

Scientific Inquiries

GRADING CRITERIA

Criterion	Performance Characteristics
Depth of reflection	Insightful. Supported with evidence. Thorough and thoughtful. Demonstrates attempted understanding of sociological perspective and/or material at hand.
Clarity	Well-written, understandable (can understand on first read). Mistakes in spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting do not interfere with understanding.
Complete	Follows guidelines. Fully answers all prompts within assignment.

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Research Ethics: Human Subjects Training

You need to abide by legal and ethical scientific standards when conducting research. Sociology research often involves human participants. For this assignment, you will complete an online training on Human Subjects protections available through the University of New Hampshire.

The training is designed to assist researchers with gaining familiarity with key issues in conducting research involving human subjects. The training module takes approximately 30 minutes. Individuals who certify their completion of the module at the end of it will receive an email that is the documentation/certification of completion of the training.

Upload the certificate as an attachment and submit it to complete this assignment. You will either earn a 0% or 100% on this assignment, based on whether or not you submit a certificate with your name on it (any late penalties notwithstanding).

The web-based training is available at: <https://rit.sr.unh.edu/training/rcr-training/human-subjects.html>

Research Ethics - Virtual Simulation on Research Misconduct

Play one of the interactive movies (Virtual Experience Interactive Learning Simulation) on research misconduct below:

- The Research Clinic: <https://ori.hhs.gov/TheResearchClinicVideo/>
- The Lab: Avoiding Research Misconduct: <https://ori.hhs.gov/TheLab/TheLab.shtml>

Afterwards, submit this assignment, answering the following questions:

1. Which program did you play (The Lab or The Research Clinic)?
2. Which character did you play?
3. What did you learn or find interesting about this activity?

Write at least four meaningful sentences.

Secondary Data Analysis: World Values Survey

Quantitative research involves analyzing quantitative data. Researchers may collect this data themselves (for example, through a survey) or they may use secondary data analysis (use already existing/collected data). There is a ton of collected data already available for scientists to analyze, from demographic census data to crime and education data to data about American attitudes. From the census to the General Social Survey (GSS) to smaller datasets other researchers have made available, there are a lot of options! One popular source for finding data sets is the Interuniversity Consortium for Political and Social Research; there researchers can search over 3500 data sets to potentially find one that will address their research question.

For this assignment, you are going to engage in secondary data analysis by taking a look at data from the World Values Survey.

"The survey, which started in 1981, seeks to use the most rigorous, high-quality research designs in each country. The WVS consists of nationally representative surveys conducted in almost 100 countries which contain almost 90 percent of the world's population, using a common questionnaire. The WVS is the largest non-commercial, cross-national, time series investigation of human beliefs and values ever executed, currently including interviews with almost 400,000 respondents. Moreover the WVS is the only academic study covering the full range of global variations, from very poor to very rich countries, in all of the world's major cultural zones."

Your job is to explore and analyze this data. Find something interesting to share with the class from the data and post it on the Discussion Board (reply to the existing thread).

While you are able to download the data, the World Values Survey has an online tool that should make this assignment easier to complete.

You can get up to 10 extra points if you include a relevant and understandable graph or map or some other graphic to explain your data.

Check out the WVS here: <http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org/WVSONline.jsp>

Secondary Data Analysis: General Social Survey

For this assignment, you are going to engage in secondary data analysis by taking a look at data from the General Social Survey. Your job is to explore and analyze this data. Find something interesting to share with the class from the data and post it on the Discussion Board (reply to the existing thread). (Use the links below to find and analyze the data.)

- GSS Cumulative Datafile 1972-2014 - Quick Tables:
<http://sda.berkeley.edu/quicktables/quickconfig.do?gss14>:
- General Social Survey (GSS) Cumulative Datafile 1972-2014 - release 2 (SDA 4.0):
<http://sda.berkeley.edu/sdaweb/analysis/?dataset=gss14>
- GSS Data Explorer: <https://gssdataexplorer.norc.org/>

Breaching Norms Experiment

According to Harold Garfinkel, we all have background assumptions, taken-for-granted ideas that give us basic directions for our behavior and everyday living; these basic rules of social life are deeply embedded, ingrained assumptions of how the world operates and how people ought to act. Breaching norms experiments uncover these background assumptions.

