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Ethnic Poverty and Social Vulnerability Data Sources from United States Census and American Community Survey Data

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Abstract

The United States Census provides an array of possible sources of ethnic and racial information which includes the following questions: (1) race; (2) Hispanic origin; (3) ancestry; (4) place of birth; (5) citizenship; (6) year-of-entry; and (7) language. While the breadth of ethnic and racial census data is striking, the power of census-based data is clearest when the geographic detail is overlaid. Specialized surveys conducted in the United States (Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) and the Current Population Survey (CPS)) provide finer and more timely measurement of income and poverty than a census, but they tend to lack the breadth of subject matter coverage, and subnational geographic detail. A new survey to be implemented in the United States, the American Community Survey (ACS), will soon begin to provide the complete range of census equivalent data on a yearly basis, and over time will provide the data for low geographic levels. Therefore, a more continuous measurement of poverty and social vulnerability of ethnic and racial groups will potentially be available to policy makers. Effective utilization of this data will require the development of tabulations, previously ignored due to the infrequency of the data for monitoring purposes. Although census data alone have not traditionally been the finest tool for measuring poverty or other aspects of social vulnerability, the addition of the ACS in the United States will certainly upgrade the utility of census-like data as both a detection and monitoring tool.

Introduction

“...America’s poverty agenda is now inseparable from its racial debate.”
Hugh Helco, “Poverty Politics,” in *Confront Poverty Prescription for Change*

A better statement is that the poverty agenda is inseparable from the race and ethnicity in America. Indeed, the collection of race and ethnic data has been a central issue for the federal government in preparing the data agenda for the next century.

The 2000 round of censuses is upon us, and a vast array of governments, state and private enterprises, non governmental agencies, scholars, and others await the barrage of data that will be forthcoming. Indeed, decennial censuses provide a wealth of socioeconomic data, but this rain of data is like a monsoon which will subside and not return until next season. A decade is a long season. This decade of data dearth is not complete since some countries have intercensal survey programs, or mid-decade censuses; however, these intercensal data collection activities often lack the geographic coverage of a census. The planned introduction of the American Community Survey (ACS) in 2003, portends to offer census-like data for many of the same levels of geography that are available from a decennial census.

The United States’ decennial census for the millennium, Census 2000, offers a number of possible sources of ethnic and racial data which include questions on: (1) race; (2) Hispanic origin; (3) ancestry; (4) place of birth; (5) citizenship; (6) year-of-entry; and (7) language. Each of these questions will also appear in the American Community Survey. Ethnicity, race, poverty, and social vulnerability are deeply entwined. In this paper, the following topics are covered: (1) ethnic, racial, and poverty data from the United States Census 1990 and 2000; (2) ethnic, racial and poverty data from the American Community Survey; (3) standardization of race and ethnic questions; (4) future data sets; and (5) a new question in Census 2000. However, an understanding of the concepts of race, ethnicity and poverty for federal data collection and

reporting purposes needs to be established.

Federal Guidelines for the Collection of Ethnic and Race Data

The federal government first established ethnic and racial data collection and reporting standards in 1977.

The adequacy of these standards was recently reviewed and the standards were revised in the fall of 1997.

Federal statistics on ethnicity and race are governed by guidelines established by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). These guidelines were formed to address specific domestic needs arising from

legislation and judicial rulings relating to discrimination and selected social issues of national importance.

Therefore, these guidelines do not necessarily conform with the concept of ethnicity as perceived by the man-in-the-street. Nor do they necessarily conform to the main currents of thought on ethnicity taught in the schools of social science.

Federal guidelines first established by OMB in 1977 laid out minimum data collection and reporting standards for race and ethnicity (OMB). Two ethnic categories were established: 1) Hispanic; and 2) Non-Hispanic. Members of either ethnic group can be of any race.

In its efforts to serve the population, the government periodically conducts surveys to determine the adequacy and the application of the concepts. Recently, two large scale Census Bureau surveys were implemented to examine such issues; these surveys were: 1) the National Content Survey; and 2) the Race and Ethnic Targeted Test. The results of these tests and other research from other federal agencies were reviewed by a federal interagency committee, and recommendations were made to OMB on the possible revisions to the racial and ethnic data collection and reporting standard.

In the fall of 1997, the OMB issued revised standards for race and ethnic data collection and reporting (OMB, 1997). The changes for ethnicity were limited to: 1) the addition of the word “Latino” in the wording of the Hispanic origin question; 2) the use of distinct questions for race and ethnicity, those types of data are collected by self-report; and 3) the placement of the ethnicity question (Hispanic origin) prior to the race question to improve item response. There were more extensive adjustments to the racial data collection and reporting standard, which included: 1) the option to declare more than one race; and 2) the creation of separate categories for Asians and Pacific Islanders. Finally, OMB indicated that the collection of more detailed race and ethnic data is permissible if these data can be folded back to the minimum racial and ethnic categories in the revised standard.

Definition of Poverty for Federal Statistics

The official definition of poverty is determined by the Office of Management and Budget.

The poverty thresholds utilized by the U.S. Bureau of the Census have their origin in the work of Orshanky (U.S.B.C., 1993). This threshold poverty measure is based on pre-tax income adjusted for inflation using the Consumer Price Index.

The establishment of a standard data series by the OMB based on this measure does not preclude other analysis or the development of other measures of poverty, as long as the alternative analysis and/or measures are distinguished from the official standard poverty data series.

A clear distinction needs to be made between poverty thresholds, the official measure of poverty, and poverty guidelines, an administrative poverty tool. Poverty guidelines are issued yearly by the Department of Health and Human Services and are used for administrative purposes. However, the poverty thresholds are a

statistical tool which is used to estimate the population in poverty. For additional information on poverty, consult the Census Bureau's website (<http://www.census.gov/hhes/www/poverty.html>).

American Community Survey - Decennial Census Link

Although there are many linkages between the American Community Survey and the decennial census, it should be made clear what this survey is not. This survey is not:

- (1) a population count; and
- (2) a measurement for apportionment of Congress.

These two functions are in the domain of the decennial census according to the Constitution of the United States.

However, the American Community Survey is a continuous demographic survey designed to yield:

- (1) annual and multi-year estimates of population and housing characteristics;
- (2) produce information for small geographic areas (states, counties, cities, towns, and census tracts)

The implementation of this large scale survey includes three phases: (1) the demonstration phase (1996-1998); (2) the comparison sites phase (1999 -2002); and (3) final implementation stage.

Implementation of the American Community Survey will be in all 3000 plus counties in the nation.

Planned products from this effort include the following:

- (1) yearly profiles for communities of 65,000 or more;

- (2) two to five year cumulations for communities of less than 65,000;
- (3) summary tabulations similar to census tabulations; and
- (4) Public Use Microdata Sample files.

To understand the differences between the data availability between the American Community Survey and a decennial census, the following sections deal with data availability from the 1990 census for selected sources of racial and ethnic data. Following the decennial overview, there is a brief look at the geographic availability of data from the American Community Survey to date. The lengthy appendices present technical documentation from: (1) the 1990 census on selected racial and ethnic concepts; and (2) technical documentation on the same concepts from the American Community Survey with a brief comparability statement. In the end, selected information is provided on the content, geography, and comparability between the decennial census and the American Community Survey.

Decennial Census Data Availability

Race and ethnicity data, for the United States, is available from decennial censuses from the following questions: (1) race; (2) Hispanic origin; (3) ancestry; (4) place of birth; and (5) language. However, much of this type of information is often enhanced by the cross with information from two additional questions which are: (1) citizenship; and (2) year of entry. All seven questions are part of the long form which is asked of approximately one in six households, but only the race and Hispanic origin questions appear on the longform and the short form, which is asked of the remaining households. This section will concentrate on Hispanic origin, ancestry, place of birth (foreign-born component), and language.

Hispanic Origin

Hispanic origin is of key importance in the United States, since it is one of the two official ethnic groups for federal reporting purposes. The 1990 the tabulations iterated Hispanic origin for 17 specific categories, and several generic categories, while the Census 2000 tables will expand this slightly (See Table 1).

Table 1. Iterations of Hispanic Origin in Tabulations: 1990 and Planned 2000	
1990 Census	Census 2000
Hispanic Origin (of any race)	Hispanic Origin (of any race)
Mexican	Mexican
Puerto Rican	Puerto Rican
Cuban	Cuban
Other Hispanic	Other Hispanic
Dominican (Dominican Republic)	Dominican (Dominican Republic)
Central American	Central American
Costa Rican	Costa Rican
Guatemalan	Guatemalan
Honduran	Honduran
Nicaraguan	Nicaraguan
Panamanian	Panamanian
Salvadoran	Salvadoran
Other Central American	***
South American	South American
Argentinian	Argentinian
XXX	Bolivian
Chilean	Chilean
Colombian	Colombian
Ecuadorian	Ecuadorian
XXX	Paraguayan
Peruvian	Peruvian
XXX	Uruguayan
Venezuelan	Venezuelan
Other South American	***
All other Hispanic	All other Hispanic/Latino
Notes: XXX equals not specified in 1990.	

Published iterations of Hispanic origin were available from the 1990 census at the subnational level for states and counties. Reduced sets of Hispanic origin groups were published for: (1) Place and [In Selected States] County Subdivision [10,000 or more persons], and (2) Place and [In Selected States] County Subdivisions of 2,500 or More Persons]. The cross of Hispanic origin groups by selected social and economic characteristics provides varying levels of detail at sub-state level which conform to confidentiality guidelines.

