFICULTAD AL MOMENTO DE CONTESTAR ESTA PREGUNTA? SI USTED NO ES LA PERSONA QUE LLENO EL CUESTIONARIO, ALGUIEN MAS LE HABLO USTED SOBRE ESTA PREGUNTA, O ES ESTA LA PRIMERA VEZ QUE LA VE O ESCUCHA SOBRE LA MISMA?

III VEAMOS AHORA LAS DIFERENTES PARTES DE LA PREGUNTA 8. ESTAN CLARAS LAS INSTRUCCIONES? TIENE SENTIDO LA FRASE "ORIGEN ESPANOL/HISPANO/LATINO"? PIENSAN QUE ESTOS TRES TERMINOS—ESPANOL, HISPANO, LATINO—SIGNIFICAN MAS O MENOS LO MISMO, O NO? POR QUE/POR QUE NO? (*Profundice en cualquier diferencia, por lo mínima que parezca, sobre cómo los participantes entienden o definen estos tres términos. También profundice sobre diferencias en connotaciones sobre la palabra "origen"*) QUE TAL LAS CATEGORIAS QUE SE OFRECEN COMO RESPUESTA—POR EJEMPLO, "Sí, mexicano, mexicano-americano, chicano", "Sí, puertorriqueño"? TIENEN SENTIDO ESTAS CATEGORIAS? EXISTE LA POSIBILIDAD DE QUE USTEDES EN ALGUN MOMENTO USEN O CONSIDEREN USAR LA RESPUESTA DE "Sí, otro grupo espanol/hispano/latino" PARA USTED O ALGUN OTRO MIEMBRO DE SU FAMILIA? CUANDO? POR QUE?

IV MIRANDO NUEVAMENTE LA PREGUNTA 8—TENDRIAN USTEDES ALGUNA DIFICULTAD CONTESTANDO ESTA PREGUNTA HOY DIA—PARA USTED? PARA OTROS MIEMBROS DE SU FAMILIA? POR QUE? POR QUE NO? (*Profundice en la naturaleza de cualquier dificultad percibida—que situaciones en específico se le presentan a los participantes y/o miembros particulares de su familia*)

V VAYAMOS AHORA A LA PREGUNTA 9. **(Lea la pregunta en voz alta incluyendo las instrucciones y todas las categorías de respuestas.)** NUEVAMENTE PIENSE EN LOS MESES DE MARZO Y/O ABRIL CUANDO SE REPARTIERON LOS CUESTIONARIOS DEL CENSO. SI USTED FUE LA PERSONA EN SU HOGAR QUE LLENO EL CUESTIONARIO, RECUERDA USTED SU REACCION A LA PREGUNTA 9 EN AQUEL MOMENTO? *HABLO O DISCUTIO USTED ESTA PREGUNTA* CON ALGUNA

OTRA PERSONA? DE HABERLO HECHO, CON QUIEN? Y SOBRE QUE FUE LA CONVERSACION O DISCUSION QUE TUVO? SI USTED FUE LA PERSONA QUE CONTESTO LA PREGUNTA, TUVO USTED ALGUNA DIFICULTAD CONTESTANDOLA? SI USTED NO FUE LA PERSONA QUE LLENO EL CUESTIONARIO, ALGUIEN MAS LE HABLO USTED SOBRE ESTA PREGUNTA. DE HABERLO HECHO, CON QUIEN Y CUAL FUE LA NATURALEZA DE LA DISCUSION?

VI VEAMOS DETALLADAMENTE LAS DIFERENTES PARTES DE LA PREGUNTA 9. ESTAN LAS INSTRUCCIONES CLARAS? (*Profundice sobre si los participantes entendieron de que podian escoger más de una respuesta y si sabían esto cuando llenaron el cuestionario*.) QUE LE PARECE LA PREGUNTA ("de qué raza se considera esta persona")? Y LAS ALTERNATIVAS PROVISTAS? TIENEN SENTIDO ESTAS ALTERNATIVAS A USTEDES? POR QUE? POR QUE NO? QUE PIENSAN SOBRE LA ULTIMA CATEGORIA (ALGUNA OTRA RAZA)? (*Si la persona contestó esta pregunta en el cuestionario del Censo 2000, profundice si el participante sabía o no sabía en aquel moemnto de que él o ella podía usar esta categoría, y si él o ella la usó y cómo.)*

VII MIRANDO NUEVAMENTE LA PREGUNTA 9—TENDRIAN USTEDES ALGUNA DIFICULTAD CONTESTANDO ESTA PREGUNTA EN LA ACTUALIDAD—PARA USTED? PARA OTROS MIEMBROS DE SU FAMILIA? POR QUE? POR QUE NO? (Profundice en la naturaleza de cualquier dificultad percibida—que situaciones en específico se le presentan a los participantes y/o miembros particulares de su familia).

