

# Live Video Interviewing in the 2020 ANES Time Series Study

Lauren Guggenheim & David Howell  
American National Election Studies (ANES)  
Center for Political Studies, University of Michigan

Prepared for the Joint Program in Survey Methodology Seminar Series  
January 27, 2021

# Acknowledgments:

- Investigator Team
  - Ted Brader, University of Michigan
  - Shanto Iyengar, Stanford University
  - Sunshine Hillygus, Duke University
  - Daron Shaw, The University of Texas at Austin
  - Nick Valentino, University of Michigan
- Stanford University
  - Matt DeBell
  - Natalya Maisel
- University of Michigan
  - Sang-Jung Han
  - Laurie Pierson
  - Jaime Ventura
- Westat
  - Michelle Amsbury
  - Peg Corp
  - Cindy Good
  - Jaime Lyons
  - Jerry Wernimont

Funding: National Science Foundation (grant nos. SES-1835721 and SES-1835022), University of Michigan, Stanford University.

# American National Election Studies (ANES)

- Begun in 1948
- Presidential election time series
- Pre-election and post-election panel design

## ANES 2020:

- Primary funding from the National Science Foundation (NSF)
- Awarded to the University of Michigan and Stanford University, with Westat performing the data collection



Phil Converse, Warren Miller, and Angus Campbell  
Credit: University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research

# Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic



Credit: Phil Roeder, Des Moines, Iowa, USA  
Available under a Creative Commons License

Original plans: a face-to-face survey and a web survey

## March 2020

- Contingency plan and design developed
- Pandemic-related questions piloted

## April 2020

- Became clear that a final decision was needed
- Data collection to begin in August
- Significant face-to-face costs soon to be incurred

## May 2020

- Scientific team met with ANES Board and NSF
- Decision to drop face-to-face, add video interviewing

# Preparing for Video Interviewing

- Neither ANES nor Westat had conducted video interviews before
- Sought advice from groups with video experience
  - Kyle Endres, Sunshine Hillygus
  - Fred Conrad, Andrew Hupp, Michael Schober
  - Stephanie Chardoul
- NSF provided a grant for small-scale piloting and pretesting of video
- Westat funded systems and technology development
- Evaluated video software options and selected Zoom

# Revised 2020 ANES Sample Design

Sample Group	Fresh Cross-Section			Interviewed Previously	
	Web-only	Mixed Web	Mixed Video	GSS	2016 ANES
Invitation	Mail	Mail	Mail	Email	Mail + Email
Screeners	Web	Web	Web	-	-
Pre-Election Survey	Web	Web, Phone	Video, Web, Phone	-	Web
Post-Election Survey	(same)	(same)	(same)	Web	Web

- Address-based sample for fresh cross
- Advance letter
- Reminders
- Incentives

# Video Recruitment & Administration

## Primarily inbound contacts

- Respondent enters virtual waiting room
- Current interviewer availability stated
- Help by live chat, phone, email
- Appointments available

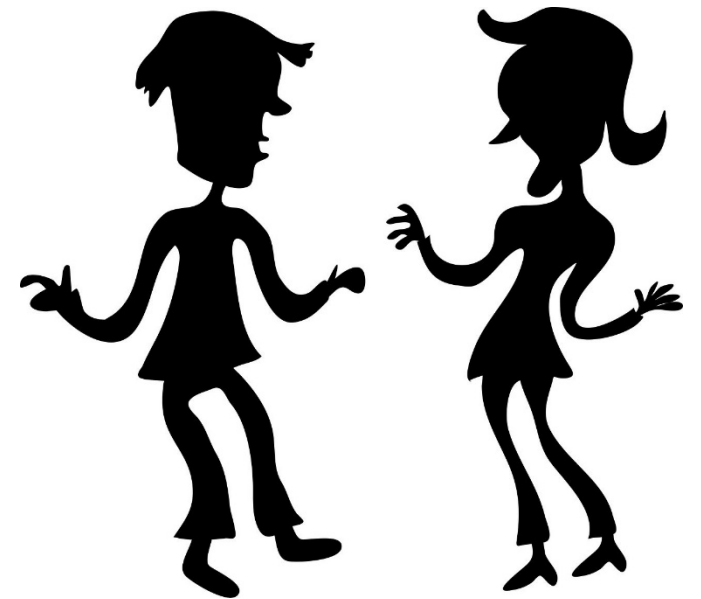
## Administration

- Zoom for videoconferencing
- Blaise for CAPI
- Respondent booklet shared on-screen, also available as PDF by email
- Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing questions instead read by interviewer



