

Implications of Current Themes in Survey Research for Informing Communication Research & Practice

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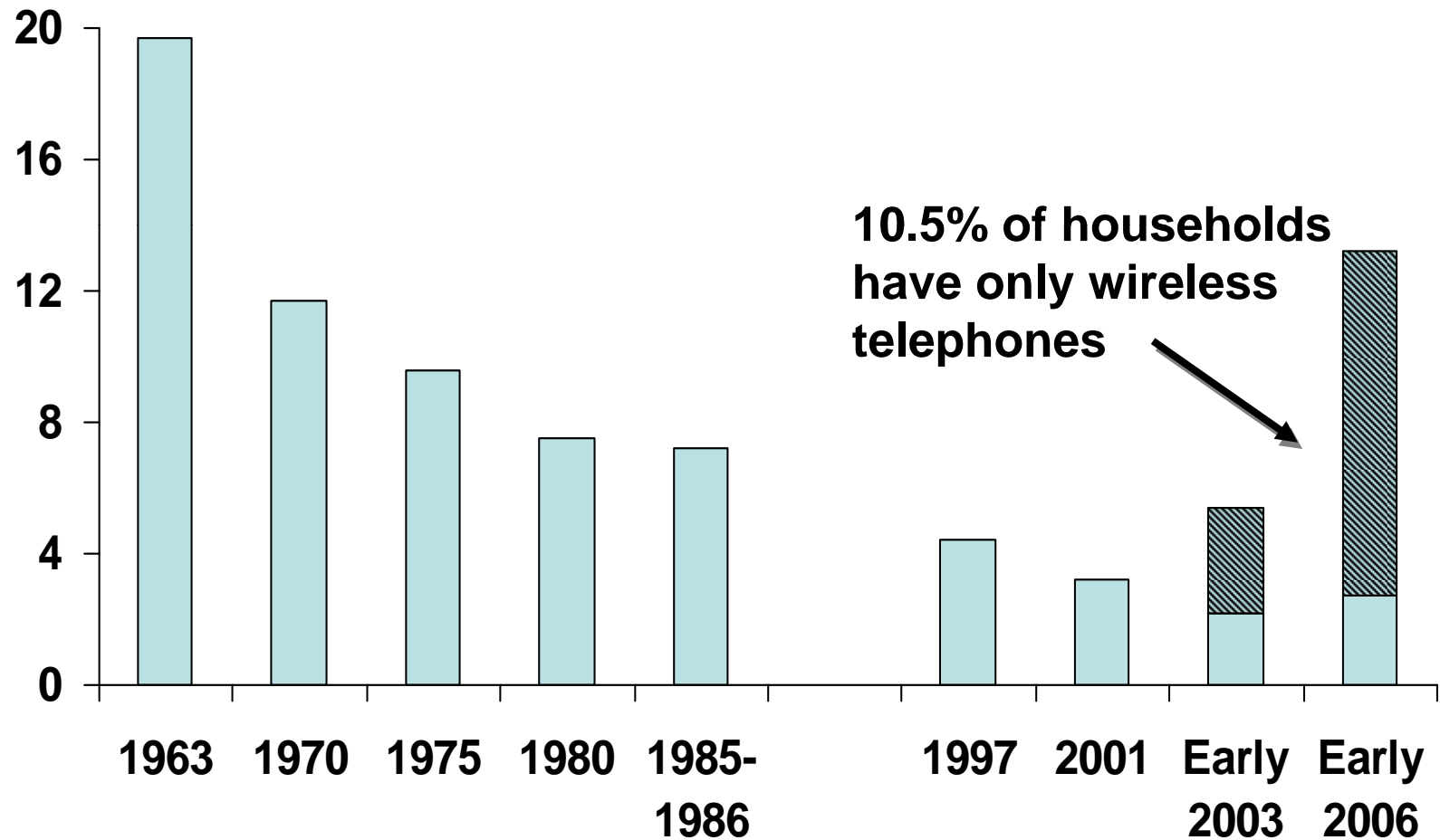
The plague of cell phones



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The cell phone problem: Trend in percentage of U.S. households without landline telephones