First, search videos online (e.g. at <https://www.google.com/videohp>) and watch at least one more norms breaching experiment. For keywords to use for searching, use norm or social norm and either breaching, violating, or breaking. You can add the word experiment in or leave it out.

Choose a social norm to violate. Make sure to choose a norm you can violate while interacting with others and observing their responses.

The main ethical principles in conducting research with human participants are respect for persons, beneficence, and justice. Make sure you are not planning anything illegal, dangerous, extremely disruptive, that will create genuine hardship or hurt for those affected, etc.

Now go out into the social world and conduct your experiment. Pay attention to how you feel breaking the social norm and to how others react.

Submit the assignment by answering the following questions:

- 1. What did you do for your breaching norms experiment?**
- 2. How did you feel doing it?**
- 3. Why do you think you felt that way?**
- 4. How did others react?**
- 5. Why do you think others reacted that way?**

Field/Participant Observation

Go somewhere where you can observe people (e.g. a daycare center, a public park, a bar, the mall, an office, a store, a classroom, etc.). Spend at least 15-30 minutes there, taking notes on what you observe, paying careful attention to people's social interactions. What do you notice? Attempt to use your sociological eye. Did anything surprise you? Post your response on the discussion board. Be sure to write where you conducted your observation as well as your analysis of what you observed.

Interview: Social Change & Social Location

Interview someone over the age of 50 about their experiences with social locations such as race and ethnicity, sex and gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, and/or other identity areas (e.g. age, national origin, physical ability status, mental ability status, marital status, parental status, etc.). In particular, find out 1) about their experiences when they were young and 2) about how, based on their current experiences, they think things have or have not changed since they were young.

While this interview does involve a human participant, you do not need to use a permission form (informed consent); however, make sure you ask your participant for their permission to interview them for class, and if you plan to share identifying information in your assignment or with the class (e.g. their name), whether or not they are okay with that.

After the interview, submit what you learned from your interview about your interviewee's experiences with these social locations/identities.

Content Analysis: Popular Culture & Social Identities

Watch any popular TV show or movie (watch at least the equivalent of a ½ hour TV show). If you do not have access to free TV or movies, one option for you is that many TV channels have recent episodes of their TV shows available to watch for free without subscription.

While watching, think critically about how social identities are portrayed (or not portrayed) in the TV show (e.g. race and ethnicity, sex and gender, class, sexual orientation, religion, age, national origin, physical ability status, mental ability status, marital status, parental status, size, etc.).

Then respond to the following prompts:

#1: Share what TV show or movie you watched.

#2: Share information about how at least two social identities were or were not portrayed. Provide specific examples from the TV show or movie.

#3: How did you feel about the way the social identities you wrote about were / were not portrayed? Did the show/movie reinforce or challenge stereotypes? What power do you think the TV show or movie has or lacks as a socialization agent?

Storytelling & Framing: I Am From

Fill out the attached document and submit it. Be ready to share your writings on Monday.

I Am From

Familiar sights, sounds, and smells from your home or neighborhood growing up
I am from...

Familiar foods, especially those associated with family gatherings or special occasions
I am from...

Familiar sayings heard repeatedly as you were growing up
I am from...

Familiar moments from history that have informed your life and work
I am from...

Familiar experiences that have challenged or shaped your identity
I am from...

Familiar people—family members, friends, ancestors, important people from your past
I am from...

Storytelling & Framing: Personal Narrative

Complete the Ganz reading before doing this week's scientific inquiry.

This week we are focused on the final part of the scientific process, publishing and communicating your work.

