In this poster we focus on four studies that took a closer look at this critical issue. Even minor variations in methods can yield different person counts.

Two main reasons for listing errors: (1) deliberate omission and concealment.

The 1990 Census asks about "persons living or staying on April 1", while the CPS and NHS ask about "persons living here" with no reference period.

The most basic question that most household surveys begin with is, "who lives or stays here?" and this is an inherently complex issue for many people. People may live in multiple locations to commute for work, be away at school, be in jail, or they may be staying with family temporarily. Our research and forthcoming paper are a literature review of household rostering studies conducted by the US Census Bureau and other organizations. This research focuses on individuals erroneously included or excluded from a within sample housing unit, it does not focus on total unit non-response.

The housing unit person counts between the 1990 Census and the Current Population Survey (CPS) and National Health Interview Survey (HIS) varied for over 20% of housing units.

In the CPS, one study estimated 60% or more of person undercounts were due to listing errors (Hogan, 1993). In the 1990 Census it was estimated that 1/3 of gross omissions were due to listing errors (Hogan, 1993).

Respondents were presented with 13 imaginary living situations of varying complexity, and then asked to fill out an experimental Decennial household roster.

Respondents were then asked about what criteria they were using to decide where to list the person as living.

Different cultural and societal factors contribute to rostering errors, especially when a sub-population is distrustful of outsiders.

Optimal rostering procedures need to be developed and empirically tested.

We need to conduct nationally representative research to estimate the potential impact of rostering errors on survey estimates.

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