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**Preliminary Results from the 1986 Census Community  
Awareness Program General Population Survey**

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## Abstract

The Census Community Awareness Program (CCAP) General Population Survey (GPS) is the cornerstone of the 1986 CCAP evaluation effort. The survey is designed to (1) provide data on typical information sources for hard-to-enumerate groups; (2) suggest the differential credibility attached to these information sources by different population subgroups; (3) indicate the potential penetration of community awareness (and traditional media) outreach efforts; (4) begin to explore group affiliation motives among the hard-to-enumerate, and how these might guide successful outreach efforts; (5) suggest (to the extent that the test census experience will generalize to the decennial census) the actual effectiveness of community awareness in reaching target groups; and (6) shed some light on the issue of behavioral effects--i.e., did community awareness motivate people to cooperate?

The GPS questionnaire is divided into eight sections. Most of the results presented in this preliminary report concern items contained in the fifth and sixth sections of the survey. The fifth section asks whether respondents were aware of the census, and if so, how they heard about the census. Section six asks respondents who reported receiving a census form what they did with the form. Like the 1980 Applied Behavior Analysis Survey (ABAS), this section of the survey makes an (admittedly limited) attempt to investigate the dynamics of the mail response process in order to learn from whom, how, at what stage, and why nonresponse occurs. Respondents who said they completed and mailed back a census form were asked why they did so. Individuals who did not complete and mail back the form were asked if there was any information that might have gotten them to comply with the census.

**Keywords:** non-response; hard to reach; awareness campaign

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PRELIMINARY RESULTS FROM THE 1986 CENSUS COMMUNITY  
AWARENESS PROGRAM GENERAL POPULATION SURVEY

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Preliminary Results from the 1986 Census Community  
Awareness Program General Population Survey

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1. MAJOR FINDINGS

A disturbingly high percentage (27 percent) of Census Community Awareness Program (CCAP) General Population Survey (GPS) respondents reported that they did not receive a census form. Reported nonreceipt of the census form was higher among minority households than among White households, and also higher among low income households in general than among households with higher incomes. Although we have no independent data with which to verify reported receipt of the census form, the fact that the survey-reported mailback rate (33 percent) so closely approximates the rate obtained for the test census at the time the GPS was conducted justifies some confidence in the reported nonreceipt figure. (Census mail response rates at the beginning of the GPS interviewing period were 28 percent in the North office and 21 percent in the South office; two days after the close of the GPS interviewing period, they were 40 percent and 31 percent, respectively.)

Consistent with the results of the 1980 Applied Behavior Analysis Survey, we find that not starting to fill out the census form is the single most important barrier to mail response. Specifically, we find that of those who reported receiving a census mailing package, 88 percent opened the envelope, but only 58 percent started to fill out the form.

White households reported significantly higher rates of mail response than Black, Hispanic, or other households, regardless of household income; similarly, high income households reported significantly higher rates of return than low income households. As noted above, the total reported mail return rate for all GPS respondents was 33 percent.

Our preliminary results offer some suggestions for developing effective outreach messages. An interesting finding is that "traditional" messages (e.g., "counting the people is important," "the census is good for the whole country," "it's my patriotic duty to fill out the census form") are among those most frequently cited by cooperators as important reasons for participating in the census. We also find that respondents who said they

NOTE: The results presented here are preliminary in nature. We have prepared this preliminary report with the aim of disseminating select major findings of the CCAP GPS to Census Bureau staff as quickly as possible. Therefore, the report has not been subject to the usual review and clearance process normally associated with such documents. Readers should understand that the data are preliminary and that the conclusions and recommendations in the report are the authors' alone (as of the report date), and are not necessarily those of the Census Bureau.

did not complete and mail back a census form most frequently cited better understanding of what the census is used for as additional information that might have influenced them to participate in the census.

The CCAP GPS suggests that outreach efforts were not successful in informing members of hard-to-enumerate populations in the Central Los Angeles County area about the 1986 test census. Only 39 percent of the GPS respondents reported having "seen or heard anything [other than the census form itself] recently about a census in this area." Only about one third (36 percent) of those who reported receiving a form indicated that they had been aware of the census before the form arrived. According to the GPS, the most effective channel for publicizing the Los Angeles census was television, which reached only 22 percent of the respondents.

