

LATINO DATA PROJECT

Crude Birth Rates and Contraceptive Use by Racial/Ethnic Group in the U.S., 1990-2000

by Victoria Stone

Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies



Center for Latin American, Caribbean, and Latino Studies
The Graduate Center
The City University of New York
365 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10016
(212) 817-8438 - clacls@gc.cuny.edu - <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/lastudies>

Crude Birth Rates and Contraceptive Use by Racial/Ethnic Group in the U.S., 1990 – 2000

By Victoria Stone

This report analyzes national level data on crude birth rates among women of three racial/ethnic groups; Latino, White, and African-American (Black).¹ Crude birth rates are examined in the following age-specific groups: 15-19; 20-29; 30-39; and 40 and above, over the ten- year period between 1990 and 2000. Data will also be presented on contraceptive use and selected contraceptive methods by racial/ethnic group between 1982 and 2002 because of their relevance to birth rates.

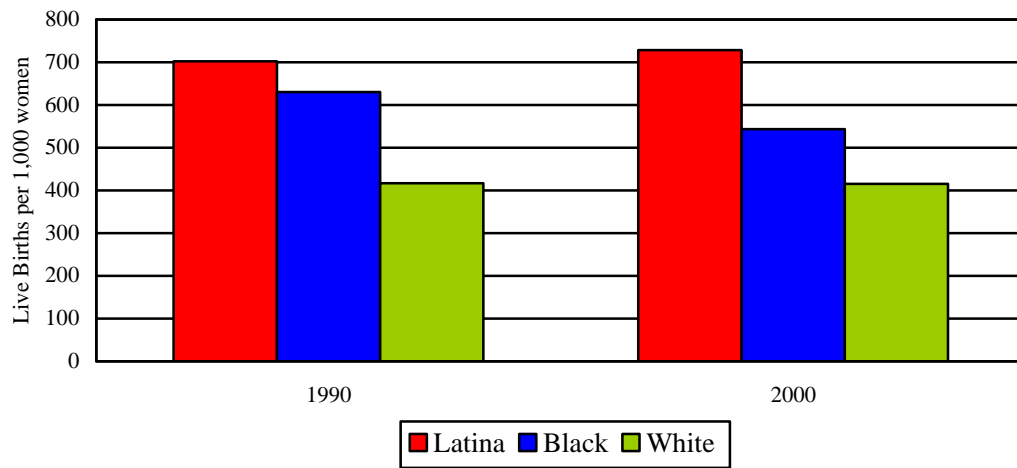
According to the 2000 Census Bureau data on crude birth rates in the United States among women over 15 years of age, Latina women had significantly higher birth rates than Black and White women in both 1990 and 2000 as indicated in Table 1 below. Data also reveal that, overall, crude birth rates among Latinas increased by 3.7% from 1990 to 2000 while they decreased among Black women by – 13.8% and White women by -0.4%. This is indicated in Figure 1 and Figure 6.

Table 1. Crude Birth Rates per 1,000 women over 15 years of Age
by Racial/Ethnic Group, Nationwide, 1990 and 2000

Racial/Ethnic Group	1990	2000	% (+/-)
Latina	702.1	728.3	+ 3.7%
White	416.7	415.2	- 0.4%
Black	630.4	543.5	- 13.8%

¹ Throughout this report I will be using the ethnic/racial categories as follows: Whites – those reporting no other race/s, non-Hispanic origin; Blacks – those reporting no other race/s, non-Hispanic origin; and Latinos/Hispanics- those reporting Latino nationality, race non-specified.

Figure 1. Crude Birth Rates among Women over 15 years of Age by Racial/Ethnic Group, Nationwide



While these data reveal national trends among women over the age of fifteen, there are variations when examining the data on crude birth rates among women in age-specific groups.

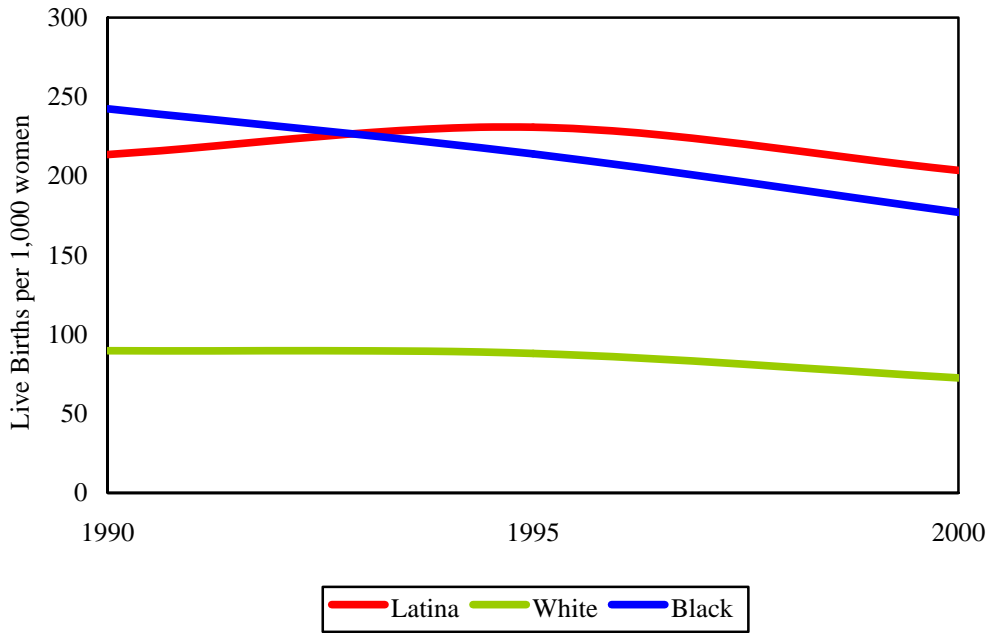
Birth Rates among Women 15 to 19 Years of Age

Among women between 15 to 19 years old in 1990, crude birth rates were highest among Black women at 242.4 per thousand, followed by Latina women at 213.6 per thousand. White women in this age category had significantly lower levels at 89.8 per thousand. Crude birth rates in this age-specific group were higher among Black women until 1994, when birth rates among 15 to 19 year old Latina women (232 per thousand) equaled and then surpassed rates of Black women until 2000. Still, there was a significant percentage decrease in crude birth rates among 15-19 year-old women for all three racial/ethnic groups between 1990 and 2000, most dramatically among Black females with a decrease of - 26.7%, followed by White females with - 19.2%, and Latinas, - 4.7%. It is important to note that the percentage decrease in birth rates among Latina women was significantly lower than among White and Black women. (See Table 2, Figure 2, and Figure 6).

