

Puerto Ricans in Orlando and Central Florida

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CONTENTS

Summary of Main Findings	2
Acknowledgments	7
Introduction	8
Changing Settlement Patterns	14
Historical Background	18
A Contemporary Socioeconomic Portrait	24
Political Incorporation	31
Cultural Identities	34
Toward a New Research Agenda	38
Conclusion	43
References	46
Tables	60
Figures	71
Biographical Sketches	77

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

- During the 1990s, Florida displaced New Jersey as the second largest concentration of Puerto Ricans in the U.S. mainland (after New York). Florida's Puerto Rican population grew from slightly more than 2 percent of all stateside Puerto Ricans in 1960 to more than 14 percent in the year 2000. Furthermore, the number of Puerto Rican residents in Florida rose from 482,027 in 2000 to 571,755 persons in 2003.
- Although Puerto Ricans still concentrate in the state of New York, their proportion decreased from nearly three-fourths of the total in 1960 to less than one-third in 2000. Correspondingly, the proportion of Puerto Ricans has increased in other states, especially in Florida.
- Within Florida, Puerto Ricans have settled in three main regions. In 2003, more than 206,000 persons of Puerto Rican origin lived in Central Florida, particularly in Orange, Osceola, Volusia, Seminole, and Polk counties. A secondary concentration is South Florida, especially in Miami-Dade and Broward counties, with about 155,000 Puerto Ricans. A third cluster has emerged around the Tampa Bay area, especially in Hillsborough County, with almost 68,000 Puerto Ricans.
- During the 1990s, Orange and Osceola became the two leading destinations of Puerto Rican migrants, displacing the Bronx and other counties in New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois. Moreover, five of the ten main locations of recent Puerto Rican migrants (including Hillsborough, Miami-Dade, and Broward) are in Florida.
- Three of the top ten metropolitan areas in the United States with Puerto Rican populations (Orlando, Tampa, and Miami) are in Florida. In addition, Ft. Lauderdale has the eleventh largest number of Puerto Rican residents in the mainland.
- The earliest recorded movement of Puerto Ricans to Florida consisted of a small number of agricultural business owners who settled in the Miami area in the 1940s. Many of the pioneers of Puerto Rican migration to South Florida were members of an economically privileged group.
- The first large-scale movement of Puerto Ricans to Florida took place under the contract farm worker program sponsored by the Migration Division of Puerto Rico's Department of Labor in the 1950s. By then, the socioeconomic composition of Puerto Rican migration to South Florida had shifted predominantly toward the working class. Most Puerto Ricans in Dade, Broward, and

West Palm Beach counties were seasonal workers specializing in the harvesting of vegetables.

During the 1970s, Puerto Rican government officials negotiated contacts for hundreds of workers with sugar growers in Florida.

- Puerto Rican migration to Central Florida began in earnest in the late 1960s, when hundreds of islanders acquired properties in the city of Deltona in Volusia County. Later, the migrant stream broadened to other Puerto Rican communities in New York, New Jersey, and Illinois.
- Between 1990 and 2000, the city of Orlando experienced the largest increase (142 percent) in the number of Puerto Ricans stateside. Today, Orlando is the fourth-largest metropolitan area for Puerto Ricans in the United States, after New York City, Philadelphia, and Chicago.
- Puerto Rican migration to Central Florida is not highly selective by sex. Island-born and mainland-born residents have very similar proportions of males and females.
- Nearly one-third of all Puerto Ricans in Central Florida are young adults (between 25 and 44 years), a similar proportion for Puerto Ricans in New York City and the entire United States, compared to slightly more than one-fourth for Puerto Rico. An important component (12.6 percent) of migrants from the Island to Central Florida consists of elderly persons.
- Whites are overrepresented in the Puerto Rican flow to the Orlando area, while blacks are underrepresented. Island-born Puerto Ricans are more likely to describe themselves as white and less likely to describe themselves as black than mainland-born Puerto Ricans.
- The educational levels of the Puerto Rican population in Central Florida are higher than elsewhere in the United States and Puerto Rico. In 2000, 73.6 percent of Puerto Ricans in the Orlando area had completed a high school education or more, compared to 64 percent nationwide, 60 percent on the Island, and 55.2 percent in New York City. Contrary to media stereotypes, U.S.-born Puerto Ricans tend to be better educated than those born on the Island. The median number of years of schooling for the former group was 13, one year more than for the latter group.
- The migrants' relatively high educational status is reflected in their ability to speak English. In the 2000 census, 63.2 percent of all Puerto Ricans in Central Florida claimed they could speak English very well, compared to 64.2 percent in New York City and only 28.1 percent in Puerto Rico.

- Puerto Rican migrants to Central Florida are drawn from all sectors of the Island's labor force, particularly white-collar workers. In the year 2000, more than half (52.8 percent) of all Puerto Rican workers in the area were employed in administrative support, sales, professional, technical, and managerial occupations. Contrary to some media reports, U.S.-born Puerto Ricans were more concentrated in higher-status jobs than were those born in Puerto Rico.
- Puerto Ricans in Central Florida as well as in Puerto Rico concentrate overwhelmingly in trade and services. However, Puerto Ricans in Central Florida are more likely to be employed in retail trade, professional, scientific, and technical services, transportation, finance, real estate, insurance, and other services than in Puerto Rico.
- In 1999, 33.3 percent of all Puerto Rican families in Central Florida (as well as 33.6 percent in New York City) earned more than \$50,000 a year, compared to 25.8 percent nationwide and only 11.3 percent on the Island. U.S.-born Puerto Ricans had a higher median family income (\$35,000) than Island-born Puerto Ricans (\$32,840). The median family income of both groups (\$33,500) was more than double that of residents of Puerto Rico (\$16,543) and one third more than in New York City (\$22,201).
- According to the 2000 census, 5.4 percent of all Puerto Ricans over 15 years of age in the Central Florida region were self-employed, compared to 4.2 percent in New York City and 7.7 percent in Puerto Rico.
- In 1997, Puerto Ricans in the Orlando metropolitan area owned 2,429 businesses, primarily in the service industry, followed by transportation, communications, construction, and retail trade. Puerto Rican firms accounted for a larger share than Cuban firms of all Hispanic-owned businesses and generated sales of 117.5 million dollars.
- Despite their achievements, Puerto Ricans have not attained socioeconomic parity with other major ethnic groups in Central Florida. On average, Puerto Ricans have lower family incomes, educational levels, rates of self-employment, and proportions of managers and professionals than other Hispanics and non-Hispanics in the area.
- More than 60 percent of Puerto Rican voters in Florida favored the Democratic candidate, Al Gore, in the 2000 presidential elections. In the year 2004, Puerto Ricans in Florida supported Senator John Kerry over President George W. Bush by a margin of two to one.

- Regarding Puerto Rico's political status, Puerto Ricans in the mainland are as sharply divided as on the Island. A recent poll found that 48 percent of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida favored the current Commonwealth status, while 42 percent supported statehood and 5 percent independence.
- The number and variety of cultural events (such as parades and festivals) sponsored by Puerto Rican community organizations have multiplied in tandem with their growing presence in Orlando, Tampa, and Miami. In particular, the Puerto Rican Parade of Central Florida has drawn between 15,000 and 20,000 people to downtown Orlando every year since its foundation in 1992.
- The growing Puerto Rican presence in Central Florida will have an impact on the area's churches, both Catholic and Protestant. Although most Puerto Ricans have traditionally been Catholic, an increasing number are Protestants and members of other denominations.
- The need for bilingual education and other public services for Spanish speakers in Central Florida will rise as a result of continuing immigration from Puerto Rico and other Latin American countries. A serious challenge is that most children raised in Puerto Rico are not fluent in English when they arrive in Florida. In 2000-01, 21.1 percent of all "language enriched pupils" in Orange County were Puerto Rican.

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Introduction

After World War II, the massive exodus of Puerto Ricans was primarily directed to New York and other northeastern states. (Smaller numbers of people moved abroad after the U.S. occupation of Puerto Rico in 1898, especially since 1917, when Congress extended U.S. citizenship to all persons born on the Island.) By the year 2003, almost half (48.9 percent) of all persons of Puerto Rican origin were estimated to live outside of Puerto Rico. Since the 1960s, Puerto Ricans have widely scattered throughout the United States. During the 1990s, Florida displaced New Jersey as the second largest concentration of Puerto Ricans in the mainland. The growth of Florida's Puerto Rican population has been spectacular, from slightly more than 2 percent of all stateside Puerto Ricans in 1960 to more than 14 percent in the year 2000. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the number of Puerto Rican residents in Florida rose from 482,027 in 2000 to 571,755 persons in 2003.¹ Puerto Ricans now represent the second largest group of Hispanics in Florida, after Cubans, and the largest one in Central Florida, particularly in the Orlando metropolitan area.

Several factors explain the growing dispersal of Puerto Ricans, especially from New York to Florida. First, the economic restructuring of New York City—particularly the decline of light manufacturing sectors such as the garment industry—undermined the well-being of Puerto Ricans, who were concentrated in such industries until the 1970s. Second, employment opportunities attracted Puerto Ricans to other places in the Northeast and South of the United States.² Third, the lower cost of living as well as the absence of state income taxes lured many people to Florida. Fourth, more and more islanders moved abroad seeking a “better quality of life,” including housing, education, health, tranquility, and security. Finally, the rapid development of Florida's Hispanic population has made the state an ideal location for Puerto Ricans, who increasingly see it as geographically, culturally, and linguistically closer to the Island than New York and other northeastern and midwestern states.³

¹ U.S. Census Bureau, “American Community Survey: 2003 Data Profile.”

² In the year 2004, the unemployment rate was 4.9 percent in Orange County, 5.1 percent in Florida, and 6.0 percent in the entire United States (Metro Orlando Economic Development Commission, *County Data: Orange County*). According to recent projections, the Orlando metropolitan area will create more new jobs than any other major city in the United States in the year 2005 (Carla M. Osorio, “Orlando, el paraíso del empleo”).

³ A 1960 newspaper article already noted that “Miami is particularly attractive for the Puerto Rican, due to the relatively quiet lifestyle one enjoys there, the predominant order in most aspects of daily life, and the climate, which

The “Puerto Ricanization” of Florida forms part of the diversification of the Hispanic population in the United States, as well as the emergence of new ethnic categories among Puerto Rican immigrants, beyond “Nuyorican,”⁴ such as “Florican,” “Orlandorican,” or even “Diasporican.” Such hybrid labels point to the significance of local contexts in shaping immigrants’ cultural identities and distinguishing them from those based on the Island. At the same time, increasing differences between Island-born and mainland-born Puerto Ricans raise emotionally charged issues such as who can claim to be Puerto Rican and how that claim can be legitimated culturally and politically. The Puerto Rican diaspora in Florida, where Cubans have predominated among Hispanics for decades, is fertile ground for rethinking identities in the context of increasingly complex interethnic relations. Among other issues, it offers a unique opportunity to examine to what extent a general Latino affiliation is taking root among contemporary immigrants from Latin America.⁵ Other questions ripe for research include the local reception of Puerto Ricans, their patterns of economic and political incorporation, and their regional and national impacts on Puerto Rican community organizations in the United States.

Until now, little was known about the socioeconomic background of recent Puerto Rican migrants to Florida. According to the 2000 census, 51.1 percent of Florida’s residents of Puerto

is so similar to the Island’s” (Germán Negroni, “Boricuas en Miami: Han logrado una rápida asimilación a sociedad,” 17; our translations from the Spanish throughout this report). In her essay “The Makings of Home: Puerto Rican Transmigration and Settlement in South Florida,” Elizabeth Aranda looks more closely at the motivations of recent Puerto Rican migrants to Miami and Ft. Lauderdale.

