

Shine Brighter Première

ShortFile 22 Puerto Rico: the 51st state?

Doc 2. p. 191: article de Sabrina Negrón, *Amherst Wire*

Sabrina Negrón:

I am Puerto Rican. For the longest time, that sentence felt self-explanatory; I am from the island, I embrace the culture, most of my family lives there, I eat the food, I listen to the music ... It seemed simple. As I grew older, however, I found myself explaining a lot. Yes, I speak Spanish. No, I'm not Spanish. Yes, I am a citizen. No, it's not because I have a green card¹. Yes, Puerto Rico is part of the United States, but no, not really.

Andres, 20 years old, was born and raised in Puerto Rico and now studies at the University of Massachusetts.

I never thought I was American. I know I have citizenship, but... Personally, I wouldn't like to be part of the United States. But if we get to a point where we have to choose, because it is definitely going to happen, right now I would say yes to statehood. I obviously have my sense of patriotism or nationalism, whatever you want to call it, but even then, the benefits outweigh² the deficits.

Anna, 25 years old, studies law at the University of Puerto Rico.

No, I don't feel American. Obviously, a lot of respect. But I don't feel American because it's not the same culture, it's not the same way of thinking, it's not the same way of looking at life. How am I supposed to identify with this country that treats me as inferior and tells me by way of their diverse laws, and hundreds of years of history, that I am inferior to them? I don't like the way they portray what they are and how they treat people.

Sabrina Negrón, *Amherst Wire*, 2024

1. permanent resident card for non-Americans **2.** *l'emportent sur*

Why is Puerto Rico so important to the United States? A deep dive into its significant role

Puerto Rico holds a special place in the heart of the United States. It's not just a beautiful island destination; it has significant strategic, economic, and cultural importance to us.

Strategically, Puerto Rico serves as a crucial military outpost for the U.S. Imagine it as our very own Caribbean fortress! By having a presence there, we can project our military power and keep an eye on things in the region. [...]

Economically, Puerto Rico is more than just a tropical paradise. It's actually one of our biggest markets for American products! Can you believe that? It ranks fifth in the world – yes, THE WORLD – as a market for goods and services coming from us. Plus, because Puerto Rico uses U.S. currency¹ and has attracted lots of investment capital over the years, it has been able to revolutionize industries like sugarcane on the island.

Lastly, culturally speaking, Puerto Ricans are part of our American family. They're not just neighbors; they're citizens! In fact, the 3.4 million Puerto Ricans have all the rights granted by U.S. Federal Law because of their status as a U.S. Territory. They contribute so much to American society with their workforce and vibrant culture. And hey, did I mention they're bilingual? That makes them even more attractive for businesses looking for talented folks².

Overall, Puerto Rico is like that cousin who brings something truly special to every family gathering – it offers us strategic advantages militarily while also being an economic powerhouse and contributing culturally.

WeLikePR, 2024

1. the dollar 2. people

What will Statehood Change for Puerto Rico?

Same

Puerto Rico will have a a state flag and other symbols of identity.

Puerto Rico will use U.S. currency, passports, and mail system.

English and Spanish will be spoken in Puerto Rico.

Puerto Rico will elect the Governor and Legislature.

U.S. citizenship for all born in Puerto Rico.

U.S. Constitution and federal laws will apply.

Puerto Rico will have its own unique culture as all states do.

Puerto Rico will keep its constitution and local laws.

Different

Puerto Rico will have the rights and powers of a state.

Puerto Rico vote in Presidential elections.

The U.S. flag will have 51 stars.

Equality under federal programs and services.

Equal security rights, and benefits.

Participation in income tax and tax credits.

Equal representation in the U.S. House and two U.S. senators.

Permanent status and an end to the status debate.

PR51st Statehood for Puerto Rico

Puerto Ricans in Philadelphia battle historical inequalities in health services

Ray Collazo looks outside the window, driving past the tightly packed row houses¹ in Fairhill toward Kensington, his old stomping grounds in the area known as North Philadelphia.