Table 2. Crude Birth Rates for Women between 15 to 19 Years of Age by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	1990	2000	% (+/-)
Latina	213.6	203.6	- 4.7%
White	89.8	72.6	-19.2%
Black	242.4	177.1	- 26.7%

Figure 2. Crude Birth Rates for Women between 15 to 19 Years of Age by Racial/Ethnic Group



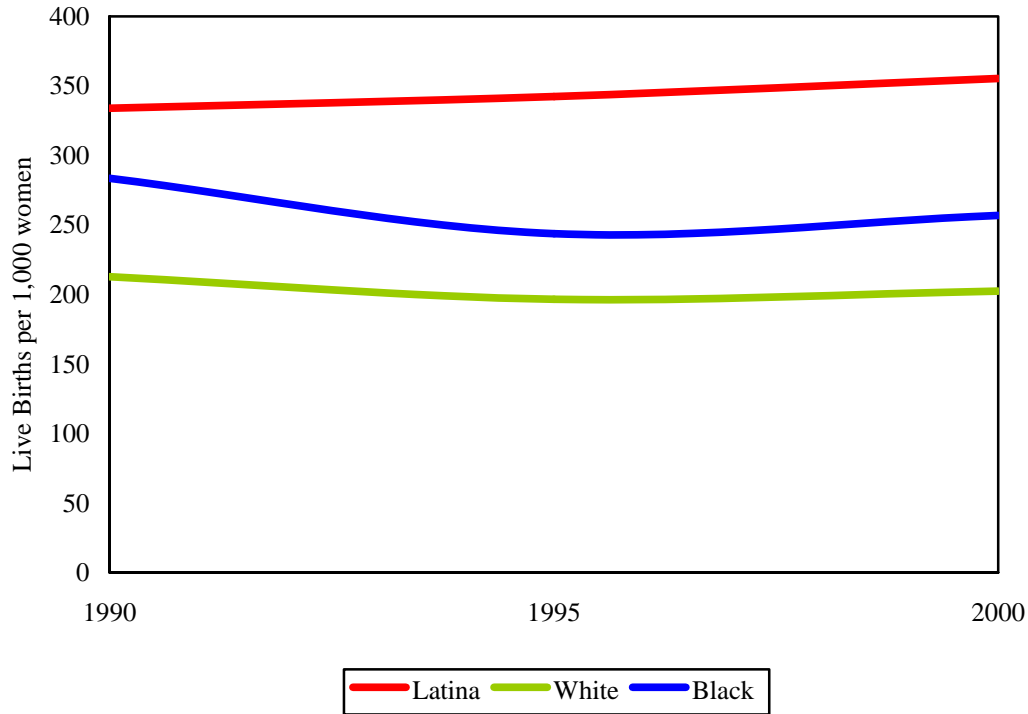
Birth Rates among Women 20 to 29 Years of Age

Crude birth rates among women in these racial/ethnic groups between the ages of 20 to 29 years old indicate that Latina women had higher birth rates than White and Black women every year between 1990 and 2000. (See Table 3 below). Crude birth rates among 20-29 year-old women declined among Black women from 284 to 256.8 per thousand between 1990 and 2000, a percentage decrease of – 9.4% and among White women from 212.8 to 202.4 per thousand over the same period, a decrease of – 4.9%. However, birth rates among Latina women increased by 6.4% from 334 per thousand in 1990 to 355.4 per thousand in 2000. (See Table 3, Figure 3, and Figure 6).

Table 3. Crude Birth Rates for Women between 20 to 29 Years of Age by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	1990	2000	% (+/-)
Latina	334	355.4	+6.4%
White	212.8	202.4	- 4.9%
Black	284	256.8	- 9.4%

Figure 3. Crude Birth Rates for Women between 20 to 29 Years of Age by Racial/Ethnic Group