⁴ The term “Nuyorican” was originally coined in the 1950s to refer to Puerto Rican immigrants in New York City. As popularly used on the Island today, it designates anyone of Puerto Rican origin who was born or raised in the United States. It is sometimes used pejoratively to imply that those living in the mainland are somehow less Puerto Rican than those on the Island.

⁵ Scholars have begun to examine this question in urban locales such as El Barrio (Spanish Harlem) in Manhattan, the Corona section of Queens, the Near Northwest Side and the Pilsen neighborhood of Chicago, and Little Havana in Miami. Examples of this work include Elizabeth M. Aranda, Elena Sabogal, and Sally Hughes, “The ‘Other’ Latin Americans: Identity, Assimilation, and Well-Being among Transnational Immigrants;” Arlene Dávila, *Barrio Dreams: Puerto Ricans, Latinos, and the Neoliberal City*; Nicholas De Genova and Ana Y. Ramos-Zayas, *Latino Crossings: Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, and the Politics of Race and Citizenship*; Agustín Laó-Montes and Arlene Dávila, eds., *Mambo Montage: The Latinization of New York City*; Gina M. Pérez, *The Near Northwest Side Story: Migration, Displacement, and Puerto Rican Families*; Patricia L. Price, Damián J. Fernández, Daniel D. Arreola, and María de los Angeles Torres, “Comparative Civic and Place Engagement in Three Latino Enclave Neighborhoods in Transition;” Milagros Ricourt and Ruby Danta, *Hispanas de Queens: Latino Panethnicity in a New York City Neighborhood*; Alex Stepick, Max Castro, Guillermo Grenier, and Marvin Dunn, *This Land Is Our Land: Immigrants and Power in Miami*. For a recent literature review, see Jorge Duany, “Puerto Rican, Hispanic, or Latino? Recent Debates on National and Pan-Ethnic Identities.”

Rican origin were born in Puerto Rico, while 48.9 percent were born in the mainland.⁶ Some journalistic reports have suggested that Island-born and mainland-born Puerto Ricans have distinct class origins. Indeed, many professionals and managers have relocated from the Island to Orlando, Tampa, and Miami. Less well known is the number of skilled and well-educated immigrants of Puerto Rican origin from other parts of the United States. However, the media have repeatedly portrayed Puerto Ricans in Florida as predominantly Island-born, middle class, college-educated, and suburban.⁷ The data presented in this report qualify that profile, insofar as mainland-born Puerto Ricans in the Orlando area have higher occupational, educational, and income levels than the Island-born.

Studies conducted by the Puerto Rico Planning Board concur that many people now move between the Island and the mainland for non-economic reasons, such as retiring, reuniting with family members, studying, and searching for a better quality of life, rather than simply finding a job. This is particularly true for Island-born professionals resettling in Florida, California, and Texas.⁸ In the early 1990s, for example, more than 40 percent of all graduates from medical schools in Puerto Rico were living in the United States; of these, 18 percent were in Florida. More recently, the Island's press has widely debated the growing exodus of nursing personnel. In 2002, more than 1,300 Puerto Rican nurses applied to practice their profession in Florida.⁹ Although the current migrant flow from Puerto Rico cannot be characterized as a "brain drain," the outflow of well-educated and skilled workers has steadily increased over the past two decades.¹⁰ Higher wages, better working conditions, opportunities for occupational advancement, and the promise of a better life often attract middle-class

⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, "5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS): Florida."

⁷ See, for instance, Robert Friedman, "Stateside Puerto Ricans Fare Well, Study Says," and Jeff Kunerth, "Numbers Depict Local Hispanics." Some academic studies have also portrayed Puerto Ricans in Florida as more prosperous than elsewhere. See Francisco Rivera-Batiz and Carlos E. Santiago, *Puerto Ricans in the United States: A Changing Reality*; and, by the same authors, *Island Paradox: Puerto Rico in the 1990s*. For an exception to this trend, see Juan Hernández Cruz, "La emigración puertorriqueña a Florida y el 'Mundo maravilloso de Disney.'"

⁸ Junta de Planificación de Puerto Rico, "Migración de retorno en Puerto Rico," and Luz H. Olmeda, "Aspectos socioeconómicos de la migración en el 1994-95."

⁹ Aixa M. Pascual Amadeo, "La hemorragia no cesa," and Ken Oliver-Méndez, "Welcome to Orlando, Puerto Rico."

¹⁰ Between 1945 and 1965, during the so-called Great Migration, most migrants from the Island to the mainland had been low-skilled manual workers with little education and of rural origin. For earlier studies of the changing socioeconomic characteristics of Puerto Rican migrants, see Edwin Meléndez, *Los que se van, los que regresan: Puerto Rican Migration to and from the United States, 1982-88*; Vilma Ortiz, "Changes in the Characteristics of Puerto Rican Migrants from 1955 to 1980;" and Rivera-Batiz and Santiago, *Island Paradox*.

migrants from the Island, as well as the mainland. The American dream of owning a house in the suburbs is also a powerful incentive for moving abroad.

According to media reports, Puerto Rican migration to Florida also draws on disgruntled residents of the Rustbelt attracted by better weather, economic opportunities, and lower costs of living in the Sunbelt of the United States. While some migrants are elderly and retired, most are relatively young job seekers. This wave of second- and third-generation Puerto Ricans from states like New York and Illinois is said to be of a lower class, less educated, and more likely to speak English than those coming from the Island.¹¹ The relations between the two groups—that is, islanders and the so-called Nuyoricans—remain an important problem, both in Puerto Rico and abroad.¹² All signs point to an increasing differentiation by class, birthplace, generation, language, and other fissures within Puerto Rican communities in Florida and elsewhere.

This report offers a general assessment of the Puerto Rican population in Central Florida, primarily based on recent census data. Where appropriate, we complement available statistics with information published in journalistic articles. We focus on the Orlando area, particularly Orange and Osceola counties, where the Puerto Rican population concentrates. We refer to the five other counties that comprise the Central Florida region (Brevard, Lake, Polk, Seminole, and Volusia), as well as two counties in northeastern Florida (Flagler and Putnam), which are included in some census data along with Volusia.¹³ Whenever possible, we compare the census data for Central Florida and New York City, the largest Puerto Rican concentration in the United States. The report emphasizes the immigrants' settlement patterns, historical background, socioeconomic characteristics, political incorporation, cultural identities, and relations with other Latino groups. Because of space limitations, we cannot dwell on important issues that should be looked at more closely in future essays, such as

¹¹ Bill Coats, "County's Hispanic Population Changes," and Larry Lipman, "City Council Election Indication of Growing Hispanic Political Clout."

¹² Recent studies of the social and cultural distinctions between Puerto Ricans from the Island and the mainland include Erna Kerkhof, "Contested Belonging: Circular Migration and Puerto Rican Identity;" José Lorenzo-Hernández, "The Nuyoricans' Dilemma: Categorization of Return Migrants in Puerto Rico;" Pérez, *The Near Northwest Side Story*; Ana Y. Ramos-Zayas, *National Performances: The Politics of Race, Class, and Place in Puerto Rican Chicago*; and Carlos Vargas-Ramos, "The Effect of Return Migration on Political Participation in Puerto Rico."

¹³ The 2000 census combines the latter three counties in its Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs), areas with 100,000 residents or more. Later in this report, we frequently use this data set as the most reliable, complete, and up-to-date source of information on Puerto Ricans in Central Florida.

the housing status of Puerto Ricans in the Orlando area. Toward the end of the report, we set out a social research agenda on Puerto Ricans in Central Florida.

Basically, we argue that the dispersal of the Puerto Rican diaspora away from its traditional destinations in the U.S. Northeast and Midwest toward the Southeast and Southwest has long-term consequences for the migrants' cultural identities, as well as for their socioeconomic well being. In particular, Puerto Rican communities in the Orlando area differ significantly from their counterparts in other major U.S. cities, such as New York, not only in their historical origins and settlement patterns, but also in their mode of economic, political, and cultural incorporation. Economically, Puerto Ricans have been more successful in Central Florida than elsewhere, as measured by their income, occupational, educational, and residential characteristics. Politically, they have received increased attention as both the Democratic and Republican parties court their votes as decisive in presidential elections. Culturally, the interaction between Island-born and mainland-born Puerto Ricans in a new setting has numerous implications, including the growing mixture of Spanish and English as everyday forms of communication. The contrasts between Puerto Ricans in Orlando and other metropolitan areas of the United States should be spelled out more systematically through analysis of census data, ethnographic fieldwork, and archival research. This is the first academic study to begin that undertaking.

Changing Settlement Patterns

Table 1 shows the shifting geographic distribution of Puerto Ricans in the United States over the last four decades. Although Puerto Ricans still concentrate in the state of New York, their proportion decreased from nearly three-fourths of the total in 1960 to less than one-third in 2000. For the first time ever, the number of persons of Puerto Rican origin in New York declined in the 1990s. Still, New York has the largest percentage of Puerto Rican residents in the mainland. Correspondingly, the proportion of Puerto Ricans has increased in other states, especially in Florida, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Texas. Overall, the figures document that the Puerto Rican diaspora has been moving away from its original core in New York and into other areas of the United States.

[Reference Table 1]

Within Florida, Puerto Ricans have settled in three main regions (table 2 and figure 1). According to the 2003 American Community Survey, more than 163,000 persons of Puerto Rican origin lived in Central Florida, particularly in Orange, Volusia, Seminole, and Polk counties. (In addition, about 43,000 lived in Osceola County, but they were not counted separately in that survey.) A secondary concentration is found in South Florida, especially Miami-Dade and Broward counties. About 155,000 Puerto Ricans were living there in 2003, while almost 37,000 resided in nearby Palm Beach. A third cluster has emerged around the Tampa Bay area, especially in Hillsborough County, with almost 68,000 Puerto Ricans. In addition, nearly 25,000 Puerto Ricans lived in neighboring Pinellas and Pasco counties. Puerto Ricans are the majority of the Hispanic population in Osceola, Orange, and Volusia, as well as the largest group of Hispanics in Pinellas, Seminole, Hillsborough, and Broward. As one journalist has noted, “the Puerto Ricans settled here [in Central Florida] rather than in South Florida because the latter was so heavily dominated by the Cuban community. The Puerto Ricans saw an opportunity to establish their identity in Central Florida.”¹⁴

[Reference Table 2 and Figure 1]

During the 1990s, Orange and Osceola became the two leading destinations of Puerto Rican migrants, displacing the Bronx and other counties in New York, Pennsylvania, and Illinois (table 3). Moreover, five of the ten main locations of recent Puerto Rican migrants (including Hillsborough, Miami-Dade, and Broward) are in Florida. The data also document the increasing circulation of people—the *vaivén*—between Puerto Rico and the United States, which has been analyzed elsewhere.¹⁵ Many more Puerto Ricans are moving away from the Bronx and other traditional destinations (such as New York and Kings counties in New York and Cook County in Illinois, not shown in the table) than from most places in Florida. According to the 2000 census, more than 23

¹⁴ Larry Lipman, “City Council Election Indication of Growing Hispanic Political Clout.”

¹⁵ Jorge Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move: Identities on the Island and in the United States*, and Pérez, *The Near Northwest Side Story*.

percent (22,604 persons) of all Puerto Rican-born residents of Central Florida were living in Puerto Rico in 1995.¹⁶ Hence, not only are more Puerto Ricans leaving the Island for Florida than other states, but also more are leaving those states and returning to the Island. Further analysis of census data should help to specify how many are moving within the United States.

