

# The Life Cycle of a Piece of Census Data

Tracing the Path of Question 16 on the American Community Survey (ACS) Form.

ACS Data Users Group  
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David Kraiker, Geographer – U.S. Census Bureau  
[david.j.kraiker@census.gov](mailto:david.j.kraiker@census.gov)

## Question Inserted on ACS Form

Interagency Committee on the ACS (co-chaired Office of Management & Budget + Census Bureau)

Present question evolved from “disability” question on Decennial form (2000); changes due to: Children’s Health Insurance Program Reauthorization Act.

First time on ACS form: 2008 (Q.15).

New Content to be added (request of CDC). *Federal Register Notice\**

**Person 1 (continued)**

**16** Is this person **CURRENTLY** covered by any of the following types of health insurance or health coverage plans? Mark "Yes" or "No" for EACH type of coverage in items a – h.

	Yes	No
a. Insurance through a current or former employer or union (of this person or another family member)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Insurance purchased directly from an insurance company (by this person or another family member)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Medicare, for people 65 and older, or people with certain disabilities	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Medicaid, Medical Assistance, or any kind of government-assistance plan for those with low incomes or a disability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. TRICARE or other military health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. VA (including those who have ever used or enrolled for VA health care)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Indian Health Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Any other type of health insurance or health coverage plan – Specify	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**17** a. Is this person deaf or does he/she have serious difficulty hearing?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

**19** Because of condition, doing errands at home or office or

☐ Yes  
☐ No

**20** What is

☐ No  
☐ W  
☐ D  
☐ S  
☐ M

**21** In the

a. M  
b. W  
c. D

**22** Ho

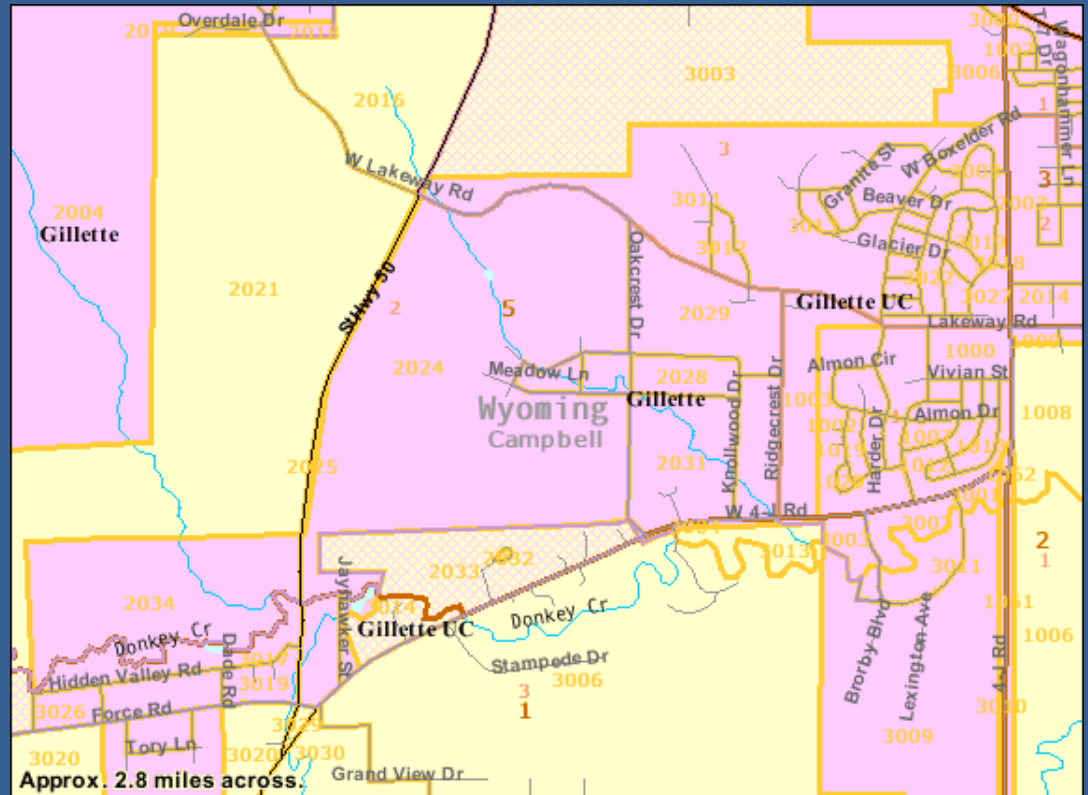
**23** in

# Marriage of MAF and TIGER

Master Address File (MAF) – updated via Delivery Sequence File (DSF), ACS updates; geography partnerships.

