From Puerto Rican to Pan-Ethnic in New York City

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ABSTRACT

Increasing diversity has stimulated interest in racial identification. Racial identification is

complex for groups that exhibit a wide range of phenotypes, such as Puerto Ricans. However,

the empirical literature on racial identification among Puerto Ricans suffers from several

limitations. We overcome several limitations with a study that is grounded in the experience of

Puerto Rican women in New York City. Our analysis focuses on two questions: How do Puerto

Rican women identify themselves racially? What are the sources of their racial identities? The

results indicate that most Puerto Rican women in New York City conflate race and ethnicity by

designating their race as either "Puerto Rican" or "Hispanic." Moreover, the decision to

"become" pan-ethnic has complex roots. In particular, the effect of physical appearance on the

adoption of a pan-ethnic identity is conditioned by socioeconomic and neighborhood

characteristics

Two prominent features of demographic change in the United States during the "global" era are the resurgence of large-scale immigration and the shift in migrant origins from Europe to Latin America and Asia. These changes have stimulated concerns about the implications of immigration for racial formations, as is reflected in scholarly efforts to understand migrants' racial identities and governmental efforts to determine how to classify growing segments of the population from different origin countries.

The issue of racial identity is particularly salient to those who trace their origins to the Spanish Caribbean, a region populated by the phenotypically diverse descendents of Spanish, African, and indigenous peoples. Migrants from this region and their descendents must manage their identities in a country that stigmatizes blackness and has defined blackness according to the "one- drop" rule of hypodescent (see Davis, 1991; Nobles, 2000).[1] Because racial categories vary across national boundaries, those who trace their origins to the Spanish Caribbean face uncertainty about the meaning of race in a society that is often described in terms of a birfurcated "black-white" racial hierarchy.

Uncertainty also stems from the history of the usage of race to denote common biological origins as well as origins that some might include under the banner of ethnicity----nationhood, national ancestry, and cultural heritage. Further complicating this picture is the emergence of "pan-ethnic" terms such as "Hispanic" alongside country-specific terms. For example, those whose ancestors come from Puerto Rico primarily classify their race as Puerto Rican, Hispanic, Latino, and Spanish (Landale and Oropesa 2002). Thus, Puerto Ricans are described as a "quasi-racial" group (Kasintiz 2000) and pan-ethnic designations have achieved a "quasi-racial status" (Hirschman 2004).

The designation of Puerto Ricans as a quasi-racial group reflects both folk conceptions of race and the ambiguous and marginalized status of Puerto Ricans in American society. Puerto Ricans also have an ambiguous place in the immigration literature. Some studies exclude Puerto Ricans on the grounds that migration between the island and mainland is unrestricted, Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens, and Puerto Rican migration matured before the new wave of immigration (e.g., Logan, Alba, and Zhang 2002; Portes

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[1] Two qualifications are worth noting here. First, there is growing recognition of "mixed race" ancestry (although few lay claim to this status). Second, it should not be inferred from this that the Spanish Caribbean is blind to blackness or race (see Duany 2002). On the contrary, in some places in the Spanish Caribbean, whiteness is defined by an analogous "one drop" rule (of white blood), whiteness is a function of resources ("money whitens"), or "blackness" is defined by national origins (e.g., see Torres-Saillant [1998] on Haitians in the Dominican Republic).

and Rumbaut 2001). The latter is undoubtedly behind assertions that Puerto Ricans can "no longer" be considered an immigrant group (Kasinitz 2000). As a result, the literature on Puerto Ricans is underdeveloped, especially for those in the most prominent multi-racial city in the world: "New York's Puerto Ricans remain a remarkably understudied population, a fact made more striking given their demographic and sociological importance" (Kasinitz 2000: 254). This dearth of attention is remarkable because Puerto Ricans played a prominent role in studies of race and immigration before 1965 (e.g., Handlin 1959; Mills, Senior, and Goldsen 1950; Glazer 1958; Glazer and Moynihan 1970[1963]).

Using data collected from Puerto Rican women in New York City, we attempt to accomplish two objectives. The first objective is to describe how Puerto Rican women in New York identify themselves racially. Here we are interested in whether women use particularistic terms such as Puerto Rican, pan-ethnic terms such as Hispanic, or other terms that reflect the "white-black" racial dichotomy. The second objective is to demonstrate how identities are shaped by phenotype (i.e., skin tone), primordial ties and sentiments, instrumental interests associated with socioeconomic position, and neighborhood composition.

PUERTO RICANS IN NEW YORK

With a population of 3.4 million, Puerto Ricans comprise about 10 percent of Hispanics and are the second largest Hispanic group in the U.S. In contrast to other major Hispanic groups, Puerto Ricans are regionally concentrated in the Northeast and New York City. Indeed, New York City originally served as a primary port-of-entry for Puerto Rican migration to the mainland with the expansion of low-cost air service in the early 1950's (Fitzpatrick 1987; Haslip-Viera 1996; see also Sánchez Korrol 1983). Now, nearly one-fourth of all Puerto Ricans in the U.S. live in the five boroughs of New York City and Puerto Ricans comprise a large share of the population of there. Approximately 37% of the Hispanic population and 10% of the total population of New York is Puerto Rican. The latter figure is larger than that for any specific racial/ethnic group except for non-Hispanic whites (35%) and non-Hispanic blacks (25%) (http://factfinder.census.gov/Table QT-P9/Census 2000 summary file 1).[2]

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[2] The share of the mainland Puerto Rican population in New York declined from 32% in 1990 (Rivera-Batiz and Santiago, 1996: p. 136) to 23% in 2000. The Puerto Rican share of the New York population has also declined since the post-1965 immigration reforms (Haslip-Viera 1996).

Although they have had a relatively long history in New York (Sánchez Karrol 1983) and a middle class segment of the population exists (Fitzpatrick, 1995), the experience of many New York Puerto Ricans is characterized by socioeconomic hardship (Rivera-Batiz and Santiago, 1996). The 2000 U.S. Census indicates that 35% of New York's Puerto Ricans are impoverished (calculated from the 5% PUMS). Their poverty rate substantially exceeds those for non-Hispanic whites (11.4%) and non-Hispanic blacks (24.6%), and is slightly higher than the rates for New York's Dominican (32%) and Mexican populations (32.9%). The high poverty rate for Puerto Ricans reflects relatively high rates of single parenthood, low occupational status (Model 1997), and their position at the bottom of occupational queue (Model and Ladipo 1996; see also Logan and Alba 1999; Logan, Alba and Stults 2003; Torres 1995).

Puerto Ricans' place in the residential landscape of New York reflects their socioeconomic profile. New York is highly segregated and the level of segregation between whites and both Hispanics and African Americans has remained relatively stable over time (Logan, Stults, and Farley 2004; Wilkes and Iceland 2004). Among Hispanics, Puerto Ricans are highly segregated from non-Hispanic whites and moderately segregated from African Americans (Freeman 1999; Rosenbaum 1996). In addition, Puerto Ricans are frequently shunted into ghettoes with inferior housing (Logan and Alba 2002; Schill, Friedman, and Rosenbaum 1998). Puerto Ricans are segregated from whites because of their African ancestry and low socio-economic status, but residential separation also is evident for "white" upwardly mobile Puerto Ricans. Logan and Alba (2002) argue that this pattern reflects housing discrimination directed at Puerto Ricans and contributes to racial tension.

The extent of racial tension and the state of race relations in New York is more difficult to document. Polling data from 2000 indicate that the majority of Hispanics (60%) and blacks (65%) described race relations in New York as "bad"(compared to 50% of whites). Although a few described race relations as "getting better" (21% of whites, 18% of Hispanics, and 11% of blacks), about 28% of Hispanics and 36% of blacks said things were "getting worse" (Quinniapic University 6/15/2000). Moreover, public perceptions of race relations have not changed much since the mid-1990s (Quinniapic University, 4/9/1999). This portrayal is consistent with contemporary and classic studies that document conflicts

between Puerto Ricans, African Americans, and whites (Fitzgerald 1987; Handlin 1959; Mills, Senior, and Goldsen 1950; Sexton 1965; Torres 1995). However, the tenor of *some* recent portrayals of race relations between the "old minorities" and the "new minorities" created with recent immigration is more sanguine. Scholars point to the development of solidarity and multiculturalism from the exposure of native minority (Blacks and Puerto Ricans) and immigrant groups to one another (Kasinitz, Millenkpopf, and Waters 2002).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Racial and Ethnic Classifications

Among the most contentious classifications are those that refer to race and ethnicity. One government official claims that the "American racial-ethnic taxonomy---including what is racial and ethnic about it--- is in a phase of unprecedented uncertainty and volatility" (Prewitt 2004: 145). This is because race is "nearly undefinable" (Hirschman, Alba, and Farley 2000) and lacks "conceptual validity" (Hirschman, 2004). Hirschman (2004: 408) argues that the concept of race should be abandoned because it lacks any scientific foundation: "race is whatever people think they are or whatever they think others are" (see also Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov 2004).

