



**SPAN322:
“North of the Río Grande”
US Latino/Chicano
Literature**

Down These Mean Streets Ia
February 11, 2020

GEO/DEMOGRAPHY

Hispanic A. *adj.* 1. Pertaining to Spain or its people; esp. pertaining to ancient Spain. 2. Spanish-speaking, esp. applied to someone of Latin-American descent living in the United States. B. *n.* A Spanish-speaking person, esp. one of Latin-American descent, living in the U.S. Chiefly in plural.

Mexican-American *n.* and *adj.* (a) *n.* a Mexican settler or person of Mexican descent in the United States; (b) *adj.* of or relating to Mexican settlers or their descendants in the United States.

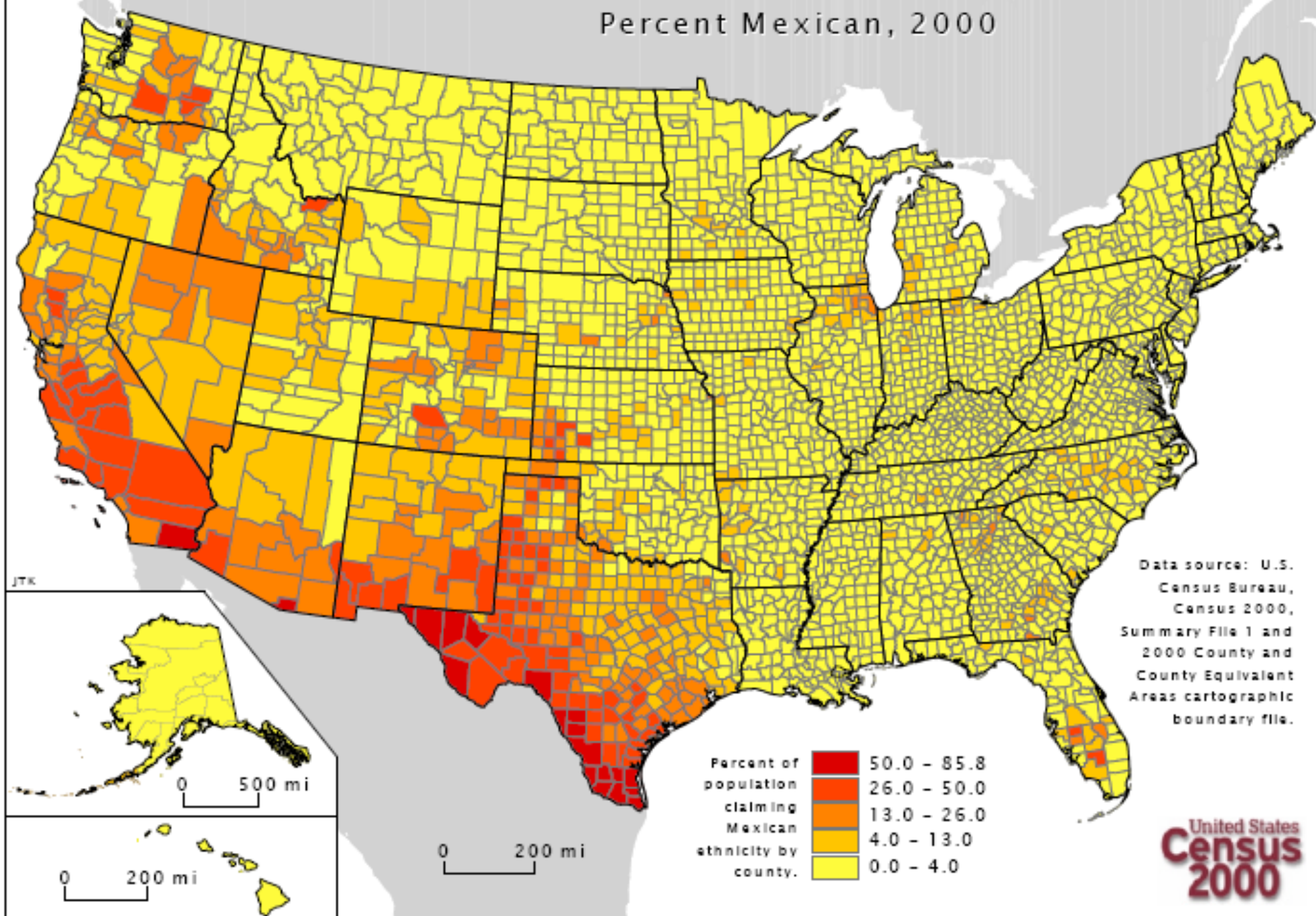
Dominican-American

Cuban-American etc.

