

**ETHNOGRAPHIC EVALUATION OF THE  
1990 DECENNIAL CENSUS REPORT SERIES**

**REPORT #15**

**ETHNOGRAPHY OF ALTERNATIVE ENUMERATION AMONG  
KOREAN AMERICANS IN QUEENS, NEW YORK**

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## **I A Brief History of Korean American Immigration**

### **a. Three Waves of Immigrations**

The first wave of Korean immigrants to the U.S. took place between 1903-1905. Some 7,000 Korean males came to Hawaii as farm laborers. Within a few years 1,000 of them returned to Korea. Approximately 2,000 of the early immigrants left Hawaii and came to the continental United States. Between 1907 to 1924 several thousand more Koreans came to the U.S. as "picture brides" (Houchins and Houchins, 1976).

Not until the Korean War did Korean immigrants come in substantial numbers. Passage of the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 increased their numbers. They came as refugees, wives of American servicemen, war orphans and students. Between 1951 and 1964, 6,400 Korean war brides and 5,300 orphans came to the U.S. (Hurh and Kim, 1982).

The liberalized immigration law of 1965 opened the door to Asian immigrants, and resulted in a chain migration pattern that increased the size of the Korean American population by fivefold from 70,000 to 355,000 between 1970 to 1980 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1981). Average annual Korean immigration figures reached 30,000 around 1975. Since 1980, annual immigration varied between 32,000 and 33,000 (U.S. Department of Justice, 1952-1986). By 1990 the number of Korean Americans was 798,849 (Bureau of the Census, 1991). The 1965 law allowed the following two groups to bring their relatives into the U.S.: 1) wives of U.S. servicemen and 2) students and professionals. Between 1953 to 1980 about 15,000 students came to the U.S. and only around 10 percent returned home. During the period 1966 to 1979 about 13,000 Korean doctors, nurses and pharmacists immigrated to America. The number of Korean war brides immigrating from 1962 to 1983 reached about 80,000 (Kim, 1981). Once initial immigrants were somewhat settled, a migration cycle or chain began. An immigrant sends for his or her spouse, children or parents (the 2nd preference). After obtaining citizenship, the immigrant's brothers and sisters are brought over (the 5th preference). These siblings in turn invite over their spouses, children, and their parents.

Although the exact figure is not known, a sizable number of Koreans have illegally immigrated to the U.S. There are several ways that an illegal immigrant can enter the U.S.: 1) going underground after their visitor's, student's or businessman's visa is expired; 2) entering into the U.S. from the Mexican or Canadian border; or 3) entering the U.S. via Mexico, Canada or one of the South American countries by plane. While doing research field work on Korean Americans conducted in New York City in the summer of 1989, I encountered several individuals who had managed to change their status into that of legal resident after having lived as illegal aliens in the U.S.

Korean immigrants tend to concentrate in a few states where large metropolitan areas provide relatively favorable economic opportunities for new comers. In 1970, 14 percent of Koreans resided in Hawaii, while California accommodated 24 percent and New York 8.6 percent. In 1973, the states of California and New York attracted 33 percent of all Korean immigrants: California received 22 percent and New York 11 percent (Koo and Yu, 1981). In 1976, 17 percent of Korean-Americans reported their residence in California (U.S. Department of Justice, 1976). However, in contrast to other Asian American groups, Koreans are more widely dispersed in all states. For example, 41 percent of all Koreans settled in the Western region compared to 81 percent of the Japanese and 57 percent of the Chinese populations; 19 percent of Koreans were drawn to the South compared to 8 percent of the Chinese and 5 percent of the Japanese (Yu, 1977). In 1979, 15 percent of all Koreans lived in Los Angeles county, while New York City had 6 percent of the group. Chicago and Honolulu drew 4 percent and 3 percent of this population respectively (Koo and Yu, 1981). According to the 1980 Census (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1981), the share of Koreans reported to be living in California increased to 29.3 percent in 1980, followed by New York (9.6 percent), Illinois (6.8 percent), and Hawaii (5.1 percent). Thus the recent Korean influx was concentrated in urban areas (67 percent). However, the urban proportion is the lowest among all other Asian American groups, even lower than the U.S. national average (74 percent) (Yu, 1977).

#### **b. The Korean American Community in Queens**

There were only several hundred students and wives of American servicemen in the metropolitan area of New York until the immigration law of 1965 took effect. With passage of the 1965 law, professionals - doctors, nurses, and pharmacists came in as 3rd preference category immigrants. Subsequently, professionals, students, and wives of the G.I.s brought their spouses, children and parents. Now the migration chain is in full motion.

Two groups of early Korean immigrants came and settled in the Queens area. Among the first group were employees of the Korean businesses and government who came to the U.S. to participate in the 1964 World's Fair held in Flushing Meadow. Some of those Korean participants decided to stay in the U.S. rather than return to Korea. Already there were Japanese Americans and some Chinese Americans in the Flushing area. Japanese businessmen, working on their overseas assignments in the New York City area during the 60's and 70's, were attracted to the Flushing area for its relatively inexpensive rent and convenient access to the transportation system. In the late 70's an Asian food store, and a few Asian restaurants opened along the Main Street area of Flushing.

The second group of Koreans to settle in Queens were professionals who came to the U.S. with the liberalized 1965 immigration law. They also brought many relatives with them. Many of these families chose to settle in the New York area. One of the circumstances revolved around the fact that during the 60's the Korean government sent a large number of miners and nurses to West Germany. Many nurses married over-educated yet underemployed Korean miners in Germany. A substantial number of these Korean nurses took advantage of the 1965 law, and immigrated to the U.S. Then they brought their husbands, children and often their parents over. Another rapidly accelerating migration cycle had begun.

In Elmhurst, two large apartment buildings stand right across the street from the Elmhurst Hospital in Queens. In the early 70's, Korean nurses started moving into the apartments near several large hospitals where they worked. By the mid-70's these two apartment complexes had been nearly taken over by Korean nurses. It was a classic textbook case of the invasion-succession cycle of the immigration and residential settlement pattern in operation.

## **II The Community Characteristics**

### **a. Geographic Distribution of the Korean American Population in Queens**

In 1980 the census reported that 62.3 percent of 23,000 Korean Americans in New York City resided in Queens (U.S. Commerce, 1981). Until recently, the number of Asians, Blacks and Hispanics in Queens was small. Sanjek (1988) claims "Queens was White." However, according to a preliminary report from the 1990 Census (The New York Times, Feb. 17, 1991), in 1990 the majority of Queens residents were of minority ethnic origins (52 percent). Out of 1,920,000 inhabitants reported, 20 percent were Black, 19.5 percent Hispanic, 11.7 percent Asian, and 0.6 percent others (Native Americans). In the ten year period from 1980 through 1990, Queens lost close to 21 percent of its population, whereas other minority groups made substantial gains: Blacks 14.5 percent, Hispanics 44.6 percent, Asians 137 percent and Native Americans 79.4 percent. The Asians made the largest gain, from a mere 5 percent of the total Queens population to 11.7 percent in a short ten year time span.

A detailed breakdown of ethnic categories within the Asian group is not available as yet. However, in 1989, the population of Korean Americans in the New York City area was estimated to be somewhere between 73,000 (Min, 1989) and 79,000 (an informal estimate given by the New York City Planning Council, in the summer of 1989). Min (1989) estimated the distribution of Korean Americans in New York City in 1989 to be as follows. 68.5 percent in Queens, 12 percent in Manhattan, 10 percent in the Bronx and a little over 2 percent for Staten Island.