VIII MIRANDO AMBAS PREGUNTAS, LA PREGUNTA 8 ('origen Espanol/Hispano/Latino') Y LA PREGUNTA 9 ('Cuál es la raza de la persona'), USTEDES VEN ALGUNA DIFERENCIA ENTRE LAS DOS? DE SER ASI, CUAL DIRIA USTED QUE ES LA DIFERENCIA PRINCIPAL? EN CASO DE USTED NO VER NINGUNA DIFERENCIA, POR QUE NO?

IX EN EL FUTURO, SUPONIENDO QUE ESTAS PREGUNTAS SE QUEDARAN IGUALES EN EL PROXIMO CENSO, COMO USTEDES CONTESTARIAN LA PREGUNTA 8? PREGUNTA 9? SI USTED CONTESTO ESTAS PREGUNTAS ANTERIORMENTE, SUS RESPUESTAS EN LA ACTUALIDAD SERIAN DIFERENTES A LAS PROVISTAS EN ABRIL? POR QUE? POR QUE NO? TIENEN USTEDES ALGUNA SUGERENCIA DE COMO ESTAS PREGUNTAS PUEDEN SER MEJORADAS?

MUCHAS GRACIAS POR SU TIEMPO. LE AGRADECEMOS LA OPORTUNIDAD QUE NOS DIERON PARA HABLAR SOBRE ESTOS TEMAS.

Appendix D

PUERTO RICO EVALUATION OBSERVATION SUMMARY FOR FOCUS GROUPS

Name of Observer/co-moderator:

Name of Moderator:

Date and time of focus group:

Location: (**If there is anything remarkable about the meeting location (e.g., particular section of town, individual's home, or neighborhood characteristics) or the arrangements that went into the group, please comment briefly.)

