

LATINO DATA PROJECT

Comparative Income Distribution Patterns Among Hispanic Households in New York City, Census 2000

Prepared by the
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Household income distribution data found in the 2000 U.S. census revealed a pattern of stark differentiation in New York City among the three principal racial/ethnic groups: Whites, African-Americans, and Hispanics or Latinos. Additionally, within the diverse Hispanic community there were sharp differences among national-origin Hispanic groups.

Of particular importance is the compelling evidence that within each Hispanic national group there was a high degree of economic stratification. This is of great significance because of the tendency to generalize about “Puerto Ricans” or “Dominicans” etc. without taking into consideration the sharp class divisions found in these New York City Hispanic nationalities.

There were also important distinctions in patterns of income distribution between the five boroughs. This report will examine the principal contours of these differentiations by focusing on the poorest and the wealthiest households.¹ It will also compare income distribution data among the six largest Hispanic national groups: Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Mexicans, Ecuadorians, Colombians, and Cubans.

Aggregated data from the five boroughs indicate that Hispanic households were among the city’s poorest, although there were clearly significant numbers of Latino households in upper income brackets. While nearly 19% of all White households earned under \$15,000 yearly, over 31% of Hispanic households were in this category, slightly more than the nearly 29% of all African-American households.

At the other end of the income hierarchy, although over 26% of all Hispanic households reported incomes of over \$50,000 yearly, the comparable percentage of African-American households was over 30%, while more than 47% of all White households earned above \$50,000. Thus, while over one-fourth of all Hispanic

¹ These are defined as those households earning below \$15,000 and above \$50,000 annually. More detailed household income data are provided in Tables 1 through 7.

Data for this article was drawn from Summary File 4, 2000 census, household income, which was for 1999. These data are not ideal for they do not reveal household size for each income category. A more accurate measure would be per capita household income. Additionally, it must be noted that there is no way to know whether these data include or exclude significant numbers of undocumented people. Regardless of their shortcomings, these data do indicate general trends in household income distribution which are in all likelihood fairly accurate. The terms Hispanic and Latino will be used interchangeably.

households were fairly well-off, an important finding of the census data, Hispanic households were slightly less likely to have higher incomes than African-American households. There was great differentiation in the percentage of wealthier Hispanic households compared with White households, although this was not significantly greater than the difference between Whites and African-Americans.

Hispanic households were generally worse off in terms of income distribution profiles in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan. Queens stands out as the one borough where household income distribution patterns were remarkably similar among White, African-American, and Latino households. In Staten Island Hispanics were much better off than African-Americans and their income distribution patterns were closer to the patterns found among White households than in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan.

Over 38% of Hispanic households earned less than \$15,000 in the Bronx, compared with nearly 30% of White and 31% of all African-American households. In Brooklyn nearly 34% of Hispanic; 30% of African-American; and 25% of White households earned less than \$15,000.

Hispanic households earning more than \$50,000 accounted for 20% of all Latino households in the Bronx while 32.3% of all White households and 26.3% of all African-American households were in this income category.

Brooklyn data exhibit a pattern similar to the Bronx: Hispanic families were among the poorest, and fewer of them were at the upper levels of the income hierarchy relative to Whites and African-Americans. Nearly 34% of all Latino households earned less than \$15,000; 30% of African-American and 26% of White households were in this income group.

Yet, nearly a quarter of all Hispanic households, 23%, earned more than \$50,000 in Brooklyn, while the comparable numbers were nearly 29% for African-American and 38% of all White households. Both the Bronx and Brooklyn data indicate the existence of solid Hispanic-origin elite groups in economic terms, despite large numbers of households living in poverty.

In Manhattan income distribution patterns for Hispanics and African-Americans were quite similar to each other and to those found in Brooklyn and the Bronx. But they were in sharp contrast with White household income profiles. Over 35% of all Latino households earned less than \$15,000 in Manhattan; 37% of African-American and only 13% of White households.

Nearly identical percentages, 23%, of Hispanic and African-American households earned more than \$50,000 yearly, while 60% of White Manhattan households were in this income category. Although lagging far behind Whites, Hispanic households with significant incomes living in Manhattan amounted to nearly one-quarter of total Latino households.

As noted previously, Queens was the one borough where income distribution patterns were similar among all three groups. Nearly 18% of all Hispanic and African-American households earned less than \$15,000 yearly compared with 17% of White households. For the city's Latino population Queens was the borough with the least comparative percentage of poorer households.

Queens was also striking in that 37% of all Hispanic households earned more than \$50,000, while a remarkable 44% of both African-American and White households reported more than \$50,000 in annual income.