Korean Americans in Queens settled along the #7 subway line. Along the #7 line, clusters of Korean Americans are found in Sunnyside, Woodside, Elmherst, Corona, Jackson Heights, and in Flushing which has the largest concentration (33.6 percent) of Korean Americans in New York City. Other parts of Queens - Elmherst, Woodside, Jackson Heights, and Bayside have 17 percent, 12.5 percent, 6 percent, and 6 percent of Korean population respectively (Min, 1989).

Sunnyside attracts more recently arrived Koreans who commute to Manhattan for their work. The area has light industrial facilities and warehouses mixed with low rental apartment buildings. Several large Korean restaurants, Oriental food stores, Korean owned gift and card shops, coffee shops, liquor stores, and electronic equipment stores are located along Queens Boulevard in the Long Island City area. Lower crime rates and somewhat lower rents for apartments in the traditional Greek neighborhood of Astoria have attracted Koreans.

Woodside has had an Irish identity. Economically well-off Koreans have bought and moved into single family houses in this area. Along the subway line, many apartments have Korean tenants. In the last decade, other Asian groups have also settled here. On Queens Boulevard, particularly around subway stations, Asian Americans have established many ethnic restaurants, grocery stores, and other types of stores that cater to the wider community.

Elmherst and Jackson Heights have no particular White identities. Still there are pockets of old Jewish, Italian, and German residents in this area. In recent years these neighborhoods have absorbed substantial numbers of Korean, Chinese, East Indians, and Latin Americans. The look of the main streets, like 37th Avenue and the few blocks of shopping along 82nd Street reflects the cultural melange of this area -- Korean restaurants and green grocers, East Indian restaurants and saris shops, an Argentine steakhouse, an Ecuadorean restaurant, Columbian grocery stores, and of course the ever present Chinese restaurants (The New York Times, May 3, 1991). Around the Elmherst City Hospital, many apartments have a high proportion of Korean residents. The 7th Street area between Broadway and 82nd Street has a variety of Korean owned and operated stores (Kang, 1990).

Corona has been an Italian neighborhood. North Corona and East Elmherst have seen a sharp increase in American and West Indian Black residents. Along Roosevelt Avenue, Corona has a high concentration of Hispanic groups. In North Corona, on Queens Boulevard, there are clusters of warehouses and run-down vacant lots. Some Koreans own light manufacturing facilities, and automobile repair shops in this area. Toward the east end of Corona a dozen Asian and Hispanic owned car repair and body shops appear near the Shea Stadium.

## Flushing

Flushing has not only the largest concentration of Koreans but also the largest cluster of other Asian American populations. As one gets closer to the Main street terminal station of Flushing on a #7 subway, one notices only a handful of non-minority people in the train even during rush hours. When you get off the train and exit to the Main Street, you will find several blocks on the southwest side of Main Street changing rapidly into a bustling Chinese business district - a new Chinatown. There are rows of Chinese restaurants, Chinese bakeries, grocery stores, and a number of Chinese owned banks within a five block area. As you walk southward on Main street, store signs change into the squares and circles of Korean phonetic letters from those of Chinese brushstrokes. There are several large Korean restaurants, fish markets, butcher shops, dress shops, beauty salons, barber shops, and the ever present green grocers on nearly every corner. Further south on Main street near the Queens Botanical Garden, East Indian stores can be seen. Along Union Street and Roosevelt Avenue around the subway station, again you will find a dense concentration of Korean owned stores with signs in both English and Korean. A walk through the doors of the Union Shopping Center on Union Street is an instant journey to what might be a large, modern department store in Seoul. It is easy to gain the impression that virtually everything in the store, including customers, is Korean (The New York Times: May 3, 1991). Three Korean owned banks are in this area. Furthermore, many of the business and apartment buildings are owned by Korean Americans. On school yards and playgrounds in this area, you will see children from many different ethnic backgrounds. Their grandparents can be seen chatting with other elderly and watching over their grandchildren.

In Flushing, Korean Americans are heavily concentrated in the area defined by College Point on the west, Northern Boulevard on the north, Murray Hill Avenue on the east, and Main Street and Kissena Boulevard on the south. Most housing in this area is multiple family dwelling units, and large high-rise apartments. In some of the large apartment buildings, Koreans may occupy over 50 percent to 70 percent of the residential units. There are several large Korean churches, medical centers, and social service offices located in this area.

Many Korean Americans, once they are economically settled, move out to more desirable suburbs or more established quiet residential sections of Queens -- North Flushing, and Bayside to the north; Forest Hill and Rego Park, which are traditional Jewish neighborhoods to the south. Farther out, some well established Koreans move into Douglaston, Little Neck, Great Neck and Manhasset. Following the residential movements of Japanese businessmen, many well-to-do Koreans have moved to the Westchester, Scarsdale areas in New York, and several suburbs along the Palisades in New Jersey (The New York Times: April 17, 1991).

## **b. Social Network and Living Arrangements**

### **1. Social Interactions**

Most Koreans have relatives living nearby. Hurh and Kim (1988) report 70 percent have contacts with their relatives at least once a week. Slightly under 93 percent of them had contacts with their relatives at least once a month. In their sample, Hurh and Kim (1988) found that 81 percent had Korean friends, whereas only 38 percent of them reported any American friends. Koreans find their Korean friends through old school ties from home, or church affiliations, or at their place of work. Their American friends are acquired mainly through their place of work. They often describe their friendships with Americans to be problematic due to their cultural differences and the language barrier which makes them frequently feel uncomfortable. Being new immigrants, Korean Americans tend to have an ethnically enclosed social network. Even those who reside in mostly White suburban neighborhood areas develop and maintain their Korean friends through ethnic Korean churches and ethnic voluntary organizations. From Long Island, Scarsdale, Westchester, they drive into Queens to attend church services or to participate in functions of voluntary organizations. They do their regular grocery shopping at ethnic grocery stores, and frequently eat out at ethnic restaurants in Queens and Manhattan. Whether they live in the suburbs or in areas with heavy Korean concentrations, they have close affiliation with ethnic institutions. This is an important factor to be taken into consideration when planning an effective outreach program. Since there are several clusters of Korean residents and Korean operated businesses in Queens, many Korean Americans claim that they can get by, without much problem, using the Korean language alone.

### **2. Housing**

Settlements of minority populations in Queens have been rather recent developments. Korean Americans live in racially mixed neighborhoods. There is no ethnic enclave which one could call a Koreatown. More recently arrived immigrants tend to live with their relatives who assisted them in coming to the U.S. Often brothers and sisters and their spouses and their children all move into the house or apartment of the person who invited them to immigrate. They remain in the same residence until they can find suitable employment and have some minimum financial security. Soon younger relatives find their own residence, and move out. However, many older parents stay with their adult children.

In cramped apartments elderly parents frequently share a room with their grandchildren, or stay on the floor in the living room area. Most urban apartments are designed for a small nuclear family. This situation makes living conditions uncomfortable for both young and old generations. About 40 percent of the elderly move out to their own apartment when they qualify for SSI and/or housing subsidies

(Kang, 1982). In the Queens area, some recently arrived single persons who work in the city reside in rooming houses where multiple beds are set up in a small room, or live in a living room which is partitioned to accommodate several beds with each bed separated by screens or by curtains. Some boarding houses are operated by elderly Koreans, who provide two or three meals a day and a shared double or triple room depending on the size of the room. We also found some unrelated elderly people sharing an apartment together.

