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INTRODUCTION

This first edition of *Working Americans: African Americans 1898-2016* is the 14th volume in the *Working Americans* series. Its 30 profiles of African Americans span 118 years. Like the other volumes in this series, this work observes the lives of working Americans—African Americans in this case—decade by decade. It covers all ages, a wide range of geographical and social backgrounds, and a vast variety of professions, some of which focus on fortune, some on fame, some on a regular paycheck, and some on no paycheck at all. But all profiles, each supported by dozens of images, demonstrate the challenges faced by African Americans, from musicians to athletes to civil rights advocates to members of the military.

Each 12-15 page profile starts with a brief introduction and photograph of the subject, then moves to three bulleted sections: **Life at Home** details what life was like in the home of those individuals profiled, with spouses, children, or parents. It might include what their house looked like, what kind of food they ate, what their daily routine was, and how they dressed. **Life at Work** details typical workday activities, from office to factory, from performance stage to teacher's desk. It includes work environments, attitudes, and relationships with co-workers. **Life in the Community** offers insight into the individual's community, or neighborhood. This section often includes some geographical and social history, as well as a sense of the area's economy and recreational opportunities.

Following these sections, **Historical Snapshots** are interesting collections of firsts and significant events that happened in the year profiled. Then, **Selected Prices** offers a number of everyday items, from violin to hotel room, and what they cost. This is followed by **Primary Sources**—magazine and newspaper articles, speeches, letters and diary entries. These original reprints help put the life of the profiled individual into historical context.

Following the 30 profiles, the back matter of *Working Americans: African Americans* includes:

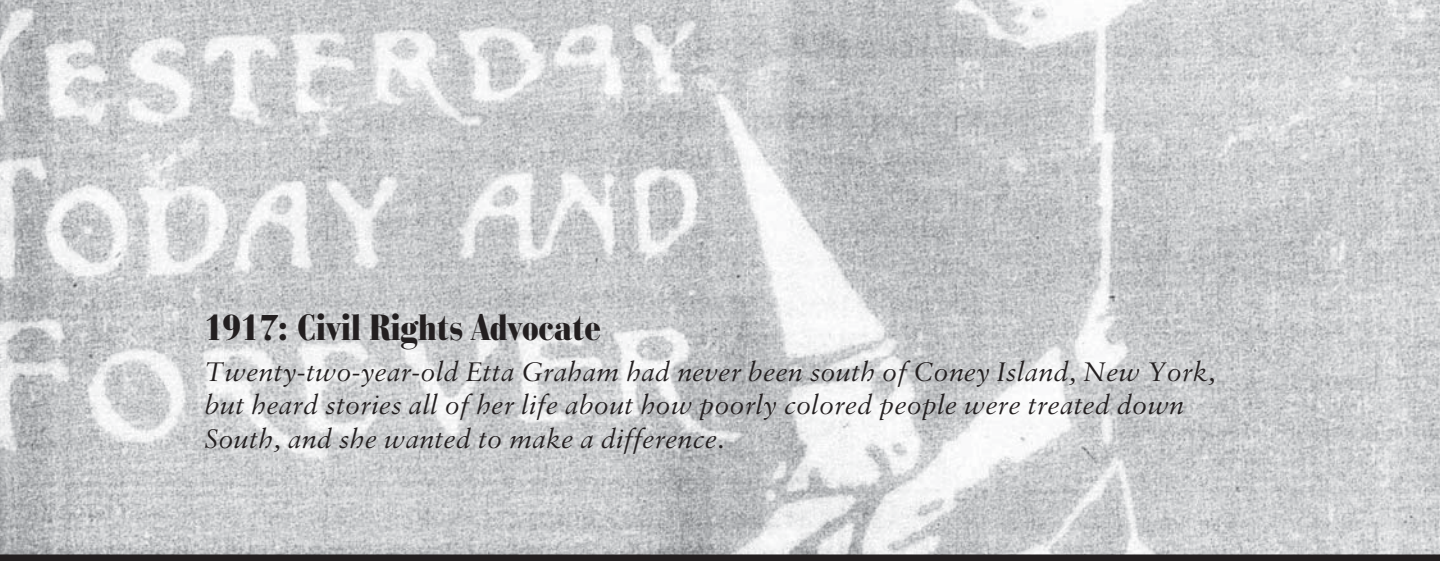
- Census Brief statistics of the Black Population—24 pages of facts, figures, maps and charts;
- Snapshot of 2016 African Americans statistics in several major categories—jobs, business, education, income, health insurance, income, families, and more;

- Further Reading section;
- Detailed Index.