Staten Island's Hispanic households were even better off than in Queens. Over 19% earned less than \$15,000 while nearly 45% earned over \$50,000. Among African-American households comparative percentages were 26% and 34% respectively. Among White households only 12% earned under \$15,000 while over 58% earned over \$50,000.

These data, presented in more detail, are summarized in table 1 and are graphically depicted in Figures 1 and 2.

Among the six largest Hispanic communities in New York City – Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, Mexicans, Colombians, Ecuadorians, and Cubans – a clear pattern of bifurcation existed between two general groupings at the lowest income levels. As indicated graphically in Figure 3 over 30% of Puerto Rican, Dominican, and Cuban households earned under \$15,000 yearly. Mexican, Colombian, and Ecuadorian families, on the other hand, had approximately 20% or far fewer of their total households earning under \$15,000. This was significantly less than the Caribbean-origin Hispanic communities. It should be pointed out that Puerto Ricans were the poorest among all of the Hispanic groups, with nearly 42% of all city households having incomes under \$15,000.

At the higher income levels the pattern was somewhat different since Cuban households were found among the wealthiest Hispanic households in the city. Thus, the city's Cuban population was more polarized than the other national groups with more households in both the poorer and wealthier household income categories. Slightly more than 20% of all Puerto Rican and Dominican households earned more than \$50,000 yearly. However, this was significantly less than the portion of Mexican, Colombian, Ecuadorian, and Cuban households. Of these over 30% earned more than \$50,000 annually, a significant finding.

Variations among the five boroughs followed an expected pattern in that more households in all six national groups earned under \$15,000 yearly in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan. (See figure 3). In Queens and Staten Island significantly lower percentages of families among all national groups earned less than \$15,000. Puerto Ricans fared the worst in the poorer boroughs with more than 40% of all households in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Manhattan reporting less than \$15,000 annual

incomes. Poorer Cuban households were clustered in the Bronx and at 42% of all households earning less than \$15,000 their income profile was identical to that of Puerto Rican households.

Relatively high percentages of households among all national groups earned over \$50,000 in Queens and Staten Island – between 30% and 40% for every nationality. Even in Manhattan over 30% of Mexican, Colombian, Ecuadorian, and Cuban households earned more than \$50,000. There were far fewer Manhattan-based Puerto Rican and Dominican households with higher incomes, although close to 20% did earn more than \$50,000. This was very similar to the portion of Puerto Rican and Dominican households in the Bronx and Brooklyn found in this higher income bracket.

In the Bronx and Brooklyn, more Colombian, Mexican, and Ecuadorian households – between 20% and 30% -- earned \$50,000 or greater annually, again demonstrating higher household earnings than the Caribbean national-origin groups.

