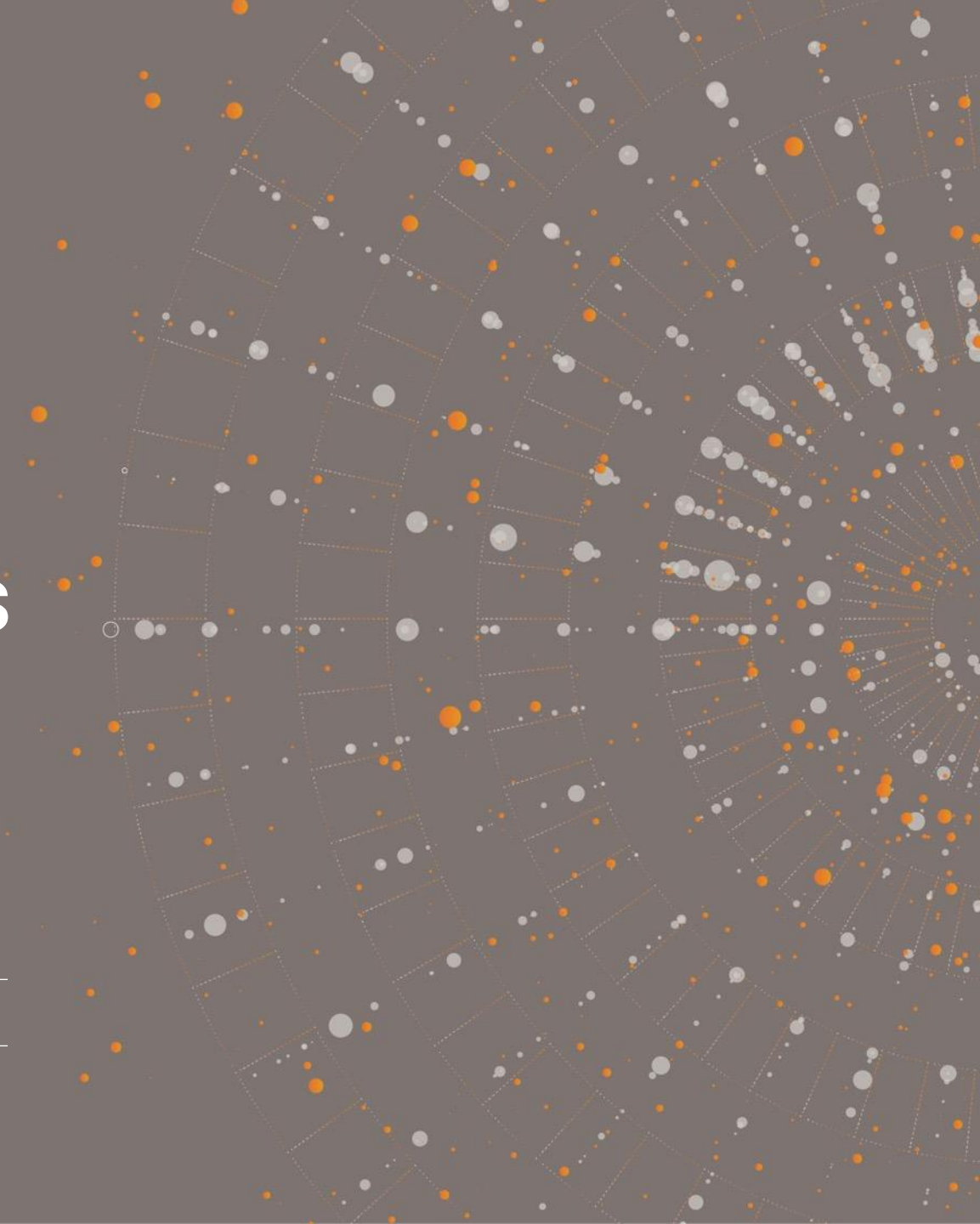NORC at the University of Chicago

The Effects of Late Reminder Text Messages on Completion Rate and Respondent Characteristics

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# Agenda

Background & Experimental Design

2023 Pew National Study

- Client: the Pew Research Center

- Nationally representative, address-based, mixed-mode (web, phone, paper) survey

