Critical Essay 2: *Data Feminism*

Task:

In this critical essay, you will use your understanding of the arguments and concepts in *Data Feminism* to bring attention to the issue of student food insecurity at Syracuse University.

To accomplish this, you will examine relevant articles from the Daily Orange and Spectrum News (PDFs accessible via Blackboard in case the links are broken) that discuss the problem and suggest possible solutions, such as supporting the work of the two campus food pantries:

- https://dailyorange.com/2023/02/university-senate-student-food-insecurity-in-latest-meeting/
- https://spectrumlocalnews.com/nys/central-ny/news/2022/12/07/syracuse-university-food-pantries-fight-hunger-and-stigma-on-campus

While you are free to consult additional sources, remember to give proper attribution.

Figure 1, shown below, aims to raise awareness about hunger among Syracuse University students by mapping the location of SU's food pantries on the main and south campuses:
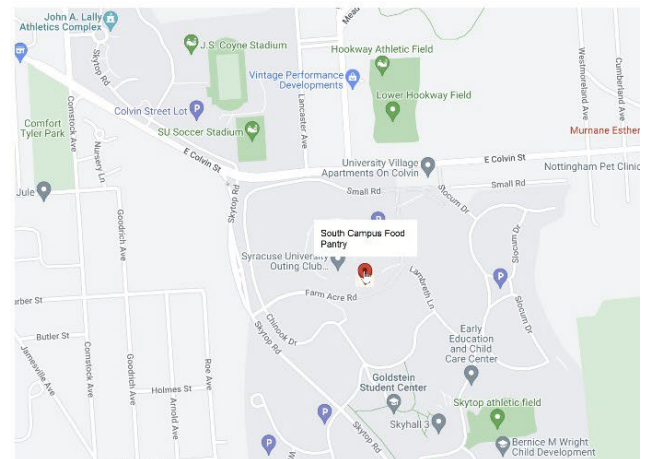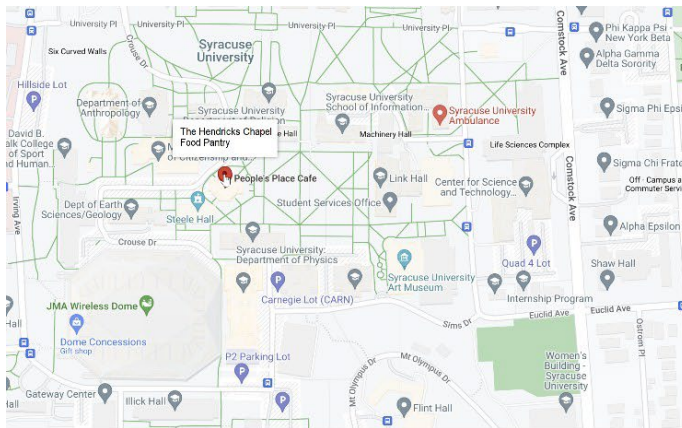

Figure 1: Syracuse University Food Pantries

Your task consists of four key steps:

Step 1: Develop a persuasive argument (your thesis statement) based on the data and visualizations found in the articles and Fig. 1. Your argument should propose potential solutions to alleviate college student hunger.

Step 2: Conduct a critical analysis of Fig. 1, focusing on the ways in which Fig. 1 may reinforce "binaries and hierarchies," "the god trick," "visual minimalism," "reason over emotion," and/or "neutrality and objectivity" (choose at least one concept to define and explain).

Step 3: Suggest ways to "visceralize" Fig. 1 using "elevating emotion and embodiment," "data emotionalization," "data storytelling," and/or "design justice" (choose at least one concept to define and explain) that support your argument in (1). This can be accomplished by creating a mock visualization in PowerPoint, Excel, hand drawing, AI-generated art environments such as Midjourney, or any other tool you choose. The data and visuals for the visualization can be fictional or approximate but should be grounded in the reality of college student food insecurity. While you will not be evaluated on the quality of the mock visceralization, You must upload the mock visceralization with your paper. Your essay will be evaluated based on the concreteness of your ideas and a comprehensive description of how your data visceralization enhances Fig. 1 grounded in the ideas and concepts in *Data Feminism*.

Step 4: Critically examine your own data visceralization considering the concept of "situated knowledge" presented in the book. You should evaluate: a) the data and/or visual(s) you chose to use; b) the story conveyed by your data visceralization; and c) the possible impact on the SU community and/or society at large. Consider, for example, whether your data visceralization could exacerbate victimization and/or stigmatization of SU students who are experiencing food insecurity. Does it reinforce societal biases, stereotypes, or deficit narratives about identity, such as class, gender, race, ethnicity, and ability?

It is expected that you engage:
- at least one concept in your critique of Fig. 1,
- at least one concept in your visceralization writeup, and
- incorporate "situated knowledge" in your reflection on the data visceralization you created as the third required concept in your essay.

Write:

In your essay, follow this format:

1. 1 paragraph introduction that introduces your **argument** about alleviating SU student food insecurity. Note: the thesis should be narrow and focused on the story you tell with your data visceralization approach.
2. 1 paragraph that describes the SU student community and the **impact** food insecurity has or could have on it.
3. 1 to 2 paragraphs that **critically analyze Fig. 1** using concepts from Data Feminism – is it an effective way of raising awareness about the problem of student hunger and/or the possible solutions? Why or why not? How does it reflect binaries, hierarchies, visual minimalism, reason over emotion, neutrality and objectivity, and/or the "god trick"?
4. 1 to 2 paragraphs that explain how your version of Fig. 1 aims to "**visceralize**" the data.
5. 1 to 2 paragraphs that **critically reflect on your own data visceralization** and how it embodies knowledge that is situated.

Requirements:

*   Minimum 1000 words
*   **Maximum of 1500 words**
*   **Include a word count at the top of the essay**
*   Define and engage at least **3 concepts or arguments** from *Data Feminism* (**"situated knowledge" must be one of the three). Make sure they are bolded in the text.**
*   Use APA citation style and include a bibliography of all sources referenced, including *Data Feminism* and the resources suggested (feel free to include citations from recitation or other outside sources).
*   Remember to submit your **data visceralization**, which can be in the form of a Word document, PowerPoint, PDF, or a photo of a paper and pencil drawing/ AI-generated artwork, along with your essay on Blackboard.

Due: **Thursday, November 7 at 11:59 pm**; upload to Blackboard; **Worth:** 15% of total grade