

United States[®] Census 2020



Doing the Numbers



Who is Counted (or not)?

The U.S. Census helps in calculating how many seats in the House of Representatives each state is assigned or "apportioned" based on the total resident population of the 50 states excluding:

- Individuals living on "foreign soil" within the United States, including the embassies, ministries, legations, consulates, and chancelleries of other nations
- Citizens of other nations temporarily visiting or traveling (but not residing) in the United States
- Residents of the District of Columbia or any of the U.S. commonwealths and territories (Puerto Rico) - jurisdictions whose residents are counted in the census but do not have the same type of congressional representation as the Constitution provides to the residents of the 50 states



Taking census, 1920. Courtesy, Library of Congress, National Photo Company Collection, <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2016827352/>

Hard to Count Populations

It is imperative to the success of the decennial census that everyone gets counted, including those who have historically been overlooked including:

Young Children:

Not everyone who should be counted does, in fact get counted. Throughout the history of the census, many people mistakenly assumed their young children did not need to be counted.

Complex Households:

Individuals in households that have blended families or multi-generations or non-relatives living under the same roof.

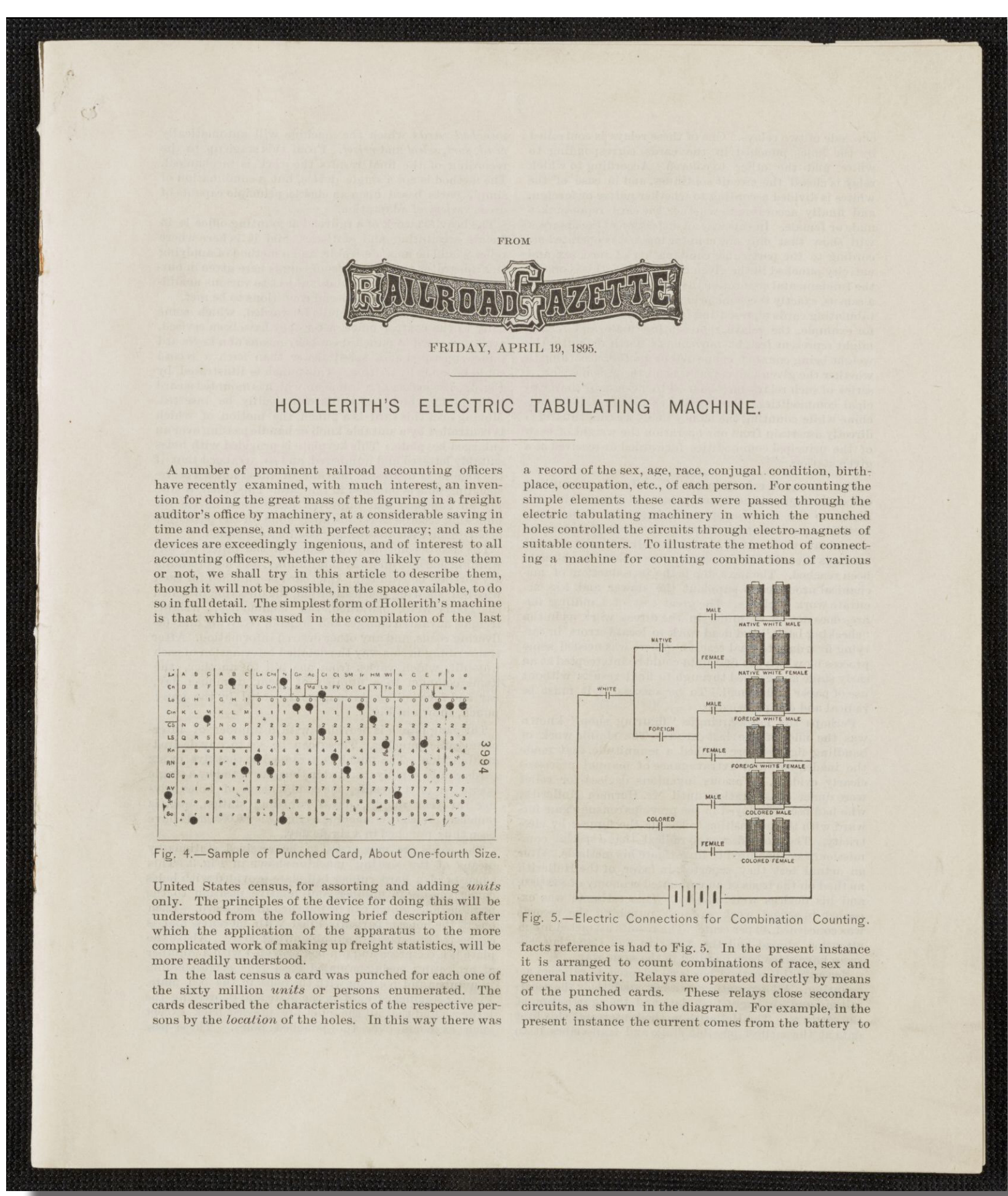
Other Hard-to-Count Groups:

- Individuals who do not speak English fluently
- Displaced people affected by disaster
- Non-traditional households
- People with low incomes
- People experiencing homelessness
- People with disabilities
- People without a high school diploma
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Renters
- Young, mobile people
- Undocumented or recent immigrants
- Rural or remote communities



Taking the census [graphic] / after sketch by Thomas Worth, 1870. Courtesy: Library of Congress, <https://ccn.loc.gov/93510014>

Image from Plate, punch card, and instructions for Herman Hollerith's Electric Sorting and Tabulating Machine, ca. 1895. Courtesy, Library of Congress, <https://www.loc.gov/item/mcc.023/>



Analyzing and Organizing the Census Data

By 1880, the Census Bureau was collecting so much data that employees could not tabulate it fast enough. A competition was held for a new machine design to speed up the process. The punch card and electronic tabulator was developed by Herman Hollerith to speed the tallying of the 1890 census. In 1950, Hollerith's electronic tabulators were replaced by UNIVAC I, the first modern computer to be used by a civilian government agency.

Census challenge:

By law, U.S. census records cannot be released to the public for a period of 72 years after completion. The census records are transferred to the National Archives & Records Administration (NARA) after those 72 years, and then made available to the public. This means the 2020 Census will be released to the public in what year?

Find out more about the history of the U.S. Census by visiting our online exhibit at:

<https://bit.ly/2nVeTK7>

www.census.gov