- Surveys more than 35,000 Americans from all 50 states about a variety of topics

- Initially planned to use all mail outreach

- Sample split across two batches to better control hitting state-specific targets
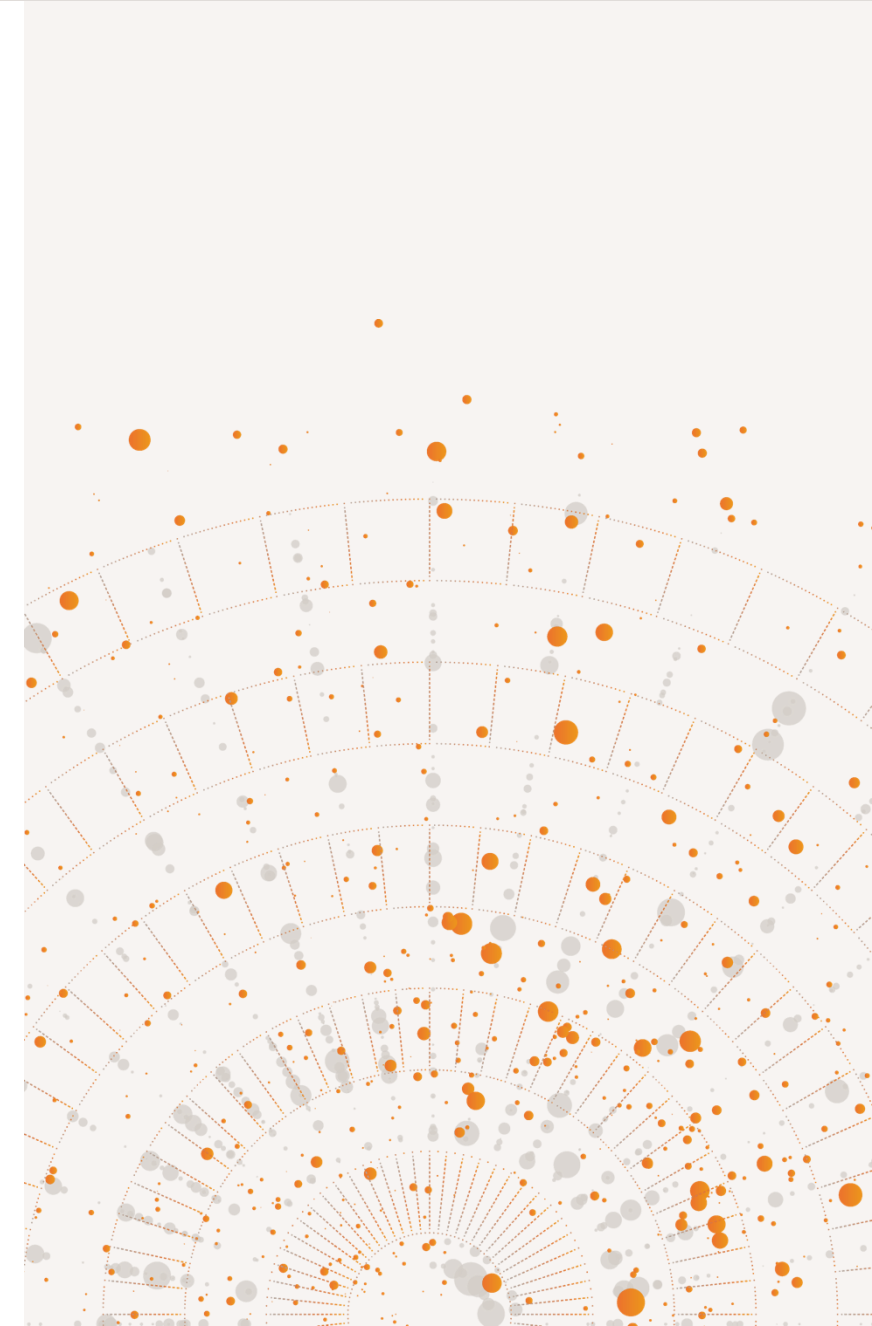
Text Message Details

