2013 BLACK ROCK CITY CENSUS

Weighted Results Report

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- Sociodemographic Characteristics
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- Life at Burning Man
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- Contributions and Acknowledgements
The Census is a collaborative research project that started in 2002.

Although the BRC Census is technically a survey and not a real census (where everyone in a population was sampled), we aspire to be a true census where everyone voluntarily participates. Until that day, we will continue to provide the most complete picture possible of the highly diverse population of Black Rock City.
Method

• Based on analysis of 11919 surveys filled out online after the event in 2013 (roughly 1 in 5.5 citizens!)
• This is roughly the same level of useful data as the 2012 paper survey with the added benefit of not requiring the extensive, time consuming and error-prone manual entry after the event.
• This is the 2\textsuperscript{nd} consecutive year in BRC history that these results were weighted to correct for non-response biases.
  – \textit{Implication: these results are the most reliable estimates available concerning the BRC population}
• Project was approved by a research ethics committee (@ Denver University) and confidentiality of respondents is protected
Details about the weighting procedure

- In 2013, the Census Lab repeated the weighting procedures introduced with the 2012 survey.
- The weighting procedure corrects the biases in the Census due to self-selection. (i.e., burners who decided to fill out the Census might be different from those who chose not to fill it out)
- In population surveys, the national census is used as a reference to weight (i.e., adjust) each survey.
- As with 2012, the 2013 BRC Census created an “unbiased” reference by randomly sampling cars at the gate during ingress, asking nine sociodemographic questions of each sampled burner who accepted.
- Thus, the results from 2013 Census were weighted according to this random sampling at the gates, improving the collective accuracy of the data.
- We also attempted a random sample of participants at Exodus though this data was merely experimental and was not used in weighting the 2013 survey results.
This presentation covers the descriptive results for the most important questions.

The first section of results contrasts the weighted (i.e., corrected results) and the unweighted (i.e., original but biased) results to help understand the usefulness of the procedure.

The remaining sections present only the weighted results.

These results are the most reliable estimates that we have of the Black Rock City population.

The “real” population values could be slightly different from the presented values due to measurement error.

For more results, visit us on the playa (near Center Camp) and follow the Census Lab’s blog at

http://blackrockcitycensus.wordpress.com
Weighting the Census
Inherent self-selection bias in past surveys
2013 complemented census with a random sampling at the gate
Random sample allowed us to weight the collected data
Variables used to weight the 2013 Census:
  – Early Arrivals or not
  – Gender
  – Age
  – Virgin Burner or not
  – Foreigner or not
  – English Speaker as a first language or not
  – US Party Affiliation (if eligible to vote in the US)
  – Voting Behavior
In this section, we illustrate the weighted data based on the random sample and compare it against the unadjusted data of the convenience sample (online survey).

Annotations of “over-represented” or “under-represented” are highlighting areas that have statistically significant differences between the weighted random sample data and the unweighted convenience sample data.

Those answering “yes” were more likely to fill out the online survey (i.e., over-represented) than those answering “no” (i.e., under-represented in the online data).

The PINK bars represent the results adjusted based on the random sample. The GREY bars represent the unadjusted convenience (online survey) sample.
Early Arrivals were over-represented

Weighting Variables

Early Arrival

Weighted Results
Unweighted Results

no
88.88%
74.79%

yes
11.12%
25.21%
Weighting Variables

Gender

- Males slightly under-represented
- Females slightly over-represented
Weighting Variables

Virgins slightly under-represented

Virgin

Weighted Results  Unweighted Results

People who attended between 5-to-7 previous burns over represented
Youngest age group is underrepresented while other age groups are adequately represented.
**Weighting Variables**

- Foreigner participants were under-represented.
- Native language was not a biased variable.

**US Citizen**

- Weighted Results: 87%
- Unweighted Results: 13%

**English**

- Weighted Results: 87%
- Unweighted Results: 13%
Sociodemographic Characteristics
Sociodemographic Characteristics

### Age Group

- **_0_19**: 2%
- **_1_20**: 4%
- **_20_24**: 9%
- **_25_29**: 14%
- **_30_34**: 16%
- **_35_39**: 10%
- **_40_49**: 10%
- **_50_59**: 6%
- **_60_69**: 10%
- **_70_79**: 12%
- **_80_99**: 7%
- **_100_119**: 2%

**Median Age:** 33-34

### Personal Income

- **None**: 4%
- **Less_than_7500US**: 6%
- **_7500_14999US**: 12%
- **_15000_24999US**: 10%
- **_25000_34999US**: 10%
- **_35000_49999US**: 8%
- **_40000_59999US**: 10%
- **_50000_74999US**: 12%
- **_75000_99999US**: 13%
- **_100k_149999US**: 17%
- **_150k_299999US**: 17%
- **300000+US**: 17%

