

STUDY SERIES
(*Survey Methodology* #2013-14)

**Ethnographic Study of the Group Quarters Population
in the 2010 Census: Homeless Populations**

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Report Issued: June 3, 2013

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1 Executive Summary

This study is part of the 2010 Census Ethnographic Study of Group Quarters (GQ) populations. In this report, we present ethnographic research findings on homeless populations. We sought to discover what types of census enumeration would lead to the most complete and accurate count of homeless populations. We also explored whether a Census Coverage Measurement (CCM) study would be feasible for homeless populations.

Our findings are based upon ethnographic data collected in 11 sites that serve the homeless populations in three cities in a Northeastern U.S. state. These sites included single and family shelters, soup kitchens, day centers, and a group home for the mentally ill. We gathered data from January 2010 through May 2010. Data collected were comprised of: (1) field notes based upon observation, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews with homeless individuals and homeless serving professionals, decennial enumeration observations at two soup kitchens, and two post-enumeration focus groups with homeless individuals; (2) demographic information collected from 50 homeless individuals and families; (3) information from homeless-serving staff about the actual census enumeration at their agency. We spent a total of 50 days for data collection.

This report provides suggestions for carrying out further research for enumerating homeless populations. These suggestions are based upon findings guided by two central research questions, which seek to identify: (1) the social and contextual aspects of where homeless individuals and families sleep that impact the accuracy of the 2010 Census enumeration and (2) the primary factors that may affect the success or feasibility of a post-enumeration CCM study.

Five social and contextual aspects that may have impacted the accuracy of the 2010 Census enumeration of homeless individuals were identified: (1) location (shelter, out-of-doors or doubling up) of the homeless population on Census Day; (2) fluidity of living arrangements; (3) poor mental health and substance abuse among the homeless population; (4) insufficient preparation of census takers to enumerate at all locations where homeless people are, including out-of-doors locations; and (5) execution of a strategy for enumerating soup kitchen users that did not maximize the counts of homeless individuals.

This study identified two primary factors that are likely to impact the implementation of a post-enumeration coverage measurement study: (1) types of homeless shelters (single versus family); and (2) high movement and extreme mobility within a day or days.

This report contains recommendations for methodologies, procedures and future research that may enhance census enumeration at sites serving the homeless:

- (1) Encourage and improve the utilization of the Be Counted form for homeless individuals who missed being counted in shelters, soup kitchens, and targeted non-sheltered outdoor locations. The Be Counted forms should be distributed to all of the major places that homeless people congregate. We also recommend ongoing distribution and explanation of the Be Counted forms in the soup kitchens.
- (2) We recommend that the U.S. Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) increase their level of contact with each other in the area

of the development of homeless enumeration methodology for the benefit of both agencies.

- (3) We recommend modification of the Individual Census Report (ICR) form so that it can include all members of the group quarters household, which is especially relevant to family shelters.
- (4) We recommend improved and consistent strategies and procedures for enumerating the homeless population at soup kitchens, which are especially important locations for the doubled-up and out-of-doors count.
- (5) Finally, we recommend further research to understand how to improve coverage of doubled-up homeless populations who are staying at households that are unlikely to include them in the household census form.

2 Introduction

The goal of this study, which is one of six independent studies of six Group Quarters (GQ) populations, was to understand the process of enumerating individuals experiencing homelessness during the 2010 Census. We sought to discover what types of census enumeration of homeless populations would lead to the most complete and accurate count of homeless populations. We also explored whether a post-enumeration Census Coverage Measurement (CCM) study would be feasible for homeless populations.

In this report we analyze some of the social dynamics and factors most likely to affect census coverage, explore the feasibility of conducting a post-enumeration coverage measurement study and propose modifications of the census enumeration strategies that would insure more complete coverage of homeless populations wherever they are located. We begin with a brief review of previous research on the enumeration of the homeless population.

3 Previous Homeless Enumeration Research

Previous ethnographic work on homeless enumeration by the U.S. Census Bureau and others has shown that the homeless population is difficult to count accurately. Key reasons why the homeless population has been under-counted include:

- Some homeless people are hiding and do not want to be identified. Examples include individuals hiding from the courts and police, individuals who fear that they will end up in a nursing home or mental hospital if the “authorities” knew their true state of health, and families with children who are trying to not be conspicuous to the state’s protective services unit (Glasser and Salo 1991).
- Homeless people often cycle through various living arrangements and can be constantly on the move; they may have access to a bed at a family or friend’s place, then sleep in a car, then be imprisoned, and then enter a shelter. Homelessness tends to be episodic for many (Fleisher and Brownrigg 1990; Glasser and Salo 1991).
- Some people are pretending to be housed. For example, a person who has a job or is seeking a job may not want their employer or potential employer to know that they are homeless (Liebow 1993). People sleeping out-of-doors may be vague about their sleeping arrangements because they do not want to be harassed and want to keep their sleeping locations private information (Glasser and Salo 1991).
- It is not possible to identify and enumerate homeless individuals by their physical appearances. One must have at least a minimal relationship to people in order to identify that they are truly homeless; it is not possible to ascertain by physical appearances. One must know where they sleep. Some of those at soup kitchens are poor, live alone, and come for the social life and should not be counted as homeless (Glasser 1988).
- Individuals who are tenuously attached to a household are often not included in the decennial census because the householder does not think of them as permanent members

of the household (Schwede and Ellis 1994; Glasser 1991). In particular, the household may be in violation of their rental lease if they are housing people for 30 days or more; they will have a real disincentive to include in the census count a guest who is homeless.

- Some homeless people may be deeply involved in the underground economy (Bourgois and Brownrigg 1990) and therefore do not want to be counted. Although some of this underground economy is illegal (e.g., the drug trade) some is not illegal, such as a home-based food distribution service.
- The concept of having a usual residence, or living or staying one place “most of the time” has been found to be an irrelevant concept in various populations, including some members of the homeless population (Martin 2007).

4 Methodology

4.1 Locations of study

In the report, we refer to Cities One, Two, and Three, which we will briefly describe.

City One is a city of 27,000 (all demographic information from American Fact Finder, 2000 Census), which has the only singles shelter for an approximate 40 miles. The city is easily accessible by public bus, for which many people have free passes or reduced fares. Its soup kitchens and other services (including a community health center) are important services for many miles around. City One also has a seaport, fishing and tourism industries, and many people are attracted to the city in hopes of locating at least a seasonal job.

City Two is a city of 17,000 and has one of the ten family shelters in the state. This family shelter serves women and their children from the capital city as well as the immediate region. City Two also has a day center for chronically mentally ill, and also a group home for mentally ill. It is easily accessible by bus to and from the capital city.

City Three is a city of 22,000 and is approximately 20 minutes by bus to the capital city. It has one of the few soup kitchens in the area that serves breakfast and lunch and is also open during the hours in between so it can serve as a day respite for people on the street. City Three also has a food bank and thrift shop which is well utilized.

4.2 Study sites

In the Northeastern state where the research for this project was conducted, there are over 4,000 people per year who spend at least one night in a shelter; this estimate includes almost 700 families who have an average of 1.9 children per family (Hirsch 2008). The statewide Coalition for the Homeless lists six family shelters, five shelters for individuals, four shelters serving individuals and families, and six domestic violence shelters. The Coalition publishes fact sheets that inform the public, in English and Spanish, in three different geographical regions of the state, of the services for shelter, food, clothing, and health care for homeless individuals. If a person has no other place to go (e.g., is barred from a shelter) he/she can go to a 24-hour crisis

intervention organization in the capital city, where a person can sit in the dayroom all night. This state has bus service to the capital city from most parts of the state, although the buses run infrequently at night.

Study Site 1 – Shelter for singles. We spent six evenings in a single men and single women’s 20-bed shelter in City One. In order to enter this shelter one has to be buzzed in, as the doors are locked at all times. This was an important site in that we observed the fluidity of homeless people moving from shelter to street to doubled-up to back to the shelter. We were able to observe two people as they were being barred from the shelter for the night. We had the opportunity to meet the same people in soup kitchens and on the streets, as they spent most of their day outside of the shelter setting. The shelter has a lounge for men and one for women, as well as separate dorm rooms. There are no prepared meals at the shelter, so people have to leave to get meals. People can bring in food themselves. They are not charged rent at this shelter.

Study Site 2 – Shelter for families. We spent three afternoons and evenings in a family shelter that provides 19 beds for households with children and 9 beds for households without children in City Two. This family shelter houses women and their children and allows the household to stay until they are able to secure housing. Unlike the shelter for single people, this shelter does not ask people to leave suddenly. Like the singles shelter, one has to be buzzed in, as the doors are locked at all times. In many ways, even though classified as a shelter, this program appeared to have the stability of a transitional program.

Study Site 3 – Specialized residence. We spent four mornings in a specialized residence designed for boat crew members who are between jobs but the residence is now utilized by homeless individuals in City One. Although not technically listed as a shelter, this service provides inexpensive single room occupancy (SRO) housing for ten single people, who stay until they can move on. There are no cooking facilities in the individual room. People come and go as they wish. The people here told us that they would not be included in any other household. At least one person had been sleeping in his car before he found a room here.

Study Site 4 – Soup Kitchen #1. We spent six mornings in a major soup kitchen in City Three. The soup kitchen serves breakfast and lunch, Monday through Friday, has a food pantry and clothing closet, and is a major source of help for the approximately 50 people who come there daily. This soup kitchen provides a respite from the cold and two meals each weekday to a predominance of men, many of whom are doubled-up with family and friends in the surrounding neighborhoods. Portuguese is the language other than English heard here. Some of the people are living in shelters in the capital city and come here for the lunch.