Race may lack a scientific foundation, but racial identification reflects both the efforts of institutions to classify populations and the efforts of populations to classify themselves (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Omi and Winant 1994; Nagel 1994). Indeed, the emergence of pan-ethnic terms such as Hispanic is often traced to the efforts of government agencies in the 1970s to encapsulate diverse peoples under a single term. [3] However, such terms have a long history in New York and predate institutional actions taken to classify populations using pan-ethnic identifiers (Handlin 1959; Mencher 1995; Mills, Senior, Goldsen 1950).[4]

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[3] The institutional arm of the U.S. government that has been responsible for developing standards for racial classification of the U.S. population is the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). OMB statistical directives have defined those who trace their origins to Latin America and the Spanish Caribbean in ethnic or cultural terms, rather than racial terms (Prewitt, 2004; Snipp 2003). This emphasis is consistent with censuses historically, which have identified these populations from questions on mother tongue (1940), surname (1950, 1960) and "origins or descent" (1970) (Rodriguez, 2000). It was not until the 1980 census that the use of "Spanish/Hispanic" emerged, a convention that gave way in 2000 to "Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" (see http://www.ipums.umn.edu/usa/voliii/tEnumForm.html). The first usage of Hispanic dates to 1584, to refer to Spain or the peoples of Spain (Oxford English Dictionary).

[4] As early as the 1940s, Puerto Ricans were described as developing a Spanish consciousness and "solidarity feelings with other Spanish-speaking people in New York City" (Mills, Senior, Goldsen 1950: 136). Moreover, Puerto Ricans "may call themselves 'Latinos' and East Harlem 'el Barrio Latino'" (Mills, Senior, Goldsen 1950: 136). Oscar

Although pan-ethnic terms were instituted to capture cultural commonalities, they have "racial"

overtones for a substantial number of Hispanics (Cornell and Hartman, 2004; Hirschman, 2004). About

47% of Hispanics and 42% of Puerto Ricans in New York opted out of the race question in the 2000

Census by choosing "some other race" instead of the official race categories (Table QT-P3,

http://factfinder.census.gov; see Grieco and Cassidy 2001 for national figures). About 43% of New York

Puerto Ricans classified themselves as "white" alone, 8% selected "Black or African American" alone, and

6% identified more than one race. Thus, Duany (2002: 256) argues that the popularity of "other" as a racial

descriptor suggests that this category is a "proxy for brown or tan" and a "racialized synonym for

Hispanic." "Other" also may be a racialized synonym for particularistic national origins, such as Puerto

Rican.[5] Indeed, the majority of mainland Puerto Ricans classify themselves as "Puerto Rican" with open-

ended questions that ask for their race. Pan-ethnic designations such as "Hispanic" are the second most

frequently mentioned racial designations (Landale and Oropesa 2002; see also Jones-Correa and Leal

1996). Thus, many Puerto Ricans opt out of the white-black dualism. They attempt to distance themselves

from these terms and classify themselves using cultural referents (Rodríguez 2000; Rodríguez and

Cordero-Guzman 1992).

The Meaning of Racial Classifications

In order to understand why many Puerto Ricans may think of their race as "Puerto Rican" or

"Hispanic," it is necessary to consider the meaning of these terms. According to some scholars, Puerto

Ricans in New York City are stigmatized as inferior "others", consistent with their socioeconomic profile

and segregation (Grosfoguel and Deoras 2000:105; see also Flores 2000; Foner 2002). Puerto Rican

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Handlin described Puerto Ricans as using the terms Latino or Hispano to emphasize cultural differences from other
New Yorkers (Handlin, 1959: 113; see Mencher [1995] on the term Hispanic in East Harlem during the 1950s).

[5] The racial identities of Puerto Ricans on the mainland must be seen against the backdrop of definitions of race on
the island. The percentage of islanders in the Puerto Rico Census who classify themselves as white increased from
48% in 1800 to 81% in 2000 (Duany 2002). At the same time, the census categories are inadequate to capture finer
distinctions based on shades of color. Duany (2002) and Gravlee (2005) list approximately 20 terms that are used to
describe race, conceived primarily in terms of skin tone. Secondary physical features such as hair texture and shape
may also come into play. Various intermediate terms between "white" and "black" include trigueño (wheat-colored
skin), jabao (fair skin, curly hair), and moreno (darker skinned). Racial classifications also may be influenced by
social status, under the principle that "money whitens." Nevertheless, "white" and "black" are more frequently
mentioned as racial identities on the island than on the mainland (Duany 2002; Landale and Oropesa, 2002).

identity is associated "in the Euro-American imaginary with racist stereotypes such as laziness, criminality, stupidity, and uncivilized behavior" (Grosfoguel 2004: 323). Such views are not only held by non-Hispanic whites. Members of other Hispanic groups may take steps to avoid being mistaken for a Puerto Rican (Foner 2002; Grosfogel 2004). This is undoubtedly motivated by cultural pride, but it may also stem from the stigmatization of Puerto Ricans. The latter is borne out by the "Puerto Rican exception" in portraits of the future incorporation of Hispanics into the U.S. (Chavez 1991; Fukuyama 1993).

This raises the issue of what alternative identities have to offer those who might otherwise identify themselves as Puerto Ricans. Identities serve to *differentiate* individuals and *affiliate* them with social groups (Phinney 1990). One of the motives for differentiation is to achieve positive distinctiveness; that is, to stand out in a positive way. This may be one reason why, despite their status as an Afro-Caribbean minority, Puerto Ricans are reluctant to think of themselves as black (another group at the bottom of New York's racial hierarchy). Although a considerable number of Puerto Ricans identify themselves as "white" in the census, this is generally unworkable as a primary identity in an environment where black "blood" darkens, "whiteness" is shorthand for European ancestry, and Puerto Rican ancestry confers cultural markers that denote otherness (Spanish language, Spanish surnames).

This leaves pan-ethnic designations as alternatives to Puerto Rican as a form of identification. At first glance, it would appear that this is no choice at all if "Hispanic" is a "weapon, a stereotyping machine. Its synonyms are drug addict, criminal, prison inmate, and out-of-wedlock family" (Stavans 1995: 26; also Oboler 1992, 1995). Yet, such negative attributions are unsubstantiated and contestable. Indeed, the desire to call oneself Hispanic has special appeal for Puerto Ricans, a group that is more likely than other groups to utilize pan-ethnic labels (Jones-Correa and Leal, 1996). According to Jaynes (2004: 106), those in close proximity to "standard representations of the underclass (in physical appearance, language patterns, geography) find that their personal destiny is dictated by the degree to which they are able and willing to distance themselves from this underclass." Representations of Puerto Ricans as part of the underclass suggest that being Puerto Rican is a negative social identity, which can be improved by taking on a less stigmatized pan-ethnic identity (Phinney 1990). In addition, pan-ethnic identities are officially

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recognized by institutions, which sometimes confer rewards on those who adopt them (Espiritu 1992).

Theoretical Foundations

The foregoing suggests that one rationale for becoming Hispanic is to lessen the brunt of being Puerto Rican. By extension, this logic suggests that all Puerto Ricans would identify as Hispanic to avoid being the stigmatized Puerto Rican "other." But the empirical reality is that the majority of those with Puerto Rican ancestry identify their race as Puerto Rican (Landale and Oropesa 2002). Thus, the task is not only to identify who becomes Hispanic, but also to determine who resists such imagery and "stays" Puerto Rican (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 1995). Theoretical perspectives emphasize the importance of skin tone, primordial sentiments and ties, class-based interests and instrumental goals, and neighborhoods as social environments that influence racial identities (Cornell and Hartmann 1998).

Skin Tone

Skin tone is a primary marker of race that "frequently carries the presumption of underclass stigma" (Jaynes 1995). It is a cue that individuals use to classify others and has implications for discrimination on a variety of socioeconomic outcomes, such as wages and education (Gomez 2000; Murguia and Telles 1996). However, the role of skin tone in the identities of Spanish-speaking groups with substantial African ancestry is not well understood (see Rodríguez 2000 for some suggestive case studies). Landale and Oropesa (2002) show that the likelihood of classifying oneself with a pan-ethnic label increases with the darkness of one's skin among mainland Puerto Ricans, but skin tone is not salient as a predictor in multivariate models. Because Puerto Ricans who are dark skinned face a "double penalty" of being Puerto Rican and dark in New York, we hypothesize that the likelihood of adopting a pan-ethnic identity will be positively related to the darkness of one's skin. A pan-ethnic identity can be seen as a way to avoid a double stigma of being black and Puerto Rican (Rodríguez 1996).