**Median Personal Income:** $50k-$51k

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Sociodemographic Characteristics

Personal Income
Primary and Non-Primary Household Earners

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Not-Primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30000+US</td>
<td>2.0%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>150k-299999US</td>
<td>5.8%</td>
<td>0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100k-149999US</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
<td>1.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75000-99999US</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50000-74999US</td>
<td>12.4%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35000-49999US</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
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<tr>
<td>25000-34999US</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7500-14999US</td>
<td>4.9%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less_than_7500US</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>None</td>
<td>1.0%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sociodemographic Characteristics

**Gender**
- Male: 58%
- Female: 41%
- Other: 1%

**Ethnoracial background**
- White: 83%
- Asian: 17%
- Hispanic: 9.1%
- Black: 3.9%
- Native: 3.1%
- Other or Mult: 0.9%

**Non-White selections**
- Asian: 5.6%
- Hispanic: 5.2%
- Native: 2.3%
- Black: 1.5%

Includes respondents who may have checked more than one answer.
Sociodemographic Characteristics

Education (Highest Degree Achieved)

- **Grad_degree**: 24%
- **Bac_degree**: 43%
- **Assoc_degree**: 6%
- **Some_college**: 20%
- **High_school**: 5%
- **Only_other**: 1%
- **None**: 1%

**Other Degrees**
- **beauty_certification**: 1%
- **healing_certification**: 4%
- **technical or vocational_certification**: 10%
Country of Residence other than US

- **Canada**: 7.2%
- **UK_Ireland**: 3.3%
- **Australia_NZ**: 2.4%
- **Europe**: 3.6%
- **Latin America**: 0.7%
- **Asia**: 0.2%
- **Africa**: 0.7%
- **Not clear**: 0.4%

About Tableau maps: www.tableausoftware.com/mapdata
Sociodemographic Characteristics

First Language Other than English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Punjabi</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Urdu</td>
<td>0.03%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tagalog</td>
<td>0.08%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>0.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindi</td>
<td>0.11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Norwegian</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Danish</td>
<td>0.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabic</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>0.15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>0.17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farsi</td>
<td>0.18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>0.26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>0.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portuguese</td>
<td>0.33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0.49%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hebrew</td>
<td>0.61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dutch</td>
<td>0.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>German</td>
<td>0.87%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>1.52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>French</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>1.84%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First Language: English

- Yes: 87%
- No: 13%
Sociodemographic Characteristics

Number of burns before this year (2013)

Virgin?

Yes 40%

Number of years since their first burn
Burning Man
Related Variables
Burning Man Related Variables

Number of people in vehicle at arrival

- 42.89%
- 18.04%
- 13.48%
- 5.75%
- 4.82%
- 1.4%
- 1.11%
- 2.42%

How did you enter BRC (other than gate)

- Airport: 99.11% enter through Gate
- Staff entrance
- Unusual entrance

Number of persons in vehicle under 18

- 97.8%

How many members of your family are you expecting at BM this year?

- 0: 56.2%
- 1: 23.1%
- 2: 10.8%
- 3: 6.7%
- 4 or more: 2.4%
Burning Man Related Variables

Did you carpool to go to BM?
- no
- yes

How did you find people to carpool with?
- Friends/family
- Craigslist
- Shuttle
- Rideboard
- Met_at_BM
- Other

- 76.2%
- 23.8%
- 86.2%
- 6.5%
Burning Man Related Variables

Projected economic impact of the 69k participants on Nevada was $55M

How much will you spend in Nevada before and after the event?

Will you visit a park and/or recreation area on your way to or from BM?

- Yes: 28.4%
- Not sure: 28.4%
- No: 43.2%
Burning Man Related Variables

Was the location of your camp pre-assigned by the BM organization?

- Yes: 50.9%
- No: 43.5%
- IDK: 5.6%

How are you fulfilling your financial obligations to your camp?

- Fees: 47%
- Work: 15%
- Fundraising: 14%
- Awarded scholarship: 2%
- None: 42%
- Other: 10%

Number of people in your camp

- 1: 3.3%
- 2: 7.1%
- 3 or 4: 9.7%
- 5 to 9: 12.6%
- 10 to 19: 12.6%
- 20 to 49: 15.8%
- 50 to 99: 17.8%
- 100 to 199: 20.1%
- 200 or more: 31.1%
Burning Man Related Variables

How do you generate power?

- Batteries: 60%
- Camp's generator: 35%
- Solar: 29%
- Vehicle's generator: 21%
- No power: 13%
- On the BRC grid: 4%
- Another camp: 2%
- Wind: 1%

Are you staying in a RV/camper-trailer at BM this year?
- Yes: 29.3%
- Not sure: 3%
- No: 70%
Burning Man Related Variables

Did you listen to BMIR 94.5FM Burning Man Information Radio?