[Reference Table 3]

Table 4 shows that three of the top ten metropolitan areas in the United States with Puerto Rican populations (Orlando, Tampa, and Miami) are in Florida. (Although not shown in the table, Ft. Lauderdale has the eleventh largest number [62,076] of Puerto Rican residents in the mainland.) Moreover, Puerto Ricans are the largest Hispanic group in Orlando and Tampa, and the second largest in Miami and Ft. Lauderdale (after Cubans). In Orlando, Puerto Ricans closely approximate the proportion of all residents (9-10 percent) in New York City. As Tony Suárez, the second Puerto Rican elected to the state legislature, has quipped, “What Miami is to Cubans, Orlando soon will be to Puerto Ricans.”¹⁷ The Central Florida region is fast becoming a Puerto Rican “Mecca.”

[Reference Table 4]

Figure 2 identifies the core areas of Puerto Rican settlement in southeastern Orange and northern Osceola counties. These areas have several census tracts with large majorities of Hispanic residents, where Puerto Ricans are the dominant group. Such geographic concentrations appear to be primarily suburban housing subdivisions with extremely high densities of Puerto Rican residents, ranging from 45 to 70 percent of all Hispanics. The causes and consequences of residential segregation among Puerto Ricans in Central Florida merit further research.¹⁸ One key factor is that real estate agents actively promote these enclaves for potential homebuyers in Puerto Rico. For

¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, “5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample.”

¹⁷ Robert Friedman, “Florida Now 2nd Most Populous P.R. State,” 6.

¹⁸ In the past, the high residential segregation of Puerto Ricans in several U.S. cities was primarily due to the large proportion of persons of African origin (Douglas S. Massey and Nancy Denton, *American Apartheid: Segregation and the Making of the Underclass*). However, 2000 census data show that Puerto Ricans are much less segregated from non-Hispanic whites in Orlando and Miami than in other metropolitan areas, such as New York, Chicago,

instance, Miami-based Landstar Homes, one of the largest developers in Central Florida, has offices in San Juan and New York, specializing in communities for middle-class residents, such as Meadow Woods in Orange and Buenaventura Lakes in Osceola.

[Reference Figure 2]

The case of Meadow Woods is worthy of attention. With 3,772 Puerto Ricans (out of 11,286 residents), it is the largest Puerto Rican neighborhood in Central Florida. In 2000, the median value of a house in Meadow Woods was \$99,900 and median household income was \$46,033. Most residents described themselves as white (67 percent) and Hispanic (52.8 percent). The vast majority of housing structures (97.1 percent) were built after 1980 and most (78.8 percent) were owner-occupied.¹⁹ Such characteristics suggest a relatively privileged residential niche for Puerto Ricans in Central Florida. This is a striking profile given the history of working-class migration from the Island.

Historical Background

The earliest recorded movement of Puerto Ricans to Florida consisted of a small number of agricultural business owners who settled in the Miami area in the 1940s. Members of prominent families, especially from the Island's south coast, including the Serrallés, Roig, Ramírez de Arellano, García Méndez, and Ferré families, bought large tracts of farmland in the Everglades region, south of Lake Okeechobee. There they established the first Puerto Rican-owned sugar cane refinery in Florida, Central Fellsmore, as well as the Pan-American Bank in Miami. In 1945, they invested at least five million dollars in 80,000 acres of land. Later they imported technical personnel, including engineers, mechanics, and electricians, but not agricultural workers from the Island. According to one reporter, "several Puerto Rican families who frequently visit Miami for short stays or who have settled

Philadelphia, and Hartford (John R. Logan, "Hispanic Populations and Their Residential Patterns in the Metropolis").

¹⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, "Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000. Geographic Area: Meadow Woods CDP, Florida."

permanently in the city, have acquired over the last years no less than 100 residences, whose value fluctuates between \$10,000 and \$20,000 each.”²⁰

In 1947, a *Miami Herald* editorial hailed the Puerto Rican contribution to the city’s economic progress and well being, noting that many of the immigrants were “retired millionaires, businessmen, doctors, dentists, educators, and artists.” It also contrasted the select background of the approximately 500 Puerto Ricans living in Miami with the “working masses” from the Island that settled largely in New York.²¹ In 1957, another *Miami Herald* article recognized that Puerto Rican business owners “form a solid and respected part of the city of Miami.” An article in the Island’s major daily, *El Mundo*, claimed that Miami was “perhaps one of the U.S. communities where the Puerto Rican has achieved more rapid integration to continental everyday life.”²² Such reports suggest that many of the pioneers of Puerto Rican migration to South Florida were members of an economically privileged group.

The first large-scale movement of Puerto Ricans to Florida took place under the contract farm worker program sponsored by the Migration Division of Puerto Rico’s Department of Labor. Between the 1940s and 1960s, this program brought thousands of Puerto Ricans to mainland farms, mostly in northeastern states, recruited by U.S. agricultural businesses seeking cheap labor.²³ *El Mundo* published several articles during the 1950s about the growing presence of Puerto Ricans in Dade, Broward, and West Palm Beach counties. Most were seasonal workers specializing in the harvesting of vegetables, such as potatoes, beans, avocados, corn, tomatoes, and lettuce. During the summer, many traveled north to work in farms and returned south during the winter. In 1953, one tomato-producing company in the small town of Princeton, Florida, hired 407 Puerto Rican workers. That same year, about 3,000 Puerto Ricans were employed in Florida farms, representing one-fourth

²⁰ *El Mundo*, “Boricuas adquieren en Miami muchas casas y propiedades,” 3.

²¹ *El Mundo*, “Miami Herald dedica artículo a residentes boricuas de la ciudad;” Juan Bautista Pagán, “Boricuas se abren paso en el estado de Florida;” E. Ramírez Brau, “Grupo boricua contribuye al éxito de Miami;” Rafael Santiago Sosa, “Agricultura de la Isla crece en la Florida.”

²² *El Mundo*, “Boricuas en Miami;” Germán Negroni, “Boricuas en Miami: Han logrado una rápida asimilación a sociedad.”

²³ For more details on the program, see Tom Seidl, Janet Shenk, and Adrian DeWind, “The San Juan Shuttle: Puerto Ricans on Contract.”

of all contract agricultural workers in the state.²⁴ By then, the class composition of Puerto Rican migration to South Florida had shifted predominantly toward the “working masses.”

Although most U.S. employers considered Puerto Ricans to be industrious and capable workers, an Industrial Commission set up in 1954 recommended restricting the number of Puerto Rican immigrants in Florida. Local newspapers reported many employer abuses against migrant workers and the increasing incidence of Puerto Ricans in criminal activities. An article titled “There Is a Puerto Rican Slum in Miami” denounced the miserable housing conditions of 50 migrant workers in the city’s dilapidated downtown area, which the reporter described as “worse than in the central district for blacks.” Another piece referred to the “Puerto Rican problem in South Florida” with racial segregation as potentially explosive: the problem was that Puerto Rican students did not fit well either in all-white or all-black public schools in Dade County. Many were considered members of a “third race.”²⁵ According to another source, the “Puerto Rican problem” was caused by the predominance of “field hands (*braceros*) with little schooling, who are forced to live in slums, barely learn English, and keep to themselves in clans that admit no one from the outside.”²⁶

During the 1970s, Puerto Rican government officials negotiated contracts for hundreds of seasonal workers with sugar growers in Florida, who were concerned with increasing labor union activities in the state, especially by the United Farm Workers (UFW) of America. Founded by Mexican-Americans César Chávez and Dolores Huerta in California in 1960, the UFW extended its organizing drive to Florida in 1977. According to a former chairman of the UFW Support Committee, “In previous years contracts were not negotiated because it was believed that discriminatory practices in the South would make working conditions for the Puerto Rican migrant unsupportable. The Puerto Rican Department of Labor apparently feels that these conditions no longer exist.”²⁷ Not coincidentally, Puerto Rico’s Migration Division established an office in Miami in 1978, a move that high-ranking public officials had advocated since the 1950s. The main purpose

²⁴ James F. Cunningham, “Patronos americanos elogian braceros boricuas en Florida;” *El Mundo*, “Puertorriqueños en Florida;” Rafael Santiago Rosa, “Desalojan en Florida a miles de boricuas.”

²⁵ See Don Reynolds, “Sur de Florida ‘tiene problema puertorriqueño;’” *El Mundo*, “Hay un arrabal de boricuas en Miami;” “Migración a Florida.”

²⁶ *El Mundo*, “Boricuas en Miami.”

²⁷ Felipe Rivera, “The Puerto Rican Farmworker: From Exploitation to Unionization.”

of this office was to stimulate the recruitment of agricultural contract workers from Puerto Rico in Florida. A secondary goal was to promote U.S. tourism, commerce, and investment in the Island.²⁸

Puerto Rican migration to Central Florida began in earnest in the late 1960s, when hundreds of islanders acquired properties near the Orlando area, particularly in the city of Deltona in Volusia County. Many bought land and houses with the intention of retiring in the area. During that period, advertisements in Spanish-language newspapers on the Island began to announce extremely cheap lots in Central Florida. Among others, the Sentinel Realty Agency sold homes to clients in Puerto Rico. The agency was the local representative of Mackie Brothers, a Floridian firm that developed this project under the name of Deltona Corporation. The movement of Puerto Ricans to Central Florida in the late 1960s coincided with widespread media coverage of real estate scams in Florida where out-of-state individuals were sold swampland and other properties unfit for future construction and development. Thus, the Sentinel Realty Agency paid for a group of Puerto Rican journalists to visit the Deltona homes and lots to reassure potential buyers.²⁹ The agency even started organizing three- and four-day excursions from Puerto Rico to Deltona so that prospective buyers could see the lots and homes firsthand.³⁰

In 1971, the opening of Walt Disney's first theme park in Orlando spurred real estate speculation in the region, and middle-class residents of the Island saw a lucrative investment opportunity there.³¹ According to one journalist, "The first wave of Puerto Ricans to settle here [in the Orlando area] were largely retirees attracted to the quiet, safer lifestyle portrayed in Central Florida at a time when the island, and particularly San Juan, was experiencing a sharp increase in crime."³² Later, the migrant stream broadened to other Puerto Rican communities in New York, New Jersey, and Illinois. By 1980, the census found that 6,796 persons of Puerto Rican origin were living in Orange County.³³

The vast surge in Puerto Rican migration from both the Island and the mainland started in the mid-1980s. By then, small Puerto Rican enclaves had emerged in several counties, particularly

²⁸ *El Mundo*, "Apoyan tener oficina de la Isla en Miami."

²⁹ Rafael López Rosas, "Puertorriqueños 'invaden' Florida: Muchos adquieren terrenos allí."

³⁰ *El Mundo*, "Una de las mejores inversiones de su vida." The advertisement indicated that the cost of a four-day excursion was \$119.00.

³¹ Rafael López Rosas, "Puertorriqueños 'invaden' Florida: Muchos adquieren terrenos allí."

³² Lipman, "City Council Election."

³³ U.S. Census Bureau, *1980 Census of Population*.

Osceola and Orange. New migrants had an easier time finding temporary housing with established relatives, following their leads into potential job opportunities, and visiting local stores that sold Puerto Rican products and food. Local government agencies also began to notice the increasing influx of migrants. For example, officials from the Orange County Public Schools were in communication with representatives from the Miami branch of the Commonwealth's Migration Division as early as 1982, trying to obtain more information regarding the growing number of Puerto Ricans in their school district.³⁴

Real estate advertisements continued to appear in newspapers in Puerto Rico and New York encouraging the purchase of affordable houses in Central Florida. In Orlando and Osceola, a new player in the real estate business—Landstar Homes—started to aggressively market home sales. Landstar, which developed such important neighborhoods as Meadow Woods and Buenaventura Lakes, opened sales offices in both New York and Puerto Rico in 1989 to pitch sales and book tours for potential buyers. Thousands of Puerto Ricans were introduced to Central Florida through the marketing efforts of Landstar and other real estate companies that quickly imitated their efforts.³⁵

Between 1990 and 2000, the city of Orlando experienced the largest increase (142 percent) in the number of Puerto Ricans stateside.³⁶ Today, Orlando is the fourth-largest metropolitan area for Puerto Ricans in the United States, after such well-established centers of the diaspora as New York City, Philadelphia, and Chicago. Puerto Ricans have developed countless cultural and social organizations over the last fifteen years, adding to the ethnic diversity of Central Florida.