In keeping with the other "awareness" findings, the preliminary GPS results indicate that the outreach effort through community organizations was minimally effective. Only five percent of all respondents reported having heard anything about the 1986 census in Los Angeles through community organizations. Only 13 percent of respondents with any involvement or contact with community organizations said they heard about the census through a community group. The fact that 39 percent of GPS respondents reported some level of involvement or contact with community groups suggests that the potential for communicating census messages to members of traditionally hard-to-enumerate populations through community organizations is far greater than was realized in 1986.

While the nonexperimental design of this research prevents us from making any statements of a causal nature based on associations between census awareness and mail response, our findings do suggest that awareness through community organizations may have an incremental positive impact on census cooperation above and beyond the mere fact of group affiliation. The mail return rate for households which were made aware of the census through groups is significantly greater than the rate for "group-affiliated" households not aware through groups.

These preliminary findings are consistent with the results of past investigations of factors influencing census mail response (e.g., the results of the 1980 Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices Survey and the Applied Behavior Analysis Survey). The apparent causes of the low rate of mail return in the Central Los Angeles County test census differ only in magnitude from what we have observed before. High rates of census form nonreceipt, particularly among hard-to-enumerate groups, difficulty in starting to fill out the census form, and the apparent deficiencies of the 1986 outreach efforts undoubtedly contributed to the unexpectedly low mail return rate.

## 2. SURVEY DESIGN

### 2.1. Survey Content

The CCAP General Population Survey is the cornerstone of the 1986 CCAP evaluation effort. The survey is designed to (1) provide data on typical information sources for hard-to-enumerate groups; (2) suggest the differential

credibility attached to these information sources by different population subgroups; (3) indicate the potential penetration of community awareness (and traditional media) outreach efforts; (4) begin to explore group affiliation motives among the hard-to-enumerate, and how these might guide successful outreach efforts; (5) suggest (to the extent that the test census experience will generalize to the decennial census) the actual effectiveness of community awareness in reaching target groups; and (6) shed some light on the issue of behavioral effects--i.e., did community awareness motivate people to cooperate?

The GPS questionnaire is divided into eight sections. Most of the results presented in this preliminary report concern items contained in the fifth and sixth sections of the survey. The fifth section asks whether respondents were aware of the census, and if so, how they heard about the census. Section six asks respondents who reported receiving a census form what they did with the form. Like the 1980 Applied Behavior Analysis Survey (ABAS), this section of the survey makes an (admittedly limited) attempt to investigate the dynamics of the mail response process in order to learn from whom, how, at what stage, and why nonresponse occurs.

Respondents who said they completed and mailed back a census form were asked why they did so. Individuals who did not complete and mail back the form were asked if there was any information that might have gotten them to comply with the census.

## 2.2. Sample Design

The CCAP GPS employed a stratified design consisting of three strata defined on the basis of groups of Census Block Numbering Areas (CBNA), where the strata were designed to capture a greater proportion of the Asian and Pacific Islander and Black households than exist in the test site as a whole, as well as providing a rough delineation of high and low household income areas within the test site. In the absence of any specific idea about the level of the characteristics of interest within each stratum, we decided to allocate the total designated sample of 2,250 households equally among the three strata (750 per stratum). Subsequent data weights were calculated to reflect the unequal probabilities of selection within each stratum.

The sampling frame included all housing unit records on the Address Control File except those contained in the blocks selected for the Pre- and Post-Enumeration Surveys. Using sampling specifications prepared by SMD, DOD selected a total of 2,253 addresses from the ACF for the CCAP GPS sample.

## 2.3. Calculation of Sampling Errors

The CCAP GPS was based on a stratified systematic sampling design consisting of three strata defined on the basis of groups of CBNA's, and with equal sample sizes per stratum. However, the sampling errors in this preliminary report were calculated essentially as if the design was an unstratified simple random sample. The standard errors calculated under this assumption are quite accurate for subdomain estimates defined on the basis of the skip patterns in the GPS questionnaire (and not further elaborated by race/ethnicity or income). For such estimates the stratification scheme produced little, if any, gains in reliability. This is to be expected since the

stratification scheme was designed primarily to increase the precision of estimates for the Black, Asian and Pacific Islander, and Hispanic populations. For estimates further elaborated by race/ethnicity and income the standard errors calculated assuming an unstratified simple random sample are only slightly higher (no more than 15 percent) than the corresponding sampling errors calculated on the basis of the actual stratified design.

