



Written by [Michael Tennant](#) on February 11, 2011

Time to Bury Governments Attempts to Find Pedigree of Nation of Mutts

Such is the case in the United States of America in the year 2011. With the number of multiracial Americans on the rise, government at all levels is having difficulty determining the best (read: the most politically expedient) method of determining individuals' racial identities. Count ethnicity one way and you risk the ire of the NAACP; count it another and the National Council of La Raza will have your cabeza on a platter.



The reason for this squabbling is simple. As the [New York Times explains in an article](#) on the problems of racial classification in multiracial America, "statistics on ethnicity and race are used for many important purposes. These include assessing disparities in health, education, employment and housing, enforcing civil rights protections, and deciding who might qualify for special consideration as members of underrepresented minority groups." In other words, there are power and money in belonging to one of the government's favored ethnicities.

The jockeying for power is so intense that the various federal agencies, as well as state and federal governments, cannot agree on how to categorize people. The Census Bureau, for example, began allowing individuals to select as many different ethnicities as apply to them, abandoning its old "multiracial" classification — a category to which the NAACP, says the *Times*, "vowed 'vigorous resistance' ..., concerned that such an option would diminish minority numbers, particularly blacks, in government counts."

Meanwhile, the Department of Education, on a White House-directed mission to inflate the number of Hispanics, has resurrected the old, rightly reviled "one drop of blood" rule when it comes to Hispanic ethnicity, according to the *Times*: "Any student ... who acknowledges even partial Hispanic ethnicity will, regardless of race, be reported to federal officials only as Hispanic." By contrast, "students of non-Hispanic mixed parentage who choose more than one race will be placed in a 'two or more races' category." Since the Education Department is, the paper explains, involved in "civil rights enforcement, program monitoring, and the identification and placement of students in special education" as well as "school and teacher accountability when it comes to student achievement and academic progress," its new racial classification method is likely to shift power over the education of the overwhelming majority of American children toward La Raza and other radical Hispanic activist organizations and even further



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away from state and local governments — yet another reason to seek [separation of school and state](#).

Then there's the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, which, the *Times* points out, "mandates that most companies provide an annual count of their workers by race, ethnicity and gender" so as to ensure that the "right" numbers of each group are being hired regardless of their fitness for the jobs they are doing. As bad as the predominant single-race classification is, imagine the legal thicket in which a private firm allowing employees to classify themselves in multiple racial categories might find itself.

On the other hand, an individual of multiple races could come in handy for meeting the EEOC's racial quotas. A firm with several individuals of, say, mixed black and Hispanic ancestry could plausibly claim them in either group, depending on how many of each group it needs to keep the bureaucrats off its back — a point not lost on the completely unclassifiable Michelle Lopez-Mullins, a university student of Peruvian, Chinese, Irish, Shawnee, and Cherokee descent who was interviewed by the *Times*. Lopez-Mullins, who would be classified by the Education Department as "Hispanic," the National Center for Health Statistics as "Asian," and the Census Bureau as, essentially, "all of the above," sees the whole race-classification scam for what it is:

"It's always, 'How can these multiracial individuals best benefit us? What category can we put them in to fulfill something?'" she said. "I figure there's such a large margin of error with that kind of ridiculous accounting anyway, I'm totally against it."

For years, when asked her race, she checked everything that applied: Hispanic, Asian, white and Native American. And if she is now confronted with a blank space for her race, she might challenge the form with a question of her own: "What does this tell you?"

Instead of trying to figure out one "best" way to classify Americans by race, the government should simply drop such classifications altogether and treat people as individuals, not as members of ethnic groups. Repeal laws banning discrimination by private institutions, eliminate racial set-asides, and stop giving people "special consideration as members of underrepresented minority groups." While we're at it, let's deep-six the Department of Education, the EEOC, and the National Center for Health Statistics, all of which are unconstitutional anyway.

America was founded on the principle that all men are created equal, however imperfectly the man who penned that phrase may have applied it. It's time our government lived up to that ideal.



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