Study Site 5 – Soup Kitchen #2. We spent five noontimes at a soup kitchen that serves a hot meal every Monday from 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in City One. This soup kitchen serves about 75 individuals each week. It is located near the shelters, the bus, and downtown. People can sit at this soup kitchen for over an hour, which is important because some people who come to it are sleeping in their cars or in other out-of-doors locations. The soup kitchen is used by most of the shelter residents as well. Although some people appear to be inebriated, no one is barred as long as they are not violent. The community police officer, the food stamp outreach worker and the housing hotline worker are often at the soup kitchen to reach out to people.

Study Site 6 – Soup Kitchen #3. We visited a third soup kitchen twice that serves hot noontime meals two Wednesdays a month in City One. This soup kitchen also serves the sheltered, out-of-doors and doubled-up homeless. We also met people who were living in the local motels (which have low prices in the winter and charge by the week).

Study Site 7 – Day Center #1. We visited a day center for homeless people returning from prison three times in City One. This is a service that is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. It is intended to be a day respite for people leaving prison who have no place to go. It does not offer food. It appears that people enter in order to receive help with things such as applying for social security and receiving referrals to substance abuse treatment. We were not able to find homeless individuals to talk with, however, at this service site.

Study Site 8 – Soup Kitchen #4. We visited a fourth soup kitchen that serves a hot meal every Saturday at 4:30 p.m. in City One once. This is the only meal program on Saturdays in City One, and serves the sheltered, out-of-doors and doubled-up homeless. The staff at this soup kitchen appears to have the closest relationships with clients compared to the other soup kitchens of City One.

Study Site 9 – Soup Kitchen #5. We visited a soup kitchen that serves daily breakfast, Monday through Friday, in City One once. Many of the people who stay at the singles shelter of City One eat here at 8:30 a.m. daily. The soup kitchen is housed in a community center that includes other services (such as a food pantry) but it was not clear how many of the homeless utilize the other services.

Study Site 10 – Day Center #2. We visited a day center for people with chronic mental illness in City Two once. This day center is a day respite and noontime meal provided for people with mental illness who may be on the streets during the day. It is listed in the street sheet of the major homeless advocacy group as a “drop in center.” However, two interviews with the directors revealed that it is a service for people who are already clients of the mental health system.

Study Site 11 – Group Home. We visited a group home for people with chronic mental illness in City Two once. This is the only real congregate living facility for mentally ill in the county. The rest of the housing designed for the mentally ill are non-supervised scattered site apartments, which means that each person would have received their April 1 household census forms in their own mailbox.

4.3 Ethnography

Ethnography is the written description of a culture after a period of intensive observation and participant observation (a hallmark of anthropology) by the anthropologist who has lived within the culture of study. In taking extensive field notes and analyzing them, one is attempting to understand not just the behaviors one can see but the *world view* of the culture that makes those behaviors possible. A wonderful description of the more subtle aspects of ethnography is provided by Charles Frake who says that describing a culture is:

not to recount the events of a society but to specify what one must know to make those events maximally probable. The problem is not to state what someone did but to specify the conditions under which it is culturally appropriate to anticipate that he, or persons occupying his role, will render an equivalent performance (Frake 1964:111-112).

The above rules of ethnography guided our work with homeless populations. It is important to understand the *emic*, or insider's point of view of homeless populations and service providers in order to discover the most efficacious way of ensuring that homeless populations are fully included in the decennial census.

We interacted with homeless individuals wherever they were: in shelters, soup kitchens, and on the streets in three cities. At times we met the same people as they traveled between the shelters, soup kitchens, and streets. In the five months of our field work, we were well received by homeless individuals and the directors of each program approached by us.

On all of our site visits we took extensive notes on our conversations with homeless individuals. In addition, we collected demographic information on more than 50 homeless individuals.

During our visits to shelters and soup kitchens we brought something to eat (usually small oranges that were in season and were not often present in homeless settings) for everyone at the site. In the soup kitchen in City Three, we brought free bus passes, since many of the people there did not have a bus pass or a reduced fare pass.

Throughout this ethnography, we encountered many homeless people who told us that they were doubled-up when they were not in the shelters. In this report we refer to the "doubled-up" as families or individuals who live temporarily with another household for economic reasons (see Appendix 2 for further discussion of this term). The doubled-up often need to contribute money to the host household or be involved in other types of reciprocity in order to stay. We were told by several of the people with whom we spoke of a newly occurring problem as householders are forced to rent smaller apartments for less money, they can no longer accommodate the family and friends doubled-up. The doubled-up are often hosted in households that are renters in subsidized housing (public housing or Section 8) wherein it is a violation of the lease to house a guest for over one month. The participants in this ethnography told us that they did not want to jeopardize someone's rental or subsidized housing by staying with them for too long.

4.4 Observation on "Census Day" at two soup kitchens

We observed the census takers in action in the Monday noontime soup kitchen in City One (Soup Kitchen 3) and in the daily soup kitchen (Soup Kitchen 1) in City Three. In both cases these were unobtrusive observations in that the observer did not interact with the enumerators and was treated as a client of the soup kitchen. In both observations, Eric Hirsch (the second author) filled out the census form (as instructed) and filled in his actual address in the space that asks "what is the full address of the place where you live or stay MOST OF THE TIME." In this way, Hirsch's forms at both soup kitchens will be linked to the household census form he filled out at his home.

The two soup kitchen enumerations were two days apart (March 29 and March 31, 2010) and were conducted by two different census teams with two different strategies. We were not sure how much each soup kitchen team of enumerators had collaborated with the soup kitchen directors or how much they had collaborated with each other. The purpose of the soup kitchen enumeration is to count people who might not be included in other enumerations, such as people living out-of-doors or people doubled-up with another family. It can also count people who might have been missed who were living at a shelter on March 29, or people who received their household form but had not returned it. In both soup kitchen enumerations, everyone was asked to fill out the form even if they felt they had been counted somewhere else. Double-counting would be avoided by having people answer the question “what is the full address of the place where you live or stay MOST OF THE TIME.”

4.5 Focus groups

To understand the potential barriers to census participation from portions of the homeless population from an emic point of view, we conducted two post-enumeration focus groups on April 8 and 16, 2010, with homeless individuals. Focus groups are a type of group interview that is generally conducted with a small group in order for key informants (the participants themselves) who are experts about their own culture, to talk in a comfortable setting (Schensul, LeCompte, Nastasi, and Borgatti 1999). A focus group usually elicits the language of the culture. Focus groups are audio-taped so that one may carefully analyze the written transcriptions for content. We were interested in the cultural categories that arise from the homeless community and the cultural themes that exist within this subculture. We conducted the focus groups for single men and women within the shelter. Before April 8 we had posted a sign-up sheet for people who wanted to participate. We conducted a second focus group at the large soup kitchen that also serves as a day respite for homeless people. At each of these two sites, we had spent six half days observing and talking with people. Thus, at least some of the homeless population in each focus group site recognized the two principal researchers (Glasser, shelter; Hirsch, soup kitchen). The focus group participants represented homeless individuals who stayed at shelters, out-of-doors location, and doubled-up with others.

In both focus groups we introduced ourselves to those who did not know us, and we reviewed the reason for the focus group, explaining why the census was an important resource used to make funding and political representation decisions for local communities and the state. We also explained that we wanted to get suggestions about how to improve the count from a group of people who are often undercounted. We told the participants that we would not be asking for any personal identifying information. We asked people to sign a consent form to participate. We encouraged the participants to say anything they wished regarding the census. We told everyone that they would receive a \$10 grocery gift card to compensate them for their time. The focus groups' questions were: What was your personal experience with the recent 2010 Census count? Can you think of any way that the census could improve the accuracy of their count of people who do not have their own place? In addition to those questions we asked follow-up questions for clarification during the groups.

4.6 In-depth interviews

In addition to the field observations and focus groups, we conducted interviews with the directors of the Housing Hotline (a community service that assists individuals in finding housing in City One; the Housing Authority Community Center of City One, and the Department of Social Services of City Three. We also interviewed the Community Police Officer of City One who was visible on the streets and parks where sheltered and out-of-doors homeless spent much of their time, and the Community Police Officer of City Three.

4.7 Demographic information

We gathered basic demographic information on over 50 people. We were able to compare the numbers of people with found at the single shelter, the family shelter and the group homeless for mentally ill with the numbers that the homeless-serving providers told us were enumerated on the night of the census count.

4.8 Post-Enumeration information from homeless-serving providers

We called the two shelters, the group home for mentally ill, and the veteran's transitional home in late April in order to discover the staff's experience with the census. We also called and the professionals working with the out-of-doors homeless to learn what the census takers had done regarding the out-of-door homeless.

4.9 Observation of the American Community Survey (ACS)

As a precursor to the study of the 2010 Census, we observed the American Community Survey as it was administered to five individuals at a homeless transitional program in a neighboring state. For a full report regarding this observation, see Appendix 1.

5 Findings that Emerged from the Repeated Ethnographic Observations

This section of the report is a summation of our key findings from our observations and conversations with homeless people who were living in the singles shelter, the family shelter, out-of-doors, motels, mariner's single room occupancy/shelter, and those living doubled-up. We found demographic, social and contextual aspects that may have impacted the accuracy of the 2010 Census enumeration of homeless individuals in terms of how likely the individuals would have been located and included in the decennial count.

5.1 Single and family shelters

There are important operational differences between the single and the family shelters, which have implications for the census.

Residents of the singles shelter tend to stay intermittently. They may also be barred from the shelter for fighting or not following other rules even after they are checked in for the evening.

On the other hand residents at the family shelter tend to stay in the shelter until they have permanent housing. They are not barred abruptly, as was the case in the singles shelter, because this would imperil the children. This implies that census enumeration at family shelters is easier since the staff tend to know all the residents well. If the census takers come in the early evening, there is a good probability that the same families will be there later in the evening, which may not be the case in singles shelters.