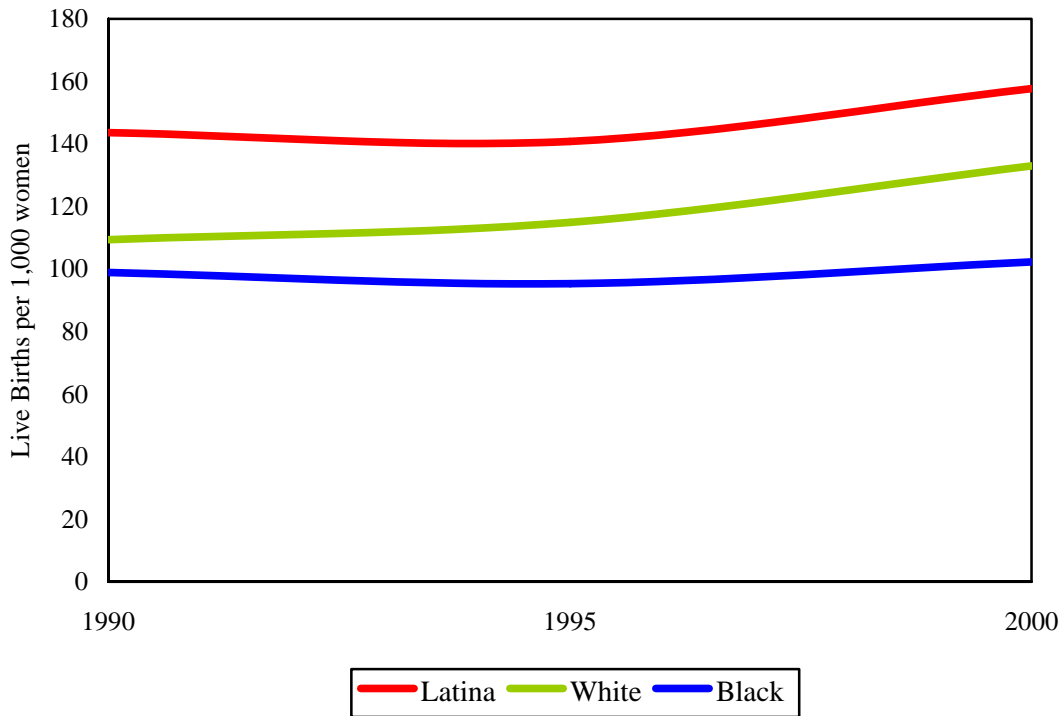
Birth Rates among Women 30 to 39 Years of Age

In the 30 and 39 year-old age group crude birth rates increased among all three racial/ethnic groups between 1990 and 2000. For White women crude birth rates were 109.4 per thousand in 1990 and 133 per thousand in 2000, a percentage increase of 21.6%. For Latina women, crude birth rates were 143.6 per thousand in 1990 and 157.7 per thousand in 2000, a percentage rise of 9.8%. For Black women, crude birth rates were lower than both of the other racial/ethnic groups, with 98.9 per thousand in 1990 and 102.3 per thousand in 2000 but there was still a percentage increase of 3.4%. It is important to note that the percentage increase among White women in crude birth rates from 1990 to 2000 was significantly higher than among Latina and Black women. (See Table 4, Figure 4, and Figure 6.)

Table 4. Crude Birth Rates for Women between 30 to 39 Years of Age by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	1990	2000	% (+/-)
Latina	143.6	157.7	+ 9.8%
White	109.4	133	+ 21.6%
Black	98.9	102.3	+ 3.4%

Figure 4. Crude Birth Rates for Women between 30 to 39 Years of Age by Racial/ Ethnic Group



Birth Rates among Women Forty Years of Age and Over

Among women over the age of 40, crude birth rates were relatively low compared to the other age categories, but all three racial/ethnic groups experienced an increase in rates between 1990 and 2000. As in the other age-specific groups, Latina women over the age of 40 had higher birth rates than White and Black women. For White women, the percentage increase in birth rates in the ten-year period was most dramatic (53.2%) from 4.7 per thousand in 1990 to 7.2 per thousand in 2000. For Black women, the increase was 30.4%, with rates at 5.6 per thousand in 1990 and 7.3 per thousand in 2000. For Latina women, the rates increased by 6.4% from 10.9 per thousand in 1990 to 11.6 per thousand in 2000. (See Table 5, Figure 5 and Figure 6).

Table 5. Crude Birth Rates for Women over 40 Years of Age by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	1990	2000	% (+/-)
Latina	10.9	11.6	+ 6.4%
White	4.7	7.2	+ 53.2%
Black	5.6	7.3	+30.4%

Figure 5. Crude Birth Rates for Women over 40 Years of Age by Racial/Ethnic Group

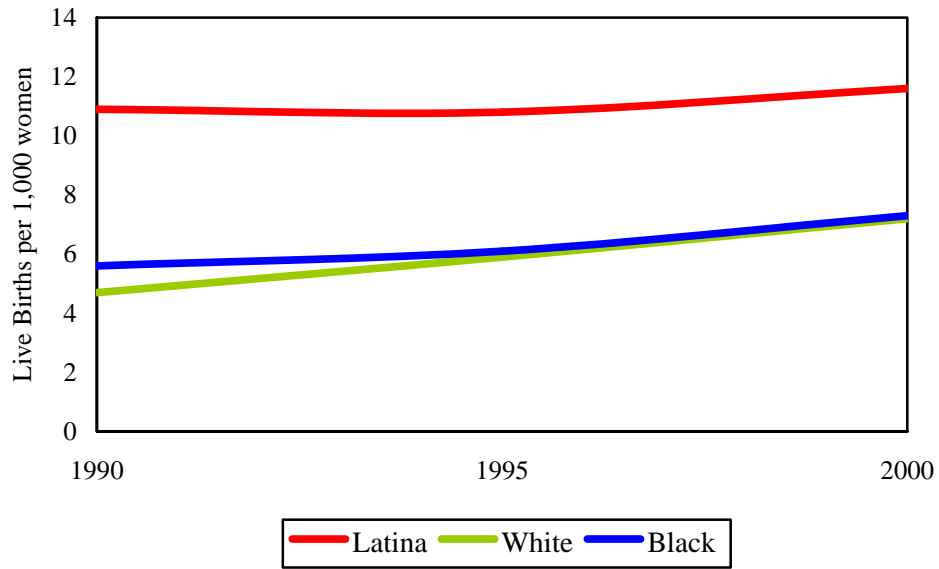
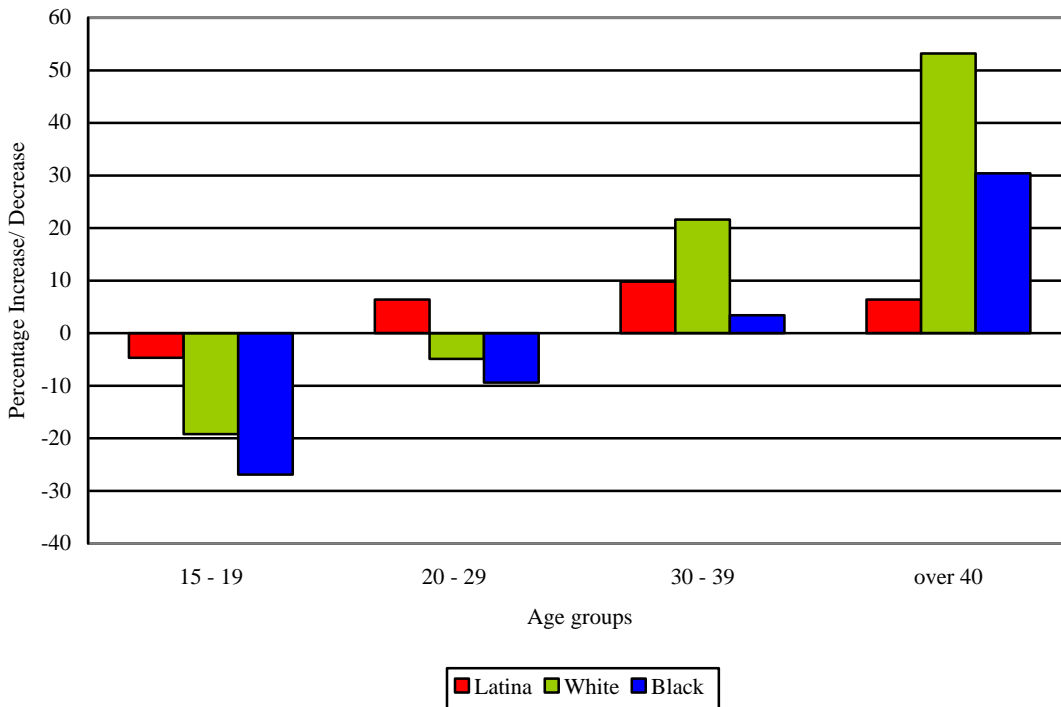