#### 2.4. Administration of the Survey

Interviewing for the CCAP GPS was conducted by personal visit using trained, experienced, permanent FLD current program interviewers. Interviewing began Monday, March 24 and was completed by Saturday, April 5, 1986. Training was accomplished through a two-hour self-study. Bilingual interviews were completed using a Spanish translation of the CCAP GPS. Los Angeles Regional Office staff edited the completed questionnaires using instructions provided by CSMR. In order to facilitate more rapid processing of the GPS, FLD shipped completed questionnaires to DPD for keying on a flow basis, and DPD revised its schedule to complete keying of the forms by April 15, 1986.

#### 2.5. Survey Response

The CCAP GPS yielded 2,015 completed interviews. Excluding 53 addresses which interviewers were unable to locate, and 73 vacant addresses, the response rate for the survey was 95 percent. Only about 1 percent of the noninterviews (23 cases) were refusals. Table A presents the number of completed interviews according to the race/ethnicity of the household respondent and reported household income. In the analyses that follow we have combined the Asian/Pacific Islander, American Indian, and other groups into a category labelled "Other."

Table A: Counts of Interviewed Persons by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income (CCAP General Population Survey)

	Household Income			Total
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	(Missing)	
White, not Hispanic	140	151	30	321
Black, not Hispanic	194	139	40	373
Hispanic	609	440	122	1,171
Asian/Pacific Islander	39	75	19	133
American Indian	5	3		8
Other	2	4	2	8
(Missing)			1	1
Total	989	812	214	2,015

### 3. DETAILED FINDINGS

All results reported hereafter are weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus are intended to represent the entire census area

population. Tables disaggregated by race/ethnicity and household income present data for the total CCAP sample, and for the following racial/ethnic and income groups: White non-Hispanic, Black non-Hispanic, Hispanic, and other (mostly Asian/Pacific Islanders); low income (total reported 1985 household income before taxes less than \$15,000), and high income (total reported 1985 household income before taxes greater than or equal to \$15,000). These tables only contain data from respondents of known race/ethnicity and income, and thus total percentages cited in the text may differ slightly from table totals.

### 3.1. Form Receipt and Behavior

This section presents three sets of findings from the CCAP GPS regarding form receipt and behavior. It begins with a discussion of reported receipt of a census form. Next, it describes what the GPS respondents reported doing with their census forms (i.e., whether or not they opened the census mailing package, started to fill out the form, finished the form, and mailed back a completed questionnaire). The section concludes with a discussion of why GPS respondents did what they did with their census forms; specifically, the reasons respondents gave for returning a form, and information nonrespondents report might have influenced them to complete and return the census questionnaire.

#### 3.1.A. Who Reported Receiving a Census Form?

All respondents were asked if their household had received a census form in the mail. If respondents reported they did not receive (or did not know if they received) a census form they were shown a mailing package envelope, and asked again if they had received the form. If appropriate, information about receipt of the form was obtained from more than one respondent. Combining responses to these questions, we find that only 73 percent of the respondents reported receiving a census form; 27 percent of the respondents either did not receive, or did not know if they received, a census form.

Table 1 summarizes our findings regarding census form receipt and behavior; the first row of Table 1 highlights differences in the extent to which members of various racial/ethnic and income groups reported receiving a census form. Among lower income households, a significantly\* higher percentage of Whites than Hispanics or others reported receiving a census form (the difference between Whites and Blacks approaches statistical significance). Among high income households we find the same pattern; here the percentage of Whites who said they received a census form is significantly higher than Blacks, Hispanics, and others. Overall, high income households reported a significantly higher rate of receipt than households with low incomes, although individual high-low differences are significant only for Hispanic households.