Ancestry

The ancestry question is an open-ended self-declaration question. Multiple ancestry declarations are allowed, but only two codeable declarations are tabulated. Religion, if reported, is placed in the uncodeable category, due to the federal governments restriction on the collection and tabulation of religious information. In 1980 and 1990 there was no editing or imputation of this item, but there will be limited editing in 2000.

The ancestry question is not used as an official source of Hispanic origin or racial data, official race and Hispanic origin data comes from their respective questions. However, it is a source of a wide array of data for the remaining ethnic groups. Data collected by the ancestry question is much more the man-in-the-street concept of “ethnicity” than the Federal definition of ethnicity discussed earlier.

In 1990, counts of approximately eighty specific ancestry groups (See Appendix A. Table 1) were available at the state, county and (in many states) place and county subdivisions of 10,000 or more persons. For lower levels of geography, counts were available for a reduced subset of ancestry groups (See Appendix A. Table 2).

Ancestry crossed with select social and economic characteristics was published only at the national level for

select ancestry groups. However, the Public Users Microdata Set (PUMS) can be used to obtain cross tabulations for areas of 100,000 or more.

Foreign-born Population

This is a unique population group that causes data presentation problems for the census. In 1980, the U.S. Bureau of the Census published a detailed set of socio-economic tables for a vast number of places of birth but in 1990, detailed socio-economic tabulations were limited to the places of birth listed in Table 2.

Table 2. Published Detailed Socio-Economic Tabulations for the Foreign-born Population: 1990		
Continent	Number of Countries	Country Names
Asia	12	Cambodia, China, Hong Kong, India, Iran, Japan,
Europe	11	France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy,
North America	2	Canada, Mexico
Caribbean	5	Cuba, Dominican Republic, Haiti, Jamaica, Trinidad
Central America	5	El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua,
South America	4	Colombia, Ecuador, Guyana, Peru
Africa	None	None
Oceania	None	None
Note: The Soviet Union was grouped with Europe for presentation purposes.		

For the 1990 census, detailed counts of the foreign-born population were available for place of birth (See Table 3). Published counts were available at the state and county levels, and at the sub-county level for selected states for areas of 10,000 or more persons.

Table 3. Published Detailed Counts of the Foreign Born: 1990		
Area	Number of Countries Detailed	Countries
Africa	7	Cape Verde, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Morocco,
Asia	24	Afghanistan, Burma, Cambodia, China, Hong Kong,
Europe	25	Austria, Belgium, Czechoslovakia, Denmark,
North America	2	Canada and Mexico
Caribbean	8	Bahamas, Barbados, Cuba, Dominican Republic,
Central America	7	Belize, Costa Rica, El Salvador, Guatemala,
Oceania	2	Australia and New Zealand
South America	10	Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia,
Note: The Soviet Union was grouped with Europe for presentation purposes.		

For lower census geography, Place and [In Selected States] County Subdivisions [2,500 to 9,999 Persons], detailed place of birth data was not available. Only eight broad categories were published, which included: (1) Europe; (2) Soviet Union; (3) Asia; (4) North America; (5) South America; (6) Africa; (7) Oceania; and (8) Area not reported.

Foreign-born data crossed with selected social and economic characteristics were published only at the national level for selected groups. However, the Public Users Microdata Set (PUMS) can be used to obtain cross tabulations for areas of 100,000 or more.

Language

This is another subject matter with data presentation problems. In 1990 no special socioeconomic tabulations, like the ancestry, foreign-born, and Hispanic origin, were produced as part of the census tabulation process. However, another government agency (U.S. Department of Education, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs, and the National Center for Education Statistics) funded the publication of some socioeconomic tabulations based on language, which are similar to the aforementioned

census tabulations. The content of these national level tables is summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Language Stub and Languages with National Socioeconomic Tables Published: 1990				
All households	English only households	Non-English language households		
		Total	All persons 14+ in household speak other language	Linguistically isolated house
Language Tabulated: Only English, Non-English, Indo-European, Jamaican Creole, German, Pennsylvania Dutch, Yiddish, Dutch, Swedish, Danish, Norwegian, Italian, French (excluding French Creole, Cajun), French Creole, Cajun, Spanish or Spanish Creole, Portuguese or Portuguese Creole, Romanian, Irish Gaelic, Greek, Albanian, Russian, Ukrainian, Czech, Polish, Slovak, Slovene, Serbocroatian, Other Slavic, Lithuanian, Lettish, Armenian, Persian, Hindi and related languages, Bengali, Marathi, Panjabi, Gujarathi, Other Indic, Other Indo-European Languages, Asian or Pacific Island, Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Malay, Miao (Hmong), Non-Khmer (Cambodian), Thai (Laotian), Indonesian, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Ilocano, Chamorro, Other Northwest Austronesian, Samoan, Tongan, Hawaiian, Other Pacific Island Languages, Turkish, Telugu, Malayalam, Tamil, Other Dravidian, Other Asian Languages, Other Languages, Finnish, Hungarian, Arabic, Hebrew, Syriac, Amharic, Kru (Kwa), Swahili, Other African, “Eskimo, Aleut, Yupik, Inupik,” Navaho, Apache, Dakota, Cherokee, Pima, Other Native North American Languages, Other and Unspecified Languages.				
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, no date, Social and Economic Characteristics of Selected Language Groups For U.S. and States: 1990, Table 7.				

This same set of tabulations provides language counts on the state level by broad age groups. The available age groups include: (1) five years and over; (2) 5-17; (3) 18-64; and (4) 65+. A key trait of this information, be it socioeconomic tabulations or just counts, is the availability of information on the

population “in linguistically isolated households.” The definition of linguistic isolation is as follows (also see 1990 Census Definitions in Appendix B):

A household in which no person age 14 years or over speaks only English and no person 1 year or over who speaks a language other than English speaks English “Very well” is classified as “linguistically isolated.” All the members of a linguistically isolated household are tabulated as linguistically isolated including members under age 14 years who may speak only English.

The U.S. Bureau of the Census is using linguistic isolation in Census 2000 as one of the variables in developing a database for targeting “Hard-to-Count Neighborhoods.”

Published census data from 1990 included the following tabulations at the state, county, and place and subcounty divisions of 10,000+ (in general): (1) Language Spoken at Home (persons 5+); (2) Language Spoken at Home by Ability to Speak English (persons 5+); (3) Ability to Speak English (persons 5+); and (4) Ability to Speak English in Household (persons 5+ in households). For places and subcounty divisions of 2,500 to 9,999 (in general) only tabulations two, three and four were published.

For language issues, the Public Users Microdata Set (PUMS) can be used to obtain cross tabulations for areas of 100,000 or more.

Census Data - Poverty and Social Vulnerability

The decennial census of the United States provides a wide range of ethnic data from a number of questions. There is an extensive amount of data on race (not detailed herein) and Hispanic origin at almost all levels of geography. In addition, there is an extensive quantity of poverty-related tabulations for these groups at the various geographies. However, socioeconomic tabulations available at the national level, were not necessarily reproduced for states for substate geographies. The Public User Microdata Sets (PUMS) would be the only no-cost source for reproducing these tabulations, but the geography would be restricted to areas of 100,000 persons or more.

The decennial censuses of the United States are **not** the primary source of poverty data. The primary sources of poverty information are the Current Population Survey, the primary survey of the U.S. Bureau of the Census, and the Survey of Income Participation Programs which is a longitudinal survey. These surveys collect much finer economic data than a census, but the ethnic detail is lacking. These surveys collect data and release data in a more timely manner than a census, but lack the geographic detail of a census. However, the introduction of the American Community Survey changes the face of census-like data, since it will provide much of the geographic detail of a census and release the data on a yearly basis.

In Census 2000, a new question has been added which is referred to as the “Caregiver,” or more frequently, the “Grandparent” question. The question seeks to address the issue of who is caring for the youth of the country. It is thought that grandparents are playing an increasing role, thus bringing the two extremes of our population into contact. It is also thought that this may be more prevalent among selected racial or ethnic groups. This single issue raises a number of sub-issues simultaneously related to the vulnerability of both the youth and the aged. Issues include:

(1) Is care giving an economic burden that places some sectors of the aged population in jeopardy?

(2) Are portions of the youth of the country placed in jeopardy while in the care of the aged?

These questions, and others, cannot be adequately addressed until we have a body of knowledge that indicates the extent of the problem and places some dimensions on the problems. Without a doubt, the ethnic and racial dimensions of this issue are of key importance. Census 2000 will start us down this road, and the American Community Survey will expand our knowledge base for this issue.

Census 2000 is adding a new level of geography which is of key importance for the Hispanic origin groups. This new level of geography deals with “Colonias.” In rough terms “Colonias” are agglomerations which developed informally over time. The “Colonias” will have special coverage in the state of Texas. Since it is assumed that the “Colonias” are highly Hispanic, this will be an area of study in the post Census 2000 period for the U.S. Bureau of the Census. The unique ethnic nature of the “Colonias” and their informal origin may indicate the possible presence of a broad range of social vulnerability issues including: (1) education; (2) linguistic isolation; and (3) a host of housing and infrastructure issues. Hopefully, there will be a number of “Colonias” of sufficient size, so that they will appear in the intercensal data products of the American Community Survey.