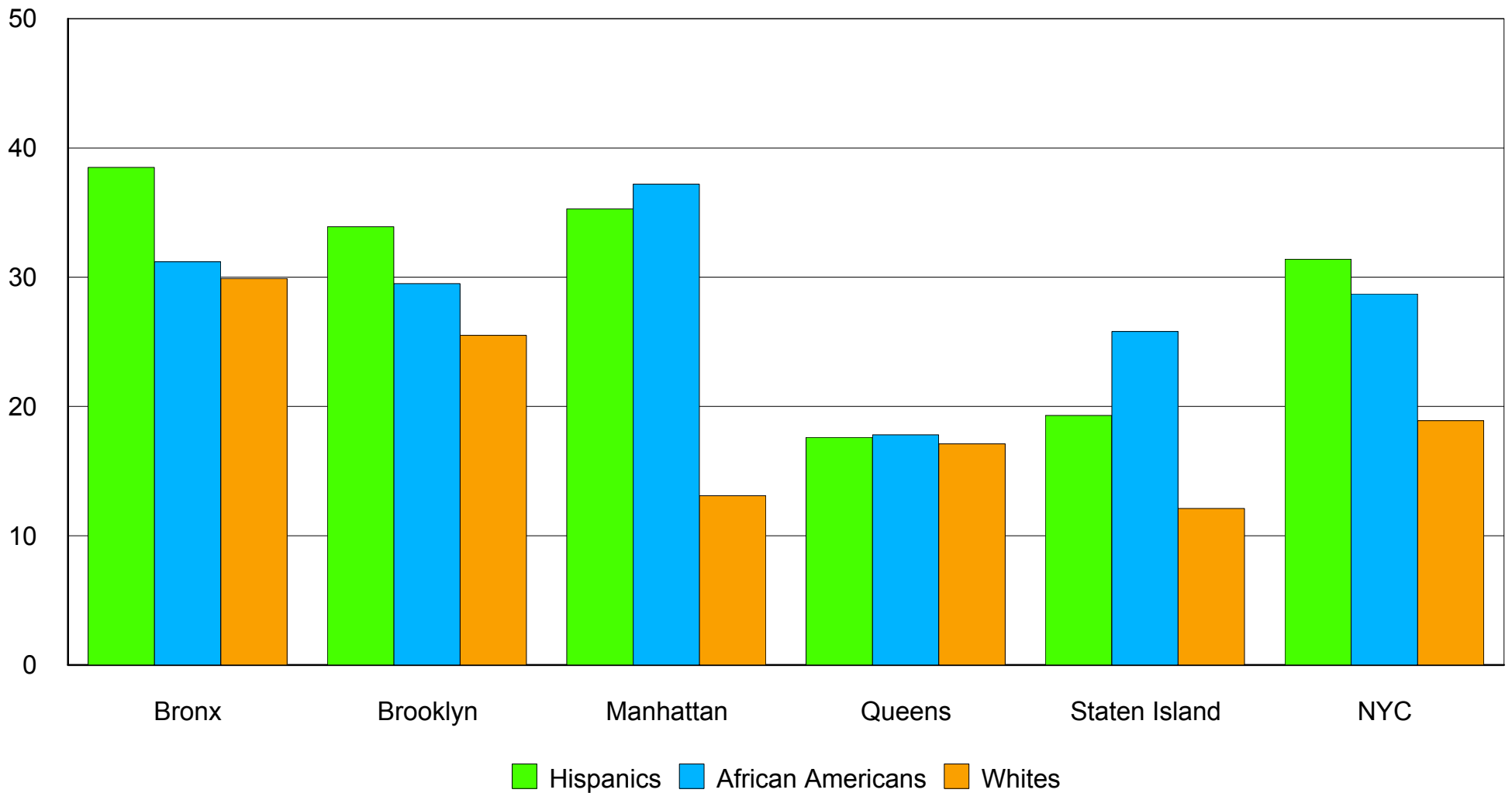
The data presented in this report suggest several conclusions. More of the city's Caribbean-origin national groups – Puerto Ricans, Dominicans, and Cubans – were found in the poorer household income categories than Mexicans, Colombians, and Ecuadorians. Puerto Ricans were quite clearly the poorest of all national groups in terms of household income, although Dominican households had comparable percentages of people in the lower income category.

Yet, there were considerable percentages of each nationality with household incomes above \$50,000 per year. This was most evident in that nearly one-third of all Mexican, Colombian, Ecuadorian, and Cuban households earned more than \$50,000 in yearly income. Even among Puerto Ricans and Dominicans, one-fifth of all households were found in the wealthiest income bracket.

There were clear geographical differences in household income patterns with Queens and Staten Island standing out as boroughs with a greater likelihood of prosperity for all Hispanic nationalities considered in this report. The Bronx and Brooklyn had greater percentages of poorer households, but even in these boroughs close to or over 20% of all households in all Hispanic nationalities considered here reported incomes greater than \$50,000 yearly.