#### 3.1.B. What Did GPS Respondents Do With Their Census Forms?

We find a consistent pattern, here as in the 1980 Applied Behavior Analysis Survey, that not starting to fill out the form is the most common stage at which individuals report "dropping-out" of the self-enumeration process.

\*All differences described as "significant" exceed twice the standard error of the difference.

TABLE 1: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting "Dropping-Out" of the Los Angeles Census at Each of Five Stages of the Self-Enumeration Process<sup>2/</sup> by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income														
	Less than \$15,000				\$15,000 or More				Total <sup>3/</sup> , All Incomes						
	White*	Black*	Hispanic	Other	Total <sup>3/</sup>	White*	Black*	Hispanic	Other	Total <sup>3/</sup>	White*	Black*	Hispanic	Other	Total <sup>3/</sup>
DID NOT RECEIVE	21	30	33	42	31	14	22	22	28	21	17	26	29	33	27
Received, DID NOT OPEN	4	10	8	4	8	9	12	7	9	9	7	11	8	7	8
Opened, DID NOT START	12	20	27	31	24	13	24	24	14	21	12	22	26	20	23
Started, DID NOT FINISH	5	7	5	4	5	5	11	8	7	8	5	8	6	6	6
Finished, DID NOT MAIL	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	0	2	3	2	3	1	2
TOTAL Percent NOT RETURNING FORM	46	69	76	84	71	43	72	64	58	60	45	70	71	68	66
(Mailback Percent)	(54)	(31)	(24)	(16)	(29)	(57)	(28)	(36)	(42)	(40)	(55)	(30)	(29)	(32)	(34)

\*Not Hispanic

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>See CCAP/GPS items 1 through 5, 24, and 32 through 34 for question wordings defining the five self-enumeration stages.

<sup>3/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

Of those who reported receiving a census mailing package, 88 percent opened the envelope, but only 58 percent started to fill out the form (Table 2). As shown in Table 2, relative attrition at this stage in the mailback process is higher than at any other stage.

TABLE 2: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting Completion of Subsequent Stages for Each Stage of the Self-Enumeration Process<sup>2/</sup>

Percent of Respondents Who:	Total All Respondents	All Who Received the Mailing	All Who Opened the Envelope	All Who Started to Fill the Form	All Who Completed the Form
(Total, All Respondents)	(100)				
Received the form	73	(100)			
Opened the form	64	88	(100)		
Started the form	42	58	65	(100)	
Completed the form	36	49	55	85	(100)
Mailed the form	33	46	52	80	93

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>See CCAP/GPS items 1 through 5, 24, and 32 through 34 for question wordings defining the five self-enumeration stages.

Looking at the racial/ethnic and income comparisons in Table 1, we find that this critical "opened, did not start" step of the process was a significantly greater barrier for low income minority households than for low income Whites, and, within minority households, was more difficult for Hispanic and "other" households than for Blacks. A similar pattern holds among high income households, although here "other" households matched Whites in dropping out at a significantly lower rate than Blacks and Hispanics. Interestingly, across all racial/ethnic groups combined there is no significant difference between low and high income households in their successful completion of this stage. In sum, the findings suggest that, regardless of household income, White households were more likely than minority households to start filling out the census form.

We conclude our examination of census behavior by examining reported mailback rates, the remainder once all the drop-out stages have been successfully completed. The final row of Table 1 indicates the percentage of all GPS respondents who reported mailing back a completed census form. The total reported mailback rate is 33 percent.

Looking at reported mail returns for the various racial/ethnic and income groups we find that White households reported mailing back their census forms at a higher rate than did Blacks, Hispanics or "others", and that this pattern holds regardless of household income. Overall, we find a significantly higher mailback percentage among high income households than among low income households, but this effect seems largely attributable to differences within the Hispanic and "other" groups (in fact, the low-high difference within Black households works in the opposite direction).

### 3.1.C. Why Did People Do What They Did With the Forms?

The GPS contains two sets of items asking why respondents returned their forms, and why nonrespondents did not. Respondents who said that they filled out and mailed back a census form were given a set of cards containing reasons people might give for complying with the census. Respondents were asked to pull out any reasons that were important to them in deciding to respond to the census, and then to rank order them.