A Contemporary Socioeconomic Portrait

The following sections describe the main socioeconomic characteristics (gender, age, race, education, occupation, industry, income, and business ownership) of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida, compared to the entire United States, New York City, and Puerto Rico. We also break down the data

³⁴ See February 11th, 1982 letter from Linda Medina, Program Assistant for Documentation, Orange County Public Schools to officials in Miami. Offices of the Government of Puerto Rico in the United States, Miami Regional Office.

³⁵ Telephone interview with Raymond Alonso, December 2, 2004. Landstar hired Mr. Alonso in 1988 to oversee sales in Puerto Rico and New York City, a position he kept until 1995. He remains active in the Central Florida Hispanic business community.

³⁶ Angelo Falcón, *Atlas of Stateside Puerto Ricans*, 6.

by birthplace, to capture some of the main differences between first- and second-generation Puerto Ricans. The data are drawn primarily from the Public Use Microdata Areas (PUMAs) of the 2000 Census of Population and Housing. PUMA files provide state-level census data for a 5-percent sample of people and housing units. Each PUMA contains a minimum population of 100,000 persons. Unless otherwise noted, the figures for Central Florida include Brevard, Flagler, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, and Volusia, as well as Flagler and Putnam counties. The data for New York City comprise New York, Bronx, Kings, Queens, and Richmond counties.

Gender. Figure 3 shows the gender distribution of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida, New York City, the United States, and Puerto Rico. Island-born and mainland-born residents of Central Florida have very similar proportions of males and females. Both groups approximate the percentage of each gender in Puerto Rico. They differ slightly from the more equitable distribution of males and females among Puerto Ricans in the entire United States. However, they contrast with the predominantly female population in New York City. The data show that Puerto Rican migration to Central Florida is not highly selective by sex.

[Reference Figure 3]

Age. Figure 4 shows that nearly one-third of all Puerto Ricans in Central Florida are young adults (between 25 and 44 years), compared to a similar proportion for Puerto Ricans in the entire United States and in New York City, and slightly more than one-fourth for Puerto Rico. Mainland-born Puerto Ricans are much younger than Island-born residents of Central Florida. The median age for the first group was 18 years, compared to 38 for the second group. Only 7.4 percent of the Puerto Rican population of Central Florida was aged 65 or more, but Island-born Puerto Ricans had a much larger proportion (12.6 percent) than those born in the mainland (5.4 percent). This finding confirms that an important component (though not the majority) of migrants from the Island to Central Florida consist of elderly persons.

[Reference Figure 4]

Race. In the 2000 census, more than two-thirds of Puerto Ricans in Florida classified themselves as white, the highest proportion of all states, though lower than on the Island. Inversely, a smaller proportion of Puerto Ricans in Florida than elsewhere said they were black, of some other race, or of two races.³⁷ Table 5 compares the racial distribution of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida, New York City, the entire United States, and Puerto Rico. The data show that whites are overrepresented in the migrant flow to the Orlando area, while blacks are underrepresented. In addition, the proportion of persons who said they were members of “some other race” was higher in Central Florida than in Puerto Rico. According to the census, Island-born Puerto Ricans are more likely to describe themselves as white and less likely to describe themselves as black than mainland-born Puerto Ricans.

[Reference Table 5]

How can this pattern be interpreted? First, the higher-class background of Puerto Rican migrants to Florida helps to explain the overrepresentation of persons of European background. Second, Puerto Ricans living in southern states such as Florida may classify themselves as white because of stronger anti-black prejudice in that region than elsewhere. Third, the presence of a large Hispanic population, especially of Cuban origin, which considers itself predominantly white, could skew the census results in favor of that racial category. In any case, the self-perception of most Puerto Ricans in Florida as white requires further reflection. How they are perceived by other groups, such as non-Hispanic whites and blacks, as well as other Latinos, merits investigation.

Education. The educational levels of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida are higher than elsewhere in the United States and Puerto Rico. In 2000, 73.6 percent of Puerto Ricans in the Orlando area had completed a high school education or more, compared to 64 percent nationwide, 60 percent on the Island, and 55.2 percent in New York City. Nonetheless, the proportion of university graduates was lower among Puerto Ricans in Central Florida (14.7 percent) than in Puerto Rico (18.3 percent), but higher than in New York City (9.1 percent) and elsewhere in the United States (13 percent) (table 6). Contrary to popular stereotypes, U.S.-born Puerto Ricans tend to be better educated than those

³⁷ Inter-University Program for Latino Research, “Race for Puerto Ricans by State.”

born on the Island. The median number of years of schooling for the former group was 13, one year more than for the latter group in Central Florida. The migrants' relatively high educational status is reflected in their ability to speak English. In the 2000 census, 63.2 percent of all Puerto Ricans in Central Florida claimed they could speak English very well, compared to 64.2 percent in New York City and only 28.1 percent in Puerto Rico.³⁸ Thus, Puerto Rican migrants to the Orlando area are drawn disproportionately among people with some college education and English language proficiency.

[Reference Table 6]

Occupation. Table 7 suggests that Puerto Rican migrants to Central Florida represent all sectors of the Island's labor force, particularly white-collar workers. In the year 2000, more than half (52.8 percent) of all Puerto Rican workers in the Orlando area (about the same as in the entire United States) were employed in administrative support, sales, professional, technical, and managerial occupations. In contrast, only 46.3 percent of Puerto Ricans in New York City were white-collar workers. Contrary to some media reports, U.S.-born Puerto Ricans in Central Florida were more concentrated in higher-status jobs than were those born in Puerto Rico. Conversely, 50.3 percent of those born on the Island had blue-collar, service, and agricultural jobs, but only 38.6 percent of those born in the mainland were found in those occupations. The occupational patterns of U.S.-born Puerto Ricans suggest that they should earn higher incomes than those born on the Island, as elaborated below.

[Reference Table 7]

Industry. Puerto Ricans in Central Florida as well as in Puerto Rico concentrate overwhelmingly in trade and services (table 8). However, Puerto Ricans in Central Florida are more likely to be employed in retail trade, professional, scientific, and technical services, transportation,

³⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, "5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample;" "American FactFinder: Ability to Speak English:

finance, insurance, and real estate, than in Puerto Rico. Conversely, a higher proportion of Puerto Ricans on the Island than in the Orlando area works in manufacturing, public administration, construction, education, health, social services, and agriculture. In New York City, Puerto Ricans are more likely to work in education, health, social services, finance, insurance, real estate, transportation, and utilities than in Central Florida. These differences are related to the structures of the labor market in each location. In particular, Orlando's tourist industry employs a much larger share (20.1 percent) of the Puerto Rican labor force in arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services than Puerto Rico's (6.5 percent) and New York's (7.7 percent).

[Reference Table 8]

Income. In 1999, 33.3 percent of all Puerto Rican families in Central Florida (as well as 33.6 percent in New York City) earned more than \$50,000 a year, compared to 25.8 percent nationwide and only 11.3 percent on the Island. Such relatively high income levels are even more impressive when one considers that average wages are lower in Florida than, say, in New York or Illinois. Table 8 shows that U.S.-born Puerto Ricans had a higher median family income (\$35,000) than Island-born Puerto Ricans (\$32,840) in Central Florida. The median family income of both groups (\$33,500) was more than double that of residents of Puerto Rico (\$16,543) and one-third higher than in New York City (\$22,201). As journalist Robert Friedman sums it up, "Puerto Ricans who have settled in and around the Orlando area are relatively well-off economically and have a higher educational level and a more thriving business community than earlier generations of Boricuas [Puerto Ricans] who settled mostly in the U.S. Northeast."³⁹

[Reference Table 9]

Business Ownership. Another index of the migrants' class selectivity is the relatively large number of Puerto Rican-owned businesses in Central Florida. According to the 2000 census, 5.4 percent of all Puerto Ricans over 15 years of age in the region were self-employed, compared to 4.2

2000."

percent in New York City and 7.7 percent in Puerto Rico.⁴⁰ In 1997, Puerto Ricans in the Orlando metropolitan area owned 2,429 businesses, primarily in the service industry, followed by transportation, communications, construction, and retail trade. Puerto Rican firms accounted for a larger share than Cuban firms of all Hispanic-owned businesses and generated sales of 117.5 million dollars.⁴¹ (See figure 5.) The Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida, based in Orlando, now has more than 300 members.

[Reference Figure 5]

This economic boom has attracted Island-based companies to the area, including Banco Popular, R & G Crown, Empresas Fonalledas, Cooperativa de Seguros Múltiples, Puerto Rican American Insurance Company (PRAICO), *El Nuevo Día*, Goya Foods, Plaza Gigante, Ana G. Méndez Educational Foundation, Inter-American University, and Polytechnic University. According to a journalistic source, about 3 percent of all enterprises based in Puerto Rico have either set up representatives or businesses in Central Florida.⁴² In addition, the Puerto Rico Chamber of Commerce has developed strong ties with the Orlando Regional Chamber of Commerce and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce of Central Florida. Such trends confirm that Puerto Ricans have established a strong entrepreneurial presence in the Orlando area.

Despite their achievements, Puerto Ricans have not attained socioeconomic parity with other major ethnic groups in Central Florida. Table 10 shows that, on average, Puerto Ricans have lower family incomes, educational levels, rates of self-employment, and proportions of managers and professionals than other Hispanics and non-Hispanics in the area. Moreover, Puerto Ricans in Central Florida are less proficient in English than the other groups. Although Puerto Ricans are doing better in the Orlando area than elsewhere in the United States, they still lag behind other local residents. In

³⁹ Friedman, "Florida Now 2nd Most Populous P.R. State," 6.

⁴⁰ U.S. Census Bureau, "5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample (PUMS): Florida;" "Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000. Geographic Area: Puerto Rico."

⁴¹ U.S. Census Bureau, "1997 Economic Census: Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses. Orlando, FL MSA;" María T. Padilla, "Hispanics Lead New Boom."

⁴² Cherie Faircloth, "Puerto Rican Businesses Boost Central Florida;" Marvin Fonseca, "Crecen las empresas de origen boricua;" Friedman, "Stateside Puerto Ricans Fare Well, Study Says;" Jill Krueger, "Puerto Rican Chamber of Commerce Makes Deal to Grow;" Carla M. Osorio, "Explosión de negocios hispanos;" Walter Pacheco, "State Hispanic Chamber Conference Comes to Life."

particular, Puerto Ricans are less privileged than Cubans and other Hispanics (apart from Mexicans) on most indices of socioeconomic status. This finding deserves further study.

[Reference Table 10]

Political Incorporation

Puerto Rican migration to the Orlando area is not only economically but politically significant. By most accounts, Puerto Ricans in Central Florida have become a swing vote that could decide local, state, and even presidential elections. The mass media have paid much attention to the increasing strength of the Democratic Party in Central Florida, largely due to the support of Puerto Ricans and other non-Cuban Hispanics, in contrast to the predominantly Republican Cubans of South Florida.⁴³ According to journalistic sources, more than 60 percent of Puerto Rican voters in Florida favored the Democratic candidate, Al Gore, in the 2000 presidential elections. As Democratic Party consultant Jeffrey Farrow has quipped, “If Gore had gotten 600 more votes in Florida, he would [have been] president.”⁴⁴

The Puerto Rican electorate centered in Orlando, Tampa, and Miami has become one of the most important political battlegrounds between Democrats and Republicans. The 2004 presidential campaign targeted the Puerto Rican constituency in Central Florida as crucial to winning the elections.⁴⁵ According to recent polls, Puerto Ricans in Florida supported Senator John Kerry over President George W. Bush by a margin of two to one.⁴⁶ Unfortunately, little is known about the political attitudes and activities of Puerto Ricans in Florida from a social scientific perspective. We hope that a survey of voting patterns in Central Florida sponsored by the Orlando Regional Chamber of Commerce will shed light on this topic.