10.5% of households
have only wireless
telephones

- Source: National Health Interview Survey



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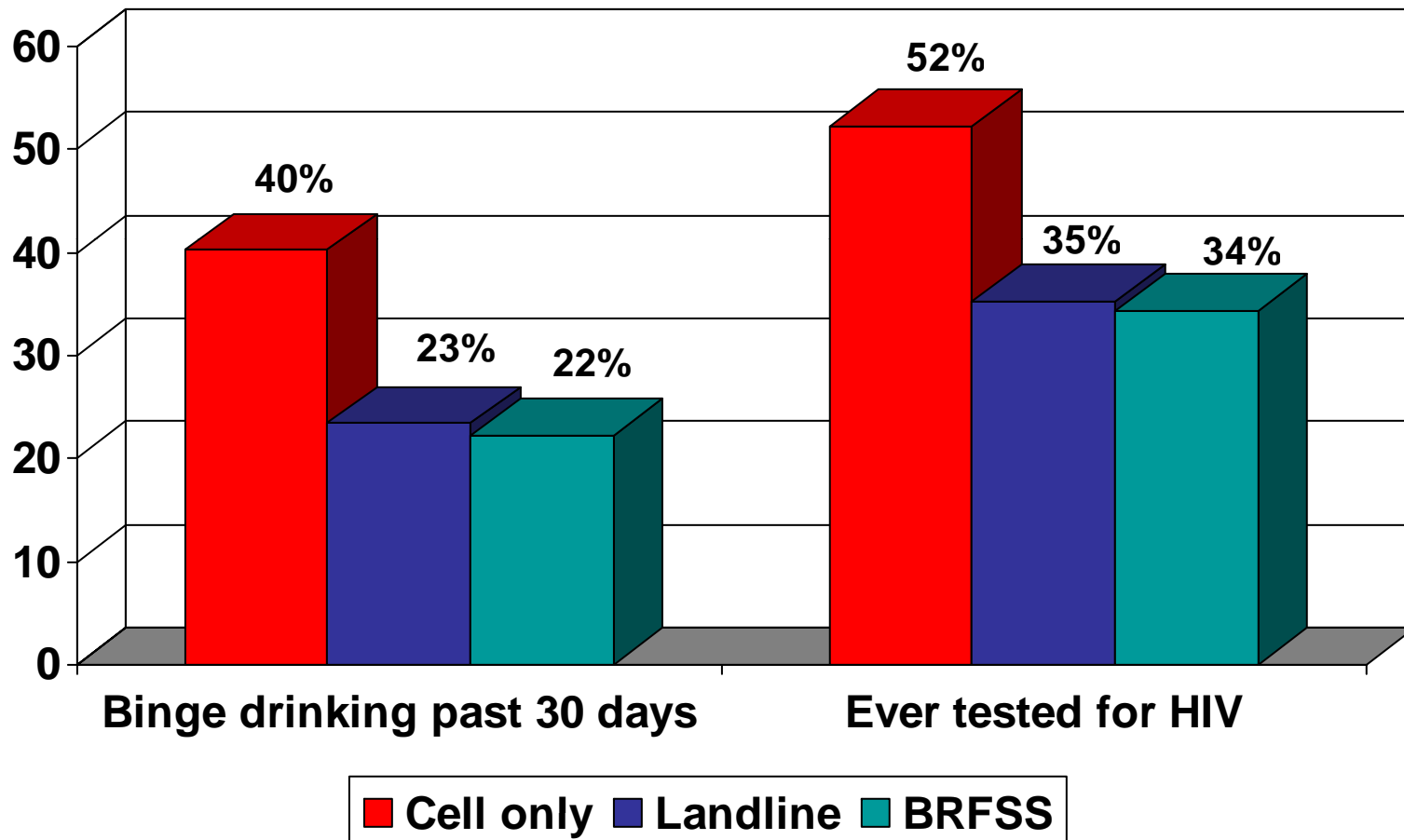


Cell phone-only households

- Cell phone-only highest among:
 - Adults with roommates (44.2%)
 - 18-34 year olds (22.6%)
 - Renters (22.5%)
- Does it really make a difference?
 - Little change in overall estimates when cell only added in;
 - BUT ... are 18-34 year olds in households with landlines the same as those in cell only households?



18-34 year olds: Binge drinking & HIV test by household phone access



Source: 2006 BRFSS ABS mixed-mode survey (mail survey respondents only)



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Conducting surveys in a multiracial/multicultural nation



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Reaching racial/ethnic minorities

- The time for consignment of non-English speakers to “language barrier” status is over:
 - Nearly 12% of US residents are born outside the US
 - 18% speak a language other than English at home
 - Nearly 5% do not speak any English at all
- Cultural and ethnic background, beliefs and practices can affect participation in surveys and response to questions
- New research into:
 - Cultural comparability
 - Translation
 - Use of interpreters





Finding new (and rediscovering traditional) ways of reaching and interviewing the general population



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Use of new sample frames and survey modes

- Testing new methods of identifying and sampling households and individuals:
 - Address-based sample (ABS) surveys
- Combining different modes of data collection:
 - Take advantage of new technologies
 - Web, video, audio, graphics ...
 - Don't discount the tried and true:
 - Mail surveys may be making a comeback
- Focus on reducing total survey error





Going local!!!