Hurh and Kim (1988), Kang (1982), and Yu (1982) report rather high residential mobility among Korean Americans in their studies of Chicago, New York, and Los Angeles respectively. Due to frequent changes of residence in the Korean American communities, all these research groups encountered great difficulty in locating individuals selected in their research samples. Cooperation of ethnic churches and voluntary organizations is of essential importance to trace addresses of these mobile individuals.

As pointed out in a previous section, most Koreans move out to single family dwellings in more quiet residential areas or to the suburbs as soon as they have the economic means to do so.

### 3. Religion

Between 70 percent to 80 percent of Korean Americans are Christians (Kang, 1982; Hurh and Kim, 1988), whereas only about 25 percent of Koreans in Korea are of the Christian faith. Korean Americans attend church primarily for their religious needs and belief in God. At the same time, they seek social and psychological refuge from the stresses and strains of immigration related adjustment problems through their church related activities. Most Koreans list church as the most important place to find and form friendships. Many Korean American churches are fundamentalist groups with an evangelical bent. In my survey of Korean American elderly, I found that many Koreans devote much of their time to church related activities. Some attend both morning and evening services on Sundays; Wednesday midweek worship, Thursday neighborhood district prayer meetings, and Friday prayer with fasting in the evening. With limited social and political opportunities in the host society, once they have some economic security established, Korean Americans seek social recognition within the ethnic community. The social positions available in the community are quite limited. There is often intense competition for leadership positions in churches, and other community organizations. The positions of elders, deacons, Sunday school teachers and even ushers are very important to the members.

Preachers and priests with the help of lay church leaders perform a variety of spiritual, social, political, economic, even psychiatric work for their parishioners. They provide advice and consultations for family troubles, problems with children,



employment information and referral, housing information and referral, psychological counselling, and often matchmaking services between male and female members of their churches. Many churches provide after school classes for children, nursery school for younger children, and English classes for the members.

The Korean American Telephone Directory of New York lists 166 Churches, of which 132 (80 percent) are in Queens. Flushing has 28 percent of the total, Elmhurst 8 percent, Woodside 13 percent, and other areas of Queens 29 percent. Min (1988) reports the average size of Korean churches in his New York sample to be 330 members. There are three churches which have over 1,000 members each. In my field work, I found one church with an average weekly collection of \$20,000. Indeed, Korean churches do have a powerful influence on many aspects of life in the Korean American community.

### **III Description and Selection of the Research Site**

#### **a. Selection of the Site**

In consultation with the CSMR staff, a set of criteria for selecting the research site was determined: 1) the site should not be too overloaded by Korean Americans -- the Korean population for the research should be about 50 percent of the residents; 2) the research site should reflect typical urban residential area characteristics for a recently immigrated Korean group. These two criteria excluded those Koreans who are economically well settled and have moved out to suburbs. We searched for a lower middle or an upper lower working class urban neighborhood.

An ethnographic study of Koreans in Queens, New York was carried out by Tai Kang in the summer of 1989 (July and August of 1990) and for two weeks during May and June of 1990. This study enabled us to select four areas in Queens as potential research sites for an Alternative Enumeration study -- a high-rise apartment building near the Elmhurst City Hospital, an apartment building in an upper middle rental apartment complex on Kissena Boulevard, two sites in the neighborhood close to Main Street station in Flushing. We decided that the research site should be in the area where there is the largest concentration of Koreans -- the Flushing area. The Elmhurst location was not in the Flushing area, and only about 30 percent of the residents in the building were Korean Americans. Counting the number of Korean names on the mailbox listing, we found 70 percent of the units in Kissena Boulevard site to be Koreans. This location has a multi-ethnic residential mix which could provide a research environment to compare ways in which different ethnic groups respond to the census. However, the Kissena site has one of the highest rental rates in the Flushing area. After eliminating the Elmhurst and Kissena sites, we focussed on two remaining sites in Flushing. Each site is a large 7 story high apartment building with 106 housing units each. These two apartment complexes are about 25 years old. They are on the same block. One

is a solid, clean, and well maintained building free of graffiti and with a marble walled entrance. The other building is much less well maintained. Old graffiti are on the front walls. At the front entrance one notices that a few marble pieces on the wall are missing and the aluminum foyer roof is bent out of shape. The less well maintained building has somewhat lower rental rate and appears to have somewhat lower socio-economic status occupants than the other building. The less well maintained building was selected to be the research site for the AE. Seventy percent of the names on the mailbox list for this building are Korean. The list is an old one which has not been changed for number of years. The manager of the apartment informed us that about 60 percent of the units in the building were occupied by Korean. The site also contained multi-ethnic groups - Koreans, Chinese, recent immigrants from Eastern European countries, Vietnamese, South Asians, Hispanics, and some long time residents of elderly Whites.

#### **b. Neighborhood Characteristics**

The ethnographic sample is located four blocks from a major subway station. A Long Island Railroad station is within walking distance. A dozen of the major New York Transit Bus routes run through this area, including buses to the two major airports. You could get to Manhattan in about forty minutes by a subway. Indeed, all modes of transportation are easily available in this area. Within a five block area there are five Chinese owned banks, three Korean owned banks, and seven American banks with Chinese and Korean signs and multi-lingual staff. Also found within easy walking distance from the sample area are: several large supermarket size oriental grocery stores (Chinese, Korean, Japanese), butcher shops, fish markets, Korean and Chinese bakeries, electronic and video equipment stores, oriental restaurants, ethnic beauty salons and barber shops, furniture stores, toy shops, boutiques and dress shops, drug stores, coffee shops, gift and card shops, green grocers, Asian call taxi companies, several large ethnic churches and temples, medical centers with Asian medical staff, and herbal medicine and acupuncture clinics. The list of businesses managed and owned by Asians for Asian clients could go on and on. The ethnographic site is an ethnically mixed neighborhood of recent immigrants from Korea, China, Vietnam, Latin Americas, Eastern European countries, and a relatively small portion of long time residents of White ethnic backgrounds. A recent immigrant from Korea with little language ability could easily manage his or her daily life without ever speaking a word of English. He buys his groceries from a Korean supermarket, has a lunch with his countrymen in a Korean restaurant, reads a Korean newspaper flown in daily from Korea and reproduced in New York, listens to a Korean radio program and watches a Korean TV program, has his hair cut by a Korea barber, has his medical needs taken care of by a Korean surgeon, cardiologist, dentist, herbal doctor, and an acupuncturist. He could even have his fortune read by a Korean

fortune teller. All those facilities and more are available within a few minutes walking distance from the ethnographic site.

### **c. Description of the Research Site**

The sample area is a seven story brick building with 106 apartment units. It contains 18 studio, 44 one bedroom, 36 two bedroom, 6 three bedroom and 2 four bedroom units. On the average the rental for a studio is \$500, \$600 for one bedroom, and \$750 for two bedroom units. These rates are lower than prevailing rates for equivalent apartments in the area. The easy access to public transportation, shopping conveniences in the neighborhood, and relatively low rental rates for the apartments attract recent immigrants with who have low income occupations and elderly with low fixed income to the building.

You notice a few old graffiti on the outside brick walls. The once marble walled facade of the entrance has a few marble pieces missing. Inside the entrance is an old faded intercom plate where many occupants' names are listed with missing characters. Also missing are many names on the mailboxes, despite of the fact that all 106 units in the building are occupied. Two elevators in the building were not properly operating for much of seven weeks' time the research team worked in the building. Yet the inside hall-ways and stairways were free of graffiti and were relatively clean.

