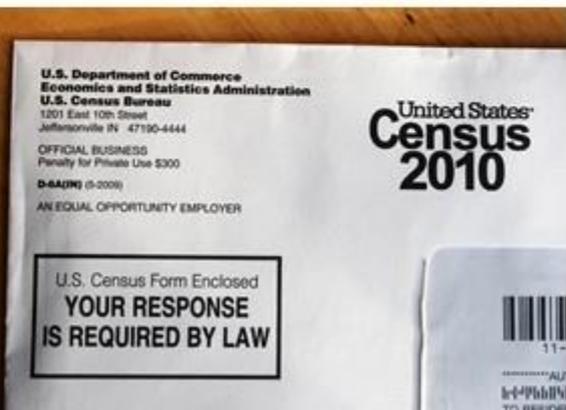


United States  
**Census  
2020**

# Considering the Census

How Past Questions about Race and Ethnicity Can Help  
Predict Future Questions about Gender and Sexuality



Sonnet Ireland  
St. Tammany Parish Library  
May 16, 2018

# We Will Cover...

How the Decennial Census has focused on race and ethnicity in the past

The different race categories used throughout the history of the Census

What might have prompted some of those changes



# Then We Will Consider....

How the Decennial Census might handle gender and sexuality questions (probably, decades from now)

How the changing questions impact our society

# Some Things to Know

Enumerators wrote the responses until 1960, when they became responsible for transcribing them

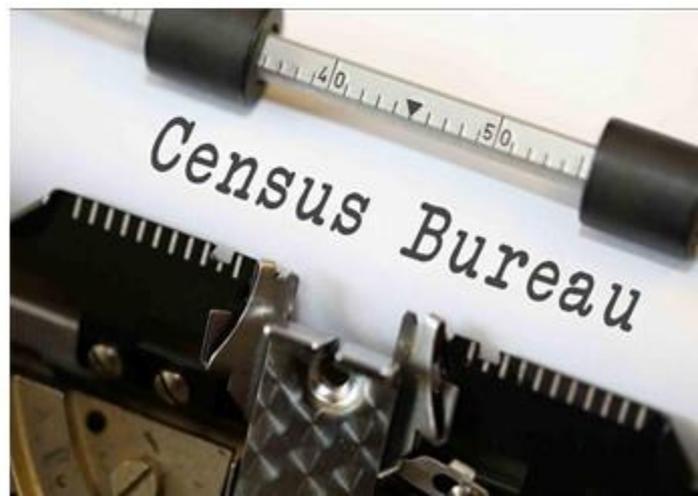
Personally identifiable information on the Census is kept confidential for 72 years

This is why the latest Census that genealogists have access to is the 1940 Census

The 1950 Census will be released sometime during or after April 2022

*Warning: There are some terms in this presentation that are offensive. These were the technical terms used in the time periods we are discussing.*

*Also, I am not an expert on gender identity or sexuality or even the Census. I'm just a curious person who had a question and then read a LOT about it.*







# 1870

Race options expanded to White, Black, Mulatto, Chinese, and Indian

Large community of Chinese immigrants started coming to the U.S. in the 1850s.

# 1880

Finally get the relationship to the head of household!



# 1890

Each family has their own sheet

Race options expanded to:

White, Black, Mulatto, Quadroon, Octoroon, Chinese, Japanese, and Indian

1853: Commodore Matthew Perry “opened up” Japan to trade

1868: Meiji Restoration - end of Tokugawa shogunate and beginning of modernization

Upheaval at home and apparent success in U.S. was attractive to Japanese immigrants

1880s: Legal barriers to emigration begin to drop, making it easier for Japanese immigrants

Almost completely lost in a fire



# 1900

Back to filling each sheet up entirely instead of separating by family

Separate Indian Population Schedule

Asked: Indian Name, Tribe, Each Parent's Tribe, Fraction of White Lineage, etc.



American Indians partially dependent on aid marked

Noted if the Indian was "taxed"--detached from tribe

Noted if the person's house was "movable" or "fixed"

Possibly prompted by progress such as...

# 1910

Late addition to the Census of “mother tongue”

Separate Indian Population Schedule

Race is back to White, Black, Mulatto, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, and Other



# 1920

Includes “mother tongue”

No longer a separate Indian Population Schedule



# 1930

Race gets even more complicated

No more Mulatto! Mexicans get included!

W for White

Neg for Black

In for American Indian

Ch for Chinese

Fil for Filipino

Hin for Hindu

Mex for Mexican

Jp for Japanese

Kor for Korean

All other races were to be written out in full.

