REVIEW QUESTIONS

Based on the first part of this exercise, answer True or False to the following items:

a. There are 12 justices on the Supreme Court.  
T  F

b. Bill Clinton was the first president to appoint a woman to the Court.  
T  F

c. President Ronald Reagan became so angry about Supreme Court decisions that he asked Congress to let him "pack" the Court.  
T  F

d. Federal judges are appointed for life.  
T  F

e. Most Americans oppose prayer in public schools.  
T  F

f. The Supreme Court issues a written opinion on 95 percent of the cases appealed to it.  
T

EXPLORE QUESTIONS

Questions about confidence in various institutions have been asked in the GSS since 1972. Let's see how confidence in the Supreme Court compares with confidence in Congress and in the government in general. Let's also include confidence in medicine, an institution outside of government, for a different perspective.

>Data File:  HISTORY
   Task:  Historical Trends
   Variables:  38 CONF CONG
               39 CONF COURT
               40 CONF GOV
               41 CONF MED

Note that these are survey data so that the values are only estimates of the population values—changes or differences of less than 10 percent are probably not important.

Answer True or False to each of the following items:

a. People have more confidence in the medical profession than they do in the Supreme Court or Congress.  
T  F

Exercise 15: The Courts
b. People have more confidence in Congress than they do in the Supreme Court.  
   T  F

c. Relative confidence in these institutions (medicine, Congress, the Supreme Court) fluctuates a great deal over time, so sometimes people have the most confidence in medicine, sometimes in Congress, and sometimes in the Supreme Court.  
   T  F

2. Using the AUTO-ANALYZER task, let's see what demographic characteristics affect confidence in the Supreme Court.

   ➤ Data File: GSS
   ➤ Task: Auto-Analyzer
   ➤ Variable: 55) SUP.COURT?

For each demographic variable listed below, indicate whether there is any significant effect. If so, indicate which category is most likely and which is least likely to have a great deal of confidence in the Supreme Court.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY MOST LIKELY TO HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF CONFIDENCE</th>
<th>CATEGORY LEAST LIKELY TO HAVE A GREAT DEAL OF CONFIDENCE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jews</td>
<td>Protestants</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College grad.</td>
<td>High School grad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

d. What are the characteristics of those most likely to have a great deal of confidence in the Court?

   Jews and college graduates

e. What are the characteristics of those least likely to have a great deal of confidence in the Court?

   Protestants and high school graduates
3. The Supreme Court has ruled on many controversial issues, and the ruling of the Court is not always popular. Perhaps an individual's attitude on these issues affects his or her confidence in the Court.

Data File: GSS
Task: Cross-tabulation
Row Variable: 55) SUP.COURT?
Column Variable: 45) SCH.PRAY
View: Table
Display: Column %

Copy the third row of the percentaged table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>NO PRAYER</th>
<th>SCH PRAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%HARDLY ANY</td>
<td>11.0 %</td>
<td>18.2 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. What is the value of V for this table?
\[ V = \_1.79^{***} \]

\[ \text{Yes} \quad \text{No} \]
\[ \text{T} \quad \text{F} \]

c. Is V statistically significant?

d. One's attitude toward school prayer has an effect on one's confidence in the Supreme Court.

Data File: GSS
Task: Cross-tabulation
Row Variable: 55) SUP.COURT?
Column Variable: 62) ABORT ANY
View: Table
Display: Column %

Copy the third row of the percentaged table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>%HARDLY ANY</td>
<td>7.7 %</td>
<td>14.9 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f. What is the value of V for this table?
\[ V = \_1.15^{***} \]

\[ \text{Yes} \quad \text{No} \]
\[ \text{T} \quad \text{F} \]

g. Is V statistically significant?
h. One's attitude toward abortion has an effect on one's confidence in the Supreme Court.
Data File: GSS  
Task: Cross-tabulation  
Row Variable: 55) SUP.COURT?

Column Variable: 40) EXECUTE?  
View: Table  
Display: Column %

Copy the third row of the percentaged table.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>FAVOR</th>
<th>OPPOSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>% HARDLY ANY</td>
<td>13.3 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

j. What is the value of \( V \) for this table?  
\( V = 0.33 \)

k. Is \( V \) statistically significant?  
Yes  
No

l. One's attitude toward the death penalty has an effect on one's confidence in the Supreme Court.

m. Taken together, these results suggest that confidence in the Supreme Court is generally based on more than one issue.

T  
F

4. Let's see if one's basic attitudes, such as partisanship and ideology, influence attitudes toward the Supreme Court.

Data File: GSS  
Task: Cross-tabulation  
Row Variable: 55) SUP.COURT?  
Column Variable: 21) PARTY  
View: Table  
Display: Column %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>DEMOCRAT</th>
<th>INDEPEND</th>
<th>REPUBLICAN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>% HARDLY ANY</td>
<td>11.0 %</td>
<td>18.2 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b. What is the value of \( V \) for this table?  
\( V = 0.058 \)

c. Is \( V \) statistically significant?  
Yes  
No

d. Independents are the least likely to have confidence in the Supreme Court.

Part IV: Institutions
Data File: GSS
Task: Cross-tabulation
Row Variable: 55) SUP.COURT?
Column Variable: 23) LIB./CONS.
View: Table
Display: Column %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LIBERAL</th>
<th>MODERATE</th>
<th>CONSERV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11.0 %</td>
<td>13.4 %</td>
<td>13.7 %</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

f. What is the value of V for this table? $V = 0.45$

g. Is V statistically significant? Yes

h. Moderates are the least likely to have confidence in the Supreme Court.

Basic attitudes, such as partisanship and ideology, strongly influence one's opinion of the Supreme Court.

5. In the opening section of this exercise, we saw how the number of cases appealed to the Supreme Court has risen dramatically over the years. The Supreme Court, however, has control over its docket and can select to hear only a small fraction of these cases. The lowest level of the federal court system, the federal district court, does not have such discretionary control over the cases it hears. District courts are the starting point for criminal cases involving the violation of federal laws, though most criminal cases are heard in state courts. Federal district courts also hear civil cases, where one private party (e.g., an individual or a business) sues another private party for damages. Civil cases are heard in federal court if they involve parties from different states and seek damages over $75,000. Let's examine the number of criminal and civil cases heard in federal district court in the past 60 years.

Data File: HISTORY
Task: Historical Trends
Variables: 64) #CIV.COM
65) #CRIM.COM

a. The workload (combined total of criminal and civil cases) before the federal district court has risen dramatically over the past 60 years.

b. The change in the workload of the federal district court is due mainly to a large change in the number of criminal cases.