Newyoricán, *n.* and *adj.* Forms: New Yorican, Newyoricán, New Yorricán, Newyorrícan, Nu Yorican, Nuyoricán. Etymology: Blend of the name of New York (see New York *n.*) and Puerto Rican, perhaps partly after Spanish *neoyorquino* New Yorker. A. *n.* = Neoricán *n.* B. *adj.* = Neoricán *adj.*

Neoricán A. *n.* A Puerto Rican native to or inhabiting the U.S., esp. New York City; (also) a Puerto Rican inhabitant formerly resident in the United States. Cf. Newyoricán *n.* B. *adj.* Of or relating to Neoricans; that is a Neoricán.

Percent Mexican, 2000

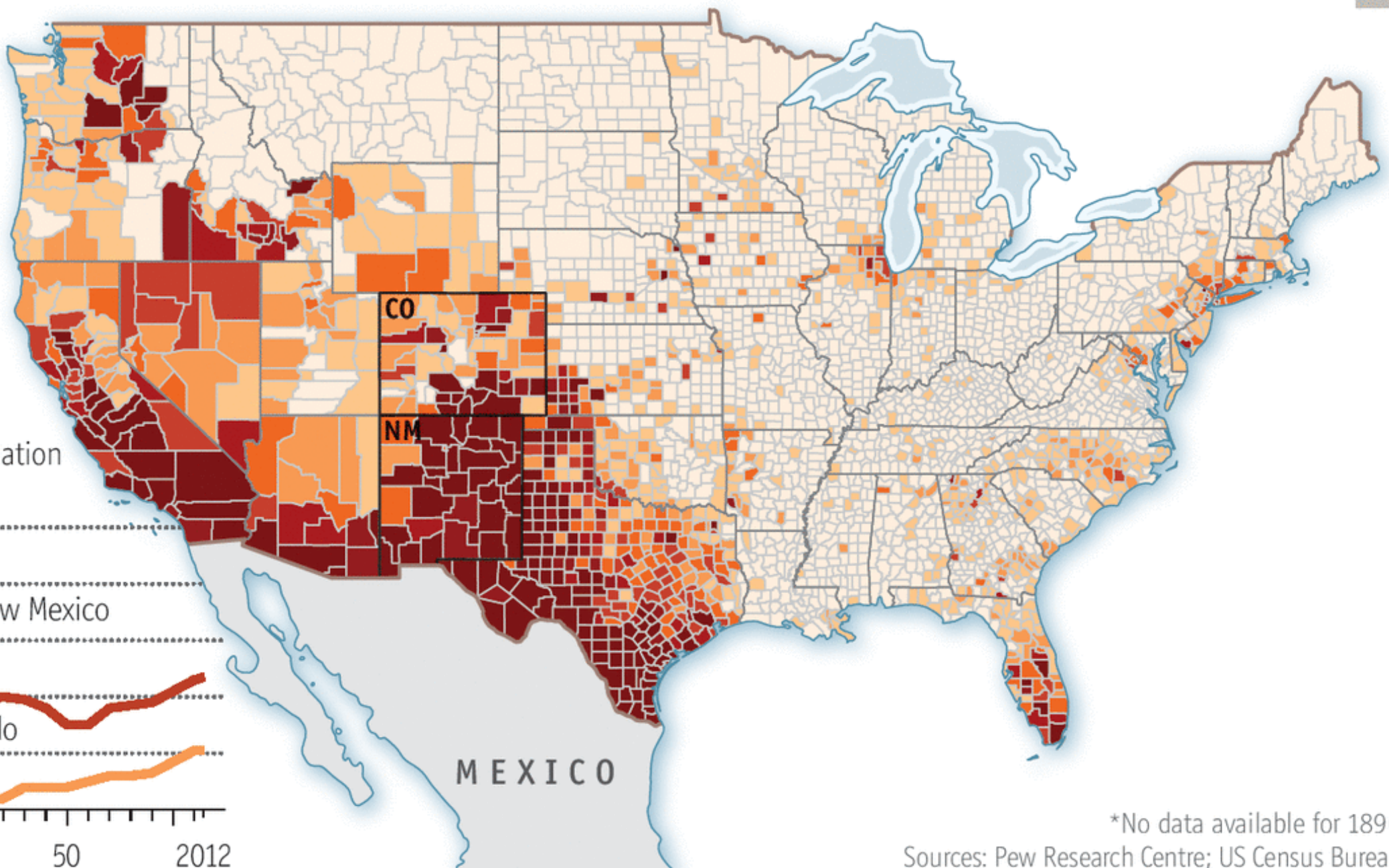
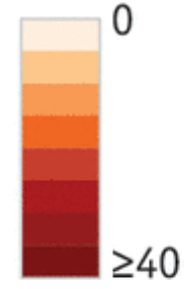


- The 37 million Mexican-Americans (or Chicanos) are the largest Latino population in the USA: over 60% of the total. They constitute c. 11% of the US population, and this proportion is growing.
- Chicanos have lived in what is now US territory since the colonial era, or even before: the story of Aztlán locates the origin of the Aztec peoples in what is now the Southwest USA.
- Numbers have grown historically through immigration, driven mostly by economic factors, though this has varied over time and has recently tapered off (Net Mexico to US migration is currently negative). But relative numbers continue to increase because of high birthrate. This is a young population, vital to the US economy.
- Though concentrated in the Southwest, there are also Mexican-Americans in major cities across the USA: Houston, Chicago, New York, Atlanta, etc.
- But the East Coast is also home to many other Latino communities, while increasingly those crossing the US / Mexico border come from elsewhere, especially Central America.

