

STUDY SERIES
(*Survey Methodology* #2013-08)

**Ethnographic Study of the Group Quarters Population
in the 2010 Census: Prisons for Adults
and Juvenile Correctional Facilities**

Michelle Inderbitzin¹
Anna Chan

¹ Oregon State University

Center for Survey Measurement
Research and Methodology Directorate
U.S. Census Bureau
Washington, D.C. 20233

Report Issued: March 7, 2013

Disclaimer: This report is released to inform interested parties of research and to encourage discussion. The views expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the U.S. Census Bureau.

1 Executive Summary

The purpose of this qualitative study was to explore the factors that shape the ability of the U.S. Census Bureau to accurately count individuals confined to state juvenile correctional facilities and prisons. The preparation and process of the 2010 enumeration was observed at both the agency level and the institution level. The primary agencies and sites included in this study included one state's Juvenile Authority (JA) and a juvenile correctional facility for females, and the same state's Department of Corrections (DOC) and four state prisons for men.

In contrast to many other Group Quarters, a primary responsibility of both juvenile correctional facilities and prisons is security and public safety. Thus, the institutions and their central agencies have clear records of which individuals are in which facility at any given time. Virtually all juvenile correctional facilities and state prisons do "counts" at least four times a day (Sykes, 1958; Jacobson-Hardy, 2002; Johnson, 2002; Inderbitzin, 2007), and corrections workers are responsible for keeping close track of the youth or inmates in their units. The challenges of enumerating the population of correctional facilities, then, are generally not in capturing accurate names and numbers of residents in any given institution. Instead, safety concerns and the closed culture of correctional facilities provide the obstacles for enumeration and Census Coverage Measurement (CCM) studies.

The state in this study was perhaps unique in that the JA and the DOC share a portion of their population (young people sentenced as adults may serve part or all of their sentences in juvenile correctional facilities where there is more opportunity for education and rehabilitation), and administrators and leaders at the central offices of both agencies work closely together on a regular basis. In addition, the number of individual in custody is relatively low – the JA has approximately 900 youth in close custody facilities, and the DOC houses approximately 14,000 inmates in state prisons.

The process of enumerating juvenile correction facilities and prisons in the 2010 Census was most notable for the interaction between state agencies. A decentralized approach was initially decided upon for the enumeration of state juvenile correctional facilities and prisons, but leaders in the DOC changed course and chose to provide administrative records and completed Individual Census Reports for all 14,000 inmates from the central agency's Research Office. At the same time, the DOC reached out to the JA and coordinated plans for the enumeration; working together to avoid miscounting of their shared population, each agency provided similar administrative data for the individuals in their custody to the local census office.

Regarding a CCM study, a second enumeration of the juvenile correctional facilities and adult prisons enumerated in Census 2010 is possible and could be done quite easily using state JAs' and DOCs' administrative data. The stability of the population will vary by institution, but the central agencies have the ability to track individuals and populations over time. Leaders of the JA and the DOC clearly understand the importance of accurate data and research, and they were extremely cooperative in working with this study and the Census Bureau.

Recommendations

- **Provide education and information about CCM studies and the decennial Census to state juvenile justice agencies and DOCs several months before the studies or enumeration will take place.** Information should include details about the purpose and

importance of CCM studies and the decennial census, and procedures and options for enumeration of state-run correctional facilities. Efforts should be made to ensure the information reaches the appropriate administrative staff members in the central agencies who can then delegate responsibility and make plans for the studies. Identifying key contact persons will enable direct personal communication and help prevent information and plans from getting lost in the bureaucracy.

- **Approach the central offices of state JA and DOC agencies to discuss and strategize procedure for validation and enumeration before researchers or local census workers approach individual institutions.** After working to generally educate and inform administrators about CCM studies or the decennial census, Census Bureau researchers or workers can avoid confusion and wasted effort by first gaining the cooperation of the directors and leaders of juvenile justice agencies and state DOCs. State agencies can then make a purposeful decision as to whether to coordinate a centralized approach or let each institution make its own arrangements. At the national level, consider appointing a “Prison Czar” with expertise in data collection in prison populations to take responsibility for coordinating enumeration and collecting data from all juvenile correctional facilities and state and federal prisons.
- **Provide more specific training for researchers and enumerators working with juvenile correctional facilities and prisons.** The Census Bureau should consider developing a new training module in consultation with American Community Survey (ACS) workers who regularly go into juvenile and adult correctional facilities to collect survey data. Specific protocols could be developed for approaching and entering juvenile correctional facilities and prisons. In addition, records could be kept on key contact persons (records should include both office and individual) in each state’s juvenile justice agency and DOC so that new researchers would have a clear idea as to first contact.
- **Delineate more clearly the hierarchical decision-making process within the Census Bureau.** To avoid frustration at the local level, the Census Bureau should make very clear at what point local researchers or office managers can make final decisions regarding data and procedure. When questions arise, timely and definitive answers to questions from local field offices would help to smooth the process and ease frustration.
- **Conduct further research on the accuracy of administrative records and how they might be improved at the state and local level to provide better and more detailed information.** The accuracy of juvenile justice agencies’ and DOCs’ administrative data could be checked as part of a CCM study. In-person enumeration of a sample of youth and inmates would allow incarcerated individuals to self-report their own demographic information. That information could then be compared to agency administrative records to gauge the general accuracy of states’ data.
- **Consider research on intake facilities and procedures for state JAs and DOCs.** Intake is the inmate’s first step into a state juvenile correctional facility or prison, and it is an important point where administrative records are created and finalized for individual inmates. Future research should analyze intake facilities and the variety of ways that

administrative records are created. Once a clear understanding of the process has been attained, the Census Bureau could consider asking state agencies to add categories to their collection of data on race and ethnicity to better match the categories and level of detail in census data.

2 Background

2.1 Introduction Note

This report is one of six that outline ethnographic research on group quarters populations. The research and writing of the report were carried out by the first author (Inderbitzin), and the description of the methods and findings are written from her sole perspective. The study design was conceived by the second author (Chan) who also guided the writing of the report.

2.2 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to use ethnographic methods to observe and assess the enumeration process in a sample of one state's juvenile correctional facilities and adult male prisons (Group Quarter Type Codes 203 and 103 respectively) in order to provide an in-depth description of the context and process surrounding Census Day 2010, and to make recommendations for improving accuracy in counting these types of facilities and conducting a CCM study in hopes of improving the accuracy of the 2020 Census. This analysis is part of a larger effort by the Census Bureau to observe the enumeration of different types of Group Quarters to develop methods to measure the coverage of the populations residing in such institutions.

The Census Bureau defines Group Quarters as "a place where people live or stay in a group living arrangement that is owned or managed by an entity or organization providing housing and/or services for the residents" (U.S. Census Bureau 2009). Group Quarters include a wide variety of facilities including college residence halls, hospitals, nursing facilities, prisons and jails, group homes, and military barracks. For this analysis, the specific Group Quarters investigated include State Prisons (Code 103) and Correctional Facilities Intended for Juveniles (Code 203).

In contrast to many other types of Group Quarters, a primary responsibility of both juvenile correctional facilities and prisons is security and public safety. Thus, the institutions and their central agencies have clear records of which individuals are in which facility at any given time. Many correctional facilities do "counts" at least four times a day (Sykes, 1958; Jacobson-Hardy, 2002; Johnson, 2002; Inderbitzin, 2007), and corrections workers are accountable for keeping close track of the youth or inmates in their units. The challenges of enumerating the population of correctional facilities, then, are not in capturing accurate numbers of residents. Instead, safety concerns and the closed culture of correctional facilities provide the possible obstacles for enumeration and CCM studies.

This analysis will: 1) trace the process leading up to Census Day 2010; 2) report on the activities of institution and state agency staff and the local census employees in the enumeration process; 3) discover how best to carry out a CCM follow up study in these types of Group Quarters; and 4) make recommendations as to how to improve the quality, efficiency and accuracy of the enumeration in future censuses.

Although not an explicit part of the original study design, this analysis focuses on the interaction between the state agencies running the correctional facilities and the individual institutions. With the 2010 Census looming, neither the state's DOC nor the state's JA had a clear plan for how to best carry out the enumeration. Once local census employees began contacting individual correctional facilities, both the DOC and the JA initially decided upon a

decentralized approach and allowed institutions to make their own arrangements with the enumerators. Plans were made and quickly cancelled, however, when both agencies later decided (February 2010) that it would be more cost- and time-effective for one office in each agency to simply provide data for the populations in custody in their facilities on April 1 to census employees. Thus, arrangements made at individual facilities were rescinded to better maximize productivity and efficiency for the state agencies.

2.3 Context

2.3.1 Juvenile correctional facilities

The state in this study has approximately 900 young people in secure juvenile correctional facilities. The JA operates ten close custody facilities throughout the state, seven correctional facilities and three transition programs. One unique aspect of this state is that some teens and young adults who have been convicted and sentenced as adults (to the custody of the DOC) may serve some or all of their sentences in state juvenile facilities. With good behavior, they may stay in a juvenile correctional facility and take advantage of better educational opportunities and the more rehabilitative environment until age 25. Thus, the DOC and the JA cooperate and individuals may be transferred between the state institutions. As of January 2010, there were more than 800 individuals confined to close custody in state juvenile correctional facilities. Of those, more than a third were DOC youth, sentenced as adults but serving their time in juvenile facilities.

2.3.2 State prisons

The state in this study currently has approximately 14,000 inmates in 14 prisons located throughout the state – this is a relatively manageable number for one state agency to work with as opposed to states like California, Texas or Florida, where prison populations all top 100,000 inmates. As such, the process for enumerating prison populations for the decennial census and CCM studies may be quite different, depending on the number of inmates in custody for any given state. In addition, as mentioned above, this state's DOC and JA share a portion of their population and share information. The central offices of both agencies are located within a few blocks of each other and within a few blocks of the state capitol. Administrators of both agencies regularly serve on committees and work together, fostering a cooperative, collaborative, and friendly relationship between the DOC and the JA.

2.3.3 Shared concerns of the JA and DOC

As the 2010 Census approached, the DOC and the JA in this study both faced extreme budget cuts and associated problems and pressures. As of 2010, both agencies were instructed by state government to reduce operating budgets by approximately 10 percent; when additional revenue forecasts came in, the agencies were instructed to plan for even deeper cuts. This led to serious discussions and strategic planning to make significant cuts, including the possibility of closing a number of correctional institutions and secure juvenile facilities.

Ultimately, the JA submitted a plan to release nearly one-third of the youth in close-custody facilities. Before such a move was made, the state legislature tapped an emergency fund

to keep open the beds and facilities until 2011 when lawmakers will be back in session and can revisit the state budget and expenditures.

To meet its reduced budget, the DOC informed the public of its plan to close four state prisons and release nearly one-quarter of the inmate population. The DOC spokesperson said that there was simply no other way to make cuts of the necessary magnitude. Almost before there was time to react to this announcement, the Governor intervened, suggesting that it was not in the public's best interest to close state prisons and offer early release to prisoners, so other arrangements would have to be made.

Faced with drastically reduced budgets, state employees were forced to take mandatory furlough days in 2009-2010 and correctional institutions generally felt stretched in their budgets and staffing. Salaried administrators, who must manage various duties and responsibilities in their work week whether it is shortened or not, seemed especially crunched in terms of time, commitments, and workload. For these administrators, dealing with the decennial census and other surveys of inmates presented an additional burden. While they were certainly willing to cooperate with the enumeration process in order to offer accurate count of their charges to the federal government, institutional gatekeepers definitely felt the need to do so on their own terms.