- No prior consent for texting

- Interviewers sent MMS messages using RumbleUp software

- Messages only sent where cellphone number was matched to a sampled address

- Likely Spanish speakers were sent bilingual texts
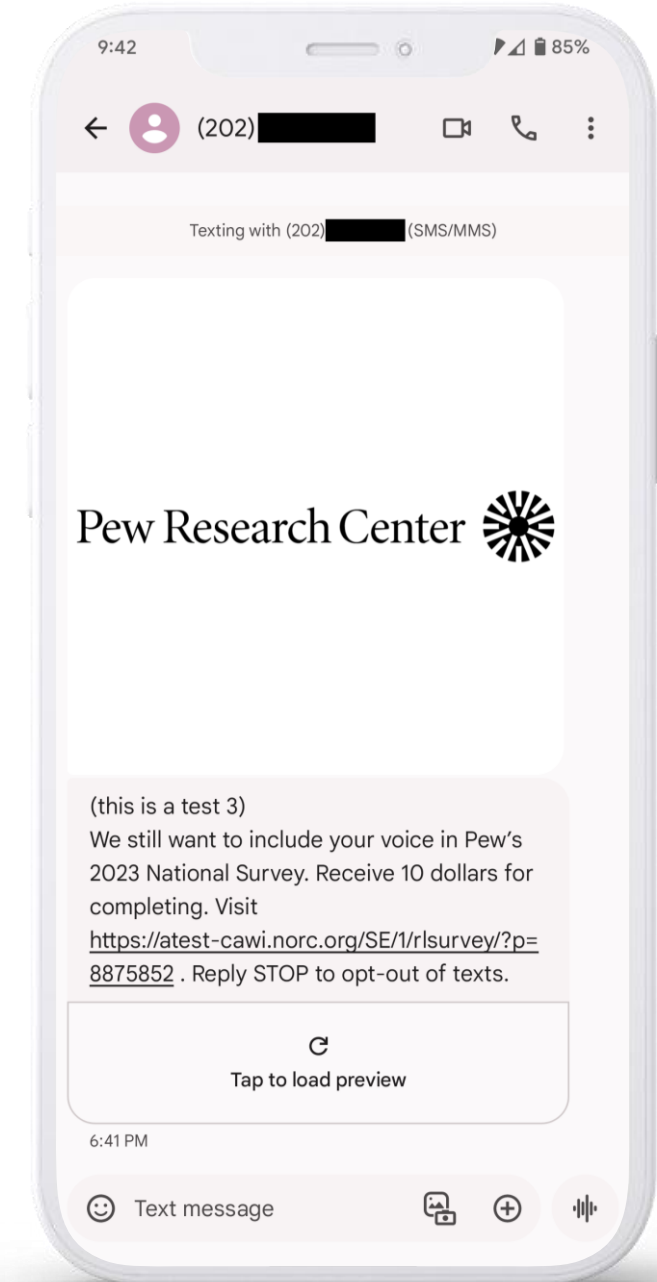
Text Treatments

## Batch 1 – Late Text Reminder

Sampled addresses with a matching cellphone number that had not completed the survey after 6 mail contacts

Batch 2 – Mid Fieldwork Text Reminder

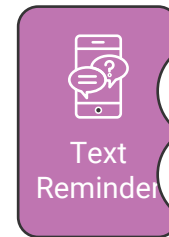Sampled addresses with a matching cellphone number that had not completed the survey after 3 mail contacts.

Push for completes before paper survey packet was sent.

Experimental Groups – Batch 1
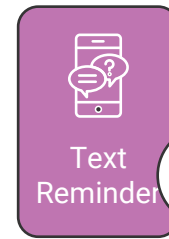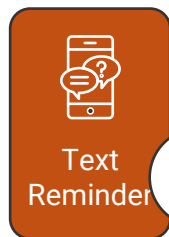
Text Web
Received text message with a direct link to complete the survey via web