In addition to the longer stay, the staff of the family shelter appeared to successfully engage the parents (mostly mothers) in activities that would assist them in leaving homelessness, such as job training, GED classes, mental health treatment, or substance abuse treatment. There appeared to be a high level of cooperation with the census among the staff as well as the shelter residents.

Many people staying in the singles shelter see homelessness as a temporary situation until they can find a job. Living in a shelter is a back-up plan if they have absolutely no where else to live. Most of the people in the shelters did not act as though they were in crisis and were generally able to get along. Our ethnographic work took place in the lounge of the shelter, where people were watching TV and talking. There was a small table where some of the residents brought in food to eat (there is no meal program at this shelter). Occasionally community groups brought in leftover food from events to the shelter.

The following are some of our field observations at this shelter that illustrate the intermittent nature of the single shelter stays:

January 29, 2010. Tonight I talked with two men who had recently entered the shelter. The first was a 41-year-old man who is a carpenter. He had been in the shelter for two weeks after leaving a roommate situation that didn't work out. The second man, also in his 40s, is a house painter. He had been in the shelter for four days after breaking up with his girlfriend and having to leave her housing. Both men appeared desperate for work.

February 5, 2010. Tonight among the people with whom I spoke was a very talkative man in his 50s who had been there for two days (he had been to this shelter before). He had various unattended serious problems. He had most recently been looking after an elderly sick man but then the man became too sick for him to care for. He told me about his drug and alcohol history. Despite the fact that he saw his stay at the shelter as very temporary, he was in fact still there in April, when we conducted the post-enumeration focus group.

The following excerpts from our field notes illustrate some of the situations of the homeless families and the longer length of stay in comparison to the single shelter:

February 3, 2010. The first person I talked with was a 24-year-old woman who had two daughters with her, aged four years old and 14 months. The woman told me that she has been associated with this shelter for 2 ½ years, first in shelter, then in transitional housing, now back in shelter for one month. When she did get into their transitional program she could not pay the rent because her funds were cut. Right now she just finished her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) training and is waiting for the test. She

appears confident that she will be able to work after that, afford housing, and leave the shelter. She also hopes to study for her RN license after this. This illustrates the potential for a long-term stay at a family shelter.

On March 15, 2010, I went to the family shelter for the evening and talked with a 31-year-old woman who has two children, ages 4 and 6. The family had been there since November 2009. She told me that she had been staying with family before that, but had to leave. She is a college graduate and in addition has two health-related licenses. She is planning on moving out soon.

In the next excerpt we see the relationship between the singles shelter in City One and the family shelter of City Two.

On the evening of March 15, 2010, I met a 22-year-old woman who is pregnant and has been in the shelter for two months. She plans to stay there until after baby is born. Before this she was staying in the singles shelter for one year. When she became pregnant, the director of the singles shelter suggested that she move into the family shelter.

Sometimes the state protective services insists that a family move to a family shelter in order to live in a safe environment for the children, even if the family is not truly homeless. This is another illustration of the flexibility that we see in how and why people move into shelters.

In the evening of March 15, 2010, I met a 22-year-old woman who has three children ages 8, 5, 1 ½. She has lived at the shelter for two weeks. Before this she lived with her family. She alluded to the fact that the state protective services were involved in her move to the shelter, although she did not elaborate. I noticed her children playing contentedly in the lounge with a college intern who was helping the school-age children with their homework.

5.2 Being barred from the shelter

A backdrop of our observations and conversations with homeless individuals in City One was the death of a homeless man as he was sleeping outside a shelter in January, 2010, after being barred from the shelter for the night. The death was sobering both to the shelter residents who were shaken by the reality of this death, as well as to the shelter workers who do bar people due to fights and safety issues. People were talking about the death throughout the spring of 2010. Below is a spontaneous conversation that took place in a soup kitchen visit on March 10, 2010:

Three men at the one table were discussing the man who died recently. They were all visibly upset in recounting the story. One of the three said that he was at the shelter on the night that the man died. The man who died had been cutting up vegetables for dinner and the shelter staff member told him to leave. According to the man who was there, the shelter staff did not call the police. The man (who died) and his girlfriend went outside and several hours later the man died in a doorway right next to the shelter. The police came after that. There was a discussion of whether the man had died of alcohol poisoning or of hypothermia.

We were able to observe two people as they were being barred from the shelter during our observations.

On February 19, 2010 I spoke with a 30-year-old man who had been released from prison in 2007 and told me that he cannot go back into public housing because of his felony. He knows that if he fills out court paper work it would take 10 years from the time he fills it out to apply to have the charge expunged from his record. He has been at the shelter on and off since he left prison. Recently his fiancée threw him out of the house for having a black-out due to his drinking. She still has his clothes at her house. He appeared to be quite discouraged.

The next Friday night, February 26, 2010, he tried to talk with us but was very drunk and did not make sense. The shelter manager asked him to leave.

On March 26 a man became very upset because another man had sat in “his seat” on the couch in the lounge. As they were verbally arguing, they took their fight to the dorm room behind the lounge, at which point one of the men was asked to leave by the shelter staff, and he did.

In addition to actually observing people being barred, the following are notes regarding two people who said that they had been barred from the shelter.

On March 10, 2010, at one of the noontime soup kitchens, we met a 40-year-old man who told us that he had been barred from the shelter because of drinking (even though it is a wet shelter). Instead of sleeping he said that he walked around all night. He said that he might go back into a rehabilitation program today. He said that he got caught up in drugs and alcohol when he worked as a fisherman. Although he gets SSDI, he still has no place to live. He told me that he wants to go on a new path in life.

Today another man at this soup kitchen told us that he is barred from the shelter because of a fight. He now lives with some other people in a neighboring town and has to come into this town daily for services such as the soup kitchen. Although we had tried to approach him before this, today was the first time he agreed to talk with me.

There is also evidence that in addition to barring people, the shelter workers will control who enters the shelter. The following excerpt illustrates this:

Friday evening, February 5, 2010, As I was entering the shelter at 6 p.m., a woman outside told me that it was full (thinking I was in need of a bed). I said, “full already!” I mentioned this to the shelter worker on duty who told me that in fact they weren’t full. I wondered how the shelter determines who can enter, especially in light of the death several weeks ago.

Being barred from the shelter, or being asked to leave after being admitted has important implications for the census, since being barred means that the person needs to find alternative (and more difficult to enumerate) places to stay, such as out-of-doors or doubled-up.

5.3 Living out-of-doors

Not all homeless individuals are in shelters: People who are not following the shelter rules, or who have not followed them in the past, can be barred from entering or staying in a shelter.

As we talked with people eating in soup kitchens we met a number of individuals who shared their stories with us about currently living out-of-doors. These people are difficult to enumerate, since they don't live in an encampment but in separate, and often very private places, hidden from view.

Below are excerpts from our field notes regarding some of the individuals we met who were living out-of-doors.

Saturday soup kitchen, February 6, 2010. It was a very cold afternoon and already almost dark outside as I entered the soup kitchen. After I made the announcement about wanting to talk with people about their living situation, a 59-year-old man immediately started to yell at me about his application for section 8 housing. He said that he has been living in an unheated garage for the past 3 ½ years and he fears that the house is about to be sold. He won't go to the shelter. He said that he was upset that the staff person who had barred the man who died outside of the shelter several weeks ago did not even get fired.

Today I also talked with a 40-year-old man who told me that he has cancer and cannot do manual labor anymore. He has been living in his car for the past six months and will not go to the shelter.

At one of the noontime soup kitchens on February 8, 2010, I talked with a 50-year-old man who just got out of prison and has been living with friends and in his van. He does not have his driver's license since getting out of prison. He told me that he has a good work history in carpentry and that he is not used to living like this. He told me that he is barred from the shelter, but I don't know why.

Today I also talked with a 61-year-old man who has been sleeping in his car for several years. He told me that he has bills to pay and is saving money by sleeping in his car. He is retired from a city job, and appears to know and be friendly with everyone at the soup kitchen.

On March 1, 2010, I was at one of the noontime soup kitchens when I saw rescue workers come to the soup kitchen and take a man I knew as one of those living on the street out. Apparently he had come to the soup kitchen, started to be served, had fallen asleep sitting up, and could not be woken up. His friends and the soup kitchen director became worried and called the rescue workers to take him to the hospital.

The next week, on March 8, 2010, the man who had to be carried out was back at the same soup kitchen, and today I had a chance to talk with him. He is a man in his 50s who told me he that he has been in and out of the shelter for 11 years. He complained that he needs oxygen but the shelter won't allow him to be there with oxygen because people smoke in the shelter, even though they are not supposed to, and the staff is worried about an explosion. Today he was with the two people I see him with often.

When I asked the man with the oxygen where he plans to sleep, he told me that he sleeps outside a lot and that he is usually around the main street with his two friends. Later in the day I talked with the social worker at the hospital (he had been there for several days and still had his wrist band on) and she told me that she didn't know why he would be barred from the shelter. She also said that he could always come back to the emergency room to sleep.

At 4:30 I went to the shelter and talked to the supervisor to try to understand this situation. The supervisor told me the man with the oxygen is the one who breaks the smoking rules and often smokes in the shelter bathroom. I asked him why someone who appears to be so disabled cannot get into public housing for the disabled. He said that he would have a hard time getting into public housing because they would fear he would burn the place down. He commented that this man "is living on borrowed time."

