Trends in US Census Counts on American Indians and Alaska Natives

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Workshop: Review of ABS Standard Indigenous Identification Question

Sydney, Australia

November 27, 2013

Chief Mountain, Montana
Photo Provided by Amy Adler Photography

Views reflect those of the presenter, not any Tribe or organization.
Purpose

• Counts of Aborigines/Torres Strait Islanders Increasing faster than Demographically Possible.
• Same trends for American Indians/Alaska Natives (AIAN) in US.
• Have both Undercounts for specific Tribes and rising AIAN population not explained by demography.
• Examine US experience for similarities, perspectives.
2010 Census Ethnicity Question

• NOTE: Please answer BOTH Question 5 about Hispanic origin and Question 6 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.

• 5. Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

  □ No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin
  □ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano
  □ Yes, Puerto Rican
  □ Yes, Cuban
  □ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – Print origin, for Example, Argentinean, Colombian, Dominican, Nicaraguan, Salvadoran, Spanish, and so on. ✓

• ”

• “
2010 Census Race Question

6. **What is this person’s race?** Mark [✓] one or more boxes.

- [ ] White
- [ ] Black, African Am., or Negro
- [ ] American Indian or Alaska Native – Print name of enrolled or principal tribe 

- [ ] Asian Indian
- [ ] Japanese
- [ ] Native Hawaiian

- [ ] Chinese
- [ ] Korean

- [ ] Filipino
- [ ] Vietnamese

- [ ] Other Asian - *Print race - for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on.* 

- [ ] Some other race - *Print race. 

- [ ] Other Pacific Islander - *Print race – for example Fijian, Tongan and so on.* 

- [ ] Other
What is an American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN)?

• Not a statistical definition.
• Historical, political, cultural, legal and judicial.
• According to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, AIAN people include members of one of 566 Federally-recognized Tribes for many program purposes.
• Note: AIAN people may also be from State-recognized Tribes, terminated Tribes, non-US Tribes, or not know their Tribe.
Tribes

- Federally Recognized (FR) – One of 566 American Indian and Alaska Native Tribes and Villages recognized through treaty, Acts of Congress, Executive Order or other Federal administrative actions or Federal court decision. Domestic Dependent Nations.
- State Recognized (SR) – One of 76 Tribes recognized by States, but not the Federal Government. (e.g. Treaties dissolved after American Revolution)
- Terminated – Formerly Federally recognized Tribes whose treaties dissolved by Congress.
- Some Tribes Exterminated.
- Some Tribes to become FR or SR.
- Dual Citizenship.
Tribal Membership

Criteria set by individual Tribes

Enrolled Members – based on blood quantum (degree of Indian blood).

Descendants – First and second degree descendants of enrolled members.

Ancestry – Typically not included in Tribal rolls, but have ancestors who were Tribal members.

Photo: Blackfeet Warrior Sculpture (Jay Laber) at four entrances to Blackfeet Reservation made of scrap metal, barbed wire & stones from mission boarding school.
Map of Indian Reservations, Trust Lands (not Alaska Villages)
US Government and Census Definition
American Indian Alaska Native

• According to a Office of Management and Budget Directive, there are 5 Racial categories – White, African American/Black, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaska Native.

• “American Indian or Alaska Native” refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintains tribal affiliation or community attachment. – Different from Legal Tribal Definition.