*But wait! There's more!*



# 1930



Someone both White and Black is now Black, regardless of percent of lineage

Someone of Black and American Indian lineage was also to be recorded as Black

*Unless considered "predominantly" American Indian and accepted as such within their community*

Someone of White and American Indian lineage was to be recorded as Indian

*Unless the American Indian lineage was very small and was accepted as white within the community*

All situations in which a person had White with some other race--report as that other race

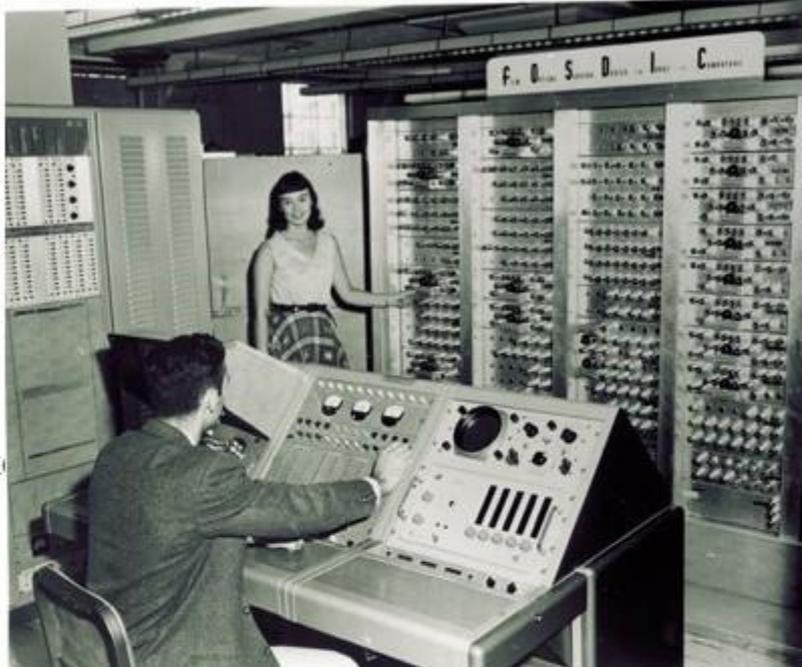
Persons who had minority interracial lineages were to be reported as the race of their father.

# 1960

We can fill it out ourselves!

Larger space to enter race

No longer reliant on what the enumerator thinks we look like



# 1980

Hispanic/Spanish origin is separated out from race.



# 2000

Multiple answers are accepted for race  
(and not coded as the first option chosen)

Many ways to personalize race!

# 2010

10 questions, 10 minutes, 10 years

Fear among undocumented immigrants leads to (well-meaning) activists encouraging people to not answer the Census.

**Person 1**

Your answers are important!  
Every person in the Census counts.

**1** What is this person's name? *Print the name of Person 1 from page 2.*

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ MI \_\_\_\_\_

**2** What is this person's telephone number? *We may contact this person if we don't understand an answer.*

Area Code + Number \_\_\_\_\_

**3** What is this person's sex? *Mark [X] ONE box.*

Male

**4** What is this person's race? *Mark [X] one or more races to indicate what this person considers himself/herself to be.*

White

Black, African Am., or Negro

American Indian or Alaska Native — *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe.* \_\_\_\_\_

Asian Indian

Chinese

Filipino

Japanese

Korean

Vietnamese

Other Asian — *Print race.* \_\_\_\_\_

Native Hawaiian

Guamanian or Chamorro

Samoan

Other Pacific Islander — *Print race.* \_\_\_\_\_

Some other race — *Print race.* \_\_\_\_\_

# 2020

## Privacy & Confidentiality

Federal Law Protects Your Information. The U.S. Census Bureau is bound by [Title 13](#) of the United States Code. This law not only provides authority for the work we do, but also provides strong protection for the information we collect from individuals and businesses. As a result, the Census Bureau has one of the strongest confidentiality guarantees in the federal government.

It is against the law for any Census Bureau employee to disclose or publish any census or survey information that identifies an individual or business. This is true even for inter-agency communication: the FBI and other government entities do not have the legal right to access this information. In fact, when these protections have been challenged, Title 13's confidentiality guarantee has been upheld.

For more information about how the Census Bureau safeguards the data it collects, visit the agency's [Data Protection](#) website.



# Some Current Fears

[https://www.census.gov/history/www/reference/privacy\\_confidentiality/](https://www.census.gov/history/www/reference/privacy_confidentiality/)

## Title 13, U.S. Code

The Census Bureau is bound by Title 13 of the United States Code. These laws not only provide authority for the work we do, but also provide strong protection for the information we collect from individuals and businesses.