⁴³ A sampling of recent political reporting about Puerto Ricans in Central Florida would include Dahleen Glanton, “Hispanics Turn Florida into More of a Swing Vote;” Ryan Lizza, “Orlando Dispatch;” Susan Milligan, “In Florida, Different Latino Groups Now in Mix;” and *Puerto Rico Herald*, “Puerto Rican Vote May Determine Presidential Election.”

⁴⁴ Quoted by Friedman, “P.R. Vote in Florida Seen as Crucial in '04,” 5.

⁴⁵ Friedman, “P.R. Vote in Florida Seen as Crucial in '04;” Mark Silva, “Hispanic Democrats on the Rise;” and Ken Thomas, “Florida Hispanics Targeted during Upcoming Elections.”

⁴⁶ Robert Friedman, “Exit Polls Show Kerry the Favorite for Stateside Puerto Ricans;” Joaquim Utset, “Más de la mitad de los electores hispanos de Florida apoya a Bush.”

It is well known that most Puerto Ricans in the United States have traditionally voted for the Democratic Party. In a Hispanic population dominated by Cuban Republicans, the growing Puerto Rican presence might alter Florida's electoral map. However, the Puerto Rican population boom has not yet translated into proportional representation in state politics. Surely, the political incorporation of recent immigrants from the Island will take some time because they need to learn the ropes by participating in multiple elections, voting for judges, school boards, and county commissions. In 1966, Puerto Rican-born Maurice Ferré became the first Puerto Rican State Representative in Florida and served as Mayor of Miami between 1973 and 1985, but he lost the elections to a Cuban candidate in 2001 and then again in 2004. At the time of this writing, only two other Puerto Ricans (Democrat Tony Suárez, elected in 1998, and Republican John P. Quiñones, elected in 2002) had served on the Florida House of Representatives. In addition, three Puerto Ricans had been elected as members of county commissions or city councils: Mildred Fernández (Orange County), Edward Martínez (Winter Springs), and Mickey Rosado (Cape Coral). Unsurprisingly, Puerto Ricans have been described as the sleeping giant of Florida politics. Although their numbers might give them a growing political clout, it is too early to tell when and how that change will take place.⁴⁷

Regarding Puerto Rico's political status, Puerto Ricans in the mainland are as sharply divided as on the Island. Some sources have suggested that the statehood movement is more popular among Puerto Ricans in Florida than elsewhere.⁴⁸ However, a recent poll sponsored by *El Nuevo Día Orlando* found that 48 percent of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida favored the current Commonwealth status, while 42 percent supported statehood and 5 percent independence.⁴⁹ Still, the impact of mainland Puerto Ricans on Island politics remains uncertain. At this point, participation in Puerto Rican elections, referenda, and plebiscites is restricted to Island residents (including naturalized U.S. citizens of non-Puerto Rican origin). Nonetheless, the constitutional requirement of Island residence for public office was recently tested in a legal case against former Governor Pedro Rosselló's bid for reelection. (The Island's Supreme Court dismissed the case on the grounds that Rosselló had filed his income tax returns in Puerto Rico as well as in Massachusetts, Maryland, and Virginia.) Beyond the technical distinction between residing on the Island or in the mainland, a key political challenge for

⁴⁷ Lipman, "City Council Election Indication of Growing Hispanic Political Clout," and Louise Story, "Hispanos de Osceola son como un gigante soñoliento."

⁴⁸ See, for example, PROFESA, "Survey of Members."

Puerto Ricans abroad is how to participate effectively in Puerto Rican affairs, including the thorny question of self-determination. So far, Puerto Ricans living in Florida, as well as in other states, have been barred from voting on the Island (unless they maintain a second residence there). Still, the media reported that many Puerto Ricans who are still registered to vote in Puerto Rico traveled from Orlando to participate in the 2004 election. Some political analysts have suggested that given the close margin of the gubernatorial election—less than 4,000 votes—, those Puerto Ricans who left for Florida could have tilted the election results. More research is needed about this topic before conclusive analysis can be made.

Cultural Identities

As already noted, Puerto Rican migration to Central Florida is part of the increasing heterogeneity of the Hispanic population, state as well as nationwide. Although Cubans still dominate the economic, political, and cultural landscape of Hispanic Florida, other groups—such as Puerto Ricans, Colombians, Nicaraguans, Mexicans, Venezuelans, and Dominicans—have expanded their presence in the state. The growing mix of Hispanics in Florida has multiple cultural consequences, of which we would like to underline six:

Popular Culture. No single ethnic group will be able to impose its own values and practices like Cubans did in Miami for several decades since 1960. Hence, Florida's popular culture may now be truly Latino for the first time. Language, food, sports, music, and dance are increasingly being Latinized in the sense that groups of various Latin American origins are contributing their values and customs to the Latino mosaic. For example, the number and variety of cultural events (such as parades and festivals) sponsored by Puerto Rican community organizations have multiplied in tandem with their growing presence in Orlando, Tampa, and Miami. In particular, the Puerto Rican Parade of Central Florida has drawn between 15,000 and 20,000 people to downtown Orlando every

⁴⁹ *El Nuevo Día*, "Sobre el status de Puerto Rico," 80.

year since its foundation in 1992.⁵⁰ In this regard, Puerto Ricans in Central Florida are counterbalancing the “Cubanization” of South Florida, along with other Hispanics.⁵¹

Language. The Spanish spoken in Central and South Florida will be a mixture of dialects from several Caribbean, Central American, and South American countries. Differences in vocabulary, pronunciation, intonation, and other speech patterns may tend to be homogenized, but one can no longer presume to speak Spanish with a Cuban accent and expect other Spanish speakers to understand and accept that dialect as the norm. Conflicts over the “correct” form of Spanish may intensify in the near future, as they have between Mexicans and Puerto Ricans in Chicago. In New York City, the convergence of various Spanish American dialects, especially from Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Mexico, suggests that Latinos increasingly think of themselves as part of a broader pan-ethnic community.⁵²

Education. The need for bilingual education and other public services for Spanish speakers in Central Florida will rise as a result of continuing immigration from Puerto Rico and other Latin American countries.⁵³ Several school districts in the region are now receiving thousands of new Hispanic arrivals, particularly from Puerto Rico and Mexico. For example, in 2001-02, 39.3 percent of all students in Osceola County and 24.3 percent in Orange were Hispanic. In 2002-03, Hispanics had higher school dropout rates (3.6 percent) than other groups, such as non-Hispanic whites (2.5 percent) and Asians (1.8 percent). A serious challenge is that most children raised in Puerto Rico are not fluent in English when they arrive in Florida. In 2000-01, for example, 21.1 percent of all “language enriched pupils” in Orange County were Puerto Rican. Hence, local public schools are recruiting bilingual teachers and staff members in an effort to reduce Hispanic dropout rates.

⁵⁰ Raphael Cosme, “Puerto Ricans: Making Their Mark in Florida;” Melissa Harris, “A Day to Celebrate;” María Padilla, “Minorities’ TV Presence Draws Fire.”

⁵¹ In *The Cubanization and Hispanicization of Metropolitan Miami*, Thomas D. Boswell uses the term “Cubanization” to refer to the increasing presence of Cubans in Miami, and “Hispanicization” to refer to the growing diversity of the national origins of the Hispanic population in that city.

⁵² In *Latino Crossings*, De Genova and Ramos-Zayas dwell on the tensions between Chicago’s Mexicans and Puerto Ricans, while Ricardo Otheguy and Ana Celia Zentella, who have conducted fieldwork with Latinos in New York City, suggest a more positive outlook for the “blending” of different dialects (see Janny Scott, “In Simple Pronouns, Clues to Shifting Latino Identity”).

⁵³ See Boswell, “Implications of Demographic Changes in Florida’s Public School Population.”

However, in 2001-02, only 11.2 percent of all instructional staff in Orange and 18.1 percent in Osceola were Hispanic.⁵⁴

Religion. The growing Puerto Rican presence in Central Florida will have an impact on the area's churches, both Catholic and Protestant. Although most Puerto Ricans have traditionally been Catholic, an increasing number are Protestants and members of other denominations.⁵⁵ In the Orlando area as well as on the Island, many attend Pentecostal churches, more than 200 of which now belong to the Hispanic Church Association of Central Florida. Numerous congregations currently offer religious services in Spanish, including readings, preaching, and musical lyrics. In 1999, the Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in East Orlando began providing services in Spanish for more than one hundred people. Similarly, St. Isaac Jogues Catholic Church in southeast Orange County offers bilingual masses for Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics, as well as radio programming in Spanish. Local churches also support a host of social programs in Spanish, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, a family crisis support center, cancer support groups, Boy Scouts, and youth groups.⁵⁶ As in other Puerto Rican communities throughout the United States, religious institutions of various denominations have helped to reaffirm the migrants' cultural identities, as well as to adapt to a new environment.

Intermarriage and the Second Generation. The quality and extent of social interaction among different Hispanic groups will largely determine whether a new, hybrid identity emerges beyond their national origins. For instance, Puerto Ricans are increasingly marrying members of other ethnic and racial groups, especially other Hispanics. Growing Hispanic intermarriage rates in Orlando, Miami, and Tampa can create a new second generation that may well identify itself with a broader, pan-Latino category, as it has in other places. In New York City, Puerto Ricans marry Dominicans more often than Cubans. In Miami, Puerto Ricans are more likely to marry Cubans than

⁵⁴ For journalistic coverage and editorial opinions on the educational status of Puerto Ricans in central Florida, see Pacheco, "Hispanics Filling Up More Classrooms;" Padilla, "Hispanic Dropouts Trouble Educators;" and Leslie Postal and Tania deLuzuriaga, "Teaching English to Puerto Ricans Is Put to Test." The statistics cited in this paragraph come from the Florida Department of Education, "Dropout Demographics in Florida's Public Schools, and Dropout Rates," "Office of Multicultural Student Language Education—Statistics," and "Profiles of Florida School Districts 2001-02." Many of these statistics are now available as a result of the implementation of the 1990 League of Latin American Citizens (LULAC), et al. v. State Board of Education, et al. Consent Decree.

⁵⁵ On the religious affiliations of Puerto Ricans in Orlando, see Susan E. Eichenberger, "Where Two or More Are Gathered: The Inclusion of Puerto Ricans in Multiethnic Latino Parishes in Southeastern United States."

in Orlando.⁵⁷ Is this trend simply a function of the size of each Hispanic community in these metropolitan areas? Or does it reflect broader trends in the relations between groups of various national origins?

Interethnic Relations. Finally, the growing linguistic and cultural presence of Hispanics in Florida might fuel tensions with other established groups, such as non-Hispanic whites and blacks. Along with frictions arising from competition in the labor and housing markets as well as for political power, one can anticipate that relations between Hispanics and non-Hispanics will be increasingly explosive. For instance, many African Americans feel displaced by the massive influx of Spanish-speaking newcomers. This pattern of interethnic rivalry has been well documented in Miami, with its growing mix of Cubans, other Latinos, Anglos, African Americans, Jews, and Haitians.⁵⁸ How Puerto Ricans in Orlando fit within this larger multiethnic picture awaits analysis.

