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Federal Decennial Census Data for Studying American Indians

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Abstract

This paper examines the federal decennial censuses as sources of information for studying the social and demographic attributes and changes in attributes of American Indians. We have three main purposes: first, to describe briefly the history of the decennial census program, with particular focus on the treatment of American Indians in that program; second, to consider the structure and content of the 1900-1940 decennial censuses, particularly as they relate to American Indians; and third, to provide discussion of the quality of the 1900-1940 census data collections. We conclude that the 1900-1940 decennial censuses provide an especially substantial body of information to study American Indian individuals, their society, and social change over a substantial and important period of time—the first four decades of the 20th century. Of particular value is the fact that the data are available in microdata files from IPUMS for both samples and complete-counts of the American Indian population, permitting extensive individual-level analyses. At the same time, we recognize that all data sources including censuses contain errors and present opportunities for misinterpretation. Given the issues that we discuss, such opportunities for error may be greater in using the 1900-1940 censuses for American Indians than the average research undertaking. Nevertheless, we are optimistic that if these data are analyzed and interpreted with great care, they provide many opportunities for increasing knowledge of American Indians, their society, and social change over these decades.

Introduction³

This paper examines the federal decennial censuses as sources of information for studying the social and demographic attributes and changes in attributes of American Indians. Although our primary focus is on the first four decades of the twentieth century, we also consider earlier and later censuses. The 1900-1940 decennial censuses were designed to collect information about every individual American, including American Indians. Because these 1900-1940 censuses contain information about people of all ages and all geographic, demographic, social, and economic circumstances, they also provide insights into the distribution of American Indians and their characteristics during an important period of Native history—the first decades of the 20th century. As such, these censuses represent one of the few sources designed to collect and disseminate systematic information about the population of American Indians across these decades.

Although the amount of information collected for each individual American Indian was limited and varied somewhat across censuses, each of the 1900-1940 censuses collected information about an array of attributes, including age, sex, household relationships, marital status, English language ability, literacy (except in 1940), school attendance, and, in 1940, years of school completed. In addition, in some census years American Indians were asked

³ We have received valuable input and guidance from many people concerning numerous aspects of American Indian history and culture and many dimensions of census data collection and analysis that have been very valuable in formulating and writing this paper. These knowledgeable and helpful individuals include: Lillian Ackerman, Trent Alexander, George Alter, Laurie Arnold, Dennis Baird, Larry Cebula, Harold Crook, Phil Deloria, Norm DeWeaver, Greg Dowd, Beth Erdey, Bonnie Ewing, Steve Evans, Rodney Frey, Cate Frost, Joe Gone, Kayla Gonyon, David Hacker, Eric Hemenway, Fred Hoxie, Nicholas Jones, Susan Leonard, Carolyn Liebler, Kevin Lyons, Scott Lyons, Diane Mallickan, Rachel Marks, Kendra Maroney, Alan Marshall, Ruth McConville, Chris Miller, Melissa Parkhurst, Allen Pinkham, Josiah Pinkham, Alphonse Pitawanakwat, Nancy Shoemaker, Lindsey Willow Smith, Matthew Snipp, Jason Sprague, Zoe Higheagle Strong, Rebecca Thornton, Connie Walker, and Patsy Whitefoot. We also appreciate the comments provided on an earlier draft by Norm DeWeaver, Cate Frost, and Lindsey Willow Smith. Assistance in preparation of the paper was provided by Lindsey Willow Smith and Jeffrey Swindle. At the same time that we appreciate the input and assistance of these individuals, we retain responsibility for any errors in the paper.

additional questions about tribe, ancestry, and other things. These census data thus are an excellent source for documenting, describing, and explaining levels and changes in these aspects of American Indian life. In addition, since a substantial core of questions was included for people of all ethnicities, it is possible to compare the experiences, attributes, and trends of American Indians with those of other groups.

Fortunately, the data from the 1900-1940 censuses are now publically available in several formats—with each having its own advantages and disadvantages. The most basic format is the raw census enumeration schedules—the filled-out sheets used by the census enumerators—that are available on microfilm. Another format is the set of basic aggregate univariate and bivariate tables published by the Census Bureau after each of the five censuses. Although valuable in their own right, these published aggregate census data have significant limitations for detailed and extensive analyses. This has led to several important projects transforming the information from the raw enumeration schedules into individual-level data files appropriate for detailed micro-analyses. These include the American Indian Family History Project that coded and disseminated individual-level data files from the 1900 and 1910 decennial censuses for five groups. Also of importance is the University of Minnesota Integrated Public Use Microdata Series (IPUMS) project that has produced and disseminated individual-level files containing samples of the entire American population for many censuses over many years, including the 1900-1940 period. Especially important for our purposes is that for certain census years the IPUMS series contains substantial samples of American Indians. Finally, Ancestry.com and the University of Minnesota have assembled and distributed through IPUMS complete-count individual-level data files of all U.S. residents, including American Indians, enumerated in decennial censuses through 1940. Together, these data projects represent a remarkable source of information to study American Indians across the forty years from 1900 through 1940.

This paper has several purposes. The first is to describe briefly the history of the decennial census program, with particular focus on that program's treatment of American Indians. Second, we consider the structure and content of the 1900-1940 decennial censuses, again with particular emphasis on the censuses as they relate to American Indians. As part of this discussion, we consider some of the specific challenges in conducting censuses-- particularly of the Native population. Our third purpose is to provide discussion of the quality of the original census data collections. As part of this third goal, we consider how data completeness may have varied across the five 1900-1940 censuses.

It is important to recognize as we address these aims that the concepts of "race" and "American Indian" have long been central in American society and to the decennial census, and both are problematic terms. Despite the long tradition of racial categorization in American society and in the census, race has become a suspect category, as there is no scientific basis for distinguishing among groups identified as separate races. Nevertheless, race continues to be a social category widely used in society and the census (Hirschman 2004; American Anthropological Association 1998; Jacobson 2002; Sollors 2002; Bentley 2003; Office of Management and Budget 1997).

The category of "American Indian" was not one originally invented by Native peoples of what is now known as the Western Hemisphere. In the year 1491, there was, of course, no "America", and India was in Asia. The Natives of the now-called Western Hemisphere thought of themselves by more specific names such as Niimiipuu, Haudenosanee, Ojibwe, and Lakota (Lyons 2010, pages 66-69; Thornton 1989, pages 186-189; Nagel 1996, pages 3-4). The American Indian label was created by Europeans as part of their colonization process to refer in general to the original peoples of the hemisphere and their descendants. The problematic nature of this language has led to the creation of such terms as "Native Americans" and "First Nations". These terms, however, have their own difficulties; for example, in 1491, there was no

America and therefore, no Native Americans. In addition, the term “native American” is sometimes used to mean someone who was himself or herself born in what is now known as America rather than a person who is a descendent of someone living in what is now America in the year 1491.