Figure 6. Crude Birth Rate Percentage Increase/Decrease between 1990 and 2000 by Age and Racial/ Ethnic Group



These data suggest that women in all three groups are having children later in life. Latina women are clearly having more children in their twenties than the other two racial/ethnic groups for which data indicate a marked decrease in birth rates. (See Figure 6 above). While there was an increase in birth rates among women in all three racial/ethnic groups between thirty to thirty-nine years of age, there was also a dramatic percentage increase for the age group forty and above, especially among White women. The increase in birth rates among women in their thirties and forties may have been the result of women in the work force choosing to postpone family planning until their careers were established. These data may also indicate choices regarding family size.

The decrease in birth rates among all three racial/ethnic groups among 15 to 19 year olds is also striking. Figure 6 indicates that the greatest percentage decrease was among young Black women. This decrease in birth rates was also evident in 20 to 29 year olds. Conversely the greatest percentage increase in crude birth rates among White women appeared in the 30 to 39 year old age group and in the forty and above age group.

Contraceptive Use among Women by Racial/Ethnic Group, Nationwide 1982 - 2002²

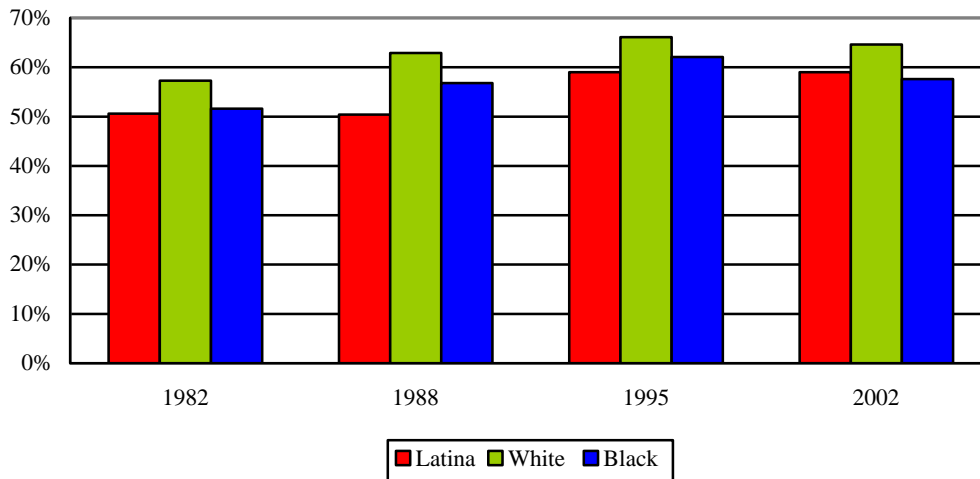
Data on contraceptive use among these same groups are clearly relevant to birth rates. According to a 2005 report on contraceptive use among women 15-44 years of age by race, and Hispanic origin in the United States issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the overall female population using contraception increased among all age groups from 1982 to 1995 with slight differences among the three main racial/ethnic groups, as indicated in Table 6. Significantly, while the percentages of women using contraceptives in all three racial/ethnic groups increased from 1982 to 1995, data for 2002 indicated a decline in contraceptive use among both Black and White women after 1995 and depicted no change among Latina women over the same time frame. (See Table 6 and Figure 7).

² The other methods of contraceptives not tabulated in this report are as follows: intrauterine device (IUD), injectable (Depo-Pravera), male sterilization, periodic-abstinence rhythmic calendar system, periodic-abstinence natural family planning, withdrawal and other methods. All of these represented much lower percentages of the methods examined in this report with most showing data with a 20-30% margin of error and hence not appropriate.