Primordial Connections through Nativity and Descent

The issue of why individuals might maintain a Puerto Rican identity is addressed by the primordial perspective, which suggests that particularistic identities reflect attachments that are deeply rooted in one's origins and the "givens of social existence…the congruities of blood, speech, custom" (Geertz 1963:

109). These roots are anchored in the territorial origins, ancestral origins, family origins, and cultural origins of individuals from birth (Geertz 1963; Isaacs 1975l; Shils 1957). For example, the quintessential indicator of territorial origins is nativity. *Nativity* defines place of origin in one's own life experience; thus being born in Puerto Rico signifies a direct connection to the island that should promote a Puerto Rican identity and discourage a pan-ethnic identity (Jones-Correa and Leal 1996; see Landale and Oropesa 2002 for equivocal findings).

Territorial origins are important in primordial accounts, in part because territory overlaps with notions of descent and connections to family members who are the focus of affective ties. This implies that racial identities reflect not only where one comes from, but also who one comes from. The offspring of two Puerto Rican parents should be more likely than those with just one Puerto Rican parent to self-identify as "Puerto Rican." Conversely, a pan-ethnic label should be more appealing for those who have a non-Puerto Rican Hispanic parent and some other label should appeal to those who have a non-Hispanic white or black parent to avoid privileging a particular identity (see also Landale and Oropesa 2002; Portes and Rumbaut 2001). This line of thinking can also be extended from the family of origin to the family of destination. Exogamous childbearing unions with non-Puerto Rican Hispanics should promote the adoption of pan-ethnic identities to minimize complexity and to enhance family solidarity.

The roots that are identified in the primordialist perspective are revealed by territorial and familial origins, but their expression occurs in the *subjective attachments and sentiments* that serve as a basis for racial identities. Primordial sentiments are reflected in the strength of preferences for co-ethnics as members of primary groups formed by families (e.g., through marriage) and neighborhoods (Shils 1957). Individuals who express strong sentiments in favor of Puerto Ricans as family members and neighbors should classify themselves as Puerto Rican, rather than as pan-ethnic or something else.

Language

The primordialist perspective also draws attention to the descent of those "possessing a label implying a given cultural 'essence' or 'peoplehood.'"(Gil-White 1999). If culture is a symbol system and the information symbols convey, then the most important symbol system is language. Language has the

capacity to reinforce psychological attachments to particular identities as well as authenticate claims for particular identities (Geertz 1963). The former is well recognized, for example, by parents who attempt to encourage Spanish maintenance among children as a way to reinforce particular identities (Schecter, Sharken-Taboada, and Bayley 1996). This helps internalize the psychological connection to particular identities, but language also may validate one's identity through judgments by external audiences (Urciuoli 1996). Languages mobilize images and feelings in speakers and audiences. While the images may be positive or negative, they can reinforce ethnic identities by fostering positive affective sentiments toward an ancestral homeland (Suárez-Orozco and Suárez-Orozco 1995) and emphasizing distinctiveness (De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003; Toribio 2000).

Although some argue that the Spanish language has the potential to forge a larger Hispanic community from smaller national-origin groups (Lopez and Espiritu 1990), the linkage between Spanish and pan-ethnicity rests on what the label "Hispanic" implies about the ability to speak Spanish. If pan-ethnic labels do not imply proficiency in Spanish or require proficiency for authenticity (Villa and Villa 1998), then pan-ethnic identification should be associated with the absence of Spanish language skills or Spanish utilization. This expectation is consistent with studies that show that pan-ethnic labels are promoted by assimilation, which is associated with Spanish language loss (Jones Correa and Leal 1996).

A different picture is offered by linguists who have conducted research in New York City. For example, Lamboy (2005: 89) notes that Spanish is "valued for its identity power. It is seen as a ticket for membership into the ethnic community and the Hispanic/Latino community. Some level of Spanish proficiency is thus necessary for having a sense of belonging in these communities. There are, however, differences in how necessary Spanish is. For instance, Puerto Ricans believe that Spanish is more necessary for belonging to the Hispanic/Latino community than for belonging to the Puerto Rican community." In a similar vein, Zantella (2002: 189) argues that "the relationship between Puerto Rican identity and Spanish has been transformed. The idea of a non-Spanish speaking Puerto Rican, anathema to island residents, takes root in NYC to accommodate the growing number of young Puerto Ricans who identify with the culture but cannot speak the language. In order to include everyone in the larger pan-

Puerto Rican family, Puerto Ricanness is re-defined in NYC without pre-requisites of birthplace and/or language: You are a Puerto Rican 'if you have Puerto Rican blood in you.'"

These linguists suggest that a pan-ethnic label carries more stringent assumptions about Spanish proficiency than does the particularistic label of Puerto Rican in New York. They also emphasize the importance of primordial connections for "street-level" conceptions of the requirements for membership in an ethnic community, but hold that membership in the specific ethnic community does not require membership in a linguistic community. Thus, Spanish speakers (bilingual or monolingual) have flexibility in how they identify themselves, but those with limited Spanish proficiency may have fewer options (see also Portes and Rumbaut 2001). English-dominant speakers should be less likely to adopt a pan-ethnic identity if Spanish is required more for Hispanics than Puerto Ricans. English speakers might also opt for another racial term besides "Puerto Rican" or "Hispanic."

Socioeconomic Position

The instrumentalist or circumstantialist perspective suggests that identification is "situationally malleable and context-dependent" (Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov 2004: 21; Cornell and Hartmann 1998). Indeed, identification may reflect interests in capitalizing on opportunities and securing resources among individuals who occupy different structural locations. Circumstances put "groups in particular positions and encourage them to see their interests in particular ways" (Cornell and Hartmann 1998). The considerable residential segregation and economic hardship faced by Puerto Ricans should favor the development of a shared Puerto Rican identity that coalesces around common circumstances.

Despite the pervasiveness of poverty among New York's Puerto Ricans, there are differences in socioeconomic circumstances within the group that should have implications for racial identities. The middle class has an incentive to dissociate itself from particularistic identities associated with negative "underclass" imagery (Jaynes 1995) and to affiliate with identities that may increase their potential for upward mobility (De Genova and Ramos-Zayas 2003; Espiritu 1992). Moreover, the middle class is more likely to have higher education, which can promote pan-ethnic consciousness (see Jones-Correa and Leal [1996]; Trillo [2004] on Hispanics and Kibria [2003] on Asians). The middle class is also more likely to

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take leadership positions in voluntary organizations, businesses, and government agencies that use pan-ethnic labels to identify relevant constituencies, to mobilize constituencies, and to allocate resources such as grants and jobs (DeSipio 1996; Ricourt and Danta 2003).

Enthusiasm for this perspective should be tempered by studies that suggest that pan-ethnicity is unrelated to income (Jones-Correa and Leal 1996; Landale and Oropesa 2002) and education (Landale and Oropesa 2002). Moreover, studies of adolescents suggest that pan-ethnic labels reflect the inability of those who are disadvantaged to muster the resources to resist externally imposed labels, and are most common among those who are the least assimilated and acculturated (Portes and Macleod 1996).

The Neighborhood as a Social Environment

Yancey and Erickson's (1976) oft-cited discussion of "emergent ethnicity" provides an important point of departure for examining the role of neighborhoods in the development of racial identities. Writing at a time when the post-1965 new wave of immigration was just getting underway, Yancey and Erickson identified southern Blacks and Puerto Ricans as groups that deserved special consideration. This is because both groups comprised large shares of the migratory flows to northern cities, and their experiences were fundamentally different from those of European ethnics who migrated to such cities before them. Puerto Ricans faced heightened levels of residential and occupational segregation that would fuel the ascendance of particularistic racial identities. Segregation facilitates the emergence, consciousness, and solidification of particularistic racial identities by increasing social relations and human interaction among those with the *same* origins and background.

Recent ethnographies have built on these key insights to describe an "emergent pan-ethnicity." Ricourt and Danta's (2003) study of a neighborhood in Queens, New York suggests that the residential concentration of individuals who trace their origins to *different* Latin American countries facilitates pan-ethnicity. Pan-ethnicity is created through cultural exchanges during the course of everyday living, as people interact while shopping, going to school, doing laundry, waiting for public transportation, and the numerous other activities that are part of public life in any community. Pan-ethnicity is also reinforced by interactions in institutional settings (e.g., churches, social service organizations) that exist to serve the

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local population, as well as the pronouncements of cultural and political leaders who are interested in mobilizing a pan-ethnic constituency to achieve various objectives. Moreover, *some* recent portrayals of race relations suggest that solidarity and multiculturalism have resulted from the exposure of "old" native minorities (African Americans and Puerto Ricans) and new immigrant minorities to one another (Kasinitz, Millenkpopf, and Waters 2002). Similar themes echo in portrayals of life in "technicolor" neighborhoods where "the sheer habit of encountering different cultures on a daily basis has made New Yorkers more open" (Berger, 2005: 24; Sanjek 1998). Such portraits suggest that the development of pan-ethnic identities among Puerto Ricans should be negatively related to the concentration of Puerto Ricans in neighborhoods and positively related neighborhood diversity.