5.4 A single room occupancy (SRO) residence not listed in homeless resource lists

We found a shelter that is designed for mariners who are between ship jobs but is in fact used as a shelter by homeless people. It is not included in any of the lists of resources of the Coalition for the Homeless. The shelter consists of rooms on the top floor of a historic building (this service has existed since 1919) that is on a wharf. Each person has a room and there is no cooking in the room. The rest of the building has a café that is open to the public, and rest rooms and showers that are open from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. These services are designed for people who work on boats and need a respite during the daytime. There are also meeting rooms and a chapel. In many ways this service is like a single-room occupancy hotel (SRO) that is designed as short term housing. This shelter was closing for renovations at the end of February.

I interviewed the director of this service on January 28, 2010. He told me that there are ten rooms that provide temporary lodging, eight men and two women. There is no meal program there for the residents, although there is a café for the public. People pay \$135/week, or as they can. They can also barter for their rent by performing chores, which I observed one resident doing this morning. The following excerpts illustrate some of the situations of people staying at the mariner's shelter:

On February 4, 2010, I talked with a man in his 20s who had been at this shelter for three months after being released from prison. Before prison he had been renting a room in a friend's house in a neighboring town, and he still uses that as his mailing address. At times he also uses his mother's address, but she is on "housing" so can't legally have him there with her. He had taken the test to be a census worker, did well, but probably can't pass the background check due to his conviction.

On February 19, 2010, I talked with a 60-year-old man who has been living here since September 2009. He had a good work history but had had a lot of mental health problems and now can only work part time, which he does. When the mariner's shelter closes, he plans to live in the RV he just bought and put it on friend's property until the campgrounds open in April. Throughout all of the problems in his life that he told me about, he says that he tries to keep his dignity about him and tries "not to jump off a bridge."

I talked with a 54-year-old man who has been at the mariner's shelter for three months. Before this he had worked on a farm all of his life but he now has many health problems and is on social security disability. Before coming to this shelter he was sleeping on the sofa of his father and stepmother's small apartment in housing for seniors. He is on the housing authority waiting list for an apartment in a building for people with disabilities but doesn't know when the apartment will be ready. When the shelter closes he can go back to the sofa in his father's apartment.

5.5 Low cost motel rooms used between shelter stays

A number of people told us about sleeping in motels as an alternative to staying in a shelter, on the streets, or with a friend. Two of the people in this situation indicated that they would be unlikely to open the door in the motel to a census taker. In our conversation with the director of the Community Center of City One Housing Authority, she places homeless families in motels as an alternative to the family shelter, especially if she believes that the stay will be short and not too expensive for the city. The single people appear to be paying for the motel room themselves. The following are some of the excerpts from our field notes about people staying in motels:

At the mariner's shelter on February 4, 2010, I talked with a 67-year-old man who is a disabled veteran who now gets SSDI. Before his one month stay at the mariner's shelter, he was sleeping in his car. Before that he was staying at a local motel, and before that he was in an apartment. He has also lived in the transitional housing program for veterans. He said that he was unsure where he will go once this shelter closes at the end of the month.

At one of the noontime soup kitchens on February 22, 2010, I talked with 48-year-old man who told me that he receives Unemployment Insurance and who is trying to rent an apartment. He can't find anything and I told him how to contact the Housing Hotline. Right now he is staying with a friend, but is moving into a local motel tomorrow which will cost \$220 per week (it is off season). He has been laid off since November.

At another noontime soup kitchen on March 10, 2010, I talked with a man and woman who are staying at a local motel for the winter. They have a camper and will leave the motel by April 15 in order to camp in the woods. They told me that they get their mail at their PO Box and that they would not talk with anyone who came to their door.

5.6 Living doubled-up (staying with family and friends temporarily)

It was very common for people to have stayed with family and friends before and between episodes of living in a shelter. Since most of the people who hosted the people were renters themselves, with leases that specified who was to be in the apartment, there is a deterrent to including the “guest” on the census form for the household. Further, the “hosts” themselves were sometimes living in hard-won subsidized housing, such as Public Housing or Section 8 (wherein one pays one third of one’s income for rent). Most people would not want to jeopardize their housing by admitting to having a person staying with them.

The following excerpts from our field notes are examples of people whose housing is tenuous because they are not the leaseholders of the apartment and they do not have the funds to rent their own place.

The next woman I spoke with was a 28-year-old woman with three children. She has been at the family shelter for seven months. Before this she was living with a friend for two years, but then a neighbor “ratted” on her since her friend was receiving a Section 8 certificate and could have lost her housing for keeping a “guest” with her for two years. She is working on her GED and thinks that she’ll take the test soon, after which she hopes to go on to community college. By April I noticed that she had moved out to her own apartment.

On February 25, 2010 I talked with a middle-aged woman at the City Three soup kitchen who is having trouble finding a job. She told me that she has worked with programs for the developmentally disabled around the state, but said she shouldn’t be in that system. Her housing situation is very precarious. She is living with her boyfriend, but he said if she can’t contribute to the rent she will have to leave by the end of March. She has no idea where she will go or who she should talk with to get help finding housing.

Today I talked with a middle-aged man in the City Three soup kitchen who spent last night doubled-up with friends. He pointed out that there are no shelters available in the immediate area. He tried a shelter several towns away but they limit people from his town to three nights in a row. He arrived there one day at 3:55 p.m. and waited for two hours without getting a bed. He was treated so badly that he decided not to stay. He is not disabled so he does not have a bus pass. This makes it impossible to get to a shelter without paying \$2.25 each way. When he can’t double up with a friend he sleeps outside. He literally doesn’t know where he is going to sleep from each night to the next.

In sum, based on our results, we found that location of where a homeless individual was located on census day may be related to the accuracy of the counts on the overall homeless population.

- Counts on homeless population who were staying at homeless shelters should be accurate. High levels of cooperation among homeless individuals who were staying at the shelters and positive attitudes from administrators who have incentives to cooperate are important factors.

- The homeless population who were not staying in a shelter is likely to be undercounted (SRO and low-cost motels).
- Doubled-up homeless individuals do not believe they will be counted at the household where they were temporarily staying.

5.7 Fluidity of homeless populations

Results from our focus groups suggest that homeless individuals are constantly in flux and may not recall the census. We conducted the two post-census focus groups among homeless individuals in a shelter and a soup kitchen one and two weeks after the group quarter and three-day service-based enumerations. Participants were asked if they knew they had been included in the census. We did not anticipate how poorly some of the participants would recall where they had been staying during the last two weeks, or whether they had seen the census taker. Two participants in the focus group in the soup kitchen two weeks after the week of March 29 did not remember if they were staying in a shelter or with a friend on Monday, March 29. Other participants also appeared to be unsure as they moved between shelters and stayed doubled-up. We think that this is an indication of how rapidly conditions change for homeless or near homeless people.

I talked with a 24-year-old woman at the family shelter who is with her five-year-old child and her 55-year-old mother. They have been in the shelter for 4 ½ months. Before this they had been in a motel, before that with a friend, and before that in another motel. Their saga began when the mother's husband sold his house and mother and daughter and grandchild had nowhere to go. This was the first family so far to include three generations.

5.8 Interviews with homeless-serving providers

The director of *Housing Hotline* suggested that we look for homeless people in all of the soup kitchens in City One as well as the shelter. The *Housing Authority Community Center Director* said that she places homeless families in local low-cost motels in City One. This director felt that families who are staying at area hotels and motels that give low weekly rates during the winter would be undercounted. The director at times pays for families to stay at the hotels and motels as an alternative to the shelters. However, the people who work at the motel and hotels are not professionals and would not necessarily cooperate with the census. The *Community Police Officer* in City One told us about the parks, streets and cemetery where the out-of-doors homeless spend their time.

In City Three the *police officer* who is knowledgeable about people living out-of-doors told us that in addition to the soup kitchen, some homeless spend their days in the public library to get out of the cold. The *Director of Social Services* in City Three told us that homeless individuals in this city lived out of their cars or vans, and that many more were doubled-up with friends and family members. He felt these numbers were large because there was no readily available shelter in the immediate area. He felt there needs to be more of a priority placed on the housing needs of poor people in the town and that City Three is a neglected area of the state.

5.9 Post-enumeration focus groups

In the section on the post-enumeration focus groups that follow, we illustrate the key finding regarding the pervasiveness of doubling up between shelter episodes, and the key finding regarding the state of flux of some homeless individuals. We also gathered suggestions from the focus group participants on how to improve the census coverage regarding homeless populations.

We conducted two focus groups after the week of the homeless enumeration. The first group was on April 8, 2010, at the singles shelter in City One, one week after the homeless enumeration. The second focus group took place on April 16, at the soup kitchen in City Three, two weeks after the homeless enumeration.

The first focus group took place in the lounge of major shelter for single people in City One (Study Site 1) and had 10 participants. Demographically the participants included three black men, three white men, one Latino man, two white women, and one black woman. The participants ranged in age from late 20s to early 50s. Everyone appeared to be comfortable with each other and with the focus group facilitators Glasser and Hirsch. The five participants who had been staying at the shelter on the evening of March 29 reported that they thought the census takers were very nice and respectful. They also said that they stayed from early evening until 10 p.m., when everyone goes to sleep.

Five out of the 10 people in the focus group (all currently at that shelter) felt that they had *not* been counted by the census because they were not at the shelter that night (March 29) but were doubled-up (four people), or because they did not want to cooperate with the census (one man who was at the shelter). The doubled-up people felt that the households they were staying with would *not* include them because they all received subsidized housing and could get into trouble for having someone stay with them who was not on the lease. The local way of referring to subsidized housing (section 8 or public housing authority) is to say that someone lives “in housing.”

