

Tues. Nov. 17 - 4:00pm  
68 Waterman St.  
Mencoff Hall

“Who Counts?”:  
Science,  
Demography  
and the Social

A Special Series  
Presented by:

The Committee on Science and  
Technology Studies,  
The Population Studies and Training  
Center,  
The Department of Africana Studies,  
The History Department,  
Pembroke Center for Teaching and  
Research on Women,  
and the Anthropology Department  
at Brown University



**Jennifer Hochschild, Harvard University**  
Henry LaBarre Jayne Professor of Government  
Professor of African American Studies

## “There’s No One as Irish as Barack O’Bama”: The Policy and Politics of American Multiracialism

For the first time in American history, the United States' 2000 **census** allowed individuals to choose more than one **race**. That new **policy** sets up our exploration of whether and how **multiracialism** is entering Americans' understanding and practice of race. Using a policy feedback framework, we find that multiracialism is becoming institutionalized, that the small proportion of Americans who define themselves as multiracial is growing, and that the evidence suggests a continued rise.

Increasing multiracial **identification** is also made more likely by racial mixture's growing prominence in American **society**. However, the **politics** side of the feedback loop is complicated by the fact that identification is not identity; traditional racial or ethnic loyalties and understandings remain strong, including among potential multiracial identifiers. We expect mixed race identity to be **contextual**, fluid, and additive, so that it can be layered onto rather than substituted for traditional racial commitments. If this development continues to take hold, it has the potential to change much of the politics and policy of American **integrations**.

