



## Spring Internship 2016

### Miz Hashimoto

During my Easter holidays this year I was lucky enough to undertake a placement with YouGov's Social and Political Team. As a politics student taking a paper on quantitative methods, this was an exciting opportunity to combine and put into practice my two interests of contemporary British politics, and statistics – with one of the UK's leading polling companies, no less, and at a time when both local elections and the EU Referendum were looming.

Although YouGov is a large company, the Social and Political Team was small and tight-knit, and it was a great environment for someone with a keen interest in politics and current affairs. As a spring intern, my main role was to support other team members with their on-going projects, whether it be in the form of tracking changes in voting intention and popularity of party leaders (especially Jeremy Corbyn!), or creating re-codes for Police Crime Commissioner constituencies throughout England and Wales.

Indeed, the main bulk of my work at YouGov required a working knowledge of SPSS, which meant the skills I gained from the quantitative methods paper were in constant use. After some practice, I was given the duty of working with raw data taken from the day's political surveys, and I recoded and weighted the data so that respondents' voting intentions could be translated into publishable charts. It may not sound exciting, but seeing voting intentions fluctuate between Labour and Conservative in response to the day's political headlines was truly thrilling! Working with a team of people who were similarly enthusiastic about British politics was also a great experience, and by the end of my placement I came out knowing more about parliamentary politics than I even thought possible.

Furthermore, my internship gave me the opportunity to strengthen my survey-writing skills, which had not been covered in my paper of choice. Continuously editing, checking, and sometimes writing survey questions was a great hands-on lesson in how to script questions with clarity and without bias.

Finally, one of the most exciting things I got to do was to explore my own interests via online polling. I chose the subject of the public's perception of people of different genders or races playing iconic characters – a topic I had been interested in for a while – and worked on it from start to finish: writing questions, gathering and coding the data, and then writing it up as an article, published on YouGov's

website. To be able to directly ask YouGov's panellists questions relating to your own interests was a great experience.

Overall, my time at YouGov was incredibly enjoyable, and the four weeks went by quickly! I learnt a great deal about the process of online polling in a political context, as well as the use of quantitative data. I would like to give my thanks to Joe and Nicola at YouGov, and to CUQM and Casey, for this great opportunity.