

Puerto Rican Experience in Hartford

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Puerto Rican Experience in Hartford

Hartford is the home to the highest percentage (27%) of Puerto Ricans in the country (Cruz, 5). Nonetheless, Puerto Ricans still face myriad challenges with respect to the integration and acceptance of their culture in Hartford. Although the PR community is only two generations old, Puerto [Ricans](#) have managed to both organize and mobilize in this relatively short time ([Cruz](#), 2). Puerto Ricans have focused closely on their ethnic identity because they viewed their incorporation into the political sphere occurring only by means of asserting their difference (Cruz, 10). They have made their mark on politics in Hartford through demographic growth, development of leadership in the community, and their strength to organize. However, this fact is shadowed by the challenges they face as the "other Americans." As Americans in the theoretical but not traditional sense, Puerto Ricans looked to their identity, specifically their ethnicity, for political mobilization. This notion of identity politics can be taken a step further to include a move from ethnic awareness to power awareness and similarly from interest to interest group.

The Puerto Ricans' experience of living as the "other Americans" was succinctly captured by Florencio Morales in 1965:

"The Hartford community must understand Puerto Ricans as Puerto Ricans...Yes, we are Americans, but we don't look like Americans. Americans must look for what the Puerto [Rican](#) has to offer." (43)

Morales' statement is not complete, however, in the sense that it does not address the need for Puerto Ricans to realize and appreciate their potential. Luis Figueroa's statement

"Puerto Ricans themselves must look at what Puerto Ricans are and what the...

... middle of paper ...

...atement well describes the historical emergence of Puerto Rican identity politics because it not only captures the social dilemma Americans face in realizing who the Puerto Ricans are, but recognizes that this conflict has stifled Puerto Rican's actualization as a community.

References

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