Dear Data Redux

The main theme I wanted to address with these question was personal and social consistency. I wanted the questions I asked to be related how was maintaining relationships with others and myself in different aspects of my life.

Visualization 1:

Target Question:

The question that I chose to address for my first visualization was , “How often and which people do I call in my family?” I wanted to collect data on the frequency, initiation

patterns, and types of communication I use with different family members, specifically my mom, dad, and brother. I was interested to know if I was calling them enough, because since I've moved to college, it's harder to keep in touch.

Data Collected:

I used my notes app as part of my data collection and would record a tally as soon as the call was over. I made a number system to dictate what type of call it was: 1- regular phone call, 2- FaceTime, 3- missed call, 4- a FaceTime call between my mom and brother, and 5- a full family FaceTime. We used to group calls a lot because my family was all in different locations during this week. I would then assign the numbers to the person who initiated the call. For example, my mom had the most 5's because she would initiate the family call, even though I talked to all my family. I also had a separate column to make notes when I called them. I committed to a full week of data collection and started on January 25th.

Justification of Visualization:

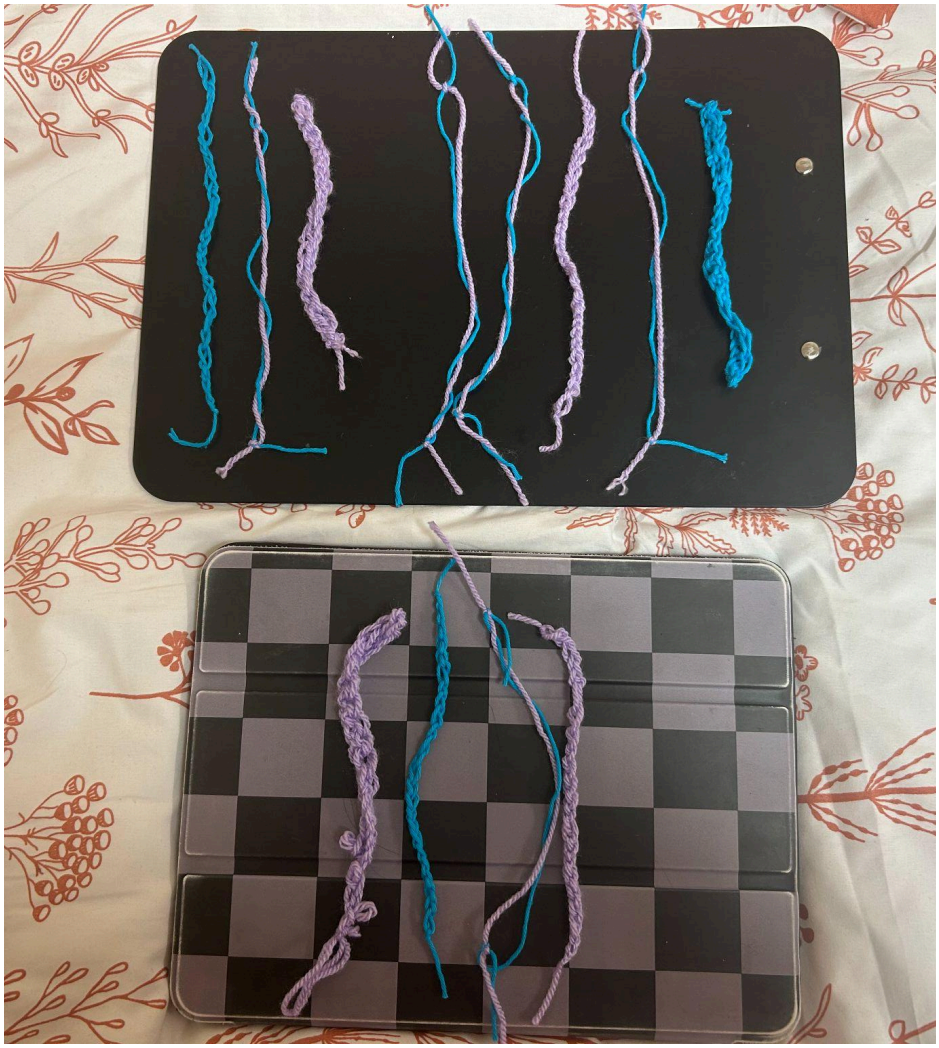
When coming up with the visualization, I wanted to do something related to the idea of family, and the first thing I came up with was the idea of a family tree. It's a really common visual when looking at familial bonds, and I thought it would also visually make it easier to see trends in the data. reveal trends. The height and curvature of the stems represent total interaction volume, and therefore, based on the diagram, the one for my Mom is the tallest, which reflects her high frequency of contact. The leaf/petal color represents directionality, so whether it was outgoing or incoming for that person. I used green leaves to represent my initiation and specific colors (pink, blue, purple) for each family member and their incoming calls. I thought this immediate color distinction would allow for a visual assessment of the balance in the number of calls made by me versus a family member. To represent the difference between a normal call and

a facetime I added a yellow glow around the leaves. I used hanging little berries to represent when there were group calls, and put them on the leaves for the person who initiated them. From my data collection, only my mom ever initiated these calls, which highlights that she would be the one to start the communication. Lastly, the red thorns represent a missed call because it shows a deviation in the stalk without stopping the height of the stalk, since we would usually call later. I chose to draw out the visualization in Procreate because the question felt personal, and I could represent the data with my family's mind. For example, the colors I chose are colors I associate with my family members.