Like the other volumes in this series, *African Americans* is a compilation of original research—personal diaries, school files, family histories—combined with government statistics, commercial advertisements and news features. The text is presented in easy-to-read bulleted format, and supported by hundreds of graphics, from personal photographs to national campaign advertisements.

This volume celebrates the contributions of African Americans, chronicling both the progress they have made and the roadblocks they have faced. In a detailed fashion, this content helps the reader reflect on civil liberties, the civil rights movement, and the day-to-day lives of African Americans over the last 118 years.

The study of history offers all of us the opportunity to view change over time. The actions and contributions of one generation are rarely lost on the next. *Working Americans: African Americans* presents an engaging way to study the progress of African Americans in today's society.



1917: Civil Rights Advocate

Twenty-two-year-old Etta Graham had never been south of Coney Island, New York, but heard stories all of her life about how poorly colored people were treated down South, and she wanted to make a difference.

Life at Home

- Etta Graham, who was born and raised in Harlem, was used to hearing about the injustices suffered by colored people in the South.
- Relatives and neighbors who had escaped the oppression of the South often told stories about beatings and lynchings and humiliations.
- Some had left their homes in Marion, South Carolina, or Tupelo, Mississippi, with little more than the clothes on their backs.
- Etta was proud to live in Harlem, New York, where Negroes had a future.
- For more than a decade, her father had operated a successful store, selling groceries, carriage supplies, and hardware.
- Etta grew up in a spacious five-room apartment above the store and learned early that it took hard work to get ahead.
- Although she had sometimes objected to the discipline of work, she respected her parents and the life they had built.
- But life in Harlem was changing.
- Every day, Southern blacks with little education and less money were arriving in the city and looking for work.
- Most arrived knowing someone who would put them up, but poor people could only care for poorer people for so long.
- Twice, cousins from Mississippi had come to Harlem seeking work, and twice her father had faced the painful task of putting them out when the stay lasted too long.
- Work was plentiful to the skilled, but elusive to those with a third-grade education and experience only in row farming.
- They deserved better, Etta knew, but felt helpless until the idea of protesting the humiliating conditions of the South was announced at church.
- Everyone was already talking about the riots in East St. Louis, Illinois, where 40 Negroes were killed in mob



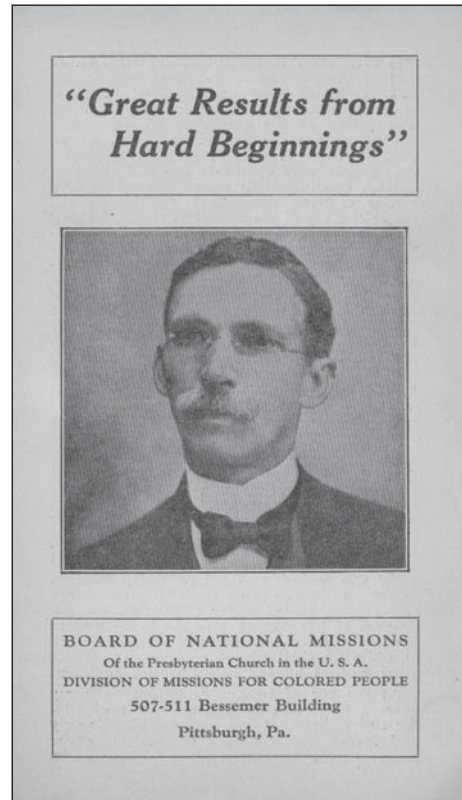
Etta Graham worked to improve the civil rights of colored people in the South.

violence and 6,000 black families were driven from their homes.

- The conflict was over jobs; hungry Negroes eager for any job were willing to work for lower wages than whites, igniting a race riot.
- In Etta's mind, a race riot was the same as an individual lynching; both involved white people taking the law into their own hands.
- Maybe that was why she was so captivated by the minister's call for a mass demonstration.
- The plan was brilliant in its simplicity: a silent protest parade of Negroes through the heart of Manhattan to condemn the injustice of racism, Jim Crow laws, and most of all, lynching.
- No shouting, no fighting, no words—only protest signs.
- Etta was intrigued by the boldness of the plan even as she fretted over how white New York might react.
- Would white troublemakers try to disrupt the silent protest? Could Harlem's Negroes contain themselves and not say a word? Would anybody have the courage to show up on a Saturday afternoon after working all morning?
- Fear troubled Etta's sleep all week.