Table 6. Percent of Women in Population 15 to 44 Years of Age Using Contraception by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	1982	1988	1995	2002
Latina	50.6%	50.4%	59%	59%
White	57.3%	62.9%	66.1%	64.6%
Black	51.6%	56.8%	62.1%	57.6%

Figure 7. Percent of Women in Population 15 to 44 Years of Age Using Contraception by Racial/ Ethnic Group, 1982-2002



These data also provide a breakdown by age-specific groups of women as follows: 15-19, 20-24, 25-34, and 35-44 years of age. Between 1995 and 2002, there was a decline in contraceptive usage among Black and Latina women in the 15 – 19 year old age-specific group, while there was an increase among White women in the same age group.³ In the 20 – 24 year old age-specific group, there was an increase in contraceptive usage among both Latina and White women and a decline among Black women. In the 25 – 34 year old age-specific group, a greater percentage of Black women reported using contraceptives, while there was an apparent decline in usage among Latina and White women. In the 35-44 year old age-specific

³ There are no age-specific data for 1982 and 1988 for all three racial/ethnic groups.

group, contraceptive usage increased among Latina women while it declined among White and Black women. (See Table 7 and Figures 8, 9 & 10). As indicated in Table 7 and Figure 11, among the 15-19, 20-24, and 25-34 year old age-specific groups in 2002, a greater percentage of White women were using contraceptives than Black or Latina women. Data indicate, however, that among the 35-44 year old age-specific group, Latinas were using contraceptives at a higher rate than Black and White women. The reasons for these disparities are not indicated by the available data.

Table 7. Percent of Women in Population Using Contraception
by Racial/Ethnic and Age Groups, 1995 -2002

Age Groups	15 – 19		20 - 24		25 - 34		35 - 44	
	1995	2002	1995	2002	1995	2002	1995	2002
Latina	26.1	20.4	50.6	57.4	69.2	66.2	70.8	72.9
White	30.5	35	65.4	66.3	72.9	69.9	73.6	71.4
Black	36.1	32.9	67.9	50.8	66.8	67.9	68.3	63.8

Figure 8. Percent of Latina Women in Population Using Contraception by Age Group, 1995 & 2002

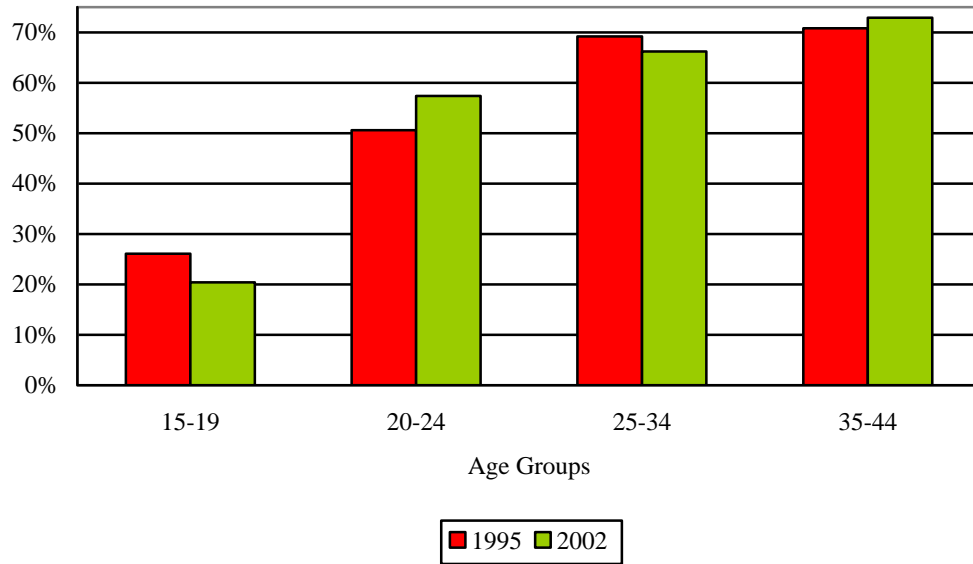


Figure 9. Percent of White Women in Population Using Contraception by Age Group, 1995 & 2002

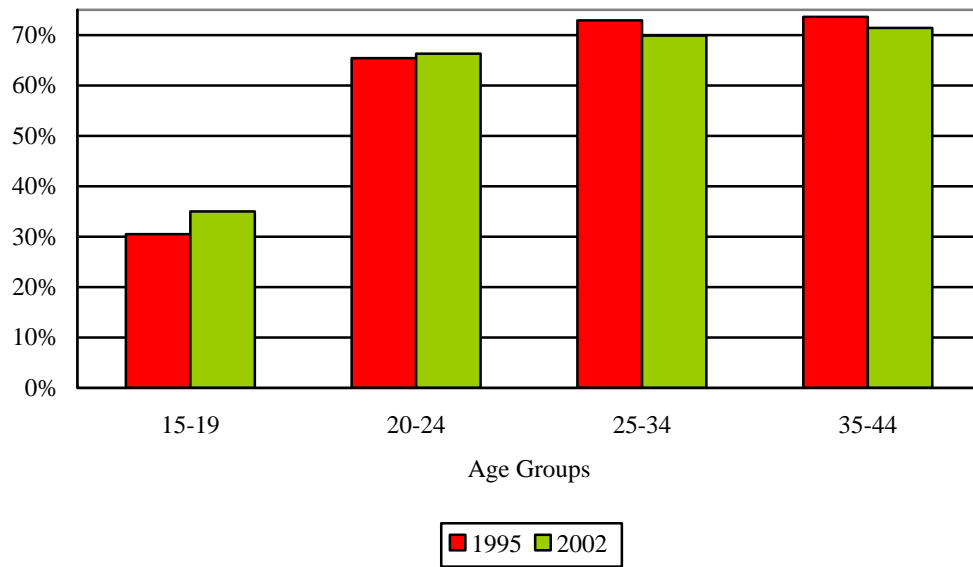


Figure 10. Percent of Black Women in Population Using Contraception by Age Group, 1995 & 2002