With these considerations, we interchangeably use the three terms mentioned above, but rely primarily on the category of “American Indian” for two reasons. First, American Indian is the category used by the Census Bureau in the data collections we discuss. And, second, many descendants of people resident in the Western Hemisphere in the year 1491 refer to themselves and their groups as American Indians (Lyons 2010, pages 66-69)⁴. Nevertheless, as we use the language of “American Indian”, “Native American”, and “First People”, we recognize the colonial and problematic nature of the categories. We also use the term “Native” in this paper as a shorthand term for “American Indian”.

Our investigation of the quality of the census materials demonstrates plenty of places for potential errors from such things as under-reporting, recording information incorrectly, vague definitions and instructions, and inconsistencies across time in definitions and instructions. Although the potential and actual difficulties are sobering, overall the decennial census program offers an especially unique and valuable source of data for understanding levels and trends in American Indian life during the first decades of the 20th century.

It is useful to note that the federal decennial census data about American Indians discussed in this paper are separate from the census data programs of the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA). The BIA and its predecessor organizations from time to time conducted censuses

⁴ This observation can be illustrated by data from the 2000 census that asked people: “What is your ancestry or ethnic origin?”. People could provide one or more ancestries. Of those who indicated “Native American” or “American Indian” as their first ancestry, 73 percent indicated “American Indian” (U.S. Census Bureau 2007, Table 1). The number reporting themselves as “Native American” was only slightly higher than the number reporting “Indian” without any modifier, and it is very likely that many of those saying “Indian” without a modifier would have thought of themselves as “American Indian”.

of American Indian groups under its jurisdiction. In addition, from 1885 through 1940, the BIA conducted a regular program of censuses among American Indians associated with reservation agencies. These BIA censuses are separate from the federal decennial censuses that we examine here and are discussed in detail by Young-DeMarco (2021).

We present our information in the following sections: first, a brief documentation of the decennial census program from 1790 forward; then a discussion of the specific information ascertained for American Indians during the 1900-1940 period; a third section that addresses census quality issues; and a fourth section focusing on differential coverage across censuses.

The United States Constitution and the Decennial Census Program

The decennial census is one of the long-standing institutions of the United States. The fundamental elements of the census, including its frequency, are mandated in the U. S.

Constitution:

“Representatives and direct Taxes shall be apportioned among the several states..... according to their respective Numbers which shall be determined by adding to the whole Number of free Persons, including those bound to Service for a Term of Years, and excluding Indians not taxed, three fifths of all other Persons. The actual Enumeration shall be made within three years after the first meeting of the Congress of the United States, and within every subsequent term of ten years, in such Manner as they shall by Law direct” (US Constitution, Article 1, Section 2, Clause 3; quoted in NCAI Policy Research Center 2016, pages 12-13).⁵

⁵ The Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution after the Civil War eliminated the three-fifths clause for the previously non-free population. However, it maintained the formal exclusion of non-taxed American Indians: “Representatives shall be apportioned among the several states according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each state, excluding Indians not taxed”

This made the United States “the first country to provide for a regular periodical enumeration of its inhabitants” (Wright 1900, page 13). This specification of the decennial census in the Constitution in regards to taxation and representation, of course, makes the census a political instrument, with the important ramifications that this can entail.

The first census was conducted in 1790 and subsequent censuses have been conducted decennially thereafter. The census program has evolved substantially over time. For example, it was only in 1830 that the censuses began to make use of a uniform printed enumeration schedule (Wright 1900, pages 15, 29, 131). Also, the censuses from 1790 through 1840 only listed households and the number of people in each household (Anderson 1988, pages 13-14; U.S. Census Bureau 2002, page 125). Beginning in 1850 and continuing to the present, the individual person has been the unit for enumeration (Anderson 1988, pages 36-42; Wright 1900, pages 46-47). And, in 1890, the census introduced electric tabulating machines for preparing the detailed tabulations of results (Wright 1900, page 74).

As just noted, the US Constitution was explicit in excluding American Indians who were not taxed from counting towards taxation and congressional representation but did not specify what constituted being taxed and not-taxed. This taxed versus non-taxed distinction was clarified in interviewer instructions in the latter part of the 19th century—but in ways that were not entirely consistent across censuses. The 1860 Census enumerator instructions stated that “Indians *not taxed* are not to be enumerated”, and then went on to say that “The families of Indians who have renounced tribal rule, and who under State or Territorial laws exercise the rights of citizens, are to be enumerated” (Census Office, 1860, page 14, italics in original). The 1870 instructions closely followed those of 1860 (Census Office 1870, page 12), and the 1870

(Fourteenth Amendment, Article 2; quoted in Legal Information Institute: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/constitution/amendmentxiv>).

census report stated that in both 1860 and 1870 the census enumerated otherwise qualified American Indians who were subject to taxation even if they were unable to afford to pay taxes (Census Office 1872, page xii). The same 1872 census report clarified the distinction further in the case of people with multiple ancestries by stating that: “Where persons reported as ‘Half-breeds’ are found residing with whites, adopting their habits of life and methods of industry, such persons are to be treated as belonging to the white population. Where, on the other hand, they are found in communities composed wholly or mainly of Indians, the opposite construction is taken”, acknowledging that for mixed ancestry people “the habits, tastes, and associations of the half-breed are allowed to determine his gravitation to the one class or the other” (Census Office 1872, page xiii). The 1880 and 1890 census instructions provided similar reasoning, but in different terms. “By the phrase ‘Indians not taxed’ is meant Indians living on reservations under the care of Government agents, or roaming individually, or in bands, over unsettled tracts of country”. Those who met the following census criteria were to be included in the enumeration: “Indians not in tribal relations, whether full-bloods or half-breeds, who are found mingled with the white population, residing in white families, engaged as servants or laborers, or living in huts or wigwams on the outskirts of towns or settlements” (Census Office 1890, page 10; U.S. Census Bureau 2002, pages 18 and 24).

This distinction between the taxed and non-taxed continued well into the twentieth century, but “by the 1940’s, all American Indians were considered to be taxed” (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1989, page 1; also Jobe 2004, page 69; Carpenter 1990, pages 640-641; Putzi 1972, page 213). This formal distinction thus faded away, but, as Hochschild and Powell (2008, pages 77-80) indicate, the influence of this distinction on the census also continued into the twentieth century.

Although taxed American Indians were enumerated in the early decennial censuses, their numbers and attributes were not provided in regular decennial census reports until 1860.

Beginning in 1860 and continuing through the 1880 decennial census, census publications reported the number of enumerated American Indians (Census Office 1894, pages 17-24; Jobe 2004, pages 70-72; Collins 2006, pages 1-3). We report the number of enumerated (and presumably meeting the taxed definition) American Indians for those years in Table 1; they range from approximately 26 thousand to 66 thousand between 1860 and 1880.