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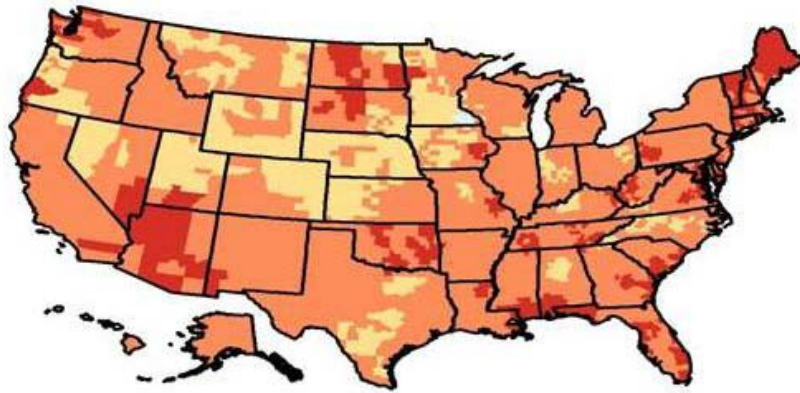


Local and small area data

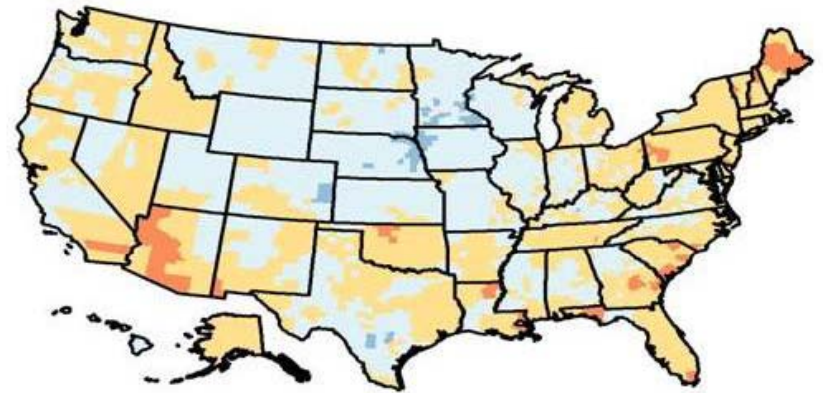
- Major push to develop estimates at the level where most health care and programs are delivered
- Use of old and new approaches
 - Increasing sample sizes
 - Small area estimation techniques
 - Synthetic or model-based estimates
 - Combining SAE with “data smoothing” and geocoding to provide geographical presentation of data



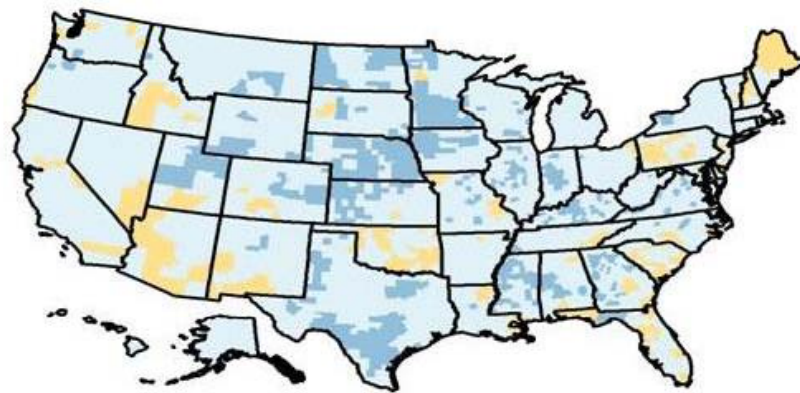
Tracking influenza vaccination coverage during 2004-05 vaccine shortage



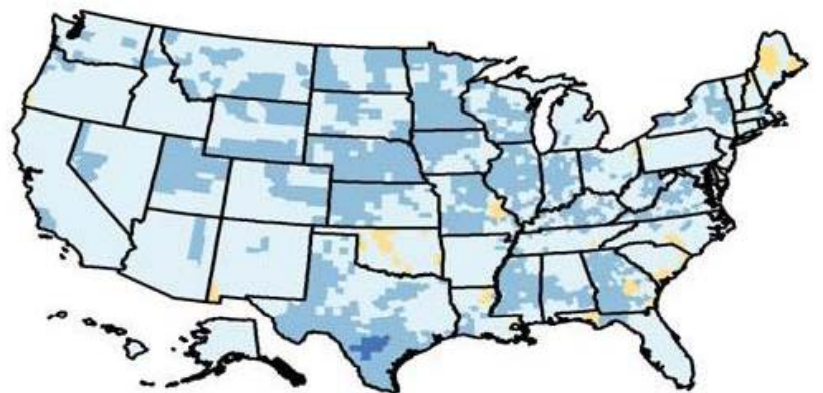
By 10/31/04



By 11/30/04



By 12/31/04



By 1/31/05



Are response rates dead?
Long live response rates!



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Rethinking how we measure data quality

- Response rates are a poor proxy for survey quality
- Need for new measures, but little agreement on what these would be
- What we do know (Groves 2006):
 - Don't blindly pursue high response rates, rather seek to balance rates across key subgroups;
 - Despite low response rates, probability sampling retains the value of unbiased sampling from well-defined sample frames;
 - Greater emphasis on post-survey adjustments to repair imbalances is required;
 - Developing multiple approaches to assess nonresponse bias on key survey estimates is critical.



In the end ...
where are we going?



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Communication and public health surveys of the future

- More complex:
 - New frames and modes
 - Different types of data collected
- Broader reach:
 - Population groups currently missing
 - More local data
- Greater emphasis:
 - Post-survey adjustments
 - Bias analyses
- More costly and require greater expertise



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