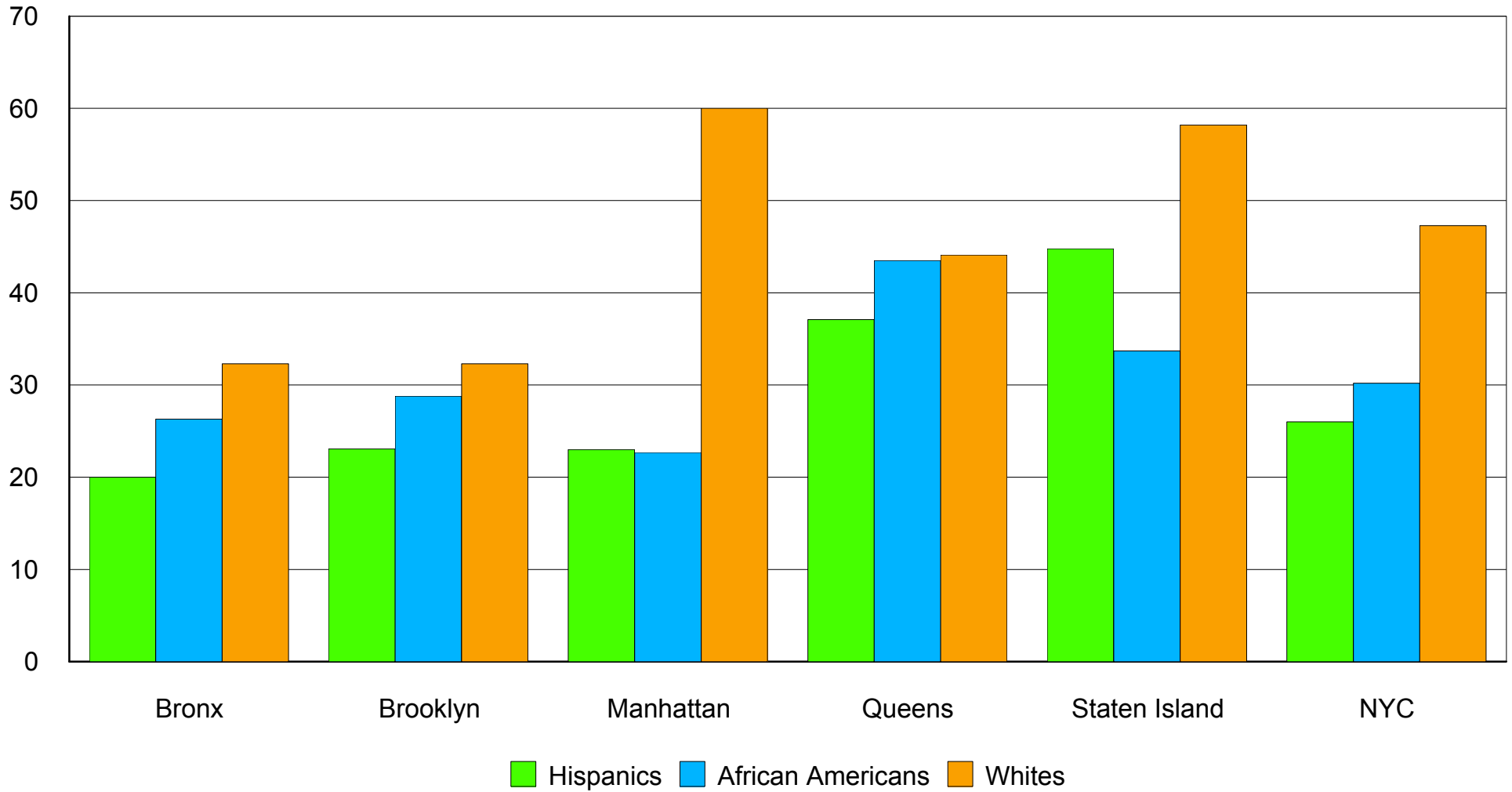
These data underscore the fact that it is difficult to draw general social or economic conclusions about the characteristics of New York City's Hispanic community and its different national components. Stereotypical images of impoverishment may not be uniformly applied even in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Northern Manhattan, which have long been associated with poverty among Hispanic communities. Clearly poverty exists, and often on a pervasive scale. Yet, significant percentages of households earned over \$50,000 annually throughout the city and even in the poorer boroughs. Thus, a clear class structure based on income currently exists among New York City's Hispanic community and within the largest national groups.

Figure 1
Percentage of Households Earning Under \$15,000 Yearly
Whites, Hispanics, African-Americans in New York City