Table 3 shows the 13 reasons for census cooperation presented to GPS respondents who reported mailing back the census form and indicates the frequency with which respondents cited each as an important reason for cooperating. (No analysis of respondents' rank orderings of these reasons is presented here.) Due to the small number of cases per cell which results when these findings are presented for the various racial/ethnic and income groups, for this preliminary report we present only total frequencies in Table 3.

It is interesting to note that the five most frequently cited reasons for responding to the census can all be categorized as patriotic or "good citizen" themes: "counting the people is important," "the census benefits my community," "I wanted to be counted in the census," "it's my patriotic duty to fill out the census form," and "the census is good for the whole country." Among the least frequently selected reasons were those suggesting the importance of peer influence on the decision to cooperate: "I filled it out because my friends/relatives did it," and "Someone I know convinced me to do it." While Table 3 does not present any subgroup breakdowns, low income respondents consistently tended to select "it's my patriotic duty to fill out the census form" as an important reason for cooperation, while higher income respondents were more likely to select "the census is good for the whole country," and "the census benefits my community." The major feature of these results, however, is their consistency across the various demographic subgroups; a rank order correlation test (not shown here), finds virtually no differences between any groups in the rank ordering of the frequency with which the 13 reasons were selected.

It is interesting to compare these responses with the information contained in Table 4. Respondents who received a census form but who reported dropping out at a subsequent stage were asked if there was any information

TABLE 3: Of All Respondents Who Reported Having Mailed Back a 1986 Los Angeles Census Form, Percent<sup>1/</sup> Selecting Each of Thirteen Reasons as Important Reason for Census Cooperation<sup>2/</sup>

<u>Reasons for Census Mail Response</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Counting the people is important	63
The census benefits my community	59
I wanted to be counted in the census	58
It's my patriotic duty to fill out the census form	57
The census is good for the whole country	54
The law says I have to answer the census questions	50
The census form was easy to fill	24
I filled out the form so I wouldn't be bothered by a census taker	20
I wanted to save tax dollars by filling out the form myself	18
I just answer the census automatically; it's just something I do	16
I enjoy filling out questionnaires	9
I filled it out because my friends/relatives did it	8
Someone I know convinced me to do it	8

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>See CCAP/GPS item 35d for a description of survey procedures regarding the selection of reasons for cooperation.

TABLE 4: Of All Respondents Who Reported Not Having Mailed Back a 1986 Los Angeles Census Form, Percent<sup>1/</sup> Citing Each of Four Types of Additional Information that Might Have Motivated Mail Response<sup>2/</sup>

<u>Information that Might Have Motivated Mail Response</u>	<u>Percent "Yes"</u>
If you had better information about what the census is used for, would that have made a difference?	46
Would you have completed and returned the form if you had been more certain that your answers were confidential?	42
Would it have made a difference if you had better instructions about how to fill out the form?	33
If people whose opinion you trust had said you should do it, would that have gotten you to complete the form and mail it back?	30
Is there any (other) information that might have convinced you to fill out the form and mail it back?	24

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>See CCAP/GPS items 36a through 36d.

that might have gotten them to complete and mail back their census forms. Specifically, they were asked if it would have made a difference if they had better instructions about how to fill out the form, if they had been more certain that their answers were confidential, if they had had better information about what the census is used for, and if people whose opinion they trust had said they should do it. Table 4 summarizes the responses to these items for all respondents who reported not having mailed back a census form.

For all households reporting they did not complete and mail back a census form, we find that better information about what the census is used for is cited most frequently as the type of information which might have made a difference to noncooperating households. While subgroup analyses are not presented here, we find that for virtually all types of households,

better information about the uses of census information is the most frequently cited response. This result is quite consistent with the results of the 1980 Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices Survey, and with focus group studies conducted prior to the 1980 Census and in the current test census cycle, which have also suggested the primary importance of understanding the purposes and uses of the census in motivating mail response behavior.

More certainty about census confidentiality also is reported frequently as information which might have motivated mail response. Approximately one third of the reported nonrespondents indicate that better instructions about how to fill out the census form might have influenced their response behavior.

