

Data Collection and Collaboration

Editor's Introduction

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During a recent meeting of the APSA Committee on Publications, headed by Lisa Martin, we discussed a proposal that had been put forward to encourage authors to deposit their data in a central repository to provide more centralized access for others seeking to replicate or extend prior work. Such a strategy should ostensibly make it easier for methodological, theoretical, and empirical work to flourish and cumulate.

In the ensuing discussion about whether and how such a process might be supported and incentivized, it became clear that many important, often unaddressed, issues come into play when considering this strategy. Qualitative and quantitative data may require alternate formats for effective archiving, and may necessitate different protections concerning confidentiality around sources. In addition, questions regarding authorship come to the fore when one set of scholars spends time collecting data while others who may have no relationship

off of it. However, political science has not yet developed a similar set of consensual norms.

As a result, the committee decided to put together the following symposium on issues related to data archiving and authorship in an attempt to provide some background, and to begin a discussion amongst the wider discipline about some of the associated broader professional issues involving authorship and collaboration. It is our hope that we can build on previous work and reports on related topics written by Biggs (2008) and the American Political Science Association's Working Group on Collaboration (Chandra et al. 2006).

Therefore, this symposium includes several articles on distinct but overlapping topics related to the secondary use of data and the proper collaborative use and allocation of credit for it. The symposium begins with separate articles on the opportunities and availability for data archiving of both quantitative and qualitative data sources. Jeremy Albright and Jared Lyle from the Inter-university Consortium for Political and Social Research describe the benefits of archiving quantitative data at an established depository. They also discuss some potential concerns related to this process, and procedures that might be instituted to protect both authors and study participants. Colin Elman, Diana Kapiszewski, and Lorena Vinuela

It is our hope that this symposium will stimulate some discussion of the value of data archiving for the cumulation of knowledge in our discipline. We also strive to encourage a wider evaluation of some of the established norms in the field surrounding authorship and collaboration in order to encourage scholars to pursue more collaborative, even interdisciplinary, research, while giving full credit to all who participate in the collection of information without undue fear of disciplinary consequences.

with them use, analyze, and write up other aspects of that data. Hard sciences have developed informal norms around many of these issues, often involving proprietary usage of data for a specified period of time. In this way, authors are required to submit data to journal Web sites for purposes of replication, but the use of that information has an embargo period during which only those who collected the data can publish

similarly describe the associated benefits and limitations involved in archiving qualitative data, and highlight some of the necessary changes in disciplinary norms whose discussion consumes many of the remaining articles in the symposium. The following article by Andrew Moravcsik makes the case for the importance of active citation and hyper-linking as preconditions for replicable qualitative data in

particular. Christian Davenport discusses the special challenges and rewards associated with conducting field research, noting the time and effort involved in cultivating contacts, appreciating the context in which they occur, and securing confidentiality for sources and continuity for the larger research program.

Because these issues inherently generate concerns regarding authorship, we confront these questions directly in this symposium as well. The article by David Lake tackles the conflicting and contradictory patterns of authorship in political science, and argues for a norm supporting authorship based on degree of contribution. Finally, my article with Peter K. Hatemi advocates for the critical role played by collaboration in cumulating knowledge, and directly addresses the quandaries this raises for professional disciplinary traditions related to hiring, promotion, and tenure.

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REFERENCES

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SYMPOSIUM AUTHORS

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exploring the sources of political and social behavior by integrating an understanding of biological predispositions with other environmental stimuli that dynamically shape preferences and behaviors on core elements of group life. Hatemi's work includes research on social and political values, fundamentalism, ideology, voting behaviors, partisanship, ideologies, terrorism, mate selection, social bonding, and fear.

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