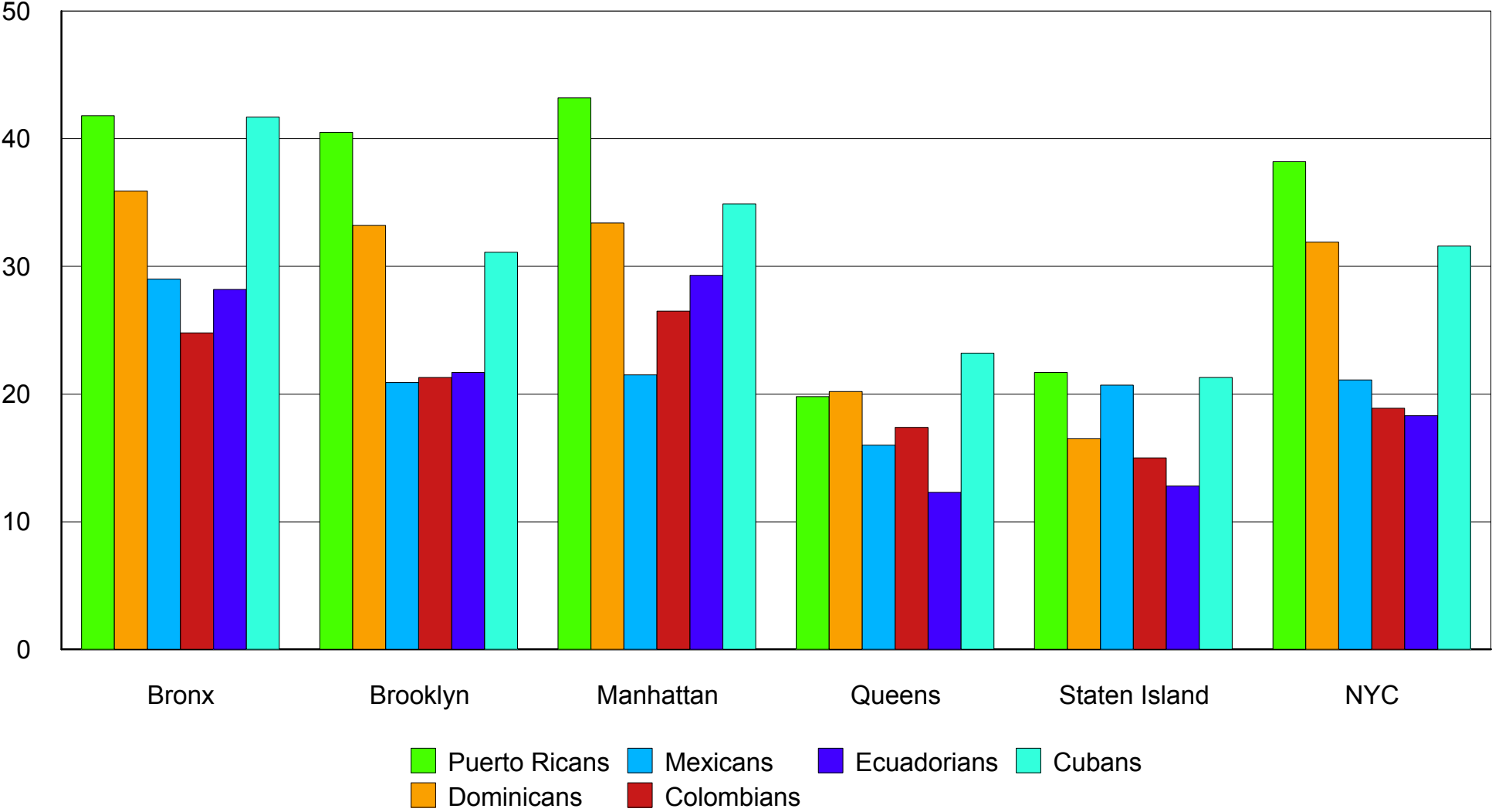
Source: Census 2000, Summary File 4, Household income

Figure 2
Percentage of Households Earning Over \$50,000 Yearly
Whites, Hispanics, African-Americans in New York City



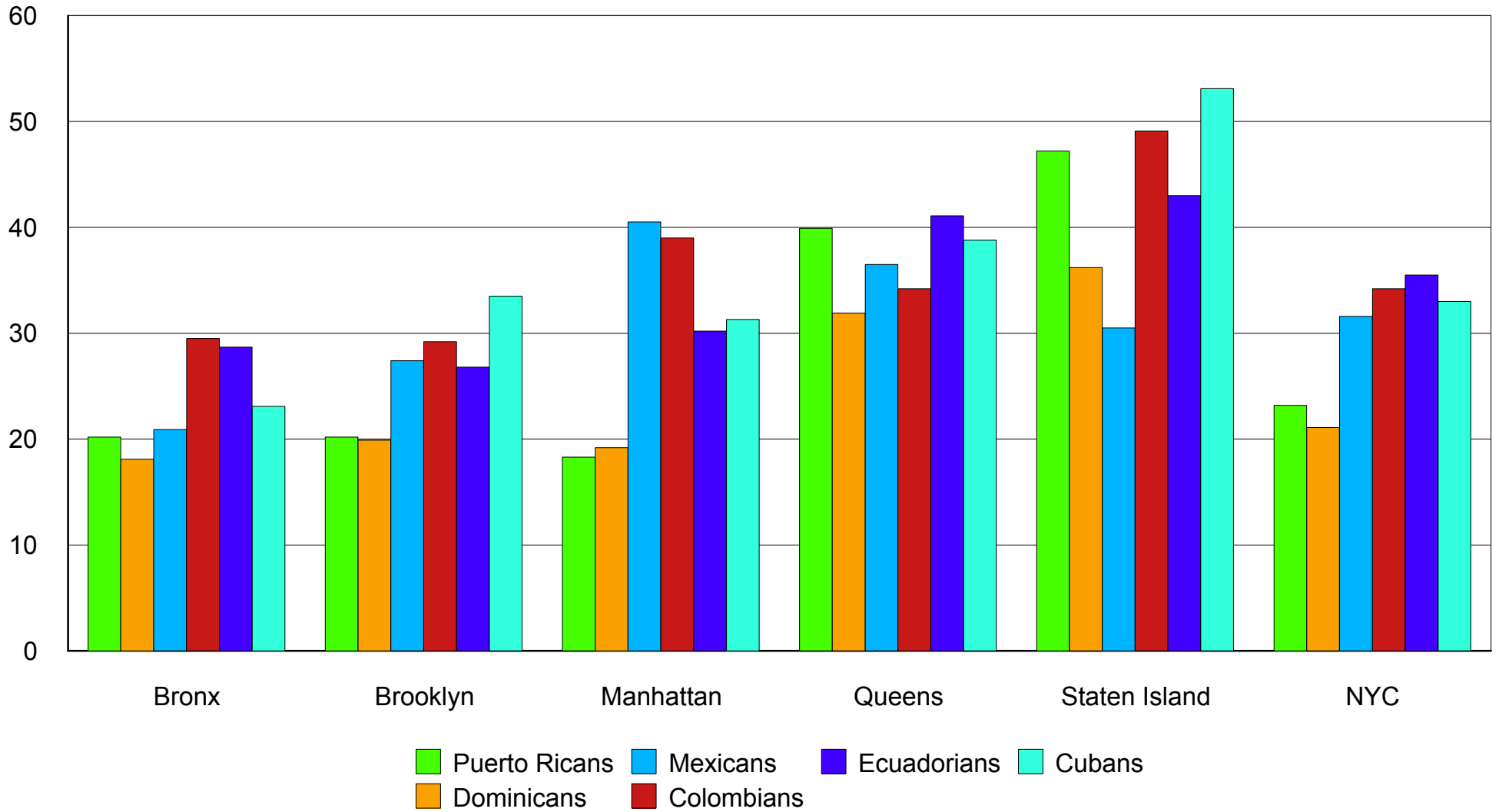
Source: Census 2000, Summary File 4, Household income