Life at Work

- Marching on a Saturday meant that she would have to ask permission from her father, but even that was worth the risk.
- The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People had organized the event through New York's black churches in response to the riots in East St. Louis, Illinois.
- They envisioned it as the nation's largest organized demonstration by black Americans in U.S. history.
- By 1 p.m. on a warm Saturday in July, everyone had assembled at Fifty-ninth and Fifth.
- The ministers had decided that the 800 assembled children would lead the parade.
- They were followed by several thousand Negro women, who created a sea of white with their finest Sunday outfits.
- The third section of the silent march was composed of men.
- Along the parade route, another 20,000 Negroes stood in solidarity.
- The silence was profound.
- Before the march of 8,000 people was on the move, Etta's heart was pounding; what if the police attacked the parade? What if riots broke out?
- Marching for her race was frightening and exciting at the same time.
- Banners were everywhere.
- One woman displayed a banner showing a Negro woman kneeling before President Woodrow Wilson, appealing for him to bring democracy to America before carrying it to Europe.
- Etta thought it spoke volumes to a nation at war, but the police quickly declared it objectionable and organizers were forced to withdraw it.

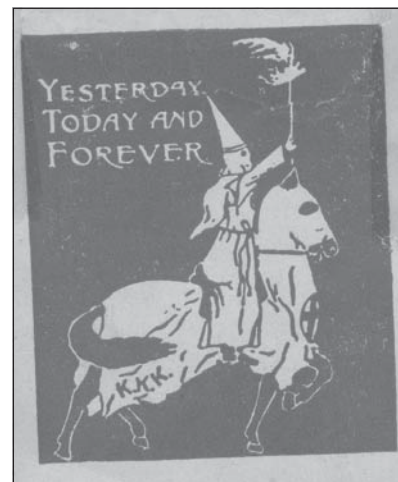




- At the head of the march, a banner read, “Your Hands Are Full of Blood,” referring to the racial violence in East St. Louis.
 - Etta was proud to hold one end of a sign reading, “We Are Maligned as Lazy, and Murdered When We Work,” which also referred to the cause of the East St. Louis riots: white resentment over black employment.
 - In her heart, she knew that she would not be there but for the urging of her pastor, Rev. Charles D. Martin.
 - Rev. Martin, like black preachers across New York, had called upon congregations to fight against lynching with a silent protest march up Fifth Avenue, a place Etta had only been once before.
 - In all, more than 100 ministers, black civic clubs, and fraternal organizations called upon their members to join the protest.
 - Rev. Martin talked about the hundreds of lynchings in the South, and the Jim Crow laws that prevented blacks from voting and using parks, libraries, and public transportation.
 - But most of all, he discussed the daily humiliations suffered by every Southern Negro, and then asserted, “We must march because we deem it to be a *crime to be silent* in the face of such barbaric acts.”
- She knew from talking to her Southern cousins that she could not change the South, but she could add her voice, even a silent one, to protest injustice.
 - Suddenly, just before the march began, her whole body grew calm; only after her fear began to dissipate did she begin to realize that she was not marching as a member of a church, but as the representative of a whole race of people.
 - So in silence she marched until she reached Twenty-third Street and the parade dispersed, when some of the protestors permitted themselves a few cheers.

Life in the Community: Harlem, New York

- The settlement of Harlem dated to 1658 and the founding of New York as a Dutch Colony.
- Initially, the land was populated by farmers.
- By the 1830s, the role of farming was diminishing when a railroad line was built linking Harlem with Manhattan’s Park Avenue, spurring development.
- As New York City’s population grew in the 1880s and transportation became more efficient, the development of Harlem became inevitable.
- Speculators built quality row houses for upper and middle class purchasers.
- In the 1890s, most of the buyers in Harlem were American-born white Protestants with first-generation immigrant servants from Ireland, Germany, and Sweden.
- The building boom abated in 1893 during the national recession, but resumed at a torrid pace by 1897.



