



# Update on Relationship Question Testing

Presentation to CSAC

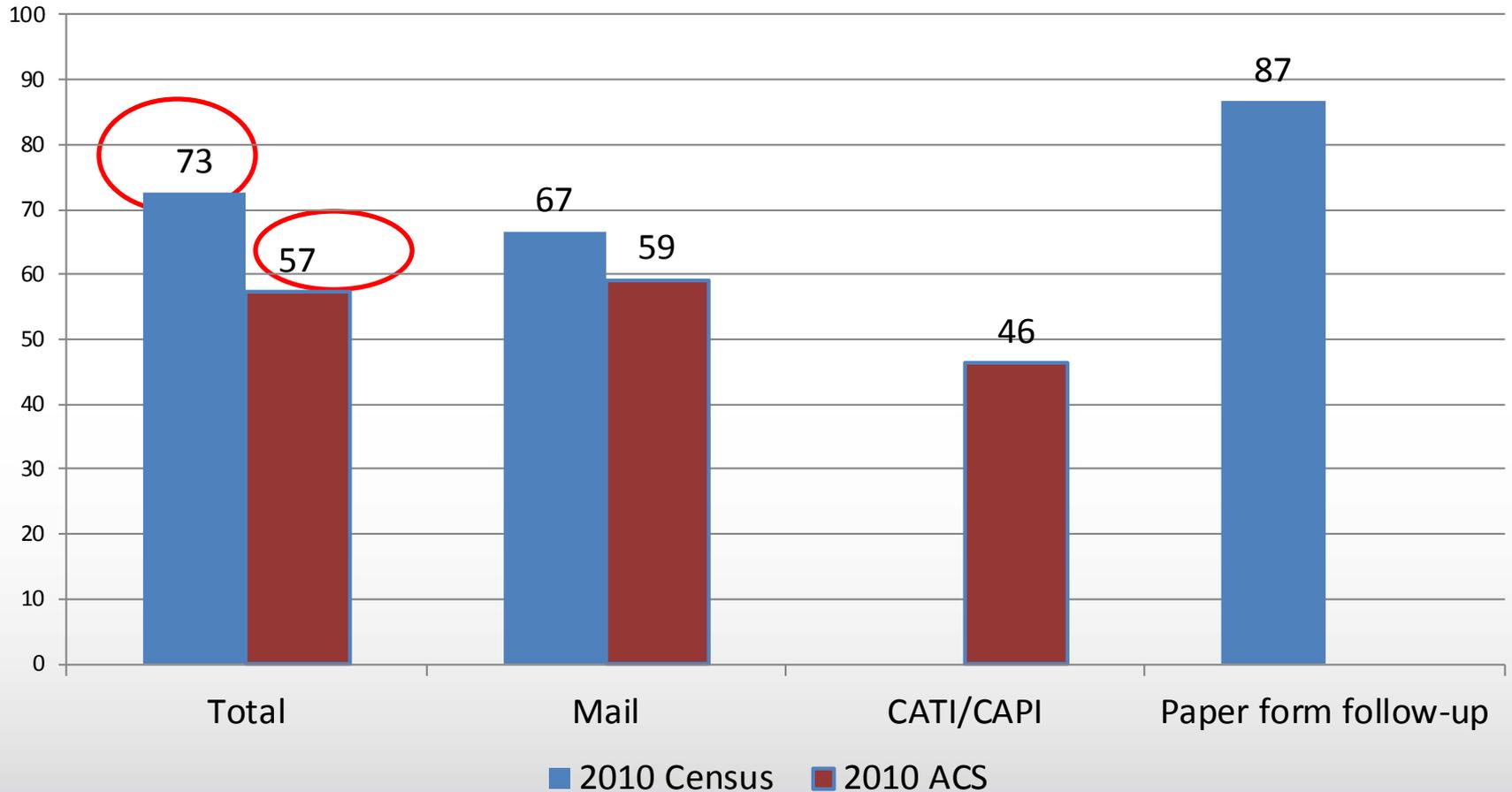
April 17, 2015

# Relationship Question Background

---

- “Unmarried partner” first placed on 1990 Census
- Change in 2000 to editing procedure: switched relationship to “unmarried partner” for those who reported as same-sex spouses rather than switching gender
- Census 2010 first to show estimates of same-sex married couples in special report/tables
- Also discovered significant error in estimates in 2010

# Percent of Same-Sex Married Households with Inconsistent Sex Reporting Between Census Forms and Social Security Records: 2010 Census and 2010 ACS by Mode



Source: Kreider and Lofquist, 2015

# Relationship Question Testing

---

- Since 2010, Census has participated in the OMB-led interagency group (Measuring Relationships in Federal Household Surveys), along with some 20 other agencies
- Census conducted focus groups and cognitive testing
- Developed new relationship question

# Relationship Question Testing

---

- Since the June 2013 Supreme Court decision on the Defense of Marriage Act, estimates of same-sex married couples would inform planning for federal agencies who administer programs that depend on marital status
- Census has been in conversation with the United Kingdom, New Zealand, and Canada, who already use very similar questions
- Recent tests include AHS 2013 and the 2014 Census Test

# Relationship Question

Version 1 2010 relationship response categories

Version 2 New relationship response categories

2. How is this person related to Person 1? Mark  ONE box.

- |                                                     |                                                        |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Husband or wife | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent-in-law                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological son or daughter | <input type="checkbox"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted son or daughter    | <input type="checkbox"/> Other relative                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stepson or stepdaughter    | <input type="checkbox"/> Roomer or boarder             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brother or sister          | <input type="checkbox"/> Housemate or roommate         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father or mother           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unmarried partner  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other nonrelative             |

← Version 1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census questionnaire.

Version 2 →

How is this person related to Person 1? Mark (X) ONE box.

- |                                                                      |                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Opposite-sex husband/wife/spouse | <input type="checkbox"/> Grandchild                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Opposite-sex unmarried partner              | <input type="checkbox"/> Parent-in-law                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Same-sex husband/wife/spouse                | <input type="checkbox"/> Son-in-law or daughter-in-law |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Same-sex unmarried partner                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other relative                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Biological son or daughter                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Roomer or boarder             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Adopted son or daughter                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Housemate or roommate         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stepson or stepdaughter                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Foster child                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Brother or sister                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Other nonrelative             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Father or mother                            |                                                        |

# 2014 Census Test Results

---

- Item non-response did not differ overall:  
1.2 percent for both the old relationship question and the revised question
- The percentage of household members reported as the spouse or partner of the householder did not differ significantly across panels
- Preliminary results indicate that about 28 percent of those who reported the same-sex husband/wife/spouse category have inconsistent responses to sex

# 2015 Tests

---

- Mismatching error still affects estimates of same-sex married couples
- Testing electronic relationship/sex consistency check
- AHS 2013 had a check

# 2015 Tests

---

- 2015 Content Test
- Relationship/sex consistency check in electronic instruments
- Cognitive testing results
  - Plan to test dropping ‘roomer/boarder’ and ‘housemate/roommate’ in 2016

# Further information

---

- To see past research on this topic, go to <http://www.census.gov/hhes/samesex/>
- Upcoming paper and poster presentations:
  - Population Association of America
  - AAPOR
  - ESRA