One of the participants, who came a little late to the group, said that he was at the shelter the night of the census, but he did not fill out the census form because he feels “insignificant” as a person. He told the group that he is bitter, nothing goes right for him, and he has been incarcerated (on and off) for 18 years. He laughingly said that he is mentally ill and violent. He also said that he feels there is a conspiracy to keep people in shelters so that the shelter workers could keep their jobs. He told about being exploited by people who pick him up outside of the shelter for jobs. He told of one man who said that he would get \$80 for one day’s work. At the end of the day he gave him \$20. The shelter resident then threw a tape measure at his head, and the man relented.

One of the women not in the shelter on March 29 said that she had been at the local soup kitchen on the day that census workers came to count people. But she said that she did not want to be counted. And she said that she did not have the patience to fill out the census form. She implied that if she had been made aware of the importance of the census count and the small number of

questions on the form, she may have been willing to answer the questions. She said she was not asked by census workers on her way out of the soup kitchen to answer those questions.

We found out from the shelter workers on duty the night of the census that if someone did not fill out the form for any reason, they (the workers) filled out the form for them, so there was 100 percent coverage. The people staying at the shelter, based on this focus group, were not aware of this.

These focus group participants came up with some helpful suggestions for counting homeless people including:

- Utilize more word of mouth from peers. If a small group of homeless persons understands the importance of the count and where it is going to take place, they will communicate with others and the count will be more effective. People are suspicious about why the government is asking them these questions. It is important to allay their fears and that is easier to do through peer networks.
- Have an 800 number available that people can call if they realize they were missed by the census.
- Send people to places where homeless people hang out during the day. They suggested a local park as an example. One participant mentioned that he thought census workers had been at this park.
- Continue to send census workers to soup kitchens to count people who may have been missed at other locations. They are very heavily utilized by homeless people in this state.

The second focus group took place on April 16, 2010 at the large soup kitchen and day respite in a city close to the capital city. There were 11 men and four women in this focus group. All were white and they ranged in age from approximately their 30s to their 70s. This soup kitchen serves breakfast and lunch five days a week all year. It is utilized by a variety of people: the doubled-up homeless; the out-of-doors homeless; those staying in shelters; those in recovery programs (if they can leave during the day); and those with their own housing, either SRO housing or supportive apartments. This soup kitchen is located on a bus route and appears to be utilized by people from many towns and cities. Many people appear to spend a large part of their mornings there, drinking coffee, talking, reading a book, or using one of the public computers that are set up.

When we asked the 15 participants whether they believed they had been counted, there was much confusion. The three people who had stayed in a shelter the night of March 29 thought that the form had been filled out for them and “they had no choice” about the census. Participants commented that once you are in a shelter “they give your name to the authorities, like the police” so the consensus was that it is no surprise that the lists were handed over to the census. The six participants who were staying with someone else thought that they would not be counted in that household because the doubled-up situation was very temporary. They said that if they are

staying in someone's apartment for one night, how could the person say that they were "living there?"

Two participants were living in a single room occupancy building in the capital city did not recall getting any forms. One man was in a substance abuse residential program and did not recall any census workers being there. One man who had just gotten out of detoxification, and did receive a form where he was staying, told us that he tore up the form because he said he did not want to be bothered.

Two participants did not seem to remember where they actually were on Monday, March 29, so they didn't know if they were in the shelter or with a friend. This appears to be an indication of how much this population moves around.

Many of the participants spend their day in the community room of a large day program in the capital city, in addition to eating at the soup kitchen. These people did not recall seeing census workers in the community during the week of March 29.

These focus group participants came up with suggestions for counting homeless people including:

- Get an updated list of shelters that are open the day of the census so the census takers know where people are.
- Maybe the census should be done before the winter shelters (also called "no freeze shelters") close. Many close at the beginning of April, and may be cleared out by March 29.
- Give out incentives (money or grocery cards) for people who answer the census, especially those who have someone else staying with them (the doubled-up).
- Have the census takers show up at 7 a.m. on a Saturday morning at the plaza at the public bus terminal when the out-of-doors homeless come to get coffee. Avoid 2-5 p.m. at the plaza because homeless people do not go there then because of the police presence.
- Be sure to have census takers at: The Plaza (very large indoor and outdoor bus terminal in the capital city), train station, bus terminal for out of state buses, libraries, emergency rooms of hospitals, clothing banks (also called collaborative) throughout the state, new tent city in city outside of capital city, and the substance abuse treatment day center in the capital city.

5.10 Observations of soup kitchen enumerations

The observation of the soup kitchen enumeration of March 29 took place in a weekly soup kitchen that serves approximately 75 people each Monday. The soup kitchen includes single men and women (approximately 75 percent of the patrons are male) who are both English and Spanish speakers.

As lunch was being served, the director of the soup kitchen spoke about the fact that there were census forms at the tables. He said that the census count was very important for the local community and asked that people fill out the forms. He turned the microphone over to the person directing the census count. He talked about the importance of counting everyone. He noted that there were census forms on every table and asked everyone to fill one out. He said that he knew that some people would have already filled out forms at their homes, but said that it was okay to fill out another form, since they would be cross-checked. He told people that they could drop the completed forms off as they exited the church basement.

There were four census employees at the front of the hall and two sitting at a side bench. Although there were a number of Spanish-speaking people who were patrons at this soup kitchen, no one made any announcements or gave any instructions in Spanish. All the forms that could be seen were in English.

A researcher sat at a table of six people. One person said that she had already filled out a form at home and so she did not intend to fill out another form. Several other people agreed with this and did not touch the forms. One couple filled out a form but they were not sure what to do with the completed form and wound up giving their forms to one of the census workers at the side of the hall.

There were a number of questions being asked about the forms. Mostly, however, the census workers simply stayed at their positions, not offering any help in filling out the forms. On only one occasion did the census workers move to answer a question. Once people exited, however, four more census workers asked them at the door whether they had filled out a form. If you said no, they asked you if you would mind answering a few questions. One of the workers said clearly that it would help the soup kitchen get funding if people filled out the forms. For the brief time while they were being observed, they were effective in getting people to cooperate and answer the census questions. They were very polite and friendly and most people appeared to be happy to speak with them. The census workers did not appear to be speaking Spanish with any of the patrons.

The second soup kitchen enumeration observation took place March 31, 2010 at a soup kitchen in a city near the capital city, which was one of the field sites of this ethnography.

There were 15 people sitting at the tables waiting for lunch to begin. Six census workers were also there, set up at two large tables off to the side of the church hall. The person directing the census count made an announcement about the importance of the census and said that they would be asking people to fill out the census form even if they had filled one out in another location. She then asked people as they came in to speak with one of the census workers behind the table. If the person agreed, the census worker assured each person that their answers were confidential. They also passed out a half-page form entitled "Your Answers Are Confidential" that explains the confidentiality rules. The form had the same information in Spanish on the reverse of the form. They then asked if the individual would like to fill out the form himself or herself or if they needed any help.

By the time lunch began there were 35 patrons in the hall, 30 white and 5 black. Eight were women. Many people willingly sat down at the census table but some did not. The census workers talked with approximately 20 people. Several patrons actually turned around and walked out when approached by the census worker. They never came back in. Others just said that they were all set and did not wish to participate. There were at least three or four people who were never approached and did not participate. There were no people at the exit to ask if you had filled out the form.

Some people engaged in lengthy discussions about why they did not wish to fill out a form. One individual, a middle-aged man, said that the census “stunk.” He suggested that every time a census had been done in a country in any part of the world genocide soon followed. He also asked why the census found it necessary to take GPS images of every address. He seemed to mean that actual photos were taken of every address, not simply GPS coordinates. He said the census worker did not have to answer that question since he, the patron, already knew the answer. This person never did agree to fill out a form. The census workers were persistent in trying to get cooperation without pushing it too far. Once it became clear that someone was not going to cooperate, they turned to another person.

There were several native Portuguese-speaking individuals. However there was no evidence that any of the census workers spoke Portuguese or Spanish and no announcements were made in any language other than English.

Conducting the census at soup kitchens is a major method of reaching the out-of-doors and doubled-up homeless who may not be counted any other place. Therefore we were surprised in our direct observation of the census at two soup kitchens that the two census teams had different strategies with different results.

5.11 Post-census enumeration information from homeless-service providers

In addition to observing the census workers in the two soup kitchens, we also called the two shelters, the group home for mentally ill, the veteran’s transitional program and the large daytime respite that serves people from the entire state after the census dates. We talked with those homeless service providers who worked with the out-of-doors homeless in order to learn how the census workers had found and enumerated out-of-doors homeless.

We found out that the census workers came to the singles shelter on March 29, 2010 and counted 19 men and three women in the shelter and four men and one woman in the transitional. The shelter worker told us that if a person did not want to cooperate with the census takers, the workers filled out the form for them. In this shelter there was at least one person who told us in a focus group that he refused to fill out the form. There was also one man who was severely depressed and goes to sleep as soon as he can get into the shelter, even though the lights are on and there is a lot of activity and noise. We believe that in both cases these people were included in the census. We feel confident that the singles shelter count was complete. The numbers of people counted at the singles shelter coincided with our observations of the shelter for singles in City One.

In the family shelter, the shelter worker with whom we talked told us that all nine families cooperated with the census on March 29, 2010. The shelter was full at this time. We had also counted nine families at the family shelter.

In the group home for mentally ill we learned from the staff director there that the census workers came in early April (she was not sure of the date) and had the forms filled out by 10 or the 12 people living there at the time. Unlike the shelters, there is a great deal of stability in this group home. The people are mentally ill and many are also physically disabled and told us that they feel lucky to have a safe place to live. The workers of this group home had everyone fill out a release-of-information form in order to talk with us as well as to talk with the census workers. We counted 12 people living at the group home at the time of our visit.

We called a veteran's transitional program in City Three and were told by the director that all 22 men who were residents at the time were counted. The census takers came three times in order to reach everyone.