Synthesis of Target Question:

Overall, this visualization reveals several key insights regarding my target question. First, I was able to realize how much I call my mom, and she calls me. I was able to notice how much of my contact with my family starts with her, and she is almost the communication hub of our family. I found that the call relationship with my dad was really rhythmic because we would call back and forth at the same time everyday and we both called each other roughly the same amount. Lastly, I learned how much I don't really call my brother one-on-one, but I believe that this discrepancy stems from the fact that I talk to him more when we are on group FaceTime calls, and therefore, there is not much of a reason to call him directly. Lastly, through the chart, I also realized that while most of our family communication is through normal calls, we still FaceTime each other in a good proportion, which was comforting, as even though we are apart, we are still making the effort to stay connected.

Visualization 2:



Target Question:

The question I chose to address for my second visualization is, “How does my punctuality change (early, late, on time) to various event especially on a week that was shortened by the weather?” I collected data during the week that we had snow days and started from Wednesday to Friday to see if I left for an event early, late, or on time.

Data Collected:

I used my notes app to track the event and classes I had and then made a note if I left early, late, or on time, and then also whether it was much earlier or later, or if it was only off by a

little bit of time. I ended up tracking this for 12 different event which included classes, going to the gym or fitness classes, and social/personal obligations. I tracked my arrival times for 12 distinct events, including academic classes, fitness sessions (gym/pilates), and social/personal obligations (meals/senior night). I used my Google Calendar and phone clock to also then go in and verify scheduled vs my actual arrival times.

Justification of Visualization:

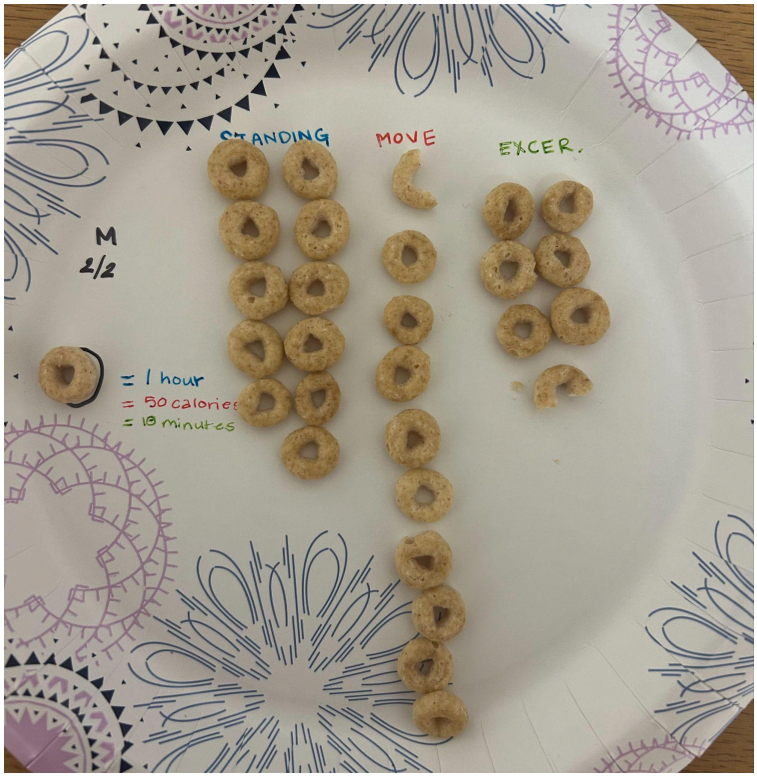
For this visualization, I decided to use crochet as my medium. I thought it would be nice because lines of yarn almost symbolize the chronological nature of my schedule. To create the visualization, I translated the timing states I was recording into two yarn colors and two different stitch types. The purple yarn represents times when I was early, and the blue represents times when I was late. The yarn that the mixture of both represents when I was on time. The chain stitch versus single stitch represents the extreme of a little late or early to a lot late or early. The chain stitch was used in the “a lot” category, and the single stitch was used in the “a little” category. I chose to do this because the chain stitch has more gaps, which I wanted to represent the gaps in time.

