Data Set: Mills Longitudinal Study
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Summary:
This 50-year longitudinal study began as a study of creativity, leadership, and plans for the future in women from two senior classes at Mills College, when the women were approximately 21 years old. Follow-up assessments were conducted at ages 27, 43, 52, 61, 70, and 73, and the project was expanded to include such diverse topics as personality types, personality change and development, work and retirement, marriage and relationships, health, social and political attitudes, emotional expression and regulation, and wisdom. Please see individual assessment wave datasets for more detailed information about measures and procedures.

Sample:
In 1958 and again in 1960, Mills College faculty members were asked to nominate seniors who had "exceptional creative potential for work in the arts, sciences, or humanities." (For a more detailed description of this nomination process, see Helson, 1967.) The seniors who were nominated as creative were compared with other members of their senior classes using questionnaires and personality inventories. The "creatives" were then invited to IPAR (the Institute of Personality Assessment and Research, which later became IPSR, or the Institute for Personality and Social Research) for further testing and observation, along with a comparison group of seniors with similar SAT scores and majors.

Total Sample (Senior Class Samples from 1958 and 1960)
About two-thirds of the Mills senior classes from each of the two assessment years participated in initial testing on the Mills College campus. There were 63 participants from the class of 1958 and 77 from the class of 1960. Based on college records, these samples were representative of their respective senior classes. All participants were asked to complete personality inventories (e.g., CPI, SCPI) and questionnaires about college life, childhood interests, family background, and marriage/vocational plans. These participants make up the original study sample and were invited to participate in follow-up assessments.

Core Sample
Most papers and analyses use data from the "core sample" of participants, which refers to the 123 women who participated at age 21 and in at least one-follow up assessment. A *coresample* filtering variable is included in all data files.

Data Collection:
The majority of the data was collected by mail. For the Age 21 and Age 27 assessments, a subsample of participants was invited to come to UC Berkeley for additional interviews and testing. For the Age 61 assessment, the entire sample was invited to UC Berkeley for a day-long assessment. Interviews and testing were conducted by Ravenna Helson and other research staff.

The Harvard Dataverse holds scans of all paper questionnaires. In addition, the coded questionnaire data are available in machine-readable form.

Measures:
For each assessment, the study directors created extensive questionnaire packets with items that were relevant to the participants' time of life. These questionnaires were often supplemented with measures and inventories created by other researchers. More detailed information about items and measures (including blank versions of questionnaires) can be found in each assessment wave's dataset.

Funding:
Earlier waves of data collection for the Mills Longitudinal Study were supported by the National Institute of Mental Health as well as several intramural grants from the University of California, Berkeley. More recent data collection was supported by supported by research grants from the Retirement Research Foundation and the Metanexus Institute. Resources and support were also provided by the Institute of Personality and Social Research, where the Mills Study originated and was housed for many years.

Acknowledgment:
The following acknowledgment of the use of these data must be included in any publication or presentation reporting analysis of the data:

> This research used the Mills Longitudinal Study data sets, made accessible in 2019. These data were collected by Ravenna Helson and Oliver P. John and are available through the Harvard Dataverse, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts [Producer and Distributor].

Special Restrictions for Use:
Data may not be used or accessed without permission from the contributors. The contributors would like to see a draft of any research report or manuscript based on the data in advance of publication. The contributors will not allow the sample to be followed-up by any other researchers.