• Alaska Natives are the indigenous people of Alaska - American Indians, Aleuts and Eskimos.
The US Census

- Collected decennially since 1790.
- Mandatory - required by the US Constitution.
- Original purpose – to collect data for legislative redistricting for Congressional Representation.
- 144 Other Statutory Requirements for Census Data (e.g. Civil Rights Voting Act, Discrimination Guidelines, Housing, Employment, Education, Veterans, Age, Intercensal Population Estimates).
US Census Design

• Count people inside a Boundary around the United States and the District of Columbia on/about April 1 of decennial year.
• Categorize by residents and non-residents.
• Include people who are temporarily abroad.
• Exclude people who reside abroad, in military overseas or in US Territories. (May be counted separately)
US Census Methods

- Self-Report.
- Paper forms mailed to households and mailed back.
- Personal or telephone call back if needed.
- Counts in Remote Areas (e.g. some Indian reservations), homeless, and non-respondents done by Census Takers.
- Aerial Mapping used for remote areas.
- Census has become the ONLY source for counts and characteristics of small and remote populations not covered by sampling, not included in PSUs – primary sampling units).
- Census forms in English and Spanish, interview conducted in hundreds of other languages, including indigenous languages.
- 2010: Long-form replaced by American Community Survey.
American Indians in US Census Before 1930

• Pre-Contact Censuses by Individual Tribes.
• Some Special Tribal Censuses (e.g. Cherokee 1835).
• 1790 – American Indians not citizens. Constitution excluded “Indians not-taxed”, i.e. on reservations, in unsettled areas, still at war.
• Racial categories limited to White, Black, Mulatto.
• Pre-circa 1930, annual counts done by Indian Agents for Congress. Little guidance, confusing instructions, lack of standard criteria, forms. Originals submitted. Few copies made.
Today, it's my opportunity
that my ancestors may not have had.

No matter which tribe you are from, now is the time to participate in the 2010 Census. By doing so we have the opportunity to speak for all those who have been here, and those still to come. The 2010 Census is our voice to let others know what we need and who we are.

2010census.gov | WE MOVE FORWARD WHEN WE PARTICIPATE
Census Counts of American Indian Population

• 1890 to 1920 – 248,300 to 244,400
• 1930 – 332,400
• 1940 – 334,000
• 1950 – 343,400
• 1960 – 508,700
• 1960 – 551,700 (With Alaska)
• 1970 – 827,300
• 1980 – 1,420,400
• 1990 – 1,929,200
• 2000 – 2,447,989 (Reporting Only AIAN Mult. Races)
• 2010 – 2,932,248 (Reporting Only AIAN Mult. Races)
• Red represents counts unexplained by demography.
Overall Demographic Equation

\[ P_1 = P_0 + B + I - D - E + \varepsilon \]

\( P_1 \) = New Population
\( P_0 \) = Original Population
\( B \) = Births
\( I \) = Immigration
\( D \) = Deaths
\( E \) = Emigration
\( \varepsilon \) = factor to make equation balance (non-coverage, other factors)
Demographic Factors

• Emigration – Negligible.
• Immigration – South, Central American & Canadian Indians. 4th largest Tribal identification (175,494 in 2010) consisted of Mexican-Indians. Why? Not as much bias. 70% of AIAN in New York City are Hispanic. (El Paso Times Oct. 2013) Counts may or may not include illegal immigrants.
• Even with these factors, rising AIAN counts remain demographically impossible.
### 10-Year Survival Rates Between Census Counts by 5-Year Age Groups in Percentages (+ Rates in Black, Negative Rates in Red)

“Historical Statistics of the US, Online Millennial Ed., C. Matthew Snipp

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<td>4.0</td>
<td>17.4</td>
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<td>20.0</td>
<td>12.1</td>
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<td>From 1970 – 1980</td>
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<td>48.5</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>62.3</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>47.1</td>
<td>42.7</td>
<td>41.1</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>13.3</td>
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<td>From 1980 – 1990</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>3.2</td>
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Another Perspective: Ancestry

• Ancestry Question on 1980 - 2000 Census, 2010 ACS.

• Question: What is this person’s ancestry?

(For example, Italian, Jamaican, African Am., Cambodian, Cape Verdean, Norwegian, Dominican, French Canadian, Haitian, Korean, Lebanese, Polish, Nigerian, Mexican, Taiwanese, Ukrainian, and so on.)

Examples have changed. Respondents can fill in many entries.
AIAN Ancestry and Race in the 2000 Census

• 7,876,568 (2.8%) of the US Population reported AIAN ancestry.