2.3.4 Stability of Populations in Juvenile and Adult Correctional Facilities

In general, juvenile correctional facilities and state prisons vary in terms of the stability of their populations. For an agency dealing with adolescents and young adults, this state's JA has relatively stable populations within its institutions. Incarcerated youth generally serve shorter sentences than adults, but the state's mandatory minimum sentencing laws now require lengthy sentences for most violent offenders over the age of 14. As described above, the JA population can be separated into those with juvenile commitments and those with "adult" DOC sentences, serving at least a portion of their time in juvenile correctional facilities.

Youth confined to state juvenile correctional facilities spend a significant amount of time with the agency. While individuals serving a sentence in this state's juvenile justice system may be held up until age 25, most are released, transitioned into community placements, or transferred to state prisons before then. The mean length of stay in juvenile correctional facilities is more than 450 days, with males generally serving longer terms than females. While juveniles committing relatively minor crimes may only spend months in a JA correctional facility, individuals sentenced to DOC facilities as young teens may spend as much as ten years in the JA before being moved to a state prison. Because this is a state with less than 900 youth in close-custody facilities, there are few choices of placement; all girls are in one facility, and younger boys are usually housed in one facility while older males are in others.

The girls' correctional facility houses 75 young women, ranging in age from roughly 13 to 23. It is the only juvenile correctional facility for females in this state, and it houses both juvenile commitments and DOC-sentenced youth. There are three distinct living units within the facility; the units are connected and surround a central courtyard. The county detention center is also connected to the girls' correctional facility; it is a small facility housing teenage boys and girls awaiting court hearings and those serving very short sentences. While sharing a location, the county detention center operates independently from the JA's correctional facility, with separate administration and staff. Youth in county detention have no interaction with the girls in the state correctional facility.

The largest juvenile correctional facility for males has a budgeted capacity of 295 beds. It generally houses older males, and most of the DOC youth serve their sentences in this facility. It has approximately ten “cottage” living units spread over a sprawling, fenced campus. Youth serving time in this institution may move between cottages during their sentence, but this facility generally has the most stable population of all of the juvenile correctional facilities in the state.

The average length of time served in this state’s DOC prisons is approximately 10 years. Maximum-security prisons will likely have the least turnover, as a percentage of inmates are serving life sentences or very long sentences. Minimum-security prisons will have much more turnover as inmates are transferred to those facilities in order to begin the transition back into the community (often being able to work on crews in the community while finishing their sentences, etc.). Related but distinct, county jails and detention centers have much more transitory populations, housing adult inmates and juvenile offenders awaiting trial or serving relatively short sentences of days, weeks, or months.

Even within the maximum security prison, there are different populations and circumstances. More than 30 men are on death row; executions are extremely rare in this state and chances are good many of them will die while on death row. In any case, this prison will almost certainly be their last place of residence because they will likely be there for many years. The maximum security prison also houses a medical unit with a hospice component for inmates who are dying; a mental health ward to house those who must be incarcerated in a secure facility but cannot get along in the larger prison; a disciplinary segregation unit and intensive management unit used to isolate those with behavioral issues until they appear ready to reenter the general prison population; and an administrative segregation unit for inmates needing protection from the larger prison population.

The maximum security prison in this state houses approximately 2200 men and is surrounded by a 25-foot cement wall topped with about a dozen guard towers. While centrally located near the state capital, it is still largely a quiet entity with a hidden population. It is nearly impossible to tell the size of the prison from outside the cement walls. It does not have a dominating presence in the city or on the street on which it is located. Families and children stop to feed the ducks and the geese at the small creek that runs in front of the prison, rarely taking notice of the guard towers in the background or wondering what might be going on behind the cement walls.

The medium-security prison that was observed in this study houses between 800 and 900 men. It is just off a main highway, surrounded by a tall chain-link fence, coiled razor-wire, and guard towers. This is a much more visible institution as it is not hidden behind a cement wall and its size is readily apparent from the highway. While the maximum-security prison centers around one hub and has cell-blocks with five tiers, the medium-security prison uses a telephone pole design, making it much more spread out, a longer and flatter institution, with more visibility in the community. The medium-security facility is categorized as a “releasing institution” by the DOC. Its population is split between those with long and life sentences who work in the high-skill and profitable industries within the prison, young offenders adjusting to life in a state prison, and inmates nearing the end of their sentences who expect to be released from prison within the next year.

Also within the realm of this study were two minimum-security men’s prisons – they are two separate facilities operating under the same superintendent and administration. There about 400 inmates in the combined institutions. I (the first author) had little contact with one of the minimum-security prisons other than meeting with the superintendent and some of his staff

members within its walls. The prison is fenced and gated, but it sits in a remote area and it is difficult to guess the size or scope of it from the street. The second minimum-security prison does not have an outer fence or wall. It sits atop a somewhat isolated hill and has a dorm-like structure for its inmates, many of whom work on inmate crews in the community during the day doing tasks like cleaning graffiti from city property. This prison has a relatively small population (less than 150 men), and most of the inmates are serving out the end of their sentences and will be released into the community in the coming months. The population turnover is expected to be quite high here.

2.4 Issues with Juvenile Correctional Facilities and Prisons

2.4.1 Administrative Records

Generally, we can expect that correctional facilities will have an accurate count of their population and would, for the most part, be able to effectively enumerate their population at any given moment (Sykes, 1958; Jacobson-Hardy, 2002; Johnson, 2002; Inderbitzin, 2007). Most juvenile facilities and prisons do “counts” several times a day and they keep clear records of who is coming and going. Custody is arguably the primary responsibility of all correctional facilities and security is no joke. The accuracy of administrative records as to who is in what particular facility at any given time is likely to be very good for these types of Group Quarters.

The administrative records are not likely to be as accurate, however, in terms of capturing data on the race and ethnicity of the population. The Juvenile Authority’s and DOC’s records on race and ethnicity can transfer only clumsily into the refined categories on race and ethnicity on the decennial Census forms. Individuals are categorized as only one race in DOC and JA administrative records (the JA categories are: Caucasian, African-American, Asian, Hispanic, Native American, or Other/Unreported; the DOC options are White, Black, Asian, Hispanic, or American Indian), and individuals have no ability to choose to identify as bi-racial or multi-racial. Administrative records are generally created in intake units, the first stop for inmates entering either the JA or the DOC. Along with individuals’ criminal histories, convictions, adjudications, and sentences, administrative records also contain basic demographic information culled from arrest records, court records, and in-person interviews. Once a person is “in the system,” it can be difficult to change or amend the record, even if names are misspelled, birthdates are off by a year, or the racial category is incorrect or incomplete.

2.4.2 Deprivations of imprisonment

Juvenile correctional facilities and prisons are unique institutions that serve as both guards and guardians to their captive populations. Administrators make decisions for their inmates, and, in the case of the census or other research inquiries, may choose to speak for them. “Civil death” (Ewald, 2002) – at least temporarily – may be viewed as simply one more aspect of the “pains of imprisonment” (Sykes, 1958) associated with incarceration and punishment. In his book, *Society of Captives*, Sykes clearly articulates the “pains of imprisonment,” breaking them down into five major categories: deprivation of liberty; deprivation of goods and services; deprivation of heterosexual relationships; deprivation of autonomy; and deprivation of security (Sykes, 1958). Inmates are infantilized in many ways while in state custody and they are not allowed to speak for themselves and be independent beings. In this context, their lack of

voluntary participation in the Census enumeration is one of many acts of citizenship of which they are deprived while incarcerated. The deprivation of liberty and deprivation of autonomy are perhaps most visible in inmates' disenfranchisement and their lack of opportunity to vote in local, state, and federal elections (Manza and Uggen, 2006; Uggen and Inderbitzin, 2010).

The sociologist Erving Goffman described prisons as "total institutions," closed systems where individuals work and live in the same setting with their peers as their only public (Goffman, 1961). Juvenile correctional facilities share much in common with prisons and may also be characterized as total institutions (Inderbitzin, 2005). Lack of privacy is a continuous issue for inmates living within total institutions and this is at odds with the Census Bureau's prioritization of confidentiality and data stewardship. Security issues would require enumeration of individuals in juvenile correctional facilities and in prisons to be done in the presence of staff members and, in some cases, within hearing range of other youth or inmates as well. While this may pose a dilemma for researchers and local enumerators, it is unlikely to cause distress among most residents of correctional facilities. As a comparison, the state in this study operates an online "offender search" (found through a link on the DOC website) which produces a great deal of information on inmates in custody, including the individual's photo and vital statistics, all convictions, and sentence and first possible date of release. With that kind of personal information online and widely available to the general public, the basic questions on the decennial census form must seem pretty innocuous.

2.5 Research Questions

The primary objective of this study was to observe the enumeration of incarcerated populations in one state's juvenile correctional facilities and prisons and to assess the feasibility of carrying out CCM studies in these settings. Given the security concerns inherent in prison settings, what would be the best method for researchers and local enumerators to employ? Would special training and preparation be necessary or helpful to researchers before they attempt to enter correctional facilities?

Initial questions and issues I hoped to examine included: (1) how to avoid miscounting inmates as they frequently move within and between institutions?; (2) how to best address concerns with literacy and other language barriers?; and (3) how to deal with the general disenfranchisement of the incarcerated population and garner cooperation from inmates and corrections staff?

Along with observing the preparation and process for the 2010 Census, a goal of this project was to produce an independent enumeration of at least one prison or juvenile correctional facility. Using my expertise on prison culture and my connections with state agencies and correctional facilities, I planned to create an alternative list of all inmates present in one institution on April 1, 2010.

Finally, an important goal of this project was to identify best practices for carrying out CCM studies and further research in juvenile correctional facilities and prisons.

3 Methods

3.1 Ethnographies in Correctional Institutions

3.1.1 The Ethnographic Approach

“Ethnography is the most basic form of social research – and resembles the way in which people ordinarily make sense of their world. Sometimes this is regarded as its major strength and sometimes this has been regarded as its major weakness. It can include observation, participation, interviewing and almost any other form of interaction between ourselves, the researchers and the social world” (Liebling, 2001:475).

There is an absence of ethnographic data on juvenile correctional facilities. Wacquant (2002) has suggested that “close-up studies at ground level of the everyday world of the confined played a decisive role in advancing the science and critique of penal establishments” (p. 384); yet such studies are currently in short supply. Wacquant (2002) goes on to argue: “the paramount priority of the ethnography of the prison today is without contest *to just do it*” (p. 386). While there were a number of compelling ethnographies of training schools and other juvenile facilities through the 1970s (Bartollas et al., 1976; Feld, 1977; Polsky, 1962), interest in juvenile institutions has diminished to the point that few comparable studies exist today (Chesney-Lind and Shelden, 2004; Inderbitzin, 2005; Inderbitzin, 2006).

My background doing ethnographic research in a juvenile correctional facility (Inderbitzin, 2005; Inderbitzin, 2006; Inderbitzin, 2007) taught me an enormous amount about the culture of such institutions and was vital in preparing for the current project. In entering a juvenile correctional facility, I quickly learned that there were stringent rules and security measures to be followed and appropriate ways to interact with both staff and youth. I developed a healthy respect for the front-line staff members who balanced their desire to offer their young charges a chance at reformation and the priority of maintaining a safe and secure facility. I also learned to relate to young people in difficult circumstances who often find it hard to trust and relate to outsiders.

The ethnographic data for the current study were gathered through observation and “moderate participation” (Spradley, 1980) in state juvenile correctional facilities and prisons. As a teacher, researcher, and volunteer, I have spent a great deal of time in state prisons and juvenile correctional facilities, and while I can never truly claim to have an insider’s perspective since I have never been incarcerated, I have worked hard to be observant, thoughtful, and open-minded, and to understand issues regarding prison culture. Because I have also carefully followed the rules and guidelines of the institutions, I have earned the confidence and goodwill of both administrators and inmates.