Text Phone
Received a text message containing both a direct web link and a phone number to complete the survey over the phone
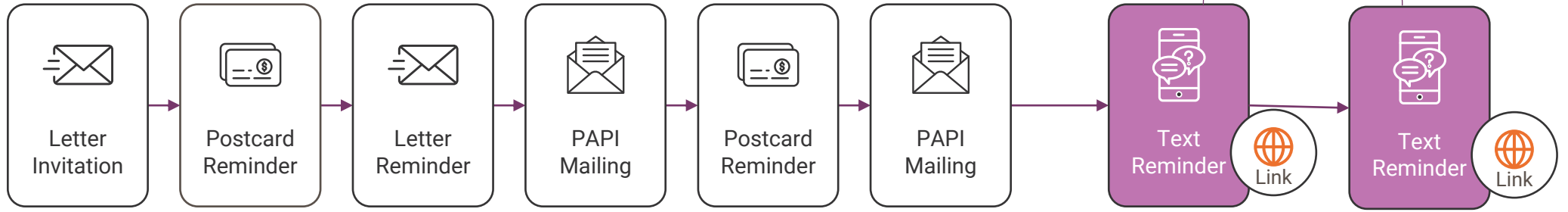
Experimental Group – Batch 2

Text Web
Received text message with a direct link to complete the survey via web

Sequencing of Pew Texting Experiments
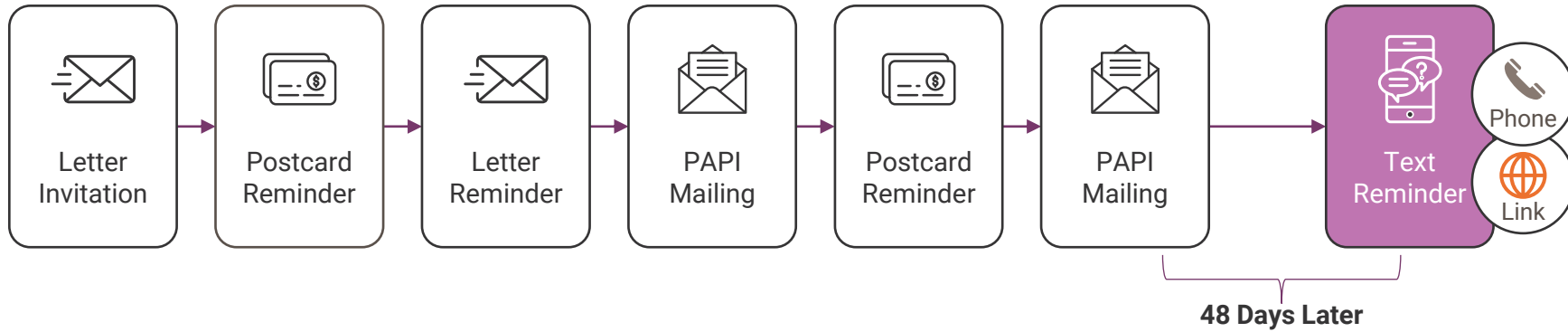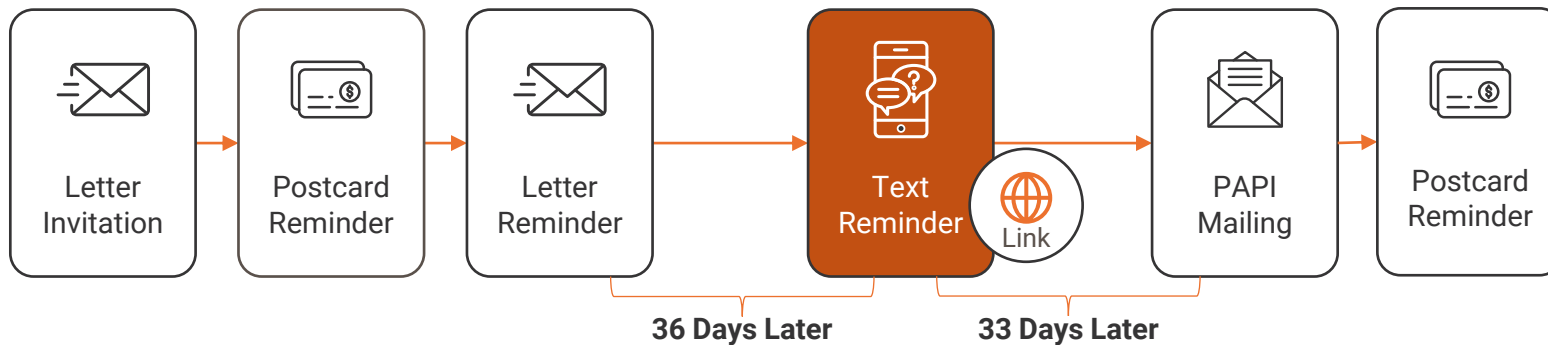
Completion Rates