Although the decennial censuses between 1860 and 1880 did not enumerate not-taxed American Indians, they did assemble estimates of the number not-taxed (Census Office 1894, pages 17-24). A 1870 decennial census report provided the justification for this as follows: “Now the fact that the Constitution excludes from the basis of representation ‘Indians not taxed’ affords no possible reason why, in a census which is on its face taken with equal reference to statistical as to political interests, such persons should be excluded from the population of the country. They should, of course, appear separately, so that the provisions of the Constitution in regard to the apportionment of Representatives may be carried out; but they should appear, nevertheless, as a constituent part of the population of the country viewed in the light of all social, economical, and moral principles” (Census Office 1872, page xvi).

The published decennial census reports for the late 19th century also began to include information from the Office of Indian Affairs concerning their estimates of the number of American Indians (taxed and not-taxed) in the United States. These numbers were considerably larger than the number of American Indians enumerated by the decennial censuses. For example, the U.S Census Bureau reported some figures derived from the Commissioner of Indian Affairs reports that indicated the total number of American Indians in the U.S. in 1870 and 1880 ranged from 244 to 278 thousand, compared to the 26 and 66 thousand enumerated by the decennial censuses in those years (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, page 10).

American Indians that were not taxed were included in the decennial census enumeration for the first time in 1880 (Wright 1900, pages 71,128-129, 894-902). This enumeration was conducted in cooperation with the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. It was, however, conducted for only a few places (U.S. Census Bureau 2002, page 21; Shoemaker 1999, page 106), and the results were apparently not published (Shoemaker 1999 page 131; Wright 1900, pages 128-129). According to Ancestry.com (2013), these 1880 manuscript censuses are available from the National Archives, and digitized versions are accessible on-line from Ancestry.com.

American Indians in the 1890-1940 Decennial Census Program

Beginning in 1890, the decennial censuses were designed to include all American Indians regardless of circumstances—a pattern that has continued to the present (Thornton 1987, pages 213-216; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, page 283; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1937, page 2; Wright 1900, pages 128-129, 178-182, 903-908). The published decennial census reports, however, maintained the distinction between taxed and non-taxed American Indians. We know that this distinction was carried through the 1910 census (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, pages 283-285). As shown in Table 1, the total number of American Indians enumerated in the decennial census of 1890 was 248 thousand, with 59 thousand (nearly one-quarter) described as taxed (also U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, pages 283-285). The total numbers of American Indians enumerated in the six decennial censuses from 1890 through 1940 in the continental US in thousands are: 248 in 1890; 237 in 1900; 266 in 1910; 244 in 1920; 332 in 1930; and 340 in 1940 (see Table 1).

Unfortunately, the manuscript census enumeration forms for the 1890 census were destroyed by fire and are thus not available for further analysis. As a result, 1900 marks the beginning of national individual-level decennial census data for American Indians currently

available for analysis—leading us to focus our following discussion on the 20th century censuses.

For the 1900 and 1910 decennial census enumerations of American Indians, the Census Bureau relied on the assistance of other agencies. This is reflected in the 1900 interviewer instructions indicating that “the census of Indians living on Indian reservations (outside of the Indian Territory) or in tribal relations will be made in cooperation with the Office of Indian Affairs” (Census Office 1900, page 9). The 1915 Census Bureau special report about American Indians in the 1910 census said that “Special agents, most of whom had had some experience in the service of the Office of Indian Affairs were appointed for the collection of statistics by means of the special schedule. In the conduct of the field work and in the preparation of schedules, the Bureau of the Census was effectively aided by the Office of Indian Affairs and the Bureau of American Ethnology” (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, page 9; also see Office of Indian Affairs 1910).

The superintendents of American Indian agencies in 1920 and 1930 were directed by the Office of Indian Affairs to cooperate with the decennial censuses, lending assistance and, in 1920 providing access to the Office of Indian Affairs census records (Office of Indian Affairs 1919, 1930). The 1930 census enumerations themselves were conducted by regular enumerators who the Census Bureau stated “may or may not have been familiar with the names of Indian tribes or the extent of mixture of blood” (U. S. Bureau of the Census 1937, page 1).

The enumeration schedules for the general population for the five 1900-1940 censuses are shown at the following website: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-1-d&q=u.s.+census+forms> (also available in U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1989). With two exceptions in 1930 that are discussed below, American Indians in these five censuses were asked to provide the same information as the other residents of the country. The result is that

these decennial censuses provide extensive comparable data across groups on important attributes. Table 2 summarizes the content of the data ascertained by the general enumeration schedules for these five censuses. As that table shows, the decennial censuses obtained information on such matters as age, sex, literacy, school attendance, years of schooling, English language ability, marital status, fertility, child mortality, and employment status.

In addition to the questions asked of all residents, the 1900, 1910, and 1930 censuses—but not the 1920 and 1940 censuses—asked American Indians additional questions. The 1900 interviewer instructions indicated that for “Indians living on Indian reservations (outside of the Indian Territory)⁶ or in tribal relations”, the enumeration “is to be taken on a modified form of the population schedule, and this special form of schedule..... will also be used by the regular census enumerators in all counties containing any considerable number of Indians” (Census Office 1900, page 9).⁷ American Indians living outside of counties containing considerable numbers of Natives received only the standard enumeration schedule. The special supplemental enumeration form for American Indians in 1900 is provided by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (1989, pages 46-47). These questions were asked after the regular questions for the general population schedule.

According to the 1915 special American Indian census volume reporting on the 1910 census “The special schedules were used in all the districts containing Indians on reservations and throughout counties where as many as 20 Indians were returned at the census of 1900” (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, page 9). The instructions to the enumerators indicated that the special schedules were “to be used principally for the use of Indians living on reservations or in tribal relations, and also by the enumerators in certain counties containing a considerable

⁶ We have not seen information concerning what they did in places the government designated as Indian Territory.

⁷ A later statement in the same document worded this instruction slightly different. It substituted the phrase “certain counties containing a considerable number of Indians” for “all counties containing any considerable number of Indians” (page 41).

number of Indians” (U.S Census Bureau 2002, page 55). The special supplemental enumeration form for American Indians in 1910 and the instructions for completing it are provided by the U.S. Bureau of Census (1989, pages 56-57; 2002, pages 45-57). As in 1900, these supplemental questions were asked after the standard items for the general population. Ninety-three percent of all American Indians enumerated in the 1910 census received the supplemental schedule in addition to the regular 1910 census form (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, page 11).