### 3.2. Census Awareness

Overall, only 39 percent of all GPS respondents reported having "seen or heard anything [other than the census form itself] about a census in this area." Table 5 summarizes responses to this item according to race/ethnicity and household income. Analysis of these data suggests that Black

TABLE 5: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting Awareness<sup>2/</sup> of the Los Angeles Census by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>
White, not Hispanic	42	41	42
Black, not Hispanic	31	29	30
Hispanic	44	45	44
Other	24	39	33
TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>	41	41	41

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>"Awareness" of the census is defined here as a "yes" response to CCAP/GPS item number 21: "(Other than the census form) Have you seen or heard anything recently about a census in this area?"

<sup>3/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

households were significantly less exposed to census information than were Whites and Hispanics, regardless of income. Among those with low incomes, "other" households also reported less awareness than Whites and Hispanics, but these differences are not significant in the higher income category. Except for the "other" category, there were no significant differences in reported census awareness according to income level.

A subsequent item in the GPS asked respondents who reported receipt of the census form whether they had been aware of the census before the form arrived, or whether the form itself was the "first news" they had heard about the census. Only about one third (36 percent) of those who received a form reported that they had been aware of the census before the form arrived. Table 6 presents responses to this item by race/ethnicity and household income. In keeping with the findings reported in Table 5 for the general awareness item, low income Black and "other" households were

TABLE 6: Percent<sup>1/</sup> of Those Who Received a Form<sup>2/</sup> Reporting Awareness<sup>3/</sup> of the Los Angeles Census before the Form Arrived by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	TOTAL <sup>4/</sup>
White, not Hispanic	37	30	33
Black, not Hispanic	25	23	24
Hispanic	40	40	40
Other	12	42	33
TOTAL <sup>4/</sup>	36	36	36

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>This table excludes persons who reported that they did not receive a census form in the mail (see CCAP/GPS items 1 through 5).

<sup>3/</sup>"Awareness ... before the form arrived" is indicated by responses to CCAP/GPS item number 23: "You said earlier that you received the census mailing. Did you know there was going to be a census here at this time before you got it, or was the mailing the first news you heard?"

<sup>4/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

less prepared to receive a census form than White and Hispanic low income households. Among those with higher incomes, Blacks were also the least informed. Once again, "other" households were the lone exception to the general finding of no significant differences in awareness before receipt of the census form for low and high income households.

Tables 7 through 11 present results for a series of items regarding respondents' specific sources of information about the Census of Central Los Angeles County. In general, these tables are consistent with the results for the more general awareness items summarized above. They indicate that awareness of the census was not extensive. The most effective channel for publicizing the census was television, which reached only 22 percent of all respondents. Where differences exist in the penetration of a particular source of information, Blacks seem to have been reached less effectively, and Hispanics more effectively, than other groups. The preliminary findings also indicate that awareness differences according to household income were generally small, although newspapers appear to have reached high income households more effectively than low income households, while the reverse is true for television.

As noted above, a major purpose of the GPS is to evaluate outreach through community organizations. Our preliminary GPS findings indicate that the 1986 community outreach effort in the Los Angeles test site failed to reach a broad audience. Only five percent of all respondents reported having heard anything about the Census of Central Los Angeles County through community organizations (see Table 11). Community organization networks were uniformly effective (or ineffective) for all race/ethnicity and income groups; with one exception--low income Whites versus low income Blacks--none of the differences in Table 11 are significant. (We note that the conclusion that community organization networks were not effective rests in large part on respondents' ability to correctly distinguish information sources in the retrospective GPS interview, a task which some research suggests is prone to error. Lacking any verification data, however, we accept these results--with caution--at face value.)

Even restricting the analysis to GPS respondents with some community group involvement does not make for a substantially brighter picture. Only 13 percent of such "involved" respondents reported hearing about the census through a community group. The fact that 39 percent of the GPS respondents reported some involvement or contact with community groups (see Table 12) suggests that the potential of community outreach for disseminating census messages is greater than was realized in 1986.