Batch 1 - Late Text Completion Rates

Received 0.5% completes from extra effort of initial text

No differences between Text Web and Text Phone groups

- Yields or dispositions (e.g., undeliverable, STOP requests)

Received another 0.3% completes from second late reminder text

	Total sample	Completes	Yield (%)
Control	14,741	34	0.2
Text Web	31,606	167	0.5
Text Phone	10,576	62	0.6
Text Web + Phone	*42,182*	*229*	*0.5*
Text Web 2	31,040	106	0.3

Some of the control group did respond during this period (23).

Batch 2 – Text Reminder Completion Rates

Received 0.9% completes from text messages sent during fieldwork

No differences between English-only and bilingual texts

Consistent results across batches – sending a text reminder doubled the number of completes compared to the control groups

	Total sample	Completes	Yield (%)
Control	9,986	45	0.5
Text Web	39,905	379	0.9

Additional Results

Batch 1 Text Message Content Comparison

No significant differences in demographics between Text Web and Text Web/Phone completes

- Gender, age, race/ethnicity, education, political ideology, income

Most people completed via web, even when a phone number was provided

No significant differences in demographics between Text Web 1 and Text Web 2 groups

✳

No differences were found across the experimental groups.

Contact and Completion Mode Comparisons

No significant differences in sample composition between early web and text message completes

Significant differences between phone and text respondents

- Phone respondents were more male, older, less educated, and lower income than text respondents

Web completes most cost efficient, phone most expensive, and texts and paper cost about the same

- Costs accounted for all contact attempts

- Texts half the cost as paper when control for mail costs

✳

Overall, text respondents similar to early web respondents.
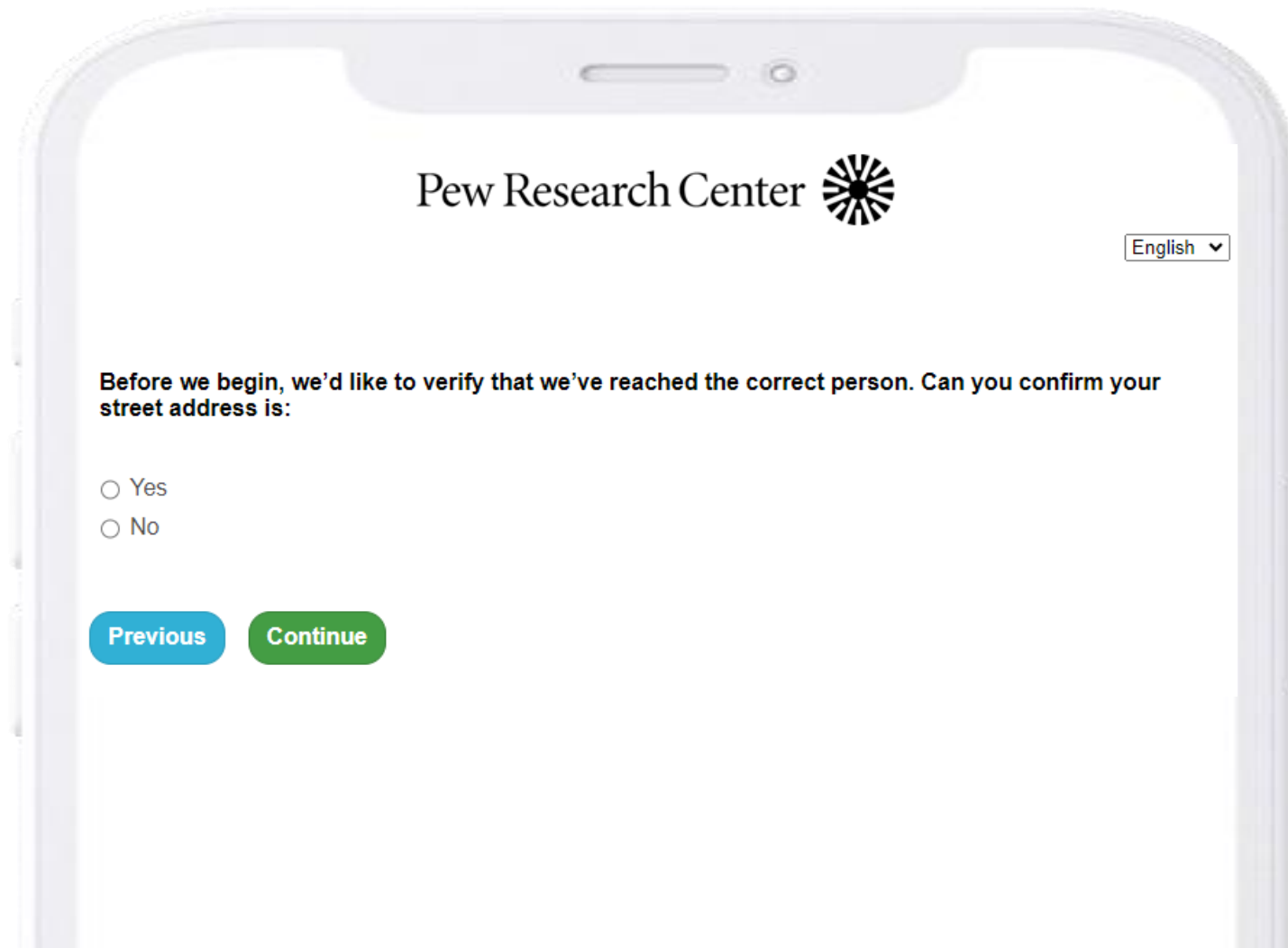
Address Verification