# Brainstorming Possible Video Advantages

- Talking to a video interviewer hoped to be similar to face-to-face
- Perhaps easier to reach respondents
  - Doesn't require them to be at home at the time
- Less expensive?
  - Travel costs eliminated
  - Less complexity to train field interviewers on
  - More controlled environment than face-to-face



Credit: Prawny from Pixabay  
Available under a Creative Commons License



# Brainstorming Possible Video Challenges

- Survey vendor
  - Integrating video application with sample management system
- Interviewers
  - Inexperience in conducting video surveys
  - Telephone interviewers not used to seeing respondents, and being seen
  - Managing video software and survey software simultaneously
- Respondents
  - Difficulties with the technology, inadequate devices
  - Negative attitudes towards mode
  - Respondent security and confidentiality concerns
  - Preferring software other than Zoom

# Research Questions

1. What kind of problems did respondents have completing the interviews?
2. How did response and re-interview rates compare across sample groups and mode?
3. How do respondent characteristics differ in the video group from other modes/benchmarks?
4. Why were response rates low?

# Respondent Difficulties

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Participant Contacts about Problems with Video

Video-specific problem or concern	General Email	General Phone	Video Help Desk
Uncomfortable with Video/Zoom	14.5	2.5	7
Technical issue (installation, etc.)	4.5	7.5	6
Inadequate device	2.0	5.0	5
Bait and switch	6.0		1
No camera	5.0		2
Interrupted interview	1.0	2.0	4
Inadequate Internet	1.0	2.0	2
Doesn't want to install software	4.0		3
Security concerns about Zoom/video	1.0	2.0	
Does not want to show face/image	1.0	1.0	
Device battery ran out of energy	1.0		
Uses video software other than Zoom	1.0		

- Some contacts involved multiple issues
- Amount of detail sometimes insufficient to be sure of exact issue
- Fractions are due to specific participants contacting us by both email and phone
- Video Help Desk numbers do not include online chat, nor interviewers pulling in the Help Desk

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Interviewer Observations

- For completed interviews only
- Pre-Election results
- Series of questions completed after interview ends
- Observations were completed for 83.4% of the completed pre-election video interviews
- *What kind of problems did Rs have completing video interviews?*

# Interviewer Observations – Technical Issues

## **Specific technical problems (pre-election results)**

	None	A little	A lot	Total
Installing Zoom or getting Zoom working	86.8%	10.8%	2.4%	100.0%
Internet connectivity	87.1%	11.5%	1.4%	100.0%
Video use (e.g., freezing)	82.3%	13.0%	4.8%	100.0%
Audio use (e.g., feedback)	78.8%	18.1%	3.1%	100.0%
Other (specify)	84.8%	13.1%	2.1%	100.0%

*Notes.* N=296. Interviewer observation forms were completed for 83.4% of the completed pre-election video interviews. Table shows results for completed observations only.

# Interviewer Observations – Non-Technical

## **Specific non-technical problems (pre-election results )**

	None	A little	A lot	Total
Confidentiality concerns with video interview or software	96.6%	3.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Concerns about self-view	93.9%	4.4%	1.7%	100.0%
Respondent not paying attention (e.g., using the computer for something else)	88.5%	8.5%	3.1%	100.0%
Duration of interview for which other people were present (e.g., kids, family members)	80.6%	11.9%	7.5%	100.0%
Other (specify)	89.1%	7.4%	3.5%	100.0%

*Notes.* N=296. Interviewer observation forms were completed for 83.4% of the completed pre-election video interviews. Table shows results for completed observations only.