• 4,119,301 (1.5%) reported AIAN as a race.

• -- 1,643,345 (0.6%) reported AIAN and another race.
• --2,475,956 (0.9%) reported AIAN as their only race.

• 2,663,818 (0.9%) - NCHS Bridged Estimate— Highest proportional change for race for AIAN population.
US Government Counts of American Indian/Alaska Natives for AIAN Programs/Treaty Obligations

- Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) – Administers education, housing, other programs. Number enrolled in Federally recognized Tribes: **1,978,099** (2005)
- Indian Health Service (IHS) – Provides health care. Source of most health data and birth and mortality vital statistics. Racial and geographic definition - Federally recognized members living on/near reservations (service areas) plus Canadian/Mexican nationals belonging to FR Tribes plus IHS urban clinics (California clause allows terminated CA AIAN) plus non-AIAN pregnant women with an AIAN child plus non AIAN IHS employees plus those with community ties or public health disease minus FR members who live out of the IHS or urban clinic areas: **1,907,777** (2009).
- 2010 Census – No relation to Federal programs; self-report – AIAN only race = **2,932,248**.
What Does This Mean?

• US population becoming a majority minority country - CA, DC, HI, NM and TX already there.
• AIAN population projected to grow.
• Huge differences between BIA definition of AIAN (enrollment in Federally-recognized Tribes) and Census Ancestry and Race (more expansive, reflect heritage, not necessarily race).
• Is this a Bad Thing? No – if concerned only with heritage. Yes – if evaluating & administering AIAN policy and programs (e.g. Indian Health Service), Civil Rights, particularly programs arising out of Treaty obligations. Count and characteristics vary greatly between Tribal enrollment & self-report.
• Disparities between general US and AIAN self-report population are great – may be much greater using Tribal enrollment/affiliation.
Profile of AIAN People (2007-2011 ACS) and 2011 Census Profile America Compared to the US Population

Highest Poverty Rate – 27% (US 14.3%)
Median Household Income - $35,062 (US $50,046)
Median Age: 29.0 years (US 37.2 years)
22% on/near 334 Fed/State reservations/villages (57% from IHS) - Remote/rural areas
Home Ownership – 54% (US 65%)
Language other than English spoken at home – 28% (US 21%) – 73% of Navajo.
High School Completion – 77% (US 86%)
College Degree – 13% (US 28%)
US AIAN DATA - SUMMARY

• AIAN population too small for most sample surveys, need to rely on Census self-report for socio-economic and demographic characteristics.

• Health Data and Vital Statistics – Largely from the Indian Health Service. State vital records have high rates of AIAN misclassification.

• Life tables, life expectancies very difficult.
Thoughts

• Census counts are critical looking back, right now and in the future.
• Often only source for indigenous populations.
• Be clear about how data will be used and to what purposes.
• Indigenous program purposes may need more narrow identification.
• Societal, cultural purposes may need to be more inclusive identification.
• May need both approaches.
Specifics

• Cognitive labs/pretests useful in placement of questions, wording, instructions.

• Include indigenous community. For example, circa 1985, the US had an External Board and Internal Federal Working Group to obtain more accurate and complete AIAN population figures. Special concerns were the rising population totals of AIAN overall, along with under-coverage in certain Tribes. The groups’ guidance resulted in the retention of the tribe write-in item.

• US improved AIAN coverage efforts on reservations with the use of AIAN Census Takers, administration in indigenous languages, aerial mapping, advertising campaigns.
Sources and Thanks

Specific Sources available upon request.

US Census Bureau

US National Archives

Indian Health Service

National Health Interview Survey

National Indian Health Board

University of Sydney

Indigenous People of Australia

International Group for Indigenous Health Measurement

Sam Notzon (CDC)

Fritz Scheuren (NORC)

Amy Adler of Amy Adler Photography

All My Relations