Address Verification Confirming Correct Household

Confirm phone number correctly matched to sampled address

Only asked if survey was entered through the text message

If address verification failed, respondent could not use web link from text message

Survey could be completed on the web if PIN on mailings was entered even after failing address verification

Pew Research Center ✸

English ▼

Before we begin, we'd like to verify that we've reached the correct person. Can you confirm your street address is:

○ Yes
○ No

Previous   **Continue**

Address Verification

Around **50%** of respondents passed the address verification question from the initial late reminder text

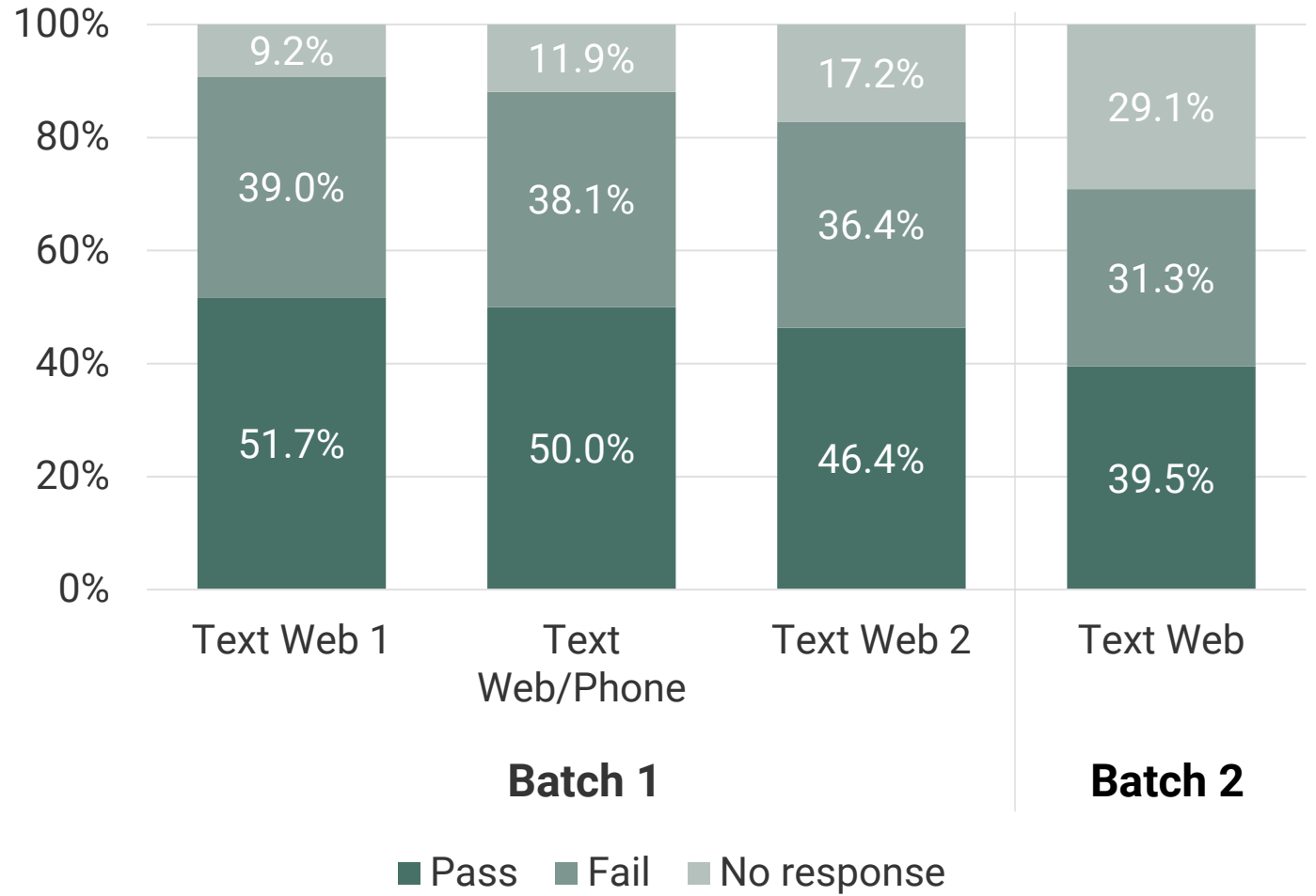- **39%** failed verification
- **10%** didn't respond

Similar results for second late reminder

- Additional **8%** of people did not answer question

Mid-fieldwork text had different results

- **40%** passed
- **31%** failed
- **29%** did not respond

Address Verification Results

Legend: ■ Pass   ■ Fail   ■ No response

Conclusions

Sending a text reminder doubles the response compared to no reminder but depends on accuracy of phone number matching to addresses.

Late text reminders did increase response rates slightly (0.5% yield), with another text increasing response (0.3%)

A mid-fieldwork text also increased response rates (0.9% yield)

Respondents used the link in the text, even when a phone number to call was provided

Text reminder completes were similar to web respondents in terms of sample composition

Just over half of the late texted numbers corresponded to the sampled address

People that received mid-fieldwork text were more reluctant to answer the question