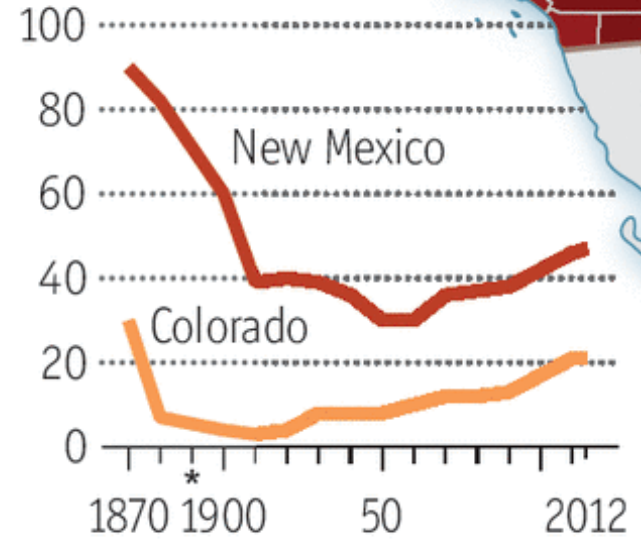
- **Puerto Ricans.** C. 5 million living in the continental USA (compared to fewer than 4 million in Puerto Rico itself). Around 10% of the US Latino population. Following the Spanish-American war (1898), the US annexed the island, and while it is not a state, Puerto Ricans are US citizens, who can travel freely to and from the mainland. They are concentrated particularly in the New York area—traditionally in “Spanish Harlem,” displacing earlier immigrants—but with significant numbers also in Florida (Orlando, Miami), Pennsylvania (Philadelphia), Massachusetts, Chicago.
- **Central Americans.** C. 2.5 million living in the USA. Many fled north during the civil wars of the 1980s: Salvadorans and Guatemalans mostly to the Southwest, around Los Angeles; middle-class Nicaraguans to Miami; but there are populations in Texas (especially Houston), New York, Virginia, North Carolina. Natural disasters (e.g. Hurricane Mitch) have also driven migration, and today thousands risk the dangerous journey through Mexico to escape both violence and poverty, and to send money (remittances) back to families still in the region.

- **Cubans.** C. 2.3 million living in the USA, overwhelmingly (if not solely) in Florida and above all Miami. Following the 1959 Cuban revolution, political migrants and exiles were welcomed by the US government. Though immigration policy was tightened in the 1990s (“wet foot, dry foot”), it is still vastly easier for Cubans to enter the USA than it is for almost any other would-be immigrants. At times, e.g. the “Mariel” boatlift, the Castro regime also encouraged migration. Unlike other Latinos, Cuban-Americans are more likely to be middle-class and Republican. Their votes are seen as vital in most presidential elections.
- **Dominicans.** C. 1.8 million in the USA, the fourth-largest group (after Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and Salvadorans), with a long-standing presence on the East Coast. Many sought refuge from political violence under dictator Rafael Trujillo from the 1940s to the 1960s. Later, migration mainly had economic causes, but was facilitated by the presence of family members and friends who had migrated earlier. Like other Caribbean Hispanics, many Dominicans are black rather than white or mestizo.
- Also **Colombians, Venezuelans, Ecuadorians, Argentines...** from South America, migration patterns tend to reflect political violence or instability.