Title 13 provides the following protections to individuals and businesses:

- Private information is never published. It is against the law to disclose or publish any private information that identifies an individual or business such, including names, addresses (including GPS coordinates), Social Security Numbers, and telephone numbers.
- The Census Bureau collects information to produce statistics. Personal information cannot be used against respondents by any government agency or court.
- Census Bureau employees are sworn to protect confidentiality. People sworn to uphold Title 13 are legally required to maintain the confidentiality of your data. Every person with access to your data is sworn for life to protect your information and understands that the penalties for violating this law are applicable for a lifetime.
- Violating the law is a serious federal crime. Anyone who violates this law will face severe penalties, including a federal prison sentence of up to five years, a fine of up to \$250,000, or both.

Title 13, U.S. Code is available to download from the Government Printing Office [here](#) [PDF 311KB].



[https://www.census.gov/history/www/reference/privacy\\_confidentiality/title\\_13\\_us\\_code.html](https://www.census.gov/history/www/reference/privacy_confidentiality/title_13_us_code.html)

## The "72-Year Rule"

The U.S. government will not release personally identifiable information about an individual to any other individual or agency until 72 years after it was collected for the decennial census. This "72-Year Rule" (92 Stat. 915; [Public Law 95-416](#); October 5, 1978) restricts access to decennial census records to all but the individual named on the record or their legal heir.

For More information about the origin of the "72-Year Rule," see the following:

- Letter from Census Bureau Director, [Roy V. Peel](#) to Archivist of the United States, Wayne C. Grover, concerning the 72-year lapse between collection and release of decennial census records, [August 26, 1952](#).
- Letter from Archivist of the United States, Wayne C. Grover to Census Bureau Director Roy V. Peel, in reply to Peel's August 1952 letter (above), [October 10, 1952](#).
- Letter from Assistant Attorney General Robert G. Dixon, Jr., to General Counsel, General Services Administration, William G. Casselman II, Esq., concerning the origins of the "72-year Rule" and its evolution to 1973, [June 14, 1973](#).

After 72 years, the records are released to the public by the [National Archives and Records Administration](#). In accordance with the 72-Year Rule, the National Archives released the [1930](#) records in April 2002 and most recently, the 1940 records were released [April 2, 2012](#).

For more information about the availability of census records, download [Availability of Census Records About Individuals](#) [PDF 150KB].

For more information about using census records for genealogical purposes, visit the [Genealogy](#) and [Genealogy Publications](#) pages.

[https://www.census.gov/history/www/genealogy/decennial\\_census\\_records/the\\_72\\_year\\_rule\\_1.html](https://www.census.gov/history/www/genealogy/decennial_census_records/the_72_year_rule_1.html)

[Census.gov](#) > [About the Bureau](#) > [Policies and Notices](#) > [Data Protection and Privacy](#) > [Data Protection](#)

## Data Protection and Privacy

### Data Protection

[Privacy Impact Assessments \(PIA\)](#)

[System of Records Notices \(SORN\)](#)

[Online Privacy Policy](#)

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### Data Protection

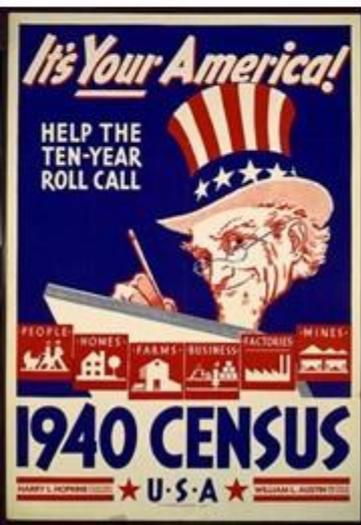


### How We Protect Your Information

The U.S. Census Bureau has an obligation to produce accurate, relevant statistics about the nation's economy and people, but we recognize that it is your information that we collect to produce these statistics.

**We depend on your cooperation and trust, and promise to protect the confidentiality of your information.**

[https://www.census.gov/about/policies/privacy/data\\_protection.html](https://www.census.gov/about/policies/privacy/data_protection.html)