Little children play in the hallways, some ride roller-skates around the small lobby area of the entrance. On a nice day you see ladies take their children out to play on the side-walk outside of the building. Also noticed are elderly Russian immigrants circled around on their portable lawn chairs reading their ethnic papers and conversing often with animated gestures. In the late evenings people who work the late afternoon shift or long hours come home in their work uniforms - Chinese cooks in their somewhat soiled white uniforms, and domestic workers and waitresses with their work uniforms. Often you see cab-drivers who reside in the building getting picked up by fellow workers at the front entrance. When they meet, they exchange hearty greetings with each other. Every once in a while ladies with boxes of garments sewn or to be sewn can be seen going in or out of the building. A couple of nights a week and on Sunday morning two or three church vans stop by to pick up or to bring back residents of the building to and from churches.

## **IV Methodology**

### **a. Review of Literature, Unobtrusive Observation, Community Consultants**

During the summer months of 1989, the researcher did an extensive review of literature on the topic of the immigration experiences of Asian Americans and the history of Queens. The Principal Investigator (PI) and his graduate assistant interviewed the staff at the Asian Studies Project at Queens College and the staff of the

Planning Council of the City of New York, and actively participated in the planning of the "Census Awareness Project" for the Korean community of New York. We interviewed key informants and ethnic community leaders for both Korean and Chinese groups - Korean Association of Queens, Korean YWCA, Korean Association of the Greater New York, Korean Times (Hankook Ilbo), several ministers of large churches, Korean Social Service Center. Along with a staff member of the Korean Social Service Center who joined us in our preparatory work for the AE, we walked and drove around many areas in Queens to observe the residential and business distribution of different ethnic groups from the tip of Long Island City to the east end of Queens -- Douglaston and Manhasset in Long Island. We also just randomly engaged in casual conversations with Korean American residents in Flushing area during the six weeks period in the summer of 1989 (Kang, 1990). During two weeks of May and June of 1990 we selected four potential research sites. The PI and his research assistant spent three days on each site to study the neighborhood and demographic characteristics of these sites.

#### **b. Unobtrusive Observation**

Once a final decision was made on the sample area, and the site approved by CSMR staff, in June of 1990 the PI and his assistant interviewed several staff of the rental office and the building superintendent to get their cooperation for our study and to obtain a general picture of the tenants' characteristics. Their attitude toward our study was lukewarm at best; the building superintendent was somewhat hostile. Nevertheless, they agreed to let us proceed. For several days we just stayed around the entrance area to get to talk to some of the residents and to get to know them. At a minimum we had to find a way to get into the building since a key is needed to enter through the front door. Another way to get into the building was to ask a resident to activate an electric key release buzzer. We engaged mothers who were playing with children into conversations, and talked with Russian immigrants who were sitting outside to find some relief from the muggy hot summer air. Fortunately, we established a friendly rapport with two elderly Koreans who had been helpful by convincing a few of their friends to cooperate with our work, and let us into the building. One of these two ladies turned out to be a very helpful community consultant for our investigation. She provided the last resort information for three household units, described the general characteristics of social relations among the residents and the relationship between the superintendent and the tenants. Once we were in the building we walked around the building to get to know the physical characteristics of the complex, and to get to talk with people -- in the laundry room, in the hallways, anywhere possible.

### **c. Research Team**

In June of 1990, we recruited two Korean American high school seniors who had worked in May as enumerators in other parts of Queens, and two bilingual Korean American women in their early thirties to assist our interviews. The two older women were Flushing area residents, and worked for the project on part-time work basis. We prepared an informal interview guide and check list in Korean and an English to assist us in recording observations made during the interview. Its design was loosely based on the check lists provided in the guidelines provided by CSMR for recording systematic behavioral observations. Two three-hour training sessions for the use of the interview guide and check list were given to the new locally recruited assistants. Three Korean families from outside the research site were recruited to perform pretests of the interview guide and check list by assistants.

### **d. Interviews**

The research team was divided into two groups. Each team was composed of a high school senior, one of the older Korean American woman and either the PI or his research assistant. We hoped that the PI and the graduate assistant would provide the academic credentials, the high school youth would appeal to the parental instincts of household heads, and the Korean American women would soften up the impression that the team presented to the respondents. The high school youths had done work for the census. The two Korean ladies had worked for the Korean American Senior Citizen Social Service Center, and had a wide range of other experiences from dealing with the local Korean population.

## **V Problems**

Some residents claimed that they had been visited by census people four or five times and were resentful of additional visits by anyone doing work for the census. Just a few weeks before our work, two apartment units in the complex had been broken into. An elderly Korean lady tells us:

"We have problems with some teenage boys in this building. They have funny looking hair cuts, and smoke marijuana and play loud music in the stairways. Most of the residents think that some of those kids pulled the robbery job. They knock on your door or call you on the phone. When there is no answer, they break into your place. Many of us are afraid of opening, the door when we hear someone knocking."

Fear resulting from recent crimes increased our difficulties with interviewing the residents.

The building superintendent seemed to want to avoid us. We felt that we needed his help in getting cooperation for our work from

the residents and to get information on last resort cases. Later the same elderly Korean lady mentioned:

"The super in this building is quite powerful. When things have to be fixed, unless you occasionally give him valued gifts such as a bottle of brandy or a box of candy with a small check, it will take months before they get repaired. In addition the super demands and gets broker's fee which is equivalent to one month's rent from a newly moving in family who gets referred to the apartment complex through a friend rather than through a Realtor. I think he is afraid that the management will find out about it."

Taking broker's fee under the table is a form of underground economy. The super may not desire to have outsiders poking around the building to find some of these interesting aspects of the superintendent - tenant relationship.

As I mentioned earlier, the apartment complex in our site has a locked front door entrance. Only the residents of the building with the keys for the front door could get into the building. Until we had established a friendly relationship with some elderly Korean ladies in two apartment units in the building, an entry into the building was quite difficult. We waited around to find someone coming out or going into the building to get through the front door. People get suspicious when they see someone hanging around the front door area. Once, when I tried to follow a middle aged lady with a professional appearance into the door, she turned around and asked me whether I lived there or was visiting someone in the building. When I replied "No, however, I am a faculty member of a university and am conducting a study for a Census Bureau research project," she politely smiled and said "then you should get approval for your work from the building management. They may provide you a key for the front door." We learned later that she was a visiting nurse for a Russian American elderly lady. She was merely following the building management's policy. In response to my request for their approval of our project, the staff of the management office were courteous:

"You could do whatever you have to do for your study as long as our residents are not forced into doing something they do not want to do. The key, you can not have. That is our management policy. No key for non-resident."

## **VI Findings**

### **a. Personal Characteristics**

#### **1) Ethnicity**

As stated before, there are 106 apartment units in the building. The ethnic breakdown by housing unit is as follows: 49.5 percent Korean; 26.2 percent White (of which 13.6 percent was Russian Jews); 12.6 percent Chinese; 4.9 percent Hispanic; 2.9 percent Vietnamese; and 3.9 percent South Asian (Indians and Pakistanis).

