ARCH 2500  

Sampling Exercise

You will use magazines as the basis for research on one of the following topics:

- How does fashion change in the 1970s and why?
- Have women in sports really become more visible in the 1990s? If it happened, when and how did this happen? If it didn’t, why do we think that it has?
- Do movies from the 80s and 90s reflect the different political agendas and consequences of their times?

**Narrow the question down to something manageable.**
You cannot research the whole topic in one week. So you must decide what aspect you will focus on. For example, will you look at men’s or women’s fashion? Shoes? Pants? Both?

**Describe how you are going to measure these changes.**
What will you use to indicate that fashion has changed? What are your data going to be? Counts of pictures depicting certain types of fashion? Number of articles on different styles? Ads with people wearing certain types of clothing?

**Design a sampling strategy and justify your choice.**
Which magazines are you looking at? Which pages, issues, volumes? What will you be sampling? Articles? Pictures? Table of contents? Which sampling strategy will you use? Stratified? Simple random? Systematic? How large a sample? Before you make your decisions, you may want to browse through some magazines to find out where the information might be found. This process can’t be totally deductive.

**Collect the data.**
Since you’ve already decided what your data are going to be, how are you going to record the information? How are you going to present it? Tables? Lists? Graphs? Figures?

**Interpret your data and evaluate your sampling strategy.**
What have you learned from your research? Back up your interpretations with your data. Remember that you have selected just a subset of the larger question. How might what you’ve learned answer the larger question? Are there biases in the data due to your sampling strategy? What are they? How do they affect your interpretations? If you’re sampling strategy worked well, describe why that may be.

**Write it all up!**
Each of the sections above should be represented in what you turn in. The methods should described thoroughly enough so that anyone could repeat your study.