American Community Survey: A New Data Horizon

In the post Census 2000 period, the American Community Survey is planned to be the continuous

measurement program of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. This program will set a new horizon on census data that will not let the sun set upon this type of data. The American Community Survey will consist of a questionnaire that asks the same questions as the long form census questionnaire. The same data will be collected throughout the decade.

Currently the American Community Survey is in the fourth year of field testing. The questionnaire, coding, edits and other particulars are being modified to reflect the final Census 2000 questionnaire, edits, etc. An overview of the data availability from the test sites for the past three years are found in Table 5. The three year aggregations of data are currently being reviewed for final data product release. With the design of the American Community Survey, time works in favor of the survey because the ability to perform data aggregations which expands the level of geography for which data is available. At present, the first three-year aggregations are being reviewed; although two-year aggregations were done last year (See Table 6), the true potential for this survey will be with the three-year and five-year aggregations.

Table 5. American Community Survey Sites: 1996 - 1998		
Year	Site	Sub-geography
1996	Rockland County, New York	Not Applicable
	Brevard County, Florida	Not Applicable
	Fulton County, Pennsylvania	Not Applicable
	Multnomah County and the city of Portland, Oregon	Not Applicable
1997	Rockland County, New York	Clarkstown, Ramapo town
	Brevard County, Florida	Melbourne city, Palm Bay
	Fulton County, Pennsylvania	#
	Multnomah County and the city of Portland, Oregon	Gresham city, Portland city
	Douglas County, Nebraska	Bennington Village, Elkhorn city, Omaha city, Ralston city, Valley city, Waterloo
	Franklin County, Ohio	Columbus city-Franklin County pt
	Houston, Texas (Harris and Fort Bend Counties)	Fort Bend County, Harris County, Houston city-Harris County pt, Houston city,
	Otero County, New Mexico	#
1998	Rockland County, New York*	Clarkstown, Ramapo town
	Fulton County, Pennsylvania*	##
	Multnomah County and the city of Portland, Oregon*	Gresham city, Portland city
	Douglas County, Nebraska**	Omaha city
	Franklin County, Ohio**	Columbus city-Franklin County pt
	Harris and Fort Bend Counties (Houston, TX)**	Fort Bend County, Harris County, Houston city-Harris County pt, Houston city,
	Otero County, New Mexico**	Alamogordo city, Boles Acres CDP, Cloudcroft village, Hilloman AFB CDP, La
	Broward County, Florida	Coral Springs city, Fort Lauderdale, Hollywood city, Pembroke Pines city
	Richland and Kershaw Counties, South Carolina	Richland County, Columbia city-Richland County pt
Note: # The 1997 American Community Survey Profiles provide data for areas of 65,000 or more. The scope of these tables is limited to housing units, occupied and		

Table 6 shows that the aggregations will permit a substantial increase in the geography for which tabulations are available. For example in Rockland County (New York) data is now tabulated for two new units Orangetown MCD with a population of 44,164 and Haverstraw MCD with a population of 34, 235.

Table 6. 1996 -1997 Combined Profiles: Geographic Data Availability	
Florida	Brevard County, Melbourne city, Merritt Island CDP, Palm Bay city, Titusville
New York	Rockland County, Clarkstown MCD, Haverstraw MCD, Orangetown MCD,
Oregon	Multnomah County, Gresham city, Portland city
Pennsylvania	Fulton County
Source: http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index_c.htm	

American Community Survey Data - Poverty and Social Vulnerability

Like the census data, poverty data from the American Community Survey do not compare with poverty data arising from the Current Population Survey or the Survey of Income and Program Participations. At present, the American Community Survey poverty table is limited to the total population without racial or ethnic iterations. Ethnic and racial iterations are possible using the Public Users Microdata Sets.

The current ethnic, racial, language and foreign born tabulations available from the American Community Survey are rather basic. In the case of Hispanic origin, for example, the ACS tables currently show “Total Hispanics” and none of the traditional Hispanic origin subgroups (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, etc.). In the case of ancestry, 34 ancestries or groupings are shown, which is substantial. For the foreign born population, only the total foreign born is presented, and presentation of greater detail is problematic. Lastly, the language table is limited to language spoken at home. Once again, more complex tabulations can be produced with the Public User Microdata Sets for this survey. Over time, a more traditional set of tabulations will arise as the survey moves into its implementation in 2003 and beyond.

This survey has all the key elements to build a continuity of data with the decennial census, but time is needed to build the utility of this data set. Additionally, it now falls on the subject matter specialists to design the proper set of tabulations to monitor ethnic poverty and an array of social vulnerability issues. Poverty and social vulnerability issues that could drive the table design process include: (1) poverty of ethnic new arrivals; (2) poverty of the ethnic aged; (3) poverty of ethnic youth; (4) language use and educational attainment; and (5) disabilities and the ethnic population, to suggest a few. However, tabulations must be designed judiciously to avoid slicing the data too thinly. The job is to build good data that can do some good for the populations at risk.

Other Ethnic and Racial Issues

As stated earlier, Census 2000 and the American Community Survey will be asking the same questions and employing to the greatest degree possible similar methodologies in coding, editing, etc. This is, in a sense, a foreshadowing of the ethnic and race data collection standardization that was mandated by the revision to the Office of Management and Budget's Federal Directive #15.

At present not all data collection activities of the U. S. Bureau of the Census use the same questions for the collection of race and ethnic data. A prime example is the largest household survey in the United States, the Current Population Survey. The question used in this survey to collect Hispanic origin data is closer to the census ancestry question than to the census Hispanic origin question. This lack of standardization is about to change.

The revision to Federal Directive #15 mandates uniform race and ethnic data collection by the year 2003.

The Current Population Survey, for example, will test the new questions and question order in the summer of 2000 in a special race and ethnicity supplement.

However, along with the benefits of standardization, there are sacrifices. The old ethnic question in the Current Population Survey will be dropped. As stated previously, this question provided information much like the ancestry question. This type of data will soon be lost.

Conclusions

The planned production of census-like data from the American Community Survey has the potential to change the nature of intercensal data in the United States. Indeed, intercensal planning, evaluation and

research will most likely be reshaped. However, in order to tap this potential, appropriate sets of data tabulation plans need to be developed.

Given the often predominant precarious social conditions of racial and ethnic groups, priority must be given to the development of tabulations that reflect the reality of these groups, and that are simultaneously useful to policy makers, planners, and social policy implementation agencies. The tabulations need to look at racial and ethnic groups in terms of poverty, disabilities, educations, place of birth, and year of entry to name a few.

Tabulations of ethnic poverty need the appropriate crosses to reveal the nature of poverty. Needed crosses, for example, include age (to determine the number of children and elderly in poverty),

linguistic isolation(to detect populations that are deprived of services due to their inability to communicate), and year of entry (to disproportionate deprivation in a community due to its recent arrival).

New topics such as the caregiver/grandparenting questions need to be explored with appropriate ethnic and other data crosses to reveal the nature and dimensions of the issue. However, all topics, old and new, need judicious care to avoid slicing the data too thinly. Care is needed to avoid excess topic crosses, especially at low levels of geography. The planned aggregations of three and five years of data in the American

Community Survey will go a long way in providing a solid base for tabulations at low levels of geography.

A savvy and succinct mind is needed when faced with the dimensions of the American Community Survey; at full implementation, this survey will be active in all the counties in the United States.

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Appendix A

Appendix A - Table 1. Published Counts for Detailed Ancestry Groups: 1990		
Alphabetic Order	Number of Groups	Name of Groups
A - B	20	Arcadian, Albanian, Arab (Egyptian, Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian, Arab/Arabic, Other Arab), Armenian, Assyrian, Australian, Austrian, Basque, Belgian, Brazilian, British, Bulgarian
C - F	16	Canadian, Celtic, Croatian, Czech, Czechoslovakian, Danish, Dutch, Eastern European, English, Estonian, European, Finnish, French (except Basque), French Canadian
G - P	19	German, Greek, Guyanese, Hungarian, Iclander, Iranian, Irish, Israeli, Italian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Luxemburger, Macedonian, Maltese, Northern European, Norwegian, Pennsylvania German, Polish, Portuguese
Q - T	20	Romanian, Russian, Scandinavian, Scotch-Irish, Scottish, Serbian, Slavic, Slovak, Slovene, Subsaharan African (Cape Verdean, Ethiopian, Ghanaian, Nigerian, African, Other Subsaharan African), Swedish, Swiss, Turkish
U - Z	15	Ukranian, United States or American, Welsh, West Indian (excluding Hispanic origin groups)[Bahamian, Barbadian, Belizean, British West Indian, Dutch West Indian, Haitian, Jamaican, Tridadian/Toboganian, West Indian, Other West Indian], Yugoslavian
Other ancestries	multiple	multiple
<p>Note: Ancestry groups in brackets such as those following "Arab" have count information presented.</p> <p>Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993, 1990 Census of Population Social and Economic Characteristics New York Section 1 of 3 (1990 CP-2-34), Table 137.</p>		

Appendix A - Table 2. Reduced Set of Specific Ancestry Groups: 1990
Arab
Austrian
Belgian
Canadian
Czech
Danish
Dutch
English
Finnish
French (except Basque)
French Canadian
German
Greek
Hungarian
Irish
Italian
Lithuanian
Norwegian
Polish
Portuguese
Romanian
Russian
Scotch-Irish
Scottish
Slovak
Subsaharan African
Swedish
Swiss
Ukrainian
United States or American
Welsh
West Indian (excluding Hispanic origin groups)
Yugoslavian
Other Ancestries
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1993, 1990 Census of Population Social and Economic Characteristics New York Section 2 of 3 (1990 CP-2-34)

Appendix B.
1990 Census Subject Matter Concepts

ANCESTRY--The data on ancestry were derived from answers to questionnaire item 13, which was asked of a sample of persons. The question was based on self-identification; the data on ancestry represent self-classification by people according to the ancestry group(s) with which they most closely identify. Ancestry refers to a person's ethnic origin or descent, "roots," or heritage or the place of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. Some ethnic identities, such as "Egyptian" or "Polish" can be traced to geographic areas outside the United States, while other ethnicities such as "Pennsylvania Dutch" or "Cajun" evolved in the United States.