# Interviewer Observations – Technology Use

## Video completion type (pre-election results)

	N	%
Type of completion in "video" <sup>1</sup>		
Used other non-Zoom video	0	0.0%
Used Zoom video + telephone	1	0.3%
Did not use video, only audio	24	8.1%
Used Zoom video + audio	270	91.5%

Notes. <sup>1</sup> Currently excluding one case with notes "Not completed due to technical issues" although coded as a complete.



# Interviewer Observations – Summary

## **Summary of technical and non-technical problems**

	N	%
No problems	124	42.0%
Technical problems only	78	26.4%
Non-technical problems only	41	13.9%
Both technical and non-technical problems	52	17.6%

*Notes.* N=296. Interviewer observation forms were completed for 83.4% of the completed pre-election video interviews. Table shows results for completed observations only.

# Response Rates & Video Intervention

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Response Rates & Re-interview Rates

## Response and re-interview rates for fresh samples

	Pre-Election		Post-Election	
	N	RR1 (%)	N	Re-Int (%)
Fresh Cross-Sectional Sample	4,135	37	-	-
Web-only (Web)	2,283	38	-	-
Mixed Web (Web + Phone)	2,407	40	-	-
Mixed Video (Video+Web+Phone)	751	28	639	85
Web (% contribution) <sup>+</sup>	328	44	307	94
Phone (% contribution) <sup>+</sup>	64	9	54	84
Video (% contribution) <sup>+</sup>	359	48	278	77
2016 Web	3,090	44	2,590	84
2016 Face-to-Face	1,180	50	1,058	90

*Notes.* Response rates are based on AAPOR Response Rate 1. <sup>+</sup>Web, phone, and video show the percent of respondents answering in each mode for the mixed video group rather than the Response Rate 1.

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Video Interventions

- Relatively slow completions, consistently off target
  - After ~2 weeks we decided an intervention was necessary
- *Would additional persuasion efforts/outbound contact generate more completions?*
- *Could we convert people on the spot?*

# Video Interventions - Progression

**Percent of respondents at each stage (out of total sampled) prior to video intervention**

	Not started	Partial Screener	Screener complete	Partial Interview	Complete Interview
Full Sample	13830 69.2%	96 0.5%	715 3.6%	514 2.6%	4015 20.1%
Web-only (Web)	1726 65.3%	23 0.9%	55 2.1%	96 3.6%	600 22.7%
Mixed web (Web+Phone)	4403 66.0%	31 0.5%	173 2.6%	196 2.9%	1510 22.6%
Mixed video (Video+Web+Phone)	1994 65.9%	20 0.7%	480 15.9%	42 1.4%	298 9.8%

*Notes.* Table excludes ineligible respondents. Report from 9/11/20. Intervention began 9/15.

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Video Intervention Administration

- Paused R push to web for NR
- Video Conversion Team formed
  - 2 highly-skilled interviewers
  - Empowered to:
    - offer alternate video conference technology
    - increase incentive to \$200
- Phone calls to all selected Rs from Completed Screener
  - Where R had not started Survey
  - If no number was on file, sent emails

# Video Intervention Outcome

## **Video conversion team analysis from Sept. 15 – 21 (first round of intervention)**

---

Reached and talked to R/HH member	49
Left Voicemail	192
Skipped	40
Hang-up/Call screened & declined	30
No answer, unable to leave VM	29
<hr/>	
Total numbers worked	340
Completed (R completed IW prior to Westat call attempts)	20
<hr/>	

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Video Intervention Outcome

## **Outcome of completed calls Sept. 15 – 21**

Agreed to complete video interview later, but didn't schedule an appointment	19
Pushed to web	9
Soft refusal	9
Status unchanged	3
Scheduled appointment for video	1
No compatible device, awaiting invitation to participate by telephone	0
Completed by video	0
Other (mostly hard refusals)	5
Total	46