An alternative view is that the dynamics of "technicolor" neighborhoods reinforce "Puerto Ricanness." Numerous *New York Times* articles document neighborhood-level tensions that have arisen between various Hispanic groups. For example, the surge in the Mexican-origin population in the Bronx is a source of tension among Puerto Ricans in Catholic churches who resent the formation of Mexican-oriented church groups, Mexican-oriented social occasions, and the construction of shrines to Mexican patron saints (Porter, *NYT,* 8/7/2001). Street life in East Harlem is described as the site of "angry looks, muttered slurs, and numerous complaints" (Feuer, *NYT,* 9/6/2003) and "lingering resentments" (Siegal, *NYT,* 7/30/2000) between Puerto Ricans and Mexicans. Underlying these signs of conflict are concerns about competition for jobs, housing, the proper dialect of Spanish (Kugel, *NYT,* 2/24/2002), and changes in the missions of cultural institutions designed to promote the Puerto Rican identity (Navarro, *NYT,* 1/15/2001). [6] This has allegedly culminated in the efforts of other Hispanics to distance themselves from Puerto Ricans (Foner 2002). Such descriptions of tension among Hispanic groups raise uncertainty about the expectation that heterogeneity in neighborhoods will foster the development of a pan-ethnic identity.

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[6] Around the time that the data for this study were collected, tension and distrust characterized political relations among Hispanics. Jones-Correa (1998: 116) notes that: "Puerto Rican leadership has made emphatic use of the label 'Puerto Rican/Latino' at events in which they present themselves as the spokespersons for Latinos in the city. This label sends the message…that Puerto Ricans are still the key players in Latino politics. It succeeds in emphasizing communality and difference, precedence and subordination, all at the same time. Other Latinos often have the impression that Puerto Ricans are using the term 'Latino' cynically, to leverage more power and inflate their numbers without being willing to share power."

Neighborhood heterogeneity and spatial proximity could foster intergroup tension and thereby reinforce a distinctive Puerto Rican identity.

Other aspects of neighborhood racial composition may be important as well. One of the noteworthy features of residential patterns in New York City is the proximity of Puerto Ricans to African Americans. Both Puerto Ricans and African Americans have limited economic opportunities, and they compete for the jobs at the lowest rung of the occupational ladder (Newman 1999). Their competition may promote accentuation of differences and the rejection a black identity on the part of Puerto Ricans. On the other hand, it is possible that living in neighborhoods with African Americans encourages acceptance of "blackness" as the basis of a shared identity. Overall, it is unclear whether particularistic or pan-ethnic identities are fostered by living in the same environment as African Americans.

RESEARCH ISSUES

This paper attempts to answer two research questions. The first question is descriptive: How do Puerto Rican women in New York City identify themselves racially? Although there has been considerable research on the ethnic and racial identities of Puerto Ricans using the census, there is relatively little empirical research on Puerto Ricans in New York City from non-official sources. Moreover, existing studies are tainted by questions that privilege externally-imposed conceptions of race over the conceptions of the research subjects. The study that is most relevant to the current analysis is that conducted by Landale and Oropesa (2002). Using an open-ended question that allowed respondents to conceive of race in their own terms, their analysis focused on mainland-island differences in racial identities. Although they did not shed light on specific cities, Landale and Oropesa show that Puerto Rican women primarily designate their race as Puerto Rican or Hispanic (see also Rodríguez and Cordero-Guzman 1992). This distinction is lost in studies that do not differentiate pan-ethnic and Puerto Rican (Falcón 1995) and studies that do not analyze Puerto Ricans separately from others (Jones-Correa and Leal 1996).

The second research question is: What are the sources of variation in the racial identities of Puerto Rican women in New York? If racial categories were equivalent in imagery and meaning, then we might expect choices to reflect random variation. However, this is unlikely given the breadth of factors, ranging

from skin tone and primordial ties to socioeconomic circumstances and neighborhood composition, identified in the literature. Indeed, we will show that the transition from "Puerto Rican to pan-ethnic" has complex roots that are especially apparent in the interconnections between skin tone and both socioeconomic and neighborhood characteristics. We know of no prior study that focuses on the question of how racial identities are shaped by skin tone in conjunction with the numerous other characteristics described above. Indeed, the relevant literature on pan-ethnicity consists of suggestive case studies (Oboler 1995; Rodríguez 2000), descriptive treatments (Falcón 1995), or multi-variate analyses with a small set of socioeconomic covariates (Jones-Correa and Leal 1996). Other potentially relevant studies omit Puerto Ricans (Portes and MacLeod 1996; Portes and Rumbaut 2001).

DATA AND METHODS

The source of data for this analysis is the Puerto Rican Maternal and Infant Health Study (PRMIHS). The PRMIHS consists of two independent samples: a birth sample and a death sample. The PRMIHS birth sample is a stratified random sample of Puerto Rican women who gave birth to infants between July 1, 1994 and December 31, 1995 in six vital statistics reporting areas in the mainland United States (New York City, Florida, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Jersey) and the island of Puerto Rico. Besides geographical location, sample strata included birthweight and month of birth. Birth certificates were sampled in each vital statistics reporting area from the full list of births to mothers who were identified as Puerto Rican on the birth certificate. The addresses on the certificates were used to locate the women, who were interviewed between October, 1996 and September, 1997. All interviews were conducted by bilingual interviewers, using computer-assisted personal interviews that were translated from English to Spanish and then back-translated to ensure linguistic accuracy. The overall response rate for the mainland birth sample was 74% (unweighted). When properly weighted, this can be considered a representative sample of Puerto Rican women who gave birth during this period. There is little selectivity due to nonresponse in these data (Oropesa and Landale 2002). This analysis is based on the 547 respondents who were interviewed in the five boroughs of New York City.

Dependent Variable

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The dependent variable is measured with responses to an open-ended question: "What race do you consider yourself?" The advantage of this question is that responses avoid contamination from the externally imposed racial categories that are revealed in closed-ended questions in typical surveys.[7] Two coding protocols are followed in the present study. Detailed responses are used to address the first objective---to describe the ways respondents identify themselves racially. This detailed strategy cannot be followed for the multivariate analysis due to sample size considerations. Instead, those who self identify as "Puerto Rican" are contrasted separately with those who adopt a pan-ethnic designation (Hispanic/Latino/Spanish) and those who provide an "other" designation (e.g., "White," "Black").

Independent Variables

One of the primary independent variables is a measure of *skin tone*. The interviewers recorded whether each respondent's skin tone was "very light," "light brown," "medium brown," "dark brown," or "very dark brown." The scale ranges in value from 1 to 5, with higher scores corresponding to darker skin (de la Garza, Falcón, Garcia, and Garcia 1992; Falcón 1995; Gómez 2000 follow a similar procedure). It should be noted that an alternative coding strategy might be justified by findings from earlier studies that emphasized the dilemmas faced by those whose skin tone falls in the middle range of the scale (e.g., Mills, Senior, and Goldsen 1950). There is no evidence in this dataset of curvilinearity in the association between racial identity and skin tone. Thus, we opt for a more parsimonious coding procedure.

Demographic and Linguistic Variables

Several demographic and cultural variables provide insights into the "primordial" foundations of identities. Key demographic characteristics are nativity, the ethnicity of the respondents' parents, and the ethnicity of the father of the sampled infant. *Nativity* is a dummy variable that identifies women who were born in the U.S. and women who were born in Puerto Rico. *Ethnicity of Parents* is measured with a dummy

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[7] The interviewers were instructed to let the respondents determine what race meant for themselves if queried and to record responses verbatim. This procedure can be contrasted with the census (see above) and surveys such as the Latino National Political Survey (LNPS). The LNPS used a closed-ended question to cover the gamut of labels used to describe those of "Spanish heritage." Reference to "Spanish heritage" (instead of race) and the omission of "white" and "black" potentially detracts from the ability of such questions to provide insights into "racial" identities.

variable that contrasts respondents with two parents who are Puerto Rican and those with only one parent who is Puerto Rican. *The ethnicity of the father of the focal child* is measured with two dummy variables. Women whose child was fathered by a Hispanic (not Puerto Rican) and those whose child was fathered by a non-Hispanic are contrasted separately with those whose child was fathered by a Puerto Rican.