Prison ethnography has its own issues and challenges; as one researcher has noted: “Without experiencing prisons ourselves, the most direct way to increase our understanding would be to interact with participants – to observe and talk with them repeatedly, over an extended period of time and within the ‘natural’ setting of the prison itself” (Jones, 1995: 108). As a long-time researcher on prison populations and a volunteer in the girls’ juvenile correctional facility and several state prisons, I have the advantage of knowing the institutions and the agencies in this particular study fairly well.

At the start of this project, I had been teaching college courses in state prisons for over three years, helping to introduce and promote new programs, which were highly praised by both inmates and administrators. By the time of this study, I had taught approximately 10 college courses in the maximum-security prison; two in the medium-security prison; and one in the minimum-security prison. In spending time in the prisons teaching popular college courses, I built credibility with inmates in these three institutions, and I was frequently invited to inmate

club meetings and banquets. In 2007-2008, I was recognized with a statewide award for my work in the prisons.

I also had worked closely with the girls' juvenile correctional facility, teaching an informal class that brought together youth in custody and female university students one night a week for two quarters. I had worked with the superintendent and administrators to arrange service-learning projects at the institution for my college students, and I had several college students choose to intern at the facility. I had more limited contact with the juvenile correctional facility for older males. I worked with administrators there to arrange field trips for my classes of university students and college athletes during several summers, but the distance proved too great for regular contact.

In the central office of the DOC, I had established a strong working relationship with the Director of Research. He had shared data and strategies with me for a previous project, and he and I maintained periodic contact and infrequent meetings over several years. At the beginning of this ethnographic research, I contacted the Director of Research and met with him to discuss this research project and its goals. He then arranged for introductions with key administrators at the different state prisons, and he also used his strong influence to arrange meetings with administrators from the JA's central office. Importantly, he showed his approval of the project by arranging and attending most of those meetings with me. The established relationship and rapport with the Director of Research and my experiences working with these populations opened opportunities for me within the prisons and juvenile correctional facilities that would be difficult to negotiate in any other way. While prisons and juvenile facilities can be difficult to navigate as a researcher, it is vital for ethnographers to get inside the walls and be present for interaction and observations. Fortunately, I had easy access to all of the institutions in this project.

3.1.2 Informal discussions with staff and inmates

I had a number of informal conversations with inmates in state prisons during the fall of 2009 and early 2010 as I prepared for this study. I was curious to learn how they thought about the census and if it mattered to them how they were counted. As a group, they were mildly curious about the project, but none of them expressed strong opinions about their representation in the 2010 Census.

While no prison or juvenile correctional facility staff members or administrators could recall how the institutions had conducted the decennial enumeration in 2000, one inmate in the maximum-security prison clearly remembered filling out his own Individual Census Report (ICR) in the prison. Other inmates in the state prisons had been interviewed for the ACS relatively recently; one young inmate involved in college classes said that he enjoyed the opportunity to speak to the researcher about his efforts to further his education.

I avoided speaking with correctional line staff or local census employees prior to the 2010 Census since I was trying to observe the enumeration process without influencing it. When it was decided to use administrative records to enumerate the population, it became clear that corrections officers would have no role in the process and would not be impacted by the enumeration. The administrative staff members who worked with me to coordinate my small alternative enumeration in the maximum-security prison seemed to understand the importance of accurate data collection; they were extremely cooperative and helpful in the process.

3.2 Study Sample

The institutions in this study included a maximum-security prison, a medium-security prison, two minimum-security prisons operating under the same administrative team, and a juvenile correctional facility for female offenders. I had also planned to approach the juvenile correctional facility for older males, but the process and project changed before I could arrange meetings with the institution's administration. While there are prisons and juvenile correctional facilities located around the state, the four prisons in this study were located on separate grounds within the same city; the central offices of the DOC and the JA were also located in that city. The girls' juvenile facility was in a suburban area about 30 miles away.

What follows is a brief overview of the institutions I had made arrangements to observe during the 2010 Census.

3.2.1 Juvenile Correctional Facility for Females

As stated earlier, this is the only secure placement for juvenile females in the state, and it houses about 75 young women. I spent a significant amount of time in this facility last year teaching weekly classes, volunteering, and working on a larger project with several of the young women. I had full cooperation of the superintendent to be in the facility when local census workers came in to do the enumeration, but other arrangements were made by the Juvenile Authority. From her time in a previous position with the DOC, the superintendent of the girls' correctional facility was very open to research and viewed the census as simply another research project, for which the protocols were generally quite clear.

3.2.2 State Prisons for Men

Maximum-security prison – I consider the maximum-security adult prison for males my “home base” for this ethnographic research. This is the only maximum-security facility in the state; it is surrounded by cement walls at least 20 feet high and topped with razor wire, and it houses the state's death row and execution chamber. It holds approximately 2300 inmates; there are five major cell blocks and also special housing units for those inmates who cannot live in general custody: those with behavioral problems, those in protective custody, those on death row, and the mentally ill. Over the past several years, I have taught eight college classes in the maximum-security prison and attended a number of events and meetings hosted by inmate clubs. I have toured the prison (usually with students) approximately 15 times, and I have a good working relationship with the administration and staff members. Of the adult prisons in this sample, the maximum-security prison will have the most stable population and would be the best choice for a Post-Enumeration Survey or other CCM studies. I have had amazing cooperation from the administration, as will be detailed below.

Medium-security prison – I have taught two college courses in this institution and have a very good working relationship with the administration. This institution houses about 800 inmates; it is classified as a “releasing facility” and the population varies between short-term, younger inmates and long-term inmates who work in the prison's businesses/industries. Population turnover at this institution will be mixed, with younger inmates coming and going

while a core of “lifers” and inmates with long sentences live in the honors unit, lead inmate clubs, and work in prestigious prison jobs.

Minimum-security prisons – Two separate minimum-security prisons in the state operate under the same superintendent and administration. I taught a college course in one of the prisons and had permission from the superintendent to come in after the enumeration to do research on the process and the accuracy of the count. There are approximately 700 beds in these facilities.

3.3 Getting Approvals and Making Plans

3.3.1 First Points of Contact

Initial work went into securing access to the facilities in order to observe the 2010 Census and to get data to conduct an alternative enumeration. In working to get this pre-approval from the agencies and in the institutions, without alerting the local census employees to my role or my presence, I was at times the correctional institutions’ first significant contact with the census, starting in February 2010.

The DOC at the agency level was confused about the decennial census protocol and did not appear to have anyone in charge of coordinating the process. A Public Information Officer (PIO) was initially “tasked” to deal with me and my questions about their plans for enumerating their incarcerated population, but rather than providing information or a plan, she ended up asking me about the decennial enumeration and how it would work. In this still-early stage of the process, the DOC decided to take a decentralized approach and have each prison make its own arrangements with local census employees. I then moved into my own negotiations with the four prisons (and three administrations) where I wished to unobtrusively observe the enumeration process.

In my meetings with high-level administrators at the central office of the DOC, I again had a lot of cooperation and help. The agency’s Director of Research was incredibly helpful; his support was critical in helping me to get timely meetings with busy superintendents and agency administrators. It was agreed that I would use the maximum-security prison as my home base for this census project. I had the most familiarity there, both in terms of my own working knowledge of the institution and the institution’s population and staff’s knowledge of me. I had allies at several levels within the maximum-security prison – administrators, staff members, and inmate leaders were all friendly and cooperative, accepting that this research project was another part of my job as a criminologist, and trusting that my familiarity with the institution and their perspectives within it would lead to fair representation and the most accurate results possible.

3.3.2 Key Gatekeepers for Adult Facilities

It was very important to get the prison superintendents on board and to get their explicit approval to enter their institutions to do this ethnographic research, but the real work and help came from the PIOs, who each held the dual-role of PIO and Executive Assistant to the Superintendent. While corrections officers were the literal gatekeepers, the PIOs were the figurative gatekeepers in each of the prisons and played a critical role in allowing access to the superintendents and the institutions. The PIOs were the key players for local census employees, too, in the initial negotiations for the decennial enumeration.

3.3.3 The JA

The JA was a somewhat different story – I had been an active volunteer-teacher at the girls’ correctional facility, but had virtually no contact with the agency’s central administration. The administration had gone through significant changes over the last several years and there was relatively new leadership at the agency and in a number of the correctional facilities. As a first step, I used my best contacts and met with the superintendent of the girls’ facility and the agency’s PIO in order to talk to them about the project and to ask about covertly observing the decennial enumeration from within the facility. In part, I think, because I was a known entity at the facility, I was offered easy cooperation and helpful advice from the superintendent. It also was quite clear that the superintendent valued research and was used to dealing with researchers from her time working in administration at the DOC. She had a strong understanding of the importance of academic and government research and did not seem to find the collaboration daunting in any way.

My emails and inquiries to the JA’s central administrators went unanswered, and it was initially extremely difficult to make contact or to even find out who the key players were at the agency level. Fortunately, I did have the help of the Director of Research from the DOC and he used his connections to set up a meeting for me with upper-level administrators from the JA. I was able to meet with the Assistant Director of the agency and several staff members. They assigned me to a woman who held an entirely different job description; she seemed open to the change in routine. While my key informant was not the primary contact for local Census employees, she was in a good position to view the process of the decennial count and to share some insight on what decisions were made and why. Before being assigned this task, my contact at the JA was not at all familiar with the census and how it had or would work within the agency. My inquiries were met with kindness and a general spirit of cooperation but also a significant amount of bureaucratic confusion. There was virtually no institutional memory of how the decennial census was conducted in 2000.

3.4 Plans for Independent/Alternative Enumeration

One goal of this research project was to produce an independent enumeration. While local census workers conducted the official enumeration, I planned to do my own enumeration of at least one prison and one juvenile correctional facility, getting the most accurate information possible for all of the inmates in the institution. While waiting to get a meeting with the JA’s central administration to get their blessing on the project, I went forward with planning and independent enumeration in a state prison. I chose to prioritize the maximum security prison; it is the largest institution with approximately 2,200 inmates, and it seemed to have the widest range of living units and possibility of error or missing data.

I arranged to get administrative records from the Research Office of the DOC sent directly to the Census Bureau headquarters. Once I found out that the local census employees were also going to use administrative records (which, unless there is human error, should be the exact duplicate of the records I obtained), I worked with the Director of Research and the administrative team at the maximum security prison to do an alternate enumeration with a sample of the population where inmates could self-report the demographic data collected by the census.

Follow-up with a sample of inmates: The maximum-security prison arranged for me to go into the institution on April 2 to conduct a follow-up survey with inmates; the goal was to collect the data they would have self-reported if they had interacted with enumerators and to then have the ability to compare this subset of data with the official records collected by local census workers. Again, the cooperation of the administrators and relatively stable population make the maximum-security prison the ideal institution to implement a Post Enumeration Survey to match the recaptured sample.

The institution initially set it up so that I could do my own alternative enumeration with 15 percent of the population or about 300 inmates. Because this plan strayed significantly from my initial research proposal, a more modest goal was adopted. My plan then was to meet with a random sample of approximately 60 inmates from the general population and, in speaking with them, to check the accuracy of the Department of Correction's administrative records. This offered the individual inmates a chance to categorize themselves in terms of race/ethnicity, which I hypothesized to be the least accurate item on the administrative records.

I met with two large groups of male prisoners in the "Activities" area of the prison. There was a prison staff member working with me to supervise and help with the process, and correctional staff members were present in the area to monitor the movement of the inmates (they are not allowed to wander the prison, but need to be accounted for when moving from place to place). The plan was to talk to the inmates about the Census generally; to tell them that they *were* counted using administrative records; to check with them if their DOC records are accurate (and let them tell me why or why not and to correct any inaccuracies); and to ask them how they think this type of information could best be collected to accurately count inmates.