*Notes. Only 46 of the 49 HH reached for completed calls had surveys completed.*



# Video Intervention Outcome

## Issues mentioned by respondent (completed calls), Sept. 15 – 21

Did not want their image appearing on video	5
Privacy/confidentiality of videoconferencing generally	5
Does not have a capable device (smartphone, tablet, computer, laptop) at all	5
Uncomfortable with videoconferencing generally	3
Technical difficulties in installing the Zoom app	3
Does not have a microphone	3
Uncomfortable with technology generally	2
Did not want their surroundings appearing on video	2
Does not have a video camera	2
Does not have speakers	2
Concerned that they are being recorded	1
Problems with them hearing us	1
Other	15
Total # Reasons	49

*Notes. IWRs can record multiple issues for each Respondent*

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Video Intervention Outcome

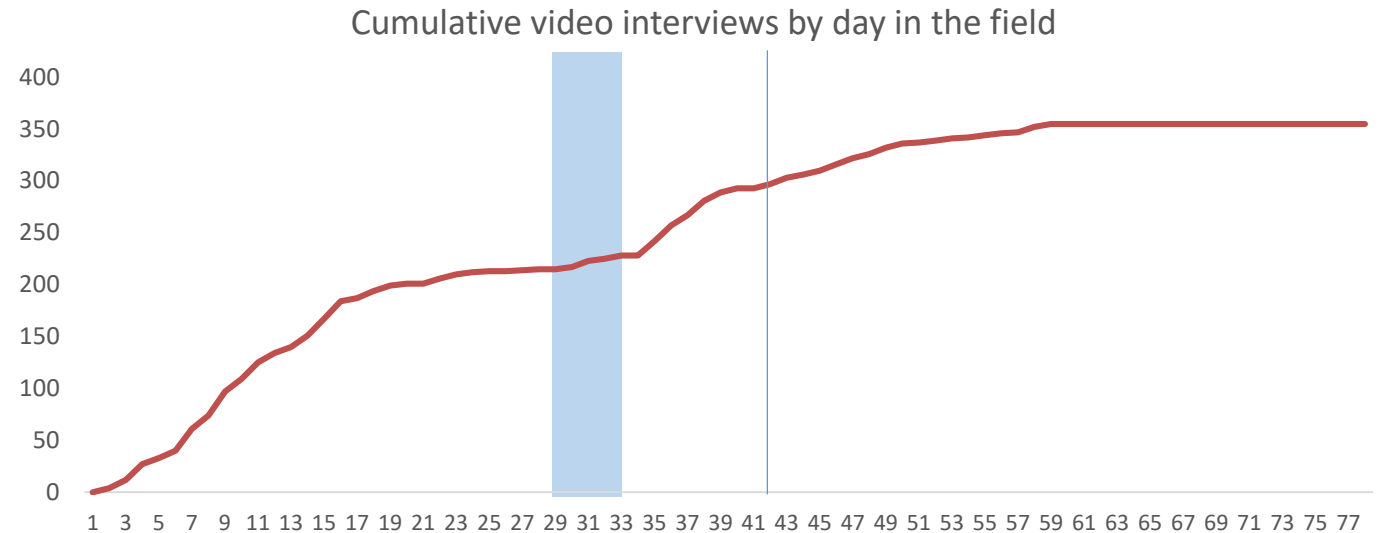
**Of HH/R reached by team during 1<sup>st</sup> round, interviewer offered. . .**

an escalated incentive of \$200	11
to use FaceTime	0
other	0
none of these	35
Total	46

*Notes. Only 46 surveys were completed out of the 49 HH reached.*

# Video Intervention Outcome - Summary

- No on the spot conversions (even with \$200 offers)
- No uptake on alternate apps
- Timeline:
  - Intervention - days 29-33
  - 2<sup>nd</sup> round calls ends - day 35
  - Incentive increase mailed - day 32
  - Push-to-web reinstated - day 42



Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Differential Participation

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Differential Participation – Pre-Election

## 2020 respondent age compared to ACS benchmarks and 2016 TS

	ACS 2020 benchmarks	ANES 2016 FTF All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2016 Web All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2020 Full sample (n=8280)	ANES 2020 Video (n=359)
Characteristic	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Age					
18-29	21.3	16.7	15.3	12.4	14.9
30-39	16.3	17.3	18.7	17.4	17.1
40-49	15.4	15.0	14.9	15.2	14.9
50-59	16.9	18.4	19.0	16.8	15.7
60-69	15.5	17.0	19.1	19.8	21.1
70 or older	14.6	15.7	12.9	18.5	16.3

*Notes.* This table includes partial completions that were considered sufficient to be included in the dataset.