This survey also permits the measurement of sentiments about family and community that are explicit in primordial accounts. Specifically, respondents reacted to two statements using a five-point Likert scale with categories ranging from "strongly disagree" (coded as 1) to "strongly agree" (coded as 5). The first statement focuses on feelings about *living in a Puerto Rican neighborhood*: "I would rather live in a neighborhood where most of the people are of Puerto Rican descent." The second statement asked for their feelings about *acquiring Puerto Rican kin through marriage*: "I would rather have the people of my family marry people of Puerto Rican descent."

The primordial perspective also directs attention to the ethnicity of *friends* and *neighbors.* We have already discussed sentiments about having Puerto Rican neighbors, but information on the actual ethnic mix of friends and neighbors is also useful. The survey questions about the ethnic mix of friends and neighbors do not refer to Puerto Ricans per se. Instead, the questions refer to the share of friends and neighbors who were Latino, using five response categories ranging from "all Latinos" (coded as 1) to "all non-Latinos" (coded as 5). These variables are assumed to reflect assimilation.

Linguistic variables tap language proficiency and language utilization. *Proficiency* is measured with information on the language of interview and responses to a question that asked respondents to indicate their proficiency in the language that the interview was <u>not</u> conducted in. English monolingual and bilingual respondents are contrasted with Spanish monolingual respondents. *Spanish utilization* is measured with an index created from several survey items that indicate the language respondents use at home and with friends, along with the language used in television programs that they usually watch and the language of printed media (newspapers, magazines, and books) that they usually read. Respondents indicated whether they spoke, read, or listened in "English most of the time," "Spanish and English about equally," or "Spanish most of the time." With inter-item correlations ranging between .5 and .6, the

responses were summed to create a *Spanish utilization index*. Higher scores indicate greater Spanish utilization.

Age is included as a demographic control, but it does not play a key theoretical role here. The likelihood of adopting a pan-ethnic identity should be inversely related to age if "young New York Puerto Ricans have often either found themselves excluded or have excluded themselves from the generally accepted bounds of latinidad, given the constitutional urban Afro-diasporicity of their cultural identity" (Rivera 2001: 255).

Socioeconomic Circumstances

There are three socioeconomic indicators: *education* (measured in completed years), *family income* (measured in thousands of dollars), and *employment status* at the time of the survey (employed vs. unemployed).

Neighborhood Characteristics

Using the census tract as rough geographic indicator of neighborhood, we utilize four measures to describe the racial composition of the local environment in which respondents live. Two measures refer to the relative size of the black (*% black*) and Puerto Rican populations (*% Puerto Rican*). Two other measures describe racial and Hispanic diversity. The *Index of Racial Diversity* is based on the racial categories used in the census and the *Index of Hispanic Diversity* is based on the detailed Hispanic categories used in the census. The Index of Diversity indicates the probability of randomly selecting two observations from different categories of a variable (Simpson 1949). The minimum value that an index of diversity can achieve is 0 and the maximum value is determined by the number of categories, but is always less than unity.[8] Thus, higher values indicate greater diversity.

The Interview Context

The assertion that racial identities are context dependent can be extended to the interview setting. An in-person interview is a linguistic and interactional event that operates under standardized constraints (Suchman and Jordan 1990). The dynamics of the interview and information collected can be influenced

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[8] The formula for Simpson's Index of Diversity is: $1 - \sum p_i^2$; where p_i is the proportion of cases that fall in the ith category of a variable. The maximum is determined by $(K-1)/K$, where K equals the number of categories. Thus, a 6 category variable can take on a maximum value of .83 [5/6].

by the characteristics of the interviewer, as well as the interviewee (Hill 2002). All respondents in the PRMIHS were interviewed by women who were fluent in Spanish. However, some interviewers were Hispanic and some were non-Hispanic (mostly white). Thus, we contrast respondents who were interviewed by Hispanic interviewers with those who were interviewed by non-Hispanic interviewers. We cannot determine whether Hispanic interviewers were Puerto Rican.

Caveats

Several methodological and measurement issues should be noted. First, any analysis based on cross-sectional data must recognize the possibility of endogeneity. For example, we assume that racial identities reflect the strength of primordial attachments to Puerto Ricans, the types of people that live nearby, and the types of people that one associates with. Caution is warranted because of ambiguity in the direction of causality. Nevertheless, the results are not sensitive to the decision to include these predictors.

A set of interrelated issues revolves around the measurement of neighborhood characteristics. First, census tracts are imperfect measures of neighborhoods, but they are probably good approximations in densely settled areas such as New York. Second, selective migration could be implicated in observed associations between neighborhood characteristics and racial identities.[9] The third issue is the relevant indicators of neighborhood composition to include from the census. Although the census could be used to identify the percent of each tract that is white or Hispanic, those measures are excluded from the analysis to avoid multicolinearity. The included tract-level variables form a consistent set to the extent that they include measures of the concentration of New York's two "traditional" minority groups and the diversity of all groups identified from census questions on race and Hispanicity.

The Analysis

As noted above, this analysis is based on all New York respondents in the PRMIHS. Respondents with missing data were not deleted from the analysis. Instead, incomplete data were handled with

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[9] This problem cannot be dealt with here because we do not know the complete migration histories of women within New York and the racial identities at the time of moves. We were able to identify women who moved between the birth of the focal child and the survey. The preliminary analysis indicated that racial identities at the time of the survey were unaffected by residential mobility between the time of birth and the survey. This variable does not affect the other results and has been excluded to facilitate a more parsimonious presentation of results.

Bayesian procedures for multiple imputation (Schafer 1997). Specifically, five separate imputed datasets were created. These datasets were analyzed and results were combined using statistical procedures that take into account the uncertainty regarding the imputation of missing data (Rubin 1987; Schafer 1997).

Another important methodological point is that the PRMIHS is based on a complex sample design that involves numerous strata, and our analysis includes variables that measure census tract characteristics. Thus, we weight the data (adjusted to retain the unweighted sample size) and use SUDAAN to generate parameter estimates and standard errors that reflect the complex sample design. The standard errors have also been adjusted in SUDAAN for the nesting of observations within census tracts.

RESULTS

Table 1 provides responses to the open-ended question: What race do you consider yourself? Respondents overwhelmingly rejected the black-white racial dichotomy. About 60% of respondents identified their race as "Puerto Rican," including a couple who called themselves "Boricua" (a term derived from Boriquén, the indigenous name for Puerto Rico). Nearly 30% provided a pan-ethnic identifier, the most popular of which is "Hispanic." About 72% of those who chose a pan-ethnic identifier used this label, with about 22% preferring "Latina" and 6% preferring to call themselves "Spanish."

---------------Table 1 ----------

The remaining 11% of responses were spread across the numerous "other" categories that were mentioned too infrequently to analyze separately. Less than 2% of the sample used "Nuyorican," a label that emphasizes a distinctive connection New York as part of one's identity. About 2% of respondents provided a conventional racial label, and 2% provided a label that combined multiple categories (e.g., "Polish and Puerto Rican"). The remaining 6% said they were "American."

A descriptive portrait of the groups is provided in Table 2. Regardless of racial category, the typical respondent has a "light brown" complexion and was born on the mainland to two parents who traced their ancestry to Puerto Rico. At the same time, larger segments of pan-ethnics fall at the darker end of the skin tone spectrum and have one parent who is not of Puerto Rican ancestry. The latter characteristic is especially prevalent among those who are in the residual category (36%).

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The reproductive choices of women also portend the appeal of pan-ethnic or other labels for the next generation. Approximately 40% of each group had a (focal) child whose father was either non-Hispanic or Hispanic, but not Puerto Rican. This openness to reproduction and family formation with non-Puerto Ricans is illustrated further with responses to questions about marriage preferences. The typical respondent in each racial group indicated that they were "neutral" on whether they would prefer family members to marry Puerto Ricans.

The typical respondent is also neutral on preferences for having Puerto Ricans as neighbors. However, pan-ethnic respondents are less likely than those who identify as Puerto Rican to have strong preferences; 10% of the former group and 25% of the latter group agreed with this item. This pattern may reflect their perception of the racial composition of their neighborhoods. About 30% of pan-ethnics said that the majority of their neighbors were non-Hispanic, compared to 18% of those who designated their race as Puerto Rican. This pattern is interesting because the measures of racial composition and diversity for women's census tracts are generally similar.

The typical respondent in New York City is bilingual, and relatively few are monolingual. This dexterity with language is reflected in Spanish utilization with friends, neighbors, and the media. Regardless of racial identity, the typical respondent falls at the midpoint of each scale. This corresponds to the use of English and Spanish equally.

