LAB 1 – LOOKING AT DEATHS IN-CUSTODY IN CALIFORNIA

This lab will draw on data from the California State Department of Justice available on the Open-Justice Web site at: <https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/data>

There are four files associated with the data set on Death in Custody & Arrest Related Deaths in California: Summary, Data Dictionary, Raw and Read Me.

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| **Death in Custody & Arrest-Related Deaths** | California law enforcement agencies report to the CA Department of Justice information on any death that occurs while an individual is: (1) in the process of arrest, (2) in the temporary custody of a municipal, county, or state law enforcement agency, or (3) incarcerated in a county, or state correctional facility. | * [Summary - CSV](https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/downloads/ca_doj_county_deaths_in_custody_summary_2005-2014_02-17-2016.csv) * [Data Dictionary](https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/downloads/ca_doj_county_deaths_in_custody_summary_data_dictionary_02-17-2016.pdf) * [Raw - CSV](https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/downloads/ca_doj_deaths_in_custody_raw_1980-2015_05-14-2016.csv) * [READ ME](https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/downloads/death-in-custody-readme.pdf) |

***Use any of the files that you think necessary to explore the data and answer the following questions:***

1. How many in-custody & arrest related (ICAR) deaths are reported in the data set?
2. What is the average number of ICAR deaths per year?
3. What does the trend look like?

(You may describe the trend as percentage change from year to year, percentage change from first year to last, or the absolute change – difference from year to year, difference from first year to last.)

1. What’s the most common reason for ICAR deaths?
2. Which California county reports the most ICAR deaths?
3. Are more ICAR deaths reported by State or by local law enforcement agencies?
4. Which agencies report the most ICAR deaths in Alameda County?
5. Pick another county and answer the same question: which agencies report the most ICAR deaths?

***Be prepared to discuss the following in class:***

1. What might explain the change from year to year?
2. Do you see any reason for dropping observations from the data set? Why or why not?
3. What do we know about the distribution of California’s population entirely apart from the dataset and how does that affect our thinking about the distribution of ICAR deaths by county?
4. Other than population, what might explain the number of ICAR deaths in a county?
5. Looking at the agencies that report the most ICAR deaths within different counties, what might explain the predominance of one agency over another?

***Your exploration of the data will be easier if you:***

* Rename some variables – many of the variables have unnecessarily long and unwieldy names;
* Recode some variables – some of the codes and groupings within variables are problematic.