Figure 3
Percentage of Households Earning Under \$15,000 Yearly



Source: Census 2000, Summary File 4, Household income

Figure 4
Percentage of Households Earning Over \$50,000 Yearly



Source: Census 2000, Summary File 4, Household income

Table 1

Household Income Distribution Among New York City Whites, African-Americans, and Hispanics, 2000 Census

	Bronx	%	Brooklyn	%	Manhattan	%	Queens	%	Staten Island	%	Total NYC	%
White Households												
Households: Total	156,410	100.0%	405,768	100.0%	471,974	100.0%	404,674	100.0%	126,444	100.0%	1,565,270	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	46,753	29.9%	103,603	25.5%	61,817	13.1%	69,094	17.1%	15,297	12.1%	296,564	18.9%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	29,887	19.1%	70,448	17.4%	52,440	11.1%	70,302	17.4%	14,843	11.7%	237,920	15.2%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	16,486	10.5%	41,010	10.1%	38,226	8.1%	46,143	11.4%	11,239	8.9%	153,104	9.8%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	12,798	8.2%	35,778	8.8%	36,133	7.7%	40,698	10.1%	11,430	9.0%	136,837	8.7%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	23,881	15.3%	66,155	16.3%	79,251	16.8%	79,829	19.7%	27,611	21.8%	276,727	17.7%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	12,508	8.0%	37,078	9.1%	50,975	10.8%	44,208	10.9%	19,355	15.3%	164,124	10.5%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	11,851	7.6%	41,494	10.2%	90,643	19.2%	46,921	11.6%	23,077	18.3%	213,986	13.7%
Households: \$200,000 or more	2,246	1.4%	10,202	2.5%	62,489	13.2%	7,479	1.8%	3,592	2.8%	86,008	5.5%
African-American Households												
Households: Total	169,483	100.0%	312,261	100.0%	113,651	100.0%	145,071	100.0%	13,883	100.0%	754,349	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	52,946	31.2%	92,181	29.5%	42,262	37.2%	25,846	17.8%	3,586	25.8%	216,821	28.7%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	35,153	20.7%	63,041	20.2%	23,669	20.8%	23,475	16.2%	2,707	19.5%	148,045	19.6%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	21,098	12.4%	38,005	12.2%	12,653	11.1%	17,568	12.1%	1,669	12.0%	90,993	12.1%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	15,747	9.3%	29,047	9.3%	9,262	8.1%	15,053	10.4%	1,237	8.9%	70,346	9.3%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	25,218	14.9%	47,549	15.2%	13,134	11.6%	29,902	20.6%	2,275	16.4%	118,078	15.7%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	11,014	6.5%	21,574	6.9%	5,714	5.0%	16,771	11.6%	1,393	10.0%	56,466	7.5%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	7,198	4.2%	18,176	5.8%	5,279	4.6%	14,860	10.2%	928	6.7%	46,441	6.2%
Households: \$200,000 or more	1,109	0.7%	2,688	0.9%	1,678	1.5%	1,596	1.1%	88	0.6%	7,159	0.9%
Hispanic Households												
Households: Total	201,196	100.0%	149,247	100.0%	140,680	100.0%	158,698	100.0%	14,875	100.0%	664,696	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	77,388	38.5%	50,585	33.9%	49,728	35.3%	27,980	17.6%	2,870	19.3%	208,551	31.4%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	43,610	21.7%	33,118	22.2%	30,471	21.7%	31,571	19.9%	2,342	15.7%	141,112	21.2%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	23,753	11.8%	18,191	12.2%	15,957	11.3%	22,147	14.0%	1,576	10.6%	81,624	12.3%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	16,165	8.0%	12,899	8.6%	12,180	8.7%	18,097	11.4%	1,420	9.5%	60,761	9.1%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	23,933	11.9%	19,727	13.2%	16,215	11.5%	31,779	20.0%	3,131	21.0%	94,785	14.3%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	9,314	4.6%	7,974	5.3%	7,148	5.1%	15,126	9.5%	1,834	12.3%	41,396	6.2%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	5,838	2.9%	5,657	3.8%	6,785	4.8%	10,835	6.8%	1,613	10.8%	30,728	4.6%
Households: \$200,000 or more	1,195	0.6%	1,096	0.7%	2,196	1.6%	1,163	0.7%	89	0.6%	5,739	0.9%

