Coursera - Computing For Data Analysis Week 4

October 14, 2013

1 Week 4 Programming Assignment Part 1

1.1 How many of each cause of homicide?

The goal of this problem is to count the number of different types of homicides that are in this dataset. In each record there is a field with the word "Cause" in it indicating the cause of death (e.g. "Cause: shooting"). The basic goal is to extract this field and count the number of instances of each cause.

Write a function named count that takes one argument, a character string indicating the cause of death. The function should then return an integer representing the number of homicides from that cause in the dataset. If no cause of death is specified, then the function should return an error message via the stop function.

- Your function should read the homicides dataset in the manner indicated above.

- The options for cause of death are "asphyxiation", "blunt force", "other", "shooting", "stabbing", "unknown".

- No other causes are allowed. If a cause of death is specified that is not one of these, then the function should throw an error with the stop function.

- Note that some homicides in the dataset do not have a cause of death listed and those records should be ignored.

- Your function should deal with some irregularities in the dataset like capitalization. For example "Shooting" and "shooting" should be counted as the same cause of death.