Blog Post 2

Premise

For this project, you will create a new dataset. You may choose to analyze your own data, aka *quantified self* or create a dataset from a topic or area you are interested in, quantifying the world around you.

First, you will collect data about an aspect of your life or the world that interests you, and then create a visualization from that data. You could make a completely new dataset over the course of a day (ex: how many times you check your phone, the number of times you enter or exit a building) or curate a new one from your digital (or analogue) footprint (ex: your email data, your location data) or count the number of people who pass in front of a store over a day.

This project will require you to engage with the full "data life cycle": you will turn a general curiosity into an engaging research question; identify the variables necessary to answer that question; design the data structure and collection methodology; assemble your data set; analyze your data set through visualization; and finally, communicate your findings as a blog.

Additionally, your data set is poised to have significant personal context and qualitative value. In the past 10 years (basically since the advent of "wearables"), this type of quantified self has gained prominence and stirred sginificant debate. This project is designed to speak to that movement while giving you the opportunity to get creative about what aspect of your "self" or the world around you to quantify.

By the end of this project, you will be able to: - Design and create a data set from scratch - Identify and utilize quantitative proxies for qualitative behavior - Engage with the full "data life cycle"

PART I: Project Proposal

DUE 6am Sunday, October 11 (10%)

Your proposal should outline these four dimensions:

1. **A research question.** Your research goal can take the shape of a question, topic, or title, but it must be coherent and addressable by this data set and through a visualization. Your research question will develop as you work with the data set. For example, your project may start with "How often do I look at my phone in a day" and expand into "What times of day do I look at my phone the most?", "Is there a relationship between task or location and phone use?"
2. **Your audience**. Who would benefit from an answer to your research question? Are you the primary audience for your work, or are you anticipating interest from a broader audience? You can give narrative context or a very direct statement of what is at stake. For example, "I use my phone nearly all of the time: I am a cyborg. This project explores the nature of my phone usage, and analyzes when and why I reach for the device."
3. **The data you will use to address your question**. You must include how you collected (or plan to collect) your data. You are welcome to collect new data, or use existing data from an activity tracker, meal planner, calendar, email, text messages, historical data about yourself, etc. For this section, you must clearly articulate what the data is, how it was or will be collected, what are the parameters on the data (category, time frame, what "counts" and what doesn't).
4. **A sketch of how you plan to visualize your data**. The sketch must be visual, preferably hand drawn. If you'd prefer, you may sketch it on a computer in a program such as Gimp, Tayuski Sketches for iPhone, Medibang Paint, etc. This sketch should not be a computer generated graph or other visual at this point in the process. It should be your initial ideas about what your visualization's ideal form might be to best answer the research question you've proposed. Attach a picture of this sketch to your email.

I cannot take late submissions, but can take early ones. This timeframe is to ensure that what you have planned is reasonable and realistic. If your project needs revisions, you will not need to submit a revised proposal. However, if there are major changes, I may ask to schedule a video chat to help reframe your project.

PART II: Visualization and Blog Post

DUE 6pm Wednesday, October 21 (75%)

You will publish a blog post on your CUNY Academic Commons Site that includes the following components. The written component should be approximately 500-1,000 words.

1. **Your research question.** Your research question may have evolved or completely changed since you submitted your proposal. However, your blog post must be cohesive. Its description and analysis must reflect the question or topic you have addressed in *this* version of your visualization.
2. **Your audience.** Describe the audience this visualization aims to serve.
3. **A written description of your visualization.** Explain your visualization in terms that a data novice would understand. Your goal is to make your work approachable. At this point in your post, anyone who has come across your site should understand what your research question is, why this topic matters to your audience, and how to read and interact with your visualization.
4. **Your embedded visualization.** Your visualization should be published on your Tableau Public Profile and embedded in your blog post. It should retain all the interactive functionality you built in Tableau.
5. **An explanation of the data and design decisions you made.** This section should illustrate what you did and why you did it. Why did you choose the type of chart/graph/visualization that you did? How does that choice best represent the data and address your

question? Through this explanation, you will illustrate that the decisions you made were intentional and how they contribute to the project. You should also explain any limitations you encountered and any subsequent compromises you made with the data or your design.

6. **Next steps**. Finally, explain where you could take this project in the future. What would the immediate and more complex next steps look like? What improvements, developments, or alterations in scope would you make?

PART III: Pin Up

DUE in class October 21, 6:30pm (via Zoom) (15%)

The final component of this project is a pin up and critique. Everyone will have the opportunity to receive thoughtful feedback about their work and offer the same to their peers. You must be present in class for the critique. Since critique is essential but ephemeral, if you have extenuating circumstances that prohibit you from attending a Zoom class on Wednesday, October 21 from 6:30-8:30pm, you must make advance arrangements.

Some questions to help shape feedback:

- Does the data address the question?
- Does the visualization address the question?
- Does the visualization fit the data?
- Who is the intended audience of this visualization?
- Was the author successful in depicting the relationships in the data?
- Is the output informative and honest?
- Where could a consumer misinterpret the data?

Some notes

You can use as many or as few visuals to address your question/topic as you wish and as you feel is appropriate. You can continue to iterate on your project until you are satisfied, but the first version must be completed by Monday 1 hour before class. If you have major revisions after the critique, you may submit your project for reassessment.

Finally, the end product (from the website to the visualizations) should be reflective of you and your style. The objective is that you will have a portfolio of work at the end of the semester that illustrates your visualization skills. If you already have a portfolio or a personal site, talk to us about how to incorporate the two.

Evaluation

Part I (10%)

10/10 for submitting on time and addressing all the components

Part II (75%)

- Appropriate choice of visualization (20)
  - The visualization type addresses the research question
  - The choice of graph or chart represents the data truthfully
- Effective Communication (20)
  - Intended message is communicated clearly
  - Data are accurately represented without distortion
- Design and Aesthetics (20)
  - All elements and features of the visualization have a communicative function
  - The visualization has a thoughtful layout and an intentional design
  - Title, headings, labels create helpful context and have appropriate sizes, locations, spellings
- Content of Blog Post (15)
  - The blog provides helpful context that makes the visualization more understandable and approachable
  - The writing provides the reader an inside look into the visualization's intent and creation process
  - All components of blog post are addressed
  - Decisions are in line with good visualization practices (see Data Points and Storytelling with Data)

Part III (15%)

15/15 for actively participating in the pinup. This includes sincerely listening to the feedback from the class as well generously offering your best ideas for improving the work of your peers.