

Discussion -- Discrimination

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to think like a statistician. Your goal, as a group, is to answer this question: **If you were a statistician, how would you collect data to determine that Alabama Discriminated Against Black Residents Over Sewage and what graphs/statistics would you compute?**

Task

1. **Due by Wednesday.** Read the background article, written by Linda Qu for the New York Times, on 5/5/2023.

Headline:

"Alabama Discriminated Against Black Residents Over Sewage, Justice Dept. Says"

Subheadline:

"State and local health authorities ignored the risks of raw sewage for residents in a rural county, the Justice Department has found; the officials have agreed to change their practices."

Article:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/05/05/us/politics/alabama-sewage-discrimination-justice-dept.html?auth=login-email&login=email&referringSource=articleShare&smid=nytcare-ios-share>

2. **Due by Friday.** We can see in the article that there WAS discrimination, but HOW would you determine if discrimination was happening?

To get started, everyone in the group should answer these questions in this discussion.

1. Is an observational study or experiment the "better" way to investigate discrimination? Why?
2. Who or what would you sample? (Who or what is the population?) Why?

3. What variables would you study? Why?
4. What sampling method, or methods, would you use to collect data? Why?
5. What *useful* graphs and statistics would you compute on the data you collect? Why?
6. What would you be looking for, in your graphs/statistics, to determine that discrimination occurred? How would you "know it if you saw it"?
7. Reflect: What lingering questions do you have? What are you unsure about? What other facts do you need to know? You're welcome to dig into online sources of data, and you're welcome to look for your own sources!

[CDC - What is on-side Wastewater Treatment?](#)

[2021 American Community Survey data on race and housing in Alabama](#)

[2021 American Community Survey data on housing type in Alabama](#)

3. **Due by Tuesday 5/16.** Read through the responses of your group members. Make a plan to connect (synchronously or asynchronously) and come up with one "final answer". How you accomplish this task is up to your group.

The Google document with the 6 questions will be put into your discussion by your teacher. This document is where you'll put your final answers.

4. **Due by Friday 5/19.** Turn in the Google document with the answers to questions 1-6.

Criteria for Success

- (up to 12 points) You'll be scored on how well you supported your 7 answers. Since there may not be a correct answer, you'll be scored on if your answers are reasonable enough to accomplish the goal. There's not "one" right answer!
- (up to 8 points) Your group has written a detailed plan that answers the 7 questions into the group Google Document. You'll earn credit for participating in the final write up. Another component of your 8 points is "doing your fair

share". If your group members feel you did significantly less work than "your fair share", we'll have a conversation about how you can make up the points you've lost.

You won't be able to see what others have posted until you have made your own post.

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