

Objectives: This activity highlights the *statistical thinking* mindset, where we observe several ways to quantitatively summarize data and then draw justified, qualitative conclusions about a population. I **don't** expect you to have already mastered the skills and techniques used in this activity—we will continue to practice and develop them throughout the semester.

Assignment You will be randomly assorted into groups of 3 or 4. Once you are in your group, introduce yourselves and **work together** to answer the following questions. Write your answers on a chalkboard around the classroom.

The Stand Your Ground Law

In 2012, Trayvon Martin was shot to death by George Zimmerman in Florida. Zimmerman was later acquitted based on Florida's 'Stand Your Ground' law. This prompted the Tampa Bay Times to investigate whether the conviction rate of those who use the 'Stand Your Ground' defense varies by the defendant's race. Below are the 220 cases where the defense was used, along with some information about the defendant's race and the trial outcome.

Table 1

	Minority	White
Aquitted	60	86
Convicted	29	45
Total	89	131

- Explain why it would be misleading to simply compare the conviction counts of 29 and 45 in order to conclude that defendant race affects conviction rate.
- Calculate the proportion of white and minority defendants who were convicted and compare the proportions. Which group is convicted at a higher rate?
- What other factors may we want to consider before concluding that whites are convicted at a higher rate than minorities?
- One additional factor we have access to is the race of the victim. Below you will find a table that includes this information as well.

Table 2

	Minority Defendant Convicted	Minority Defendant Acquitted	White Defendant Convicted	White Defendant Acquitted
Minority Victim	19	45	5	19
White Victim	10	15	40	67

Explain how to obtain the data in **Table 1** using the data in **Table 2**.

- Explore the data in **Table 2** by computing several more proportions. In particular, compute the conviction rate for minority defendants with minority victims and for minority defendants with white victims. Compute similar conviction rates for white defendants. Then compute the conviction rate among all defendants when the victim is a minority, and when the victim is white.
- Based on the proportions computed in the previous problem, why might the direction of the trend reversed itself when including the victim's race? (from a statistical perspective, not necessarily a sociological perspective)