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Project Milestone 3

After an arduous journey, I have accepted the fact that the quality of my data for this final project is lacking. Poor data quality is a massive limitation to the validity of any argument that can be concluded from it. Due to this fact, any subsequent visualization generated from that data is at best, visually interesting. While I can expand on arguments that can be made with this data, I take issue with the lack of integrity within my findings. Data like this does not provide honest and complete insight and conveys a level of misrepresentation. No method of data collection is perfect, and the reality of perfect data is highly improbable, the assumed level of error in the data I have collected feels significant. I am uncertain how to improve the data collection around the topic of firearms, but I am certain that the direct relationship of higher quality data would absolutely yield more reliable results. Additionally, there is some ambiguity within the data and how it has been categorized which subsequently impacts efforts to extract any true meaning. Standardizing and upholding data quality expectations of both the reporting and collecting agencies of these types of incidents would be a great first step in having more meaningful data. Only after these types of standards are implemented can extracting valuable societal insights truly be realized.

“Expand and finalize the data with refined visuals and interactivity” was my identified third milestone. My expectations for this phase were not completely realized, but a core component of what I set forth in my project plan was accomplished. Knowing that this was an iterative process, each step of the way I was able to improve and enhance the visual aspects of the data; doing so in a way that unifies the messaging. This phase has put into focus the importance of relational theming both in coloration and plotting styles to minimize audience confusion and concentrate the message. A compelling argument was the desired goal; and while I feel my data does promote additional conversation around the unjustified targeting of rifles for further regulation, I would not consider my results compelling. I circle back to the lack of quality and complete data to find truly comparative vantage points.

My final obstacle for this project is deciding the medium through which my visuals will be presented. Considering my target audience, government legislators, I will need to determine the most effective way to reach them. Currently, a pamphlet or a PowerPoint presentation are the two main vehicles under consideration. At this point, the pamphlet is winning out as I cannot envision a scenario where I will have an opportunity to provide a guided presentation via PowerPoint in front of an audience of these representatives. This simple fact has pushed me to 95% certainty that my final project will result in an informational pamphlet. My choice of medium does bring into focus some limitations created by the physical real estate of a piece of paper. I believe this will be the last significant challenge that this vehicle choice will present. I am by no means a graphic designer, but I will work hard to provide a professional and polished final publication.