

**Data Collection Project: Youth and Society**  
**Due Friday, June 16, 2017 by 8:00pm ET**

Throughout this course, you will acquire knowledge on the topic of youth, youth culture, and social issues (keep in mind that youth can range from 13 to 24 and adolescence from 10 to 19). The goal of this assignment is to apply some of that knowledge to what you see every day in society. While it is extremely important to learn about theories, this knowledge is wasted if we do not practice applying it. For this project, you will be collecting two kinds of data and analyzing based on what you have learned in this course. This will not require you to do any statistical modeling or write any long ethnographic reports, but it will require you to observe and measure what is actually happening in society today within the topic of youth and society.

Sociology is the scientific study of social behavior and society. Since its inception, it has relied on various methods of empirical investigation that produce data. Broadly, these methods of social research fall into two categories: qualitative and quantitative.

Qualitative Research: Qualitative data utilizes descriptions and relies on social phenomenon that are observed, but not necessarily measured. This type of data is produced through in-depth interviews, ethnography, participant observation, and focus groups, among others. For example, you might see the following in a paper with qualitative methods: “The young men were standing off to the side of the dance floor. Many of them seemed timid about joining the young women who were dancing.”

Quantitative Research: Quantitative data deals with numbers, focusing on social facts that can be measured. Quantitative data is gathered through questionnaires and surveys. An example you might see in a paper that utilizes quantitative methods would be: “In the December 2011 issue of *Seventeen Magazine*, 34 out of the 48 young women (or 70.83%) featured in advertisements were white (based on the author’s observations). This would suggest that the magazine is under-representing other races and ethnicities.”

For this assignment, you will need to collect qualitative and quantitative data on relevant topics of your choice. You will then need to write a 1 to 2 double-spaced page report for each, not counting the reference page. You will need to turn in your field notes as well (you may scan these or type them up). The next few pages explain the expectations and requirements for each part of this project.

Your Data Collection Project will have **four parts**: (1) the qualitative field notes, (2) the qualitative data report, (3) the quantitative notes, and (4) the quantitative data report. Turn all of these in to the Data Collection Project Dropbox on D2L no later than **Friday, June 16, 2017 at 8:00pm ET**. You have the first five weeks of the semester to work on the assignment; so do not wait until the last minute.

## Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative data collection portion of the assignment will require you to do observations of a field site of your choice. You will need to travel to a field site to study the participants and culture of the setting. The research method you will be using is ethnography (where you are something like a fly on the wall) or participant observation (where you naturally engage with the people in this setting). You will go to a public place with many people present. When picking your field site, remember that the class is focused on youth and society. Be sure that you choose a field site that will allow you to analyze aspects of youth culture, youth risk, youth behavior, etc. (where youths are those aged from about 13 to 24). Some examples of field sites are a coffee shop, a bar or club, or a mall. If you have any questions about whether or not your chosen field site is appropriate, please let me know ([mindessa@msu.edu](mailto:mindessa@msu.edu)).

At your field site, find a place to sit for at least an hour so that you can take notes of both the people and their interactions. Return at least one additional time for a least an hour to the field site for further observations; please take note of the day and time for each observation. However, do not record any actual names of people or places (you may create pseudonyms).

Take note of both the verbal communication and the nonverbal behavior of a few different groups in the particular setting. Make sure you separate your descriptions from interpretations. It is better to have plenty of jotted notes rather than a lack of notes.

In your report, you will respond to the following questions:

- What social patterns among the youth are occurring in the setting? Provide a few specific examples.
- What social patterns are based on gender, social class, or race/ethnicity? (One or more of these variables may be addressed.)
- What lessons can be learned from these observations? Explain.

*Make sure that you connect course materials (readings, videos, podcasts, discussions etc.) into your paper. Please include at least three citations from your text. This is the application part of the assignment.*

Provide me with a one to two page double-spaced typed report, not counting the reference page. Your paper will be due by **Friday, June 16 by 8:00pm ET**. You have the first five weeks of the semester to work on the assignment; so do not wait until the last minute.

## Quantitative Data Collection

The quantitative data collection portion of this project will require you to gather measurable data through your own observations. In this part, you will not be so focused on the descriptive elements of your subject. You will be focusing on gathering as much data as you can quickly, which is what quantitative data is for. In this portion, be doing a quantitative content analysis based on what you find in youth-oriented magazines.

Select at least three different magazines that are directed toward youths and young adults and a total of five issues. Examples include *Seventeen*, *Teen People*, *Teen Vogue*, *ESPN: The Magazine*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Ms.*, etc. The MSU Library should have many of these magazines available for library use only or bounded that you can check out. List which magazines and issues you chose. You will be focusing on the advertisements in each magazine issue.

- What number and percentage are included in each magazine ad: Arab women and men, Asian women and men, Black women and men, Latina women and Latino men, Native American women and men, White women and men and multi-racial women and men? What is the theme of each ad? Construct a table of your findings. *Take note of how each individual is portrayed in each ad.*
- What social patterns may be concluded about gender, race and ethnicity, and social class as portrayed in ads? Explain.

Alternatively, you may do quantitative data collection through another method of your choosing. One example would be looking at advertisements on a TV channel that targets youths, such as MTV or Freeform. If you choose to do an alternative project for this portion, please email me to get your project approved and to ensure that it will meet the requirements.

*Make sure that you connect course materials (readings, videos, podcasts, discussions etc.) into your paper. Please include at least three citations from your text. This is the application part of the assignment.*

Provide me with a one to two page double-spaced typed report, not counting the reference page. Your paper will be due by **Friday, June 16 by 8:00pm ET**. You have the first five weeks of the semester to work on the assignment; so do not wait until the last minute.

Evaluation:	Excellent	Good	Acceptable	Needs Work	Severely Lacking	Points
Follow directions & respond to questions	11-12	10	8-9	7	6 or less	
Clear introduction & specific thesis	11-12	10	8-9	7	6 or less	
Logical development of ideas	22-24	20-21	16-19	14-15	13 or less	
Support (include examples, readings, & concepts)	22-24	20-21	16-19	14-15	13 or less	
Writing (spelling, grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, citations, references, etc.)	11-12	10	8-9	7	6 or less	
Overall paper	11-12	10	8-9	7	6 or less	
Attachments (tables, jotted notes, etc.)	22-24	20-21	16-19	14-15	13 or less	
<b>Total</b>	<b>120</b>					