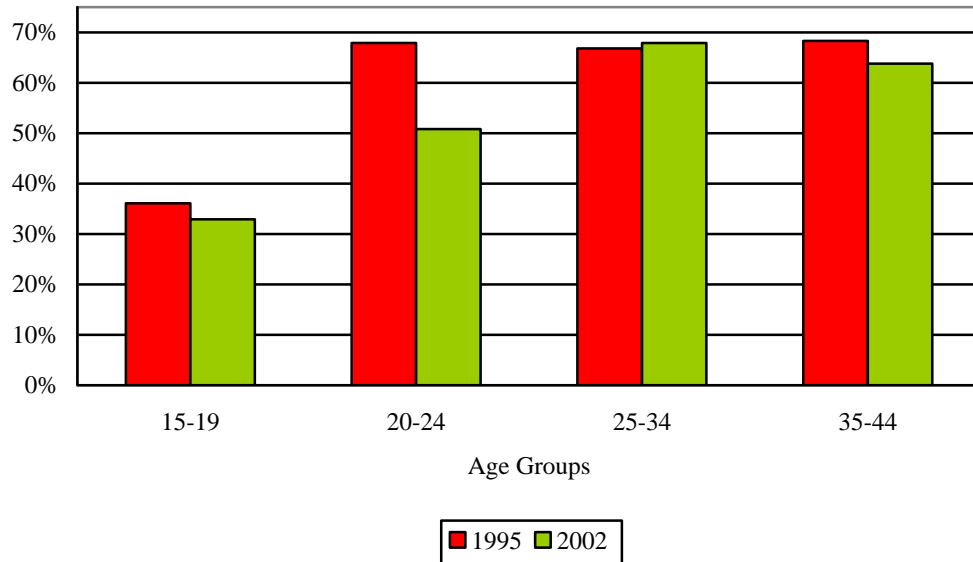
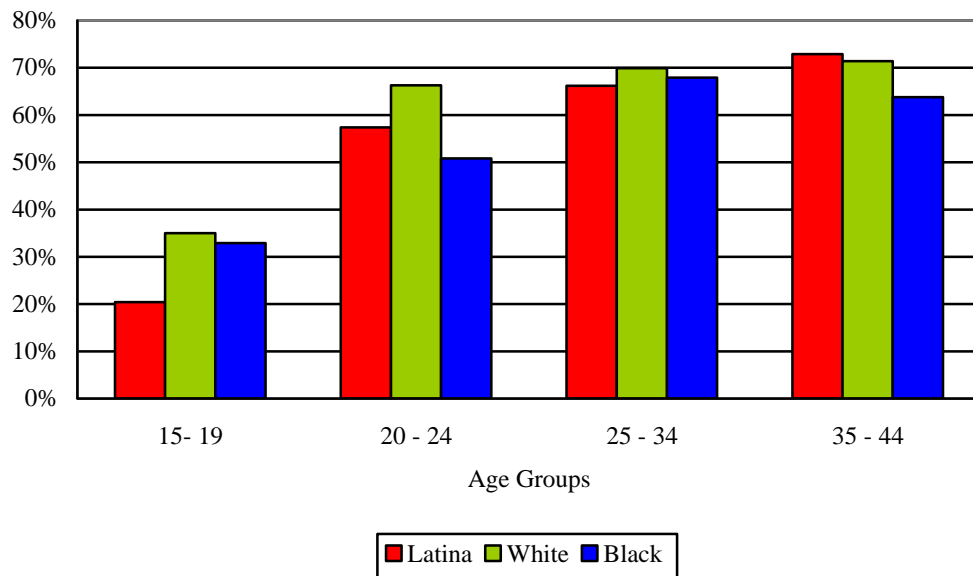


Figure 11. Percent of Women in Population Using Contraception by Racial/ Ethnic and Age Group, 2002



Data on these contracepting populations also detail the method of contraceptive used and the three most frequent methods are presented here: female sterilization, birth control, and condom use.

Female sterilization ⁴

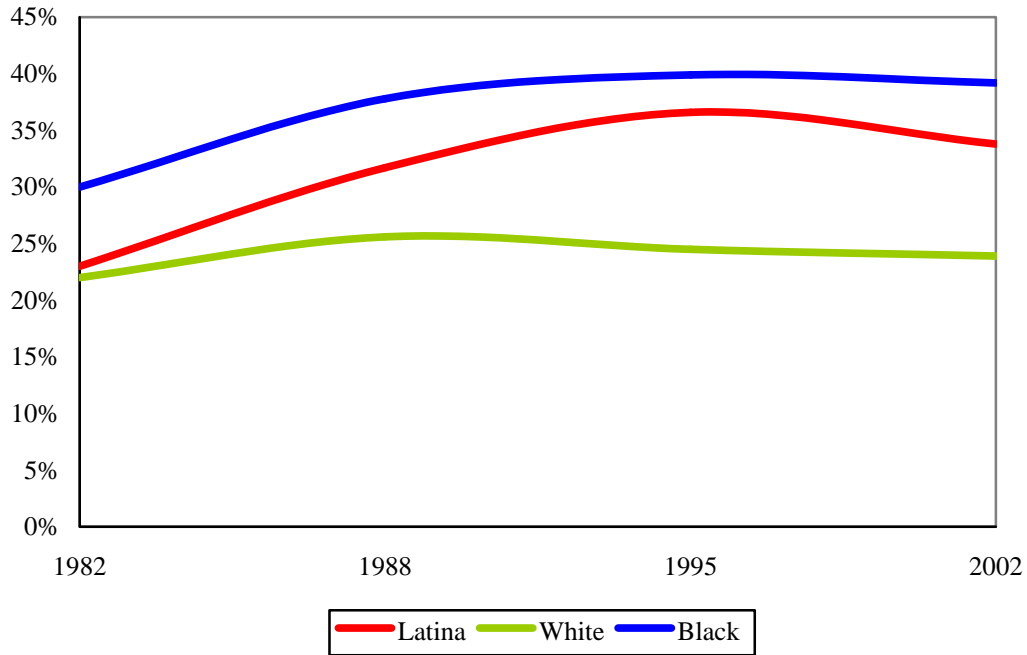
Between 1982 and 1995, the percentage of women using contraceptives undergoing female sterilization as means of birth control increased among all three racial/ethnic groups although from 1995 to 2002 there was a slight decrease within these same groups. Of women using contraceptives in 1982, 23% of Latina women, 22% of White women, and 30% of Black women, underwent female sterilization. Between 1982 and 1988 female sterilization increased dramatically among Black and Latina women and increased again to 1995 although there was a slight decline thereafter to 2002. For white women, sterilization increased to 25.6% from 1982 to 1988 and decreased slightly by 1995 to 24.5%, and further to 23.9% in 2002. In 1982, 1988, 1995, and 2002, sterilization as method of contraception was highest among Black women. (See Table 8 and Figure 12).