The 1930 census took a different approach for obtaining additional information about American Indians. All information about all Natives, without respect to geographical location, was ascertained using the same form as used for the non-Native part of the population. The Census Bureau stated that “In the enumeration of Indians, however, instead of asking for the State or country of birth of the parents, the enumerator was instructed to ask whether the Indian was of full or mixed blood and for the tribe to which he or she belonged” (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1937, page 1). The added questions on tribe and ancestry were written in the blank columns vacated by the two questions about the place of birth of the person’s mother and father. Information from the 1937 special American Indian census volume covering the 1930 census indicates that tribe and ancestry were ascertained for about 89 percent of the population (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1937, pages 54-74).⁸

Table 3 provides a summary of the additional information ascertained about American Indians in 1900, 1910, and 1930. As shown in the table, the special schedules included a focus on tribal affiliation and the individual’s non-Native ancestry—ascertained by the Census Bureau in terms of blood quantum, which is equivalent to the amount of non-Native ancestry. As

⁸ The 1937 special American Indian census volume indicates that this information exists for about 89 percent of the population. Page 54 says that tribe was not reported for 35,150 people and Page 67 gives the same number. Page 74 says that 37,363 out of 332,297 did not report ancestry (blood quantum).

summarized in Table 3, in 1910 the special American Indian schedule also inquired as to “graduation from educational institutions, allotments, residence on own lands, and whether living in civilized or aboriginal dwellings” (U. S. Census Bureau 1915, page 9).

The Census Bureau was quite aware of the complexities of measuring tribal affiliation and ancestry. The 1915 special American Indian census volume covering the 1910 census explicitly recognized the difficulty of categorizing tribe when the person had ancestry from more than one tribe (U.S Bureau of the Census, 1915, page 71). The 1937 special volume covering the 1930 census also mentioned the difficulties associated with there being different names for the same tribe (U. S. Bureau of the Census 1937, page 33). Also of note is that the Census Bureau made modifications in tribal designations across time (1937, pages 33-36). The Census Bureau also noted the difficulties of identifying the ancestry or blood quantum of American Indians (1937, page 70).

As mentioned earlier, there was no special American Indian enumeration schedules for 1920 and 1940. In these two censuses, American Indians were asked the same questions on the regular enumeration schedules as the general population.

We earlier noted the difficulties presented by the concept of race and the colonization origins of the American Indian category. However, the Census Bureau identified racial categories for grouping people for each of the 1900-1940 censuses, with American Indian being one of those categories. Table 4 documents both the racial categories the Census Bureau used in its 1900-1940 censuses and its instructions for determining people’s membership in those categories. As shown in Table 4, the racial categories used in 1900 were American Indian, White, Black, Chinese, and Japanese. Both the number and content of categories used by the Census Bureau to define race changed across the censuses from 1900 to 1940, with both

additions and deletions of categories between censuses (also see Bennett 2000 and Snipp 2003).

As Jobe (2004, page 75) has stated, “Through the Census of 1950, the race of an individual was determined by the enumerator”. From 1860 through 1890, the instructions to the enumerators provided no guidance as to who should be listed as an American Indian (Census Office, 1860, 1870, 1890), and this pattern was continued in 1900 (Census Office 1900, page 29). The enumerator in 1900 was simply instructed to fill a column in the schedule labeled “Color or race” as follows: “Write ‘W’ for white; ‘B’ for black (negro or of negro descent); ‘Ch’ for Chinese; ‘Jp’ for Japanese, and ‘In’ for Indian, as the case may be” (Census Office 1900, page 29). Except for instructions for determining between “blacks” and “mulattos”, the enumerators in 1910 and 1920 were given no additional instructions beyond being told to write the race of the individual in the appropriate column (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1919, page 27).

But, in 1930, the enumerators were given instructions that attempted to clarify boundaries among whites, Negroes, American Indians, and Mexicans (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1930, page 26; also see U.S. Bureau of the Census 1937, page 1). “A person of mixed white and Negro blood should be returned as a Negro, no matter how small the percentage of Negro blood”. “A person of mixed Indian and Negro blood should be returned a Negro, unless the Indian blood predominates and the status as an Indian is generally accepted in the community”. “A person of mixed white and Indian blood should be returned as Indian, except where the percentage of Indian blood is very small, or where he is regarded as a white person by those in the community where he lives”. Concerning Mexicans, it was determined that “all persons born in Mexico, or having parents born in Mexico, who are not definitely white, Negro, Indian, Chinese, or Japanese, should be returned as Mexican”.

The directions to interviewers concerning racial categories—especially those relevant to American Indians--changed somewhat from 1930 to 1940. For 1940, the Census Bureau also produced both an unabridged and abridged version of the instructions (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1940a, page 43; U. S. Bureau of the Census 1940b, page 7). Both 1940 versions of the instructions regarding the classification of people of mixed Negro-Native heritage followed the 1930 instructions closely in assigning cases to the Negro category. The category of Mexican was removed from the 1940 list of races, and both versions instructed the enumerators to record Mexicans as white “unless definitely of Indian or other nonwhite race”. The unabridged version of the instructions for categorizing people of mixed white-Native heritage said that such a person “should be returned as Indian, if enrolled on an Indian Agency or Reservation roll; or if not so enrolled, if the proportion of Indian blood is one-fourth or more, or if the person is regarded as an Indian in the community where he lives” (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1940a, page 43). Just below this instruction, the unabridged version said simply that “Any mixture of white and nonwhite should be reported according to the nonwhite parent”. The 1940 abridged instructions provided only one sentence about mixtures of white and nonwhite, repeating the unabridged statement that “Any mixture of white and nonwhite blood should be reported according to the race of the nonwhite parent” (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1940b, page 7).

It is exceptionally difficult to know how the census enumerators actually conducted their enumerations and made their decisions about racial categorization. It is similarly difficult to know how the enumerators viewed and interpreted the more detailed instructions and criteria they received for the later censuses—or if they generally proceeded as they had in earlier censuses. There is also little information concerning how enumerators thought they should obtain the information necessary for making decisions about a person’s race. We know that interactions between enumerators and the people being enumerated are complex and do not always follow

the instructions of study designers and supervisors, even when such instructions seem clear, as they were not in the census enumerations of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Census Data Quality Issues

Every data collection and analysis project is fraught with the potential for errors of various sorts to creep in. This is especially true for the Census Bureau when it conducts a project that in just a few months collects data from the entire U.S. population. It requires enormous personnel and logistical resources to recruit and train enumerators, the sending of enumerators to every part of a very large country, and the collection of accurate information from and about people in every condition of life. It is also a project that depends on the trust, good will, and patience of the people being enumerated, as the absence of trust and cooperation would result in a very flawed census. In addition, for a project being used to study social change, there must be consistency of procedures and definitions across time.

Given the daunting nature of successfully conducting censuses, it should come as no surprise that there has never been a perfect census, let alone a perfect series of censuses. Some people are not enumerated and others are counted more than once. Incorrect information is sometimes provided, correct information is sometimes recorded improperly, calculation errors can occur, and the publication process can sometimes introduce errors. As Meister (1980) discussed, these sources of error certainly apply in census enumerations of American Indians.