- The development of Harlem into a predominately black community began in the early days of the twentieth century when an oversupply of housing stock led landlords to begin advertising for African American tenants.
- A typical sign read, “Apartments to Let. 3 or 4 Rooms with Improvements For Respectable Colored Families Only.”
- By 1914, 50,000 blacks lived in Harlem.
- Many of the newcomers arrived from the South where Jim Crow laws, the sharecropper system, and lynching made life unbearable.



With improved transportation, the development of Harlem was inevitable.

- Many found greater tolerance in Harlem, but little opportunity for economic advancement, which was one of the reasons the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) thought that a silent Negro protest against lynching would be a success.
- During the late 1800s, the lynching of black people in the Southern and border states became an institutionalized way to terrorize.
- Lynching was conceived and carried out more or less spontaneously by a mob who publicly murdered individuals suspected of a crime.
- Most of the lynchings were by hanging or shooting, or both.
- Many involved burning at the stake, maiming, dismemberment, castration, and other brutal methods of physical torture.
- White southerners publicly declared that Negroes could only be controlled by fear.
- *The Chicago Tribune* first began to take systematic account of lynching in 1892.
- That same year, the Tuskegee Institute began to collect and tabulate lynching statistics.
- Beginning in 1912, the NAACP kept an independent record of lynching.
- Lynching peaked in 1892, when 230 persons were lynched; 161 were black and 69 were whites.
- The Southern states accounted for nine-tenths of the lynching.
- Mississippi had the highest incidence of lynching in the nation.
- Most black men were lynched for the crimes of raping white women and murder.



The Queensboro Bridge, completed in 1909, connected the borough of Queens to Manhattan.

- The racist myth of Negroes' uncontrollable desire to rape white women acquired a strategic position in the defense of the lynching practice.
- Lynching occurred most commonly in the smaller towns and isolated rural communities of the South where people were poor, often illiterate, and lacked power in the community.
- The people who comprised lynch mobs were usually small land holders, tenant farmers, and common laborers whose economic status was very similar to that of the blacks.

- Many Southern politicians and officials supported “lynch-law,” and came to power on a platform of race prejudice.
- Because of the tight hold on the courts by local public opinion, lynchers were rarely indicted by a grand jury or sentenced.
- A study of 100 lynchings found that at least one-half were carried out with police officers participating.
- W. E. B. DuBois summed up white motivation, saying “The white South feared—more than Negro dishonesty, ignorance, and incompetency—Negro honesty, knowledge, and efficiency.”
- The NAACP was instrumental in awakening the nation to the urgency of stopping lynching.



The public library on 5th Avenue in Manhattan.

HISTORICAL SNAPSHOT

1917

- As part of America's entrance into World War I, the United States Army opened its first all-black school for officer training in Des Moines, Iowa
- Clarence Birdseye discovered how to quick-freeze food to retain its freshness
- T. S. Eliot published *Prufrock and Other Observations*, Sinclair Lewis wrote *The Innocents*, and Irving Bacheller's book *The Light in the Clearing* achieved bestseller status
- Congress authorized the sale of War Certificates and liberty loans to support World War I
- C. G. Jung published *Psychology of the Unconscious*; Freud published *Introduction to Psychoanalysis*
- Oscar Micheaux produced and directed the silent film, *The Homesteader*, the first film to be produced and directed by an African American
- Courses in the German language were outlawed as part of the war effort
- Electric voting machines, a Jewish navy chaplain, electric food mixers, and *The Grumps* cartoon all made their first appearance
- Thomas Gainsborough's painting *Blue Boy* sold for \$38,800
- The United States Supreme Court ruled that a Louisville, Kentucky law forbidding blacks and whites from living in the same neighborhood was unconstitutional
- A vaccine against Rocky Mountain spotted fever was developed
- Hit songs included, "Go Down Moses," "Goodbye Broadway, Hello France," "Nobody Knows de Trouble I've Seen," and "Hail, Hail, the Gang's All Here"
- The New York Philharmonic celebrated its seventy-fifth anniversary
- Six hundred blacks were commissioned as officers as America entered World War I
- Race riots broke out in East St. Louis, Illinois, stemming from white resentment over the employment of blacks in a local factory; at least 40 blacks were killed during the riots.
- A conflict erupted between black soldiers and white civilians in Houston, Texas; two blacks and 17 whites were killed in the violence
- Emmett J. Scott was made special assistant to the Secretary of War, where he worked for nondiscrimination in the Selective Service Act
- Silent movie premieres included *The Woman God Forgot* directed by Cecil B. DeMille; *Easy Street* and *The Immigrant*, both starring Charlie Chaplin; and *Les Misérables*, directed by Frank Lloyd