After meeting with the approximately 50-60 inmates from the general prison population, the institution arranged for me to be escorted by a staff member to special housing, including the intensive-management unit, disciplinary segregation, and administrative segregation. If a Post-Enumeration Survey were to take place within the prison, inmates in the special housing units would undoubtedly be the most intimidating and likely the least able or willing to cooperate. My small-scale alternative enumeration was set up to offer insight into surveying those special populations as well as inmates from the general population of the prison.

3.5 Semi-Structured Interviews with Staff and Prisoners

Personal interaction was key to learning about the 2010 Census enumeration of prisons and juvenile correctional facilities and attempting to understand the process from the perspective of the agency and institution stakeholders. Throughout this project, I had meetings with 12 administrators from the central office of the DOC and the four prisons in my sample, and I met with a total of 10 administrators from the JA.

During the alternative enumeration and more informally in inmate club meetings, I made myself available to inmates to discuss their thoughts on the 2010 Census and how they were counted. I also spent time with two prison staff members who were enthusiastic in escorting me to special housing units and were open to questions and conversation.

More formally, after the enumeration I conducted in-person, semi-structured interviews about the 2010 Census process with the following stakeholders:

- the Director of Research for the DOC
- the Research Analyst who compiled all of the records for the DOC enumeration
- the Key Contact at the JA who compiled the agency's records for enumeration

- the Public Information Officer for the medium security prison
- the Local Office Manager of the Census

Each individual was able to reflect on the process for the 2010 Census, evaluate prospects for a CCM follow-up study, and offer ideas for improving the process of enumeration for the 2020 Census.

3.6 Limits of Research

3.6.1 Adapting and Changing Plans

In planning this research, I had initially hoped to observe enumeration in several settings and to do more observation and work with the juvenile correctional facilities. Instead, because administrative records were ultimately used by both the DOC and the JA for enumeration, the focus of this research project shifted to an analysis of the institution-agency-census workers' interactions and how arrangements were finally made and carried out for counting this state's incarcerated persons in the 2010 Census. I then was able to use that information to make recommendations for CCM follow-up studies and future research.

3.6.2 Inadvertently Influencing the Process

In working to gain approval from agency and institution administrators, I may have inadvertently brought issues to the table. Certainly the Director of Research of the DOC – who became the major decision-maker in the state enumeration process – helped to arrange and was involved in nearly all of my meetings with institution and agency stakeholders.

In making arrangements to unobtrusively observe the enumeration process, I may have influenced both the JA and the DOC to get more organized than they otherwise would have been. In my initial contacts with both agencies, there was no firm plan in place for enumerating the state's juvenile and adult correctional facilities. At that time, both state agencies chose to utilize a decentralized plan where the administrative teams at the individual institutions would make their own arrangements with local census employees.

After I had more than a half dozen meetings with superintendents and administrators, the DOC Director of Research decided to centralize the enumeration through his office and the use of administrative records for all inmates. He then worked cooperatively with the JA to arrange for a centralized approach for the juveniles in state custody, as well.

Had I not been trying to observe the process, I do not think the challenges of the 2010 Census would have come to the attention of the central agencies as early as it did. It is not clear how the enumeration would have played out at the juvenile correctional facilities, but the state prisons that I observed would have still used administrative records to enumerate their populations. In a decentralized process, each institution would have given their records and/or forms to their local census employees rather than having one centralized file for the agency. The results would have been comparable and perhaps exactly the same, but the process would have taken more time, effort, and expense.

4 Ethnographic Results and Findings

My time spent tracking the preparation for the 2010 Census in the DOC and the JA revealed several key themes. Bureaucratic confusion and disorganization were prevalent – there was confusion and poor communication between the local census offices and the state agencies; between the state agencies and their own individual institutions; and between the Census Bureau headquarters and local census offices. There was also general confusion within the state correctional agencies over the differences between the decennial census, the ACS, and other surveys of prisons, inmates, and correctional institutions.

Even as there was confusion about the process for the decennial census up until March 2010, a cooperative attitude prevailed amongst the state agencies and correctional facilities. Both the JA and the DOC and all of the individual institutions were willing and able to cooperate with enumeration procedures. Arrangements varied at the institution level, but administrators were all willing to work with local census employees to provide accurate data as efficiently as possible.

At the same time, local census employees exhibited a lack of understanding of correctional facilities' specific needs, rules, and regulations. Their lack of common sense, preparation, and site-specific training led to frustration and disbelief with institution administrators, particularly within the DOC.

Budget concerns, safety issues, and staff constraints informed virtually every step of the process leading up to the 2010 Census. The use of administrative records for enumeration of both the DOC' and the JA's populations was clearly the best solution for both state agencies. Administrative records are likely to be very accurate in terms of who was in what facility on midnight of April 1 when the records were run, and providing those records was much less of a burden on institution staff and administration than in-person enumeration would have been. At the same time, it is likely that the race and ethnicity information in the agencies' administrative records is relatively weak. The racial categories used by the state agencies do not map onto the census categories, and the race/ethnicity information from state agencies is undoubtedly lacking in detail.

Finally, observing at both the agency level and the institution level turned out to be critically important in understanding how this state's prisons and juvenile correctional facilities were enumerated in the 2010 Census. Ultimately, the cooperation between the DOC and the JA made the enumeration process easier on all parties. The choice to use agency-level data rather than enumerating each institution individually provided the best possible count, as the agencies had a better overview of their shared population, as well as individuals moving between institutions or temporarily out of the correctional facilities for court, hospitalization, etc.

4.1 Pre-Enumeration Experiences and Challenges

4.1.1 Initial Letter to JA from Census HQ

Census Bureau headquarters sent at least one letter to the JA explaining the process for the 2010 Census enumeration, but the letter came quite late for the purpose of facility planning. To be more effective, it may have been more effective if introductory/explanatory letters were sent much earlier, before any of the phases of enumerating Group Quarters began. The timeline from the 2010 decennial census was outlined in the letter to the Director of the JA as follows:

Validation – completed by Oct. 23, 2009
Advance Visit – through March 19, 2010
Enumeration – begins on April 1, 2010

The letter to the JA Director was dated February 24, 2010; it was received and processed at the agency on March 2, 2010, which seemed to be much too late to be helpful. By that point, the validation and advance visits had generally taken place at the individual juvenile correctional facilities, and administrative teams at the institutions had generally met with local census employees to discuss the enumeration of their facilities.

The letter from Census Bureau headquarters explained that there were four different enumeration methods available:

- Census workers conduct and interview
- Distribution of questionnaire packets for each resident by census workers
- Self-enumeration
- The use of administrative records

Juvenile correctional facilities were encouraged to self-enumerate “because of the need to operate under privacy, protect standard routine activities against disruption, and for safety issues concerning Census Bureau staff and the facilities’ residents.” It was then explained that with self-enumeration, facility staff would conduct the enumeration.

The letter then went on to list the responsibilities of the facility contact person. The list included 11 separate responsibilities which would require considerable time and effort on the part of the facility staff member(s) chosen as the contact person.

The list of facility contact responsibilities included: going through training; educating facility staff and residents about the census; preparing Individual Census Report (ICR) packets for each resident in the facility; making sure each resident completes an ICR or has one completed based on administrative records; reviewing completed ICR’s for accuracy and legibility; and communicating with local census employees (for the full list of facility contact responsibilities, see Appendix B). The lengthy list makes clear that the enumeration could easily have become an enormous burden for individual facilities and staff members who were tasked to make these arrangements in the midst of their other job responsibilities. Particularly in the case of the 2010 Census, when budget cuts and furloughs were putting a great deal of strain on institution staff, it seemed problematic to add to the workload and responsibility of individual staff members without providing additional compensation.

4.1.2 Initial Census Point of Contact and Training Issues

The initial contacts at several of the prisons created a bad first impression for the decennial census process when a young woman with GPS unit showed up to validate and document the space and to get information on how many housing units were within the institutions. Her unannounced visits showed an obvious lack of understanding of correctional facilities and the issues surrounding prisons. She showed up at the front gates of at least two male prisons, where visitors (professional or otherwise) must be approved ahead of time before they will be allowed entrance. The prisons run a criminal background check on all visitors/guests. She did not have clearance, having not gone through the proper channels to prepare. However, she was able to talk to the correctional officers in the guard towers and at the

gatehouses, and she was able to talk to the institutions' PIOs. She was not allowed into the prisons for several reasons: first, her lack of clearance and preparation; second, she was dressed inappropriately, wearing a midriff-baring shirt and shorts that would not be allowed in any state prisons; and third, she did not have approval to bring in the GPS unit, and prisons are generally very cautious about allowing any electronic equipment into their confines, particularly those that too closely map their layouts (concerns about attempted escapes).

This was an unfortunate first point of contact for those working with the 2010 Census. Months later, two of the prisons' PIOs spoke explicitly about this young woman. They held vivid, negative impressions of her inappropriate dress and her unrealistic expectation of coming into the prisons with unapproved technology. They were convinced that if she had been allowed into the institution(s), she would undoubtedly have caused a stir amongst the incarcerated men by going in their midst in a relatively skimpy (and seemingly quite thoughtless) outfit.

The next contact varied widely as different enumerators approached the prisons and PIOs to decide upon a plan for enumeration.

One PIO received multiple calls, some just asking her to confirm what times she would be at work, without being able to say why they wanted or needed to know. The PIO felt the local census employees had little understanding of the fact that she works daily *within* a state prison and visitors must be approved and pass through security to meet with her in person. One census employee showed up in blue jeans, clothing that is strictly forbidden in this state's prisons because inmates wear blue denim and security concerns require clear separation in clothing of inmates, officers, and guests.

Some of the local census employees did a better job; the PIO of the medium-security prison said that in planning for enumeration, the census worker called and asked her what he needed to know before coming to meet with her. She said that she was happy to send him the legal terms of the prison, including rules on what to wear and what he would be allowed to bring in, and that meeting was much more successful.

The PIO commented that it would be really helpful for future Census Bureau researchers or enumerators to have at least some generalized understanding of prisons so that they can be sensitive to the dress code, to security issues, and the fact that they cannot just "drop in" for an appointment within the prison. Additional coverage of prisons/correctional facilities in the training materials for employees/enumerators could help to smooth the process and prevent frustration on both sides. Even if the enumerators went to the websites of the particular institutions they were working with, clothing restrictions are generally listed under sections on visiting inmates. That kind of online research would be a starting point, as would calling ahead to find out what steps visitors need to take (background checks, for example) before coming into the institution for a professional meeting with one of the administrators.

As a comparison, the PIO also said that the researchers who work with the ACS come to the medium-security prison every few months to collect more in-depth data from a small sample of inmates, and that process now runs very smoothly. The prison administrators and staff have the random selection of inmates on callout sheets ahead of time (in order to get them at the right place at the right time for the survey), and everything goes quickly and efficiently. She also added that the inmates generally hate the survey; her impression is that inmates are generally concerned about conspiracy theories and worry how their personal information is going to be used – and particularly if it is going to be used against them in some way. As far as the prison administration is concerned, however, working with the experienced ACS interviewers is an easy and pleasant process.

4.1.3 Key Findings of Agency vs. Institution Interplay and Inter-Agency Cooperation

One of the surprising and most interesting findings from this study was the interplay between the DOC and the JA and the individual correctional facilities. While the state employees were generally very willing to cooperate with the census employees to make the 2010 enumeration as smooth as possible, there was real bureaucratic confusion in making it happen. Both the Census Bureau and the state agencies initially took a decentralized approach, and local census employees contacted the institutions within their territories to make arrangements for the enumeration.

The arrangements varied by institution, but the institution administrators were all willing and able to work it out. As state agencies, prisons and juvenile correctional facilities are frequently required to send data and reports to both the state and federal government and they were not daunted in being asked to do so again. There were, however, budget issues, safety concerns, and staff constraints that needed to be addressed for the 2010 Census. The superintendent of the female juvenile correctional facility, with a relatively small population of 75 girls, was prepared to have her staff members trained to conduct the enumeration, but it would have been a burden on the staff to use their time and attention on this additional job. By contrast, all of the DOC prisons in this study arranged to use administrative records for the enumeration; in no case did it seem feasible from the administrations' perspectives to have staff members escort census enumerators through the institutions in order to have inmates self-report or fill out their own ICR forms.