TIGER (Topologically Integrated Geocoding & Encoding Referencing)– is a geospatial file with streets, linework, etc. that is tied to the MAF.

These two together combine the springboard for sample selection.



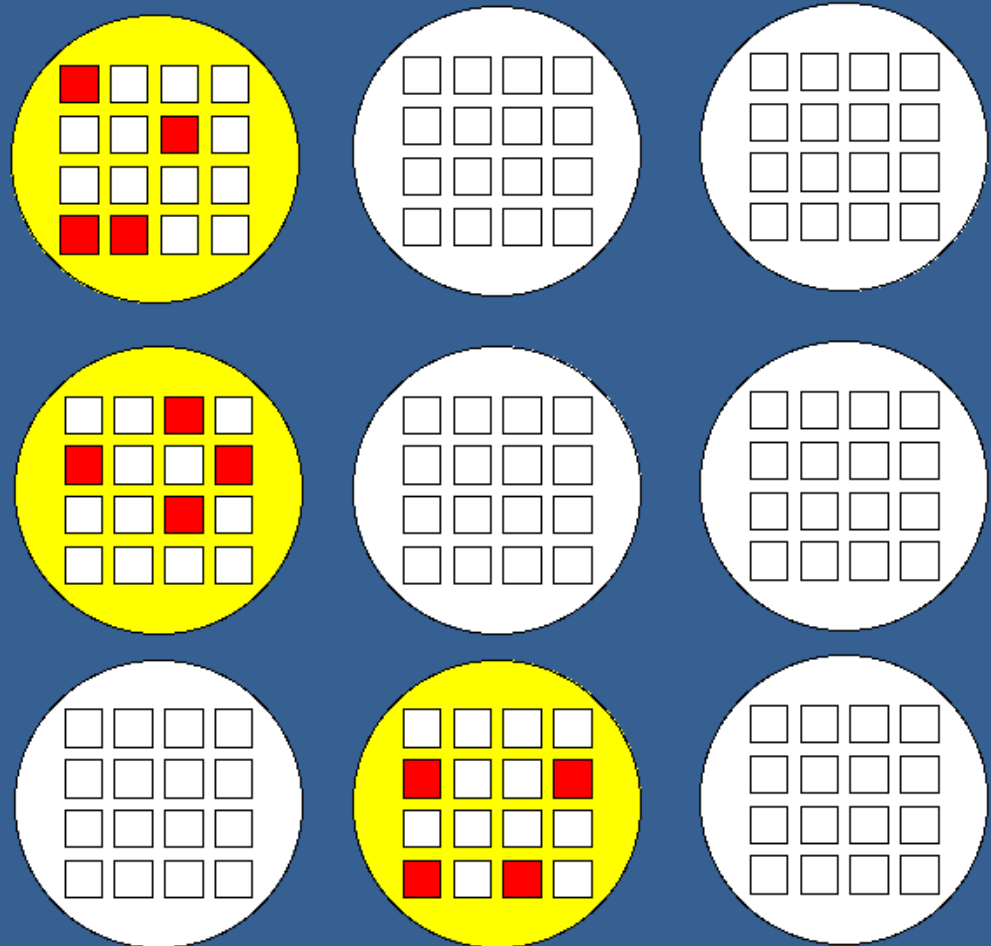
# Sample Selection

An extract (snapshot) is taken twice a year from the MAF.

16 different sampling rates for different geographies and their densities.

Address selection is pulled from the MAF.

Address generation is made and delivered to Processing Branch.



# A Place Called NPC!

National Processing Center  
in Jeffersonville, Ind.

NPC assembles all the  
cards, letters, packets which  
will be sent to households.