- online year round 3%
- online pre-event 18%
- on a mobile device while traveling to Burning Man 22%
- on an FM radio at Burning Man 72%
Burning Man Related Variables

Ever attended a regional BM event?

- Yes_attended: 37%
- Yes_volunteered: 35%
- No_but_email_list: 17%
- No: 11%
Life at Burning Man
Life at Burning Man

How much did you enjoy your experience this year at BM?

Your most wonderful memories of BM this year are memories of:

- People: 56.3%
- Art: 19.6%
- Personal Events/Accomplishments: 11.8%
- Music: 5.7%
- Other: 4.4%
- Nature: 1.9%
- I_dont_have any: 0.3%

Do you intend to come back to BM?

- Absolutely: 60%
- Probably: 30%
- Not sure: 10%
- Probably_not: 0%

• Burning Man continues to be an important cultural event for participants
• Interactions with people are the dominant positive association
Life at Burning Man

This year at BM, with how many new persons did you have...

- Fascinating discussions
- Deep emotional bond
- Sex
- Intimate activities
- Expect to keep in contact

Do you intend to keep contact with these persons with whom you had sex?

- No
- Not sure
- With at least 1

- New relationships formed at Burning Man tend to be lasting
Life at Burning Man

- A large majority ride mutant vehicles at least once
- Primarily seen as “for fun”

Did you ride on a mutant vehicle?

- 65.7% No
- 34.3% Yes

How frequently did you ride on a mutant vehicle?

- 50.00%
- 45.00%
- 30.00%
- 20.00%
- 10.00%

- Once
- Twice
- A few times
- Every day

Why did you ride on a mutant vehicle?

- 50.8%
- 45.3%
- 4.0%
- 0.0%

- To get somewhere
- For fun
- Both
Did you have a bike to use in BRC?

- Yes_exclusive_use: 87%
- Yes_borrowed: 5%
- No: 3%
- No_but_I_wish_I_had: 3%
- Other: 2%

How much time per day did you spend...

- <1h
- 1 to 2h
- 2 to 3h
- 3 to 4h
- >4h
Life at Burning Man

Did you [fill in the blank] at BM this year?

- Playful mood
- Heckle/tease
- Volunteer or work
- Sexy encounter
- Get naked
- Get out-of-control

Legend:
- Top_priority
- Yes
- Sort_of
- No_sounds_fun
- Not_into_that
Life at Burning Man

A majority are well-rested
Identity & Self
Identity & Self

Do you consider yourself married?

- Yes: 26%
- Sometimes: 5%
- No: 69%
Identity & Self

How do you describe your spirituality?

- Religious: 7%
- Spiritual_not_relig: 49%
- Agnostic: 15%
- Atheist: 22%
- Deist: 1%
- IDK: 6%

Do you engage in prayer/meditation/contemplation?

- Never_or_nearly: 48%
- Daily: 12%
- Weekly: 15%
- Monthly: 12%
- Yearly: 13%
Identity & Self

Do you belong to a religion?
- No_religion: 71%
- Protestant: 3%
- Catholic: 5%
- Christian_other: 5%
- Jewish: 6%
- Buddhist: 2%
- Pagan: 2%
- Pastafarian: 2%
- Other: 4%

How often do you attend religious services?
- Never_or_nearly: 55%
- Yearly: 13%
- On Holidays: 13%
- Monthly: 6%
- Weekly: 3%
- Less: 13%
- More: 1%
Identity & Self

Do you Consider yourself an artist?

- Yes: 33%
- No: 20%
- No_butcreative: 47%

Do you get paid to be an artist?

- Main_income: 17%
- Often: 8%
- Sometimes: 30%
- Rarely: 19%
- No: 26%

If so, what is your main form of art?

- Performing
- Literary
- Visual_craft
- Other
Identity & Self

Self-identified as LGBT*

- Overall: 15.4%
- For males: 14.1%
- For females: 15.6%
- For fluid/neither: 61.7%

Self-identified sexual orientation

- Overall: 69%
- For males: 76%
- For females: 62%
- For fluid/neither: 17%

* Self-identified trans = 0.76% of the population
** Bisexual also includes people who identify as pansexual or similar
I am sexually attracted to...