The intent of the ancestry question was not to measure the degree of attachment the respondent had to a particular ethnicity. For example, a response of "Irish" might reflect total involvement in an "Irish" community or only a memory of ancestors several generations removed from the individual.

The Census Bureau coded the responses through an automated review, edit, and coding operation. The open-ended write-in ancestry item was coded by subject-matter specialists into a numeric representation using a code list containing over 1,000 categories. The 1990 code list reflects the results of the Census Bureau's own research and consultations with many ethnic experts. Many decisions were made to determine the classification of responses. These decisions affected the grouping of the tabulated data. For example, the "Assyrian" category includes both responses of "Assyrian" and "Chaldean."

The ancestry question allowed respondents to report one or more ancestry groups. While a large number of respondents listed a single ancestry, the majority of answers included more than one ethnic entry. Generally, only the first two responses reported were coded in 1990. If a response was in terms of a dual ancestry, for example, Irish-English, the person was assigned two codes, in this case one for Irish and another for English.

However, in certain cases, multiple responses such as "French Canadian," "Scotch-Irish," "Greek Cypriote," and "Black Dutch" were assigned a single code reflecting their status as unique groups. If a person reported one of these unique groups in addition to another group, for example, "Scotch-Irish English," resulting in three terms, that person received one code for the unique group ("Scotch-Irish") and another one for the remaining group ("English"). If a person reported "English Irish French," only English and Irish were coded. Certain combinations of ancestries where the ancestry group is a part of another, such as "German-Bavarian," the responses were coded as a single ancestry using the smaller group ("Bavarian"). Also, responses such as "Polish-American" or "Italian-American" were coded and tabulated as a single entry ("Polish" or "Italian").

The Census Bureau accepted "American" as a unique ethnicity if it was given alone, with an ambiguous response, or with State names. If the respondent listed any other ethnic identity such as "Italian American," generally the "American" portion of the response was not coded. However, distinct groups such as "American Indian," "Mexican American," and "African American" were coded and identified separately because they represented groups who considered themselves different from those who reported as "Indian," "Mexican," or "African," respectively.

In all tabulations, when respondents provided an unacceptable ethnic identity (for example, an uncodeable or unintelligible response such as "multi-national," "adopted," or "I have no idea"), the answer was included in "Ancestry not reported."

The tabulations on ancestry are presented using two types of data presentations--one used total persons as the base, and the other used total responses as the base. The following are categories shown in the two data presentations:

Presentation Based on Persons:

Single Ancestries Reported--Includes all persons who reported only one ethnic group. Included in this category are persons with multiple-term responses such as "Scotch-Irish" who are assigned a single code.

Multiple Ancestries Reported--Includes all persons who reported more than one group and were assigned two ancestry codes.

Ancestry Unclassified--Includes all persons who provided a response that could not be assigned an ancestry code because they provided nonsensical entries or religious responses.

Presentations Based on Responses:

Total Ancestries Reported--Includes the total number of ancestries reported and coded. If a person reported a multiple ancestry such as "French Danish," that response was counted twice in the tabulations--once in the "French" category and again in the "Danish" category. Thus, the sum of the counts in this type of presentation is not the total population but the total of all responses.

First Ancestry Reported--Includes the first response of all persons who reported at least one codeable entry. For example, in this category, the count for "Danish" would include all those who reported only Danish and those who reported Danish first and then some other group.

Second Ancestry Reported--Includes the second response of all persons who reported a multiple ancestry. Thus, the count for "Danish" in this category includes all persons who reported Danish as the second response, regardless of the first response provided.

The Census Bureau identified hundreds of ethnic groups in the 1990 census. However, it was impossible to show information for every group in all census tabulations because of space constraints. Publications such as the 1990 CP-2, Social and Economic Characteristics and the 1990 CPH-3, Population and Housing Characteristics for Census Tracts and Block Numbering Areas reports show a limited number of groups based on the number reported and the advice received from experts. A more complete distribution of groups is presented in the 1990 Summary Tape File 4, supplementary reports, and a special subject report on ancestry. In addition, groups identified specifically

in the questions on race and Hispanic origin (for example, Japanese, Laotian, Mexican, Cuban, and Spaniard), in general, are not shown separately in ancestry tabulations.

Limitation of the Data--Although some experts consider religious affiliation a component of ethnic identity, the ancestry question was not designed to collect any information concerning religion. The Bureau of the Census is prohibited from collecting information on religion. Thus, if a religion was given as an answer to the ancestry question, it was coded as an "Other" response.

Comparability--A question on ancestry was first asked in the 1980 census. Although there were no comparable data prior to the 1980 census, related information on ethnicity was collected through questions on parental birthplace, own birthplace, and language which were included in previous censuses. Unlike other census questions, there was no imputation for nonresponse to the ancestry question.

In 1990, respondents were allowed to report more than one ancestry group; however, only the first two ancestry groups identified were coded. In 1980, the Census Bureau attempted to code a third ancestry for selected triple-ancestry responses.

New categories such as "Arab" and "West Indian" were added to the 1990 question to meet important data needs. The "West Indian" category excluded "Hispanic" groups such as "Puerto Rican" and "Cuban" that were identified primarily through the question on Hispanic origin. In 1990, the ancestry group, "American" is recognized and tabulated as a unique ethnicity. In 1980, "American" was tabulated but included under the category "Ancestry not specified."

A major improvement in the 1990 census was the use of an automated coding system for ancestry responses. The automated coding system used in the 1990 census greatly reduced the potential for error associated with a clerical review. Specialists with a thorough knowledge of the subject matter reviewed, edited, coded, and resolved inconsistent or incomplete responses.

Source: http://www.census.gov/td/stf3/append_b.html#ANCESTRY

CITIZENSHIP--The data on citizenship were derived from answers to questionnaire item 9, which was asked of a sample of persons.

Citizen--Persons who indicated that they were native-born and foreign-born persons who indicated that they have become naturalized. (For more information on native and foreign born, see the discussion under "Place of Birth.")

There are four categories of citizenship: (1) born in the United States, (2) born in Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands of the United States, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, (3) born abroad of American parents, and (4) citizen by naturalization.

Naturalized Citizen--Foreign-born persons who had completed the naturalization process at the time of the census and upon whom the rights of citizenship had been conferred.

Not a Citizen--Foreign-born persons who were not citizens, including persons who had begun but not completed the naturalization process at the time of the census.

Limitation of the Data--Evaluation studies completed after previous censuses indicated that some persons may have reported themselves as citizens although they had not yet attained the status.

Comparability--Similar questions on citizenship were asked in the censuses of 1820, 1830, 1870, 1890 through 1950, 1970, and 1980. The 1980 question was asked of a sample of the foreign-born population. In 1990, both native and foreign-born persons who received the long-form questionnaire were asked to respond to the citizenship question.

Source: http://www.census.gov/td/stf3/append_b.html#CITIZENSHIP

HISPANIC ORIGIN--The data on Spanish/Hispanic origin were derived from answers to questionnaire item 7, which was asked of all persons. Persons of Hispanic origin are those who classified themselves in one of the specific Hispanic origin categories listed on the questionnaire--"Mexican," "Puerto Rican," or "Cuban"--as well as those who indicated that they were of "other Spanish/Hispanic" origin. Persons of "Other Spanish/Hispanic" origin are those whose origins are from Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America, or the Dominican Republic, or they are persons of Hispanic origin identifying themselves generally as Spanish, Spanish-American, Hispanic, Hispano, Latino, and so on. Write-in responses to the "other Spanish/Hispanic" category were coded only for sample data.

Origin can be viewed as the ancestry, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Some tabulations are shown by the Hispanic origin of the householder. In all cases where households, families, or occupied housing units are classified by Hispanic origin, the Hispanic origin of the householder is used. (See the discussion of householder under "Household Type and Relationship.")

During direct interviews conducted by enumerators, if a person could not provide a single origin response, he or she was asked to select, based on self-identification, the group which best described his or her origin or descent. If a person could not provide a single group, the origin of the person's mother was used. If a single group could not be provided for the person's mother, the first origin reported by the person was used.

