

# Very Quick Introduction, Quick Look at Data, Discussion of Your Happiness Research

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# outline

intro

quick data

discussion

- first go over syllabus
- then these slides here
- and then, once we have basic idea about the class
  - we'll do lengthy introduction of ourselves
  - and discussion for the reminder of tonight
- don't freak out! we'll get first into philosophy and psychology, and only then, in couple classes, go back to public policy and administration, and community stuff

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## setup

- no pre-requisites, but we will go as fast as possible
- want this to be more conversation than lecture
- do interrupt me and ask questions

# today

- we'll do proper intro to the topic next week
- today just very quick intro
- and quick overview of data,
- so that you can get going with research from day 1
- we'll try to figure out what you want to research
- but first some super basic things

## happiness, what is it?

- super-interdisciplinary; in this class:
  - social psychology, geography, and sociology
- it's a cognitive evaluation of one's life as a whole
  - not domain (say neighb, financial satisfactions)
  - not affective (happy at a moment)
- so technically properly called "life satisfaction"
  - but typically used interchangeably with
  - "happiness", and there is also a scientific term
  - SWB: Subjective Wellbeing

## how do we study it?

- typically in this class and in my world: if you can't measure it with numbers, you can't study it
- and there's little use for collecting data, because it already has been collected!
- a typical survey question reads:
  - “are you satisfied with your life as a whole”
  - and is answered on a Likert scale say from 1 to 5 or 1 to 10
  - it's reasonably valid/reliable
- and then we regress it on what we're interested in say age, education, income, inequality, poverty, etc



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**if you can't measure it (put as number), it doesn't exist**

- depending on your research interests and skills, get familiar with at least one dataset from the next slide
- (i use them and can also share with you my Stata code)
- ie download it and play with it, read literature using it, eg google scholar “happiness, general social survey”

## the datasets (more coming later)

- difficult but comprehensive containing almost everything panels (need to be great with data management):  
<https://psidonline.isr.umich.edu/>,  
<https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/content/DSDR/add-health-data-guide.html> and <https://www.icpsr.umich.edu/icpsrweb/ICPSR/studies/21600/datadocumentation>
- user friendly but still comprehensive cross sections:  
<http://www.worldvaluessurvey.org> <http://gss.norc.org>
- interested in communities/localities, ie counties? use brfss!  
<http://cdc.gov/brfss>
- AND let's quickly skim through studies in community development class-neighbor data! esp Toronto, and Camden (Cooper Ferry)
- want to use other data? anything specific? let me know!

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## let's publish, not perish

- i want to spend much time on this, and already today have a discussion like 30min
- so that we can start figuring out topics and collaborations asap
- first, lets check out my research [theaok.github.io](https://theaok.github.io)
- and then 2 questions about you:
- what do you study or want to study?  
(we'll be able to link just about anything to SWB)
- what data are you using or want to use?

## if time: my research in pictures

- finish up with quick intro to my research in pictures
- [https://theaok.github.io/junk/extracted\\_figures.pdf](https://theaok.github.io/junk/extracted_figures.pdf)