GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
PUBLIC POLICY 646
DATA VISUALIZATION
Data Visualization Story
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For your previous assignments, you have used graphical analysis methods to explore data and produce visualizations for people like yourself: professional policy analysts and other specialist members of your policy topic's issue network.

For this assignment, you will compose a "data story." Data stories often come from "data journalists," writers who discover news stories primarily from exploring data instead of learning from newsmaker sources. Professional policy analysts, too, can produce such stories to contribute strategic, "large-n" evidence-based information to public deliberation about a policy issue. Analysts also publish data stories to enhance their employer's visibility as well as their own. (Employers and their funders sometimes regard the independent publication of such work as an indicator of an analyst's potential for impact.)

This kind of work product differs from traditional guest op-ed contributions to widely circulated opinion-leader publications. In the past, op-ed pieces from policy analysts might include a visualization as a decorative accessory, like a photo, to break up large blocks of text that might discourage readers. Data story authors, however, use graphical analysis methods, among others, to explore data and obtain insights from it. The story flows from the data analysis and relies on visualizations to engage a broader range of stakeholders in examination of the data.

Well trained data journalists provide some helpful examples to follow. See, for example, columns like "Wonkblog" in *The Washington Post* and "The Upshot" in *The New York Times*. These are only a few of the many available examples.

- https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/01/11/us/politics/trump-border-crisis-reality.html
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/11/03/what-americans-care-about-ahead-elections-mapped/
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/04/23/young-people-actually-rocked-vote-new-census-data-find/
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/10/22/low-voter-turnout-is-no-accident-according-ranking-ease-voting-all-states/
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/10/02/downward-mobility-where-middle-class-kids-are-worse-off-than-their-parents/
- https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2018/11/13/demographic-surges-that-spurred-s-heavy-turnout/

- https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2018/09/26/not-all-immigrants-face-backlash-not-all-natives-support-it-here-are-exceptions-both-sides/

Your data story should focus on a few key points that are 1) neither obvious nor already well known outside of perhaps specialist members of the related policy issue network, and 2) are based substantially on insights obtained from your visualizations.

Your story should consist of two types of elements: visualizations (at least two but no more than four) and a brief analytical report. You can create the visualizations in R, Tableau, or both. Please refine the visualizations in Adobe Illustrator. These visualizations should be new; they should not be copies of work submitted for an interim visualization assignment. You can include work from this assignment in your portfolio. The written portion of your data story should run between 500 and 900 words. Longer is *not* necessarily better.

Finally, the audience for your data story consists of readers of opinion-leader outlets, such as *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, and so on. Or, perhaps your piece would appear on the web site of a think tank, such as the Brookings Institution, the American Enterprise Institute, or the Urban Institute. Hence your writing should be crisp and concise.

Please submit your story as a single PDF document by the due date. Work submitted in multiple files will be returned to the student and considered late work. If your data story includes any visualizations created in Tableau, please turn in the complete Tableau file(s) used to create the visualization(s). The files should be in .TWBX file format, which will include the data.