

U.S. Census Data: The Implications of Persistent Undercounting of Communities of Color

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Shaping Our Future: Policy Pathways
Capstone Project Overview
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The U.S Census



The decennial U.S. Census

- **used to allocate more than \$675 billion in federal funds**
- **used by state and local governments to fund community projects**
- **used to determine the apportionment of House of Representative seats**

The U.S Census: Statement of the Problem

**American Indian,
Hispanic, and Black
households are more
likely to be
undercounted in the
U.S. Census.**

[https://gcn.com/articles/2020/04/03/
census-undercount-concerns.aspx](https://gcn.com/articles/2020/04/03/census-undercount-concerns.aspx)



The U.S Census: Policy Context



Why is there undercounting in communities of color?

- **People were unfamiliar with the census**
- **Misconceptions about the census and its use**
- **Concerns about privacy and confidentiality**
- **Low knowledge about the census across demographics characteristics**
- **No time**
- **No trust in the government**
- **Fear that answers will result in repercussions**

The U.S Census: Policy Formation

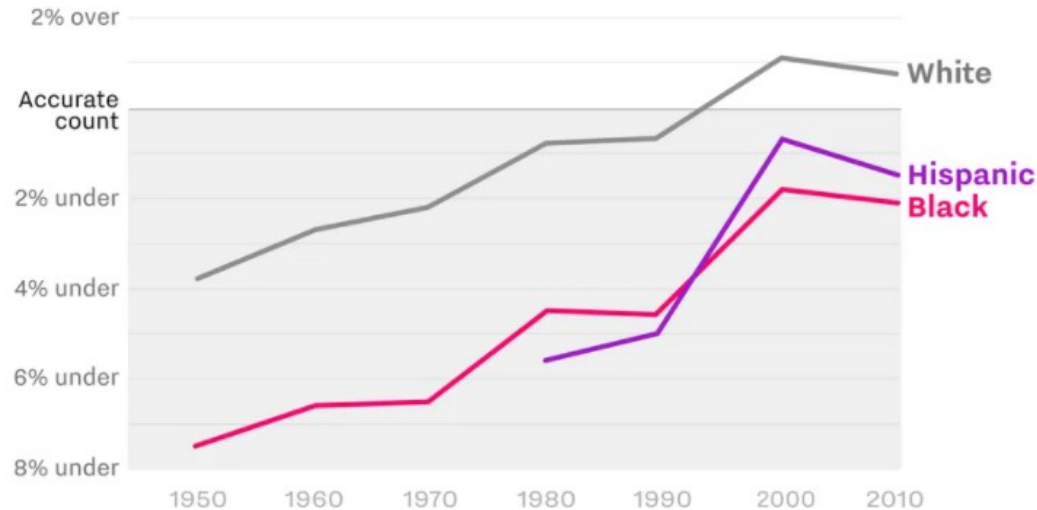
Source: The 2020 Census Barriers, Attitudinal, and Motivators Study (CBAMS) provides a way that underrepresented groups might be more likely to complete the census. <
<https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/newsroom/press-kits/2019/cbams-faqs.pdf>>

What has been proposed to fix the undercounting of people of color in the US Census?

- People are most interested the provision of widely enjoyed public services.
- Community funding is the primary motivator of self-response.
- Findings suggest that community funding is a more compelling motivator when it is connected to:
 - information about the impact of the census,
 - tangible and local evidence of community benefits, and
 - the concept of a better future for the community.

