

**DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
AND
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
Research Methods Posc 302**

**ASSIGNMENT 3
Using Data to Answer Substantive Questions
Due: April 27, 2000**

The purpose of this assignment is to make sure everyone can create and interpret cross-classifications and derive and explain substantive conclusions based on the data.

Suppose a newspaper asks you to write an article on the topic "Moral Character and Politics." In particular, the editors want to know if people take candidates' personal ethical standards and conduct into account when they vote.

Write a short essay backed with empirical evidence that addresses this issue. To simplify the task, use a secondary analysis of the 1996 American National Election Study and use the variables "Which candidate did R Vote for?" and "Does R consider Clinton moral?" to make your case. (With regard to the latter variable, pay attention to the question wording; it asks respondents if various terms or sentences describe Clinton.)

Some guidelines:

- Use the techniques that I have demonstrated (e.g., "Find in page" command) to locate the variables in the study.
- Think: what is the dependent variable? What is the independent variable? Where in the table are you going to place them?
- Simplify the table by excluding Perot and "other" categories, as demonstrated in Class 9.
- The paper should contain all of the information a reader needs to assess your argument's worth.
- Format and present your table according to the standards discussed in class and in Assignment 2.
- Use a word processor to prepare your essay, which incidentally should be no more than a page.
- Include the table in the text, not as a separate page. (If you need help, ask in class.)
- Your name and student number should be on the title page.
- Strive for simple, clear, direct prose. *Read Woe Is I* and, if appropriate, imitate O'Connor's style. After all, I am going to look at and evaluate the writing and substance of your essay. Pay particular attention to usage: if you are not sure a word is being used correctly or might be misspelled, look it up!
- For this assignment, I want everyone to use only the variables mentioned above. Later, you can strike out on your own.



Turn into 347 Smith Hall, the Political Science Department office. Do not leave papers in *my* office!