With the exception of a small percentage of Whites (about 12 percent of the total residents), most of the occupants were recent immigrants. Koreans were the largest group, followed by Russians and Chinese. Four Korean families, two Russians, one Chinese, one Vietnamese, and three White families invited us into their apartments for interviews. Interviewees from the other 95 households talked to us outside of their apartments with the door either slightly open or closed. Some refused the interview outright or were unavailable. For those cases we had to use last resort information from neighbors or the rental office. We found Russian immigrants and White residents to be more cooperative with our interviews. Less fear of government on the part of Whites, and the authoritarian socialization the Russians experienced may explain the lower resistance we encountered among these two groups.

#### **2) Age**

Elderly recent immigrants were most difficult to interview. They tend to have the least degree of familiarity with English. They are more likely to be suspicious of outsiders. A typical response from the elderly was "No English," or "I don't know about anything, You have to talk to my son or my daughter." Cooperative individuals tend to be older high school youths or young college aged youths as Rynearson and her associates found in their work (1990). In one Vietnamese household, an old grandmother was adamant in refusing to be interviewed. A grandson who was a college student strenuously tried to persuade her to let us interview the family. Only after a long heated exchange of words between the grandmother and her grandson were we allowed to talk to her grandson outside the apartment.

#### **3) Gender**

Gender did not, in general, appear to be related to willingness to respond to the AE. However, elderly female immigrants are much more likely to refuse to be interviewed than younger females. In the following few sections, we analyzed the quantitative relationships between the personal characteristics of interviewees and their willingness to respond to being interviewed for the AE. Some

caveats are called for in interpreting the analyses for the following reasons:

1. Measures of the interviewees' willingness to respond to the AE (a five point scale -- very negative to very favorable), English language proficiency (a four point scale -- no or very little to good), living standard of the households, and occupations of the heads of households (a five point scale -- unemployed to professional) were based on the subjective evaluations of those characteristics by the research team. When there were disagreements on the above measures majority views among the three researchers were take.
2. The sampling of interviewees from the households studied was not based on a random selection method. Therefore, the generalizability of the analysis is limited. Furthermore, since in many of the households studied we were denied entry into their apartments, we could not make personal observations of furnishings in the apartments. Consequently, we could not make evaluations of the living standards of those households. These limitations produced a considerable number of missing cases for our measurements. Due to those limitations in our quantitative data, the statistical tests and probability values provided in the following analyses should be interpreted mainly in a descriptive spirit.

#### 4) Language

Only sixteen percent of the interviewees included in the AE were native English speakers. Sixty four percent spoke their own ethnic language only. Nineteen percent of the interviewees had some proficiency in English. In our analysis of data we found that English proficiency is positively related to cooperation with the AE (an analysis of variance --  $F=.06$ ;  $DF=9, 72$ ;  $p < .06$ ). (See Appendix 1, Table A)

In a sequel to the analysis of variance we did a multiple classification analysis to examine the relationship between "cooperation" for the AE and English "proficiency". The grand mean for "cooperation" for the group as whole was 3.11. Individuals with low English proficiency had negative deviations from the grand mean which indicated their less cooperative attitudes toward the AE. In contrast, those with higher degree of English proficiency had means above the grand mean which is indicative of their more cooperative attitude toward the AE (See Appendix 1, Table B). For the site as a whole, 57 percent of the interviewees had a neutral or negative response toward the AE.



## 5) Occupation

Many residents in the building had unusual work schedules. Koreans working for their ethnic business employers (green grocers, sewing factories) and Chinese employed in restaurants and grocers worked unusually long hours -- 11 to 12 hours a day, seven days a week. We experienced difficulty in getting hold of those individuals. We had to visit them before 8 in the morning or after 11 at night. After many repeated attempts we were successful in interviewing them.

Occupational status (an analysis of variance --  $F=2.40$ ;  $DF=19, 27$ ;  $P < .02$ ) showed a significant relationship with cooperation with the AE. Low occupational status is associated with a decreased willingness to participate in the AE. (See Appendix 2, Table A)

In the following multiple classification analysis we found the grand mean of "cooperation" score for the group as a whole to be 3.36. Individuals in lower occupational categories had negative deviations from the grand mean, whereas those in higher occupational groups showed positive deviations. The result indicated a positive relationship between "occupation" and "cooperation with the AE" -- the higher the occupational status, the greater the cooperation with the AE. (See Appendix 2 Table B)

### b. Social Relations

Because most residents in the building are recent immigrants, their social relations with neighbors are quite limited. Seventy six percent of those interviewed indicated that they had little interaction with their neighbors. Koreans seem to develop friendly relations with their ethnic neighbors through shared religious and work related activities. Our consultant in the building, an elderly lady deaconess of a Korean church, said:

"We do things together with neighbors who are members of the same church. We get together twice a week for prayer meetings which is held on a rotating basis in each member's apartment. We go to the church together in a church van."

Russians had many active interactions with their ethnic neighbors. Chinese and Vietnamese limited their social associations in the neighborhood within their own ethnic groups. A young Russian cab driver living in the building helped to persuade other Russians to cooperate with our study. A Chinese high school boy interpreted our interview for his family and introduced us to one of his neighbors. A Vietnamese college youth was instrumental in obtaining two families for our interviews. It is important to identify socially active individuals who are cooperative to persuade reluctant ethnic families to participate in the AE.

**c. Residual Characteristics (Carry-overs From the Past)**

Social status characteristics carried over from pre-immigration days in their home countries are important for many recent immigrants in their encounter with the drastic decline in status they experience in new social environments. An elderly Romanian gentleman protested:

"I used to be an administrative head of a large region in Romania. I know how a government works. All these repeated census requests! Don't you know that I know what my rights are? I also used to teach in Romania, too, you know."

Fortunately, one of my assistants spoke French. The gentleman was delighted in conversing with her in French -- he also taught in a French high school before he came to the United States. He finally consented to provide us with names, gender, age, and relations to the head of the household for the members of his family for our AE. However, he still refused to let us into his place. Respect accorded to the present or past social status are often of vital importance in establishing rapport with interviewees. A Korean elderly woman who turned out to be a key community consultant for our project was a good example. We first met her in a neighborhood oriental grocery store. During casual conversation we found out that she resided in the research site. When she discovered that the PI was a college professor, she had a big smile and mentioned:

"I was a college instructor in Korea when Korean universities and colleges had few female college instructors. I had my master's degree in English. It was, of course, a long time before women were allowed to pursue advanced graduate work in Korea. I do understand difficulties you encounter in your field research. I will do my best to help you out. I am mostly home. So when you need to come into the building, just ring my bell I will let you in."

**d. Barriers**

**1) Boarders**

Many immigrant households in New York take in boarders to supplement their income and to help to pay for high rents for their housing. Most families with boarders are not willing to let the outsiders know about their housing arrangements. Reasons for this reluctance are: 1) the desire to conceal unreported income from the IRS and welfare officials; and 2) the desire to conceal from management that there are unauthorized boarders living within the housing unit.

An elderly Korean couple claimed "Just two of us live in this apartment." Just then, a young Korean woman came out of the apartment. When she came out of the door, we noticed a bed in the living room. In response to our question "Is she staying with you?", the man replied "She has been with us for only a few months as a visitor." As we left the couple and walked down the stairway, we heard the man shouting at his wife "I told you not to talk to those people. We may have a big trouble." I returned to the couple and explained the confidentiality guaranteed for information provided for the census. The man turned his back after looking at me with an angry expression. We obtained information about the young woman for our AE through a neighbor of this old couple. For this household, both the AE and the census data listed an elderly Korean couple and a boarder. Korean farmers have a proverb "Don't let the government know how many sons and how many cows you have." Similar sayings exist in China and other countries with long histories of oppressive governments.