CATI (Computer-aided  
telephone interview) done  
by:

NPC

Tucson, AZ

Hagerstown, MD



## The Respondent: Agreeable vs. Reluctant

### *Agreeable Respondent:*

“My” respondent had 5 people living in HH, of 3 different generations.

Passed the form around to each individual within household.

Called for help – had trouble with some questions about health insurance question.\*

Returned form to NPC.





## Data Goes to NPC for Processing.

Received paper forms are “guillotined,” scanned, & transcribed.

OMR (Optical Mark Recognition) – looks for illegible marks.

NPC calls respondent if there are discrepancies.

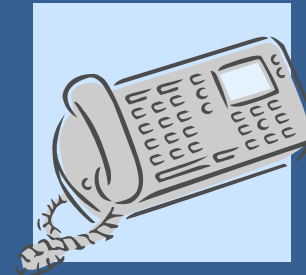


## What about the Reluctant Respondent?

NPC, etc. will continuously call household (if they have the telephone number *associated with address*).

If they don't get the phone interview, then 2/3 of remaining cases are sent to Regional Offices (RO).

Cases transmitted to RO near end of month.





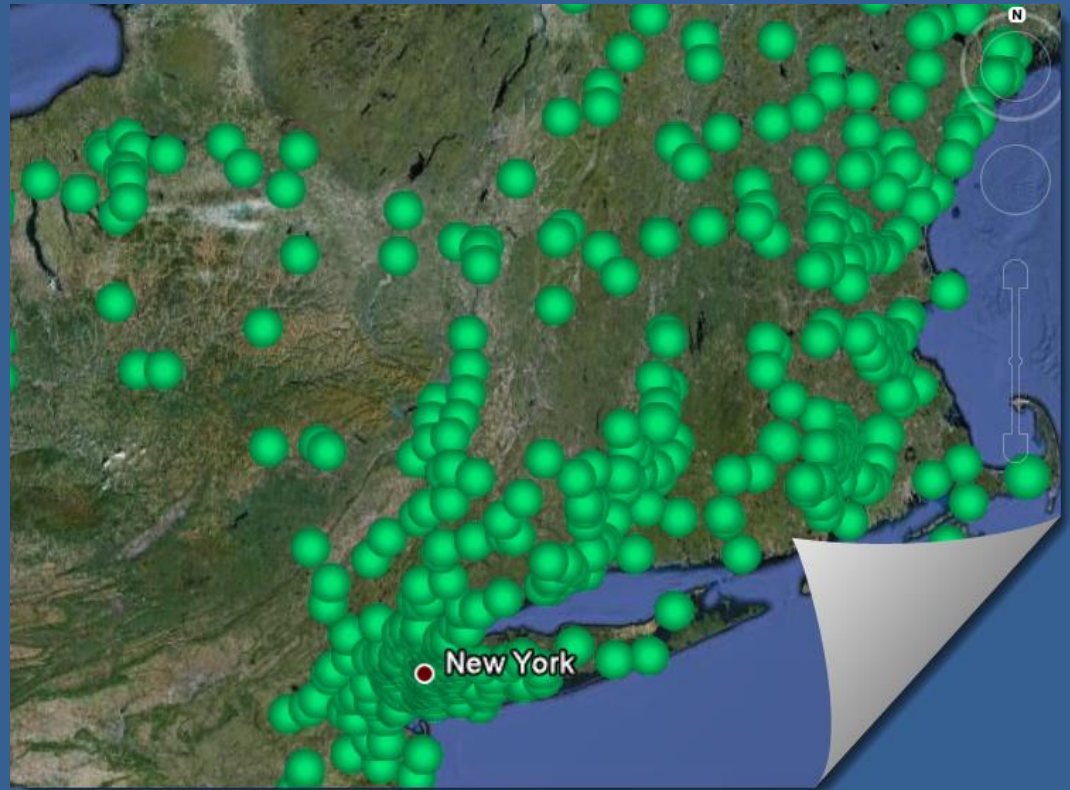
## At the Regional Office: Computer-aided Personal Interview (CAPI)

6 Regional Offices

9,200 Cases assigned out  
of NYRO monthly

Many Cases “Re-assigned”  
by Field Supervisors.

