

According to the article found at

[https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/us/census-undercounted-population.html?campaign\\_id=60&emc=edit\\_na\\_20220310&instance\\_id=0&nl=breaking-news&ref=headline&regi\\_id=58861203&segment\\_id=85228&user\\_id=a24a6eeca7d8b188f444d87cbb6addb3](https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/10/us/census-undercounted-population.html?campaign_id=60&emc=edit_na_20220310&instance_id=0&nl=breaking-news&ref=headline&regi_id=58861203&segment_id=85228&user_id=a24a6eeca7d8b188f444d87cbb6addb3), “Saddled with daunting logistical and political obstacles, the 2020 census seriously undercounted the number of Hispanic, Black and Native American residents even though its overall population count was largely accurate, the Census Bureau said on Thursday.

At the same time, the census overcounted white and Asian American residents, the bureau said. . .

But some obstacles face every census count. The census has historically undercounted populations that are harder to reach through surveys, phone calls and door-to-door canvassing, including Native Americans on reservations, poor urban communities and undocumented immigrants. . .

By the bureau’s estimates, the 2020 tally incorrectly counted 18.8 million residents, double-counting some 5.2 million people, wrongly including another two million and missing others entirely, even as it came extremely close to reaching an accurate count of the overall population. Many of the people whom the census originally failed to count were picked up and added to final census totals through a process called imputation — a statistical guess, using complex algorithms, of who was living in places that census takers could not reach.

Those imputations, however, did not guess the race or ethnicity of missing residents. That partly explains why the grand total count of residents was substantially accurate, even as many minorities were missed. . .

The estimates released on Thursday — in essence, a statistical adjustment of totals made public last year — are based on an examination of federal records and an extensive survey in which the bureau interviewed residents in some 10,000 census blocks, the smallest unit used in census tabulations. Bureau experts then compared their answers to the actual census results for those blocks.”

a. Is the U.S. decennial census a true census? Explain.

b. We do not know how accurate the “complex algorithms” described here were. What are some potential issues with algorithms?

c. Why might the U.S. decennial census tend to undercount the number of Hispanic, Black, and Native American residents?