In a one bedroom apartment, a Korean couple with a young child took in two boarders after the census day, replacing a boarder who moved out in May of 1990. An overcrowded apartment with two beds in the living room for the boarders was not something many people would be comfortable disclosing to outsiders. The head of the family we interviewed was reluctant to tell us about the boarders. This turnover of boarders created a discrepancy between the census data and the AE.

A middle aged Korean man responded to our knock on his studio apartment. He provided us with a minimum of information about himself, and claimed that he was the only resident of the apartment. In our "match" phase of field work we found that there was a housemate reported to the census sharing the apartment. Both of the residents worked unusually long hours of their jobs. It took us seven visits to meet a resident to interview.

## 2) Underground Economy

Several families in the building had small garment subcontract work done in their apartments. One Korean family had two sewing machines in the living room, three ladies were working on ladies' blouse and men's ties. A few minutes after we got into the apartment, a young man (the head of the household) came in. The ladies were willing to be interviewed before the man returned home. The man asked us what we were doing. When we introduced ourselves as researchers working on a census project, he immediately pushed us out of the apartment. "We just don't want to talk to you, people. I don't want you to snoop around. Don't ever come back," he kept shouting at us as he shoved us out the door. For our AE we had to obtain information about this family through a community consultant who resided in the building. Information that we obtained with a great deal of difficulty from a neighbor matched with the information related to the census. Many subcontractors in the garment industry in New York

City operate underground. Unreported income from this type of operation is closely guarded from outsiders.

### 3) Cultural Norms

When a cultural norm is violated, one is reluctant to reveal a culturally disapproved norm violating behavior. A young Korean woman is married to a Pakistani man. Koreans generally disapprove of inter-racial marriage; this type of cultural sanction is more noticeable when a Korean woman marries a non-Korean man. We met this Korean lady in the laundry room. She said:

"They (Koreans in the building) don't like us. They just completely ignore us. I don't have any social contact with Koreans in the building."

For this household, information in the AE matched information reported to the census.

Another young Korean woman lives with a Hispanic man. She listed herself as the sole resident of an apartment on the AE. He reported only himself to the census.

On the AE, a young Korean man listed himself as the only resident. An enumerator for the census reported a young Korean woman as a housemate. In our later follow-up, we found out that his family (his wife and children) in Korea will join him soon. According to one of his neighbors, the present housemate reported to the census seemed to be his live-in girl friend. Understandably, he was unwilling to list her as a resident in his apartment on AE.

On AE, an elderly Jewish man claimed to be the sole occupant of the apartment. An enumerator in May, 1990 listed two residents in the unit with minimum information (the last resort method was used). When we revisited the building, a neighbor told us that the second person reported to the census seemed to be the unmarried partner of the person we had interviewed during AE.

### 4) Overcrowding

Chinese residents in the building tend to live in small overly crowded apartments. In four Chinese occupied studios, the average number of residents was 4.25. For six Chinese occupied single bedroom apartments, the average was 4.5 persons. Doubled-up family living arrangements seem to be quite prevalent among Chinese, particularly until the families are economically secure. One Vietnamese family had six people living in a single bedroom apartment.

A middle aged Chinese couple and their seven daughters shared a one bedroom apartment. The head of the family was a cook in a local Chinese restaurant. He was a reluctant interviewee with very limited English. On the AE he did not report two of his daughters. One of these daughters was listed in the census. His sense of economic inadequacy because of the overcrowded living condition, his negative attitude toward the census and his limited language proficiency all contributed to producing the discrepancy between AE and census.

On the AE a Korean household reported four residents -- an older couple and their two sons. However, on the census eight people were listed. These eight individuals composed three generations of a family. The apartment had only two bedrooms. Before she came out and reluctantly talked to us, the older lady of the household refused to be interviewed several times. When asked "... then, you have four people living in the apartment?", she replied "yes." The reluctance we noticed when interviewing residents of overcrowded apartments may be attributed to reasons similar to those given for households with boarders: 1) some members of the housing unit make financial contributions to the head of the household which could be unreported income for that person; 2) unreported income may jeopardize the welfare benefits of the head of the household; 3) the management rules of the apartments may prohibit overcrowding; 4) the low income implied by overcrowding and associated sense of shame.

#### **5) Ambiguous Residents**

Ambiguous residents in our study include irregular residency -- persons interviewed for the AE study who were not sure of the census residency definition of someone in the housing unit, individuals who were not physically present in the housing unit at the time of the census, and intentional concealment of "couch people" particularly if they are illegal.

An elderly Korean lady has a nicely kept, clean one bedroom apartment with another Korean lady as a boarder. There is a small carrying case for a violin in one corner of the living room. The old lady talks about the violin:

"My grandson who is 12 years old plays a violin. He used to stay with me until the middle of this March. His mother took him when she found a larger apartment for herself. Now he comes over weekends and stays with me. I don't know his mother included him in her census. I should have listed him in my household for your AE since he still stays with me over weekends, right?"

Of course, she was right to not include the grandson in her household on the census. But she strongly insisted that her grandson be included in her household on our AE.

A Hispanic family had a niece living with them. When this household was being interviewed for the AE the niece was not present. The head of the household included only the members of immediate family on the AE, and not the niece.

A Russian family of three reported two more individuals to the census -- one relative and a non-related person. On the AE the head of the family, an elderly Russian man, furnished information only about three members of his family. Two other individuals listed in the census were not at home at the time of our interview.

We interviewed the head of a Hispanic household. He listed five members of his immediate family in our AE. He did not include his niece whom he reported as resident in his household to the census. During the AE his niece was not at home.

In several Korean and Chinese households, we strongly suspect the concealment of "couch people", as Bourgois (1990) calls them. These are people who are sometimes seen shirtless and lying on a sofa or sitting in the kitchen area, visible as you peep through the small openings of the door. Individuals interviewed would not let you into the apartments, and were obviously reluctant to talk to you about household related information. If the residents of an apartment unit are determined to keep outsiders from learning about the composition of their household, they can easily do so in an urban apartment setting such as our site where interaction among the residents is minimal.

#### **6) Fear of Crime**

Muggings in the neighborhood are frequently reported in local ethnic papers. In particular, the elderly and lone persons on the street after dark are known to be vulnerable to street crimes committed by young gang members. Recently the research site had two break-ins. The residents of the complex suspect some young people living in the building. One lady we met in the laundry room told us:

"We see those kids sitting around the steps in those end of hallway exit stairways, -- drinking beers, listening to those loud boomboxes, and smoking. We try to avoid interacting with them. We are sure that those kids did the break-in jobs. Now we are really afraid to say even hello to unknown persons we run into in the building. For example you and your group, if you didn't let me know that you are affiliated with an university, I wouldn't be talking to you as I do now."

Two young Korean girls in their late teens live with their mother in an apartment. Their mother was away visiting her home country. Those two young ladies absolutely refused to be interviewed. A neighbor of theirs told us "their fear of crime is extreme, they are very careful -- not going out after dark, not talking to strangers, particularly since their mother has been away."

The composition of the research team, three individuals in each team in neatly presentable attire with polite manners somewhat assuaged their fear of crime. Particularly the inclusion of a young lady in her early thirties on each team reduced fear.

#### **7) Language Problems**

Individuals with language problems were often reluctant to be interviewed. Even with help from an interpreter, it was difficult to obtain census relevant information from these respondents. Furthermore, the information obtained was often incomplete.