Write at least three paragraphs in response to the following prompt:

What experience(s) and/or people in your life have shaped your values and made you want to address the social problem you selected for your research project?

As you write, think about the following:

- Are there specific details you can include to help make the story come to life?
- How can you communicate clear values, emotion, and authenticity into your story?
- Is your story clear, compelling, concrete, and concise?

Survey: Popular Conceptions

First, create a brief questionnaire/survey to find out people's perceptions about the social problem you are working on for your research project. Make sure to include at least one question that tests potential popular misconceptions about your social problem.

Next, administer your questionnaire to at least 10 individuals. You can earn extra points if you survey more people. If this is a paper survey, make sure that each survey participant signs a permission form (see BB). If this is an electronic survey, make sure each survey participant is marking their permission.

Finally, present, analyze, and discuss your results.

Submit the assignment by answering the following questions:

1. List the questions from your survey instrument:
2. How many surveys did you actually collect and how did you select the participants?
3. Data/Findings: You do not need to and should not provide a copy of all of your raw data. Here you should present aggregate or summarized data. Aggregate data is grouped data; share your survey results for relevant questions (e.g. For the question, "How many times have you heard the n-word in public over the past year, 10 people said 0 times, 15 people said once, 10 people said twice, 5 people said three times, 3 people said four times, and 3 people said five or more times. You may also want to break this down by racial group – what were the results for white students? black students? other students of color?).
4. Results/Analysis and Implications: What conclusions can you make from your data? What does your data say about your research question? (You are not required to present graphs or use percentages, but this may find doing so helpful.)
5. What limitations in your study should be considered in evaluating the results or in generalizing the results?

Information Research: Investigating Social Problems
(This is also Research Project Assignment #6: The Cause of the Problem)

Why does this problem exist? How is the problem produced? What are barriers to solving this social problem? What role do social structures, systems, and institutions in this social problem?

Write at least two meaningful paragraphs, but no more than five. Use at least two credible sources. At least one must be a peer-reviewed scholarly journal article that is either written by a sociologist, published in a sociology journal, or makes substantive use of sociological theory. Include in-text citations and the appropriate bibliographic information – whether you use ASA, APA, Chicago, MLA, or another style is up to you.

Grading Criteria

<u>Criterion</u>	<u>Performance Characteristics</u>
Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Persuasively provides insight into cause(s) of the social problem▪ Causal explanation makes use of sociological theory/perspective(s)▪ Rich, up-to-date, correct evidence to address research question
Clarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Well-written, understandable (can understand on first read)▪ Uses correct spelling, grammar, punctuation, and formatting throughout▪ Adeptly communicates content▪ Strong organization, focus, and flow.
Complete	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Follows guidelines▪ Fully answers all prompts within assignment▪ Two to five meaningful paragraphs
Sources	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ At least two credible sources used▪ At least one source is either written by a sociologist, published in a sociology journal, or makes substantive use of sociological theory▪ Provides all needed citations and references, properly formatted.



Great Bay
Community College

PERMISSION FORM

SPRING 2015

Dear study participant,

I am a student in a Sociology course at Great Bay Community College and am working on a research project. I am writing to invite you to participate in this project.

You will not receive any compensation to participate in this project. The potential risks of participating in this study are minimal. Although you are not anticipated to receive any direct benefits from participating in this study, the research will help me investigate sociological questions through basic research and analysis, better understand the social phenomena I am exploring, and enable me to share the results of my sociological investigations.

Participation in this study is strictly voluntary. If you refuse to participate, you will not experience any penalty or negative consequences. If you agree to participate, you may refuse to answer any question and/or if you change your mind, you may withdraw at any time during the study without penalty or negative consequences.

I seek to maintain the confidentiality of all data and records associated with your participation in this research, within legal limits. The end result of this research is a class research project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Yes, I, _____ consent/agree to participate in this research project.

No, I, _____ do not consent/agree to participate in this research project.

Signature

Date