If any household member failed to respond to the Spanish/Hispanic origin question, a response was assigned by the computer according to

the reported entries of other household members by using specific rules of precedence of household relationship. In the processing of sample questionnaires, responses to other questions on the questionnaire, such as ancestry and place of birth, were used to assign an origin before any reference was made to the origin reported by other household members. If an origin was not entered for any household member, an origin was assigned from another household according to the race of the householder. This procedure is a variation of the general imputation process described in Appendix C, Accuracy of the Data.

Comparability--There may be differences between the total Hispanic origin population based on 100-percent tabulations and sample tabulations. Such differences are the result of sampling variability, nonsampling error, and more extensive edit procedures for the Spanish/Hispanic origin item on the sample questionnaires. (For more information on sampling variability and nonsampling error, see Appendix C, Accuracy of the Data.)

The 1990 data on Hispanic origin are generally comparable with those for the 1980 census. However, there are some differences in the format of the Hispanic origin question between the two censuses. For 1990, the word "descent" was deleted from the 1980 wording. In addition, the term "Mexican-Amer." used in 1980 was shortened further to "Mexican-Am." to reduce misreporting (of "American") in this category detected in the 1980 census. Finally, the 1990 question allowed those who reported as "other Spanish/Hispanic" to write in their specific Hispanic origin group.

Misreporting in the "Mexican-Amer." category of the 1980 census item on Spanish/Hispanic origin may affect the comparability of 1980 and 1990 census data for persons of Hispanic origin for certain areas of the country. An evaluation of the 1980 census item on Spanish/Hispanic origin indicated that there was misreporting in the Mexican origin category by White and Black persons in certain areas. The study results showed evidence that the misreporting occurred in the South (excluding Texas), the Northeast (excluding the New York City area), and a few States in the Midwest Region. Also, results based on available data suggest that the impact of possible misreporting of Mexican origin in the 1980 census was severe in those portions of the above-mentioned regions where the Hispanic origin population was generally sparse. However, national 1980 census data on the Mexican origin population or total Hispanic origin population at the national level was not seriously affected by the reporting problem. (For a more detailed discussion of the evaluation of the 1980 census Spanish/Hispanic origin item, see the 1980 census Supplementary Reports.)

The 1990 and 1980 census data on the Hispanic population are not directly comparable with 1970 Spanish origin data because of a number of factors: (1) overall improvements in the 1980 and 1990 censuses, (2) better coverage of the population, (3) improved question designs, and (4) an effective public relations campaign by the Census Bureau with the assistance of national and community ethnic groups.

Specific changes in question design between the 1980 and 1970 censuses included the placement of the category "No, not Spanish/Hispanic" as the first category in that question. (The corresponding category appeared last in the 1970 question.) Also, the 1970 category "Central or South American" was deleted because in 1970 some respondents misinterpreted the category; furthermore, the designations "Mexican-American" and "Chicano" were added to the Spanish/Hispanic origin question in 1980. In the 1970 census, the question on Spanish origin was asked of only a 5-percent sample of the population.

Source: http://www.census.gov/td/stf3/append_b.html#HISPANIC

Language Spoken at Home--Data on language spoken at home were derived from the answers to questionnaire items 15a and 15b, which were asked of a sample of persons born before April 1, 1985. Instructions mailed with the 1990 census questionnaire stated that a respondent should mark "Yes" in question 15a if the person sometimes or always spoke a language other than English at home and should not mark "Yes" if a language was spoken only at school or if speaking was limited to a few expressions or slang. For question 15b, respondents were instructed to print the name of the non-English language spoken at home. If the person spoke more than one language other than English, the person was to report the language spoken more often or the language learned first.

The cover of the census questionnaire included information in Spanish which provided a telephone number for respondents to call to request a census questionnaire and instructions in Spanish. Instruction guides were also available in 32 other languages to assist enumerators who encountered households or respondents who spoke no English.

Questions 15a and 15b referred to languages spoken at home in an effort to measure the current use of languages other than English. Persons who knew languages other than English but did not use them at home or who only used them elsewhere were excluded. Persons who reported speaking a language other than English at home may also speak English; however, the questions did not permit determination of the main or dominant language of persons who spoke both English and another language. (For more information, see discussion below on "Ability to Speak English.")

For persons who indicated that they spoke a language other than English at home in question 15a, but failed to specify the name of the language in question 15b, the language was assigned based on the language of other speakers in the household; on the language of a person of the same Spanish origin or detailed race group living in the same or a nearby area; or on a person of the same ancestry or place of birth. In all cases where a person was assigned a non-English language, it was assumed that the language was spoken at home. Persons for whom the name of a language other than English was entered in question 15b, and for whom question 15a was blank were assumed to speak that language at home. The write-in responses listed in question 15b (specific language spoken) were transcribed onto computer files and coded into more than 380 detailed language categories using an automated coding system. The automated procedure compared write-in responses reported by respondents with entries in a computer dictionary, which initially contained approximately 2,000 language names. The dictionary was updated with a large number of new names, variations in spelling, and a small number of residual categories. Each write-in response was given a numeric code that was associated with one of the detailed categories in the dictionary. If the respondent listed more than one non-English language, only the first was coded.

The write-in responses represented the names people used for languages they speak. They may not match the names or categories used by linguists. The sets of categories used are sometimes geographic and sometimes linguistic. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the content of the classification schemes used to present language data. For more information, write to the Chief, Population Division, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Washington, DC 20233.

Household Language--In households where one or more persons (age 5 years old or over) speak a language other than English, the household language assigned to all household members is the non-English language spoken by the first person with a non-English language in the following order: householder, spouse, parent, sibling, child, grandchild, other relative, stepchild, unmarried partner, housemate or roommate, roomer, boarder, or foster child, or other nonrelative. Thus, persons who speak only English may have a non-English household language assigned to them in tabulations of persons by household language.

Figure 1. Four- and Twenty-Five-Group Classifications of 1990 Census Languages Spoken at Home with Illustrative Examples

Four-Group Classification	Twenty-Five-Group Classification	Examples
Spanish	Spanish	Spanish, Ladino
Other Indo-European	French	French, Cajun, French Creole
	Italian	
	Portuguese	
	German	
	Yiddish	
	Other West Germanic	Afrikaans, Dutch, Pennsylvania Dutch
	Scandinavian	Danish, Norwegian, Swedish
	Polish	
	Russian	
	South Slavic	Serbocroatian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Slovene
Languages of Asia and the Pacific	Other Slavic	Czech, Slovak, Ukrainian
	Greek	
	Indic	Hindi, Bengali, Gujarathi, Punjabi, Romany, Sinhalese
	Other Indo-European, not elsewhere classified	Armenian, Gaelic, Lithuanian, Persian
	Chinese	
All other languages	Japanese	
	Mon-Khmer	Cambodian
	Tagalog	
	Korean	
	Vietnamese	
	Other languages (part)	Chamorro, Dravidian Languages, Hawaiian, Ilocano, Thai, Turkish
	Arabic	
	Hungarian	
	Native North American languages	
	Other languages (part)	Amharic, Syriac, Finnish, Hebrew, Languages of Central and South America, Other Languages of Africa

Ability to Speak English--Persons 5 years old and over who reported that they spoke a language other than English in question 15a were also asked in question 15c to indicate their ability to speak English based on one of the following categories: "Very well," "Well," "Not well," or "Not at all."

The data on ability to speak English represent the person's own perception about his or her own ability or, because census questionnaires are usually completed by one household member, the responses may represent the perception of another household member. The instruction guides and questionnaires that were mailed to households did not include any information on how to interpret the response categories in question 15c.

Persons who reported that they spoke a language other than English at home but whose ability to speak English was not reported, were assigned the English-language ability of a randomly selected person of the same age, Spanish origin, nativity and year of entry, and language group.

Linguistic Isolation-- A household in which no person age 14 years or over speaks only English and no person age 14 years or over who speaks a language other than English speaks English "Very well" is classified as "linguistically isolated." All the members of a linguistically isolated household are tabulated as linguistically isolated, including members under age 14 years who may speak only English.

Limitation of the Data--Persons who speak a language other than English at home may have first learned that language at school. However, these persons would be expected to indicate that they spoke English "Very well." Persons who speak a language other than English, but do not do so at home, should have been reported as not speaking a language other than English at home.

The extreme detail in which language names were coded may give a false impression of the linguistic precision of these data. The names used by speakers of a language to identify it may reflect ethnic, geographic, or political affiliations and do not necessarily respect linguistic distinctions. The categories shown in the tabulations were chosen on a number of criteria, such as information about the number of speakers of each language that might be expected in a sample of the United States population.

Comparability--Information on language has been collected in every census since 1890. The comparability of data among censuses is limited by changes in question wording, by the subpopulations to whom the question was addressed, and by the detail that was published.

The same question on language was asked in the 1980 and 1990 censuses. This question on the current language spoken at home replaced the questions asked in prior censuses on mother tongue; that is, the language other than English spoken in the person's home when he or she was a child; one's first language; or the language spoken before immigrating to the United States. The censuses of 1910-1940, 1960 and 1970 included questions on mother tongue. A change in coding procedure from 1980 to 1990 should have improved accuracy of coding and may affect the number of persons reported in some of the 380 plus categories. It should not greatly affect the 4-group or 25- group lists. In 1980, coding clerks supplied numeric codes for the written entries on each questionnaire using a 2,000 name reference list. In 1990 written entries were transcribed to a computer file and matched to a computer dictionary which began with the 2,000 name list, but expanded as unmatched names were referred to headquarters specialists for resolution.