We had an English speaking Chinese youth to interpret for us while interviewing the extremely reluctant older Chinese lady of a household. She listed just herself and her husband as residents of the unit. A relative of the family had been reported to the census but was not at home during the AE, and was not listed.

On the AE, an elderly Chinese lady was interviewed with the help of an English speaking Chinese high school boy. She listed her son and his family (his wife and a baby girl) as residents in the apartment. However, in the census the family of her son listed on the AE was excluded.

#### **8) Unusual Work Hours**

Many new immigrants have unusual work hours. Entire family members often work ten to twelve hours a day, seven days a week. Consequently, a census worker has difficulty interviewing individuals from this type of household.

An enumerator in June of 1990 used the last resort method to list two residents in an apartment obtaining a minimum of information. During the day we could not find anyone at home in the apartment. Finally one evening around eleven in the evening, we encountered an old Chinese lady who could not speak a word of English. We brought over a bilingual Chinese youth from the neighborhood to interpret our conversations for us. The old lady was extremely reluctant to be interviewed. The interview took place outside of her apartment. The household contained a couple with two of their sons. They all worked in a local Chinese restaurant -- seven days a week, eleven to twelve hours a day. An enumerator in June was unable to interview anyone due to the unusual working hours of the family.

## 9) Movers, Travellers

There were a number of households where some individuals moved in or out of the apartments after the census day. Among immigrant families, there were those who were visiting their old home countries around the census time. These changes created some discrepancies between the census and the AE files.

In a Hispanic household, a new son-in-law moved into the apartment of the new bride's parents after the census day. When he moved in, a relative of the family moved out of the household. This change produced a discrepancy between the census and the AE.

An interview with a very reluctant East Indian woman from Guyana revealed that four members of her family who were residents of the household were visiting their homeland (Guyana) on a long vacation. They planned to come back. Consequently five individuals were reported as residents in the AE. On census day they were out of the country. On the census she listed only herself as resident.

### e. Multiple Listing

There were three duplicate and one triplicate listings in the census and one duplicate in the AE.

On the AE, two records had been submitted by the research team apparently for the same household. The reason for this duplication in the AE is as follows: A few years ago, without notifying the apartment management office, one Korean family rented out the apartment to another Korean family and moved out. A research team assigned to this apartment unit had a difficult finding someone in this apartment to interview. After six attempts, the team decided to obtain information about this household through the management office. In the meantime the second research team managed to find someone in the apartment and interviewed him. With some reluctance and with our assurance of strict legal confidentiality of census related information, he told us about the informal rental arrangement that he had with the other Korean family. In our AE listing, we made the error of not deleting the first household listing submitted.

## VII Recommendations

### 1) Community Resources For Outreach

#### a. Ethnic Organizations

There are a large number of social, political, business, and cultural community organizations in the Korean community. Some examples are listed as follows: the Korean American Association of Greater New York, the Association of Fruit and Vegetable Stores, the Dry Cleaners Association, the Association of Small and Medium



Size Business, the Broadway Merchants Association, the Flushing Businessmen's Association, Korean American YWCA of New York, the Korean Senior Citizen's Association of New York, Korean American Social Service Center of New York, Association of Korean Marine Corps Veterans, Seoul National University Alumni of New York, and the Yee Wha Girl High School Alumni. The Korean American Telephone Directory of New York (1989 edition) contains 80 such organizations in all.

A number of community organizations with significant influence in the community could be selected. Selection criteria would be based upon those organizations with large memberships, and those with significant contacts in the community such as social service organizations, and ethnic grocery stores. Again, the support of the community organizations should be solicited by explaining the importance of the census to the Korean American community. The census outreach workers should emphasize the benefit of political, economic, and social aspects of empowerment for minority groups through Census participation. These organizations would not only facilitate the dissemination of information about the census, but would also contribute economic and human resources to assist in the outreach work for the census.

#### **b. Power and Status Dynamics in the Community**

In a newly emerging ethnic minority community, few Korean Americans find opportunities to attain social recognition commensurate with the status they aspire to in the majority community. The only place where they could achieve and attain recognizable status is in their own ethnic community. Within this small enclave, valued status positions are limited. Often competition for a few available status positions becomes serious and intense. In organizing a community-wide organization for enhancing and promoting the census, one has to have an extensive comprehension of the power and status dynamics in the Korean community. One also has to be extremely careful in suggesting a workable plan for a coordinated organizational effort in censusing.

#### **c. Ethnic Churches and Buddhist Temples**

In my 1982 study of the Korean American community in New York City, I interviewed a random sample of 289 Korean Americans. I found that most Koreans in New York were Christians (sixty eight percent Protestants, eight percent Catholics). Approximately ten percent of the sample were affiliated with Buddhism. Furthermore, seventy seven percent of the sample indicated that they attended religious services at least once a month, and sixty four percent of them at least once a week. Given the overwhelming majority in the community who attend religious services, churches and Buddhist temples have a powerful and extensive influence on the lives of Korean Americans. More importantly, leadership groups in churches (elders, deacons) include influential individuals in business and

professional fields. Most churches have active youth groups for college and high school students. The implication of these findings is that support for the census should be solicited from preachers and priests in the community. The preachers could explain the importance, nature and characteristics of the census. They could emphasize the strict confidentiality of censusing to their parishioners in their sermons. Indeed, church leaders and youth groups could function as key links to individuals in the community to ensure comprehensive censusing.

In the 1990 census, despite strong community wide "awareness" efforts where church ministers participation were solicited, many ministers gave a perfunctory, lukewarm endorsement for the census in short statements, often at the tail end of their sermons. This effort should be improved. Being recent immigrants, as described earlier, Koreans eagerly seek recognition of their social status within the ethnic community. Preachers are no exception to the widely practiced status seeking efforts in the community. "Awareness" programs in the future should attempt to include church ministers in the programs as titled officials with appropriate recognition from proper local political dignitaries.

#### **d. Ethnic Mass Media**

There are 13 ethnic newspapers serving the community, including the 4 U.S. editions of 4 major Korean daily papers relayed through a satellite communication device -- Hankook Ilbo, Tong-A Ilbo, Choong-Ang Ilbo, and Choson Ilbo. The community also supports a 24 hour a day Korean language radio broadcast and a 4 hour per day ethnic TV program with a large community-wide audience. Each of these media has a sizable portion of their programming set aside for public information on events of community-wide interest. The size of audiences for these media, particularly visual media, is indeed massive in Korean communities. Korean families spend many hours watching TV dramas or Korean movies on video cassettes. Attractively designed promotions for the census with emphasis on direct benefits in political and economic empowerment should be attached as part of those visual media message. To stress the confidentiality of census information, a visual media promotion could include a concrete illustrative example where, for example, a high government official was prevented access to the confidential census information. Community leaders and scholars are often asked to contribute articles to daily papers, and to appear on radio and TV programs. Strong endorsements for the census given by ethnic community leaders and scholars would be effective in publicizing the importance of the census.

#### **2) Recruitment and Training of Volunteers**

For a new immigrant group with little language and cultural familiarity of the host culture, it is essential that the respondents and the census worker and volunteers share the same

ethnic and cultural background. If they do not share the same background, close monitoring of the effects of these differences should be made.

**a. Culture, Language, and Manner**

The interpersonal communications among Korean Americans reflects the vertical social status structure of the traditional culture. It demands the proper use of a complicated set of honorifics. Census workers and volunteers should be particularly careful in the proper use of gender and status related honorifics. In conversations as well as in written communications, the structure of sentences should be congruent with status relationships among the participants in the interaction. Census workers familiar with neighborhoods in the community and preferably from the same ethnic background as the respondents would have an understanding of what constitutes appropriate behavior.