After all of these arrangements had been made, in late February 2010, the Director of Research at the DOC decided that a centralized approach made more sense for the agency. His office took on the task of providing administrative records for the entire DOC population and printed ICR forms for all 14,000 inmates in state prisons. He also provided leadership and coordinated with the JA; they, too, chose to provide administrative records for the approximately 900 youth in state juvenile correctional facilities.

This was certainly the most efficient way for state prisons and juvenile correctional facilities to be enumerated, but a good deal of time, effort and planning was wasted in getting to that point. Better communication and planning at the agency level of both the DOC and the JA would have relieved the administrative teams at the individual institutions of the burden of multiple meetings and planning sessions with local census employees. It also would have saved local census employees a great deal of time and effort.

As a researcher, I would have missed this interaction entirely if I had not chosen a double-pronged approach, where I sought information and permissions from both the agencies and the individual institutions at the same time. My personal connections and working knowledge of the people and places in the state's prison and juvenile correctional system proved very helpful in seeing the larger picture (Jacobs, 1974).

4.1.4 Cooperation between the DOC and JA

An additional consideration for this state is the fact that the DOC and the JA share a population. As described earlier, young DOC-sentenced inmates can serve some or all of their sentences in juvenile correctional facilities where there is more programming available (education, vocational skills, counseling) and there is more focus on rehabilitation. This could

be quite confusing for local census employees, and, as it was, the DOC and JA had to confer to be sure they were not double-counting or missing any of their population. Technically, the population of inmates with adult sentences serving their time in youth facilities belongs to the DOC, but since they regularly reside in JA facilities, they should be and were counted at those juvenile facilities.

4.1.5 Planning for the Independent Enumeration

After introducing the project and gaining cooperation from the administrations at the prisons and the girls' juvenile correctional facility, I had initially arranged to be contacted by the facilities once final plans were in place for the official decennial enumeration. Because I did not want to interfere with the enumeration process, I worked with the administrative teams to come up with tentative plans to blend into the background of the facilities while observing the enumeration. In the girls' facility, the plan was to have me stationed in the room where the enumeration would take place. To remain unobtrusive, administrators were going to explain that I was a teacher simply working on a lesson plan in the corner of the room. Plans were less specific with the different prisons, but I generally could have appeared as an additional escorting staff member, a staff member in training, or a researcher working on other non-Census projects.

Once the DOC Research Office took the initiative and decided all Census counts would be centralized and they would provide the local census employees everything they needed via administrative records, it became clear that there would be no in-person enumerating in the facilities to observe.

Along with providing data from administrative records to local census employees for the official enumeration, my agency contacts at the DOC and JA were extremely cooperative and provided administrative records for their entire populations directly to Census Headquarters for the independent enumeration phase of this study. The records were as clean as they could be: those working with the data were more than willing to give the census employees exactly what they needed to the best of the data's ability.

The DOC researchers would have liked to send the data via protected electronic files directly to the national Census Bureau office for the official enumeration, which would have saved time, money and effort for virtually all involved. Because the technology and protocol were not in place to send the data electronically, the DOC researchers ended up printing Individual Census Reports for all 14,000 inmates in state prisons.

4.2 Institutional and Agency Arrangements

4.2.1 Juvenile Correctional Facility

I had made arrangements with the girls' facility to be alerted and present for the enumeration, whether it was conducted by local census employees or by juvenile corrections workers in the facility.

Local census employee had seemed to take a very proactive role in negotiating with the contact person at the juvenile correctional facility. They wanted to train and temporarily swear-in facility staff members to enumerate the population. There was no mention of compensation for the staff members, so this would have ultimately been a burden on the facility to schedule the employees for training and to then have them temporarily working for the census while

enumerating the population. The population in the facility is approximately 75 girls, so it may not have taken a great deal of time, but the superintendent still felt to be an imposition on the facility and a burden on an already over-extended staff.

4.2.2 Adult Prison Facilities

The maximum-security prison was willing to allow me to observe the official enumeration; the more challenging question for them initially was to figure out how to enumerate an inmate population of over 2000 on a single day. Administrative team members expressed a multitude of concerns: the safety of enumerators, staff and inmates; the fact that it is a burden on the facility to have staff members escorting and watching over enumerators; the disruption to the facility's routine; the fact that there is quite a bit of movement within the facility during the day. Inmates go from cells, to work in various jobs within the prison, to meals, to recreation, to meetings, hobby shop, visits, classes, etc. Some segments of the population were likely to be more difficult to enumerate: those temporarily (or for the long-term) confined to disciplinary segregation, administrative segregation, the intensive management unit, the medical ward, or the mental health ward. Some segments of the population would undoubtedly have literacy issues and language issues (would they have sent in an enumerator fluent in Spanish?). Inmates could possibly self-enumerate and fill out their own forms, but they would have all of the above issues and enumerators would have to track down the stragglers to see who they were missing to try to get an accurate count. At the institution level, the decision was made to enumerate the maximum-security prison using administrative records for April 1.

The medium-security prison was very clear in what the staff were willing to do. In meetings with the local census employees, the prison's Public Information Officer said they would supply the Census Bureau with administrative records for April 1. They have the ACS come into the prison quite regularly and have that routine down, so they are familiar with sharing this kind of information and data and felt it could best be done using the prison's official records.

At the minimum-security prison(s), the Public Information Officer did not hold a strong position in the negotiation process and she was told the census employees would drop off hundreds of forms and give her time to complete each individual form based on administrative records. The census employees expected the prison employees to do this work, which would have certainly been a burden on the institution. There was no mention of compensation.

In observing or reflecting on these different interactions between agency contact persons and local census employees, it seemed to matter quite a lot who the parties were in negotiating how the enumeration would take place. Whichever side was more authoritative and held their position more strongly seemed to get their way in the initial planning. Superintendents were largely out of the loop on these discussions, finding out about them after the fact and then either going along with the agreement or modifying what they were willing to do or have take place in their facility.

The JA had better communication between the agency and their facilities – emails were going out in February and there was a clear point person at the agency level – but they chose to let institutions make their own arrangements with more and less success. The feeling was that some local census employees were very professional and easy to work with and others had no understanding of the special circumstances of juvenile correctional facilities and appropriate actions and attire.

The DOC initially had no agency-level plan and no one person in charge of the decennial enumeration. When I made contact with the Public Information office at the agency level in early 2010, they seemed baffled and there was no hierarchy or plan in place. The initial decision was to decentralize the process and let institutions make their own arrangements. This decision changed several weeks into the negotiation process when the Director of Research chose to centralize the enumeration out of his office by using administrative records to compile Individual Census Reports for all 14,000 inmates in state prisons. While this took several hours of meetings on his part, the majority of the work in compiling the data and printing the ICR forms was done by one research analyst, and it took him less than 20 hours total. As a research department for a major government agency, the DOC analysts have experience working with large amounts of data and making it available for various projects. The decennial census could be viewed as just another one of those projects, and centralizing the enumeration in the Research Office took the burden off of the individual institutions and staff members.

The DOC Director of Research also reached out to the JA and they made similar arrangements. The JA provided an Excel worksheet with administrative records for all of the youth in state juvenile correctional facilities (approx. 900) to the local census employees. Census employees then had to transfer those records onto Individual Census Reports for each individual. DOC-sentenced youth were included in the JA's data and were not included in DOC data; the clear communication between the two agencies greatly reduced the risk of double-counting any members of their shared population.

4.3 Alternative Enumeration

As the negotiations between institutions and local census employees and institutions and the larger state agencies played out, I made arrangements to get administrative records for the entire population of state prisons and juvenile corrections facilities. The DOC Research Office chose to run their records at midnight on April 1, a time when there would be least movement between and in and out of institutions. The JA also ran their records on April 1. In both cases, the data were put on encoded CDs and sent to the project manager at headquarters in accordance with the guidance on how to handle Title 13 data. In getting the data directly from the source, I got the best possible copy of the records – they are completely accurate as far as DOC's administrative records are accurate. In future research, it would be possible to double-check these records against the official census data for these agencies and facilities. Any differences would be directly attributable to human error or enumerator discretion (for the race/ethnicity questions) as local employees translated the administrative records onto individual census forms.

I arranged to conduct a small-scale alternative enumeration in the maximum-security prison on the morning of April 2. A small sample of the general population (from the five main cell blocks) was randomly selected by the institution and put on "call passes" to come to the Activities floor in the prison during one of two time slots. They were directed to a small room, where I gave a brief overview of this research project. Most of the inmates were familiar with the decennial census, having been exposed to the advertising on television and in print media. I explained to them that they had been officially counted based on administrative records from the DOC and my purpose as a researcher working with the Census Bureau (since some knew me in my role as teacher) was to double-check that data to see how accurate the DOC's records were and to identify gaps or problems. I made it clear that their participation was completely voluntary, but if they were willing to share their information, I had a form they could fill out, or

they could individually check with me to see what their DOC records showed and inform me of any errors. I had with me a paper copy of an Excel file with all of the information for the more than 2200 men in the prison. It was a bit cumbersome – I had made the data as small as possible and still had over 50 pages of records.

On the whole, both groups of men from the general population were extremely polite and cooperative. It really seemed like no big deal to most of them. It took them maybe two minutes to fill out the form and then they could leave to go back to work or whatever their day held. A number of men were curious to see what DOC had claimed on their behalf, and for the most part, the records were accurate and the men were pleased to know they had been appropriately represented. There were questions about being counted in the prison's locale rather than their home communities, but not too much push back on that. These are men who are currently under a sentence of "civil death" (Ewald, 2002) and unable to vote in elections (Uggen and Manza, 2004), so it may be that they felt it was nice to be counted in any government representation.

As the randomly selected participants left the Activities area after offering their demographic data, the prison worker who was serving as my escort asked if I would like more people to participate. Since it did not seem to matter if this data remained a random sample of inmates, I said yes and he went out onto the larger Activities floor and recruited a dozen or so more men to come talk to me. They did so willingly. I gave them a brief overview of what I was doing and they checked their DOC records for accuracy before going back to their business.

After finishing on the Activities floor, I was handed off to another prison worker to be escorted into the specialized housing to try to check a sample of census records of those in the Intensive Management Unit or Disciplinary segregation (same building) and Administrative Segregation or Death Row (housed together in a separate building).

I particularly wanted to go into specialized housing – which has notoriously more difficult populations – to see what the experience might be like for researchers or local census employees attempting to enumerate the population in person. It can be an intimidating atmosphere. I have been out in the disciplinary segregation unit on tours on many occasions, and inmates often scream profanities and work to get attention of outsiders in loud and alarming ways. Going out there can also cause some trouble for the staff; once the population is riled up by the presence of strangers, it can take time for them to calm down again.

In negotiating to conduct my mini-alternative census, I asked the administration how they would deal with real census employees or researchers and they said they would have them escorted into these specialized units to gather information at cell fronts. You give up some privacy in gathering information this way, but it is really the only feasible way for the prison to allow contact with large numbers of potentially volatile inmates. If they had to escort them to a private room, it would take two correctional officers per inmate; the officers would have to handcuff and shackle the inmate in order to move him just a small distance down the hall. It is very labor-intensive and time-consuming, particularly for a system challenged by major budget cuts.

My experience in the special housing units was largely uneventful. My escort and I approached consecutive cells and asked the residents if they would mind answering a few questions to help check the accuracy of the data that was given to the Census. I explained that they had already been counted and their cooperation was voluntary. For those who agreed to participate, I read them the questions through the cell doors and recorded their answers. Several men declined to participate, particularly those in Administrative Segregation, but it was a

generally calm environment, and it took little time to get information from 14 men in the three different units.

