Example of Secondary Analysis: **General Social Survey Spring 2016**

source:

<http://www.thomsonedu.com/sociology/gssdata/GSS9606%20codebook.doc> retrieved 4/3/2017

The General Social Survey (GSS) is a survey done by the National Opin­ion Research Center on the attitudes, behaviors, and background characteristics of US adults who are noninstitutionalized (<http://gss.norc.org>). These surveys have occurred annually or biannually since 1972. The GSS contains a standard 'core' of demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal questions, plus topics of special interest. Many of the core questions have remained unchanged since 1972 to facilitate time-trend studies as well as replication of earlier findings. The GSS takes the pulse of America, and is a unique and valuable resource. It has tracked the opinions of Americans over the last four decades.

Samples are full probability samples, and the samples reflect multistage area probability samples to the block level. At the block level, however, quota sampling is used with quota based on sex, age, and employment status. The primary sam­pling units employed are Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas or nonmetropolitan counties, stratified by region, age, and race before selection. The units of selec­tion at the second stage are block groups and enumera­tion districts, stratified according to race and income before selection. The third stage of selection involved blocks, which were selected with probabilities proportional to size. The final sampling units involved housing units and individuals.

The original sample sizes for the 1996 and 2006 studies were 4,559 and 9,535. After accounting for such things as vacant buildings, language problems, new dwelling units, and other factors at the sampling level and for refusals, break offs before completion, no one home, and other factors at the individual level, there were 3,814 and 4,510 completed cases, resulting in response rates of 76.1 and 71.2 percent. The split-ballot technique was used, where some questions were asked of part of the sample and other questions were asked of another part of the sample. Basic questions were asked of all participants. As a result, the totals for some of the variables you analyze may not total the numbers of completed cases noted above.

The GSS is widely regarded as the single best source of data on societal trends. The 1972-2012 GSS has 5,545 variables, time-trends for 2,072 variables, and 268 trends having 20+ data points. You can find links to pre-generated trends or create your own tables in and SDA (1972-2010) and NESSTAR (1972-2006). To generate time-trends in SDA (1972-2010) using its cross-tabulation program, specify the variable you would like to analyze as a "column" variable, and then specify the variable YEAR as the "row" variable, and request percentaging by rows (instead of columns).

**REGION** 2. Region of interview.

1. New England 2. Middle Atlantic 3. East North Central

4. West North Central 5. South Atlantic 6. East South Central

7. West South Central 8. Mountain 9. Pacific

**RACE** 3. What race do you consider yourself? 1. White 2. Black 3. Other

**SEX** 4. Sex. (Coded by interviewer.) 1. Male 0. Female (recoded “2” on original to “0’)

**AGE** 5. Age. (Determined by asking date of birth, actual ages recorded.) Values reflect actual age.

**CLASS**  16. If you were asked to name one of four names for your social class, which would you say you belong in: the lower class, the working class, the middle class, or the upper class?

1. Lower class 2. Working class 3. Middle class 4. Upper class

**POLVIEWS** 25. Im going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from ex­tremely liberal 1 to extremely conservative 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale? (Recoded into three categories.)

1. Liberal 2. Moderate 3. Conservative

**TVHOURS** 27. On the average day, about how many hours do you personally watch television? (Actual number of hours recorded.) Actual number of hours

**OWNGUN** 30. Do you happen to have in your home any guns or revolvers? 1. Yes 2. No

**HEALTH** 32. Would you say your health, in general, is excellent, good, fair, or poor?

1. Excellent 2. Good 3. Fair 4. Poor

**GRASS** 46. Do you think the use of marijuana should be made legal or not?

1. Should be made legal 2. Should not be made legal

**GUNLAW** 49. Would you favor or oppose a law which would require a person to obtain a police permit before he or she could buy a gun? 1. Favor 2. Oppose

**HAPPY**  53. Taken all together, how would you say things are these days would you say that you are…?

1. Very happy 2. Pretty happy 3. Not too happy

**FEAR**  59. Is there any area right around here, that is, within a mile, where you would be afraid to walk alone at night? 1. Yes 2. No 3. Maybe

We are faced with many problems in this country, none of which can be solved easily or inexpensively. I’m going to name some of these problems, and for each one I’d like you to tell me whether you think we’re spending too much money on it, too little money, or about the right amount. Are we spending too much, too little, or about the right amount on. . . (applies to item 68.)

**NATCRIME** 68. Halting the rising crime rate? 1. Too little 2. About right 3. Too much

**SPANKING** 81. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree that it is sometimes necessary to discipline a child with a good, hard spanking?

1. Strongly agree 2. Agree 3. Disagree 4. Strongly disagree

**COURTS**  97. In general, do you think the courts in this area deal too harshly or not harshly enough with criminals? 1. Too harshly 2. Not harshly enough 3. About right (volunteered)