In City Three homeless individuals occasionally stay at a daytime respite in the capital city that is open all night to accommodate homeless individuals who have not taken refuge in a shelter for the night. In a conversation at this respite we were told that the census takers visited in the daytime and enumerated those homeless people who entered the shelter in late afternoon. Those clients who entered later in the evening were counted by staff using Be Counted forms provided by the census workers.

Were the out-of-doors counted? According to Community Police Officer, the director of the Housing Hotline, and the worker at a day center for homeless people leaving prison in City One, no census worker had come to consult with them about where the census workers might find homeless people living out-of-doors. We did not hear of a census worker looking for the out-of-doors homeless, although they may have come to City One without us or any of the homeless server providers knowing about it.

5.12 Cooperation with census workers

A key finding from all of our ethnographic work was the high level of cooperation between the administrators of the group quarters and the U.S. census workers.

In these days of competitive funding, we observed that most service providers are eager to count the *maximum* number of people residing with them. Compared with past research conducted by Glasser and Hirsch, homeless service providers would have been skeptical of the census and its ability to enumerate homeless populations. However, since that time homeless service providers participate in the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Point-in-Time (PIT) count in January and in keeping data for the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). Today, documenting the maximum number of group quarter residents during the census are important for continuing funding for housing and services for the homeless. Cooperating with census takers can benefit the agency for many types of services and funding from local, state, federal and private sources of funding. When the census takers came to the group quarters, if someone was

not available to fill out their own form (e.g., they were sleeping) the administrator did it for them.

The high level of cooperation between the homeless service providers and the census contrasts to the situation Glasser observed 20 years ago (Glasser and Salo 1991), when service providers were not accustomed to cooperating with outside agencies as they now do with HUD in the PIT count. Additionally, some of the homeless service providers twenty years ago were political activists who openly doubted that any accurate homeless count could be obtained.

5.13 Undercount due to the Individual Census Report's (ICR) design

In our work we noticed that the Individual Census Report (ICR) utilized by the GQ count under-reports the number of individuals in each family when it is used in a family shelter. The ICR appears to have been designed for single individuals. The form has no place for household members' names. This means that families in homeless shelters are only counted as the name of the head of the household. In one family shelter we talked to a total of 8 women who had 13 children with them. In addition, two children lived with family part time, and one family included a second adult in the family (the woman's mother). The current ICR form would have only captured the existence of the eight women: only 8 of the 22 people living in the family shelter.

Family homelessness is a serious issue. The National Coalition for the Homeless reports that 23 percent of all homeless people were members of families with children. Homelessness disrupts the family in terms of health, mental health, children's education and development, and the separation of family members (National Coalition for the Homeless 2009).

Another issue in regard to family shelters is that it is the policy of many family shelters to exclude fathers and male children over 12. Thus the families have to split up, with male children staying at times with family, friends or in foster care. The family shelter we studied in this ethnography had the same father and male child exclusion.

6 Themes of Work, Mental Illness and Substance Abuse

In our conversations with homeless individuals throughout this study, three themes emerged as important in the lives of the people with whom we spoke.

6.1 Work

As we spent time among homeless populations, we heard many conversations about work and we observed many instances of disability due to mental illness and substance abuse. When we met people at the shelters and in soup kitchens, we were often asked if we knew of jobs. With even some money, people feel that they can find housing, even if it is a room in someone's house. The soup kitchen in City Three has two computers that people can use all morning between the soup kitchen breakfast and lunch. The day center for homeless people returning to the community from prison also has computers to assist people with their job search. The family shelter promotes the job training programs for certified nursing assistants that are run

by the local community college and the local community action agency. The men and women of the singles homeless shelter asked us if we knew of jobs. We met carpenters, house painters, and construction workers who saw their homelessness as temporary and as being solved once they got back to work.

In an era of almost no financial support for the intermittently employed, people are forced to live with family and friends, in shelters, and for some, on the streets. For the homeless population who can no longer work due to disability (physical or mental) or old age, the best that workers at shelters can do is help people apply for social security (SSI or SSDI, depending on the individual's work history). This will give them some of the funds for housing, although most will have to apply for a rent subsidy or public housing in order to afford their own place.

6.2 Mental illness

Another theme that emerged from this study was that of mental illness. The singles shelter has a locked medication room and many of the people were doled out their psychiatric medications in the evening.

We encountered people throughout the study who appeared to be suffering from mental illness. The following are several examples from our field notes:

In the soup kitchen of City Three one patron at my table was speaking to himself constantly. He talked about being worried about someone stealing his bread which he had just picked up at the food pantry in the same building. He discussed throwing a match into the middle of a table with a number of men sitting at it and he wondered what effect that would have. Other people at the table did not say much to him. A woman at the table did say at the end of lunch that he looked like her son and said good-bye to him warmly.

Another morning in the soup kitchen of City Three, as I was talking with a woman, another patron came to the table. After greeting the person with whom I was talking he said that I must be selling insurance, that I shouldn't be selling insurance in a church. He began screaming obscenities and was quickly moved away from the table by one of the staff members. The soup kitchen director then went to talk with the patron to explain that this sort of behavior was not acceptable. There were no further outbursts. Three different patrons apologized to me and said they were sorry that I had to deal with this client.

In the City One singles shelter, a man who appeared to be in his forties tried to talk with me. I was eager to meet him as I had often seen him on the main street walking up and down. However, he was mumbling something and I could not understand him. I tried talking with him several times after that at two soup kitchens but still could not understand what he was saying to me.

6.3 Substance abuse

We talked with many homeless people who currently or in the past have had severe substance abuse issues. Sometimes this has led to their spending time in prison, but it often has meant that

they have lost their job and or families and have become homeless. Here are a few examples from our field notes:

In the singles shelter, I spoke with a 45-year-old man who told me that he was African American, Asian and American Indian (he did not know which tribe). He has been at the shelter on and off for 10 years. He had been drinking today and now didn't feel well (he looked as if he was nauseated) but he was still quite communicative. I often see him on the main street of the town walking up and down. He told me that he has high blood pressure and shouldn't be drinking.

In the singles shelter I met a 22-year-old man who told me that he has been in the shelter for four months. He was on the methadone maintenance program but recently told them that he wanted to get off methadone and is now being detoxified. He told me he was brought up by his grandfather, who then became sick and he took care of him. He got into carpentry early and became a foreman for a contractor but it was all very stressful and he eventually turned to heroin.

Both untreated mental illness and substance abuse complicate the lives of homeless individuals. They may be barred from a shelter for being out of control or on the verge of violence. They may also be asked to leave a doubled-up situation abruptly.

The constant state of crisis of so many of the people we followed here made it hard for them to even recall if they had been counted in the census or not only a week later. To ask the person "Do you live or stay in this facility MOST OF THE TIME?" (Question #6 of the Individual Census Report) or "What is the full address of the place you were living on April 1, 2020?" (Question # 1 of the Be Counted form) may be too difficult to answer for a portion of the homeless population. The concept "most of the time" may be too conceptual for people worrying about where to stay for the night. We have seen also that asking a person about a specific date (e.g., April 1) may be too difficult for people whose days run into each other.

We recommend further research on how and under what circumstances homeless people with considerable mental illness and substance abuse, who are often in a state of flux, be asked questions that they understand and can answer accurately.

7 Is a Census Coverage Measurement (CCM) Study Feasible?

The homeless individuals and families we observed were often in flux, moving between shelters, the street, and staying with family and friends temporarily. This makes a follow-up study such as a CCM study very difficult, as it is likely that the individual or family are no longer staying at the group quarter or household very long after the census.

We think that a CCM study would be impossible at homeless shelters for singles unless it occurred within days of the census enumeration. In family shelters, CCM might be able to be conducted within weeks of the census, given the typical length of stay of homeless families in contrast to homeless single individuals.

Could a CCM study be conducted using administrative records? There are administrative records kept by shelters and transitional programs for the homeless. Each HUD-funded homeless housing residence collects personal identifying information through Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). The information, however, is confidential and each homeless individual has to sign a consent form for the information to be obtained by the agency, but it still cannot be shared with outside groups, including HUD. There are also shelters and permanent housing not covered by the HMIS. The group homes and day respites of mental health agencies that serve the homeless community require individual signed release of information forms for any sharing of information.

There tend to be no administrative records for soup kitchens (generally a no-questions-asked service) or for homeless living in out-of-door locations.

8 Summary of Recommendations

The preparation leading up to the night and day of the census is the key to its success. We observed good preparation of the census takers with the group quarters administrators. However, we were not able to see comparable evidence of the census takers working with those who know the out-of-doors populations. We observed the use of staying with family and friends as a major strategy of homeless populations before and between shelter stays, and counting this doubled-up population remains difficult. We also did not observe a consistent strategy of enumeration at the two direct observations of the census takers at the soup kitchens.

Based on our findings we suggest:

- Ongoing distribution and *explanation* of the Be Counted forms in the soup kitchens, bus terminals, and all of the major places that homeless people congregate.
- Publicize a 800 number within the homeless community, for people to call if they realize that they were not counted.
- The Census Bureau and the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) should work together on the development of homeless enumeration methodology; both agencies have considerable knowledge and research regarding homeless enumeration.
- Modify the Individual Census Report (ICR) form so that it can include all members of the group quarters household, which is especially relevant to family shelters.
- Conduct further research regarding effective strategies to count the homeless after the three-day service-based enumeration if person was missed in the shelter count or in the targeted non-sheltered outdoor location count or was not included in household census because they were doubled-up.
- Due to the significant extent of mental illness and substance abuse among some of the homeless who are often in a state of flux in terms of their sleeping arrangements, we

recommend further research on how and under what circumstances homeless people can be asked questions that they understand and can answer accurately.

