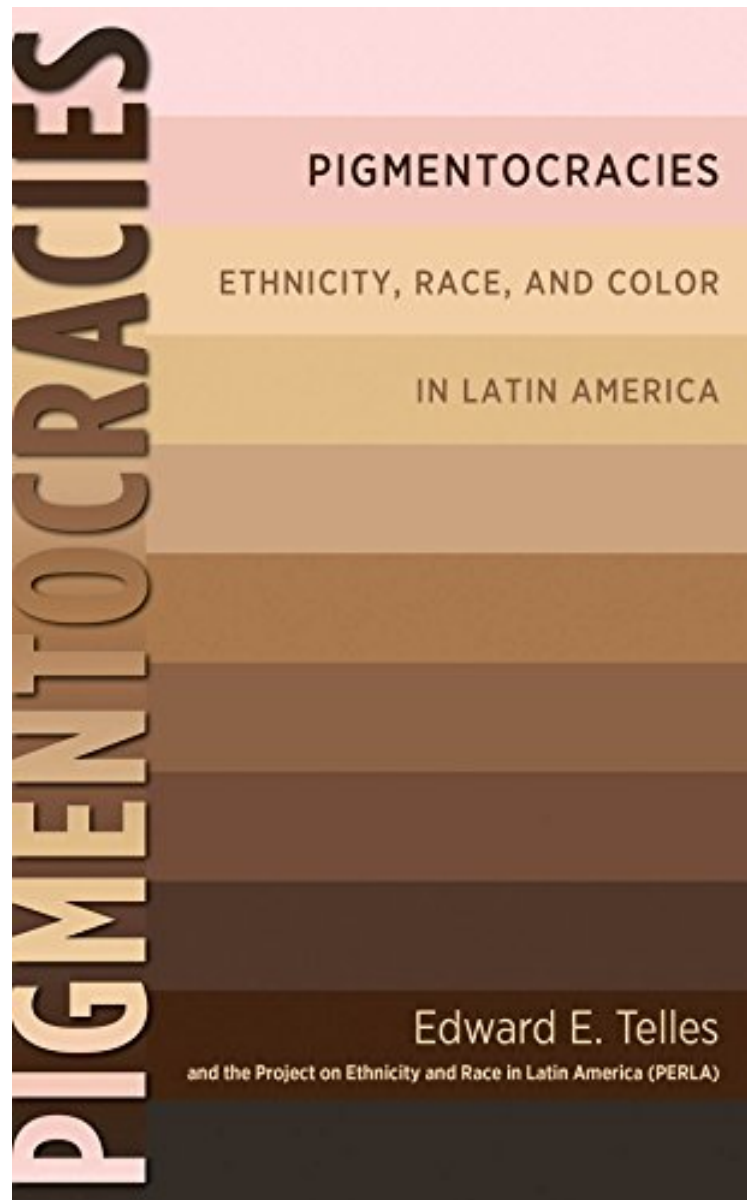


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Pigmentocracies: Ethnicity, Race, and Color in Latin America

Edward Telles

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Pigmentocracies--the fruit of the multiyear Project on Ethnicity and Race in Latin America (PERLA)--is a richly revealing analysis of contemporary attitudes toward ethnicity and race in Brazil, Colombia, Mexico, and Peru, four of Latin America's most populous nations. Based on extensive, original sociological and anthropological data generated by PERLA, this landmark study analyzes ethnoracial classification, inequality, and discrimination, as well as public opinion about Afro-descended and indigenous social movements and policies that foster greater social inclusiveness, all set within an ethnoracial history of each country. A once-in-a-generation examination of contemporary ethnicity, this book promises to contribute in significant ways to policymaking and public opinion in Latin America. Edward Telles, PERLA's principal investigator, explains that profound historical and political forces, including multiculturalism, have helped to shape the formation of ethnic identities and the nature of social relations within and across nations. One of Pigmentocracies's many important conclusions is that unequal social and economic status is at least as much a function of skin color as of ethnoracial identification. Investigators also found high rates of discrimination by color and ethnicity widely reported by both targets and witnesses. Still, substantial support across countries was found for multicultural-affirmative policies--a notable result given that in much of modern Latin America race and ethnicity have been downplayed or ignored as key factors despite their importance for earlier nation-building.

An excellent source of scholarly and official ethnoracial histories and contexts.--American AnthropologistTelles and his team have laid a data baseline useful in the continuing quest for the what, how, and why of Latin American racism.--Choice Pigmentocracies is a significant resource and a welcome addition to the literature on race and ethnicity in Latin America, providing up-to-date findings and analyses rarely found elsewhere. Includes fascinating data that are important for a deeper understanding of race and ethnicity in Latin America.--Jan Hoffman French, University of RichmondPigmentocracies presents fascinating new findings about racial stratification and attitudes in contemporary Latin America. No other book exists with data like these; no other book can speak directly to the empirical questions addressed in these chapters. A valuable and distinctive contribution to scholarship on race and ethnicity in a major region of the world.--Mara Loveman, University of California at BerkeleyFor some time now national ideologies of racial democracy and mestizaje in Latin America have been under critical pressure, from academics and Black and indigenous rights activists alike. Pigmentocracies shatters these ideologies' veneer of academic legitimacy, marshaling data that definitively links racial difference with enduring socio-economic inequality. The study's color palette method is sure to generate intense controversy, and by extension, healthy debate on how racialization affects people's wellbeing. Rarely has academic research--through a combination of compelling evidence and actionable arguments--had so much potential to make tangible contributions to racial justice in the Americas.--Charles R. Hale, University of Texas at AustinWe have needed this book for a long time. Based on a rigorously comparative survey of racial attitudes and identities in four Latin American countries, it identifies important differences among those countries and one fundamental similarity: the effects of skin color on socioeconomic outcomes and individual life chances. The book is a major research achievement and a model of how to carry out international scholarly collaboration.--George Reid Andrews, University of PittsburghThis book breaks new ground with its rigorous comparative approach, which reveals the variety of Latin American attitudes towards and perceptions of racial difference, and with its systematic use of questionnaire data, which allow many standard ideas about race in Latin American countries to be tested in detail--and confirmed in some cases, but challenged in others. Indispensable reading for all scholars and students of race and ethnicity in Latin America.--Peter Wade, University of ManchesterPigmentocracies is a signal achievement in the comparative sociology of race and racism, punctuating Edward Telles's already distinctive and pioneering research on racial and ethno-national classification and categorization. In providing and unpacking multicountry data, Pigmentocracies' conclusions highlight the relationship between identification and inequality often obscured in both nationalist and scholarly explanations of racial exceptionalism, with implications for both North and South America.--Michael Hanchard, The Johns Hopkins UniversityBased on imaginative, meticulous, and ambitious comparative research, this pathbreaking book shatters the traditional indigenous-black divide and takes the study of race, color, ethnicity, and mestizaje in Latin America to a whole new level. A must read.--Alejandro de la Fuente, Harvard UniversityAbout the AuthorEdward E. Telles is professor of sociology at Princeton University. The multinational and multidisciplinary PERLA team includes Juan Carlos Callirgos, Regina Martinez Casas, Rene Flores, Marcelo Paixao, Emiko Saldivar Tanaka, Graziella Moraes Silva, Christina Sue, David Sulmont, Fernando Urrea Giraldo, Carlos Viafara Lopez, and Mara Viveros Vigoya.