We have already discussed some issues that bear on the quality of the information about American Indians in the censuses conducted in the first part of the 20th century. Among those is the fact that the definition of being an American Indian was not specified precisely in the census instructions. And, the instructions that were given to enumerators changed over the years. We also mentioned earlier that while American Indian was consistently included in the list of races for the enumerator to choose from, the other groups listed as races varied from census

to census (see Table 4). With the list of available races to choose from varying, the reference group for deciding if someone is an American Indian shifts. This can shift both the context of racial categories and the operationalization of race in the minds of enumerators and the people being enumerated. These identification issues are addressed more thoroughly elsewhere (Thornton, Young-DeMarco, and Smith 2021).

The Census Bureau today is very aware of numerous problems that challenge the integrity of censuses—and has active research programs investigating many of these issues. It was also aware of many of the difficulties in collecting and analyzing reliable information in the 19th and early 20th centuries—and sometimes acknowledged errors and problems explicitly (Census Office 1872, pages xix-xxvi). For example, the 1930 special American Indian volume recognized inconsistencies of counts across states from census to census (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1937, page 4). Earlier we reported that in 1910 the special American Indian census schedules ascertained information about “graduation from educational institutions, allotments, residence on own lands, and whether living in civilized or aboriginal dwellings”. Here we add that the Census Bureau stated that the answers for these questions “were so deficient or manifestly inaccurate as to render the results of little or no value” (U. S. Bureau of the Census Bureau 1915, page 9). Also, despite the 1900 census obtaining information on ancestry, the special American Indian census volume for 1910 stated that the 1910 census “was the first at which any returns worthy of tabulation were secured as to the proportion of full-bloods and mixed-bloods in the Indian population” (U. S. Bureau of the Census 1915, page 31). No explanation of this evaluation was provided. The Census Bureau even acknowledged that something as fundamental to the census as the constitutional distinction between taxed and non-taxed American Indians was difficult. This conclusion was based on the considerable skepticism arising from the direct results of the 1910 question asking American Indians to report whether they were taxed (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, page 283).

The decennial census data about American Indians also has the common errors associated with all data collection projects—for example, missing information, misreported information, and errors in the recording and processing of data. We have analyzed some of these issues, and our preliminary analyses have revealed that, much like other data, there are errors in the decennial censuses. We know, for example, that some information that was meant to be collected in the censuses is missing from the data files, but missing data is an issue in all analyses and our investigations suggest that it is infrequently a serious issue with the census data we have examined. There is also age-heaping in many age reports in the census data—that is the common demographic phenomenon of people reporting age imprecisely, with an over-representation of ages ending in zero and five (Hoxie et al 1992). Fortunately, analyses can often be designed to take this age-heaping into account.

Censuses are subject to both missing people entirely and double counting people. However, as explained by the Census Office (1872, pages xxii-xxiv), problems of undercount are usually more frequent than problems of overcount. Undercounts are also of ubiquitous concern among users of census data. Undercounts of the American population have been an issue from the very beginning. In fact, both George Washington and Thomas Jefferson asserted that the very first census in 1790 produced an undercount (Anderson 1988, page 14; Hacker 2013, pages- 74-75; Wright 1900, pages 16-17). Systematic studies of census quality have documented the almost universal presence of undercounts, with some people not being enumerated (Hacker 2013). These problems exist even among the best censuses of the current day. Furthermore, the undercounts are not distributed evenly across the population, but are believed to be often concentrated among minorities and people with fewer resources, including American Indians (Hoy 2015; Snipp 1997, 2003; Lujan 2014; Meister 1980). This means that research concerning American Indians using census data must be cognizant of the likelihood of

undercount, treat the data with caution, and be alert to how such undercount can influence results.

The ability to enumerate any population successfully is affected by many things including geographic mobility, geographic and social isolation, differences in language and culture, distrust of the census and other governmental enterprises, and ambiguities about group membership (Ackerman 2005; Hoy 2015; Lujan 2014; Liebler 2018, pages 182-185). Many American Indian groups have been affected by many of these conditions. Seasonal mobility has been an important feature of Native life for centuries—and this lifestyle continued for many into the 20th century.

Frequent semi-permanent migrations could also hinder the ability of census enumerators to make contact with individuals. We also know that during much of the 19th century American Indians were increasingly relegated to marginal land away from the centers of Euro-American population, creating difficulties for enumerators to contact them. Although such geographical isolation was established during the 19th century, it continued well into the 20th.

Language and cultural differences with the census takers were also substantial issues in conducting censuses among American Indians. For example, the 1910 census reported that about 38 percent of adult American Indians could not speak English, and this percentage would have been greater among some Native groups (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, page 232). The government was aware of this problem and sometimes provided translators; however, enumerators were strongly encouraged to rely, whenever possible, on bi-lingual neighbors, friends, and relatives for translation assistance (Census Office 1900, pages 15-16).

Obtaining a complete count of American Indians would also be hindered by the history of Native encounters with Euro-American diseases, military power, thirst for land, social and economic organization, and educational institutions (Hoy 2015; Jobe 2004; Lujan 2014; Sturm

2010, pages 35-44). Many American Indians of the 19th and early 20th centuries—and their parents and grandparents--had lived through a history of experiencing terrible diseases and mortality, conflict, removal from their land, cultural attack, and forced enrollment of children in boarding schools. These experiences could lead to a distrust of Euro-American people and their institutions and a desire to be invisible to Euro-American people in general and authorities more explicitly to avoid negative repercussions including removal from their land and removal of their children to boarding schools (Sturm 2010, pages 33-44).

Within this historical and social context many American Indians may have viewed the census project as a colonial endeavor that was of no value—and potentially harmful—to them. This could lead to distrust, hostility, and resistance to the census enterprise (Jobe 2004; Lujan 2014; Liebler 2018); for a discussion of similar circumstances in Canada, see Hamilton 2007). It could also lead to a desire to remain invisible by refusing to participate in the census or to provide incorrect information in the enumeration.

There were at least two ways of avoiding being recorded in a census as an American Indian. The first would be to avoid the census enumerator entirely; that is, not be counted at all. The second is to engage with the enumerator in ways that would lead the enumerator to record a non-Native race for the person rather than recording the person as an American Indian. This could occur by the person telling the enumerator that she or he was White or some other non-Native race or dressing in ways perceived as White. Both strategies would, of course, produce an undercount of American Indians in the census. Jobe wrote that, “In the late nineteenth and early 20th centuries, many Indians were probably overlooked by the census because they did not appear to be Indian, did not live on Indian reservations, were not recognized by the community as Indian, or chose to hide Indian ancestry from enumerators” (Jobe 2004, page 75).