Hispanic population, 2011, % of total
















Hispanic population % of total
















*No data available for 1890

Sources: Pew Research Centre; US Census Bureau

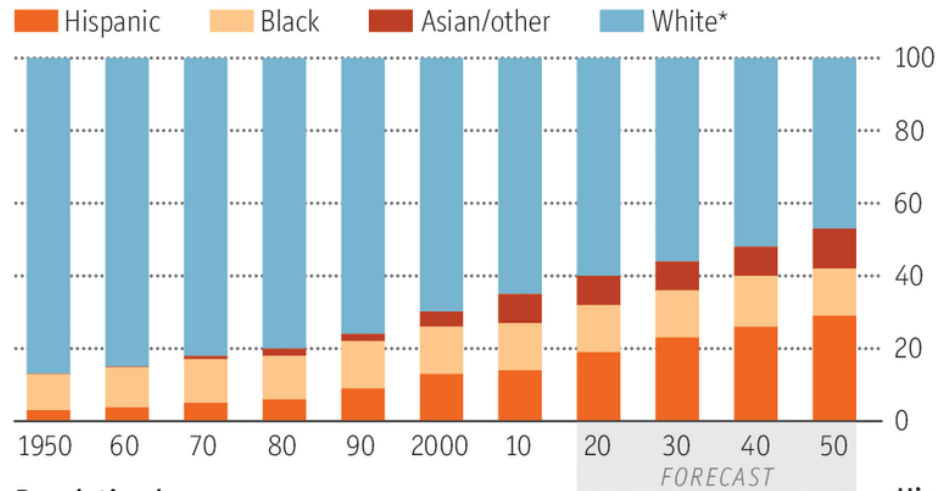
Hispanic and Latino Population by state or territory (2000–2010)^{[1][2]}

State/Territory	Pop 2000	% pop 2000	Pop 2010	% pop 2010	% growth 2000-2010	%pop 2012	%pop 2015 ^[3]	%pop 2016 ^[4]	%pop 2017 ^[5]
 Puerto Rico	3,762,746	98.8%	3,688,455	99.0%	-2.0%	99.5%		98.7%	99.1%
 New Mexico	765,386	42.1%	953,403	46.3%	+24.6%	47.0%	48.0%	48.5%	48.8%
 Texas	6,669,666	32.0%	9,460,921	37.6%	+41.8%	38.2%	38.8%	39.1%	39.4%
 California	10,966,556	32.4%	14,013,719	37.6%	+27.8%	38.2%	38.8%	38.9%	39.1%
 Arizona	1,295,617	25.3%	1,895,149	29.6%	+46.3%	30.2%	30.7%	30.9%	31.4%
 Nevada	393,970	19.7%	716,501	26.5%	+81.9%	27.3%	28.1%	28.5%	28.8%
 Florida	2,682,715	16.8%	4,223,806	22.5%	+57.4%	23.2%	24.5%	24.9%	25.6%
 Colorado	735,801	17.1%	1,038,687	20.7%	+41.2%	21.0%	21.3%	21.3%	21.5%
 New Jersey	1,117,191	13.3%	1,555,144	17.7%	+39.2%	18.5%	19.7%	20.0%	20.4%
 New York	2,867,583	15.1%	3,416,922	17.6%	+19.2%	18.2%	18.8%	19.0%	19.2%
 Illinois	1,530,262	12.3%	2,027,578	15.8%	+32.5%	16.3%	16.9%	17.0%	17.2%
 Connecticut	320,323	9.4%	479,087	13.4%	+49.6%	14.2%	15.4%	15.7%	16.1%
 Rhode Island	90,820	8.7%	130,655	12.4%	+43.9%	13.2%	14.4%	14.9%	15.4%

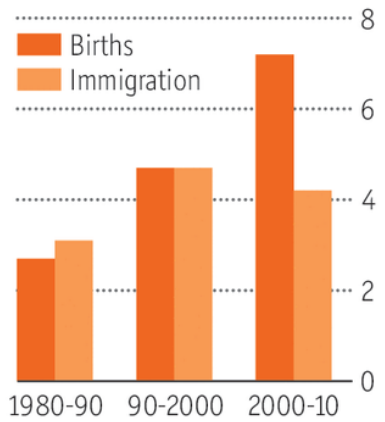
Hispanic and Latino Population by state or territory (2000–2010)^{[1][2]}

State/Territory	Pop 2000	% pop 2000	Pop 2010	% pop 2010	% growth 2000-2010	%pop 2012	%pop 2015 ^[3]	%pop 2016 ^[4]	%pop 2017 ^[5]
 South Carolina	95,076	2.4%	235,682	5.1%	+147.9%	5.3%	5.5%	5.5%	5.7%
 Alabama	75,830	1.7%	185,602	3.9%	+144.8%	4.1%	4.2%	4.1%	4.1%
 Tennessee	123,838	2.2%	290,059	4.6%	+134.2%	4.8%	5.2%	5.2%	5.4%
 Kentucky	59,939	1.5%	132,836	3.1%	+121.6%	3.2%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%
 Arkansas	86,866	3.2%	186,050	6.4%	+114.2%	6.8%	7.2%	7.2%	7.4%
 North Carolina	378,963	4.7%	800,120	8.4%	+111.1%	8.7%	9.1%	9.2%	9.4%
 Maryland	227,916	4.3%	470,632	8.2%	+106.5%	8.7%	9.5%	9.8%	10.1%
 Mississippi	39,569	1.4%	81,481	2.7%	+105.9%	2.9%	3.1%	2.9%	2.9%
 South Dakota	10,903	1.4%	22,119	2.7%	+102.9%	3.1%	3.6%	3.7%	3.6%
 Delaware	37,277	4.8%	73,221	8.2%	+96.4%	8.6%	9.0%	9.2%	9.3%
 Georgia	435,227	5.3%	853,689	8.8%	+96.1%	9.2%	9.3%	9.3%	9.6%
 Virginia	329,540	4.7%	631,825	7.9%	+91.7%	8.4%	9.0%	9.0%	9.3%
 Oklahoma	179,304	5.2%	332,007	8.9%	+85.2%	9.3%	10.1%	10.3%	10.6%

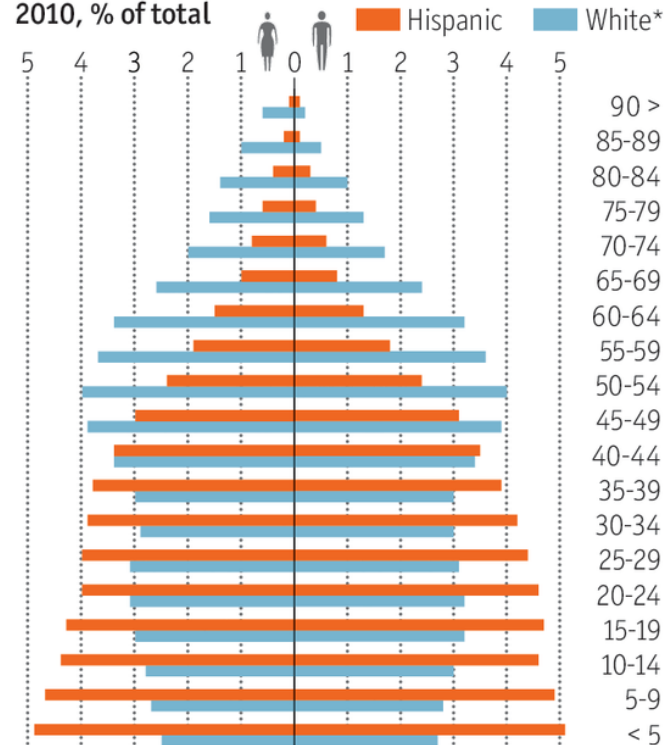
America's racial/ethnic composition, %



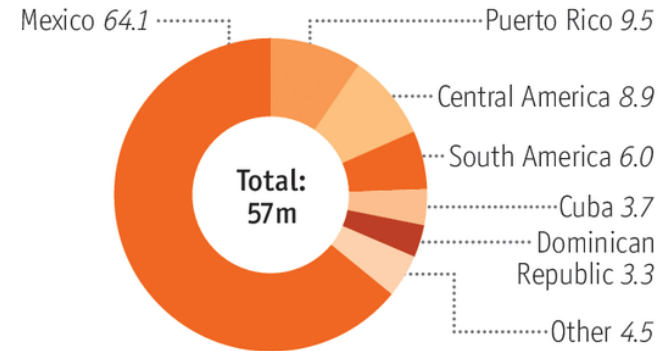
Growth of Mexican-American population, m



Population by age group 2010, % of total



Hispanic population by origin, 2013, %



Hispanic-American purchasing power is equivalent to the world's **16th** largest country

Nearly **1m** US-born Hispanics reach voting age annually

Median wealth† of households
 Hispanic **\$7,683**
 White* households **\$110,500**



*Non-Hispanic

Sources: Pew Research Centre; US Census Bureau; "Latino Boom II" by Chiqui Cartagena; "Latino America" by Matt Barreto and Gary Segura †2011

- Latinos are an increasingly important influence in the USA: politically, economically, culturally.
- The US is now the second-largest Spanish-speaking country in the world, with 41 million native speakers and 12 million bilinguals, ahead of Colombia and Spain, but behind Mexico.
- But this is a diverse population: people of Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican, Dominican, or Central American descent have often come to the US in different circumstances, differ by class and legal status, and may not share attitudes or opinions, which can be shaped by context.
- The Latino population is also racially diverse. Note that (unlike other census categories) “Hispanic” is not a racial classification: Hispanics can be white, mestizo, indigenous, or black.
- Not even language necessarily unites US Latinos: second-generation immigrants may not speak Spanish at home, and may be more comfortable in English.
- If Latino is an “identity,” it is a complex and contested one.

PUERTO RICO

- The Spanish-American War (1898) led to the loss of Spain's remaining colonies in the Caribbean and the Pacific.
- Led by Teddy Roosevelt, the USA was expanding its influence as a maritime power.
- The war led to Cuban independence (under terms dictated by the USA) and the occupation of Puerto Rico (and the Philippines and Guam).



THE BIG STICK IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA

- Following the war, Puerto Rico became a US colony, and as of 1917 its inhabitants were (retrospectively) granted US citizenship.
- In 1952, the island became a Commonwealth or “Estado Libre Asociado.”
- Under this arrangement, Puerto Ricans enjoy most of the rights of US citizenship, including the right to residence anywhere in the USA.
- They have a governor, but are not represented in the US Congress and Puerto Rican residents do not vote in US presidential elections.

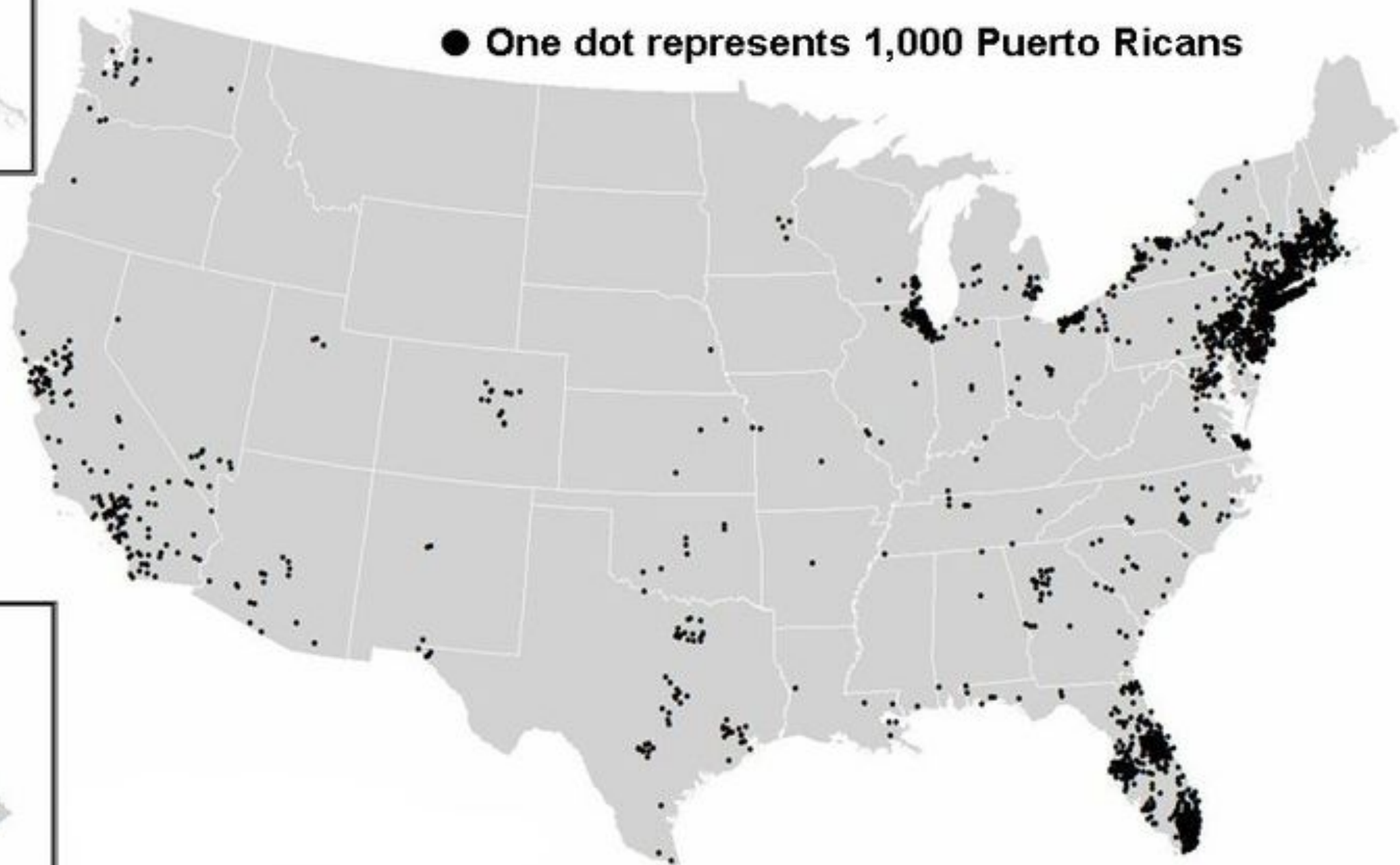
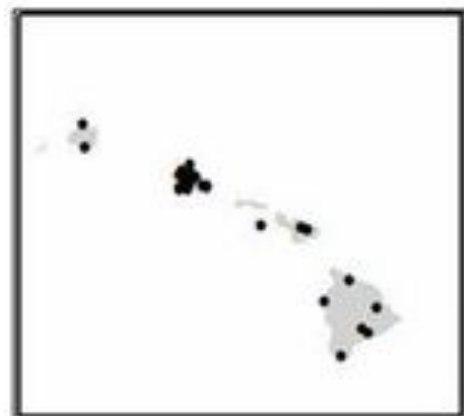


- After World War II, with economic depression on the island and cheap air travel, thousands of Puerto Ricans migrated to the USA, particularly the East Coast.
- “In 1945, [. . .] 13,000 Puerto Ricans in New York City; in 1946 there were more than 50,000. Over the next decade, more than 25,000 Puerto Ricans would come to the continental U.S. each year, peaking in 1953, when more than 69,000 came. By 1955, nearly 700,000 Puerto Ricans had arrived. By the mid-1960s, more than a million.”





● One dot represents 1,000 Puerto Ricans

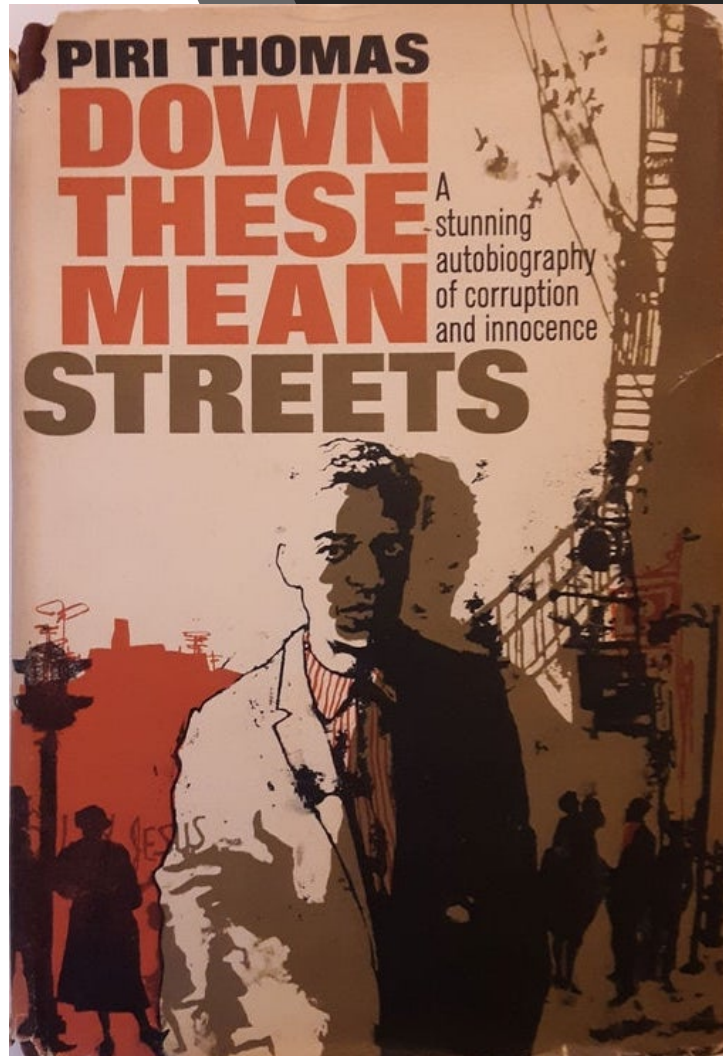


- In New York, Puerto Ricans especially settled in East Harlem, Manhattan.
- The area had been known as Little Italy, but the Italian population was gradually displaced and/or moved to the suburbs.
- It came to be known as “Spanish Harlem,” and now “El Barrio.”
- Over time, also migration to the Lower East Side (“Loisaida”) and the suburbs: Brooklyn, Queens, New Jersey



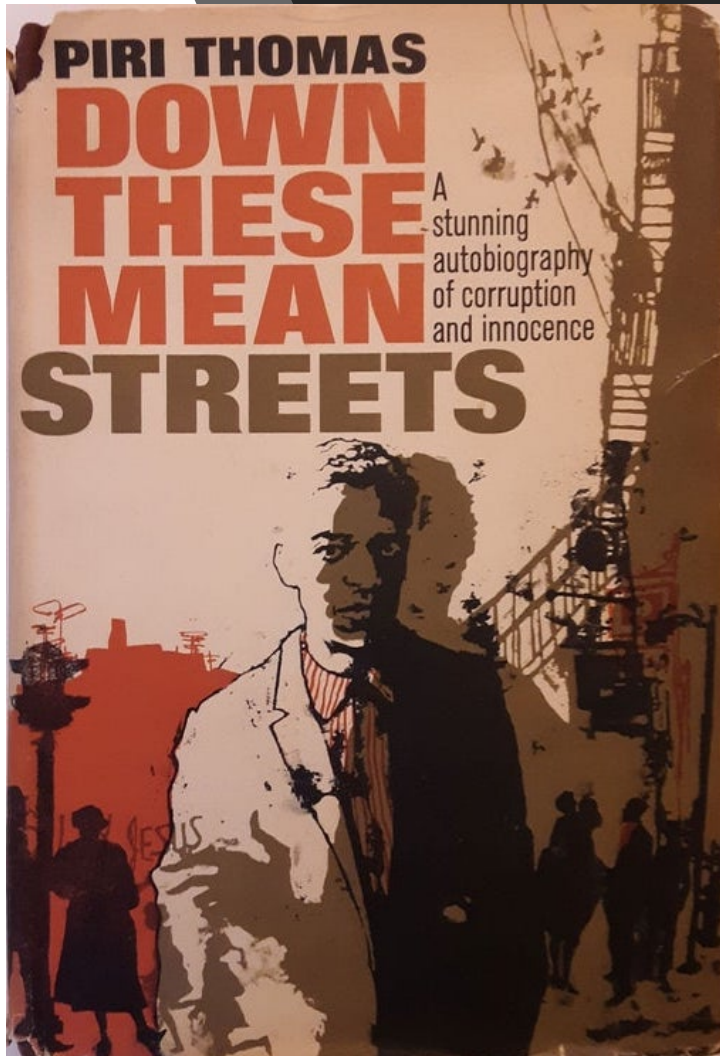
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Down These Mean Streets



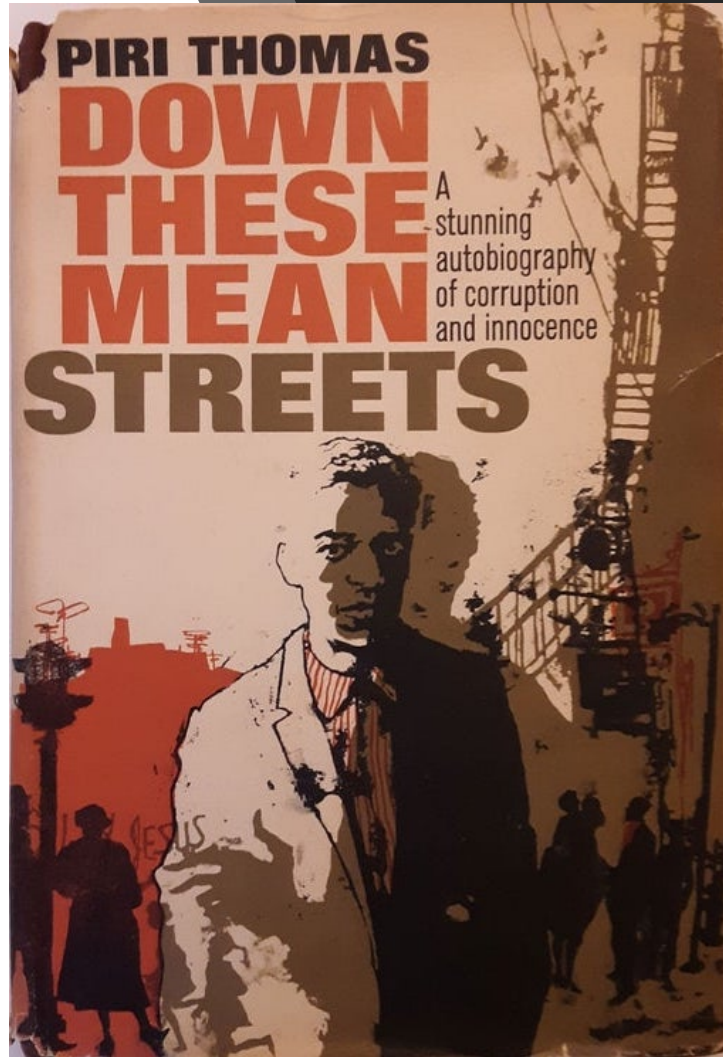
- By Piri Thomas (1928-2011), a key figure in the “Nuyorican” movements of 1960s and 1970s
- A memoir / autobiography, published 1967
- Deals, among other things, with Thomas’s racial ambiguity: perceived as black, he identifies as Latino
- “A classic portrait of ghetto life”

Down These Mean Streets



- What is identity? Why is it important?
- What are ways in which we identify ourselves or are identified? How do they differ?
- How do they arise? Who gets to decide?
- Personal: name; personality; family.
- Group: race; ethnicity; gender; sexuality; age; generation; legal status.
- Economic: class; employment status.
- Regional: Urban; New Yorker; Southern
- National: US; Puerto Rican.

Down These Mean Streets



- What are the “kinks” in this book?

NEXT STEPS

For Thursday

- Bring laptop (if you have one) to class.
- Make two edits on Wikipedia.
- Write brief comments on two of your classmates' blog posts. Especially on Blogger, make sure you sign them.

Mid-Term

- I will announce five concepts, topics, or themes in advance.
- In the exam, you will have a choice of three of these concepts, and pick one of them to write an essay about two or more of the texts you have read.
- You may bring in notes (a “cheat sheet”), maximum one side of Letter size paper.