### 3.3. Associations of Community Group Involvement and Awareness Through Groups with Mail Response

The results cited above provide important information about respondents' reported census behavior and census awareness. In this section we begin to examine associations between the two. Specifically, we address three questions which are particularly important in terms of the CCAP evaluation: (1) "Is community group involvement associated with mail response behavior?"; (2) "Is awareness of the census through community groups associated with mail response?"; and (3) "If the answer to questions '1' and '2' are 'yes', is there a difference in the two associations?"

It has been suggested that an absence of significant effects of outreach through community organizations might be the result of a "preaching to the converted" problem. People who are involved with community organizations, so this argument goes, are "good citizens" who are likely to be favorably disposed toward the census and census cooperation without any assistance from an outreach effort. Table 13 provides some support for this notion--the mail return rate among households reporting community group involvement is significantly greater than the rate for households not involved with community groups--but it is clear that there is still some "converting" to be done among those who are accessible through community organizations.

TABLE 7: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting Awareness of the Los Angeles Census through Newspapers<sup>2/</sup> by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>
White, not Hispanic	14	20	17
Black, not Hispanic	7	7	7
Hispanic	14	19	16
Other	11	21	17
TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>	13	18	15

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>"Awareness ... through newspapers" is defined here as a "yes" response to CCAP/GPS item number 22a: "Did you read something about the census in a newspaper?"

<sup>3/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

TABLE 8: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting Awareness<sup>2/</sup> of the Los Angeles Census through Television by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>
White, not Hispanic	18	14	16
Black, not Hispanic	12	11	12
Hispanic	31	26	29
Other	10	11	10
TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>	25	20	23

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>"Awareness ... through television" is defined here as a "yes" response to CCAP/GPS item number 22b: "Did you see something about the census on TV?"

<sup>3/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

TABLE 9: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting Awareness<sup>2/</sup> of the Los Angeles Census through Radio by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>
White, not Hispanic	13	13	13
Black, not Hispanic	13	11	12
Hispanic	18	16	17
Other	6	14	11
TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>	16	15	15

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>"Awareness ... through radio" is defined here as a "yes" response to CCAP/GPS item number 22c: "Did you hear something about the census on the radio?"

<sup>3/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

TABLE 10: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting Awareness<sup>2/</sup> of the Los Angeles Census through Posters, Signs, or Handbills by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>
White, not Hispanic	7	5	6
Black, not Hispanic	6	7	6
Hispanic	8	12	10
Other	7	13	11
TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>	8	10	9

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>"Awareness ... through posters, signs, or handbills" is defined here as a "yes" response to CCAP/GPS item number 22g: "(Other than what you've just told me) Did you see a poster, sign, handbill, or anything like that about the census?"

<sup>3/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

TABLE 11: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting Awareness<sup>2/</sup> of the Los Angeles Census through Community Groups by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>
White, not Hispanic	8	5	7
Black, not Hispanic	4	8	6
Hispanic	4	6	5
Other	2	4	3
TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>	5	6	5

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>"Awareness ... through community groups" is defined here as a "yes" response to CCAP/GPS item number 22d: "Did you hear something about the census through some local community group?"

<sup>3/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

TABLE 12: Percent<sup>1/</sup> Reporting Any Involvement or Contact with Local Community Groups<sup>2/</sup> by Race/Ethnicity and Household Income

	Household Income		
	Less than \$15,000	\$15,000 or more	TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>
White, not Hispanic	42	50	46
Black, not Hispanic	43	63	51
Hispanic	29	39	33
Other	34	41	39
TOTAL <sup>3/</sup>	34	45	39

<sup>1/</sup>The data on which the table entries are based have been weighted to reflect the stratified sampling design, and thus represent the entire census area population.

<sup>2/</sup>"Involvement or contact with local community groups" is defined here as a "yes" response either to CCAP/GPS item number 10: "Are you involved in any way with groups or associations which are active in this community - like a church or other religious organization, a social club, union, PTA, a neighborhood organization, or some other community group?" or item number 11: "Do you have any contact at all with local community groups - for example, through mailings or other kinds of notices, or even word-of-mouth contact through other household members or friends or relatives?"

<sup>3/</sup>Table totals exclude cases for which race/ethnicity or household income was missing.