The question on ability to speak English was asked for the first time in 1980. In tabulations from 1980, the categories "Very well" and "Well" were combined. Data from other surveys suggested a major difference between the category "Very well" and the remaining categories. In tabulations showing ability to speak English, persons who reported that they spoke English "Very well" are presented separately from persons who reported their ability to speak English as less than "Very well."

Source: http://www.census.gov/td/stf3/append_b.html#LANGUAGE

PLACE OF BIRTH--The data on place of birth were derived from answers to questionnaire item 8, which was asked on a sample basis. The place-of-birth question asked respondents to report the U.S. State, commonwealth or territory, or the foreign country where they were born. Persons born outside the United States were asked to report their place of birth according to current international boundaries. Since numerous changes in boundaries of foreign countries have occurred in the last century, some persons may have reported their place of birth in terms of boundaries that existed at the time of their birth or emigration, or in accordance with their own national preference.

Persons not reporting place of birth were assigned the birthplace of another family member or were allocated the response of another person with similar characteristics. Persons allocated as foreign born were not assigned a specific country of birth but were classified as "Born abroad, country not specified."

Nativity--Information on place of birth and citizenship were used to classify the population into two major categories: native and foreign born. When information on place of birth was not reported, nativity was assigned on the basis of answers to citizenship, if reported, and other characteristics.

Native--Includes persons born in the United States, Puerto Rico, or an outlying area of the United States. The small number of persons who were born in a foreign country but have at least one American parent also are included in this category.

The native population is classified in the following groups: persons born in the State in which they resided at the time of the census; persons born in a different State, by region; persons born in Puerto Rico or an outlying area of the U.S.; and persons born abroad with at least one American parent.

Foreign Born--Includes persons not classified as "Native." Prior to the 1970 census, persons not reporting place of birth were generally classified as native.

The foreign-born population is shown by selected area, country, or region of birth: the places of birth shown in data products were selected based on the number of respondents who reported that area or country of birth.

Comparability--Data on the State of birth of the native population have been collected in each census beginning with that of 1850. Similar data were shown in tabulations for the 1980 census and other recent censuses. Nonresponse was allocated in a similar manner in 1980; however, prior to 1980, nonresponse to the place of birth question was not allocated. Prior to the 1970 census, persons not reporting place of birth were generally classified as native.

The questionnaire instruction to report mother's State of residence instead of the person's actual State of birth (if born in a hospital in a different State) was dropped in 1990. Evaluation studies of 1970 and 1980 census data demonstrated that this instruction was generally either ignored or misunderstood. Since the hospital and the mother's residence is in the same State for most births, this change may have a slight effect on State of birth data for States with large metropolitan areas that straddle State lines.

Source: http://www.census.gov/tid/stf3/append_b.html#PLACE

POVERTY STATUS OF HOUSEHOLDS IN 1989 - The data on poverty status of households were derived from answers to the income questions. The income items were asked on a sample basis.

Households are classified below the poverty level when the total 1989 income of the family or of the nonfamily householder is below the appropriate poverty threshold. The income of persons living in the household who are unrelated to the householder is not considered when determining the poverty status of a household, nor does their presence affect the household size in determining the appropriate poverty threshold. The poverty thresholds vary depending upon three criteria: size of family, number of children, and age of the family householder or unrelated individual for one and two-persons households. (For more information, see the discussion of "Poverty Status in 1989" and "Income in 1989" under Population Characteristics.)

Source: http://www.census.gov/tid/stf3/append_b.html#POVERTY STATUS

POVERTY STATUS IN 1989- The data on poverty status were derived from answers to the same questions as the income data, questionnaire items 32 and 33. (For more information, see the discussion under "Income in 1989.") Poverty statistics presented in census publications were based on a definition originated by the Social Security Administration in 1964 and subsequently modified by Federal interagency committees in 1969 and 1980 and prescribed by the Office of Management and Budget in Directive 14 as the standard to be used by Federal agencies for statistical purposes.

At the core of this definition was the 1961 economy food plan, the least costly of four nutritionally adequate food plans designed by the Department of Agriculture. It was determined from the Agriculture Department's 1955 survey of food consumption that families of three or more persons spend approximately one-third of their income on food; hence, the poverty level for these families was set at three times the cost of the economy food plan. For smaller families and persons living alone, the cost of the economy food plan was multiplied by factors that were slightly higher to compensate for the relatively larger fixed expenses for these smaller households.

The income cutoffs used by the Census Bureau to determine the poverty status of families and unrelated individuals included a set of 48 thresholds arranged in a two-dimensional matrix consisting of family size (from one person to nine or more persons) cross-classified by presence and number of family members under 18 years old (from no children present to eight or more children present). Unrelated individuals and two-person families were further differentiated by age of the householder (under 65 years old and 65 years old and over).

The total income of each family or unrelated individual in the sample was tested against the appropriate poverty threshold to determine the poverty status of that family or unrelated individual. If the total income was less than the corresponding cutoff, the family or unrelated individual was classified as "below the poverty level." The number of persons below the poverty level was the sum of the number of persons in families with incomes below the poverty level and the number of unrelated individuals with incomes below the poverty level.

The poverty thresholds are revised annually to allow for changes in the cost of living as reflected in the Consumer Price Index. The average poverty threshold for a family of four persons was \$12,674 in 1989. (For more information, see table A below.) Poverty thresholds were applied on a national basis and were not adjusted for regional, State or local variations in the cost of living. For a detailed discussion of the poverty definition, see U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 171, Poverty in the United States: 1988 and 1989.

Table A. Poverty Thresholds in 1989 by Size of Family and Number of Related Children Under 18 Years

Size of Family Unit	Weight average thresholds	Related children under 18 years								Eight or more
		None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	
One person (unrelated individual)	\$6,310									
Under 65 yrs.	6 451	\$6,451								
65 yrs. & over	5,947	5,947								
Two persons	8,076									
Householder under 65 yrs.	8,343	8,303	\$8,547							
Householder 65 yrs. & over	7,501	7,495	8,515							
Three persons	9,885	9,699	9,981	\$9,990						
Four persons	12,674	12,790	12,999	12,575	\$12,619					
Five persons	14,990	15,424	15,648	15,169	14,798	\$14,572				
Six persons	16,921	17,740	17,811	17,444	17,092	16,569	\$16,259			
Seven persons	19,162	20,412	20,540	20,101	19,794	19,224	18,558	\$17,828		
Eight persons	21,328	22,830	23,031	22,617	22,253	21,738	21,084	20,403	\$20,230	
Nine or more persons	25,480	27,463	27,596	27,229	26,921	26,415	25,719	25,089	24,933	\$23,973

Persons for Whom Poverty Status is Determined-- Poverty status was determined for all persons except institutionalized persons, persons in military group quarters and in college dormitories, and unrelated individuals under 15 years old. These groups also were excluded from the denominator when calculating poverty rates.

Specified Poverty Levels--Since the poverty levels currently in use by the Federal Government do not meet all the needs of data users, some of the data are presented for alternate levels. These specified poverty levels are obtained by multiplying the income cutoffs at the poverty level by the appropriate factor. For example, the average income cutoff at 125 percent of poverty level was \$15,843 (\$12,674 x 1.25) in 1989 for a family of four persons.

Weighted Average Thresholds at the Poverty Level--The average thresholds shown in the first column of table A are weighted by the presence and number of children. For example, the weighted average threshold for a given family size is obtained by multiplying the threshold for each presence and number of children category within the given family size by the number of families in that category. These products are then aggregated across the entire range of presence and number of children categories, and the aggregate is divided by the total number of families in the group to yield the weighted average threshold at the poverty level for that family size.

Since the basic thresholds used to determine the poverty status of families and unrelated individuals are applied to all families and unrelated individuals, the weighted average poverty thresholds are derived using all families and unrelated individuals rather than just those classified as being below the poverty level. To obtain the weighted poverty thresholds for families and unrelated individuals below alternate poverty levels, the weighted thresholds shown in table A may be multiplied directly by the appropriate factor. The weighted average thresholds presented in the table are based on the March 1990 Current Population Survey. However, these thresholds would not differ significantly from those based on the 1990 census.

Income Deficit--Represents the difference between the total income of families and unrelated individuals below the poverty level and their respective poverty thresholds. In computing the income deficit, families reporting a net income loss are assigned zero dollars and for such cases the deficit is equal to the poverty threshold.

This measure provided an estimate of the amount which would be required to raise the incomes of all poor families and unrelated individuals to their respective poverty thresholds. The income deficit is thus a measure of the degree of impoverishment of a family or unrelated individual. However, caution must be used in comparing the average deficits of families with different characteristics. Apparent differences in average income deficits may, to some extent, be a function of differences in family size.

Mean Income Deficit--Represents the amount obtained by dividing the total income deficit of a group below the poverty level by the number of families (or unrelated individuals) in that group.