The typical respondent is also in her mid 20's and not employed, and has low education (less than 12 years) and income (less than 25 thousand dollars per year). It is noteworthy that those who call themselves "Puerto Rican" are generally poorer than those who call themselves "Hispanic." The mean family income for Puerto Ricans was 17.5 thousand dollars, which was considerably less than the 24 thousand dollars received by the typical pan-ethnic family. Lastly, 5% of respondents with a Puerto Rican identity, 10% of respondents with a pan-ethnic identity, and 14% of others were interviewed by non-Hispanics.

Before proceeding to the multivariate analysis, it is instructive to view the geographic distribution of respondents across neighborhoods. Figure 1 shows the spatial location of respondents in the five

boroughs, with shaded areas representing census tracts according to the percentage Puerto Rican (top

figure) and the percentage black (bottom figure). In keeping with their smaller share of the New York's

total population, a comparison of the shaded areas in each figure provides evidence of the relatively

smaller number of geographic areas that is more than 20% Puerto Rican. The figures show the dispersal

of respondents over areas that have both large and small concentrations of each group, but the majority of

respondents are drawn from areas with non-trivial numbers of blacks and Puerto Ricans.

--------Figure 1 -------------

Table 3 presents results from bivariate and multivariate multinomial logistic regression models that

contrast those who describe themselves in pan-ethnic terms and those who use another term with those

who refer to themselves as Puerto Rican. Because our description of the previous table expressed the

nature of the bivariate associations, we focus here on the multivariate results. It should be noted that

various other models were examined in the preliminary analysis, but the results are not sensitive to

alternative specifications (one important exception is noted below).

---------------Table 3 Here----------

The multivariate results support several hypotheses. The non-trivial odds ratio of 1.32 for skin tone is

borderline significant (p = .058). As expected, the likelihood of identifying oneself as pan-ethnic increases

with skin tone. Surprisingly, the pattern of results is uneven for demographic variables that are indicative

of primordial connections. On the one hand, racial identity is unrelated to nativity, the ethnicity of the

father of the focal child, and preferences for marrying Puerto Ricans. On the other hand, respondents who

have two Puerto Rican parents are substantially less likely than those with one Puerto Rican parent to

identify their race as Hispanic (odds ratio = .17) or to use some other designation.

Identities are unrelated to both language proficiency and Spanish utilization. If language is a

major factor for expressing and connecting to others culturally, it is limited in its implications for

the formation of pan-ethnic or particularistic identities.

The results also point to the importance of social ties to friends and neighbors, as well as the racial and

ethnic composition of neighborhoods. An example is respondents' feelings about living in a Puerto Rican

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neighborhood. The bivariate model indicates that those who prefer to live near Puerto Ricans are less likely to favor a pan-ethnic identity, but the odds ratio for this variable (.73) is not significant (p = .102) in the multivariate model. However, this result is sensitive to the inclusion of preferences for marriage to Puerto Ricans, which is positively correlated with preferences for neighbors (r = .45). The desire to have Puerto Rican neighbors achieves borderline significance in a model that excludes marriage preferences; thus, we conclude that pan-ethnic identities and preferences for neighbors are weakly related.

The association between racial identities and the characteristics of friends and neighbors is evident from other results as well. The likelihood of a pan-ethnic identity increases with both the share of friends (odds ratio= 2.0, p < .001) and the share of neighbors who are non-Hispanic (odds ratio = 1.40, p < .05). This latter finding is consistent with that for the share of the population in the tract that is black. The odds of assuming a pan-ethnic identity increase with the concentration of blacks in the area, as well as the *diversity* of the Hispanic population.

As for socioeconomic circumstances, there is just one significant variable. The likelihood of forming a pan-ethnic identity increases with affluence. Identities are unrelated to education and employment status. Pan-ethnic identities are also unrelated to age and the Hispanicity of the interviewer.

These results are informative, but additive models may not fully capture the complex factors that influence racial identities. In order to explore more complex associations, we tested for nearly 50 interactions between variables of interest. We were especially interested in whether the effects of various covariates (such as nativity, language, etc.) are conditional on skin tone or neighborhood composition. Although some care must be taken to avoid capitalizing on chance with large-scale tests for interactions, these tests suggest that numerous covariates interact with skin tone.[10] Covariates that interact with skin tone include percent black, the Index of Hispanic Diversity, education, and income.

In order to facilitate an accessible understanding of the results, Table 4 shows three-way cross-

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[10] These tests are based on the significance of the parameter estimate for a given multiplicative term on the contrast between a Puerto Rican and a pan-ethnic identity, as well as the overall Wald F test that takes all three categories the dependent variable into account. In a couple of cases, the Wald test did not achieve significance, but a multiplicative term for the contrast between those who were Puerto Rican versus pan-ethnic was significant. We have included the latter results because the overall test for the significance of the multiplicative terms is conservative due to the low frequency of those who fall in the "other" category.

classifications of racial identity, skin tone, and the relevant covariates. The column variable is skin tone (with "dark" and "very dark" combined) and the rows identify each covariate (trichotomized into equal-sized groups to facilitate comparisons) implicated in the tests for interactions. Each cell entry is the percentage of respondents in the specified row and column who used a pan-ethnic identifier instead of Puerto Rican. The few respondents who provided another response are excluded here to enhance readability and interpretation.

--------------Table 4 Here----------

Because racial identities are assumed to reflect environments, within-row comparisons are especially useful for understanding the interactions between skin tone and tract composition. Specifically, the first panel indicates that the likelihood of adopting a pan-ethnic identity *increases* substantially with skin tone among those living in tracts with low concentrations of African Americans. About 19% of the eligible respondents with a very light complexion in tracts with few blacks used a pan-ethnic identifier. This percentage increases across the other categories, culminating in a figure of 70% for those with dark skin. The likelihood of adopting a pan-ethnic label also increases somewhat with skin tone among those who live in tracts with greater concentrations of blacks, *except* for those with the darkest skin. Just 20% of those in high percentage black areas who had dark skin adopted a pan-ethnic label. This overall pattern reflects the fact that (reading within columns) proximity to blacks slightly *increases* the likelihood of a pan-ethnic identity among those with light complexions, but proximity to blacks substantially *decreases* the likelihood of a pan-ethnic identity among those with dark skin.

The association between skin tone and racial identity is also conditioned by the diversity of the Hispanic population. Among those living tracts with relatively little Hispanic diversity, the likelihood of adopting a pan-ethnic identity stands at about 26% and 34% for those with very light and light brown skin, respectively. These figures *decline* to 4% for those with dark skin. At the other extreme of Hispanic diversity, the percentage *increases* from 29% for those with very light skin to 61% for those with dark skin. Put differently, within-column comparisons show that there is little association between Hispanic diversity and identification for those with lighter skin tones, but the association grows increasing strong

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and positive with skin tone.

The remaining panels suggest that socioeconomic circumstances are also important. The within-column comparisons show that education and income are especially important for promoting the adoption of pan-ethnic identities among those with the darkest skin. Among those with dark skin, the percentage of those who call themselves Hispanic increases from 22% among those with 0-11 years of education to 79% among those with 13 or more years of education. For those with the lightest skin, we see a paltry increase from 24% to 32% across education categories. For income, we see a similar pattern. There is relatively little action among those with the lightest skin, but the association becomes increasingly positive as skin tone darkens. Approximately 22% of those with dark skin in the lowest income category use a pan-ethnic label. This increases to 64% for those in the highest income category. Thus, education and money may not whiten, but these indicators of social position Hispanicize Puerto Ricans who have darker skin.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Efforts to document racial formations face three fundamental challenges: to identify valid categories for racial classifications, to identify the criteria for classifications, and to identify the sources of continuity and change in racial formations. One potential source of change in racial formations is the growth of the Hispanic population(s). Indeed, the growth of the Hispanic population has raised questions about the validity and the criteria for racial classifications that are rooted in a black-white dualism.[11] A *prima facie* case for this was made by showing the substantial number of Hispanics who "opt out" of standard census-type race questions. This is the basis of the aforementioned assessments that race is undefinable and should be abandoned in favor of the concept of ethnicity (Hirschman 2004).

The starting point for assessing the validity of racial classifications and such recommendations is consideration of the populations that they are meant to describe. We have documented how Puerto Rican women in New York define themselves racially using open-ended questions that avoid the use of externally-imposed racial categories or definitions as cues. The results suggest that standard racial classifications built primarily around the black-white dualism do not reflect the racial identities of Puerto

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[11] The validity of racial classifications and criteria for racial classifications have also been stripped of their pseudo-scientific veneer by contemporary research on the human genome.

