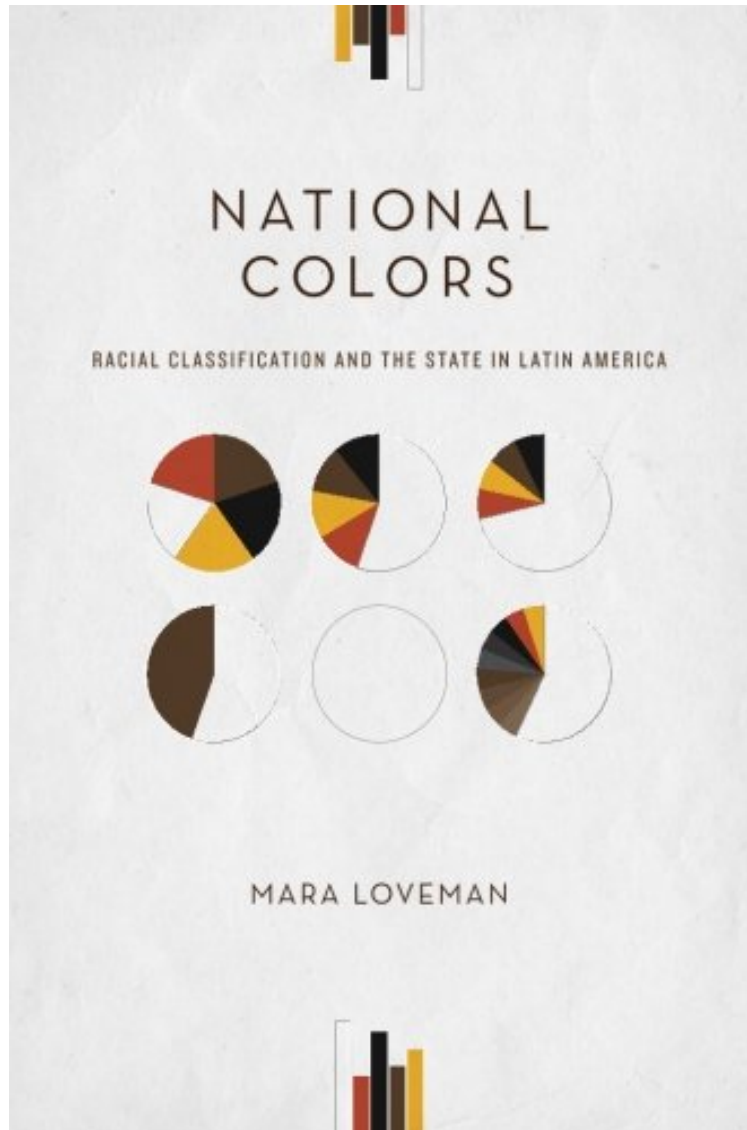


National Colors: Racial Classification and the State in Latin America

Mara Loveman

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Mara Loveman : National Colors: Racial Classification and the State in Latin America before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised National Colors: Racial Classification and the State in Latin America:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. Impressive! By David FitzGerald This book shows how racial

categories we often take for granted have changed over the year throughout Latin America. I don't know of any other work that equals its geographic breadth and historical scope. A must-read for anyone interested in race or Latin American history. It also offers an interesting contrast with the U.S

The era of official color-blindness in Latin America has come to an end. For the first time in decades, nearly every state in Latin America now asks their citizens to identify their race or ethnicity on the national census. Most observers approvingly highlight the historic novelty of these reforms, but *National Colors* shows that official racial classification of citizens has a long history in Latin America. Through a comprehensive analysis of the politics and practice of official ethnoracial classification in the censuses of nineteen Latin American states across nearly two centuries, this book explains why most Latin American states classified their citizens by race on early national censuses, why they stopped the practice of official racial classification around mid-twentieth century, and why they reintroduced ethnoracial classification on national censuses at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Beyond domestic political struggles, the analysis reveals that the ways that Latin American states classified their populations from the mid-nineteenth century onward responded to changes in international criteria for how to construct a modern nation and promote national development. As prevailing international understandings of what made a political and cultural community a modern nation changed, so too did the ways that Latin American census officials depicted diversity within national populations. The way census officials described populations in official statistics, in turn, shaped how policymakers viewed national populations and informed their prescriptions for national development--with consequences that still reverberate in contemporary political struggles for recognition, rights, and redress for ethnoracially marginalized populations in today's Latin America.

"*National Colors* is a brilliant synthesis of Latin America's centuries-long history of counting and classifying racial groups. It is a treasure trove of information and analysis for anyone seeking to understand the complex connections among race, the census, and state-formation in the region." -George Reid Andrews, Distinguished Professor and Chair, Department of History, University of Pittsburgh"*National Colors* deftly examines the historical and political forces that have shaped two hundred years of ethnoracial censuses in Latin America. In recent years, ethnoracial data collection has become nearly universal in the region as many of these countries declare themselves multiculturalist, often in the face of changing international pressures and growing democratic participation. Mara Loveman makes an important contribution to the expanding literature on race and ethnicity in Latin America, revealing how and why these nation-states decide to collect such data, despite efforts to appear racially homogenous." -Edward Telles, Professor of Sociology, Princeton University"While Loveman is not the only scholar paying attention to governmental census taking, this book stands out for its theoretical depth, the remarkable mastery of historical context and agency, and its long-term historical breath. Loveman shows that rather than reflecting domestic politics or specific demographic configurations, Latin American states collected data on the kind of racial or ethnic categories that they thought would help document, to a global audience of other states, their efforts and achievements in becoming modern nations." -Andreas Wimmer, Hughes-Rogers Professor of Sociology, Princeton University"...any preconceived impression about statistics and census data as dry could not be farther from the truth with this book! Loveman has transcended any initial impressions in terms of both content and style, to write a book that provides information and insights, yet offers an almost novel-like appeal for readers." -The Social Science Journal"*National Colors* is a rich comparative historical examination of the state agencies charged with the collection of census data in nineteen Latin American states from early 19th-century independence to the present. ... a comprehensive study that makes a significant contribution to debates concentrating on the politics of race and ethnicity and Latin America." -American Journal of Sociology
About the Author
Mara Loveman is Professor of Sociology at the University of California, Berkeley.