As a follow-up to my own alternative enumeration, I also took advantage of an opportunity to attend a meeting of the inmate-run Chicano Club in the maximum-security prison. Because it was clear that race was the weakest category in the administrative data, it made sense to make a targeted appeal for information from a minority population. At the beginning of the Chicano Club's monthly meeting, I gave a brief overview of the decennial census and my role as a researcher trying to check the accuracy of the data the DOC had submitted on their behalf. Much of their meeting was held in Spanish, so it would have been better to have a bilingual researcher or census worker. Instead, an individual attending the meeting translated my words for me. I explained again that they all had been officially counted, but if they were willing, I would love a moment of their time to check their records with them individually. At the end of the meeting, 15 men approached me and verified and corrected their information against the DOC administrative records.

All in all, I spoke to 88 inmates at the maximum-security prison in my alternative enumeration. 59 of the inmates were randomly called from the general population and/or were working on the activities floor; interviews with 14 inmates were conducted cell-front in special housing units (disciplinary segregation, the intensive management unit, and administrative segregation); and 15 inmates were briefly interviewed at a voluntary meeting of the inmate Chicano Club.

4.4 Using Administrative Records for Enumeration

4.4.1 Accuracy of the Administrative Records

The accuracy of the administrative records of both the DOC and the JA is extremely good as far as who is in what facility at any given time. It is the primary job of these state agencies to keep track of the populations in custody and keep them secure. Juvenile correctional facilities and state prisons count their populations several times a day, so there is little room for error.

In every case, the 88 men in DOC prisons who took part in the alternative enumeration were listed in the administrative records by the correct name, sex, and location. For the most part, age and date of birth were accurate, as well, although there were isolated errors on either side. The administrative records had the wrong birth year (off by one year) for two of the 88 inmates I spoke to, and, at the same time, in looking at the written forms provided during the alternative enumeration, two other inmates appeared to identify themselves as the wrong age (based on their dates of birth, the age given was a year older than it should have been).

Race was certainly the much bigger issue when using administrative data. There were a few errors where the DOC records were simply different than the inmates' self-identified race, but more commonly, there was a real loss of detail in those records. The DOC identifies inmates by only one race, and the categories are large ones: White, Black, Indian, Hispanic, or Asian. Because the decennial census allows individuals to choose more than one race, if inmates had been interviewed or allowed to fill out their own forms, there would be much richer detail about the multiracial population in prisons and other correctional facilities.

The inmates' records are created and compiled in intake facilities when they are first admitted to state custody. Once an official record has been created, it is very difficult to change it. If administrative records are to be used in the future for CCM studies or the 2020

enumeration, it would be useful to investigate the creation of those records at intake and to consider asking states to refine their categories on race and ethnicity so they are a closer or exact match to the categories that the Census Bureau uses.

Additionally, if cell numbers or room or bed numbers were needed for the enumeration, they could easily be included in data compiled from administrative records if so requested. The room, cell, or bed number seemed unimportant in Census 2010, since the census employees could be quite confident that using agency-level administrative records covered all residents of all state prisons and juvenile correctional facilities.

4.4.2 Benefits of Using Administrative Records

The *Group Quarters Enumeration 2010 Census Enumerator Manual* makes clear that the Census Bureau considers individuals' records complete if they contain answers to three of the first five questions on the ICR form: Name, Sex, Age or Date of Birth, Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin, and Race. Administrative records can offer answers to the first three questions with confidence; therefore, while lacking detail on race and ethnicity, DOC and JA administrative records would all be considered "complete" by definition.

The savings in cost, time and effort were particularly important in 2010 as budget and staffing issues made security a real concern. Using administrative records for the large-scale decennial enumeration made the process much more manageable for the agencies. For a closer look at their populations, the DOC and the JA are perfectly willing to keep cooperating with the ACS on a smaller scale, where more detailed pictures of populations within correctional facilities can be compiled. Additionally, both agencies provide relatively frequent counts of their populations to the government (with the U.S. Census Bureau as collection agency) through the National Prisoner Statistics Prisoner Population Reports and other surveys of correctional facilities and inmates.

4.4.3 Potential Problems with Using Administrative Records

As predicted, nearly all of the problems detected in DOC data were in the race and ethnicity categories. With my sample of 88 men in the maximum-security prison (including members of the Chicano Club), I found that 15 of them would have identified their race either differently or in more detail than the prison's administrative records showed. Most of those 15 men would have claimed more than one race; for example, their DOC record classifies them as White, they would self-identify as White and Hispanic or White and Indian. The men who were classified as Hispanic would have given more detail; eight of those I spoke to would have claimed Mexican heritage. It was rare that the DOC administrative records were entirely wrong, but they were undoubtedly missing some of the detail that could be picked up through in-person enumeration.

As I was conducting my own alternative enumeration with the sample at the maximum-security prison, I wondered what would happen if one was enumerating in person and an inmate refused to give information. This happened in the special housing units (intensive management, disciplinary segregation, and administrative segregation) during my alternative enumeration. Because I explained this was an entirely voluntary process and they had already been counted, when an inmate chose not to answer, I simply moved on. In total, I approached 22 inmates in specialized housing and eight declined to speak with me, and the other 14 readily offered their

information. Five of those who refused to talk were in protective custody and may have felt they had good reason not to speak to outsiders. In an official in-person enumeration, if the inmates refused to offer their information, the enumerator would have to have a knowledgeable guide with administrative records in hand to know who was in each cell and to figure out who withheld information or who may have been missed.

Adult inmates seemed generally disconnected from the census process, although they did voice two specific concerns: first, they echoed the current controversy in the news about how counting inmates in prison skews funding away from their home communities and to the locale of the facilities, and second, two men disliked the fact that “Negro” was a category – they found the term insensitive and offensive.

To have local census workers inside of the prison may have allowed the inmates to feel “counted” in a more concrete way and would have perhaps allowed them to voice concerns to a government representative (this may have also been exploited by inmates trying to air grievances unrelated to the census to outsiders/government employees). In their current circumstances, they do not seem to expect such courtesies, but in-person enumeration might make them feel more like citizens who count and are counted. While allowing inmates to speak for themselves in this way may be temporarily good for morale within the prison, it seems unlikely this rationale would hold much weight against safety concerns and time constraints in thinking about future studies or enumerations.

4.5 Feedback from Key Personnel

4.5.1 Feedback from the JA

Sara (a pseudonym), the key contact for the JA, suggested that one of the major issues with the 2010 Census was that the Census Bureau employees went directly to individual facilities rather than to the agency. She thought it would have been much more effective for the Census workers to approach the JA agency before going to the facilities. She said enumerators “trickled into” facilities over several months, and there were three or four facilities where no one from the Census Bureau showed up at all until after April 1. In addition, she said that Census employees did not leave their names or contact information when they dropped by the facilities. At one residential work camp, for example, the Census Bureau employee left only his or her first name, which Sara deemed to be “poor communication.”

While some of the local census employees were very good, Sara said that others missed appointments, and one even showed up a full month after the scheduled meeting. From the JA’s perspective, the whole process seemed haphazard, and there seemed to be no real organization. One reason for the confusion and miscommunication is that the census employees tend to be “regionalized,” while the JA has facilities across the state. It made it difficult at times for them to communicate and coordinate.

Following the lead – at least partially – of the DOC, the JA put their administrative records into an Excel file and gave them in that form to the local census office. Sara said that “a lot” of regional census people still showed up at the individual facilities to attempt to enumerate them, but the official count was done at the agency level.

The JA had particular concerns about the confidentiality of juvenile offenders’ records. They also seemed to have questions, and possibly confusion, about whether they were to count

just those youth in close custody (state juvenile correctional facilities and residential camps) or also the JA youth in community placements (foster homes, treatment homes, etc.).

Sara also said there were some inconsistencies with the information given by census employees. For example, some local census employees said they needed to put JA employees through a two-hour training, but when they showed up to do it, the training and swearing in took only approximately 30 minutes.

Any form of in-person enumeration was perceived to be costly and an unnecessary burden to the JA. Enumerators could have gone into institutions to oversee the enumeration, but they would have had to be escorted by institution staff the entire time. Alternatively, the census employees could have come in and trained JA staff members to conduct the enumeration, but then there was the two-hour training for Title 13 and the time to go through the process, all of which Sara said would have been overtime for the JA staff members. By using administrative records, the JA central office was able to put together the report for the census in approximately two to three hours total, a much more efficient use of time and resources for the agency.

Sara acknowledged that the race and ethnicity information for their population will not be quite accurate. She made a comment about how an individual could not possibly be both white and Hispanic, which seemed to be either an indication of her own lack of understanding of race and ethnicity or just a reflection of her time as an administrator only able to check one box in each category. In any case, the JA data will clearly not be a perfect match with the categories and possibilities that individuals might have chosen had they filled out their own census forms or been able to claim their own race and ethnicity.

While the administrative records may not be entirely accurate, Sara also said that the forms may not have been entirely honestly and accurately completed if the youths filled out their own information. Her perception was that incarcerated youths may feel they have reason to lie, or they may simply not want to cooperate with any government agency. Sara also wondered aloud how to check that the youth in state custody were not being double-counted at the facility and at their parents' addresses.

Sara also mentioned a perceived waste of resources by local census employees; she said it seemed very odd for the local census employees to bring the "gift bags" filled with Census Bureau-branded merchandise (coffee cups, baseball caps, magnets, pencils, etc.) to the state agency. They brought four bags of census items, which she thought was unnecessary and a poor use of resources. Also, one of the facilities was given a bunch of census forms and envelopes even though the enumeration was done through the central office. Since they were not sure what to do with the forms, the JA employees shredded them – another waste that could have been easily avoided with better communication.

Ultimately, Sara's main issue with the 2010 Census process was poor communication. She thought that the local census employees should have first contacted the agency instead of approaching individual facilities. It was confusing for the facilities when enumerators would show up at their front gates without calling first. There also seemed to be confusion over county detention vs. state juvenile correctional facilities, and she said the census employees need more understanding of the fact that they are based on different levels of government and institutionalization and operate as completely different agencies.

Lastly, Sara mentioned that April was a very busy month for the JA, with three different surveys going on for outside agencies. The agency was dealing with the 2010 Census, the ACS, and the Juvenile Close Custody Survey which takes place every two years. The close custody

survey was not too much of a burden because it could be done electronically over the internet, but it seemed like bad timing to have it due around the same time as the decennial census.

4.5.2 Feedback from DOC Key Personnel

Jay (a pseudonym), the research analyst who provided all of the data to for the 2010 enumeration, explained the agency's reasoning for taking a centralized approach and using administrative records both in person and in a written memo. The memo he wrote for me details the process and the rationale:

To complete the 2010 Census by having each inmate fill out an individual census form would be prohibitively staff-labor intensive and unacceptably disruptive to institutional operations. Additionally, it is highly unlikely the process could have been accomplished in a single day and since approximately 10 percent of DOC inmates move each month, it would have been nearly impossible to gather the necessary information from each inmate at their April 1, 2010 location.

The local census authority provided approximately 14,000 Individual Census Forms to Research and Evaluation prior to April 1, 2010. On the morning of April 1, 2010 Research and Evaluation generated a list of all inmate names housed within our facilities, their location, age on April 1, date of birth, and race. Research personnel created a Word merge document with the necessary data elements placed in the appropriate places on the page and merged the information to blank on-screen documents. Census forms were loaded into a copy machine and we printed all forms collated by inmate location. Each location was bundled and identified by facility name, address, zip code, and county on a cover sheet included with each bundle. The completed forms were boxed and ready for census personnel to pick up the following day... The entire DOC process was handled by one Research Analyst and consisted of a total time commitment of approximately 12 hours.

