Preservation of Scientific Data in the Humanities

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Issues covered in presentation

• Scientific data archives in the Humanities & Social Sciences
• European situation
• Important standards relevant for preservation
• Changing research practice and influence on data archiving
Scientific data archives in the Humanities & Social Sciences

- Humanities: branches of knowledge that are concerned with human thought and culture; the liberal arts.
- Social Science: The study of human society and of individual relationships in and to society.

Scientific data archives created by: Historian, Art-historian, Archaeologist, Linguist, Sociologist, Psychologist, Anthropologist, Economist, Theologian, …
European social science data archives

Source: http://www.nsd.uib.no/Cessda/europe.html
More information about the Steinmetz Archive

The Steinmetz Archive, founded in 1962, is part of the Netherlands Institute of Scientific Information Services - NIWI of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences - KNAW. The archive makes Dutch social science research data available to the public. Through the Steinmetz Archive, researchers in the Netherlands have also access to the collections of foreign data archives.

The Steinmetz Archive is co-ordinator of the Dutch national membership of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research - ICPSR in the United States.

Every three months the Steinmetz Archive Newsletter Data News is published. In this newsletter the recent additions to the archive and forthcoming studies are described, as are new publications and events. The Steinmetz Archive Newsletter is free.

Other services
- By order of others and at its own initiative the Steinmetz Archive makes compilations of datasets.
- By order of others the Steinmetz Archive can make analyses of archived data.
- Visitors can - by appointment - also analyse data at the NIWI/Steinmetz Archive premises.

- The Steinmetz Archive plays an important role in defining metadata and participates in various international telematica- and metadata projects.

- Students and employees of institutes that participate in the national membership of the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research - ICPSR, can participate in the Summer Program in Quantitative Methods in Ann Arbor, Michigan - USA. The Steinmetz Archive co-ordinates participation from the Netherlands.

- Steinmetz Archive organises "user-days", workshops and international congresses.

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Study
P0136

Title
Verkiezingsonderzoek 1970-1973

English title
National election study 1970-1973

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Abstract
Attitude towards politics in mass-media / political interest / sense of political efficacy / political cynicism / advantages and disadvantages of political parties / position along ideological continua / response to ideological labels like socialist, progressive / perception of party-position labels that fit the parties / closeness of pairs of political parties to each other / opinions about the number of political parties / major national and international problems / major provincial problems / satisfaction evaluation of government measures / attitude to government interference / attitude to social welfare policy / attitude to foreign policy / political partisanship / political information / insight opinions on political system / coalition preferences / political socialization parents / political party and interest / political alienation and cynicism / sense of political efficacy / sympathy for various political parties / social distance / perception of political power structure / political participation and opinion leadership / important characteristics for second chamber members / how should R.P.'s take voting decisions / political actions / their effectiveness / anonymity / membership in associations and clubs / detailed religious background data. Background variables: basic characteristics/ place of birth/ residence/ household characteristics/ occupation/employment/ income/capital assets/ education/ social class/ politics/ religion/ readership, mass media, and cultural exposure/ organizational membership

Keyword(s)
elections
international relations
massmedia
politics, internal

Discipline(s)
political science

Restrictions
No restrictions

Data file(s)
Name Cases Variables
P0136 1838 374

Preservation of Scientific Data in the Humanities
Electronic text archives

- E.g. Oxford Text Archive, established 1976 (http://www.ota.ahds.ac.uk/)
- Importance of TEI (Text Encoding Initiative), standard for describing content, context and structure of electronic texts (see: http://www.tei-c.org)
Historical Data Archives

• Both structured and unstructured data
• Archiving routines based on Social Science Data Archives
• Source oriented computing vs. problem oriented computing and its impact on data archiving methods
• Importance of relation Dataset – Historical Source
Public Record Offices

- Relative recent interest in digital archiving
- **Definition issues** (Record management standard ISO 15489 defines business principles behind records management and defines how organizations can establish a framework to enable a comprehensive records management programme)
- Adoption of principle of provenance in digital environment
International situation

• International collaboration
  – IFDO (International Federation of Data Organisations)
  – CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives)

• User oriented organisations
  – AHC (Association for History & Computing)
  – ACH/ALLC (Ass. for computers in the Humanities / Ass. for literary & linguistic computing)
Welcome

Welcome to the CESSDA (Council of European Social Science Data Archives) home pages. CESSDA promotes the acquisition, archiving and distribution of electronic data for social science teaching and research in Europe. It encourages the exchange of data and technology and fosters the development of new organisations in sympathy with its aims. It associates and cooperates with other international organisations sharing similar objectives.

The CESSDA home pages allow easy access to the catalogues of member organisations and provide a central news forum about its activities and other relevant information.

CESSDA Goals and Tasks

- To promote the acquisition, archiving and distribution of electronic data for social science teaching and research in Europe
- To encourage the exchange of data and data related technology
- To provide users access to multiple data sources across national boundaries
- To support the compilation of internationally comparative data sets
- To support the development of new organisations in sympathy with CESSDA’s aims

Furthermore to promote
- the development and use of metadata standards for the management of data
- the development and use of social science thesauri and user friendly interfaces
Important standards

- OAIS (helps to establish common vocabulary)
- DDI (Data Documentation Initiative, technical documentation for social science data) (http://www.icpsr.umich/DDI).
- TEI (Text Encoding Initiative)
- XML based standards, e.g. METS
- EAD (Encoded Archival Description) (http://www.loc.gov/ead/)
- ISAD (International Standard for Archival Descriptions) (http://www.ica.org/biblio/cds/isad_g_2e.pdf)
The Data Documentation Initiative is an international effort to establish a standard for technical documentation describing social science data. A membership-based Alliance is developing the DDI specification, which is written in XML.

The DDI has received external support from the National Science Foundation (NSF award SES0136447) and Health Canada.
Changing research practices and influence on data archiving

• Scholars working together in networked environment ("collaboratory" / "sharium")
• Data archives must be active at the beginning of the life cycle
• Central vs. distributed models of storage
• Open Access