There are several examples or anecdotes about American Indians actively declining to participate in census enumerations. Several come from censuses of American Indians conducted in the Pacific Northwest in the late 19th century by the Office of Indian Affairs (predecessor of BIA). Multiple groups declined to participate in an 1870 Office of Indian Affairs census. One group refused to participate, “claiming that with a government of their own, they did not recognize that of the United States—that the only authority they recognized was God who already knew their numbers” (Ruby and Brown 1965, page 55). Another group refused, saying “The Chief of us all God has numbered us and no man shall number us” (Ruby and Brown 1989, page 140). The same groups expressed similar reluctance for an 1881-1882 census (Ruby and Brown 1965, pages 184-185; Ruby and Brown 1989, page 165).

Another example comes from the 1890 census. Hochschild and Powell (2008, page 78) report that one tribe was so outraged by the census that it captured one of the enumerators. As recently as the 1940s a government agent found that the American Indians he was dealing with were suspicious of censuses and were reticent to participate, but with personal attention and development of trust, willingness to participate increased (Fisher 2010, pages 196-197).

Furthermore, discussions with American Indians even today about past censuses sometime lead to comments about Natives in past times wanting to “hide” from the census enumerators. These observations suggest that the ancestors of these American Indians had reasons to want to hide, including fear of being removed from their land and their children being removed from the family. This tendency to avoid enumeration has probably declined substantially over time, but may remain a factor in people not presenting themselves as American Indian or reporting non-Native identity on censuses at the present time. However, in today’s world many American Indian organizations recognize the advantages that come to Native communities through the census and actively encourage Natives to be counted in the census.

Differential Coverage of 1900-1940 Censuses

Measuring the completeness of a census, especially for relatively small populations such as American Indians, is a very difficult proposition. One approach frequently used in recent U.S. censuses is to conduct a post-enumeration study that essentially does a more intensive data collection operation whose results can be compared with the actual census. Another approach is to compare two adjacent censuses, taking into account fertility, mortality, and migration counts in the intervening decade. Unfortunately, neither of these options are easily available for American Indians in the first part of the 20th century.

However, the data in Table 1 provide some rough and indirect clues concerning how much the coverage of American Indians varied across the forty years from 1900 to 1940. As shown in this table, the total number of American Indians enumerated declined by 4 percent between 1890 and 1900, increased by 12 percent from 1900 to 1910, declined by 8 percent between 1910 and 1920, increased by 36 percent between 1920 and 1930, and remained essentially constant between 1930 and 1940. Such fluctuating population numbers are consistent with differential census coverage and changing definitions of race across the four inter-decadal periods, but the fluctuations could also be due to differences in net international migration, mortality, and fertility.

Further insight into this issue can be gained through eliminating one source of differential change across decades—that being fertility—and taking advantage of the fact that net international migration of American Indians during this period was likely very small and would not have had substantial effects on population counts. We eliminate the possibility of fertility influences by limiting the population change between censuses to the people who were alive at one census and following them to the next census. This is done by calculating census survival ratios by dividing the number of people from ages X to Y in the second census by the number

from ages X-10 to Y-10 in the first census. This can be done for small ranges of X to Y like five or ten year age cohorts or for large ranges of X to Y across a larger age range such as 20-59. Unfortunately, this census survival ratio approach leaves mortality confounded with the combination of census coverage and reporting of race, but it requires few assumptions, and, as we will see, provides interesting results.

The last column of Table 1 shows a broad overview of census survival ratios for each inter-decadal census period from 1900 through 1940—indicating the extent to which people enumerated at ages 10-49 in one census survived to ages 20-59 in the subsequent census. Comparing the census survival ratios across inter-decadal periods, we see that the ratio is substantially the highest for the 1920-1930 period, the lowest for the 1910-1920 period, and intermediate for the 1900-1910 and 1930-1940 periods. We also calculated similar census survival ratios for five-year age groups and, with only one exception, the differences shown in the overall census survival ratios are also reflected in all the age-specific survival ratios (results not shown).

The very high inter-decadal census survival ratios from 1920 to 1930 suggest that the 1930 census very likely had substantially better coverage and/or more identification of people as American Indian than did the 1920 census. In fact, the overall survival ratios are so close to one that they could not be possible without increased coverage or changing racial definitions—and some of the survival ratios for some five-year age groups actually exceed 1.0, which is impossible without changes in coverage or racial identification. Also, if there were no unusual increases in mortality from 1910 to 1920, the very low census survival ratios from 1910 to 1920 suggest that the 1920 census did not do as well at interviewing American Indians as did the 1910 census. These observations suggest that coverage may have been especially extensive in 1930 and particularly low in 1920. This low coverage level of 1920 compared to 1910 and 1930 may be related to the fact that both 1910 and 1930 contained particular focus on obtaining

information from American Indians while the 1920 census did not. Lujan (2014, page 322) suggests that the improved coverage between 1920 and 1930 may have been the result of increased attention and effort exerted by the Census Bureau to enumerate American Indians more fully in 1930.

The 1970 special American Indian census report suggests that the relatively high population numbers reported in 1910 and 1930 were the results of “a special effort.....to include all persons of mixed Indian and white descent as Indian” (U.S. Bureau of the Census 1973, page xi). Although the 1970 special report does not provide a reason or evidence for this assertion, we know that there was additional effort put into creating special American Indian enumeration schedules in 1910 and 1930 and to produce special volumes reporting the Native census results in those years—and these census aspects did not exist in 1920 or 1940.

Of course, these observations can only be conjectures without precise information about how mortality might have varied across the four inter-decadal periods. More insights concerning coverage issues in these censuses must await further analysis with understanding of how mortality might have changed across the inter-decadal census periods.

Availability of 1900-1940 Decennial Census Data for American Indians

As mentioned in the introduction, the rich information from the 1900-1940 decennial censuses about American Indians is available in several formats. In this section of the paper we provide a brief overview of five different sources of decennial census information about American Indians during this four decade period. Each source is extensive and complex and we provide only an overview, with full descriptions being beyond the scope of this paper.

Raw Enumeration Schedules

Fortunately, federal laws called for the retention of the raw enumeration schedules themselves (the filled-out forms used by the census enumerators), and this practice was generally followed (Wright 1900, pages 76-78). Accessibility to these enumeration schedules has been facilitated by the fact that they have been microfilmed and are available to the general public (U.S. Census Bureau 2002, pages 110-114). In addition, as we note below, much of the information from these microfilm forms has been digitized into computer files useful for sophisticated analyses of many kinds. Nevertheless, these raw enumeration documents remain an important source for the basic documentation of the original data.

Census Bureau Publications

A second important source of 1900-1940 decennial census information about American Indians is the aggregate-level analyses conducted and published by the Census Bureau following the censuses themselves (for example, U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, 1937). In each of the five census years, the Census Bureau tabulated and published basic univariate and bivariate information for many of the central attributes of the population, with many of the published tables disaggregated by racial categories. A number of these aggregate tables are presented both for the national population and for individual states. In addition, for the 1910 and 1930 censuses the Census Bureau (1915, 1937) published special American Indian census volumes that provide basic univariate (and bivariate) information for relevant attributes for groups of tribes and/or individual tribes (with the details varying between 1910 and 1930). Moreover, data collected from American Indians in the 1900 census were reported in both the 1910 and 1930 special volumes and 1910 American Indian data were included in the 1930 special report volume as well.

