Description: The descendants of the First Peoples of the Americas (labeled “American Indians and Alaska Natives” in the federal definition) are a particularly challenging group to count in censuses. Those who do not report a tribe and those who change their race response from one census to another complicate these efforts. Tribal self-enumeration and indigenous data sovereignty may improve data about some portions of the population.

Carolyn Liebler is broadly interested in the social construction of race. Her research focuses on how social construction processes impact demographic studies of racialized populations including American Indians, Native Hawaiians, children of interracial couples, and others with mixed racial background. She earned her PhD in Sociology from the University of Wisconsin and is now an Associate Professor of Sociology at the University of Minnesota.