

Social Science 200

Spring 2000

Lab Report #1: A Statistical Picture of American Families: Trends and Diversity

Choose one of the following topics:

- a. Never-married, married, divorced, widowed: the changing life course of marital status.
- b. Who has children, how many, and into what family circumstances?
- c. How do men and women divide their time between home and market work?
- d. When do children enter, and when do they leave, formal schooling?

Write a 4-5 page (typed, double-spaced) report tracing out either changes over time in this aspect of family behavior, or diversity within the American population by race/ethnicity, social class (education level), or region.

Report guidelines:

Begin with a cover page that includes a title, your name, student number, and lab section as well as “Social Science 200, Spring 2000.”

State very clearly in the title and, in more detail, in the introduction which topic you are writing about and whether you are examining trends or diversity/variability—i.e. changes over time in family size and family structure, or differences in school attendance of Hispanic and non-Hispanic children at different ages.

You should use authoritative data, clearly presented, to document these patterns.

Present data clearly and effectively both in tables and figures. Is there some simple manipulation of the data (eg. Calculating rates or proportions, graphing percentage rates of change) that would make your presentation more informative or effective?

Describe the important aspects of the data in words. What does this data tell us?

You should include at least two other scholarly sources that assist in the interpretation of what you find in the data. One of these sources may be from the readings, if appropriate, but should not include the textbook.

Summarize and draw conclusions regarding the changes/variations in the functioning of families.

Notes: Document your sources precisely, including the URL and source of any information from the internet. One standard format for referencing Web sources can be found at:

<http://www.uvm.edu/~ncrane/estyles/mla.html>.

How do you document sources? When do you need a direct quote, when can you paraphrase, when does a source require a direct cite or a footnote? Bookmark the Modern Language Association's Guide for Writing Research Papers at <http://webster.commnet.edu/mla.htm> and see the discussion and examples in the section on plagiarism.

Due date: Lab #5, April 27,28.