# Genealogists' Tears in 72 Years



# What about the Future?



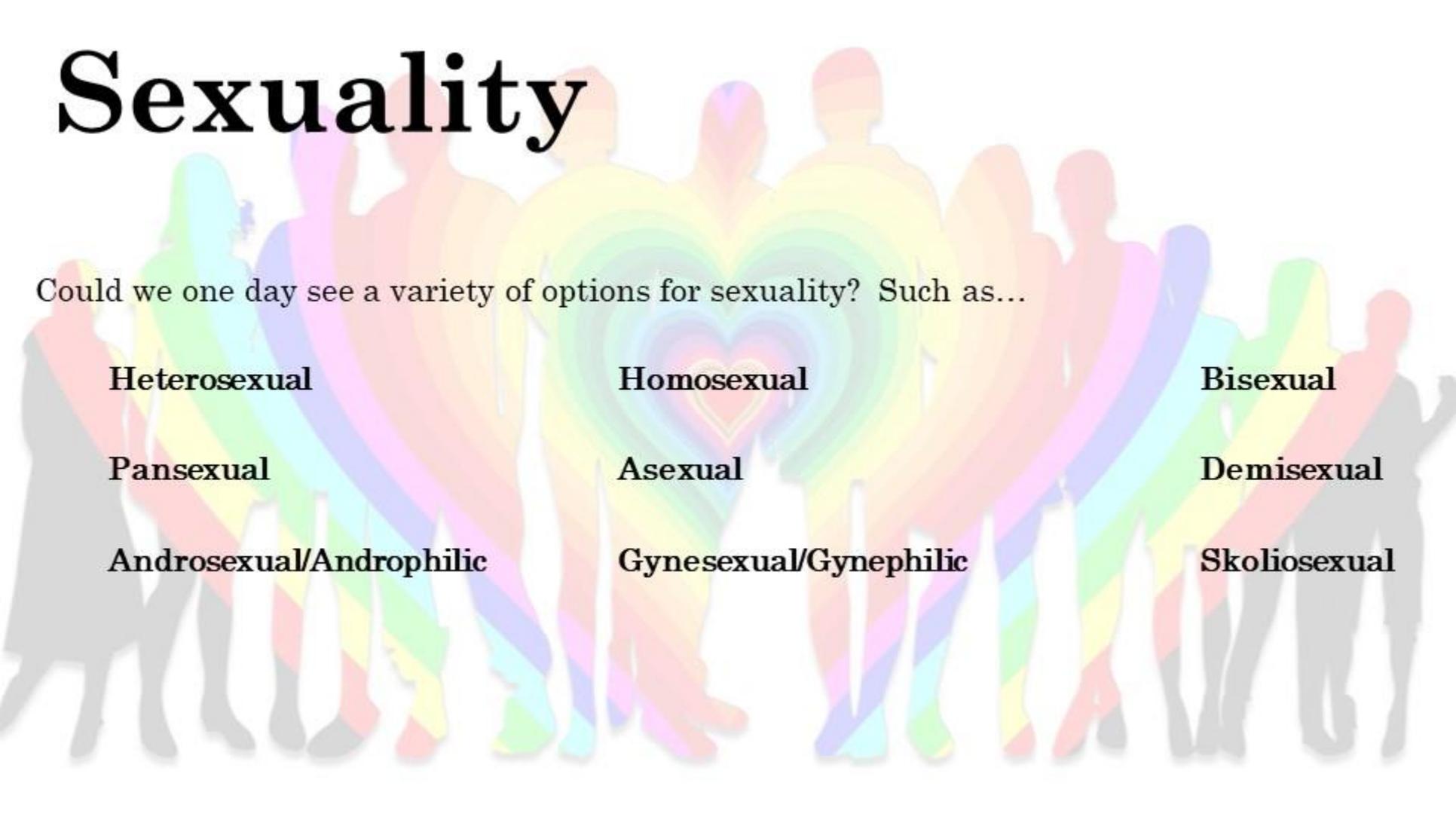
Ethnicity and race are interesting, but they are also likely to blend together more over time. If race can evolve this much over 220 years, what about....

**Gender?**

**Sexuality?**

**Gender Identity?**

# Sexuality

A row of human silhouettes, each with a rainbow-colored heart on its back. The hearts are of varying sizes and are arranged in a line, with the largest heart in the center. The silhouettes are in various poses, some facing forward, some in profile, and some with their arms raised. The background is white.

Could we one day see a variety of options for sexuality? Such as...

**Heterosexual**

**Homosexual**

**Bisexual**

**Pansexual**

**Asexual**

**Demisexual**

**Androsexual/Androphilic**

**Gynesexual/Gynephilic**

**Skoliosexual**

# Gender Identity

We could also see something similar with gender identity (how a person identifies their own gender).

**Cisgender**

**Transgender**

**Agender**

**Bigender**

**Gender Fluid**

**Androgyne/Androgynous**

**Pangender**

**Third Gender**

**Gender Non-Conforming**

**Transsexual**

**Transitioning**

# Gender Assignment

I do think the big mistake we might make is to assume that Gender Identity needs to replace actual physical gender. To balance this, I would recommend a question about what gender you were assigned at birth.

Female



Intersex



Male



# Thank you!

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