Table 8. Percent of Women Using Contraception Undergoing Female Sterilization by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	1982	1988	1995	2002
Latina	23%	31.7%	36.6%	33.8%
White	22%	25.6%	24.5%	23.9%
Black	30%	37.8%	39.9%	39.2%

⁴ The percentages in each section on selected contraceptive method are derived **ONLY** from the female population using contraceptives, not the total female population.

Figure 12. Percent of Women Using Contraceptives Undergoing Female Sterilization by Racial/ Ethnic Group, 1982 - 2002



Birth Control Pill ⁵

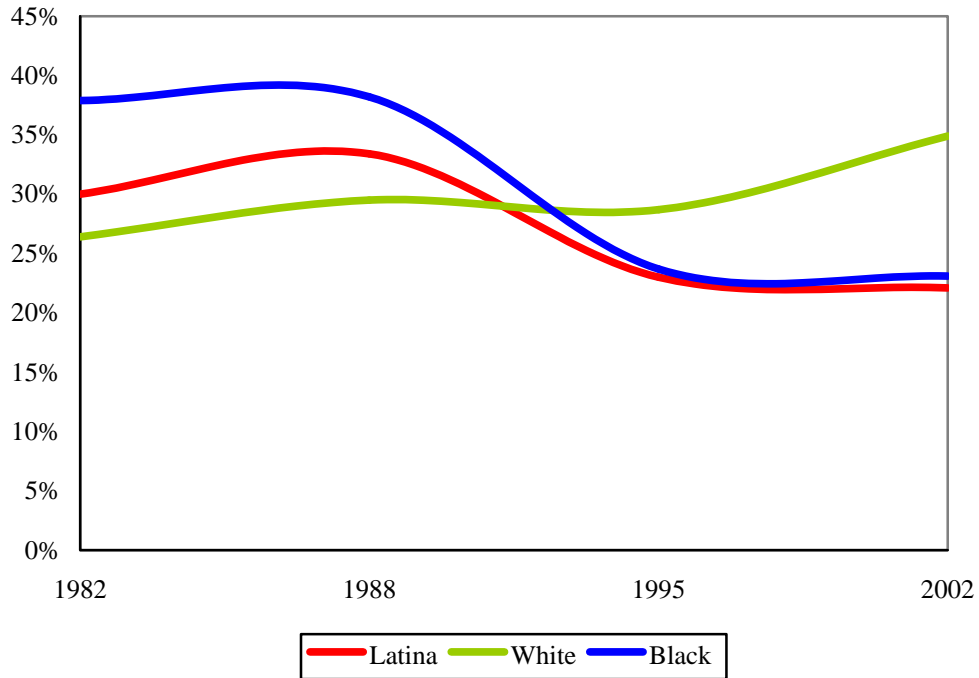
A decrease in birth control pill use was noted among all three racial/ethnic groups among women using contraceptive methods, with the most dramatic decrease occurring among Black women from 37.9% in 1982 to 23.1% in 2002. For Latina women, the use of birth control pills decreased from 30% of all women using contraceptives in 1982 to 22.1% in 2002. For White women, birth control pill use increased from 26.4% of all women using contraceptives in 1982 to 34.9% in 2002, which was at a higher percentage than birth control pill use among both Latina and Black women in that year. Among Black women, birth control pill use increased slightly between 1982 and 1988 from 37.9% to 38.2% respectively, and decreased dramatically to 23.1% in 2002. (See Table 9 and Figure 10). The precise reasons for these changes are not indicated by the data.

⁵ The percentages in each section on selected contraceptive method are derived **ONLY** from the female population using contraceptives, not the total female population.

Table 9. Percent of Women Using Contraception Using Birth Control Pills by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	1982	1988	1995	2002
Latina	30%	33.4%	23%	22.1%
White	26.4%	29.5%	28.7%	34.9%
Black	37.9%	38.2%	23.7%	23.1%

Figure 13. Percent of Women Using Contraceptives Using Birth Control Pills by Racial/ Ethnic Group between 1982 and 1995