- **Overall**: 51%
  - No_attraction: 6%
  - Im_not_sure: 2%
  - Only_same_sex: 21%
  - Mostly_same_sex: 11%
  - Equally: 34%
  - Mostly_opp_sex: 26%
  - Only_opp_sex: 17%

- **(for males)**: 64%
  - No_attraction: 2%
  - Im_not_sure: 6%
  - Only_same_sex: 21%
  - Mostly_same_sex: 11%
  - Equally: 34%
  - Mostly_opp_sex: 26%
  - Only_opp_sex: 17%

- **(for females)**: 34%
  - No_attraction: 6%
  - Im_not_sure: 2%
  - Only_same_sex: 21%
  - Mostly_same_sex: 11%
  - Equally: 34%
  - Mostly_opp_sex: 26%
  - Only_opp_sex: 17%

- **(for fluids/neither)**: 34%
  - No_attraction: 6%
  - Im_not_sure: 2%
  - Only_same_sex: 21%
  - Mostly_same_sex: 11%
  - Equally: 34%
  - Mostly_opp_sex: 26%
  - Only_opp_sex: 17%
Identity & Self

Do you consider yourself polyamorous or kinkster?

- Poly: 11%
- Kinkster: 8%
- PolyKinkster: 6%

No, 75%
Burning Man in the Default World
Burning Man in the Default World

Do you consider the burner community as family?

- No: 3%
- A_bit: 13%
- Somewhat: 32%
- A_lot: 30%
- Extremely: 22%
Burning Man in the Default World

Do you consider BRC to be your home?

- Second_home: 47%
- A_bit: 20%
- Main_home: 10%
- Not_sure: 5%
- No: 14%
- Only_home: 4%
Does the Temple and its spiritual significance on the playa clash with other religious beliefs you may hold in the default world?

- No: 94%
- Somewhat: 4%
- Yes: 2%
Burning Man in the Default World

Did you ever tell about your Burning Man experience ...

- to non-burner family members?
  - To_most: 56%
  - To_some: 40%
  - No: 0%

- to non-burner friends?
  - To_most: 62%
  - To_some: 37%
  - No: 11%

- to non-burner colleagues?
  - To_most: 36%
  - To_some: 54%
  - No: 11%

- in the public space (in the media, a journal article, a blog, a website, etc.)?
  - To_most: 35%
  - To_some: 62%
  - No: 10%
Burning Man in the Default World

Did you consciously decide not to mention Burning Man to any of the following?

- coworkers
- close friends
- family members
- fellow members of your church/congregation
- other acquaintances
Burning Man in the Default World

Do you have a playa name?

Yes_given 34%
Yes_chosen 19%
No 18%
No_but_hoping 29%

If so, how frequently did you use your ___ name on playa this year?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Most_of_the_time
- Always

Playa Name
- Non-Playa Name

- Playa Name
  - Never 19%
  - Sometimes 16%
  - Most_of_the_time 23%
  - Always 37%

- Non-Playa Name
  - Never 29%
  - Sometimes 21%
  - Most_of_the_time 40%
Burning Man in the Default World

Did you ever tell your playa name ..

- To some
- To most

- To non-burner family members?
  - 18% (To some)
  - 38% (To most)

- To non-burner friends?
  - 19% (To some)
  - 48% (To most)

- To non-burner colleagues?
  - 11% (To some)
  - 28% (To most)

Ever use your playa name in the public space (in the media, a journal article, a blog, a website, etc.)?

- More than once: 21%
- Once: 7%
- No: 72%
Main Reasons to Go to Burning Man
Main Reasons to Go to Burning Man

Best represents the reasons why you went to Burning Man

- to play or party (56%)
- to experience radical inclusion (42%)
- to meet like-minded people (30%)
- to grow or connect spiritually (24%)
- to escape an alienating default world (21%)
- to experience radical expression (17%)
- to experience gifting and decommodification (17%)
- to experience radical self-reliance (17%)
- to create or work on a project (14%)
- to satisfy my curiosity (12%)
- for another reason (8%)
Contributions and Acknowledgements
Contributions and acknowledgements

**Project coordination:**
Megan Heller (Countess), Dominic Beaulieu-Prévost (Hunter) and Kateri McRae (Variance) are the principal investigators who led the 2013 Census project.

**Sampling & data analysis:**
Dominic Beaulieu-Prévost (Hunter)

**Report coordination, layout & design:**
David Nelson-Gal (Scribble)

**Additional Data Visualizations & Analysis:**
Steven Crane (Indiana), Andrew Pederson & Alana Glassco (Lovechild)

**The 2013 Census Lab:**
The project also involved numerous other volunteers whose contributions were essential in many ways: research collaborators, volunteer coordinators, statisticians, camp builders, gate samplers, keypunchers, census lab hosts, graphic designers, and many more. These contributors will globally be referred to as “the Census Lab”. We would also like to thank the Burning Man organization for the resources that they provided both on playa and off playa and for believing in the project.

A final thanks to all the BRC citizens who contributed to the 2013 Census. The Census project could not exist without you.
For more information about the 2013 Census project or the people involved in the project, please write to census@burningman.org.

For more information about this report, please write to Dominic Beaulieu-Prévost at beaulieu-prevost.dominic@uqam.ca.

You can also access the Census blog at http://blackrockcitycensus.wordpress.com.

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