Toward a New Research Agenda

We would like to suggest eight key areas for further research on Puerto Rican migration to Central Florida:

1. *The health status of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida.* Unfortunately, we have been unable to locate any recent databases on health outcomes among Puerto Ricans in the Orlando area. However, a study based on the National Health Interview Survey, conducted between 1992 and 1995, found that Puerto Ricans fared worse than other Hispanics in the U.S. mainland on most health indicators. For example, Puerto Ricans were more likely than Cubans or Mexicans to report an activity limitation, fair or poor health, seeing a physician in the previous year, spending more days in bed because of illness, losing days from school or work, and staying in the hospital. The study's authors noted that the role of health insurance or access to health care was unclear in explaining these

⁵⁶ Mark Silva, "Church Sanctuary Is Center of Political Battleground;" Robert Hainlen *et al.*, "The Orlando Puerto Rican Community."

⁵⁷ Greta A. Gilbertson, Joseph P. Fitzpatrick, and Lijun Yang, "Hispanic Inter-marriage in New York City: New Evidence from 1991;" Gabriel Aquino, "Patterns of Out-Group Marriages: Puerto Ricans in the United States, 1990."

⁵⁸ Stepick *et al.*, *This Land Is Our Land*.

differences.⁵⁹ While such results have been publicly disputed, it would be useful to explore the impact of class, education, culture, language, and other variables on the health status of the Puerto Rican population in the Orlando area. In particular, we would suggest examining rates of chronic and infectious diseases, leading causes of mortality, and high health risk factors such as obesity, low rates of physical activity, smoking, substance abuse, and lack of health care coverage. Also in need for research are the access to health service delivery for Puerto Ricans and the level of cultural competency among Central Florida health care providers regarding Puerto Rican patients. Ways to provide a smooth transition in patient services between Puerto Rico and Central Florida should be explored.

2. *Other practical needs of the Puerto Rican community in Central Florida.* Among others we would stress education, housing, employment, and legal issues. For example, little is known about why Puerto Ricans in the Orlando area have higher school dropout rates than other groups. Nor is it clear why they concentrate in certain geographic areas, or to what extent they face discrimination in the labor market and the justice system due to national origin, language preference, or skin color. Detailed information on such key aspects of the experiences of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida would allow systematic comparisons with other places, such as New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia, as well as specific public policy recommendations to improve their situation in the Orlando area.

3. *The development of Puerto Rican businesses in Central Florida.* As we documented before, many Island-based companies have followed the migrants to the Orlando area. Had business-owners already accumulated capital, skills, and connections elsewhere, either on the Island or in the mainland? How did such entrepreneurs establish a niche in Central Florida? How did they compete with (or perhaps displace) other Hispanic entrepreneurs? To what extent have they begun to form an economic enclave similar to the one developed by Cubans in Miami? How have private corporations based in Puerto Rico fared in the Orlando area? What is the significance of economic transactions between Puerto Rican-owned businesses in Florida and in Puerto Rico?

4. *The creation and consolidation of transnational networks between Puerto Ricans in Central Florida and Puerto Rico.* Most academic studies have neglected the Puerto Rican situation as an example of the persistence of social, economic, political, and cultural ties across great distances

⁵⁹ National Center for Health Statistics, "Health Outcomes among Hispanic Subgroups: Data from the National

and over long periods of time.⁶⁰ How Puerto Ricans, who are U.S. citizens by birth, compare to other transnational migrants, such as Mexicans or Dominicans, most of whom are not U.S. citizens, merits further investigation. Recent research suggests that “Puerto Rican migrants [do not] engage the civic and political life of Puerto Rico in a manner demonstrably different than do other large Latino migrant populations in the politics of their nation’s origin.”⁶¹ Furthermore, like other transnational communities, stateside Puerto Ricans send large amounts of money—as much as \$1 billion per year—to their relatives on the Island.⁶² More work is needed on the socioeconomic underpinnings of Puerto Rican transnationalism. For example, how often do Puerto Ricans in Central Florida travel and make telephone calls to their relatives and friends on the Island? How many own businesses and property in Puerto Rico? How many plan to move back there in the near future? Such information would allow one to pinpoint the main differences and similarities between Puerto Ricans and other Hispanics.

5. *The maintenance of Puerto Rican cultural practices in Central Florida.* A recent study commissioned by the Puerto Rico Federal Affairs Administration (PRFAA) found that Puerto Ricans in the United States are highly acculturated in the sense of having adopted many traits from American culture, such as watching baseball, speaking English, and owning credit cards. (Many Puerto Ricans on the Island have also adopted such traits.) However, this finding begs the question of how stateside Puerto Ricans retain a separate cultural identity from Americans in their culinary, linguistic, musical, religious, and other practices. For instance, Puerto Ricans continue to celebrate patron saints’ festivals (*fiestas patronales*), Three Kings Day, and other traditional holidays in Orlando, Tampa, Ft. Lauderdale, Miami, and elsewhere.⁶³ Such festivals promote public awareness of Puerto Rico’s rich cultural heritage, as well as providing a place for the community to gather periodically and unite itself. Straight-line assimilation into mainstream American culture is not the

Health Interview Survey, 1992-95.”

⁶⁰ For exceptions to this trend, see Duany, *The Puerto Rican Nation on the Move*; Pérez, *The Near Northwest Side Story*; Maura Toro-Morn and Marixsa Alicea, “Gendered Geographies of Home: Mapping Second- and Third-Generation Puerto Ricans’ Sense of Home.”

⁶¹ Louis D. DeSipio and Adrian D. Pantoja, “Puerto Rican Exceptionalism? A Comparative Analysis of Puerto Rican, Mexican, Salvadoran, and Dominican Transnational Civic and Political Ties,” 1.

⁶² Falcón, *Atlas of Stateside Puerto Ricans*, 12.

⁶³ Friedman, “Stateside Puerto Ricans Fare Well, Study Says;” Hainlen *et al.*, “The Orlando Puerto Rican Community;” and Milton D. Carrero Galarza, “A Piece of Puerto Rico.”

preferred path for many Puerto Rican migrants. In Florida, they may well “assimilate” into a broader pan-Latino culture.

6. *The relations among Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and other Hispanics in Central Florida.*

Survey results suggest that most Puerto Ricans on the Island feel little animosity toward Cubans.⁶⁴ In San Juan, many Puerto Ricans have developed productive relations with Cuban co-workers, business associates, employers, close friends, and even spouses. However, the two groups have yet to collaborate on a shared collective agenda, either in Florida or elsewhere in the United States. That Puerto Ricans prevail in Central Florida but are a small minority in South Florida, where Cubans predominate, may add to the separation between the two communities. What are the main fault lines between Puerto Ricans and Cubans, as well as other Hispanics in the Orlando area? How do racial, cultural, class, and ideological differences shape the interaction among these groups? What is the potential for charting a common ground based on linguistic, geographic, historical, religious, or other affinities?

7. *The self-definition of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida as Hispanics or Latinos.* As noted before, this is a hotly debated issue amongst academic and policy circles. The 2002 National Survey of Latinos, conducted by the Pew Hispanic Center, found that 54 percent of those interviewed preferred to identify themselves by national origin, while 24 percent preferred the label Hispanic or Latino. Twenty-one percent chose simply “American.” Other studies have documented that ethnic, national, pan-ethnic, and transnational identities can be combined in different contexts for distinct purposes.⁶⁵ Thus, a person can simultaneously claim to be Puerto Rican, Hispanic, or Latino, as well as a member of other groups defined by age, gender, sexual orientation, race, class, and other variables. However, no one has yet examined the process of identity formation among Puerto Rican migrants in Central Florida. Nor have any studies been published on whether Puerto Ricans align themselves with other Hispanics in Orlando, Miami, or Tampa.

8. *The relations between Island-born and mainland-born Puerto Ricans.* According to an Island-born Puerto Rican leader in Orlando, “We’re all Puerto Rican, but we don’t speak the same language and besides [those who arrive now] don’t want to be with those who are already here.

⁶⁴ Duany, “Two Wings of the Same Bird? Contemporary Puerto Rican Attitudes toward Cuban Immigrants.”

Puerto Ricans from New York aren't interested in being with those who come from the Island, and at the same time aren't united among themselves."⁶⁶ To what extent does this statement reflect the attitudes of most Puerto Ricans from the Island toward those born on the mainland? This subject should be thoroughly investigated, for it lies at the heart of the major generational, linguistic, racial, and class rifts within Puerto Rican communities, not only in Central Florida, but also elsewhere. Indeed, the politically loaded question of who is Puerto Rican is constantly raised in the diaspora, as much as on the Island. For our part, we are convinced that birthplace, residence, language, or citizenship can no longer be used as exclusive markers of national identity, especially in the context of massive transnational migration. Puerto Ricans in the United States have increasingly redefined their identities in non-territorial and non-linguistic terms, including national origin, family background, cultural practices, and emotional ties.⁶⁷

Conclusion

The settlement patterns of Puerto Ricans in the United States have shifted greatly over the past few decades. Whereas New York had been the primary destination during the 1940s and 1950s, Florida became the favorite location of Puerto Rican migrants during the 1990s. In particular, the Orlando metropolitan area has attracted the largest number of recent Puerto Rican migrants, both from the Island and other parts of the United States. In Central Florida, Puerto Ricans are highly concentrated in certain counties, such as Orange and Osceola, and certain districts, especially Kissimmee. Even though Puerto Ricans cluster in some neighborhoods, such as Meadow Woods and Buenaventura Lakes, their residential encapsulation is not primarily due to racial or class segregation from middle-class whites and blacks. Rather, it is the result of recruitment practices by real estate agents as well as informal kinship and friendship networks among migrants.

Although Puerto Ricans have been moving to Florida at least since the 1940s, they did not relocate there in large numbers until the 1980s. The main impetus for this new population flow was

⁶⁵ Pew Hispanic Center, "2002 National Survey of Latinos;" for two different positions on the emergence of a pan-ethnic consciousness among Latinos, see De Genova and Ramos-Zayas, *Latino Crossings*, and Ricourt and Danta, *Hispanas de Queens*.

⁶⁶ Fonseca, "Persiste la falta de unidad borincana," 5.

⁶⁷ See Ana Celia Zentella, *Growing Up Bilingual: Puerto Rican Children in New York*.

the rapid expansion of the Orlando metropolitan area after the establishment of Disney World and other tourist attractions. Puerto Ricans from both the Island and the mainland began to resettle in and around Orlando looking for jobs, lower-cost housing, and a higher quality of life. Today, most are young adults and high school graduates, who describe themselves as white. The majority is employed as white-collar workers in the service sector and earns higher family incomes than in Puerto Rico, New York City, and elsewhere in the United States. Their socioeconomic characteristics differ substantially from those of earlier migrants from the Island to the mainland.

The data presented in this report suggest that Puerto Ricans in Central Florida may follow a distinct path from other Puerto Rican communities in the United States. For one, the class background of recent migrants is much more favorable than previous migrant waves from the Island, although they still lag behind most groups of Hispanics and non-Hispanics. For another, Puerto Ricans in the Orlando area are more likely to establish their own businesses and advance occupationally than in New York City. Politically, they are poised to influence both the Democratic and Republican parties as a key electoral bloc in a highly contested state. Culturally, they are increasing Florida's ethnic diversity, along with other Hispanics. Unlike some regions that received Puerto Rican migrants in the past, such as the Northeast and the Midwest, Central Florida has no history of receiving and engaging a large migratory influx (particularly of individuals who speak a language other than English). Puerto Ricans are the first large group to challenge the area's relatively homogenous cultural makeup. Because Puerto Rican migration to Central Florida is so recent, it has not yet received sustained academic attention. We hope that this report will stimulate further work on the growing Puerto Rican presence in the Orlando area. We strongly recommend establishing a local task force of concerned scholars and policymakers to develop, monitor, and implement this research agenda.