When he was 11, his parents moved to Philadelphia for work, as did many other Puerto Rican laborers and families in the 1940s and '50s.

Collazo points to blocks he could never cross, recounting being assaulted by a group of white children the first few weeks in his new neighborhood for crossing North Front Street.

“I could never be over here,” he said. “Here” is the other side of North Front Street, where mostly white, Irish families lived. [...]

In the 1970s, rapid gentrification displaced Puerto Ricans from Spring Garden, pushing them into economically disadvantaged neighborhoods. This shift deepened unemployment, poverty, and racial discrimination. [...]

Decades later, Puerto Rican patients exhibit rates of depression higher than white or other Hispanic populations. [...]

Philadelphia-based public-health scholar, Ana Martínez-Donate, attested to this in her research.

“It is not about the person and what they’re doing right or wrong. It’s about context. It’s living in neighborhoods that are more prone² to crime. It’s being more likely to be unemployed or having to pay a greater proportion of your income on rent, it’s not having education opportunities because you are not eligible for certain kinds of financial aid. It’s lacking health insurance and not being able to see a health provider³. It’s not speaking English fluently and not having enough providers in the city that are linguistically and culturally competent to serve the community.”

Vicky Diaz-Camacho, *kensingtonvoice.com*, 2025

1. *maison mitoyenne* **2.** likely to face **3.** medical professional

In Puerto Rico, tears, joy and gratitude over JLo's flag shoutout at Super Bowl

The screams echoed across Puerto Rico when Jennifer Lopez unfurled a feather¹ cape representing the flag of the U.S. territory during the Super Bowl's halftime show, a moment that many were still replaying and sharing on Monday. The move came at a trying time for those on the island of 3.2 million U.S. citizens, who are still struggling to recover from a devastating hurricane and major earthquake.

"Everybody began to clap. They jumped out of their chairs. It was so exciting. There were even people with tears falling down their face," said Danny Hernández, a government employee in the southwestern town of Guayanilla, where dozens of people lost their homes in a recent 6.4 magnitude earthquake that killed one person.

The halftime moment surprised Puerto Rican journalist Jonathán Lebrón Ayala and his family as they watched the game at home. His wife and daughter jumped up, spilling drinks on the floor as Lopez yelled², "Let's get loud! Latinos!" and then unfurled the flag while her young daughter sang, "Born in the U.S.A."

"It was rather hectic," he recalled with a laugh. "You could hear people in the neighborhood screaming." Lebrón said he felt it was the most politically charged NFL Super Bowl ever, and that the moment will draw attention to Puerto Rico's needs, which also include recovery from a 13-year recession.

NBC News, 2020

1. plume 2. shouted

Why the Puerto Rican Day Parade Matters This Summer More Than Ever

New York City's annual Puerto Rican Day Parade is almost upon us, and it's incredible that almost seven decades have passed since the parade's inception. But it's also hard for me to imagine a time without it — the Puerto Rican community's contributions to New York are that intrinsic. In every neighborhood, in every barrio, on every block in this city of 18 million people, if you look hard enough, you'll see our influence — from the corner bodegas to the salsa blaring¹ from passing cars to the flags hanging from power lines or draped from windows. We're a prideful people, and the parade celebrates that pride.

But as time passed, the number of Puerto Rican flags in my neighborhood began to dwindle². The noise that once accompanied our raucous³ celebrations of Puerto Rican pride became fainter, the parties fewer and further between. The cement stoops⁴ that had once been host to our barbecues became condos⁵, silent towers of glass and steel that no longer told our story. The city even tried to remove the "Avenue of Puerto Rico" sign that has proudly hung on Graham Avenue in Brooklyn for decades. This is the aftermath of gentrification.

So, as rents rise and more Puerto Ricans pack up and move away, the Puerto Rican Day Parade and the many accompanying celebrations serve as an important reminder — not only of how far we've come and what we've achieved, but that we're still here.

Miguel Machado, *popsugar.com*, 6 June 2024

1. playing loudly
2. decrease
3. loud
4. staircases in front of individual houses
5. apartments