Source: Census 2000, Summary File 4, Household income data.

Table 2

Household Income Distribution Among Puerto Ricans, Census 2000

	Bronx	%	Brooklyn	%	Manhattan	%	Queens	%	Staten Island	%	Total NYC	%
Households: Total	113,153	100.0%	74,353	100.0%	49,050	100.0%	36,507	100.0%	8,502	100.0%	281,565	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	47,336	41.8%	30,104	40.5%	21,186	43.2%	7,217	19.8%	1,846	21.7%	107,689	38.2%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	22,695	20.1%	15,510	20.9%	10,084	20.6%	6,120	16.8%	1,132	13.3%	55,541	19.7%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	12,004	10.6%	8,110	10.9%	5,060	10.3%	4,631	12.7%	838	9.9%	30,643	10.9%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	8,264	7.3%	5,641	7.6%	3,735	7.6%	3,963	10.9%	677	8.0%	22,280	7.9%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	13,234	11.7%	8,713	11.7%	4,851	9.9%	7,931	21.7%	1,793	21.1%	36,522	13.0%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	5,699	5.0%	3,498	4.7%	1,989	4.1%	3,869	10.6%	1,227	14.4%	16,282	5.8%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	3,366	3.0%	2,312	3.1%	1,615	3.3%	2,621	7.2%	967	11.4%	10,881	3.9%
Households: \$200,000 or more	555	0.5%	465	0.6%	530	1.1%	155	0.4%	22	0.3%	1,727	0.6%

Table 3

Household Income Distribution Among Dominicans, Census 2000

	Bronx	%	Brooklyn	%	Manhattan	%	Queens	%	Island	%	Total NYC	%
Households: Total	43,055	100.0%	19,802	100.0%	43,912	100.0%	21,176	100.0%	624	100.0%	128,569	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	15,463	35.9%	6,580	33.2%	14,657	33.4%	4,267	20.2%	103	16.5%	41,070	31.9%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	10,318	24.0%	5,134	25.9%	10,900	24.8%	4,665	22.0%	135	21.6%	31,152	24.2%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	5,694	13.2%	2,303	11.6%	5,574	12.7%	3,060	14.5%	112	17.9%	16,743	13.0%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	3,806	8.8%	1,850	9.3%	4,359	9.9%	2,434	11.5%	48	7.7%	12,497	9.7%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	4,937	11.5%	2,324	11.7%	4,872	11.1%	3,819	18.0%	160	25.6%	16,112	12.5%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	1,599	3.7%	929	4.7%	2,029	4.6%	1,647	7.8%	26	4.2%	6,230	4.8%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	913	2.1%	550	2.8%	1,279	2.9%	1,162	5.5%	40	6.4%	3,944	3.1%
Households: \$200,000 or more	325	0.8%	132	0.7%	242	0.6%	122	0.6%	-	0.0%	821	0.6%

Table 4

Household Income Distribution Among Mexicans, Census 2000

	Bronx	%	Brooklyn	%	Manhattan	%	Queens	%	Staten Island	%	Total NYC	%
Households: Total	6,260	100.0%	11,879	100.0%	7,691	100.0%	9,879	100.0%	1,385	100.0%	37,094	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	1,816	29.0%	2,488	20.9%	1,656	21.5%	1,579	16.0%	287	20.7%	7,826	21.1%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	1,717	27.4%	3,083	26.0%	1,389	18.1%	2,092	21.2%	385	27.8%	8,666	23.4%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	822	13.1%	1,757	14.8%	872	11.3%	1,417	14.3%	132	9.5%	5,000	13.5%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	597	9.5%	1,295	10.9%	660	8.6%	1,184	12.0%	159	11.5%	3,895	10.5%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	831	13.3%	1,869	15.7%	1,463	19.0%	1,983	20.1%	228	16.5%	6,374	17.2%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	240	3.8%	694	5.8%	639	8.3%	887	9.0%	83	6.0%	2,543	6.9%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	207	3.3%	504	4.2%	764	9.9%	650	6.6%	111	8.0%	2,236	6.0%
Households: \$200,000 or more	30	0.5%	189	1.6%	248	3.2%	87	0.9%	-	0.0%	554	1.5%

