



The 'majority-minority' America is coming, so why not get ready?

By Hector Cordero-Guzman



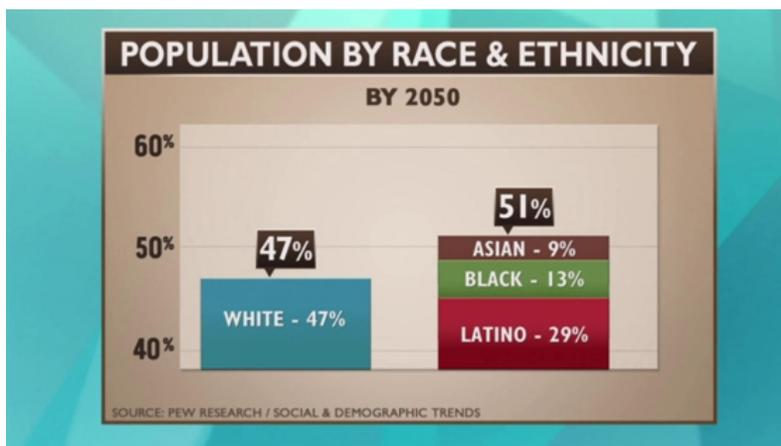
Melissa Harris-Perry, 6/14/14, 10:42 AM ET

A recent article by Nate Cohn in the *New York Times* suggested that more Latinos were changing their racial classification to “white.” Cohn’s argument, and the controversy that has arisen from it, has

spotlighted the anxiety expressed by segments of the United States population over the nature, extent and consequences of racial and ethnic changes within it.

Demographic change in the U.S. is real, inexorable, and has been well-documented. Examining the data behind that change can help us better understand the country that our children are living in and will inherit.

Latinos are going to be the main drivers of population growth and compositional change in the U.S., but not due to immigration. The bulk of growth and change in the Latino population in the U.S. over the next decades will be due to births rather than to immigration. This means that Latino population growth and demographic diversity will continue and that migration trends can only accelerate the pace of change but will not reverse it.



Melissa Harris-Perry, 7/20/14, 11:13 AM ET
How the 'browning of America' is imminent

In 1980, according to the Census, there were 14.6 million Latinos in the U.S. The Census released a report three years later, *Projections of the Hispanic Population: 1983-2080*, that projected the number of

Latinos at 27 million in the low growth series, 31 million in the middle growth series and 42 million Latinos in the high growth series. By 2010, however, there were close to 50 million Latinos in the United States – a number that exceeded even the highest projections made back in the early 1980s.

Close to one in every 4.4 babies born in the U.S. in 2012 was Latino, close to one-quarter of yearly births in the country. Approximately 10.6 million Latino babies were born in the U.S. between 2002 and 2012, and by next year, Latino births are expected to be 1.1 million per year. That's already 27% of the U.S. total, and expected to grow to 37% by 2050.

Varied growth assumptions lead to different estimates of the speed and level of demographic change by that year. On the low side, the projection is 105 million Latinos in the U.S. by 2050 out of a total population of 384 million. High side? 119 million Latinos out of a total US population of 415 million. Under most assumptions, Latinos are expected to be at least 29% of the total U.S. population by 2050.

Using the middle growth series projections, by 2050 the racial\ethnic breakdown of the population is expected to be:

- 47% Non-Hispanic white
- 13% Black
- 8% Asian
- 1% Native American and Pacific Islander
- 4% of "two or more races"
- and close to 28% of Hispanic\Latino origin.



*Melissa Harris-Perry, 7/20/14,
11:18 AM ET
The power of Latino voters*

Diversity is experienced differently by age cohorts with the older U.S. population still being predominantly Non-Hispanic White while younger cohorts, particularly those under 18 years of age, experiencing significant diversity. A recent

presentation by the Bureau of the Census highlights the nature of these changes and shows that by 2018, the “minority population” of those 18 and younger is expected to actually become a numerical majority of their age group. By 2043, the same will be true of the total U.S. population.

Those are a lot of reality to absorb, too many for some. But, I ask: why try to fight this impending reality? Why not plan for it, and embrace it?

What happens in between now and this “majority-minority” reality depends on a lot of factors. The availability and use of resources, investments that are (or are not) made, and the policies that are proposed and implemented, just to count a few. Add in the outcomes of political struggles, economic and labor evolutions, and many other key elements and ingredients in social change. However it plays out, we’ll be here together, sharing a history in this hemisphere with the Caribbean, Mexico and the rest of Latin America. As far as the composition of the population is concerned, we need to acknowledge and comprehend our shared history.

Impending demographic changes provide a powerful reason to increase our efforts to provide effective education, training, and a range of supportive programs for youth, families, and children. Now is a critical time to redouble our efforts and make the needed investments. What it isn’t is a time to demonize, criminalize, exclude and divest from our diverse youth of color.

Hector Cordero-Guzman, Ph. D., is a Professor at the School of Public Affairs at Baruch College of the City University of New York. You can follow him on Twitter at [@HCorderoGuzman](https://twitter.com/HCorderoGuzman).