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Table 1
Geographic Distribution of the Puerto Rican Population in the United States,
by State, 1960-2000 (Percentages in Parentheses)

	<i>1960</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>
California	28,108 (3.1)	50,929 (3.6)	93,038 (4.6)	126,417 (4.6)	140,570 (4.1)
Connecticut	15,247 (1.7)	37,603 (1.9)	88,361 (4.4)	146,842 (5.4)	194,443 (5.7)
Florida	19,535 (2.2)	28,166 (2.0)	94,775 (4.7)	247,010 (9.1)	482,027 (14.2)
Illinois	36,081 (4.0)	87,477 (6.1)	129,165 (6.4)	146,059 (5.4)	157,851 (4.6)
Massachusetts	5,217 (0.6)	23,332 (1.6)	76,450 (3.8)	151,193 (5.5)	199,207 (5.8)
New Jersey	55,351 (6.2)	138,896 (9.7)	243,540 (12.1)	320,133 (11.7)	366,788 (10.8)
New York	642,622 (72.0)	916,608 (64.1)	986,389 (49.0)	1,086,601 (39.8)	1,050,293 (30.8)
Ohio	13,940 (1.6)	20,272 (1.4)	32,442 (1.6)	45,853 (1.7)	66,269 (1.9)
Pennsylvania	21,206 (2.4)	44,263 (3.1)	91,802 (4.6)	148,988 (5.5)	228,557 (6.7)
Texas	6,050 (0.7)	6,333 (0.4)	22,938 (1.1)	42,981 (1.6)	69,504 (2.0)
Other states	49,156 (5.5)	75,517 (5.3)	155,045 (7.7)	265,677 (9.7)	450,669 (13.2)
<i>Total</i>	892,513 (100.0)	1,429,396 (100.0)	2,013,945 (100.0)	2,727,754 (100.0)	3,406,178 (100.0)

Sources: for 1960-1980, U.S. Census Bureau, *U.S. Census of Population: 1960; Persons of Spanish Origin by State: 1980*; for 1990-2000, “Census 2000 Summary File 1 (SF1) 100-Percent Data.”

Table 2
Population of Puerto Rican Origin in Florida, by County, 2003

	<i>Estimated number of persons</i>	<i>As percent of Puerto Ricans in state</i>	<i>As percent of all Hispanics in county</i>	<i>As percent of all residents in county</i>
Orange	105,112	18.4	51.7	11.1
Miami-Dade	93,373	16.3	6.7	4.1
Hillsborough	67,706	11.8	31.6	6.4
Broward	62,076	10.9	17.8	3.6
Palm Beach	36,922	6.5	20.6	3.1
Volusia	18,974	3.3	53.6	4.2
Pinellas	18,812	3.3	37.1	2.1
Seminole	16,180	2.8	33.3	4.2
Polk	14,971	2.6	26.3	3.0
All other counties	127,960	22.3	24.9	1.9
Total	571,755	100.0	18.4	3.4

Note: The 2003 American Community Survey did not provide separate estimates of the population in Osceola County.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey: 2003 Data Profile."

Table 3
Main Destinations of Migrants between Puerto Rico
and the United States, by County, 1995-2000

	<i>Immigrants from Puerto Rico</i>	<i>Outmigrants to Puerto Rico</i>	<i>Net U.S. migration</i>
Orange, FL	14,347	4,947	9,420
Osceola, FL	7,600	600	7,000
Bronx, NY	13,853	8,534	5,319
Hillsborough, FL	6,147	1,401	4,746
Miami-Dade, FL	8,754	4,029	4,725
Hartford, CT	6,250	2,708	4,542
Broward, FL	5,170	1,058	4,112
Hamden, MA	5,580	1,864	3,716
New Haven, CT	4,897	1,761	3,136
Philadelphia, PA	6,017	2,946	3,071
Other	164,358	82,940	80,398
Total	242,973	112,788	130,185

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "Migration between Counties in the United States and Puerto Rico: 1995 to 2000."

Table 4
Top Ten Metropolitan Areas with Puerto Rican Residents
in the United States, 2003

	<i>Estimated number of Puerto Ricans</i>	<i>As percent of Hispanics</i>	<i>As percent of total population</i>
New York, NY	923,682	37.7	10.0
Philadelphia, PA	166,632	62.1	3.3
Chicago, IL	166,305	10.5	1.9
Orlando, FL	161,426	47.4	9.1
Tampa-St. Petersburg- Clearwater, FL ^a	97,805	32.5	3.9
Miami, FL	93,373	6.7	4.1
Newark, NJ	81,741	26.9	4.0
Hartford, CT	75,296	64.8	6.5
Boston, MA	72,606	33.2	2.2
Bergen-Passaic, NJ	66,305	24.7	4.8

^a The 2003 American Community Survey did not provide separate data for Tampa alone.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "American Community Survey: 2003 Data Profile."

Table 5
Race of Puerto Ricans in Central Florida, New York City, the United States,
and Puerto Rico, According to the Census, 2000
(in Percentages)

	<i>Central Florida</i>		<i>N.Y.C.</i>	<i>Entire U.S.</i>	<i>Puerto Rico</i>	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>P.R.-Born</i>				<i>U.S.-Born</i>
White	63.0	67.7	57.3	43.6	46.4	80.5
Black or African American	3.0	2.3	3.9	7.9	6.4	8.0
American Indian or Alaska Native	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.4
Asian	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.3
Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.3	0.0
Some other race	27.1	24.4	30.4	41.5	38.2	6.8
Two or more races	6.2	5.1	7.7	6.1	7.6	4.2
Total	100.0	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The total for the fourth column does not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

Sources: Inter-University Program for Latino Research, "Race for Puerto Ricans by State;" U.S. Census Bureau, "5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample: Florida;" "Profile of General Demographic Characteristics for Puerto Rico: 2000."

Table 6
Educational Attainment of Puerto Ricans
in Central Florida, New York City, the United States, and Puerto Rico, 2000
(in Percentages)

	<i>Central Florida</i>			<i>N.Y.C.</i>	<i>Entire U.S.</i>	<i>Puerto Rico</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>P.R.-born</i>	<i>U.S.-born</i>			
Less than 9 th grade	10.0	20.0	12.8	3.3	17.5	25.4
9 th to 12 th grade, no diploma	16.4	24.8	17.0	15.0	18.1	14.6
High school graduate	25.4	25.2	25.4	25.3	29.5	22.3
Some college or associate degree	33.5	20.2	29.9	42.1	21.9	19.4
Bachelor's degree	10.9	6.0	11.1	10.8	8.6	13.6
Graduate or professional degree	3.8	3.1	3.9	3.5	4.4	4.7
Total	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.0	100.0	100.0

Note: The percentages refer to persons 25 years and over. The total for the fourth column does not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample;" "Current Population Survey: March 2000;" "Profile of Selected Social Characteristics: 2000. Geographic Area: Puerto Rico."

Table 7
Occupational Distribution of Puerto Ricans
in Central Florida, New York City, the United States, and Puerto Rico, 2000
(in Percentages)

	<i>Central Florida</i>		<i>N.Y.C.</i>	<i>Entire U.S.</i>	<i>Puerto Rico</i>	
	<i>Total</i>	<i>P.R.-born</i>				<i>U.S.-born</i>
<i>Executive, administrative, and managerial</i>	8.8	7.4	10.2	7.8	7.8	9.9
Professional and technical	11.4	13.8	14.4	12.7	12.2	17.5
Sales	13.7	11.8	15.6	10.1	12.6	12.7
Administrative support	18.9	16.7	21.1	15.7	19.4	15.2
<i>Precision production, craft, and repair</i>	4.8	4.8	4.4	3.6	10.0	4.6
<i>Operators, fabricators, and laborers</i>	23.3	16.1	21.1	16.6	19.1	22.9
Service	20.7	21.9	17.2	33.3	18.2	16.2
Agricultural	0.6	0.3	0.9	0.1	0.7	1.1
Total	100.0	99.9	100.0	99.9	100.0	100.0

Note: The percentages refer to employed persons over 16 years of age. The totals for the third and fifth columns do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, “5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample;” “Current Population Survey: March 2000;” “Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000. Geographic Area: Puerto Rico.”

Table 8
Industrial Distribution of Puerto Ricans
in Central Florida, New York City, the United States, and Puerto Rico, 2000
(in Percentages)

	<i>Central Florida</i>			<i>N.Y.C.</i>	<i>Entire U.S.</i>	<i>Puerto Rico</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>P.R.-Born</i>	<i>U.S.-born</i>			
Agriculture and mining	0.7	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.5	1.7
Construction	5.4	5.5	5.1	4.2	3.6	8.6
Manufacturing	8.3	9.8	5.9	7.9	14.6	13.5
Trade	18.1	16.9	20.2	15.4	22.6	16.1
Transportation and utilities	8.9	9.0	8.7	9.4	7.3	4.2
Finance, insurance, and real estate	7.1	6.8	7.5	10.0	8.6	5.0
Public administration	4.1	3.6	4.9	5.3	3.8	10.7
Professional, scientific, and technical services	8.4	8.0	9.0	9.0	10.3	9.0
Education, health, and social services	15.2	14.9	15.6	25.6	21.7	19.3
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	19.4	20.1	18.2	7.7	2.5	6.5
Other services	4.4	4.9	3.8	5.4	4.4	5.4
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	99.9	99.9	100.0

Note: The percentages refer to employed persons over 16 years of age. The totals for the fifth and sixth columns do not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, “5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample;” “Current Population Survey: March 2000;” “Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000. Geographic Area: Puerto Rico.”

Table 9
Family Income of Puerto Ricans
in Central Florida, New York City, the United States, and Puerto Rico, 1999
(in Percentages)

	<i>Central Florida</i>			<i>N.Y.C.</i>	<i>Entire U.S.</i>	<i>Puerto Rico</i>
	<i>Total</i>	<i>P.R.-born</i>	<i>U.S.-born</i>			
Less than \$10,000	5.6	5.8	5.2	16.9	15.7	31.4
10,000-14,999	5.3	5.8	5.2	9.1	9.3	14.9
15,000-24,999	16.5	17.1	15.4	13.5	18.7	20.1
25,000-49,999	39.3	39.8	38.2	27.0	30.6	22.3
50,000 and over	33.3	31.8	36.3	33.6	25.8	11.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.1	100.0	100.0
Median family income	\$33,500	\$32,840	\$35,000	\$22,201	\$23,646	\$16,543

Note: The total for the fifth column does not add up to 100 percent because of rounding.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, “5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample;” “Current Population Survey: March 2000;” “Profile of Selected Economic Characteristics: 2000. Geographic Area: Puerto Rico.”