Comparability--The poverty definition used in the 1990 and 1980 censuses differed slightly from the one used in the 1970 census. Three technical modifications were made to the definition used in the 1970 census as described below:

1. The separate thresholds for families with a female householder with no husband present and all other families were eliminated. For the 1980 and 1990 censuses, the weighted average of the poverty thresholds for these two types of families was applied to all types of families, regardless of the sex of the householder.
2. Farm families and farm unrelated individuals no longer had a set of poverty thresholds that were lower than the thresholds applied to nonfarm families and unrelated individuals. The farm thresholds were 85 percent of the corresponding levels for nonfarm families in the 1970 census. The same thresholds were applied to all families and unrelated individuals regardless of residence in 1980 and 1990.
3. The thresholds by size of family were extended from seven or more persons in 1970 to nine or more persons in 1980 and 1990.

These changes resulted in a minimal increase in the number of poor at the national level. For a complete discussion of these modifications and their impact, see the Current Population Reports, Series P-60, No. 133.

The population covered in the poverty statistics derived from the 1980 and 1990 censuses was essentially the same as in the 1970 census. The only difference was that in 1980 and 1990, unrelated individuals under 15 years old were excluded from the poverty universe, while in 1970, only those under 14 years old were excluded. The poverty data from the 1960 census excluded all persons in group quarters and included all unrelated individuals regardless of age. It was unlikely that these differences in population coverage would have had significant impact when comparing the poverty data for persons since the 1960 censuses.

Current Population Survey--Because of differences in the questionnaires and data collection procedures, estimates of the number of persons below the poverty level by various characteristics from the 1990 census may differ from those reported in the March 1990 Current Population Survey.

Source: http://www.census.gov/td/stf3/append_b.html#POVERTY

YEAR OF ENTRY -The data on year of entry were derived from answers to questionnaire item 10, which was asked of a sample of persons. The question, "When did this person come to the United States to stay?" was asked of persons who indicated in the question on citizenship that they were not born in the United States. (For more information, see the discussion under "Citizenship.")

The 1990 census questions, tabulations, and census data products about citizenship and year of entry include no reference to immigration. All persons who were born and resided outside the United States before becoming residents of the United States have a date of entry. Some of these persons are U.S. citizens by birth (e.g., persons born in Puerto Rico or born abroad of American parents). To avoid any possible confusion concerning the date of entry of persons who are U.S. citizens by birth, the term, "year of entry" is used in this report instead of the term "year of immigration."

Limitation of the Data--The census questions on nativity, citizenship, and year of entry were not designed to measure the degree of permanence of residence in the United States. The phrase, "to stay" was used to obtain the year in which the person became a resident of the United States. Although the respondent was directed to indicate the year he or she entered the country "to stay," it was difficult to ensure that respondents interpreted the phrase correctly.

Comparability--A question on year of entry, (alternately called "year of immigration") was asked in each decennial census from 1890 to 1930, 1970, and 1980. In 1980, the question on year of entry included six arrival time intervals. The number of arrival intervals was expanded to ten in 1990. In 1980, the question on year of entry was asked only of the foreign-born population. In 1990, all persons who responded to the long-form questionnaire and were not born in the United States were to complete the question on year of entry.

Source: http://www.census.gov/td/stf3/append_b.html#YEAR

Appendix C.
American Community Survey Subject Matter Concepts

Ancestry

The data on ancestry were derived from answers to questionnaire item 12. The question was based on self-identification; the data on ancestry represent self-classification by people according to the ancestry group(s) with which they most closely identify. Ancestry refers to a person's ethnic origin or descent, "roots," or heritage or the place of birth of the person or the person's parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. Some ethnic identities, such as "Egyptian" or "Polish" can be traced to geographic areas outside the United States, while other ethnicities such as "Pennsylvania Dutch" or "Cajun" evolved in the United States.

The intent of the ancestry question was not to measure the degree of attachment the respondent had to a particular ethnicity. For example, a response of "Irish" might reflect total involvement in an "Irish" community or only a memory of ancestors several generations removed from the individual.

The Census Bureau coded the responses through an automated review, edit, and coding operation. The open-ended write-in ancestry item was coded by subject-matter specialists into a numeric representation using a code list containing over 1,000 categories. The code list reflects the results of the Census Bureau's own research and consultations with many ethnic experts. Many decisions were made to determine the classification of responses. These decisions affected the grouping of the tabulated data. For example, the "Assyrian" category includes both responses of "Assyrian" and "Chaldean."

The ancestry question allowed respondents to report one or more ancestry groups. Generally, only the first two responses reported were coded. If a response was in terms of a dual ancestry, for example, Irish-English, the person was assigned two codes, in this case one for Irish and another for English.

However, in certain cases, multiple responses such as "French Canadian," "Scotch-Irish," "Greek Cypriote," and "Black Dutch" were assigned a single code reflecting their status as unique groups. If a person reported one of these unique groups in addition to another group, for example, "Scotch-Irish English," resulting in three terms, that person received one code for the unique group ("Scotch-Irish") and another one for the remaining group ("English"). If a person reported "English Irish French," only English and Irish were coded. Certain combinations of ancestries where the ancestry group is a part of another, such as "German-Bavarian," the responses were coded as a single ancestry using the smaller group ("Bavarian"). Also, responses such as "Polish-American" or "Italian-American" were coded and tabulated as a single entry ("Polish" or "Italian").

The Census Bureau accepted "American" as a unique ethnicity if it was given alone, with an ambiguous response, or with State names. If the respondent listed any other ethnic identity such as "Italian American," generally the "American" portion of the response was not coded. However, distinct groups such as "American Indian," "Mexican American," and "African American" were coded and identified separately because they represented groups who considered themselves different from those who reported as "Indian," "Mexican," or "African," respectively.

In all tabulations, when respondents provided an unacceptable ethnic identity (for example, an uncodeable or unintelligible response such as "multi-national," "adopted," or "I have no idea"), the answer was included in "Ancestry not reported."

The tabulations on ancestry use two types of data presentations -- one used total persons as the base, and the other used total responses as the base. The following are categories shown in the two data presentations:

Presentation Based on Persons:

Single Ancestries Reported--Includes all persons who reported only one ethnic group. Included in this category are persons with multiple-term responses such as "Scotch-Irish" who are assigned a single code.

Multiple Ancestries Reported--Includes all persons who reported more than one group and were assigned two ancestry codes.

Ancestry Unclassified--Includes all persons who provided a response that could not be assigned an ancestry code because they provided nonsensical entries or religious responses.

Presentations Based on Responses:

Total Ancestries Reported--Includes the total number of ancestries reported and coded. If a person reported a multiple ancestry such as "French Danish," that response was counted twice in the tabulations--once in the "French" category and again in the "Danish" category. Thus, the sum of the counts in this type of presentation is not the total population but the total of all responses.

First Ancestry Reported--Includes the first response of all persons who reported at least one codeable entry. For example, in this category, the count for "Danish" would include all those who reported only Danish and those who reported Danish first and then some other group.

Second Ancestry Reported--Includes the second response of all persons who reported a multiple ancestry. Thus, the count for "Danish" in this category

includes all persons who reported Danish as the second response, regardless of the first response provided.

Limitation of the Data--Although some experts consider religious affiliation a component of ethnic identity, the ancestry question was not designed to collect any information concerning religion. The Bureau of the Census is prohibited from collecting information on religion. Thus, if a religion was given as an answer to the ancestry question, it was coded as an "Other" response.

Comparability--The ACS question was the same as 1990 decennial census. The system for coding the responses differed slightly from that used in the 1990 decennial census. The change involved consistency checks with answers to other questions when the write-in response to ancestry was "Indian."

Source: http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index_b.htm

Citizenship

The data on citizenship were derived from answers to questionnaire item 8.

Citizen--Persons who indicated that they were born in the United States or born abroad of American parents, or from Puerto Rico, etc., and foreign-born persons who indicated that they have become naturalized citizens. (For more information on native and foreign born, see the discussion under "Place of Birth.")

There are two categories of citizenship: (1) Native born: born in the United States, Puerto Rico, Guam, the Virgin Islands of the United States, or the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, or born abroad of American parents, and (2) citizen by naturalization.

Naturalized Citizen--Foreign-born persons who had completed the naturalization process at the time of the ACS and upon whom the rights of citizenship had been conferred.

Not a Citizen--Foreign-born persons who were not citizens, including persons who had begun but not completed the naturalization process at the time of the ACS.

Comparability--The question for the ACS and the decennial census are identical. However, there is one variation in the response category for Americans born abroad. The decennial response category was "Yes, born abroad of American parent or parents", while the ACS response category was "Yes, born abroad of American parent(s)"

Source: http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index_b.htm

Hispanic Origin

The data on Spanish/Hispanic/Latino origin were derived from answers to questionnaire item 5. Persons of Hispanic origin are those who classified themselves in one of the specific Hispanic origin categories listed on the questionnaire-- "Mexican," "Puerto Rican," or "Cuban"--as well as those who indicated that they were of "other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" origin. Persons of "Other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" origin are those whose origins are from Spain, the Spanish-speaking countries of Central or South America, or the Dominican Republic, or they are persons of Hispanic origin identifying themselves generally as Spanish, Spanish-American, Hispanic, Hispano, Latino, and so on. Write-in responses to the "other Spanish/Hispanic/Latino" category were coded.

Origin can be viewed as the ancestry, nationality group, lineage, or country of birth of the person or the persons parents or ancestors before their arrival in the United States. Persons of Hispanic origin may be of any race.

Some tabulations are shown by the Hispanic origin of the householder. In all cases where households, families, or occupied housing units are classified by Hispanic origin, the Hispanic origin of the householder is used. (See the discussion of householder under "Household Type and Relationship.")