500 ACS Field  
Representatives (FR)— 15  
to 20 cases/month



# The Art of getting an Interview

FR has cases on computer and makes personal visits: days, evenings and weekends.

FRs look for housing unit (HU) anomalies and make geographic corrections.

FRs who speak specific languages get sent “cases” of like languages.

Cases transmitted at end of month.



## Our Headquarters Receives Data

Data transmitted to HQ via  
ASCII files.

Data from the CAPI, CATI,  
vacant interviews arrive in  
Suitland, Md.

Statistical methodologies  
and confidentiality rules  
applied in Suitland.



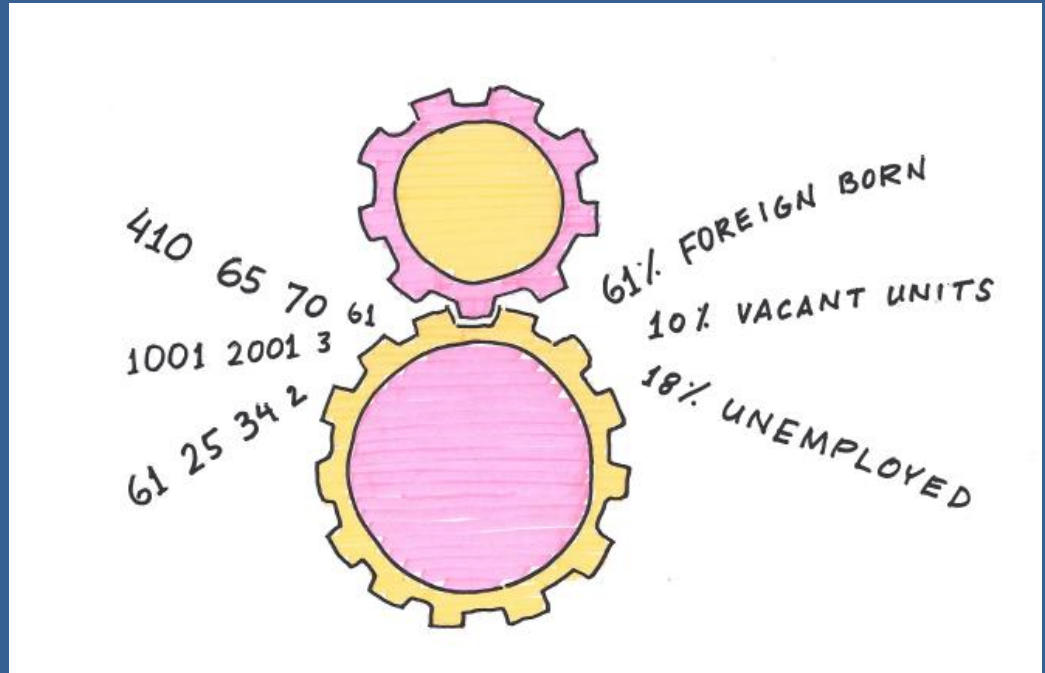
## Data Become Statistics

Data set up by ACSO,  
transferred to DSCMO  
(Decennial Systems and Contracts  
Management Office) branch.

DSCMO makes sure the  
Census Geographies are in  
place. Prep the system.

SEHSD (Social Economics & Housing  
Stats Division) check the data  
shells (Data, Product,  
Metadata).

Data released on an  
embargoed site.





## American Factfinder (AFF): A Dissemination Vehicle

Not all data on AFF is from  
ACS!

Data from question 16 is  
cross-tabulated in myriad  
ways.

Must train the public on  
how to use AFF

AFF is constantly changing!



# Portrait of a Data User

Finger Lakes Health Systems Agency – was trained by SDC.

Covers 9 counties near Rochester, NY.

Uses PUMS (Public-Use Microdata Samples) to determine unemployment/no health care.

Provides health care package “solutions” to local population.





## For further information...

David Kraiker  
Data Dissemination Specialist  
US Census Bureau  
[david.j.kraiker@census.gov](mailto:david.j.kraiker@census.gov)

**[www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)**