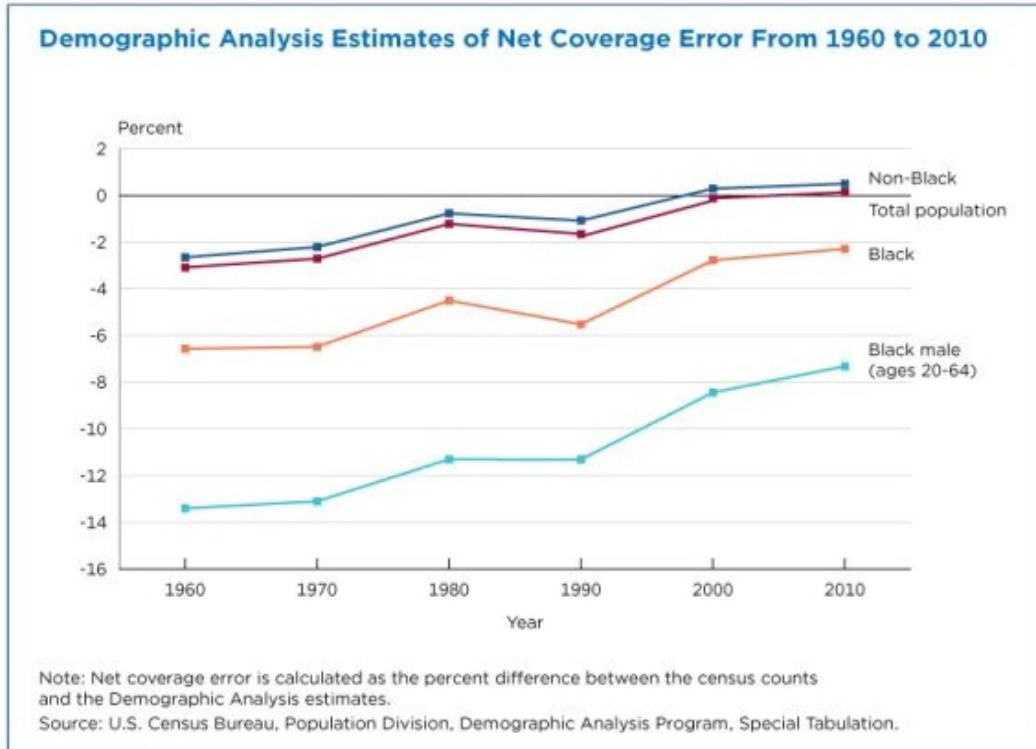
The U.S Census: Policy Analysis

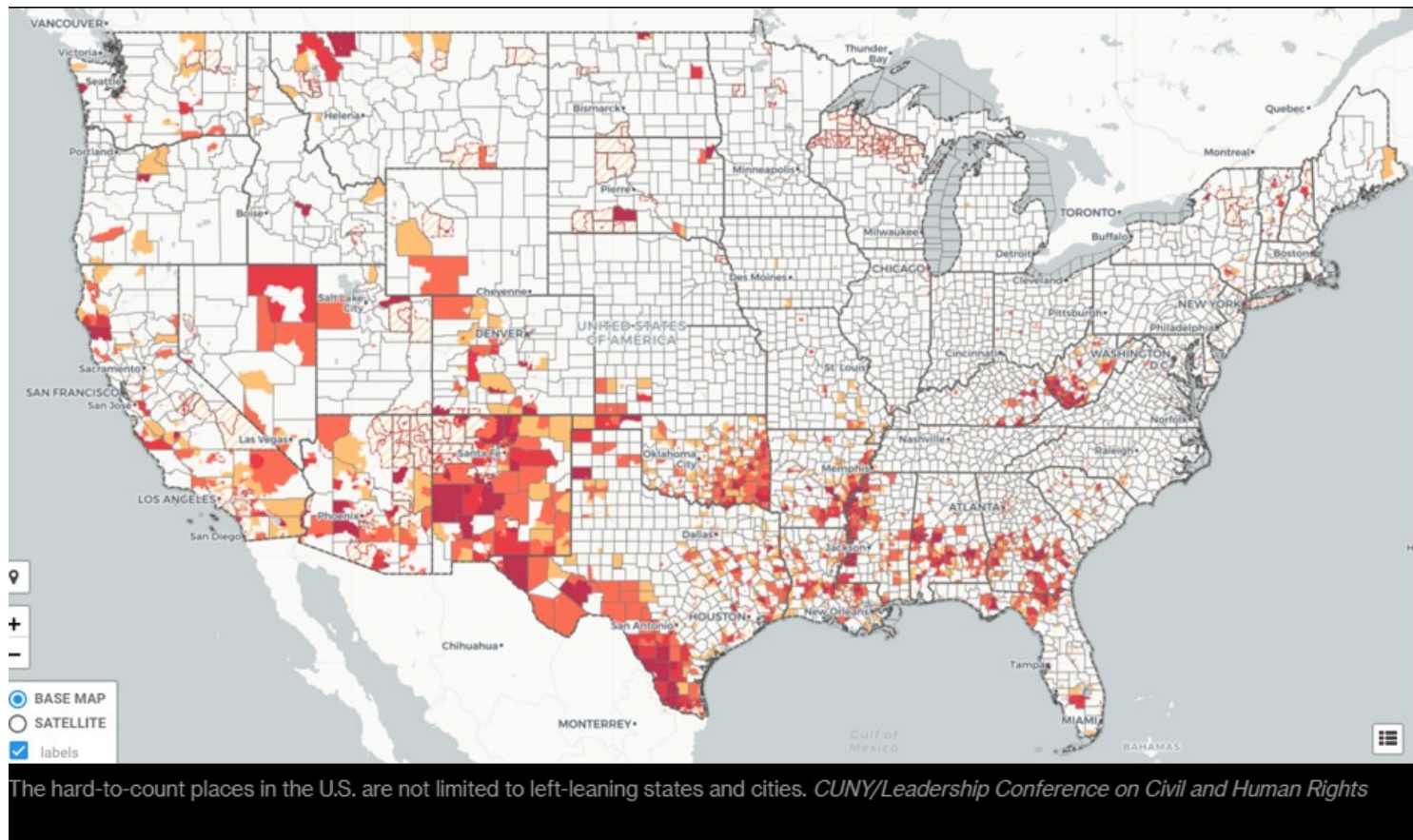
How much racial groups have been under- or overcounted since 1950



Data from the US Census Bureau's Population Division and Mother Jones

The U.S Census: Policy Analysis





The U.S Census: Policy Implications

Where the 2020 U.S. Census undercount will do the most damage

The U.S Census: Policy Recommendations

Recommendations for Decreasing Undercounting of People of Color in the US Census

- Continue to spread the word that completing the census helps communities,
- Emphasize that communities can receive more funding for public services,
- Discuss the apportionment of seats in the House of Representatives, and
- Increased civics education in middle and high schools

The U.S Census: References

<https://www.essence.com/news/census-count-2020-extended-coronavirus/>

(Slide 3)

<https://www.usnews.com/news/education-news/articles/2019-07-22/educators-sound-alarm-on-census-undercount-of-children>

(Slide 4)

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2018-03-30/where-a-census-2020-undercount-will-do-the-most-damage>

(Slide 10)

<https://www.americamagazine.org/politics-society/2020/08/10/census-deadline-latinos-outreach>

(Slide 5)