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Differential Participation – Pre-Election

## 2020 respondent sex compared to ACS benchmarks and 2016 TS

	ACS 2020 benchmarks	ANES 2016 FTF All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2016 Web All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2020 Full sample (n=8280)	ANES 2020 Video (n=359)
Characteristic	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Sex					
Male	48.5	47.5	47.0	45.8	44.0
Female	51.5	52.5	53.0	54.2	56.0

*Notes.* This table includes partial completions that were considered sufficient to be included in the dataset.

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Differential Participation – Pre-Election

## 2020 respondent education compared to ACS benchmarks and 2016 TS

	ACS 2020 benchmarks	ANES 2016 FTF All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2016 Web All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2020 Full sample (n=8280)	ANES 2020 Video (n=359)
Characteristic	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Education					
Less than HS cred.	9.8	9.0	5.8	4.6	2.2
HS credential	27.8	22.0	18.2	16.4	13.8
Some college/AA degree	31.9	33.1	36.3	34.2	28.9
Bachelor's degree	19.3	22.6	22.6	25.2	29.2
Graduate degree	11.2	13.3	17.1	19.5	25.8

*Notes.* This table includes partial completions that were considered sufficient to be included in the dataset.

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Differential Participation – Pre-Election

**2020 respondent race/ethnicity compared to ACS benchmarks and 2016 TS**

	ACS 2020 benchmarks	ANES 2016 FTF All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2016 Web All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2020 Full sample (n=8280)	ANES 2020 Video (n=359)
Characteristic	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Race/ethnicity					
White non-Hispanic	67.4	67.7	73.2	72.9	75.9
Black non-Hispanic	12.5	10.1	9.1	8.9	10.2
Hispanic	12.8	14.4	9.2	9.3	7.6
Other non-Hispanic	7.3	7.8	8.5	8.9	6.2

*Notes.* This table includes partial completions that were considered sufficient to be included in the dataset.

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.



# Differential Participation – Pre-Election

## 2020 respondent partisanship compared to ACS benchmarks and 2016 TS

	ACS 2020 benchmarks	ANES 2016 FTF All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2016 Web All Pre Rs (unweighted)	ANES 2020 Full sample (n=8280)	ANES 2020 Video (n=359)
Characteristic	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Party ID 7-point					
Strong Democrat	--	18.9	21.7	23.8	29.7
Not very strong Democrat	--	11.8	13.7	10.9	12.6
Independent-Democrat	--	15.0	10.2	11.8	17.6
Independent	--	10.3	14.9	11.7	3.1
Independent-Republican	--	16.6	9.9	10.7	13.7
Not very strong Republican	--	11.3	12.2	10.1	8.7
Strong Republican	--	16.0	17.3	21.0	14.6

*Notes.* This table includes partial completions that were considered sufficient to be included in the dataset.

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Differential Participation – Summary

- *How did Video Rs compare to population and other Rs in other samples?*
- Compared to benchmarks, Video Rs:
  - More educated
  - More Democratic

# Additional Preliminary Findings

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Additional Preliminary Findings

- TRC (Interviewer) Team Reports & IWER Debrief
  - Supervisors recorded (unsystematically) IWER concerns
    - Some people were missing equipment (e.g., video cameras)
    - Phone batteries died during course of IW
  - Interviewers enjoyed survey
  - Appointment setting did not work
- Interviewer Thumbnails
  - “Bait & Switch”
  - Length of Interviews