1968 ECONOMIC PROFILE

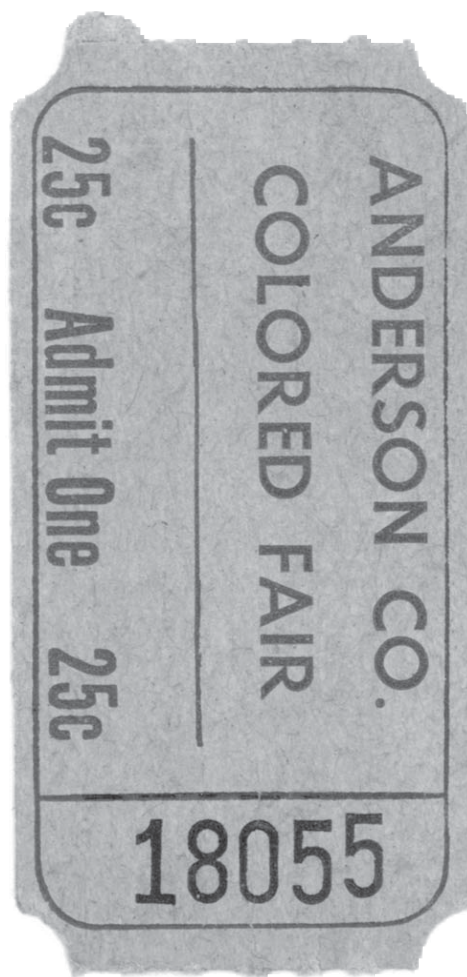
Income, Standard Jobs

Bituminous Coal Mining	\$8,169.00
Building Trades	\$8,332.00
Domestic Industries	\$6,759.00
Domestics	\$3,254.00
Farm Labor	\$3,327.00
Federal Civilian	\$9,002.00
Federal Military	\$5,148.00
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	\$6,994.00
Gas, Electricity, and Sanitation	
Workers	\$8,666.00
Manufacturing, Durable Goods	\$8,002.00
Manufacturing, Nondurable	
Goods	\$6,849.00
Medical/Health Services	
Workers	\$5,292.00
Miscellaneous Manufacturing	\$6,252.00
Motion Picture Services	\$7,946.00
Nonprofit Organization	
Workers	\$4,655.00
Passenger Transportation Workers,	
Local and Highway	\$6,279.00
Personal Services	\$4,960.00
Private Industries, Including	
Farm Labor	\$6,772.00
Public School Teachers	\$7,129.00
Radio Broadcasting and	
Television Workers	\$9,563.00
Railroads	\$8,663.00
State and Local Government	
Workers	\$7,255.00
Telephone and Telegraph	
Workers	\$7,506.00
Wholesale and Retail Trade	
Workers	\$8,142.00