As we discuss below, much of the original census information has been digitized into individual-level data files, but the published aggregate information remains valuable for several purposes. First, these published census volumes contain some information that has not yet been included with some of the important data files, and this information can enhance data analyses. Second, the published volumes provide a baseline of information that can be used in designing and conducting analyses of the digitized micro data files. Of course, the major weakness of these published data is that they are aggregate in nature and cannot be disaggregated to conduct detailed individual-level analyses.

Micro Data Samples Prepared by the American Indian Family History Project

A third source of census data available for the study of American Indians in the 1900-1940 period is the American Indian Family History Project of the D'Arcy McNickle Center for the History of the American Indian. The Chicago-based D'Arcy McNickle Center has accumulated, computerized, and archived decennial censuses for five tribes for 1900 and 1910 (Hoxie et al 1992). In addition the D'Arcy McNickle Center computerized and archived censuses conducted by the Bureau of Indian Affairs among these five tribes for 1885 (or another BIA census near 1885) and 1930 (Hoxie et al 1992). These micro-data permit full individual-level analyses of the individual American Indians included in these data files.

Micro Data Samples Disseminated by IPUMS

A fourth source of 1900-1940 census data is the micro samples made available through IPUMS' extensive and complex data acquisition and dissemination program (Ruggles, Flood, Goeken, Grover, Meyer, Pacas, and Sobek ND). These IPUMS sample data sets include both general and special purpose samples of individuals drawn from the 1900-1940 decennial census records by several academic institutions and then harmonized and distributed by IPUMS. These samples vary in size across the various censuses. They provide the opportunity

to conduct the full range of analyses provided by data at the individual level, recognizing that sampling error is associated with estimates made from these data. Two of the samples from 1900 and 1910 include data from the special American Indian supplemental schedules.

Complete Count Data Files Disseminated by IPUMS

A fifth data source of census data for the study of American Indians is the complete-count decennial census files digitized by Ancestry.com, and harmonized and distributed by IPUMS (Ruggles, Flood, Goeken, Grover, Meyer, Pacas, and Sobek ND). These data files are particularly rich because they were designed to include all individuals that participated in any of the five 1900-1940 censuses. They are appropriate for conducting extensive individual-level analyses—and with the advantage of not involving sampling concerns. While general population data are available for all American Indians enumerated, the complete count files do not include any data from the special American Indian supplemental schedules.

Summary

We bring this discussion to a close with the conclusion that the 1900-1940 decennial censuses provide an especially substantial body of information to study American Indian individuals, society, and social change over a substantial and important period of time—the first four decades of the 20th century. Censuses, by nature, are limited in the amount of data that can be collected, but, as we have discussed, the U.S. decennial censuses include information on several important aspects of life. In addition, these are census materials designed to cover the entire population of American Indians during this four decade period. And, of particular value is the fact that the data are available in microdata files for both samples and complete-counts of the American Indian population, permitting extensive individual-level analyses.

We recognize that all social science and social history must be done with great care and diligence, as the opportunities for faulty conclusions are substantial. All data sources including

censuses contain errors and present opportunities for misinterpretation. Given the issues that we have discussed, such opportunities for error may be substantially greater in using the 1900-1940 censuses for American Indians than the average research undertaking. Nevertheless, we are optimistic that if these data are analyzed and interpreted with great care and caution, they provide many opportunities for increasing knowledge of American Indian society and social change over these decades.

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Table 1. American Indian Population Enumerated in Decennial Censuses, Inter-decadal Change for American Indian and U.S. Populations, and Inter-decadal Census Survival Ratios

Year	American Indian	American Indian % Change	U.S. % Change	Census Survival Ratio
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1860 (taxed)	44,021			
1870 (taxed)	25,731			
1880 (taxed)	66,407			
1890 (taxed)	58,806			
1890	248,253			
1900	237,196	-4.5	20.7	
1910	265,683	12.0	21.0	0.80
1920	244,437	-8.0	14.9	0.67
1930	332,397	36.0	16.1	0.98
1940	333,969	0.5	7.2	0.72

Sources and definitions:

The 1860-1940 data for columns 2 and 3 are taken from Gibson and Jung (2002), Table 1 and Appendix B.

The numbers recorded in this table as taxed in 1860-1890 have been consistently reported in multiple census publications, but the labels have varied across census publications. Among the category labels used have been “civilized”, “out of tribal relations”, “citizen Indians, taxed or taxable”, “civilized Indians living off reservations and counted in the general census, (taxed)”, or simply as “Indians taxed” (Census Office, 1894, pages 16-28; U.S. Bureau of the Census 1915, pages 283-285).

The column for “American Indian” indicates the number of American Indians enumerated in the censuses for the coterminous U.S. (that is, excluding Alaska and Hawaii).

The American Indian and U. S. percent change columns (Column 3-4) are the percent change between the number in the specified year compared to the number the previous decade.

The census survival ratio column (Column 5) is the ratio of the American Indian population ages 20-59 in the specified year divided by the American Indian population ages 10-49 in the previous decade. For 1900, the age distribution was not available and it was assumed to be equal to the 1910 age distribution. For 1940, the age distribution was not available and it was assumed to be equal to the 1930 age distribution. For all other years, the Census publications provided age distributions for the appropriate year.

Table 2. Information Collected in the General Population Schedules by Census Year

Information Collected	Census Year				
	1900	1910	1920	1930	1940
Street	X	X	X	X	X
House Number	X	X	X	X	X
Dwelling Number	X	X	X	X	X
Family Number	X	X	X	X	
Name	X	X	X	X	X
Relation	X	X	X	X	X
Sex	X	X	X	X	X
Color or Race	X	X	X	X	X
D.O.B. Month	X				
D.O.B. Year	X				
Age at Last Birthday	X	X	X	X	X
Marital Status	X	X	X	X	X
Years of Pres. Marriage	X	X			
Age at First Marriage				X	X
Mother of # Children	X	X			X
# Children Living	X	X			
Woman Mar. 2+ Times					X
Birthplace	X	X	X	X	X
Father's Birthplace	X	X	X	X	X
Mother's Birthplace	X	X	X	X	X
Year Immigration	X	X	X	X	
Years in U.S.	X				
Naturalized/Citizenship	X	X	X	X	X
Year of Naturalization			X		
Mother Tongue			X	X	X
Father's Mother Tongue			X		