- Recruit more homeless or formerly homeless to work on the census so that the peer-to-peer network, which is so important in homeless populations, may be utilized.
- Based on Census Day soup kitchen observations, there is a need to develop consistent and effective strategies at soup kitchens for enumeration of non-sheltered homeless, including multiple visits at same soup kitchens. These include:
 - Visit each major soup kitchen more than once to reach the maximum number.
 - Have the census workers be available at the tables in order to answer questions as people are filling out the forms at the tables.
 - If the soup kitchen has several doors leading out, have at least one census taker stationed at all of the exits.
 - Do not confront people as they enter the soup kitchen. This results in a large number of refusals to cooperate, and may cause people to leave without eating.
 - Leave the census forms at each place setting at a table and make an announcement about the importance of the census. The first person to speak should be a staff member of the soup kitchen, not a census worker.
 - Employ census takers who can speak the major native languages for the local community.

9 Areas for Further Research

There is a long history of anthropological work at the Census Bureau that has been employed in households and in communities in order to uncover “hidden” populations who may not be counted in the decennial census (see Schwede 2010 for a recent review and Glasser 1999 for a previous review). There is also a trove of previous research at the Census Bureau on the complexities of household composition and who within a household may or may not be covered by the decennial count (e.g., Chan and Moore 2007, Martin 2007, Schwede and Ellis 1994).

Based on the findings of this report, we suggest further studies that would continue the search for the types of census coverage that would include homeless populations in the decennial counts.

First, there is a great need for ongoing research on how to include everyone who stays in a household on April 1, including those staying in households on a very temporary basis. The homeless population in group quarters and out-of-doors overlaps with the doubled-up homeless population, who are very difficult to count. We were told by homeless people that they would not be counted in households of people with whom they were staying on a temporary basis.

We know from our homeless key informants that a major portion of their time between shelter stays and living out-of-doors occurs as they stay very temporarily with family and friends who open their doors to them. This population, sometimes referred to as the doubled-up homeless, are very often, we think, not included in the host household's census form. There are many reasons for this, including the households' own definitions of who is a part of their household, and the rules of the landlords, public housing and subsidized housing programs about having people not on the lease living with the household.

In order to extend the research that has been done on the doubled-up populations by the Census Bureau, we propose exploring the extent of the doubled-up phenomena in two cities where we are known and which have been the sites of the research presented here. Both cities have public housing, subsidized housing, and rental housing. We know from our current research that there is extensive doubling up among the homeless populations there.

We could interview a purposive sample of households that we know offer housing to the homeless. We think that with modest financial incentives, we could interview heads of households as well as homeless individuals who stay with friends and family. In a current evaluation we are conducting, we have had good success with grocery gift cards as incentives.

We believe that we would know a lot more about the doubled-up phenomena and how it impacts on the likelihood of the homeless doubled-up being included on the household census form.

Second, more research regarding better methods to distribute and utilize the Be Counted forms is needed.

Our findings suggest that homeless individuals who believed that they had not been counted in shelters, soup kitchens, nor in any households did not know about the Be Counted form or have easy access to one. During this study, we did see the Be Counted forms at one service site (on the wall) but we did not observe any outreach efforts. Although there has been recent cognitive testing of the Be Counted form to make the questions more clear and easy to answer (Childs, Gerber and Norris 2009), there is a lack of research on the most effective methods to distribute and utilize the forms. If used properly, the Be Counted form could be an excellent vehicle for reaching the out-of-doors homeless, those who are between shelter stays (for example, being barred for the night) and the doubled-up homeless. With a more pro-active distribution and return system, the Be Counted form could include more of the homeless populations in the decennial counts.

We propose conducting a pilot test of effective ways to distribute the Be Counted form to those homeless not included in the group quarters count, the service-based count, and the household count.

We have seen that the yearly HUD Point in Time counts (done every January) utilize the vast network of homeless service providers to count homeless individuals. We propose testing the utilization of this same network to reach homeless individuals and help them fill out the Be Counted form in a pilot test. If a pilot tested Be Counted distribution protocol could be developed, we think it could be implemented in the next decennial count.

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11 Appendix 1: Observation of ACS by Irene Glasser, March 18, 2010

Background

I observed a field representative (FR) as she conducted the ACS at a group quarter in a city in a northeastern state. The GQ was a transitional housing program, which houses single men and women who have come directly from homelessness, such as from the streets or a shelter.

The FR took a random sample (not stratified by gender) by bed numbers of 10 individuals. She was able to interview 5 of the people (3 women and 2 men). The other 5 individuals were not found in the building (people can come and go in this program). The FR left 5 ACS forms and letters of introduction with the program director, for her to distribute to the people and get back to the FR.

Of the 5 people interviewed, one was hard of hearing and another person had obviously been drinking (from how he smelled) although he appeared to be able to answer the questions.

The FR told me that if there had been non English speakers at the GQ (CT has many Spanish speakers for example) she would have found someone at the GQ to help, or would have followed up by having a Spanish speaker FR do the interview at a later time.

Assessment of Operations Observed

The FR was very professional and business like. She has an air of authority and confidence about her. I believe that she garners a lot of cooperation from the people she interviews.

All of the interviews were done in a private room. The director of the program brought in each person that had been chosen in the sample.

The people were identified only by their bed number, which was the basis of the random sample. After that, the FR called all of the men Bob Doe and all of the women Jane Doe (so she could enter that in the form in the computer). Even though the FR was not going enter a real name, I thought personally that referring to the person by their real first name would be more respectful.

For the most part, the FR looked directly at the person when she was asking the questions and then entered the data into the computer.

At the beginning of the interview, the FR assured each person that if there were questions they would prefer not to answer, they could decline to answer. This was very helpful I thought. People in fact answered all of the questions.

I thought that the FR made sure that she spoke loudly enough for the woman who was hard of hearing, without shouting at her.

The FR was careful to ask all of the questions. For example, when she asked people their race, one laughed and said a little indignantly that he was obviously white. The FR explained that she had to ask all of the questions.

When a person answered “sometimes” to a question that was asking for a yes or a no, the FR followed up and asked, “is that a yes or a no.” The person was able to then specify yes or no.

One person said she had been married “in the 1980s” and the FR asked the question several times until the person being interviewed settled on 1985. I thought that the woman did not really know the date of her marriage. The woman told us that she has a lot of problems.

At the end of each interview the FR thanked the person for their time and gave them a letter that explained more about the ACS.

Problems Discovered

I observed several things that I would not necessarily call problems, but I did have questions about them.

The time frames imbedded in the questions varied, from last week, last month, last year, within the last five years, etc. I wasn’t always sure that the person was responding to the correct time frame. Perhaps verbally emphasizing the time frame (e.g., did you earn any money *last week*?) would help.

The people interviewed were asked about their grandchildren, but not their children. All were over 45 years old. But even at 45 a person could have children under 18.

Two of the people had worked in nursing homes. When asked “what was your main job” they answered in terms of taking care of *patients* (for example, a nursing assistant said she took care of *patients*). The FR said can we call them *clients* instead? I didn’t understand that since people in nursing homes are often patients or residents.

One man had worked at a temporary labor agency (note, this is very common in the homeless community). The FR then asked where he had actually been placed for the day, and I believe, although I’m not sure, that she entered the name of the company itself as where he had worked. But people working for a temporary labor agency are employees of the temporary agency, and are not working for the place they end up working for the day.

Recommendations

There was one point at which some calculations were needed (how much money the person had made in a period of time when they knew their weekly wage). The FR did the math by hand, and I thought that it would be better to have a calculator handy.

I think that the ACS must have pre-tested how to ask the various time frames in the questions (last week, last month, within the last year, etc) but this appears to me to be the most confusing

part of the interview. Perhaps just verbally emphasizing the time frame would help the individual focus on it.

The people I observed today answering the ACS questions had been homeless and told us that they had many problems. One man had been drinking, another told us he was very depressed, and a woman told us that she has had a lot problems. The changing time frames it seemed to me were difficult. Even saying something such as: “now I’m going to ask you about last week: last week, how much money did you earn?” could be helpful.

12 Appendix 2: Definitions of Doubled-up

Definitions related to “doubled-up” from the U.S. Census Bureau, Housing and Household Economic Statistics Division, Fertility & Family Statistics Branch, Current Population Survey (CPS) - Definitions and Explanations (<http://www.census.gov/population/www/cps/cpsdef.html>)

Subfamily

A subfamily is a married couple with or without children, or a single parent with one or more own never-married children under 18 years old. A subfamily does not maintain their own household, but lives in the home of someone else.

Related subfamily. A related subfamily is a married couple with or without children, or one parent with one or more own never married children under 18 years old, living in a household and related to, but not including, the person or couple who maintains the household. One example of a related subfamily is a young married couple sharing the home of the husband’s or wife’s parents. The number of related subfamilies is not included in the count of families.

Unrelated subfamily. An unrelated subfamily (formerly called a secondary family) is a married couple with or without children, or a single parent with one or more own never-married children under 18 years old living in a household. Unrelated subfamily members are not related to the householder. An unrelated subfamily may include people such as guests, partners, roommates, or resident employees and their spouses and/or children. The number of unrelated subfamily members is included in the total number of household members, but is not included in the count of family members.

Beginning in 1989, any person(s) who is not related to the householder and who is not the husband, wife, parent, or child in an unrelated subfamily is counted as an unrelated individual.

Unrelated individuals

Unrelated individuals are people of any age who are not members of families or subfamilies.

13 Appendix 3: Field Work Chart

The following chart summarizes at a glance the field sites, the number of visits, and the significance of the field site to the ethnography.