The DOC research office would have preferred to send the secured data directly to Census Headquarters, but this was not an option. While the DOC analysts and administrators found the local census employees relatively helpful and easy to work with, they also felt they would have benefitted from having at least one person on the team with a strong understanding of technology. As it was, the DOC employees felt that even with the use of administrative records for the 2010 enumeration, the process was still not nearly as efficient as it could have been. Jay explained how the DOC saved – or attempted to save – the local census employees time and effort on several levels:

In meeting with local census officials DOC broached the possibility of the department providing an electronic list of inmates directly to the Census Bureau. This would have enabled us to provide a list of current inmates with the appropriate data variables via secure CD, or other secure method, and would have allowed the Census Bureau to directly upload the information into the Federal database.

The local census officials had not previously been approached with this type of suggestion and referred the question to a higher authority. The decision was made that the electronic method was not currently feasible and submission of individual (Form D-

20 (3-17-2009)) forms was necessary. However, prior to the generation of the forms Research personnel discovered after generation there would be no way by which to identify the geographical location of each inmate for each form. This would mean that no forms would be tied geographically and each form would have to be individually researched at a later date as to where that individual was housed on April 1, 2010. In discussions with census personnel we discovered they intended to place a sticker on the reverse side of each form designating the location where the inmate was housed. However, they made no provision or suggestion as to exactly how they would identify any one form with any particular geographical location. We informed them if they provided the geographical code for each institution location we could add that data to the forms automatically. Census personnel declined the offer and chose to place the labels if we would identify the location of each form.

The PIOs from the individual prisons also gave some feedback about their experience with the 2010 Census; their impressions were that interactions with the local census employees varied widely, but all census enumerators could use training specific to working with correctional facilities.

At the medium-security prison, for example, the PIO Vickie (a pseudonym) was very frustrated with the young woman who initially showed up at the prison in a halter top and shorts with a GPS unit to “mark all housing units.” She dropped by the prison with no warning and she was stopped at the gatehouse where all guests and employees must enter the medium-security prison. The young woman would not give her ID or the name of her supervisor to the correctional officer at the gate. She was not allowed into the prison for multiple reasons, and Vickie said she “got snotty” about it. She left and they never heard back from her or her supervisor or anyone at the census regarding this interaction. This started the decennial Census process with a bit of a bad taste. A more professional initial contact would have obviously made a much better impression and garnered more good will from the institution.

The next contact from the census came when an older gentleman showed up at the gatehouse of the medium-security prison. Again, there was no advance notice and he was also inappropriately dressed: he was wearing blue jeans, which guests are not allowed to wear into the facility. He wanted to discuss an overview of the process, and he did show a census ID. Vickie happened to be there and available, and he was able to meet with her for a few minutes and ask some preliminary questions.

Two to three months later, the enumerator assigned to the medium-security prison called Vickie to set up a time to meet. They met after that phone call, and Vickie said he was very polite and on script. He was careful to not waiver from his script as he explained the choices for enumeration and the “secrecy form” (Title 13). He was then in touch a couple of weeks later to schedule training for correctional staff members in case the use of administrative records from the research office did not work out. Vickie felt that the communication with this Census employee was “decent,” and he made a much better impression than the previous contacts.

Vickie had some thoughts on making this process or CCM studies smoother in the future. More preparation and training for the Census employees would be helpful if they are going to be working with prisons. At minimum, they should call or check the institution’s website to look for the visitors’ policy, what they should wear or not wear, and what to expect. The DOC, for example, has a policy with new visitors where they must orally inform them that the Department will not negotiate for hostages; Vickie said the enumerators unfamiliar with prisons may be

afraid for their lives to go into the facility with inmates, but regardless they would need to complete their task.

Finally, Vickie also suggested that it would be a good idea for the local census office supervisor to contact the DOC or individual institutions to make arrangements and find out policies and regulations before sending employees to the institution. Advance notice would be helpful for all concerned.

4.5.3 Feedback from Local Census Office

The manager of the local census office said that she and the local census workers found dealing with the DOC research office a very good experience. The streamlined process and use of administrative data worked very well for enumerating juvenile correctional facilities and state prisons. It also proved helpful as a model for enumerating other Group Quarters, as well, and the local office used a similar method for some hospitals and mental health units as they continued with the 2010 Census.

Her largest frustration was with the headquarters of the Census Bureau – she said that she could not get questions answered in timely fashion, if at all. No one seemed to be “in charge,” and to have final authority to make decisions. Given the workload and responsibility of her office, she felt that the local workers had to keep moving forward in order to not get behind on the enumeration. To keep on schedule, she made decisions that duplicated effort that may have been prevented (saving time and money) if the Census Bureau headquarters had responded to her queries. The best example from this process was the fact that even though the DOC printed 14,000 individual census forms with data from administrative records, the local census office manager was not sure that those forms would be usable or acceptable. Unable to get a timely or definitive answer from anyone at the Census Bureau headquarters, she decided to have her employees re-do them, transferring all of the data onto 14,000 new forms by hand.

4.6 Ethnographic Observation of ACS Interviews in a County Jail

To get another view of how information is collected within correctional facilities, I was able to accompany a field representative (FR) as part of the ACS at a county jail in a large metropolitan area. The jail is a coed facility that holds approximately 1000 inmates. Prior to our visit, I spoke with the FR as well as a captain at the jail to give her my information so that the county jail could run a background check to allow me inside.

In our phone conversation, the FR mentioned that surveying correctional facilities has become much more difficult recently, and that they don't want census employees coming into the facility at all now. It can be rather subjective; as he said: “It all depends on which captain is in charge.” He had to work to garner permission to bring his laptop into the jail, saying that the computer with its prompts is absolutely necessary to get decent data for the ACS. My ACS observation took place within a working dorm where inmates hold jobs in the facility and work during the day.

Before driving to the facility, I had looked online for clothing guidelines for visitors to the jail. I could not find any guidelines and so I assumed – correctly – that the inmates would be in jumpsuits and there would be less danger of blending in to the population. The FR and I were escorted through the prison and into the dorm. The FR had a randomly selected list of 10 men, out of a total of perhaps 75 to 80 men in that dorm. The inmates range in age and demeanor, but

all seemed cooperative and obediently answered the questions asked. Questions from the ACS survey (prompted by and recorded on the laptop computer) included the following information:

- Confirmation of full name
- Date of Birth
- Confirmation of age
- Where you were one year ago
- Street address
- Health insurance
- Marital status
- When did you last work (outside of the jail) even if it was only for a few days?
- How many weeks out of the last year did you work?
- Approximately how much money did you make?
- Other forms of income?
- Types of jobs?
- Questions about health problems
- Questions about education.

Survey and interviews then end very abruptly. Interviews were very quick – easily less than 15 minutes per individual on average. The FR opened and closed each interview with handshakes, which seemed a particularly humanizing touch in a jail setting where the respondents were wearing orange jumpsuits with pink tee shirts with the word JA IL clearly marked on them underneath.

The FR interviewed eight men in person and then worked with the facility escort to get information from administrative records for the two inmates who were out of the dorm at class and at work that morning. Using the computer prompts and our facility escort as the proxy respondent, the FR got what information he could. Information on the inmates' health insurance, work, marital status, education were all missing from the jail's records. The entire process took approximately two and a half hours.

The FR asked for a quiet private space to conduct the interviews since the data are confidential, but we had to be in plain sight of the officer at all times. The interview space was an open dorm ringed with bunk beds, and at 9:00am men were still sleeping in their beds on one side and around the perimeter of the room. There was a grouping of four-seat tables in the middle of the dorm and the FR selected one near the back and tried to speak softly during the interviews. The inmates, however, did not seem particularly bothered by the lack of privacy – they must be at least somewhat used to it while spending time in this jail.

The FR was personable and flexible, commenting on some individual responses while still moving along efficiently and professionally. He seemed to enjoy this job. At times, he explained the confidentiality piece in ways that were meant to be funny and relevant to the setting; for example: “If I take your information to the streets, I could go to prison for five years.” Other times, he read the information about Title 13 more formally, which may have been difficult for at least some of the inmate population to understand. In some cases – and for some questions – a visual aid might have helped the respondents to understand the questions and potential answers. Perhaps a card listing category options could be utilized. The FR simply read the questions from his laptop and typed in responses. All of the interviewees spoke English in this case, but I was left to wonder, what would have happened if they did not speak English?

A couple of the respondents asked why they had to do this survey, as it was taking place at the exact same time as the decennial census. One said he had already filled out his census form and mailed it in. While this would not affect the ACS survey, it is worth noting if he was in jail for another week, he would also be counted in the jail on April 1 and would likely be double-counted. This is undoubtedly more of an issue for jails and detention centers than for longer term prisons or correctional facilities with more stable populations.

4.7 Considerations for Enumerating Juvenile Correctional Facilities and Prison Populations

Working with administrative records at the agency level rather than at the facility level had some distinct advantages for this state in the current context. One benefit of working at the agency level is that the entire population can be assessed without being thrown off by the movements within the population. There is movement between prisons and, as analysts in the DOC research office pointed out, the inmates' files and administrative records would travel in the transport van with them. Therefore, if the enumerators were working with individual institutions, any inmates in transit would be missed completely or possibly double-counted at two different institutions. Within a single prison, there is still movement between cells, to and from the Disciplinary Segregation Unit, to and from jobs, classes, meals, medical care, etc. It would be difficult to count 2,200 men at one time without double-counting or missing individuals, especially if the enumerators were not familiar with prisons generally and particularly with the specific institution.

Similarly, by using data for the whole JA system rather than from individual facilities it was less likely that any individual would be missed in the enumeration. It would still be possible to miss individuals at the time of the count if they were being transported from a county facility to a state facility (from county detention or jail to a state prison or juvenile correctional facility) or from a JA facility to a DOC institution, but using agency data from one specific point in time makes that less likely.

The DOC can only give an "outcount" of inmates who are away from state prisons at court, at the hospital, etc.; the administrative records cannot necessarily get more specific as to exactly where the inmates are when they are temporarily out of the institution. Presumably, those inmates would be counted at their temporary placement.

If enumerating at individual institutions, agency administrators offered several considerations. First, they suggested that intake units will be the most complicated as they have more movement of their populations; individuals are being processed into the state system from county facilities, and they are being transferred to the state institutions considered most the most appropriate fit for their circumstances. The day of the week would also matter for enumeration; in the DOC, for example, there is more movement between institutions on Wednesdays and Thursdays than on other days. Similarly, the time of day of the count will matter; if enumerating in person, there will be significant shifts and movement of population depending on the time of day. None of these issues are insurmountable, the enumerators just should be aware of them so that they can strategize to get the most accurate count possible as efficiently as they can.

Finally, when dealing with incarcerated populations, individuals may have multiple names in the records. Their birth names may be different than the names used in their convictions, there may be several variations of the same name or aliases used for single

individuals. It can get quite complicated and enumerators should simply be aware this is a potential issue to watch for in the data.

5 Recommendations

5.1 Recommendations Regarding CCM and in Preparation for the 2020 Census

5.1.1 Provide education and information about CCM studies and the decennial census to state juvenile justice agencies and DOCs several months before the studies or enumeration will take place.

First contacts should be made with state agencies and institutions several months prior to the validation phase or the time when local census employees may begin showing up at institutions. Information should include details about the purpose and importance of CCM studies and the decennial census, and procedures and options for enumeration of state-run correctional facilities. Efforts should be made to ensure the information reaches the appropriate administrative staff members in the central agencies who can then delegate responsibility and make plans for the studies. Identifying key contact persons will enable direct personal communication and help prevent information and plans from getting lost in the bureaucracy.