Mother's Mother Tongue			X		
Speak English? Y/N	X	X	X	X	
1935 Residence—2,500 +					X
1935 Residence—County					X
1935 Residence—State/Other					X
1935 Residence— Farm? Y/N					X
Able to Read? Y/N	X	X	X		
Able to Write? Y/N	X	X	X		
Able to Read AND Write?				X	
School Attendance (past year) Y/N		X	X	X	X
Months (#) of School	X				
Highest Grade Completed					X
Occupation	X	X	X	X	X
Industry		X	X	X	X
Employee or Employer		X	X		
Class of Worker				X	X
At Work? Y/N				X	
Non-Emergency At Work?					X
Emergency At Work?					X
Months Unemployed	X				
Weeks Unemployed		X			
Line # on Unemployed Schedule				X	
Weeks Worked last year					X
Money Received					X
Other non-work Money					X
Usual Occupation					X
Usual Industry					X
Usual Class of Worker					X
Have Soc. Sec. #? Y/N					X
Old Age Pension received?					X
Fraction of pension to wage					X
Unemployed—Seeking Work?					X
Unemployed—Keeping busy?					X

Unemployed—Reason						X
Hours worked in past week						X
Duration unemployed in weeks						X
Out of work on census day?		X				
Owned or Rented	X	X	X	X		X
Owned Free or Mortgaged	X	X	X			
Farm or House	X	X		X		X
# of Farm Schedule	X	X	X	X		X
Value of Home				X		X
Radio Set? Y/N				X		
Veteran? Y/N				X		X
Civil War Veteran? Y/N		X				
Veteran of What War				X		
Child of Dead Veteran?						X
War or Military Service?						X
Blind (both eyes)? Y/N		X				
Deaf and Dumb? Y/N		X				

Table 3. Information Collected in the Special American Indian Schedules by Census Year

Information Collected	Census Year		
	1900	1910	1930
American Indian Name	X		
Tribe	X	X	X
Father's Tribe	X	X	
Mother's Tribe	X	X	
Full or Mixed American Indian Blood			X
# of Times Married		X	
Polygamous	X	X	
Educational Institution		X	
If Taxed	X	X	
Year of Citizenship	X		
Year of Allotment		X	
If Citizenship via Allotment	X		
Type of Dwelling	X	X	
Own Lands		X	

Table 4. Enumerator Instructions for recording Race by Census Year

Year	Text
1900	<p>126. Column 5. Color or race.—Write "W" for white; "B" for black (negro or of negro descent); "Ch" for Chinese; "Jp" for Japanese, and "In" for Indian, as the case may be.</p>
1910	<p>108. Column 8. Color or race.—Write "W" for white; "B" for black; "Mu" for mulatto; "Ch" for Chinese; "Jp" for Japanese; "In" for Indian. For all persons not falling within one of these classes, write "Ot" (for other), and write on the left-hand margin of the schedule the race of the person so indicated.</p> <p>109. For census purposes, the term "black" (B) includes all persons who are evidently full-blooded negroes, while the term "mulatto" (Mu) includes all other persons having some proportion or perceptible trace of negro blood.</p>
1920	<p>120. Column 10. Color or race.—Write "W" for white; "B" for black; "Mu" for mulatto; "In" for Indian; "Ch" for Chinese; "Jp" for Japanese; "Fil" for Filipino; "Hin" for Hindu; "Kor" for Korean. For all persons not falling within one of these classes, write "Ot" (for other), and write on the left-hand margin of the schedule the race of the person so indicated.</p> <p>121. For census purposes the term "black" (B) includes all Negroes of full blood, while the term "mulatto" (Mu) includes all Negroes having some proportion of white blood.</p>
1930	<p>150. Column 12. Color or race.—Write "W" for white; "Neg" for Negro; "Mex" for Mexican; "In" for Indian; "Ch" for Chinese; "Jp" for Japanese; "Fil" for Filipino; "Hin" for Hindu; and "Kor" for Korean. For a person of any other race, write the race in full.</p> <p>151. Negroes.—A person of mixed white and Negro blood should be returned as a Negro, no matter how small the percentage of Negro blood. Both black and mulatto persons are to be returned as Negroes, without distinction. A person of mixed Indian and Negro blood should be returned a Negro, unless the Indian blood predominates and the status as an Indian is generally accepted in the community.</p> <p>152. Indians.—A person of mixed white and Indian blood should be returned as Indian, except where the percentage of Indian blood is very small, or where he is regarded as a white person by those in the community where he lives. (See par. 151 for mixed Indian and Negro.)</p> <p>153. For a person reported as Indian in column 12, report is to be made in column 19 as to whether "full blood" or "mixed blood," and in column 20 the name of the tribe is to be reported. For Indians, columns 19 and 20 are thus to be used to indicate the degree of Indian blood and the tribe, instead of the birthplace of father and mother.</p> <p>154. Mexicans.—Practically all Mexican laborers are of a racial mixture difficult to classify, though usually well recognized in the localities where they are found. In order to obtain separate figures for this racial group, it has been decided that all persons born in Mexico, or having parents born in Mexico, who are not definitely white, Negro, Indian, Chinese, or Japanese, should be</p>

	<p>returned as Mexican ("Mex").</p> <p>155. Other mixed races.—Any mixture of white and nonwhite should be reported according to the nonwhite parent. Mixtures of colored races should be reported according to the race of the father, except Negro-Indian (see par. 151).</p>
<p>1940 Unabridged</p>	<p>458. Column 10. Color or Race.—Write "W" for white; "Neg" for Negro; "In" for Indian; "Ch" for Chinese; "Jp" for Japanese; "Fil" for Filipino; "Hin" for Hindu; and "Kor" for Korean. For a person of any other race, write the race in full.</p> <p>454. Mexicans.—Mexicans are to be regarded as white unless definitely of Indian or other nonwhite race.</p> <p>455. Negroes.—A person of mixed white and Negro blood should be returned as a Negro, no matter how small the percentage of Negro blood. Both black and mulatto persons are to be returned as Negroes, without distinction. A person of mixed Indian and Negro blood should be returned as a Negro, unless the Indian blood very definitely predominates and he is universally accepted in the community as an Indian.</p> <p>456. Indians.—A person of mixed white and Indian blood should be returned as Indian, if enrolled on an Indian Agency or Reservation roll; or if not so enrolled, if the proportion of Indian blood is one-fourth or more, or if the person is regarded as an Indian in the community where he lives. (See par. 455 for mixed Indian and Negro.)</p> <p>457. Mixed Races.—Any mixture of white and nonwhite should be reported according to the nonwhite parent. Mixtures of nonwhite races should be reported according to the race of the father, except that Negro-Indian should be reported as Negro.</p>
<p>1940 Abridged</p>	<p>45. Column 10. Color or race.—For symbols to be entered in this column, see the note at the bottom of the schedule. Any mixtures of white and nonwhite blood should be recorded according to the race of the nonwhite parent. A person of mixed Negro and Indian blood should be reported as Negro unless the Indian blood greatly predominates and he is universally accepted in the community as an Indian. Other mixtures of nonwhite parentage should be reported according to the race of the father. Mexicans are to be returned as white, unless definitely of Indian or other nonwhite race</p>