# Non-Response Follow Up (NRFU)

- Design

- Similar to 2016, 1-2-pg mailed survey
  - Selected R by name
  - Selected HH w/selection of R
  - Appears to be an unrelated study

- Content related to mode

- HH Internet, use of videoconferencing, survey mode preference, privacy orientation, free time, trust in others



Credit: Andreas Breitling from Pixabay  
Available under a Creative Commons License

# Conclusions

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Conclusions

- More than half of video respondents had trouble with video
  - ~44% had technical difficulties
  - ~8% used audio only, with video turned off
- Video respondents much more educated than web and FTF Rs
- Difficult to recruit
- “Worst” of both worlds for recruitment?
  - Video request may feel more intimate/invasive than a web survey
  - Easier to decline interview from inbound contact than if someone was on your doorstep

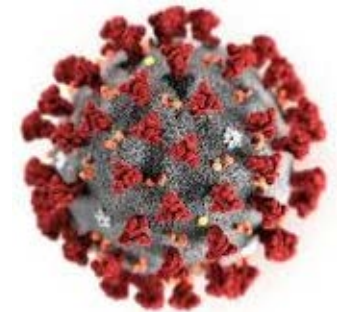
# Conclusions & Limitations

- Interviewers
  - Enjoyed survey
  - Able to acclimate to video format
- Limitations:
  - Respondents may be unable/unwilling to fully articulate concerns about video.



# Conclusions & Limitations

- Limitations:
  - Design Specifics
    - Inbound Contact
    - “Bait and switch”
    - Zoom vs. easier to use/integrated tech
  - Context of Pandemic
    - Response/Re-interview Rates
    - Demographics
  - Election Study
    - Trump
    - Politically polarized environment



Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.

# Conclusions & Future Directions

- Future directions:
  - How does response quality compare to face-to-face?
    - Don't knows, length of response to open-ends, social desirability, propensity to select the middle category, political knowledge
- Analysis of NRFU

# Thank you!

- Lauren Guggenheim – [lguggen@umich.edu](mailto:lguggen@umich.edu)
- Dave Howell – [dahowell@umich.edu](mailto:dahowell@umich.edu)

ANES website: [www.electionstudies.org](http://www.electionstudies.org)

**Mixed Video Group Respondents' Education by Party Identification (Tau b = -0.14)**

	Strong Dem.	Weak Dem.	Lean Dem.	Indep.	Lean Rep.	Weak Rep.	Strong Rep.	<i>Total</i>
	Frequency							
Less than HS	4	2	1	0	0	0	1	8
HS credential	17	3	10	2	6	3	6	47
Some College/AA degree	10	20	14	5	18	13	23	103
Bachelor's degree	33	10	19	4	14	11	13	104
Graduate degree	42	10	18	0	10	4	8	92
<i>Total</i>	106	45	62	11	48	31	51	354
	Cell Percents (%)							
Less than HS	1.1	0.6	0.3	0	0	0	0.3	2.3
HS credential	4.8	0.8	2.8	0.6	1.7	0.8	1.7	13.3
Some College/AA degree	2.8	5.6	4.0	1.4	5.1	3.7	6.5	29.1
Bachelor's degree	9.3	2.8	5.4	1.1	4.0	3.1	3.7	29.4
Graduate degree	11.9	2.8	5.1	0	2.8	1.1	2.3	26
<i>Total</i>	29.9	12.7	17.5	3.1	13.6	8.8	14.4	100
	Row Percents (%)							
Less than HS	50.0	25.0	12.5	0	0	0	12.5	100
HS credential	36.2	6.4	21.3	4.3	12.8	6.4	12.8	100
Some College/AA degree	9.7	19.4	13.6	4.9	17.5	12.6	22.3	100
Bachelor's degree	31.7	9.6	18.3	3.8	13.5	10.6	12.5	100
Graduate degree	45.7	10.9	19.6	0	10.9	4.3	8.7	100
<i>Total</i>	29.9	12.7	17.5	3.1	13.6	8.8	14.4	100

Statistics and findings in this presentation are preliminary and subject to revision as the data are reviewed, cleaned, and processed.