For CCM studies, educating the state agencies and institutions as to the purpose of the particular study would be helpful in easing confusion and gaining cooperation. JA and DOC administrators felt overwhelmed at times by the number of studies that were occurring for which they needed to provide data. While they were generally very cooperative, more clarity on the differences between studies and data collection would be helpful.

5.1.2 Approach state juvenile justice agencies and DOCs to discuss and strategize procedure for validation and enumeration before any local workers approach individual institutions.

At minimum, Census Bureau researchers and employees need to find a reasonable first contact person (the PIO would be a good place to start) at each agency or correctional institution and call before trying to visit or go into prisons to make further arrangements for surveys or enumeration. Census employees should ask about dress codes, regulations, ID needed, etc. Most prisons/juvenile correctional facilities will require that a criminal background check be cleared before any individual is approved to enter the facility.

5.1.3 At the national level, consider appointing an individual familiar with juvenile correctional facilities and prison populations and data collection procedures as “Prison Czar” to take responsibility for coordinating enumeration of all state and federal prisons.

With more than 1.4 million people in this GQ population group, in order to get the most accurate data possible with the least burden on facilities’ administration and staff, an expert familiar in prison research, methods, and workings would be well-positioned to contact and negotiate with state agencies and individual institutions. If there are questions about the accuracy

of administrative records, ACS data could be used as a basis for comparison and for its more detailed look at incarcerated populations.

5.1.4 Provide additional, context specific training for enumerators working with juvenile correctional facilities and prisons. Consider developing a new training module in consultation with ACS workers who regularly go into correctional facilities to collect survey data.

The Census Bureau should provide specialized training for enumerators and employees working with prisons, juvenile correctional facilities, and county jails and detention. Correctional Facilities likely have the largest capacity of all Group Quarters. Enumerator training simply does not cover what to do when you are dealing with hundreds and thousands of residents of an individual GQ facility. The enumerator handbook currently breaks down populations as either nine or less residents or ten or more. This does not offer much help when enumerators are working with a facility that houses thousands of inmates.

Additionally, a database of information could be compiled on visiting regulations and key contact people for different state agencies and correctional facilities. Keeping such records updated could be a challenge, but it would pay off any time enumerators or census workers needed to go into such institutions. Additionally, records could be kept about how institutions chose to be enumerated in 2010 so that there is some institutional memory of the process even as individuals cycle out of the agencies and institutions.

5.1.5 Educate state agencies about the different procedures, timing, and goals for the decennial census, ACS, Survey of Inmates, National Prisoner Statistics Prisoner Population Reports, Juvenile Close Custody Survey, and CCM studies.

Administrators in state juvenile justice agencies and DOCs do not have a clear understanding of the differences between the many surveys they are required to provide data for. More education and explanation may decrease the confusion and ease frustration over what seems like repetitive requests for data.

5.2 Recommendations Regarding the Use of Administrative Records for Further CCM Studies and Future Enumeration of Juvenile Correctional Facilities and Prisons

5.2.1 Conduct further research on the accuracy of administrative records and how they might be improved at the state and local level to provide better and more detailed information for the 2020 Census.

I recommend that Census Bureau statisticians compare official Census 2010 data with administrative records attained in the alternative enumeration in this study. Because the original administrative records were attained and sent directly to Census Bureau headquarters, and all data were coded by hand onto approximately 15,000 Individual Census Reports, with further research it would be possible to get a sense of how much human error there may be in that kind of copying. For the DOC data, at least, most discretion would have been taken out at the agency level: race categories were already collapsed into White, Black, Hispanic, Indian, and Asian. The JA may be slightly different – there may have been more room for discretion or decisions to

be made by the local enumerators in translating the administrative records onto Individual Census Reports.

5.2.2 Conduct further research to provide more checks on accuracy of the administrative records used for enumeration.

I recommend that Census Bureau statisticians compare decennial Census data with ACS information to get a better look at race and ethnicity and to get a more detailed picture of incarcerated populations in Group Quarters. If juvenile correctional facilities and prisons move to using administrative records for enumeration and data collection, comparing the self-reported information from the ACS would be a useful check to analyze how similar administrative data on race and ethnicity is to data that is self-reported by inmates.

5.3 Overarching Recommendations for Enumerating Incarcerated Populations

5.3.1 Consider research on intake procedures for state DOCs and juvenile justice agencies.

Intake is an important place in the world of corrections. The inmates arrive at a DOC or JA intake center with a judgment. There is a name on the judgment and that becomes the individual's official name for the rest of their time in the institutional system. The report includes a sentence computation and also a report with criminal background and history. The information contains a name, date of birth, and social security number, so by the time the individual inmates are in a state juvenile correctional facility or prison, the general demographic information (name, DOB, SSN) is likely to be pretty accurate.

Since intake is an important point where administrative records are created and finalized for individual inmates, state agencies could be asked to add categories to their collection of data on race and ethnicity to better match the categories and level of detail in census data.

5.3.2 Delineate more clearly the hierarchical decision-making process within the Census Bureau.

Census Bureau headquarters should take steps to make clear at what point local researchers and office managers can make final decisions regarding data and procedures. When questions arise, Census Bureau headquarters should make every effort to provide more timely and definitive answers to questions from local field workers and offices. A clear delineation of power and authority for decision-making will likely save time and duplicated effort in CCM studies and the 2020 Census.

6 References

- Adler, Patricia A. and Peter Adler. 1987. "The Past and Future of Ethnography." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 16(4): 4-24.
- Bazelon, Emily and Peter Wagner. "Census' Cell Count Steals Voting Power." *Newsday*, September 8, 2004.
- Chesney-Lind, Meda and Shelden, Randall G. 2004. *Girls, delinquency, and juvenile justice, third edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Comfort, Megan L. 2002. "'Papa's House': The Prison as Domestic and Social Satellite." *Ethnography*, 3(4): 467-499.
- Ewald, Alec C. 2002. "'Civil Death': The Ideological Paradox of Criminal Disenfranchisement Law in the United States." *University of Wisconsin. Law Review*, 5: 1045-1137.
- Goffman, Erving. 1961. *Asylums*. New York: Anchor Books.
- Huling, Tracy. 2000. "Prisoners of the Census." *Mother Jones*. URL: <http://motherjones.com/politics/2000/05/prisoners-census>. Accessed 6/29/2010.
- Inderbitzin, Michelle. 2007. "A Look from the Inside: Balancing Custody and Treatment in a Juvenile Maximum Security Facility." *International Journal of Offender Therapy and Comparative Criminology*, 51(3): 348-362.
- Inderbitzin, Michelle. 2005. "Growing Up Behind Bars: An Ethnographic Study of Adolescent Inmates in a Cottage for Violent Offenders." *Journal of Offender Rehabilitation*, 42(3): 1-22.
- Inderbitzin, Michelle. 2006. "Lessons from a Juvenile Training School." *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 21(1): 7-26.
- Jacobs, James B. 1974. "Participant Observation and Prison." *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 3: 221-240.
- Jacobson-Hardy, Michael. 2002. "Behind the Razor Wire: A Photographic Essay." *Ethnography*, 3(4): 398-415.
- Johnson, Robert. 2002. *Hard Time: Understanding and Reforming the Prison, Third Edition*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.
- Jones, Richard S. 1995. "Uncovering the Hidden World: Insider Research in Prison." *Journal of Contemporary Criminal Justice*, 11(2):106-118.
- Liebling, Alison. 2001. "Whose Side Are We On? Theory, Practice and Allegiances in Prison Research." *British Journal of Criminology* 41, 472-484.

Lotke, Eric and Peter Wagner. 2005. "Prisoners of the Census: Electoral and Financial Consequences of Counting Prisoners Where They Go, Not Where They Come From." *Pace Law Review*, 24(2): 587-607.

Manza, Jeff and Christopher Uggen. 2006. *Locked Out: Felon Disenfranchisement and American Democracy*. New York: Oxford University Press, Inc.

Spradley, James P. 1980. *Participant Observation*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Sykes, Gresham. 1958. *The Society of Captives: A Study of a Maximum Security Prison*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Uggen, Christopher and Jeff Manza. 2002. "Democratic Contraction? Political Consequences of Felon Disenfranchisement in the United States." *American Sociological Review*, 67: 777-803.

Uggen, Christopher and Michelle Inderbitzin. 2010. "The Price and the Promise of Citizenship: Extending the Vote to Non-incarcerated Felons." In Natasha A. Frost, Joshua D. Freilich, and Todd R. Clear (Eds.), *Contemporary Issues in Criminal Justice Policy: Policy Proposals From the American Society of Criminology Conference*, pp. 61-68. Belmont, CA: Cengage/Wadsworth.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2009. *2010 Census Group Quarters Definitions and Code List. Signed Internal Memorandum*, U.S. Census Bureau, September 17, 2009.

U.S. Census Bureau. 2009. *Census Group Quarters Enumeration 2010 Census Enumerator Manual*, U.S. Census Bureau, August 15, 2009.

Wacquant, Loic. 2002. "The Curious Eclipse of Prison Ethnography in the Age of Mass Incarceration." *Ethnography* 3(4): 371-397.

Excerpt from Letter Sent from Census Headquarters to Juvenile Correctional Facilities

From the letter from Arnold A. Jackson, the Associate Director for Decennial Census:
“We encourage juvenile correctional facilities to self-enumerate because of the need to operate under privacy, protect standard routine activities against disruption, and for safety issues concerning Census staff and the facilities’ residents. Self-enumeration means that the staff at the facility conducts the enumeration. Self-enumeration can be conducted through the use of administrative records, or the facility can choose to distribute the questionnaire packets to each resident and then collect the completed questionnaires in a sealed envelope. The Census Bureau will provide all the materials and train the facility staff on how to do the job. Details for self-enumeration are outlined in the *2010 Census Self-Enumeration Procedures*, which is included in this set of materials.

Enclosed is a set of materials that describes the enumeration process for juvenile correctional facilities and provides a marked sample of a Census ID badge that our employees will wear. Please review these documents and pass them along to your state’s juvenile correctional facilities and administrative offices so that they will be aware of the purpose and timing of our visits.

The letter continues:

“Under the guidelines for 2010 Census Self-Enumeration Procedures, the Facility Contact Responsibilities are listed as follows:

Facility Contact Responsibilities

The Facility Contact has many responsibilities. These include:

Selecting personnel to help with the enumeration

Creating resident lists of all persons living in the Group Quarters as of April 1, 2010. These lists are required to conduct a complete enumeration.

Setting a date for training all personnel as well as providing space for the training.

Getting enumeration materials from the Census Bureau Crew Leader.

Letting facility staff and residents know about the Census and that their cooperation is requested.

Preparing the Individual Census Report (ICR) packets for each resident in Group Quarters.

Making sure that each resident in every Group Quarters completes an Individual Census Report.

Completing Individual Census Reports from administrative records for any individual who is not present or able to complete it at the time of enumeration but still is a resident of the Group Quarters as of April 1, 2010.

Reviewing completed materials for accuracy and legibility.

Turning in completed materials to the Census Bureau Crew Leader.

Discussing any issues/questions with the Census Bureau Crew Leader.”

8 Appendix B

Form Used in Alternative Enumeration at the Maximum-Security Prison

Questions on the Census Form

1. Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

2. Sex: Male Female

3. Age: _____

4. Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year): _____

5. Are you of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

____ No, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

____ Yes, Mexican, Mexican American, Chicano

____ Yes, Puerto Rican

____ Yes, Cuban

____ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish Origin (ex: Columbian, Dominican, Salvadoran, etc.)

6. What is your race? Circle one or more.

White

Black, African American, or Negro

American Indian or Alaska Native

Asian Indian

Japanese

Native Hawaiian

Chinese

Korean

Guamanian or Chamorro

Filipino

Vietnamese

Samoan

Other Asian (example: Hmong, Laotian, Thai, etc.) _____

Some other race: _____