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LIS 545 B Winter 2024: Data Curation

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**Assignment # 1- Data in Society**

In Queenie Wong’s Los Angeles Times article titled “In San Francisco, Asian Americans have mixed feelings about Biden meeting with Chinese President Xi,” published on Nov 15th, 2023, various data forms are employed to explore the reactions of the Asian American community to the APEC summit and the Biden-Xi meeting. This paper will delve into the specifics of the data types, their origins, accessibility, and the critical role they play in shaping the newspaper’s narrative.

Interviews as Data

The interviews in Wong’s article are a pivotal qualitative data source, offering nuanced, personal views from the Asian American community. The individuals interviewed range from community activists to average residents, each bringing a unique perspective. Wong’s qualitative data comes from interviews with individuals such as Joyce Lam, the political director of the Chinese Progressive Association. Her statement that events in other countries impact the treatment of Chinese Americans, Asian Americans, and Chinese immigrants in the U.S. provides a personal perspective on the international political climate. The interviews originated from Wong’s interactions with members of the Asian American community, capturing their personal experiences and opinions. The stakeholders here include not just the interviewees and journalist but also readers seeking to understand the diverse Asian American experiences and perceptions.

Imagery as Data

In Wong’s article, imagery, including photographs of protests and community gatherings, functions as visual data. Visual data in the form of photographs are used to capture the atmosphere of events, such as the protests against Chinese President Xi Jinping and the APEC summit. The origin of this data is the photographic documentation of these events, providing an immediate, visual narrative. Stakeholders include the broader public, visual communicators, and historians who might use these images to understand or illustrate the Asian American community’s engagement in political and social issues.

Survey Data

Wong’s article provides a nuanced look into the Asian American community’s views on China, leveraging both qualitative and quantitative data from different surveys. The Pew Research Center’s survey illuminates the community’s split perspective, showing a majority with an unfavorable view of China, while a notable portion holds favorable or neutral positions. This data is critical to understanding the varied opinions within the community, especially when distinguishing between the views of U.S. born individuals and those born abroad.

Additionally, Wong’s article draws on economic data from the Peterson Institute for International Economics to shed light on the ramifications of U.S.-China trade relations, revealing the high tax rates on imports and exports that underscore the economic strain between the two nations. This information, alongside the survey results, provides stakeholders—including researchers, policymakers, and the media—with valuable insights. The article’s provision of direct links to the Pew survey and the economic data allows readers to access the detailed data for a comprehensive understanding of the community's stance and the complex dynamics at play in U.S.-China relations.

Relation to Borgman’s Definition of Data

Christine Borgman’s definition of data, as stated in “Big Data, Little Data, No Data,” emphasizes the context-dependent and process-oriented nature of data. Borgman argues that data gain meaning from the context in which they are used and from the perspectives of those interpreting them (Borgman 29). In this light, the data presented in Wong’s article underscore Borgman’s assertion that data are representations of observations or entities used as evidence for phenomena in research or scholarship. The Pew Research Center’s survey and the economic data from the Peterson Institute serve as evidence of the Asian American community’s sentiments and the tangible impacts of geopolitical decisions on trade, fitting into Borgman’s conceptual framework where data are not static entities but dynamic elements that acquire meaning through their use.

Conclusion

In summary, by integrating interviews, imagery, and survey data, Wong’s article offers a multifaceted view of the Asian American community’s response to international politics. This approach aligns with Borgman’s perspective on the contextual and interpretive nature of data. The critical analysis of Wong’s article should consider the potential biases and limitations inherent in each data type. The interviews may reflect personal biases, the imagery might capture only specific aspects of the events, and the survey data, while statistically robust, could be influenced by the survey design. Additionally, Wong’s background as a reporter covering tech and entertainment policy might shape her narrative approach and the selection of data. Nevertheless, Wong’s article, not only presents data but also invites a deeper reflection on the nature of data as evidence, shaped by the viewpoints of those who create, manage, and interpret it. (750 words)

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