Table 5

Household Income Distribution Among Colombians, Census 2000

	Bronx	%	Brooklyn	%	Manhattan	%	Queens	%	Staten Island	%	Total NYC	%
Households: Total	1,232	100.0%	2,503	100.0%	2,474	100.0%	20,047	100.0%	426	100.0%	26,682	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	306	24.8%	533	21.3%	656	26.5%	3,496	17.4%	64	15.0%	5,055	18.9%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	279	22.6%	515	20.6%	421	17.0%	4,087	20.4%	36	8.5%	5,338	20.0%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	173	14.0%	399	15.9%	204	8.2%	3,339	16.7%	57	13.4%	4,172	15.6%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	110	8.9%	325	13.0%	228	9.2%	2,277	11.4%	60	14.1%	3,000	11.2%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	247	20.0%	432	17.3%	370	15.0%	3,886	19.4%	140	32.9%	5,075	19.0%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	37	3.0%	160	6.4%	211	8.5%	1,548	7.7%	34	8.0%	1,990	7.5%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	80	6.5%	134	5.4%	281	11.4%	1,198	6.0%	35	8.2%	1,728	6.5%
Households: \$200,000 or more	-	0.0%	5	0.2%	103	4.2%	216	1.1%	-	0.0%	324	1.2%

Table 6

Household Income Distribution among Ecuadorians, Census 2000

	Bronx	%	Brooklyn	%	Manhattan	%	Queens	%	Staten Island	%	Total NYC	%
Households: Total	4,419	100.0%	5,422	100.0%	3,708	100.0%	16,714	100.0%	242	100.0%	30,505	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	1,247	28.2%	1,177	21.7%	1,086	29.3%	2,055	12.3%	31	12.8%	5,596	18.3%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	958	21.7%	1,331	24.5%	653	17.6%	3,356	20.1%	41	16.9%	6,339	20.8%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	503	11.4%	895	16.5%	470	12.7%	2,443	14.6%	35	14.5%	4,346	14.2%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	444	10.0%	564	10.4%	379	10.2%	1,984	11.9%	31	12.8%	3,402	11.2%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	727	16.5%	890	16.4%	470	12.7%	3,612	21.6%	62	25.6%	5,761	18.9%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	278	6.3%	330	6.1%	309	8.3%	1,966	11.8%	28	11.6%	2,911	9.5%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	247	5.6%	200	3.7%	276	7.4%	1,222	7.3%	14	5.8%	1,959	6.4%
Households: \$200,000 or more	15	0.3%	35	0.6%	65	1.8%	76	0.5%	-	0.0%	191	0.6%

Table 7

Household Income Distribution Among Cubans, Census 2000

	Bronx	%	Brooklyn	%	Manhattan	%	Queens	%	Staten Island	%	Total NYC	%
Households: Total	3,562	100.0%	3,083	100.0%	6,531	100.0%	5,938	100.0%	507	100.0%	19,621	100.0%
Households: Less than \$14,999	1,487	41.7%	959	31.1%	2,279	34.9%	1,376	23.2%	108	21.3%	6,209	31.6%
Households: \$15,000 to \$29,999	569	16.0%	460	14.9%	1,097	16.8%	1,062	17.9%	63	12.4%	3,251	16.6%
Households: \$30,000 to \$39,999	410	11.5%	411	13.3%	566	8.7%	550	9.3%	8	1.6%	1,945	9.9%
Households: \$40,000 to \$49,999	273	7.7%	220	7.1%	547	8.4%	649	10.9%	59	11.6%	1,748	8.9%
Households: \$50,000 to \$74,999	490	13.8%	520	16.9%	773	11.8%	936	15.8%	82	16.2%	2,801	14.3%
Households: \$75,000 to \$99,999	180	5.1%	248	8.0%	466	7.1%	658	11.1%	84	16.6%	1,636	8.3%
Households: \$100,000 to \$199,000	122	3.4%	237	7.7%	582	8.9%	640	10.8%	85	16.8%	1,666	8.5%
Households: \$200,000 or more	31	0.9%	28	0.9%	221	3.4%	67	1.1%	18	3.6%	365	1.9%