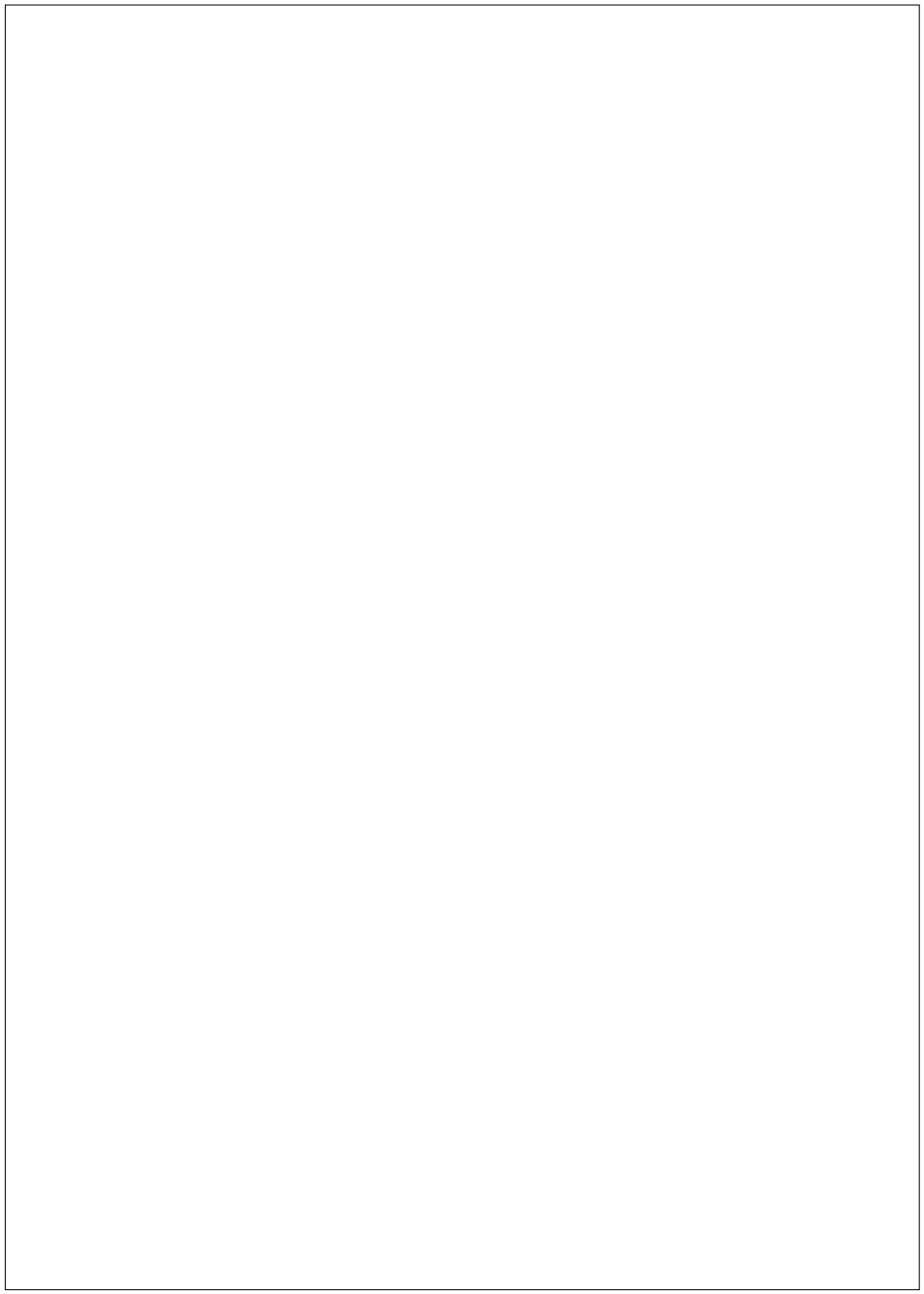
1. Physical Setting: Brief description of setting in which meeting is taking place (e.g., type of building, size and shape of room, arrangement of furniture, condition of the facilities, distracting noises, etc.)

2. Participants List names of all participants.

Name	Home Address
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	

3. Seating Arrangement / Sociogram Please draw the seating arrangement and label who is sitting where.

a. Place a check mark next to the person's name each time s/he speaks.
b. (If not too distracting) Draw arrows showing who is addressing remarks to whom.



4. General observations As you observe the interactions among the participants, pay attention to the following issues (N.B. there may be other, relevant matters that are not listed below).

1. Facilitator's style and group's response to it;
2. Expression of views – openness of the group to voicing and hearing diverse opinions;
3. Non-verbal signals (e.g., body language);
4. Degree to which one person or subgroup is dominating the discussion;
5. Indications that there are divisions or tensions in the group and how these break down.

(Observations should contain more information than simply your perspective. For example, do not write, "Juan became angry," but rather" Juan seemed to get angry, as he raised his voice and pounded his fist on the table when he spoke." This will allow the reader to draw his/her own conclusions about the behavior and enhance our ability to interpret the findings.)

5. Overall Observations: Briefly summarize the tone and feel of the group, major themes that seemed to emerge from the session, and any additional comments that you believe will help us to interpret the transcript. Please also include any "lessons learned" as to what to do or not to do in the next group based on how this group went.

Appendix E

CENSUS 2000 QUESTIONS ON ETHNICITY AND RACE

➜NOTE: Please answer BOTH Questions.

Is Person 1 Spanish/Hispanic/Latino? *Mark ☒ the **"No"** box if **not** Spanish/Hispanic/Latino.*

□ No, not Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
□ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
□ Yes, other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino – *Print group.*↙
|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|

□ Yes, Puerto Rican
□ Yes, Cuban

What is Person 1's race? ***Mark ☒ one or more races*** *to indicate what this person considers himself/herself to be.*

□ White
□ Black, African Am., or Negro
□ American Indian or Alaskan Native – *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.*↙
|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|

□ Asian Indian
□ Chinese
□ Filipino
□ Other Asian – *print race.* ↙
|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|

□ Japanese
□ Korean
□ Vietnamese

□ Native Hawaiian
□ Guamanian or Chamorro
□ Samoan
□ Other Pacific Islander – *Print race.*↙
|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|

□ Some Other race – *print race.* ↙
|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|__|