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Snitch. Snake. Mole. Books.: Examining Responses to “Insider/Outsider” Researchers in Corrections

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Abstract: Qualitative researchers face unique challenges when conducting original data collection within facilities of confinement. These challenges are shaped by a range of factors including the study's research design, researcher identity, and organizational climate of the facility. Although the barriers of data collection in corrections are known, literature providing context, nuance, and recommendations for overcoming these obstacles is sparse, especially for qualitative fieldwork. This work addresses this gap by examining responses of correctional employees to observational research. During data collection, correctional staff called the primary author "snitch," "snake," "mole," and "Books." This paper investigates these labels and offers suggestions on how future researchers can navigate their experiences.