**Final Project – Working Journal and decision-making notes/ramblings.**

**3/25/2023** – (1 hour) Started to find and evaluate data sources. This was cut very short, a little over an hour in, due to power outage and network outage that lasted well into the evening hours. I was still working on narrowing things at this time, but have a few target focal points for the data.

1. Finding the data around Rifle (typically “long guns”) uses in assaults/homicides vs other firearms to understand why there is outrage.
2. Pivot this to evaluate a rise/fall in the past 5 or so years in gun violence and it’s relationship to Law Enforcement Officers (LEO’s) employment counts. This appears at surface level to be on the decline.
3. Finding both firearm related deaths/assault numbers and comparing them to firearm sales statistics to validate or discredit the idea of “more” guns equates to more violent crime.

Again, seeing the target being law makers/government officials to push for changes in accordance with what the data reveals.

**3/27/2023** – (2.25 hours) Finally back online and looking to nail down data sources. This seems to be a bit of a quagmire when looking to find this data. I have found some areas where I might be able to pull this down and will be working to identify if I can get the data I’m looking for. As forecast, by you Dr. Silva, this is proving to be a bit daunting as finding this data isn’t as easy as you would think and has started to become a bit overwhelming.

Working to collect data from here: [https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/#](https://cde.ucr.cjis.gov/LATEST/webapp/) gathering annual data files for “weapon” use. Will look to get data for the past 5 years that I can get starting with 2021. This will require some more data work to get these “together” as they’re individual files per year. Correction, this is limited to only 2020 and 2021. Not ideal. (

**3/28/2023** – (3.5 hours) Back looking again to find any good data source that will help to tell ANY relevant 2nd Amendment story at this point. Getting a bit discouraged with the results from the CDC and FBI resources at those are basic reports rather than raw data. I will need to continue to dig in order to better identify if the data can tell the story I am trying to tell?

Again, looking for another 2 hours with no reasonable data set that isn’t in a report to work with. I have tried cdc data, fbi data, atf data, and anything else I can find by searching. Ready to give up on this topic all together and just to get something to work with at this point. I don’t have an additional 5-6 hours to keep looking for this same data that I’m no able/capable of sourcing.

Found some FBI data that indicates weapons used in homicides from 2015-2019 for all 50 states, DC and US Virgin Islands. These files are only available per year and will need to combine them. This data doesn’t really tell that great of a story as it relates to supporting the 2nd Amendment. This is the most common weapon used, but is broken down into subcategories like handgun, rifle, shotgun, and Firearm “other”. I’m going to need to look deeper into this data and see if it’s helpful to tell a story here. Data was gathered here by going to the individual years 🡪 Crim in the U.S. “YEAR” 🡪 “Offenses Known to Law Enforcement section 🡪 “Weapons” 🡪 Murder – Weapons “Table 20”. <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s>   
  
I’m hoping that this is an acceptable step and in the interest of time, I’m going to use Microsoft Access to mash together these spreadsheets quickly and allow me to add in a field for the year that is not currently present in the source data. I’m still not too confident that I can work with this data set to really tell a compelling story, but I have a start to at least begin to evaluate.

I have now created a new .xls file that I’ll likely save as a CSV and clean up the field names for import. Currently they have spaces in them which seems to be problematic at times. Now after about 3 hours I think I have some data to examine to see what it provides. I’ll be looking to work with this csv in a jupyter notebook and do some data manipulation there for getting better visuals.

**4/1/2023 –** (1 Hour) Ok, worked with the data to get a decently clean file for use to try to see what visualizations in Plotly may be useful. I can’t say I’m happy with the limited extent of the data I have collected, I might look to gather more historical years and potentially have 10 years of history (only considering this if what I have doesn’t show a story).

I began my journey just plugging my data into the charts that I had already put together for the Plotly session that we had led. I just wanted to get a baseline of how the data was shaping up and what the charts could look like based of our in-class examples. Clearly these aren’t going to be stellar, but interesting either way. A couple in, not sure this is the right way to use this data. Going to try a few things later today and see what I get. I think I can just leverage the source data without the “describe” as it provides zero value to the visualization. Will regroup and attempt some visuals later, I think they’re likely to be easier to pull potentially. Will see.   
  
Lost power from 4/1/2023 at 1pm until 4/2/2023 at roughly 5pm. The household requirements took over my time and was not able to revisit this again.

**4/4/2023** –

This might be helpful to get some “scores” up for strictest laws and least restrictive laws: <https://worldpopulationreview.com/state-rankings/strictest-gun-laws-by-state>. I might look to add this to my tables to have an additional

**4/7/2023**

Spent some time reviewing the Dr. Silva’s findings via the API calls into the FBI data. This doesn’t look to be all that dissimilar to what I’ve gathered from here [FBI — Crime in the U.S.](https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s) on 3/28. While helpful, as Dr. Silva added, not sure if it helps me much.  
  
I did do some additional digging into that site and did consider another angle as it pertains to the number of police officers per state. I’m going to gather that data for the years I have 2015-2019 and perhaps attempt to see any correlation to number of officers to gun crime or just homicides in general.

Started to gather the Police officer tables, wonderfully 2016 data does not exisit as it does for all other years I’ve gathered. So, I may continue this path or I may scrap doing this route too. Perhaps this is a perfect fit to see that we can identify 2016 data as “NONE” or 0 for graphing purposes as we recently learned in class.   
  
I’m going to work tomorrow on getting these new tables to combine with my existing table and look to build this source data further.

**4/8/2023**

(Morning 2 hours) - So, after doing some thinking last night, perhaps for 2016 police numbers I can take 2015 and 2017 and simply get the average between the two and leverage that number for 2016 counts. While a little goofy and graphically would be linear, it would likely be a close number to actual and provide me one additional data point for visual reference. At this point, I would like to have data that may be “reasonably” wrong there rather than nothing for visual representation for this project.

\*\*\* I would like to go on record stating that I DO NOT like the idea of “fudging” the data, but in this case it’s a calculated assumption that I’ll be making in the interest of having a quasi-complete dataset that should have a minimal margin of error here.

I’ll be working on getting the csv expanded to include this new police data for each year today. I hope to get some time to work on starting some of the Plotly visuals in hopes of finding a telling story.

Been working via Microsoft Access to mash the files together. I’m working from 5 original Homicide weapon .xls and now 4 LEO .xls files via access to get them all together into one table. I have been able to get the calculated average for 2016 LEO information as indicated above. I’m not sure I really like the way that’s going to flow in between years….I might toss in some minor random factoring to give is a little variation rather than the linear nature of the resultant numbers. This did result in some previously unobserved mission data. I’m thinking about how I want to populate that data, once again, as discussed in class this week.   
  
Funny enough to me, Florida information is what’s missing from the Homicides table. This is somewhat funny, as I could have focused on the “Florida Man” angle/story here…very disappointing. HAHAHAHA 😊

(Afternoon plan) I’m going to get this into a jupyter notebook to start working with visualizations at this point. I’m going to attempt to find something of value in the data that I’ve been able to compile. I think the original data may have some stories as it pertains to protecting rifles considering their limited use vs handguns. I’m also going to investigate how to potentially leverage the use of MAPS via Plotly to see if that will allow me to give a nice representation of data considering the states are a “sorting” category for me presently.

Sadly, my afternoon got re-arranged with household demands. I’ll be working on getting those initial visualizations together throughout the week this week.

-------------- Project Milestone 1 --------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------