Rican women. Specifically, Puerto Rican women in New York overwhelmingly describe themselves with

pan-ethnic terms such as "Hispanic" or ethnic-specific terms such as Puerto Rican. Among those who use

pan-ethnic terms, the overwhelming preference is for "Hispanic." Over 70% of those who identify as pan-

ethnic use "Hispanic" to describe themselves. Few women use standard racial terms used in the U.S. to

classify those with at least a "drop" of African ancestry or folk terms from the island. Thus, race *is*

ethnicity for Puerto Rican women in New York.

This study also investigated the "criteria" for racial identities, albeit indirectly. The question of race

for New York's Puerto Rican women is: Do I call myself Puerto Rican or Hispanic? This is an interesting

choice because Puerto Ricans are a subset of all Hispanics and can justifiably claim a Hispanic identity. If

there were no differences in the meaning of these identities, the utility of these identities, or the imagery

associated with these identities, we would expect women to offer multiple responses or a random pattern

of responses. The overwhelming tendency to offer a single response to this question and the multivariate

analysis indicate that more is involved in becoming pan-ethnic than caprice.

Our results suggest that identities reflect a complex set of characteristics and circumstances that span the

various perspectives on identity formation.

Several results are consistent with the primordial perspective. Although nativity is non-significant, the

primordial perspective receives substantial support from evidence of the strong linkage between identity

and the ethnicity of one's parents. A Puerto Rican identity is promoted by having two Puerto Rican

parents and a Hispanic identity is promoted by having one non-Puerto Rican parent. This suggests that a

Puerto Rican identity in New York is tied more to "blood," than to place of birth. In keeping with the

primordial perspective, a Hispanic identity also is associated with sentiments and the composition of

primary groups. Hispanicity is associated with weaker sentiments about living in neighborhoods with

Puerto Ricans, non-Hispanic neighbors, and non-Hispanic friends. Needless to say, the aforementioned

caveats about causality are worth keeping in mind here.

Racial identities also reflect instrumental interests that revolve around class or socioeconomic

characteristics. If being "Puerto Rican" is stigmatized in some New York circles, then we might expect

those who have characteristics that might otherwise be a marker of achievement to distance themselves from this label. In keeping with this expectation, the likelihood of identifying as Hispanic increases with income. This suggests that the use of a pan-ethnic identifier may be part of an instrumental strategy to soften the association with a stigmatized racial status. In other words, a Hispanic identity becomes especially attractive as income increases to avoid diluting the positive status associated with income with a label (e.g., Puerto Rican) that may detract from one's status (e.g., Puerto Rican). This finding is inconsistent with other studies that suggest pan-ethnic identities are adopted by those with the fewest resources to resist externally imposed labels (Portes and Rumbaut, 2002).

A fundamental assumption of social scientific approaches to race is that identities are shaped and constructed by human agents in response to the environments within which they are embedded. Perhaps one of the most important environments for the construction of racial identities is the neighborhood. Neighborhoods are the sites for numerous activities and social relationships that have implications for identity formation. In serving as the sites for various activities, neighborhoods potentially influence pan-ethnicity through the types of people that are brought into contact with one another. The results suggest that Hispanic identities are forged in areas that display considerable diversity in the Hispanic population and have relatively large African American populations. These findings are particularly telling because they suggest that exposure to other Hispanic groups fosters the use of a label that was conceived to recognized cultural commonalities, but is often derided for not recognizing cultural differences. This pattern of findings would not be expected if exposure to different groups heightened conflict and such conflict caused individuals to become entrenched in particularistic identities.

Additional findings suggest that phenotypic differences in skin tone are crucial. This is not just because the likelihood of becoming pan-ethnic increases with the darkness of one's skin. Rather, skin tone interacts with several other variables included in this analysis. Specifically, the association between pan-ethnicity and skin tone is conditioned by the population composition of neighborhoods and socioeconomic characteristics. The likelihood of pan-ethnic identification generally increases with skin tones for those in the very light to medium part of the spectrum regardless of neighborhood composition, but pan-ethnic

identities are especially appealing to darker-skinned Puerto Rican women living in areas with relatively few African Americans and diverse Hispanic populations. Conversely, particularistic (Puerto Rican) identities are especially appealing to dark-skinned women in areas with greater concentrations of African Americans and less Hispanic diversity. Needless to say, the association of pan ethnicity and skin tone is also influenced by class context. Pan-ethnic identities are especially appealing to darker women who have higher levels of education and are relatively affluent.

These findings suggest that the adoption of a pan-ethnic identity may be part of a strategy to negotiate an urban physical and socioeconomic terrain in which having black skin and Puerto Rican ancestry carries a dual stigma among other groups, including other Hispanic groups and non-blacks. One cannot change skin color, but racial labels are malleable. A dark-skinned person who lives in an area with relatively few blacks and a diverse Hispanic population may avoid a traditional racial identifier (i.e. "black") and prefer a pan-ethnic label to a particularistic label for identity management where both blackness and Puerto Ricanness have negative overtones. A similar interpretation is possible for the interaction between skin tone and education and income. Pan-ethnic labels that were created in recognition of commonalities among those who trace their origins to Latin America are especially appealing to those with dark skin who seek to differentiate themselves from identities that are associated with a variety of negative images.

Future research on pan-ethnicity among Puerto Ricans and other Hispanic subgroups can build upon this study in several ways. One of the strengths of this study is that it is based on respondents who live across numerous neighborhoods within a single urban area that has served as the primary port-of-entry for Puerto Ricans. This represents a useful restriction in the scope of previous studies that have been national or regional in scope, but have not been grounded in particular urban areas that serve as proverbial social laboratories (Landale and Oropesa 2002). Additional attention to differences across cities is warranted in future research, as is the expansion of the scope of this study to include the experiences and identities of men. This will require additional datasets because the lack of attention to gender here is an artifact of the study design. Gender has also been underexplored in previous quantitative analyses of pan-ethnicity (e.g., DeSipio 1996; Itzigsohn 2004; Jones-Correa and Leal 1996).

Future research should also attend to the criteria for various racial designations and the meaning of various designations. Our understanding of these issues will be informed by both qualitative and quantitative research in this area. Future surveys can be better informed by qualitative studies in the construction of variables that directly measure motives for various forms of racial identification, perceptions of various categories that are available/unavailable for racial identification, and emotional attachments to various racial categories. Such information would be useful, for example, in evaluating whether responses reflect the desire for *differentiation* to escape stigmatization or the desire for *assimilation* as an expression of commonality. Additional research along these lines would enhance our understanding of the cognitive foundations of race and ethnicity, as well as provide insights into the classic sociological questions of how categories of people are transformed into groups (Brubaker and Cooper 2000; Brubaker, Loveman, and Stamatov 2004).

In closing, there is a touch of irony in these results. Social scientists are increasingly questioning the analytic utility of the concept of race because many Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics opt out of standard racial classifications. This is ironic because "Puerto Rican" and "Hispanic" are ethnic designations that are used as racial terms in the streets, but preferences for these identities are structured around skin tone. In turn, skin tone is a traditional racial marker. Thus, "race" and "ethnicity" have become conflated because the conceptual justification for the former has been undermined for Puerto Ricans (see also Rodríguez 1989). A viable alternative may be to describe "ethnoracial" categories, but such conceptual issues should not obscure the empirical fact that phenotypic differences, primordial ties, socioeconomic circumstances, and neighborhood environments play complex roles in how people manage their identities.

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Table 1. Responses to Question: What race do you consider yourself?

	Percent
What race do you consider yourself?	
Puerto Rican	59.9
Pan-Ethnic	28.7
(Hispanic)	(20.7)
(Latina)	(6.3)
(Spanish)	(1.6)
Other	11.3
(Nuyorican/Neorican)	(1.5)
(White/Black)	(2.3)
(Mixed)	(1.9)
(American)	(5.6)
Total	100.0

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics by Racial Identification