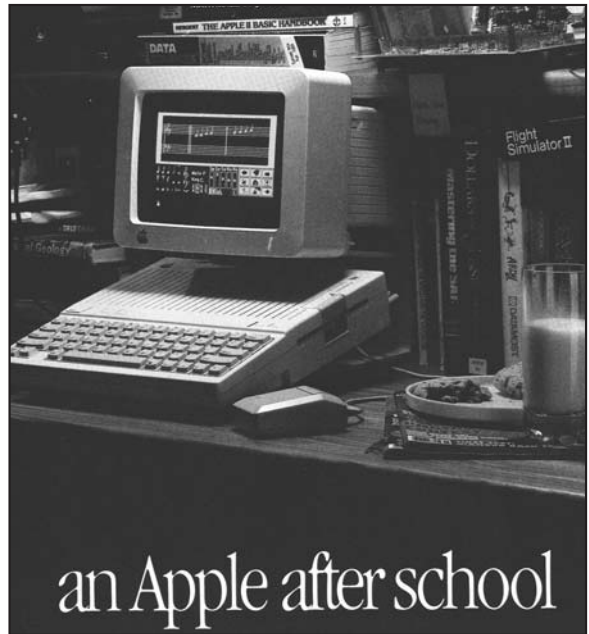
Selected Prices

Argus 35-mm Cartridge Camera, with Flash	\$69.95
Black and Decker Drill, Electric	\$10.99
Child's Fruit of the Loom Briefs, Package of Three	\$2.65
Colgate Toothpaste, 6.75 Ounce Tube . . .	\$0.55
Custom 7 Transistor Radio.	\$12.95
Cut-Glass Glasses, Includes Six Tumblers	\$2.49
Daisy Golden 750 Rifle	\$7.50
Davis Super Highway Tire, Six-Ply Rating	\$26.95
DeLong Red Worm Fishing Lure, Package of Three	\$0.49
Delta Airline Fare, Chicago to Miami	\$74.70
Dual-Exhaust Kit for Corvair	\$18.45
Goldblatt's Air Conditioner, Whole House.	\$498.88
Hunts Catsup, 14-Ounce Bottle	\$0.22
Jarman Man's Dress Shoes	\$22.00
Lady Kenmore Electric Shaver	\$13.97
Mattel Teenage Barbie.	\$2.29
Pepsi Cola, 10-Ounce Bottles, Six Pack ..	\$0.59
Seagram's VO Whiskey, 86.8 Proof, Fifth	\$5.79
Solid-Oak Nightstand.	\$25.95
Truetone Riviera Television, 16" B&W	\$149.95
Western Auto Sunburst Wall Clock	\$16.25
Wizard Long Life Light Bulbs, Four Pack.	\$1.29
Wizard Washer, 10-Pound Capacity. . . .	\$99.88



Selected Prices

Apple Macintosh Computer.....	\$2,500.00
Butter, per Pound.....	\$1.99
China, 10-Piece Tea Set.....	\$69.00
Coffee, per Pound.....	\$2.19
Gas Grill.....	\$179.99
House, Four-Bedroom, New York.....	\$156,000
Lawn Mower, Craftsman.....	\$299.99
Screwdrivers, Stanley Set of Four.....	\$26.95
Shotgun, Winchester 12-Gauge.....	\$1,200.00
Woman's Leather Bag.....	\$49.00



an Apple after school



The Black Population: 2010

2010 Census Briefs

Issued September 2011

C2010BR-06

INTRODUCTION

This report provides a portrait of the Black population in the United States and discusses its distribution at the national level and at lower levels of geography.^{1,2} It is part of a series that analyzes population and housing data collected from the 2010 Census. The data for this report are based on the *2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File*, which was the first 2010 Census data product released with data on race and Hispanic origin and was provided to each state for use in drawing boundaries for legislative districts.³

UNDERSTANDING RACE DATA FROM THE 2010 CENSUS

The 2010 Census used established federal standards to collect and present data on race.

For the 2010 Census, the question on race was asked of individuals living in the United States (see Figure 1). An individual's response to the race question was based upon self-identification. The U.S. Census Bureau collects information on race following the guidance of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget's

¹ The terms "Black" and "Black or African American" are used interchangeably in this report.

² This report discusses data for the 50 states and the District of Columbia, but not Puerto Rico.

³ Information on the *2010 Census Redistricting Data (Public Law 94-171) Summary File* is available online at <<http://2010.census.gov/2010census/data/redistricting-data.php>>.

Figure 1.
Reproduction of the Question on Race From the 2010 Census

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 Guamanian or Chamorro

Filipino Vietnamese Samoan

Other Asian — Print race, for example, Hmong, Laotian, Thai, Pakistani, Cambodian, and so on. ↘

Other Pacific Islander — Print race, for example, Fijian, Tongan, and so on. ↘

Some other race — Print race. ↘

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census questionnaire.

(OMB) 1997 *Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity*.⁴ These federal standards mandate that race and Hispanic origin (ethnicity) are separate and distinct concepts and that when collecting these data via self-identification, two different questions must be used.⁵

⁴ The 1997 *Revisions to the Standards for the Classification of Federal Data on Race and Ethnicity*, issued by OMB, is available at <www.whitehouse.gov/omb/fedreg/1997standards.html>.

⁵ The OMB requires federal agencies to use a minimum of two ethnicities: Hispanic or Latino and Not Hispanic or Latino. Hispanic origin can be viewed as the heritage, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. People who identify their origin as Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish may be of any race. "Hispanic or Latino" refers to a person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race.

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