Condom ⁶

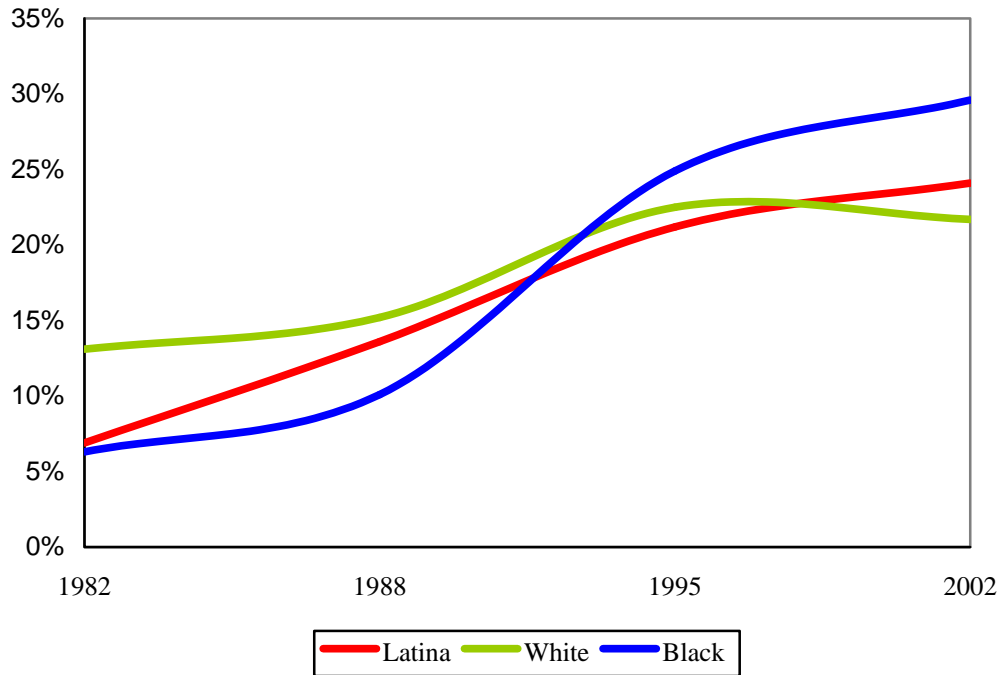
The most increasingly used method of contraception was the condom with the sharpest increase recorded among Black women from 6.3% in 1982 to 29.6% in 2002. For Latina women, condom use rose from 6.9% in 1982 to 24.1% in 2002 and for White women, from 13.1% in 1982 to 21.7% in 2002. Of interest, while higher percentages of White women were using condoms as method of contraceptive in 1982, 1988, and 1995, a decrease in condom use was indicated between 1995 and 2002. This occurred while condom use increased steadily among both Black and Latina women. (See Table 10 and Figure 14).

Table 10. Percentage of Women in Population between 15 to 44 Years of Age Using Contraception *Using Condoms* by Racial/Ethnic Group

Racial/Ethnic Group	1982	1988	1995	2002
Latina	6.9%	13.7%	21.2%	24.1%
White	13.1%	15.2%	22.5%	21.7%
Black	6.3%	10.1%	24.9%	29.6%

⁶ The percentages in each section on selected contraceptive method are derived **ONLY** from the female population using contraceptives, not the total female population.

Figure 14. Percent of women using contraceptives using *condoms* by ethnic group between 1982 and 2002



Conclusion

While these data show that crude birth rates among Latina women were higher among all age groups, the percentage increase among women in all three racial/ethnic groups in their thirties and forties raises interesting comparative questions regarding family planning and other social, economic and cultural issues. These changes may have been the result of women in the work force choosing to postpone family planning until their careers were established. One question concerns why there were such comparative differentials between each racial/ethnic group. Unfortunately, the data sources used in this report do not permit this to be answered. The following questions are also suggested by the data:

1. Are more women having children in their thirties because they are working to establish careers in their twenties? If this is so, then how would the comparative differentials between racial/ethnic groups be explained? As indicated in this report, birth rates among Black women between the ages of 15 – 44 decreased much more dramatically than among White and Latina women. In turn, White women had the greatest percentage increases in birth rates in their thirties and forties between 1990 and 2000 compared with Black and Latina women. If establishment of careers was a determining factor, what would account for the comparative differences and why was there such a significant increase in birth rates among White women in their thirties? Could this indicate different levels of workforce integration by racial/ethnic group? Also, how might career development affect how women in their thirties decide whether or not to have children?
2. What factors account for the increase in birth rates among Latina women in their twenties while birth rates decreased among both White and Black women in this same age-specific group?
3. Could longer life expectancy also account for the later start in child-bearing? Is this also influenced by advances in technology that monitor fertility and facilitate conceiving children later in life?

The percentage decreases among 15-19 year-old women among all three racial/ethnic groups seem to suggest greater use of contraception, especially among young Black women who experienced a percentage decrease in birth rates of 26.7% between 1990 and 2000. However, a decrease in contraceptive use appeared among 15-19 year-old Black women and among Latina women between 1995 and 2000. A correlation between the increase in contraceptive use among White women from 30.5% in 1995 to 35% in 2002 and the birth rate decline of 19.2% from 1990 to 2000 should be noted.

Additionally, the rise in condom use among all three groups in the latter part of the 1980s and early part of the 1990s suggest a growing awareness of sexually transmitted diseases, particularly HIV. The decrease in birth control pill use among Latina and Black women may be explained by the increased availability of other form of contraceptives such as condom use.

The descriptive data and the questions raised in this report all require further consideration.

Data Sources:

Data for this report were gathered from the 2000 Census excel files data:

Table 3. *Crude birth rates, fertility rates and birthrates by age of mother, according to race and Hispanic origin: United States, selected years 1950-2000.* Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, National Vital Statistics System, Birth File. Martin JA, Hamilton BE, Ventura SJ, Menacker F, Park MM. Births: Final Data for 2000. National vital statistics reports; vol 50, no 5. Hyattsville, Maryland: National Center for Health Statistics, 2002; Ventura SJ. Births of Hispanic parentage, 1980 and 1985. Monthly vital statistics report; vol 32, no 6 and vol 36, no 11, suppl. Public Health Service. Hyattsville, Maryland. 1983 and 1988; Internet release of Vital statistics of the United States, 1998, vol 1, natality, tables 1-1 and 1-7 at www.cdc.gov/nchs/datawh/statab/unpubd/natality/natab98.htm. Vital statistics of the United States, 1999, vol 1, natality. In preparation.

Table 17: *Contraceptive use among women 15-44 years of age, according to age, race, Hispanic origin, and method of contraception: United States, 1982, 1988, 1995, and 2002*

Data Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention