

Brazilian Americans and Latinidad

Creation Process:

As a white cisgendered woman, I have worked to center the voices of Brazilian Americans, Latinx, and Hispanic individuals within this Zine. I sought after tweets, interviews, forums, facebook comments, and other forms of online communication from Brazilian Americans in order to amplify their experience navigating their identity. As demonstrated, there is no easy yes or no to the question "Are Brazilian Americans Latinx?" It boils down to "It depends." It depends on the individual and their life experiences. This Zine was intended to sort through and highlight the different ways Brazilian Americans relate to Latinidad and the panethnic labels of Latinx and Hispanic.



Latinx?

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Latinx?

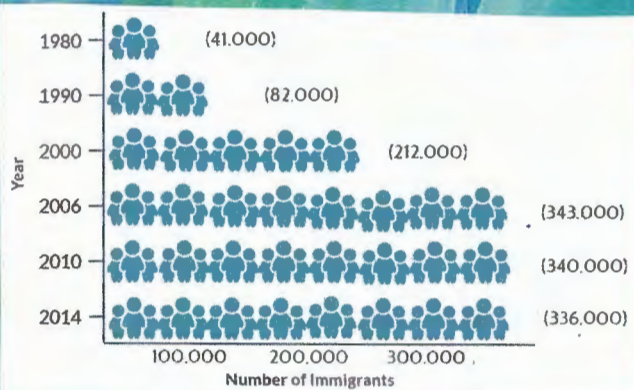
What comes to mind when you hear
Latinx?

What comes to mind when you think
of Brazilian Americans?

Brazilian Americans in the United States

It is uncertain how many Brazilians are living in the United States. The Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs believes that it is over a million. However, the American Community Survey only reported 346,000 in 2007.

This disparity has roots in the fact that many Brazilian immigrants are undocumented and the US census does not clearly specify what Brazilian Americans should mark.



Census Definitions

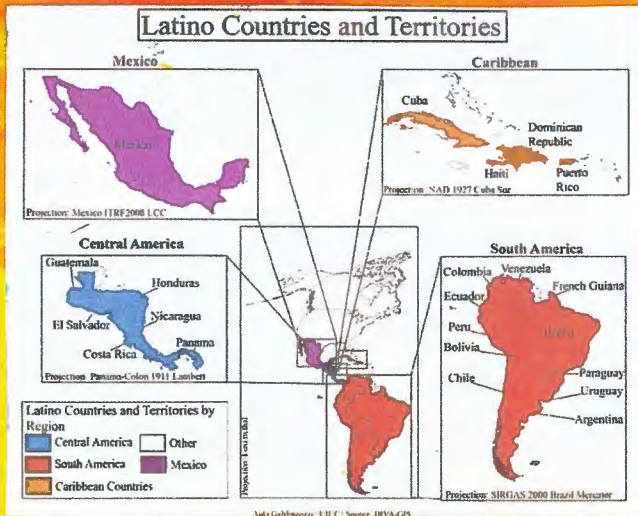
The US Census labels hispanic or latino people as any "person of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American, or other Spanish culture or origin regardless of race."



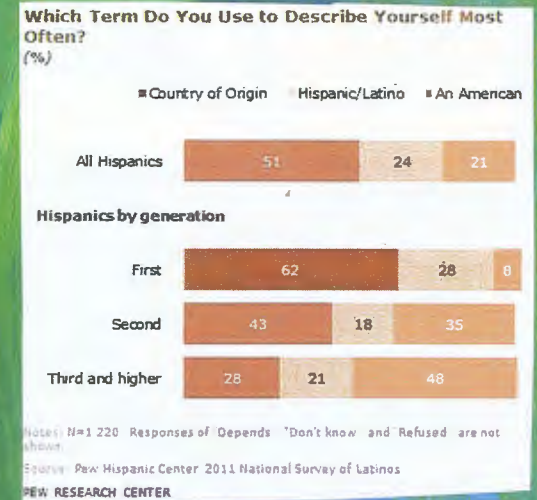
Latinx refers to the people from the geographical area of Latin America.

Hispanic is used to highlight a connection to the Spanish language.

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I'm living in the US and when I was filling one of the immigration forms I was going to check the Latino option but it said said clearly "all countries from Latin America except Brazil"
I checked Caucasian, then.
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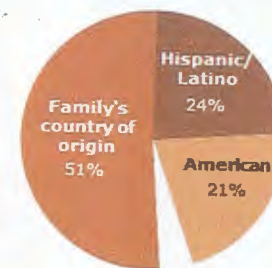
Often times, individuals do not see themselves or their cultures reflected within the panethnic labels of hispanic/latinx. More often than not, those individuals are not included within the naming process.



“Panethnicity- the generalization of solidarity among ethnic subgroups- is largely a product of categorization. An imposed category ignores subgroup boundaries, lumping together diverse peoples in a single expanded ‘ethnic’ framework”

- Yen Le Espiritu in “Asian American Panethnicity”

Which Term Do You Use to Describe Yourself Most Often?



Notes: N=1,220. Responses of "Depends," "Don't know," and "Refused" are shown but not labeled.
Source: Pew Hispanic Center, 2011 National Survey of Latinos.
PEW RESEARCH CENTER

Only 24% of those with roots in Spanish speaking countries say that they identify as hispanic or latinx with 21% identifying as simply American and 51% choosing to state their country of origin.

In her article "Coming To Terms With 'Latinx'" Arianna Davis says, "Latino has become the name most widely embraced by its people. It unites millions of people in America whose cultures are not the same, but share similar commonalities, whether they are through our food, music, or our language." Despite the vast differences between the cultures of the many countries labeled Latinx/Hispanic by the US, there is a common experience or feeling that unites these people. This connectedness is...

Latinidad

Juana Maria Rodriguez defines Latinidad as encompassing "within it the complexities and contradictions of immigration, (post)(neo)colonialism, race, color, legal status, class, nation, language, and the politics of locations."



Are Brazilian Americans Latinx?

"Ummmmmmmmmm...."

"I Don't Know"

Do Brazilian Americans identify with Latinidad?

"It depends"

"No!"

"Sí!"

- Brazilian Americans from NPR's podcast "Are Brazilian-Americans Latino?" hosted by Latino USA

Where Brazilian Americans do not Identify with Latinidad: Coloniality and Language

Portuguese Basics

Expressões úteis do dia-a-dia useful daily expressions

Obrigado. Thank you.	Bom fim de semana. Have a nice weekend.	In a letter or email (formal)
De nada. You're welcome.	Boa sorte. Good luck.	Caro/a Dear
Por favor. Please.	Boas férias. Enjoy your holidays.	Caro/a Senhor/a Dear Mr./Mrs.
Com licença. Excuse me	Boa viagem. Have a nice trip.	Cumprimentos, Kind regards.
Desculpe. Sorry.	Bom Natal. Merry Christmas.	Atentamente,
Não faz mal. That's ok./ There is no harm.	Bom Ano Novo. Happy New Year	Atenciosamente,
Claro que sim. Of course.	Bom apetite. Enjoy your meal.	Beijinhos! Sweet kisses!
Claro que não. Of course not.	Fique com o troco. Keep the change.	Abraços! Hugs!
Penso/aço que... I think that...	Fixei Cool!	Amo-te. I love you.
Eu tenho a certeza. I'm sure.	Não há problema. No problem.	Gosto muito de ti. I like you a lot.
Não sei. I don't know.	Posso...? May I...?	Tenho saudades tuas. I miss you.
Feliz aniversário! Happy anniversary!	Podia ajudar-me...? Could you help me...?	
Parabéns! Congratulations!	Que horas são? What time is it?	

"I am Brazilian. Never Latina. We were colonized by the Portuguese and we have a completely different culture from those who speak Spanish."

- Brazilian American woman from NPR's podcast "Are Brazilian-Americans Latino?" hosted by Latino USA

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 ↕ Personally, I don't identify myself with the Latino culture, after all, my ancestors were not exploited in silver mines and didn't speak Spanish. My ancestors were Brazilian landowners and merchants of Portuguese, Spanish and Italian origins. I might have some native Brazilian or African blood, considering that the Portuguese settlers had second families with native Brazilian Indians and freed slaves in the absence of white women.
 In the United States I'm perceived as a white person of unknown nationality. People say I might be French, Spanish, Italian, Eastern European or even American.
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ENGLISH	SPANISH
Hello	Hola
Goodbye	Adiós
Yes	Si
No	No
Please	Por favor
Sorry	Lo siento
You're welcome	De nada
Thank you	Gracias
I don't understand	No entiendo
I don't know	No lo se
Can you speak more slowly?	¿Puedes hablar más despacio?
How much is it?	¿Cuánto cuesta?
Excuse me	Perdone
How are you?	¿Cómo estás?
Where is.....?	¿Dónde está.....?
Can you help me?	¿Puedes ayudarme?
Can you repeat please?	¿Puedes repetir por favor?
Do you speak English?	¿Hablas inglés?

"As a Brazilian, I have never really felt included in Hispanic culture, So I would be fine being left out of it. Hispanics have a very distinct culture when it comes to language literature and music and I reckon that bundling everything together would eclipse Brazilian culture. It is bad enough that people 'joke' that the capital of Brazil being Buenos Aires."

- waspbr, Reddit User

"No, we do not identify as latino, since we speak another language, have other heritages and a very different mindset than the rest of Latin America"

- Zuzarte, Reddit User

Where Brazilian Americans Identify with Latinidad: Food and Soccer

"When you think of Latins you think of Mexicans but we are Latins too"

- Brazilian American from NPR's podcast "Are Brazilian-Americans Latino?" hosted by Latino USA



"We are not very different . Latinos like soccer. The culture is basically the same"

- Brazilian American from NPR's podcast "Are Brazilian-Americans Latino?" hosted by Latino USA



"I have always felt a lot of kinship. We love soccer, we have rice and beans, blah, blah, blah. It feels really good to say, well, here is a team of my people. Here is a larger group of people that I have something in common with."

- Julia Furlan, Brazilian American Audio Editor for BuzzFeed

Brazilian Cuisine



Mexican Cuisine



Political Power of Collaboration within Panethnic Groups



"Brazilians like to think of themselves as better than Latinos: We are the best soccer players, the best dancers, but when I started filling out college forms, I started checking the Latino box. If we are discriminated against as Latinos in the U.S., you have to buddy up with the others. Being Brazilian and special is not going to get you far."

- Caroline Braga, a Brazilian American law student interviewed by businessinsider

Some Brazilian Americans identify as Latinx while others do not. Coming to terms with one's identity through different panethnic labels can be a challenging journey. Brazilian Americans who identify as Latinx find community and comfort in the larger community they find.

However, other Brazilian Americans have a hard time relating to the experiences and cultures within the Latinx community. These murky cultural borders and similarities between Brazilian Americans and the Latinx community show that identity is created both through personal experience and heritage but also the labels that those in power assign to groups.

So, are Brazilian Americans Latinx?
The answer is complicated in its simplicity.

It depends.