Field Site	Number of Visits*	Significance to ethnography
Single Men and Single Women's Shelter, provides 20-beds for men, and six beds for women, City One	Six evenings	Demographic information on 14 people obtained** This was an important site in that we observed the fluidity of homeless people moving from shelter to street to doubled-up to back to the shelter. We were able to observe two people as they were being barred from the shelter for the night. We also had the opportunity to meet the same people in soup kitchens and on the streets, as they spent most of their day outside of the shelter setting. The shelter has a lounge for men and one for women, as well as separate dorm rooms. There are no prepared meals at the shelter, so people have to leave to get meals. People can bring in food themselves.
Family Shelter, provides 19 beds for households with children and 9 beds for households without children, City Two	Three afternoons, evenings	Demographic information on 9 families obtained. This family shelter houses women and their children and allows the household to stay until they are able to secure housing. Unlike the shelter for single people, this shelter does not ask people to leave suddenly. There appears to be a high level of cooperation with the US Census.
Specialized residence (SRO) designed for boat crew who are between jobs but is utilized by homeless individuals, City One	Four mornings	Demographic information on 4 people obtained Although not technically listed as a shelter, this service provides inexpensive single room occupancy (SRO) housing for ten single people, who stay until they can move on. There are no cooking facilities in the individual room. People come and go as they wish. The people here told us that they would not be included in any

Field Site	Number of Visits*	Significance to ethnography
		other household. At least one person had been sleeping in his car before he found a room here.
Soup kitchen serves breakfast and lunch, Monday through Friday; food pantry and clothing closet; major source of help and respite from the cold; serves approximately 50 people daily, City Three	Six mornings	Demographic information on 6 people obtained This soup kitchen provides a respite from the cold and two meals each weekday to a predominance of men. The doubled-up need to contribute money to the host household in order to stay; smaller apartments cannot accommodate the family and friends doubled-up; Portuguese is the language other than English heard here. Some of the people are living in shelters in the capital city and come here for lunch.
Soup kitchen that serves a hot meal every Monday at 11:30 am, City One	Five noontimes	Demographic information on 10 people obtained This soup kitchen serves about 75 individuals each week. They are located near the shelters, the bus, and downtown. People can sit at this large soup kitchen for over an hour, which is important to those people who come who are sleeping in their cars or in other out-of-doors locations. The soup kitchen is used by most of the shelter residents as well. Although some people appear to be inebriated, no one appears to be barred as long as they are not violent. One day during the observation one man was carried out by the rescue squad because he was sitting up but non responsive (people worried that he had expired). He was taken to the hospital for various respiratory problems and was back in the soup kitchen the next week. The community police officer, the food stamp outreach worker and the housing hotline worker are often at the soup kitchen to reach out to people.
Soup Kitchen that serves a hot meal every Saturday at 4:30 pm,	Once	Demographic information on 2 people obtained

Field Site	Number of Visits*	Significance to ethnography
City One		This is the only meal program on Saturdays in City One, and serves the sheltered, out-of-doors and doubled-up homeless. We met two people here who were living out-of-doors in an unheated garage and in a car. The staff at this soup kitchen appears to have the closest relationships with the people compared to the other soup kitchens of City One.
Soup kitchen that serves hot noontime meal two Wednesdays a month, City One	Two times	Demographic information on 1 person obtained This soup kitchen also serves the sheltered, out-of-doors and doubled-up homeless. We also met people who were living in the local motels who have low prices in the winter and charge by the week.
Soup kitchen that serves daily breakfast, Monday through Friday, City One	Once	Many of the people who stay at the singles shelter of City One each here at 8:30 daily. The soup kitchen is housed in a community center that includes other services (such as a food pantry) but it was not clear how many of the homeless utilize the other services.
Day center for homeless people returning from prison, City One	Three times	This is a service that is open Monday through Friday from 9 am to 1 pm. It is intended to be a day respite for people leaving prison who have no place to go. It does not offer food. It appears that people enter in order to receive help with things such as social security applications and linking with substance abuse treatment.
Day center for people with chronic mental illness, City Two	Once	Demographic information on 8 people obtained This day center is a day respite and noontime meal for people with mental illness who may be on the streets during the day. It is listed in the street sheet of the major homeless advocacy group as a 'drop in center.' However, two interviews with the directors revealed that it is a service for people who are already clients of the mental

Field Site	Number of Visits*	Significance to ethnography
		health system. All of the PIIs came from people living at the group home for mentally ill described below.
Group home for people with chronic mental illness, City Two	Once	Demographic information on 2 people obtained This is the only real congregate living facility for mentally ill in the county. The rest of the housing designed for the mentally ill are non-supervised scattered site apartments, which means that each person would have received their April 1 household census in their own mailbox.
Observation, ACS, Transitional program	Once	The people at this transitional housing program appeared to have problems with mental illness, and some with substance abuse. There appeared to be some confusion about the changing time frames of the questions asked (last year, last month, ever) as well as the questions about work. Some of the people had worked for a day labor agency, yet the FR wanted them to answer some of the questions as related to the actual company in which they were placed.
Observation of soup kitchen enumeration, City One	Once	After observing the enumeration at this soup kitchen we suggest: have the census workers be available at the tables in order answer questions as people were filling out the forms at the tables; have at least one Spanish speaking census taker, who could make a very brief announcement in Spanish, just to signal that anyone with questions who prefers to speak Spanish can do so; the census takers could have found out before hand as they were setting up the visit with the soup kitchen director that there are indeed Spanish speakers at this soup kitchen; this soup kitchen in fact has two possible doors out. Although the census takers were stationed at the main

Field Site	Number of Visits*	Significance to ethnography
		entrance, it is possible to leave at the opposite door and the census takers would have missed these people; it appeared appropriate to ask everyone to fill out the forms, even though some people had already received the forms in the mail and others had been counted the night before in the shelter.
Observation of soup kitchen enumeration, City Three	Once	After observing the enumeration at this soup kitchen we suggest: do not confront people as they enter the soup kitchen. This results in a large number of refusals to cooperate, and may even cause people to leave without eating; have the Census leave the forms at each place setting at a table and make an announcement about the importance of the Census; the first person to speak (and introduce the census) should be a staff member of the soup kitchen, not a Census worker; position workers at the exit to make sure that each person is asked to fill out a form; have people available who can speak the other major native languages for the local community. In this case, that would've meant having a Portuguese speaker.
Focus group, shelter, City One	Once, 4/8/2010	Five out of the 10 people in the focus group (all currently at that shelter) felt that they had not been counted by the census because they were not at the shelter that night (March 29) but were doubled-up (four people), or because they did not want to cooperate with the census (one man who was at the shelter). The doubled-up people felt that the households they were staying with would not include them because they all received subsidized housing and could get into trouble for having someone stay with them who was not on the lease. This focus group came up with some helpful suggestions for counting homeless people.

Field Site	Number of Visits*	Significance to ethnography
Focus group, soup kitchen, City Three	Once 4/16/2010	15 people were in this focus group. When we asked who believed they had been counted, there was much confusion. If they had stayed in a shelter on March 29 (approximately 3), they felt as though the form had been filled out for them and “they had no choice” about the census. Those who were staying with someone else, doubled-up (approximately 6) thought that they would not be counted in that household, because this was very temporary. Those who were in the community room of a large day program in the capital city did not recall seeing any census workers the week of March 29. Those living in a single room occupancy building in the capital city did not recall getting any forms. Another person was in a substance abuse residential program and did not recall any census workers being there. One man had just gotten out of detoxification, and did receive a form where he was staying. He tore up the form because he said he did not want to be bothered. Aside from the individual experiences, this group did have suggestions for improving the homeless enumeration.
Meetings with Housing Hotline Director. Housing Hotline is a community service that assists individuals in finding housing and knows many of the homeless living out-of-doors, City One	Three times	Suggested that we look for homeless people in all of the soup kitchens in City One as well as the shelter. She is well known in the community because she goes to the soup kitchens to meet people in need of housing.
Interview, Housing Authority Community Center Director, visited once and learned that she places homeless families in local low cost motels, City One	Once	This director felt that an uncounted group will be the families who are staying at area hotels and motels that give low weekly rates during the winter. The director at times pays for families to stay at the hotels and motels. However, she said that the people who work at these places are not

Field Site	Number of Visits*	Significance to ethnography
		professionals and would not necessarily cooperate with the census.
Meetings with Community Police Officer, knowledgeable of people living out-of-doors, City One	Three times	This police officer is well aware of the people who live out-of-doors, as well as the people who stay at the shelter and in low income housing. He has an office next to the shelter. People see him as a community resource. He arranges for transports for people on the street in need of emergency medical care.
Meeting with police officer, knowledgeable about people living out-of-doors, City Three	Once	Police officer suggested that the Director of the Social Services agency of City Three is knowledgeable about the homeless. Also suggested that some homeless spend their days in the public library to get out of the cold.
Meeting with Director of Social Service, City Three	Once	Director said that he thought there were a number of residents who were homeless. They live out of their cars or vans, and that many more are doubled-up with friends and family members. He feels these numbers are large because there is no readily available shelter in the immediate area. He feels there needs to be more of a priority placed on the housing needs of poor people in the town and that this is a neglected area of the state.

*Visits refers to extended amounts of time conducting observations and brief discussions with homeless people about their situations; it does not include the numerous discussions with the ‘gate keepers’ who are the staff in charge of each field site and whose permission and on-going good will we needed in order to conduct our ethnographic observations.

**Note that we obtained demographic information on more individuals than we submitted for the alternate enumeration, since some of the people for whom we obtained demographic information had left the shelter by the time of the census enumeration. At times we were only able to obtain some of the demographic information due to the reluctance of the individual to tell us all of the personal information. Also, we note where we *first* met the person. For example, we met some individuals at the soup kitchens although they were in fact staying at the shelters. In the above chart we note that their demographic information was gathered at the soup kitchen.