During interviews, persons were asked to select one category, based on self-identification, the group which best described his or her origin or descent. If a person could not provide a single group, the origin of the person's mother was used. If a single group could not be provided for the person's mother, the first origin reported by the person was used.

Comparability--The ACS questionnaire and the 1990 decennial census questionnaire differed slightly. The decennial questionnaire item asked "Is this person of Spanish/Hispanic origin?", while the ACS questionnaire asks "Is this person Spanish/Hispanic/Latino?". Also, the decennial questionnaire listed several examples of possible groups as "Other Spanish/Hispanic". The ACS questionnaire does not.

Source: http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index_b.htm

Language Spoken at Home

Data on language spoken at home were derived from the answers to questionnaire items 14a and 14b, which were asked of persons 5 years old and older. Instructions mailed with the ACS questionnaire stated that a respondent should mark "Yes" in question 14a if the person sometimes or always spoke a language other than English at home and should NOT mark "Yes" if a language was spoken only at school or if speaking was limited to a few

expressions or slang. For question 14b, respondents were instructed to print the name of the non-English language spoken at home. If the person spoke more than one language other than English, the person was to report the language spoken most often or the language learned first.

Questions 14a and 14b referred to a language spoken at home in an effort to measure the current use of a language other than English. Persons who knew languages other than English but did not use them at home or who only used them elsewhere were excluded. Persons who reported speaking a language other than English at home may also speak English; however, the questions did not permit determination of the primary language of persons who spoke both English and another language.

Ability to Speak English--Persons 5 years old and over who reported that they spoke a language other than English in question 14a were also asked to indicate their ability to speak English based on one of the following categories: "Very well," "Well," "Not well," or "Not at all," in question 14c.

The data on ability to speak English represent the persons own perception of his or her own ability or, because ACS questionnaires are usually completed by one household member, the responses may represent the perception of another household member.

Comparability--The ACS questions and coding procedures were the same as the 1990 decennial census.

Source: http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index_b.htm

Place of Birth

The data on place of birth were derived from answers to questionnaire item 7, which asked respondents to report the U.S. State, commonwealth or territory, or the foreign country where they were born. Persons born outside the United States were asked to report their place of birth according to current international boundaries. Since numerous changes in boundaries of foreign countries have occurred in the last century, some persons may have reported their place of birth in terms of boundaries that existed at the time of their birth or emigration, or in accordance with their own national preference.

Nativity--Information on place of birth and citizenship were used to classify the population into two major categories: native and foreign born. Natives include persons born in the United States, Puerto Rico, or an outlying area of the United States, and persons who were born in a foreign country but have at least one American parent.

The native population is classified in the following groups: persons born in the State in which they resided at the time of the census; persons born in a different State, by region; persons born in Puerto Rico or an outlying area of the U.S.; and persons born abroad with at least one American parent. Persons not classified as "Native" are "foreign born."

The foreign-born population is shown by selected area, country, or region of birth: the places of birth shown in data products were selected based on the number of respondents who reported that area or country of birth.

Comparability--Same as 1990 decennial census.

Source: http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index_b.htm

Poverty Status for the Past 12 Months

The poverty status data were derived from answers to the same questions as the income data, questionnaire items 40 and 41. (For more information, see the discussion under "Income.") Poverty statistics presented in American Community Survey publications were based on the Social Security Administration 1964 definition, which was subsequently modified by federal interagency committees in 1969 and 1980. At the core of this definition was the 1961 economy food plan, the least costly of four nutritionally adequate food plans designed by the Department of Agriculture. It was determined from the Agriculture Department 1955 survey of food consumption that families of three or more persons spend approximately one-third of their income on food; hence, the poverty level for these families was set at three times the cost of the economy food plan. For smaller families and persons living alone, the cost of the economy food plan was multiplied by slightly higher factors to compensate for the relatively larger fixed expenses for these smaller households.

In determining the poverty status of families and unrelated individuals, the Census Bureau used income cutoffs which included a set of 48 thresholds arranged in a two-dimensional matrix consisting of family size (from one person to nine or more persons) cross-classified by presence and number of children (from no children present to eight or more children present). Unrelated individuals and two-person families were further differentiated by age of the reference person (UP) (under 65 years old and 65 years old and over). The poverty thresholds in the ACS are revised monthly to allow for changes in the cost of living as reflected in the Consumer Price Index. Poverty thresholds were applied on a national basis and were not adjusted for regional, State or local variations in the cost of living.

The total income in the previous twelve months of each family or unrelated individual in the sample was compared to the appropriate poverty threshold to determine the poverty status of that family or unrelated individual. If the total income was less than the corresponding threshold, the family or unrelated individual was classified as "below the poverty level." The number of persons below the poverty level was the sum of unrelated individuals and persons in families, each with incomes below the poverty level.

Persons for Whom Poverty Status is Determined--Poverty status was determined for all persons except institutionalized persons, persons in group quarters, and in college dormitories, and unrelated individuals under 15. These groups also were excluded from the denominator when calculating

poverty rates.

Specified Poverty Levels--Since the poverty levels currently in use by the federal government do not meet all the needs of data users, some of the data are presented for alternate levels. These specified poverty levels are obtained by multiplying the income cutoffs at the poverty level by the appropriate factor. For example, the average income cutoff at 125 percent of the poverty level was \$20,045 (\$16,036 x 1.25) for calendar year 1996 for a family of four persons.

Comparability--Poverty data in the American Community Survey are for the past twelve months as opposed to data in the decennial census which is for a single calendar year.

Poverty Thresholds in 1996 by Size of Family and Number of Children Under 18 Years (Average of the 12 Monthly Values)

Number of persons	Number of related children								
	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight plus
One person, under 65 years	\$8,027								
One person, 65 years or older	7,399								
Two persons, UP under 65 years	10,330	\$10,634							
Two persons, UP 65 years or older	9,326	10,594							
Three persons	12,069	12,419	\$12,430						
Four persons	15,914	16,173	15,647	\$15,701					
Five persons	19,191	19,469	18,874	18,412	\$18,130				
Six persons	22,073	22,159	21,703	21,265	20,616	\$20,230			
Seven persons	25,396	25,556	25,009	24,629	23,919	23,090	\$22,182		
Eight persons	28,405	28,656	28,139	27,688	27,047	26,234	25,385	\$25,171	
Nine or more persons	34,169	34,335	33,879	33,496	32,865	32,000	31,215	31,023	\$29,827

Poverty Thresholds in 1997 by Size of Family and Number of Children Under 18 Years (Average of the 12 Monthly Values)

Number of persons	Number of related children								
	None	One	Two	Three	Four	Five	Six	Seven	Eight plus
One person under 65 years	\$8,253								
One person, 65 years or older	7,607								
Two persons, UP under 65 years	10,621	\$10,933							
Two persons, UP 65 years or older	9,588	10,892							
Three persons	12,408	12,768	\$12,780						
Four persons	16,361	16,627	16,086	\$16,142					
Five persons	19,730	20,016	19,405	18,929	\$18,640				
Six persons	22,693	22,782	22,313	21,863	21,195	\$20,799			
Seven persons	26,110	26,275	25,712	25,321	24,591	23,739	\$22,805		
Eight persons	29,203	29,461	28,930	28,466	27,807	26,972	26,099	\$25,878	
Nine or more persons	35,129	35,300	34,832	34,437	33,789	32,900	32,092	31,895	\$30,665

NOTE: The Census Bureau used monthly factors to derive adjusted annual income estimates in the Summary Tape File (SF.) tables. For the 1996 Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), a user can convert the income estimates to approximate adjusted income estimates by using the average annual adjustment factor of 1.016363. For the 1997 Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS), a user can convert the income estimates to approximate adjusted income estimates by using the average annual adjustment factor of 1.0115.

Source: http://www.census.gov/ACS/www/index_b.htm

Year of Entry

The data on year of entry were derived from answers to questionnaire item 9, which was asked of persons who were not born in the United States. The question was asked of persons who indicated in the question on citizenship that they were not born in the United States. (For more information, see the discussion under "Citizenship.")

The ACS questions, tabulations, and census data products about citizenship and year of entry include no reference to immigration. All persons who were born and resided outside the United States before becoming residents of the United States have a date of entry. Some of these persons are U.S. citizens by birth (e.g., persons born in Puerto Rico or born abroad of American parents). To avoid any possible confusion concerning the date of entry of persons who are U.S. citizens by birth, the term, "year of entry" is used in this publication instead of the term "year of immigration."

Limitation of the Data--The census questions on nativity, citizenship, and year of entry were not designed to measure the degree of permanence of residence in the United States. The phrase, "to live" was used to obtain the year in which the person became a resident of the United States. Although the respondent was directed to indicate the year he or she entered the country "to live," it was difficult to ensure that respondents interpreted the phrase

as intended.

Comparability--The year of entry question in the ACS was not the same as the year of entry question in the 1990 decennial census. The decennial questionnaire item asked "When did this person come to the United States to stay?", while the ACS questionnaire item asks "When did this person come to live in the United States?". Moreover, the year of entry question in the 1990 decennial census provided respondents with a fixed number of response options, while the year of entry question in the ACS collects year of entry through a write-in space.

Source: http://www.census.gov/acs/www/index_b.htm