**b. Social Distance**

Census workers and volunteers should dress, behave, and talk in ways that minimize any chance of offending respondents. Overly dressed persons with a stiff official bureaucratic manner are found to inhibit respondents. Respondents may be afraid to admit strangers into their homes. Female respondents may be much less willing to have a male worker or volunteer to come into their homes. Use of indigenous workers and volunteers may reduce many response related problems associated with social status distance, language, and manner.

**c. Social Desirability**

Researchers who have studied the Korean American community (Kang, 1985; Hurh and Kim, 1982) report a persistent problem of low validity in certain items used in their research instruments. Keeping or saving "face" in interactions, particularly with strangers, is of utmost importance in traditional Korean culture. This may involve a polite and subtle distortion of facts. Distortion of facts due to a social desirability factor is in response to items such as "education", "income," and "occupation." Frequently one finds a respondent who claims to have a high school education displaying difficulty writing his or her own name. Korean Americans tend to inflate their education and occupational status, and to understate their "income" (Kang, 1985; Hurh and Kim, 1982).

In the outreach effort for censusing, along with an emphasis on the political and economic significance of census for the community, strong emphasis should be placed on the importance of accuracy in responses and the absolute guarantee of confidentiality of censusing.

#### **d. Informal Community Consultants**

In the Korean American community, one can find some informal leaders of considerable linkages and influence. In my field work, I found an interesting group of such influential individuals. One elderly lady is a church deaconess. Through church related work she established an extensive social network within the community. She is the one whom people call to find out where one can find an available apartment, part-time work, baby sitters, or to arrange an informal short term loan. Another person built her community-wide social network through her job she had in a social service center. She connects job seekers with employers, renters of apartments and stores with landlords, and sometimes even performs go-between roles for the families with boys and girls of marriageable age. Preachers and priests invariably have those multiple roles in the community with their extensive personal social network. These informal network resources should be fully utilized to maximize outreach efforts.

#### **e. Drop-in Assistance Centers**

Churches, temples, and social service organizations along with social and business organizations with wide networks in the community should be identified to serve as drop-in assistance centers for censusing. People in the community could bring their census forms to these center and fill them out with the help of trained volunteers. To implement a coordinated effort of outreach, a community wide organization should be developed. Publicity and educational work, translations of census forms, training of voluntary workers, and community wide mobilization of financial and human resources could be coordinated through the new organization.

#### **f. Youth Organization**

Utilization of youth groups in churches for the census outreach is of essential importance. They are familiar with the host culture and language. They could bridge the culturally separate community of new immigrants with the community of the host society. Churches and temples with their large numbers of parishioners could set up drop-in centers to help their members and neighbors to complete the census forms.

#### **g. Census Awareness Project (CAP)**

In the future, "Census Awareness Project" (CAP) should have three or preferably four years of work to prepare for the next decennial census. Individuals who are capable of influencing their own ethnic communities should be carefully screened and selected as CAP staff. These individuals could identify key community leaders and influential media to enhance census awareness in ethnic communities.

A Korean member of the CAP staff in New York City was just such a person. Some fifty community leaders representing various ethnic organizations got together to organize a community-wide Census outreach committee in June of 1989. They had some difficulty in getting organized. However, with gentle yet effective advice provided by this Korean CAP staff person, the community-wide outreach group became operational. The CAP staff organized a "Korean Census Assistance Center" with financial support that they solicited from Korean community organizations -- churches, business and cultural, and other social groups. With the \$20,000 these organizations donated, about two dozen Korean American high school youths were trained to give talks and to distribute census promotion materials (prepared in Korean) to various Korean groups. They handed out over 35,000 short promotional forms where respondents were asked to call to obtain help for censusing if they failed to respond to the census. The number of telephone calls received in response to these promotional materials was impressive.

#### **h. Enumerator**

Census responses through mailing are indeed minimal for recent immigrant groups. Enumerator interviews might be the only way to census these groups. Two staged enumeration might improve censusing recent immigrant groups. First, ethnic households could be identified. Then, one who speaks their ethnic language should conduct the census interviews. Enumerators who can not communicate in ethnic language just cannot get through to recent immigrants with little language facility.

#### **i. Building Management Staff**

In censusing a urban multiple housing apartment complex, it is of much value to establish rapport with the staff of the building management office, particularly with the building superintendent. Many urban apartments have locked front entrances -- you have to have keys to get into the buildings. A friendly relationship with the superintendent of the building would be help census enumerators enter a building and obtain the information about the residents.

Appendix 1

Table A

Analysis of Variance (Cooperation by Language)

<u>Source</u>	<u>Sum of Squares</u>	<u>DF</u>	<u>Mean Squares</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Sig of F</u>
Between	22.97	9	2.55	1.93	.06
Within	95.05	72	1.32		
Total	118.01	81	1.46		

Table B

Multiple Classification Analysis (Cooperation by Language)

Grand Mean = 3.11

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Unadjusted Dev'n</u>	<u>Eta</u>	<u>Adjusted Dev'n</u>	<u>Beta</u>
1. No	6	-.11		-.03	
2. a little	32	-.42		-.32	
3. somewhat	26	.24		.17	
4. good	16	.52		.38	
			.31		.23
R Square					.13

Appendix 2

Table A

Analysis of Variance (Cooperation by Occupation)

<u>Source</u>	<u>Sum of Squares</u>	<u>DF</u>	<u>Mean Squares</u>	<u>F</u>	<u>Sig of F</u>
Between	36.93	19	1.94	2.40	.02
Within	21.92	27	.81		
Total	58.85	46	1.28		

Table B

Multiple Classification Analysis (Cooperation by Occupation)

Grand mean = 3.36

<u>Category</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Unadjusted Dev'n</u>	<u>Eta</u>	<u>Adjusted Dev'n</u>	<u>Beta</u>
1. unemployed	12	-.20		-.19	
2. unskilled	13	-.21		.03	
3. skilled	7	-.92		-.53	
4. clerk and sales	6	.80		.28	
5. professional	9	.75		.44	
			.52		.28
R Square					.52

DISCLAIMER FOR ETHNOGRAPHIC EVALUATION OF THE 1990 DECENNIAL CENSUS REPORT SERIES, REPORTS # 1- 24 (EV -01 THROUGH EV -29)

Disclaimer: This is the final report for one of the 29 independent Joint Statistical Agreement projects which conducted an ethnographic evaluation of the behavioral causes of undercount. All 29 studies followed common methodological guidelines. This report is based on an analysis of the results of a match between the author(s)' Alternative Enumeration to data from the 1990 Decennial Census forms for the same site. Each ethnographic site contained about 100 housing units. Information was compiled from census forms that were recovered through October 10, 1990. The data on which this report is based should be considered preliminary for several reasons: Between October 10, 1990 and December 31, 1990, additional census forms MAY have been added to or deleted from the official enumeration of the site as a result of coverage improvement operations, local review, or other late census operations.

- ~ Differences between October 10, 1990 and final census results as reported on the Unedited Detail File were incorporated in later analyses of data from this site. The consistency of the authors' coding of data has not been fully verified. Hypothesis tests and other analyses are original to the author. Therefore, the quantitative results contained in this final JSA report may differ from later reports issued by Census Bureau Staff referring to the same site.

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