	Puerto Rican	Panethnic	Other
Mean Skin Tone	1.6	1.9	1.7
% Medium+	14.0	24.4	15.7
Nativity			
% United States	71.6	75.3	84.9
% Puerto Rico	28.4	24.7	15.1
Ethnicity of Parents			
% Both Puerto Rican	97.5	88.9	64.0
% One Puerto Rican	2.5	11.1	36.0
Ethnicity of Father of Child			
%Hispanic, Not Puerto Rican	22.6	27.0	27.6
%Non-Hispanic	15.2	16.1	16.1
%Puerto Rican (ref.)	62.2	57.9	57.3
Prefer family marry Puerto Rican	2.9	2.7	3.0
% Agree/Strongly Agree	4.9	9.6	13.6
Prefer Puerto Rican neighborhood	2.9	2.7	2.8
% Agree/Strongly Agree	24.8	10.3	22.2
(Non-)Hispanicity of Neighbors			
% Majority Non-Hispanic	18.2	30.1	25.6
(Non-)Hispanicity of Friends			
% Majority Non-Hispanic	5.9	8.8	9.2
Language Proficiency			
%English Monolingual	20.9	17.0	14.9
%Bilingual	69.1	76.3	80.2
%Spanish Monolingual (ref.)	10.0	6.7	4.9
Mean Spanish Utilization Index	6.4	6.1	6.0
Mean Age	26.6	27.9	28.3
Mean Years of Education	11.2	11.5	11.8
Mean Family Income (000s)	17.5	23.9	21.5
Employment Status			
% Employed	28.2	33.1	25.3
% Not Employed (ref.)	71.8	67.0	74.7
Tract Characteristics			
Mean % Black	29.3	32.3	21.3
Mean % Puerto Rican	29.8	26.7	30.4
Mean Index of Hispanic Diversity	.5	.5	.5
Mean Index of Racial Diversity	.5	.5	.4
Interviewer Ethnicity			
% Not Hispanic	4.9	9.6	13.6
% Hispanic	95.1	90.4	96.4

Table 3. Multinomial Logistic Regressions

	Bivariate		Multivariate	
	Pan-Ethnic (1) vs. Puerto Rican (0)	Other (1) vs. Puerto Rican (0)	Pan-Ethnic (1) vs. Puerto Rican (0)	Other (1) vs. Puerto Rican (0)
Skin Tone	1.37*	1.03	1.32+	.86
Nativity				
United States	1.22	2.24+	1.12	1.82
Puerto Rico (ref.)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Ethnicity of Parents				
Both Puerto Rican	.21**	.05***	.17**	.02***
One Puerto Rican (ref.)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Ethnicity of Father of Child				
Hispanic, Not Puerto Rican	1.29	1.32	1.57	2.23
Non-Hispanic	1.14	1.14	.64	.65
Puerto Rican (ref.)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Prefer family marry Puerto Ricans	.81	1.09	1.08	1.40
Prefer Puerto Rican neighborhood	.74*	.86	.73	.80
(Non-)Hispanicity of Neighbors	1.44**	1.21	1.40*	1.29
(Non-)Hispanicity of Friends	1.87***	1.96**	2.00***	2.22**
Language Proficiency				
English Monolingual	1.20	1.44	.42	.27
Bilingual	1.64	2.35	.76	.55
Spanish Monolingual (ref.)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Spanish Utilization Index	.95	.93	1.01	.94
Age	1.03	1.04	1.04	1.10*
Years of Education	1.05	1.14	.92	1.02
Family Income	1.02**	1.01	1.03**	1.01
Employment Status				
Employed	1.25	.86	1.15	.51
Not Employed (re.)	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0
Tract Characteristics				
% Black	1.00	.98*	1.01*	.99
% Puerto Rican	.99	1.00	1.02	1.02
Hispanic Diversity	3.27	2.43	6.84*	2.79
Racial Diversity	1.19	.82	1.39	.51
Interviewer Ethnicity				
Not Hispanic	.86	.80	.91	.87
Hispanic	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0

+ p < .10; * p < .05; ** p < .01; *** p < .001

Table 4. Percent Identifying as Pan-Ethnic (vs. Puerto Rican) by Skin Tone and Selected
Neighborhood and Personal Characteristics.

	t	sig.	Very Light	Light Brown	Medium Brown	Dark/Very Dark Brown
					Skin Tone	
% Black Tract	-2.19	.030				
Low			19.4	31.9	59.3	69.7
Medium			32.1	29.9	43.8	12.6
High			28.8	40.7	45.7	20.0
Index of Hispanic Diversity	1.83	.068				
Low			26.0	33.8	20.9	4.4
Medium			24.5	28.0	62.7	26.5
High			28.9	41.8	53.5	60.8
Education	1.80	.073				
0-11 years			24.1	29.2	42.1	21.6
12 years			25.5	44.2	60.6	31.1
13+ years			31.7	35.5	46.9	79.4
Income	2.21	.028				
< $10,000			29.1	29.2	35.3	21.8
$10,000-$22,500			21.9	29.3	47.8	45.4
>$22,500			29.2	49.8	68.7	64.2

Note: The number in each cell refers to the percentage of respondents who provided a pan-ethnic
identification among those who provided either a pan-ethnic or Puerto Rican identification. Those
who provided an "other" designation are excluded from the denominator. The t statistic refers to
ratio of the parameter estimate to its standard error for the relevant interaction term involving skin
tone (e.g., %black * skin tone) for the contrast between a pan-ethnic identity and Puerto Rican
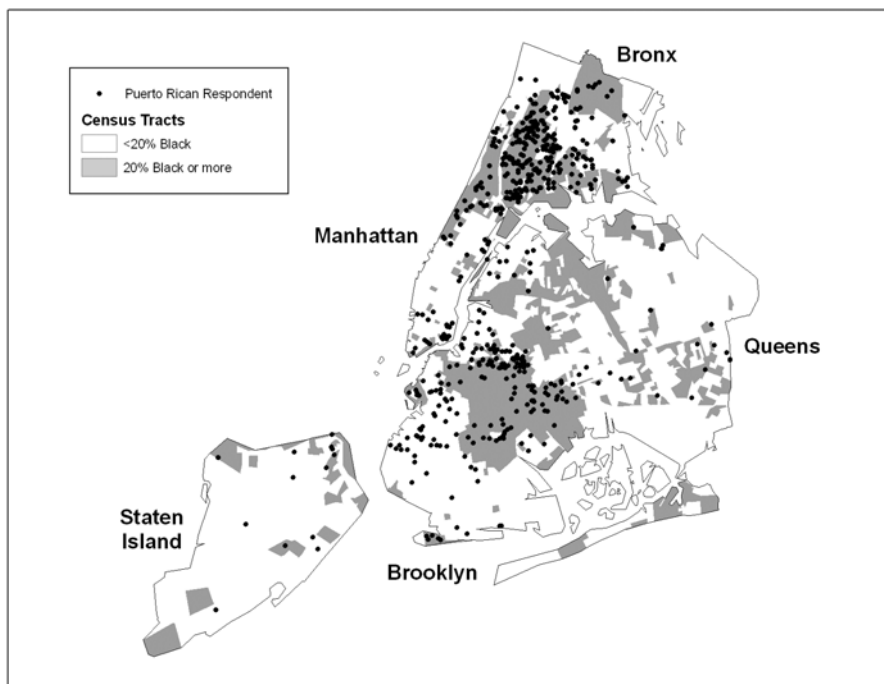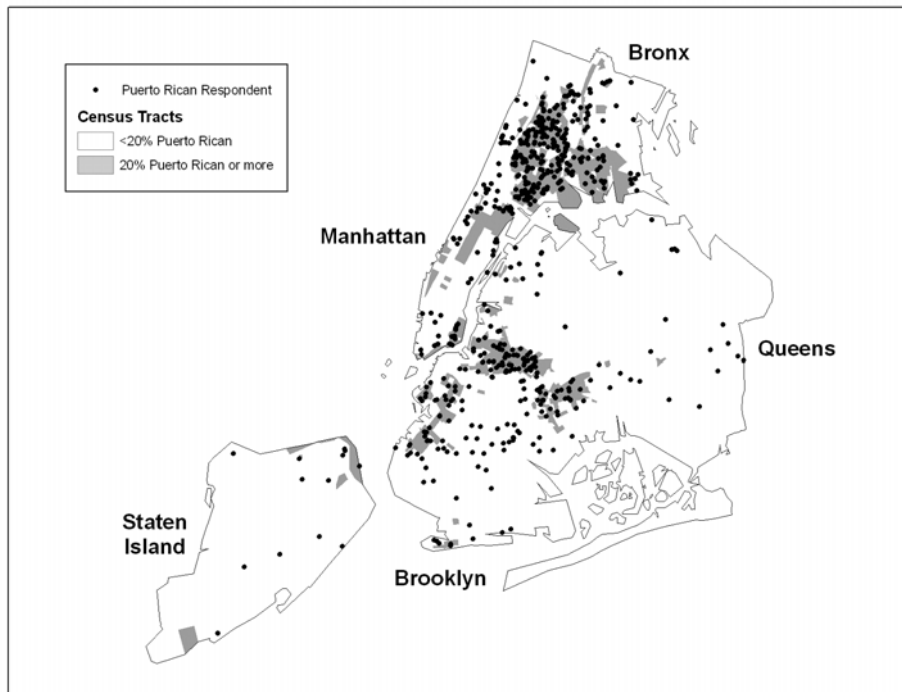contrast in the multinomial model. Wald's F statistic is available on request.

Figure 1. Distribution of Respondents in New York and Racial Composition