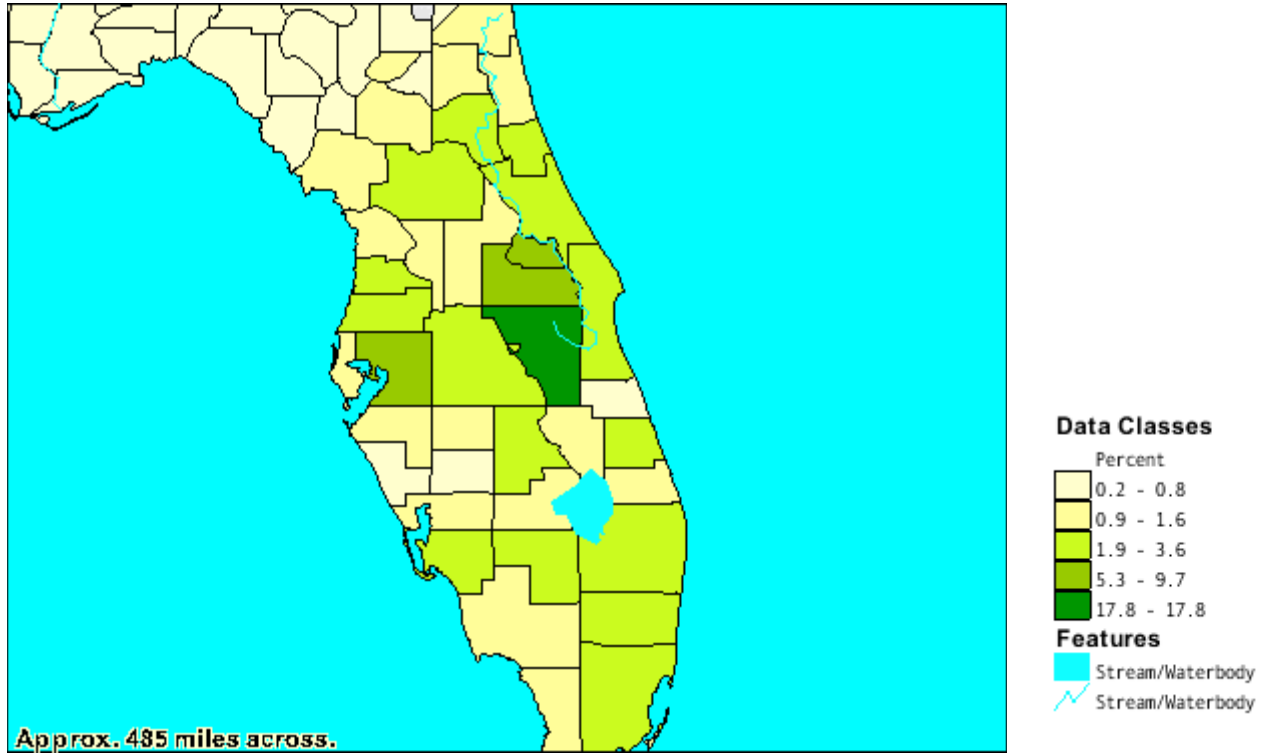
Table 10
Selected Socioeconomic Characteristics
of Puerto Ricans, Other Hispanics, and Non-Hispanics in Central Florida, 2000

	<i>Puerto Ricans</i>	<i>Cubans</i>	<i>Mexicans</i>	<i>Other Hispanics</i>	<i>Non-Hispanics</i>
Median family income (U.S.\$)	33,500	47,600	29,100	37,000	37,900
Percent of families with incomes above \$50,000	33.3	63.4	43.0	63.4	50.6
Median years of schooling	12	14	12	13	13
Percent of college graduates	14.8	30.9	16.3	21.5	21.9
Percent able to speak English very well	63.2	83.0	71.3	81.9	78.3
Percent self-employed	4.4	8.7	6.6	5.5	10.0
Percent employed in managerial and professional occupations	18.8	35.5	18.2	23.1	29.4

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample."

Figure 1

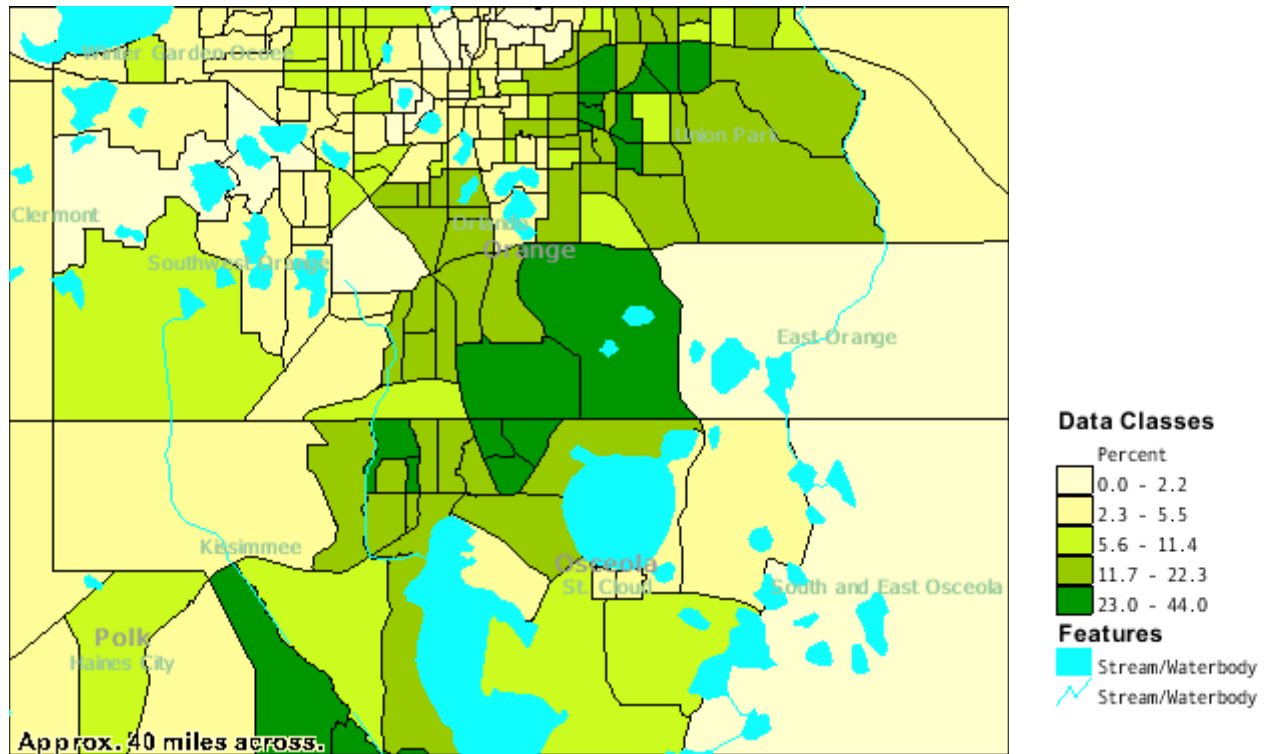
Geographic Distribution of the Puerto Rican Population in Florida, 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, “American Factfinder: Thematic Maps. Percent of Persons Who Are Puerto Rican: 2000.”

Figure 2

Top Areas of Puerto Rican Settlement in Central Florida, 2000

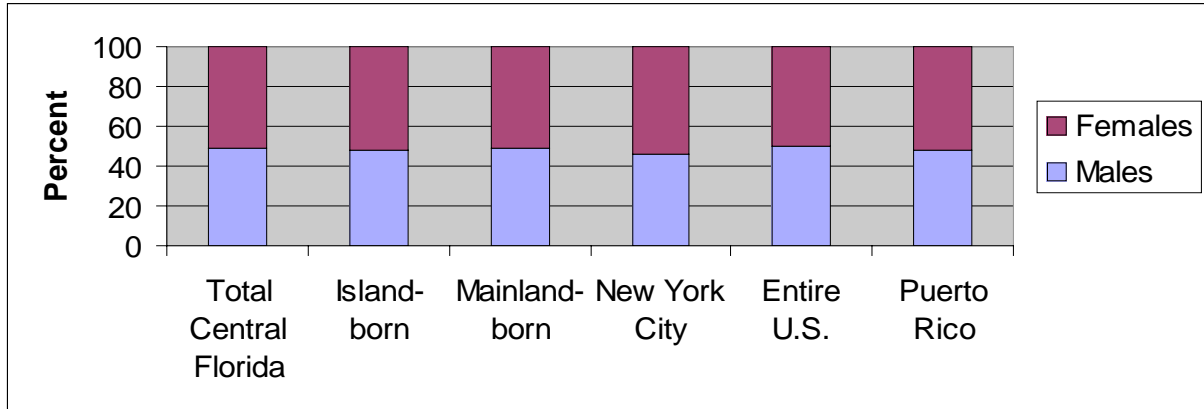


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "American Factfinder: Thematic Maps. Percent of Persons Who Are Puerto Rican: 2000."

Figure 3

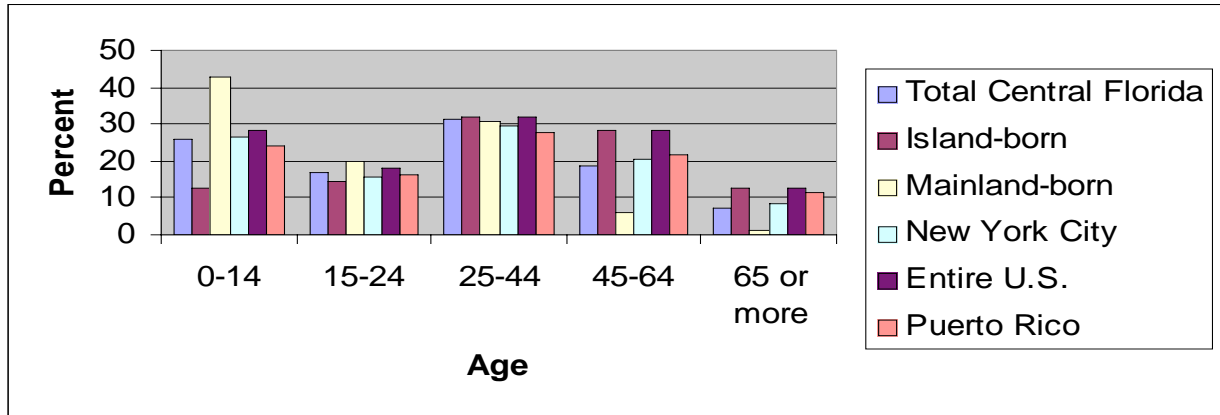
Gender Distribution of Puerto Ricans

in Central Florida, New York City, the United States, and Puerto Rico, 2000



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, “5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample;” “Current Population Survey: March 2000;” “Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000. Geographic Area: Puerto Rico.”

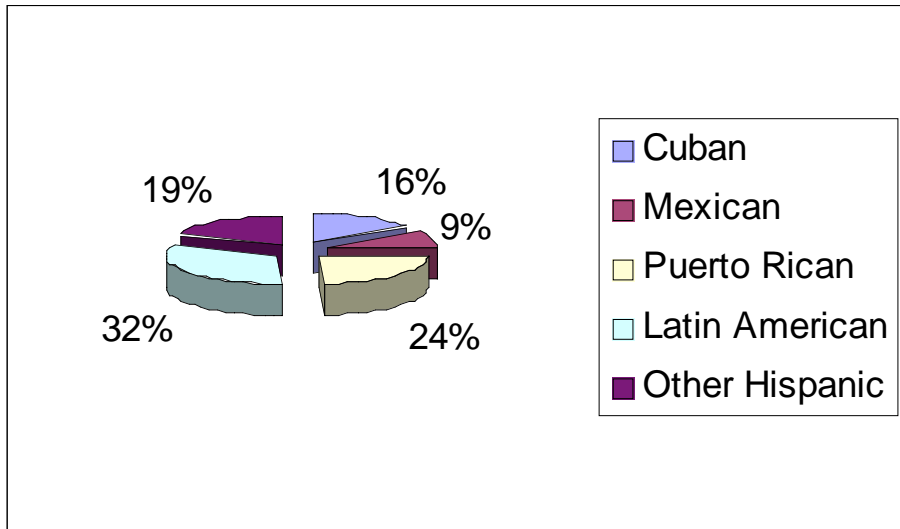
Figure 4
Age Distribution of Puerto Ricans
in Central Florida, New York City, the United States, and Puerto Rico, 2000



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, “5-Percent Public Use Microdata Sample;” “Current Population Survey: March 2000;” “Profile of General Demographic Characteristics: 2000. Geographic Area: Puerto Rico.”

Figure 5

Hispanic-Owned Business in the Orlando Metropolitan Area, 1997



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, "1997 Economic Census: Minority- and Women-Owned Businesses. Orlando, FL MSA."

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

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