TABLE 13: Mail Response Behavior in the Los Angeles Census by Community Group Involvement and Awareness Through Groups (All Respondents)

	Involved with Community Groups			
	Not Involved with Community Groups	Total	Not Aware thru Groups	Aware thru Groups
Mail Response Rate	30%	38%	36%	50%

Table 13 also suggests that awareness through community organizations may have an incremental positive impact on census cooperation above and beyond the mere fact of group affiliation, since the mail return rate for households which were made aware of the census through groups is significantly greater than the rate for "group affliator" households not aware through groups.

It is important to remember that the nonexperimental design of this research prevents us from making statements of a causal nature about the associations between census awareness and mail response; the most we can say is that any such associations are consistent with the notion that awareness influenced cooperation. Many other explanations are also possible (e.g., that "aware" persons tend to be those good citizens who mail back census forms). CCAP GPS results do suggest, however, that there is "out there" a substantial audience for outreach efforts through community organizations, that this audience is as yet not fully committed to cooperation with the census, and that outreach to this audience through community organizations may have positive effects on census mailback behavior.

#### 4. IMPLICATIONS

In concluding this report we review the major implications of these preliminary findings for understanding response to the 1986 Census of Central Los Angeles County. As stated above, we believe that the most notable aspect of these preliminary findings is their similarity to the results of other research which has investigated factors associated with census mail response. The apparent causes of the low rate of mail return in the Central Los Angeles County census seem to differ only in magnitude from what we have observed before; we do not find, through the GPS, evidence of any "new" impediments to achieving a high mail return rate. Rather, high rates of census form nonreceipt, particularly among hard-to-enumerate groups; some combination of motivational and task-based impediments to starting to fill out the census form; and apparent deficiencies of the 1986 outreach efforts in informing individuals about the census may have contributed to the unexpectedly low mail return rate.

The high percentage of CCAP GPS respondents reporting they did not receive a census form indicates that additional research must be carried out to determine our actual success in distributing the census mailing package. Currently we have no independent data with which to verify reported receipt of the census form. However, form nonreceipt only half as extensive as that reported in the GPS would still represent a serious threat to the Census Bureau's ability to conduct a mailout, mailback census.

In general, the GPS suggests that the 1986 outreach efforts were not successful in informing members of hard-to-enumerate populations in the Central Los Angeles County area about the 1986 test census. This is true across information sources; the most effective channel for publicizing the Los Angeles census (television) reached only 22 percent of the interviewed respondents. While the literature indicates that there are some limitations to relying on self-reports of information sources (due to recall problems), the GPS findings nevertheless suggest that the outreach effort through community organizations was particularly unsuccessful. While 39 percent of the GPS respondents reported some level of involvement or contact with community groups, only 13 percent of those involved individuals (5 percent of all GPS respondents) reported having heard anything about the 1986 census in Los Angeles through community organizations.

It is particularly important to isolate the reasons why the community outreach effort was not more successful in 1986, as our findings suggest that the absence of a strong association between awareness of the census and reported census mail response behavior could be an artifact of the limited success of the 1986 outreach effort rather than a limited potential of awareness to affect mailback. While the nonexperimental design of this research prevents us from making any strong causal statements, our findings do suggest that awareness through community organizations may have an incremental positive impact on census cooperation above and beyond the mere fact of group affiliation. In sum, while community-based outreach may be theoretically sound, it appears in 1986 to have failed to reach its potential.

One other striking CCAP GPS result merits further consideration regarding its implications for the enumeration of hard-to-enumerate areas in the 1990 census: the success of the Census Bureau's field staff in securing cooperation with a questionnaire administered through personal visit. It is worth noting that in an area with such a low mail response rate to the (mandatory) census, a (voluntary) personal interview survey achieved a 95 percent response rate. It may in fact be the case that hard-to-enumerate areas are also the areas where it is most difficult to recruit, train, and maintain a temporary field staff large enough to conduct personal visit census enumeration. Nevertheless, the responsiveness of even those GPS respondents who reported they did not participate in the 1986 Census of Central Los Angeles County to a trained interviewer suggests that personal enumeration in hard-to-enumerate areas merits further consideration.