Synthesis of Target Question:

Overall, the data in this visualization reveals a clear divide in how I approach my day-to-day activities. Both my recorded gym sessions resulted in being a lot late, which suggests that my fitness routines were the most difficult to maintain during the snow-disrupted week. From my recorded data and the crochet, it also seems like I was consistently on time for meals and social gatherings. To me, this indicates that my punctuality is higher when other people are waiting for me. Lastly, the times I recorded data for class, I was usually early or on time. Therefore, despite the short week due to the snow, I was able to see that when I had planned

activities involving other people, I was early or on time, and the events to which I was late usually were activities in which it was only me holding myself accountable.

Visualization 3:




STANDING
MOVE
EXCER.
Tu
2/3
= 1 hour
= 50 calories
= 10 minutes


STANDING
MOVE
EXCER.
We
2/4
= 1 hour
= 50 calories
= 10 minutes

Target Question:

The question I chose to address for my third visualization was “How does my physical activity change over the weekdays, and how consistent am I with 'closing' my activity rings?” I collected this data from my Apple Watch, which I wear every day, and used the numbers to see consistency. I thought this would be a good way to collect data because the numbers are concrete and measured with digital sensors, and I wear my Apple Watch throughout the day with few disruptions.

Data Collected:

To break it down, I noted my active calories, exercise minutes, and standing hours. I used the weekly breakdown on my watch app and only did Monday through Wednesday because later that week, I had gone places where I didn’t bring my Apple Watch.

Justification of Visualization:

To make this visualization, I chose to use Cheerios as a physical medium. I thought that the circular shape of the Cheerio was a nod to the rings that I was closing on my Apple Watch. I used a plate to note the date of the data I was representing. I then made a key in the corner as to what one Cheerio represented. For standing hours, each cheerio is an hour, for exercise minutes, each cheerio is 10 minutes, and for the move ring, each cheerio represents 50 calories burned. If a cheerio is cut in half, it means that it is between the next interval up for that quantity. I tried stacking the Cheerios for the standing hours to make it more 3d but this ended up not working as the Cheerios weren’t stable enough, so I pivoted to a 2d view from the top. I also ended up using the colors from the Apple Watch that represented each aspect of the ring.

Synthesis of Target Question:

Overall, the data from this visualization shows that I definitely lack consistency on a daily basis, especially as the week progresses. Across all three days, the move column is consistently the longest, but I can not help but notice that my exercise column visibly shrank. Monday was my peak workout day, whereas Wednesday shows a significant drop-off in intentional exercise. My standing hours also show a slight decline everyday which to me shows the general decline in activity throughout the week. I want to add that I do believe that this lack of consistency does stem from the effect of the weather that week, which isn't necessarily shown in the visualization. I feel like the Cheerios show the decline clearly and showed how my motivation peaked early and then suffered significantly by the middle of the week.

Final Synthesis

For this project, I utilized three different media, which included digital illustration, crochet, and physical objects (cereal), to explore a theme of personal and social consistency within my own life. For the digital illustration, I noticed that I had the most fluidity and space to really create whatever I wanted in terms of the visualization. I was able to use the brushes from Procreate to make organic shapes, and I had an extremely large color palette to choose colors that I felt would best represent the data. Additionally, I felt that because digital art is easily editable, the process I used changed a lot, and I was able to erase and restart the process a lot.

Next, I decided to use crochet to represent my next data set. This was harder for me because I only recently got into crochet, so I had to relearn how to do some of the stitches. However, once I re-learned how, the process was very repetitive and almost rigid. It was harder to undo the digital media because if I had to redo it, I would have to undo the stitches. Lastly, I used Cheerios to represent my Apple Watch data. This was the easiest medium to work with

because there is no additional changing of the medium. It was very simple to put the Cheerios on the plate, and it's important to note that this is also the least permanent structure.

Through all these processes, I learned how interpretive data visualizations can be. I had all the control to decide how specific aspects of data can be represented. It made me realize, regardless of the medium, I had to make very specific decisions to show how I wanted the data to be represented. By engaging in these three different processes, I moved away from simply viewing my data on my notes page or a screen to building a physical representation and gaining a better understanding of the data.

A Common Thread:

Coming back to the central theme of the question, I think it's important to understand how they build off of each other. I went from a social to a personal aspect of consistency. My first visualization established that my social world, specifically my familial connections, is actually relatively consistent and primarily driven by my Mom. After this, I was thinking about how I spend my time, which then led me to wonder about consistency with my punctuality. The punctuality data showed that I was less consistent in this aspect of my life, and it also led me to question how my physical activity stayed consistent. That's why I ended with my final question about consistency as related to movement in my life. Collectively, these three visualizations show that my consistency tends vary depending on what aspect of my life I am analyzing. My social life is the most stable. Whereas, certain personals aspect of life, like my punctuality and movement in life tend to be less consistent.