Questions?
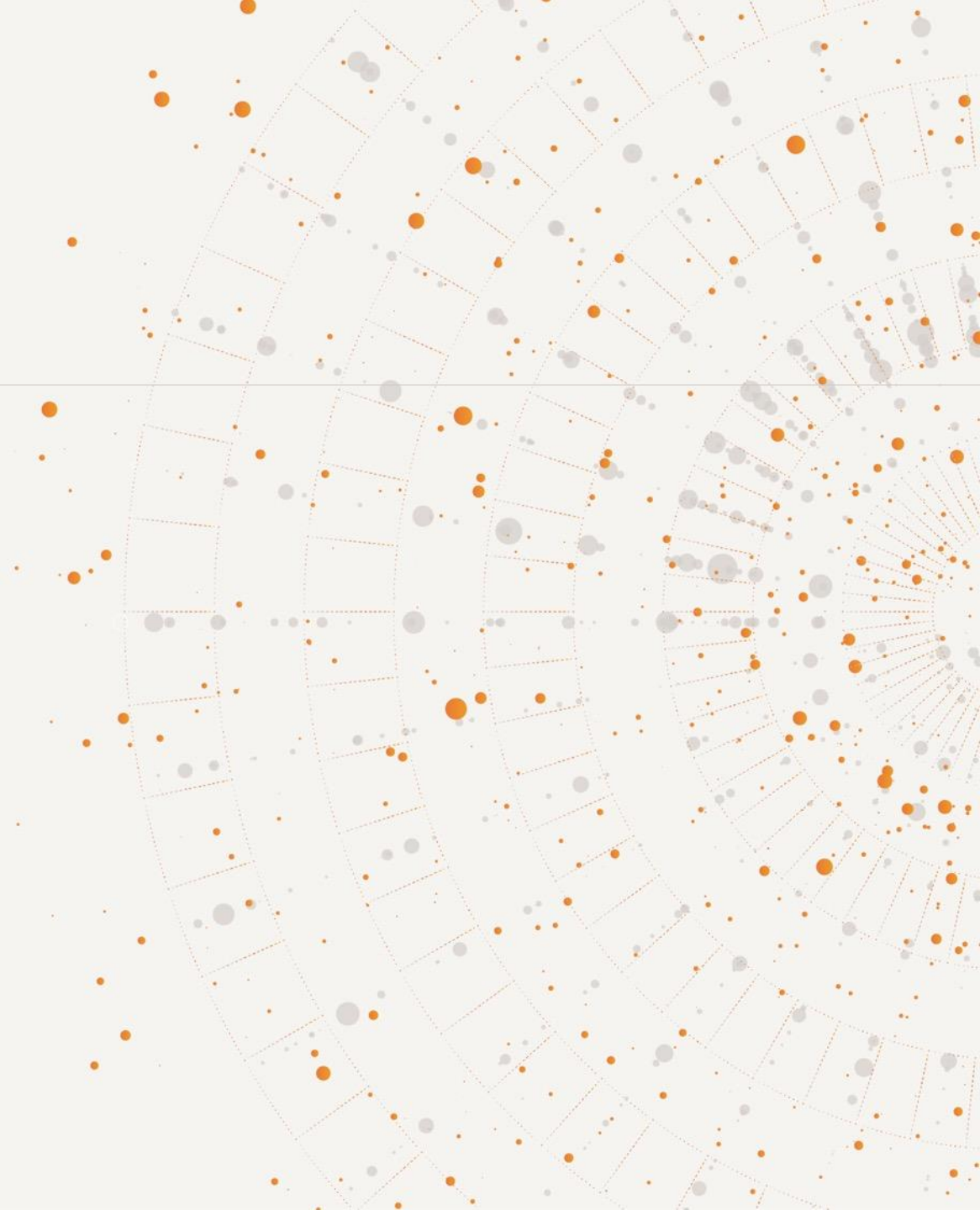
Thank you.

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NORC at the University of Chicago

Batch 1 - Late Text Dispositions and Completion Rates

	Control		Text Web		Text Phone		*Text Web+Phone*		Text Web 2	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	*Count*	*%*	Count	%
Total sample	14,741	-	31,606	-	10,576	-	*42,182*	*-*	31,040	-
Sent to carriers	-	-	31,338	99.2	10,475	99.0	*41,813*	*99.1*	29,425	94.8
Delivered	-	-	27,958	88.5	9,289	87.8	*37,247*	*88.3*	25,997	83.8
Undelivered	-	-	3,380	10.7	1,086	10.3	*4,466*	*10.6*	3,428	11.0
"Stop" requests	-	-	1,353	4.3	474	4.5	*1,827*	*4.3*	735	2.4
Entered survey	-	-	586	1.9	236	2.2	*822*	*1.9*	425	1.4
Completes	34	0.2	167	0.5	62	0.6	*229*	*0.5*	106	0.3

Some of the control group did respond during this period (23).

Batch 2 – Text Reminder Dispositions and Completion Rates

	Control		Text Web	
	Count	%	Count	%
Total sample	9,986	-	39,905	-
Sent to carriers	-	-	39,531	99.1
Delivered	-	-	35,265	88.4
Undelivered	-	-	4,266	10.7
"Stop" requests	-	-	1,756	4.4
Completes	45	0.5	379	0.9