History

How has the Latino population of New York City grown since the 19th century?

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Introduction

• Immigrants that came to NYC from Spanish-speaking countries began to increase during the 20th century.
• Reasons why they came were because of social, economic, and political problems occurring in their country. This increased the number of immigrants coming into New York.
• Only 508 persons who were from Mexico and South America were documented in the 1845 census. Many Latin immigrants were not counted in the census, therefore leading to such a small reported population during this time period.
• The United States started having an influence in many Latin American countries. Such programs were Operation Bootstrap in Puerto Rico, the military occupation of the Dominican Republic from 1914 to 1924, and other types of international policies.
• Within 1920 to 1930 the total number of Latins increased from 41,094 to 110,223.
• During the 1930s America experienced the Great Depression. This affected the Latino immigrant population very negatively by creating even higher unemployment rates and decreased wages.
• After the Depression, New York promoted the industrial economy and encouraged Latinos to come to New York City because of the opportunities they would receive.
• After 1950 the labor force, which was mostly filled with Western Europeans, was replaced by the growing Latino population.
• From 1960 to 1970 the Latino population in NYC surpassed 1 million.
• Many new immigrants from 1960 until the present are middle class looking for better work and refuge.
• Currently we have over 2 million Latinos in NYC.

Research Questions

• When did the Latino population start to arrive in New York City?
• How much has the Latino population increased?
• In what areas did the Latino population settle the most?
• What was the percent of Latinos in NY?
• What was the reason behind their immigration specifically to NY?

Findings

In New York City, from 1970 to 2010 different Latino groups experienced growth or decline. The Puerto Rican population increased from 1970 to 1990 but then began to drastically decrease from 98,000 to 100,000. The Cuban population has also decreased from 100,000 to nearly 600,000. Likewise, the Mexican population showed major increases since 1960. This graph is significant in showing the impact of globalization and how this influenced the rise and decline of the different populations.

Conclusion & References

The History group researched four major historical groups that have migrated to New York City. These four Latino groups are Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Cubans. Every group had a different reason as to why they came to New York. Some of these groups have increased their population, and some have decreased over time. Cubans and Puerto Ricans would be an example of the latter because their population is now decreasing, while Mexican and Dominican populations are increasing every day.

Puerto Ricans

• Puerto Ricans started to arrive in New York in large numbers in the 1940s.
• Many migrated in search of employment.
• Puerto Rican communities were established in East Harlem (Spanish Harlem) and Brooklyn.
• During the 1940s Puerto Ricans made up over 80% of New York’s entire Latino population.
• During the 1950s and 1960s the emergence of “Colinism” formed a major concentration in New York City.
• Over 4,200 were estimated to have arrived to the United States between 1946 and 1956 each year, with 85% settling in NY.
• By the 1960s 7.9% of the city’s population was Puerto Rican.
• By 1964, Puerto Rican communities made up 9.3% of the total population.

Mexicans

• Mexicans migrated to the U.S. as early as the end of the 19th century following the Mexican-American War of 1846.
• For almost 100 years Mexicanos would populate by majority the areas of Texas, Arizona, California, and as far northeast as Chicago.
• Mexicans began arriving in NYC from around 1950 to 1960.
• Mexicans are considered a historical minority within the U.S. because of the U.S. expansion that resulted from the Mexican-American War.
• Mexicans in New York City have shown an increase in population over the last 30 years, almost doubling every decade.
• Mexicans populate many areas of New York City but predominantly the borough of Queens.
• Many of the Mexican families who choose to migrate to areas of the U.S. and, as of 1970, New York City, have shown to do so based on economic needs.
• A large percentage placed upon Mexicans is “economic migrant” in which one leaves their homeland for economic reasons.

Dominicans

• Migration from the Dominican Republic began soon after the death of the Dictator Rafael Trujillo in 1961 and the U.S. invasion of Santo Domingo in 1965.
• From 1970-1974 studies show that Dominicans took jobs that no one else in New York City wanted.
• Dominicans left their homes to improve their lifestyle and increase their ability of consumption, and also because of social and economic problems.
• In 1980, over 75% of U.S. Dominicans lived in the state of New York. Almost 92% of that population was housed in New York City.
• According to the 60’s Census the number of Dominicans in the United States increased to 170,817 in 1980.
• In 1990, Dominicans were the largest Latino immigrant group in New York City with a population of 332,713.
• In 2010 the U.S. Census determined that it increased to over 1 million.
• Many Dominicans farmed in New York in 2010 below the poverty level.
• More Dominicans were deported than immigrants from all other Caribbean nations combined in 2010.

Cubans

• 1968 was when Cubanos first came to NYC in large numbers due to the war for Cuban independence.
• Cubans started to arrive in the United States in even larger numbers starting in 1959 due to the Cuban Revolution. These waves of migration resulted from an internal class struggle and Cold War confrontation.
• Cubans have a very well respected reputation as an economically successful group and have also acquired many of the leadership positions in politics.
• Most of the Cubans are located in southern Florida; 60% of the Cuban-origin population lives there because it is so close to Cuba.
• New York housed the earliest and the most numerous communities of Cubans in the 1960s, although these communities were not very big with only about 2,000 persons.
• In both Manhattan and Brooklyn there were tobacco factories and sugar refineries where Cubans worked.
• New York became an important place for Cubans economically and culturally.
• In the 2000 U.S. Census there were 1.3 million people in the U.S. who identified as being of Cuban origin or descent.

References