

Newest Methods in Social Science Research: Working with Internet Data

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Thursdays, 14:10-17:20

*prerequisite: качественные методы в соц.иссл.

This course is concerned primarily with the methods of Internet data gathering and analysis used in contemporary social science research. The theoretical part of the course will introduce the students to the principal approaches in Internet data research, among them digital ethnography, methods of social media analysis, controversy mapping, and others. Parallel to the readings and discussions, the students are expected to try, master, and present various tools for research, learn from each other, and collaborate on projects. In the process, they will learn to think critically about the steps of research question formulation, master the tools for Internet data collection, consider the advantages and shortcomings of Internet data, its analysis, and visualization. The topics that the students will chose will be driven by their own interests and will require significant independent thinking, initiative, and group work. By the end of the course, students are expected to produce enough data and analysis to write, in groups or individually, a publishable research paper or a methods-driven chapter for their current research projects.

All materials for the course, including maps and visuals, will be available on a shared Google Drive folder. Students are expected to share data they acquire and open their materials for discussion.

ASSIGNMENTS

Data collection and in-class presentations: Students will be continually acquiring, discovering, and learning new tools, which they are expected to present in class. They will also be required to present the data they collect for their research projects, which will be subject to discussion and methodological scrutiny with the group. Ongoing, weekly participation, exploration, and collaboration will be fundamental to the course and will count heavily toward the final grade. **Course attendance is required, and points will be deducted for unauthorized absences.** (30%)

Online journal: All students will be required to keep an online journal as a Facebook group. A minimum of seven (7) substantive contributions will be expected of each student. A substantive contribution involves analysis, observation, photographs if appropriate, addition of relevant research materials, links to new research, and interpretative commentary for the material. (There is no specific word limit, but it cannot simply be a link with a descriptive sentence, so use your judgment.) (20%)

Research Questions/methods analysis assignment: Students will design a research question, a program of research, specify what data they will use, how they will collect it, how they will present it, and develop methods for pursuing their chosen topics (15%)

Research Questions/response and peer review: Students will substantively evaluate the proposals of their peers, offer constructive comments, and engage in continual peer-review of their partner's or partner group's research over the course of the semester. (10%)

Final papers: The goal of the course is to produce an article-quality final essay of 4-5K words. The students will have the option of writing in Russian or English. (35%)

TOOLS

Issuecrawler: http://www.govcom.org/Issuecrawler_instructions.htm

(Rogers, R. (2009), "Mapping Public Web Space with the Issuecrawler," in: Claire Brossard and Bernard Reber (eds.), *Digital Cognitive Technologies: Epistemology and Knowledge Society*. (London: Wiley), pp 115-126.)

Google Scaper: <https://tools.digitalmethods.net/beta/scrapeGoogle/>

Twitter Scaper: <https://github.com/digitalmethodsinitiative/dmi-tcat/wiki>

(Erik Borra, Bernhard Rieder, (2014) "Programmed method: developing a toolset for capturing and analyzing tweets", *Aslib Journal of Information Management*, Vol. 66 Iss: 3, pp. 262 – 278)

<http://lab.softwarestudies.com/p/cultural-analytics.html>

ImagePlot: <http://lab.softwarestudies.com/p/imageplot.html>

LikeScaper: <https://tools.digitalmethods.net/beta/likescraper/>

MediaLab: <http://www.medialab.sciences-po.fr/tools/>

Digital Methods Initiative tool database:

<https://wiki.digitalmethods.net/Dmi/ToolDatabase>

Venturini, T. et al *Sciences Po Media Lab Tools*, <http://tools.medialab.sciences-po.fr/>

ONLINE RESOURCES

Diminescu D. and M. Jiacomy (Eds) *The E-diasporas project*. Mapping Diasporic Networks Digital Social Research Methods: Navicrawler and Gephi, <http://www.e-diasporas.fr/>

ESRC Methods Festival, *Online Methods Tutorials: What is X?* (Ethnography, Discourse Analysis, ..), <http://www.ncrm.ac.uk/TandE/video/RMF2012/whatis.php>

Hine, C. et al *Digital Methods as Mainstream Methodology*
<http://digitalmethodsni.com/>

Rogers, R. et al, *Digital Methods Initiative*
<https://wiki.digitalmethods.net/Dmi/ToolDatabase>

Vis F. and M. Thelwall, *Researching Social Media Blog*,
<http://researchingsocialmedia.org/>

Noortje Marres and Carolin Gerlitz, Issue mapping <http://www.issuemapping.net>

Contropedia (wikipedia controversies, EMAPS project) <http://www.contropedia.net>

SCHEDULE OF CLASS MEETINGS

Week 1. Feb 2 Introduction

Introduction to the goals of the course, discussion of new methods, what they are and why they are needed.

Week 2. Feb. 9 Tricks of the Trade: Society and ‘The Social’

Readings

Becker, Howard, *Tricks of the Trade: How to Think about Your Research While You’re Doing It* (Chicago Guides to Writing, Editing, and Publishing, 1998).
Chp. 2 (Imagery) pp. 10-66.

Mariam Fraser, “Once upon a problem,” Back, Les, and Puwar, Nirmal, eds. *Live Methods* (Sociological Review Monographs, 2012).

Alberto Toscano, “Seeing it whole: staging totality in social theory and art,” in Back and Puwar, eds., *Live Methods*, pp. 65 - 80.

Week 3. Feb 16 Digital Methods

Readings:

Fielding, N., Lee, R. & Blank, G. (2008) The Internet as Research Medium: An Editorial Introduction to The Sage Handbook of Online Research Methods, *The Sage Handbook of Online Research Methods*, pp. 3-20

Noortje Marres, “The redistribution of methods: on intervention in digital social research, broadly conceived, in *Live Methods*, pp. 139-165.

Rogers, Richard. (2013) *Digital Methods*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, “The End of the Virtual: Digital Methods,” pp. 19-39

Week 4. Feb 23 Independent Research (Holiday)

Students explore websites and initiatives, brainstorm projects, prepare a 10-15 min presentation of key inspirations and ideas.

Week 5. March 2 Engines and Devices

Ruppert, E., Law, J. and Savage, M. (2013) Reassembling Social Science Methods: the challenge of digital devices. *Theory, Culture & Society*, 30(4)

Rogers, Richard. (2013) *Digital Methods*. The MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, “The Website as Archived Object” p. 61-83, “Googlization and the Inculpable Engine,” pp.83-95.

*Student presentations of preliminary research ideas

Week 5. March 9 Ethics and Privacy

Readings:

Cornish, Gillespie, Zittoun, “Collaborative Analysis of Qualitative Data”, in Handbook of Qualitative Data Analysis, pp. 79-93, 2013.

Sweeney et al “Hearing the voices of service user researchers in collaborative qualitative data analysis: the case for multiple coding,” *Health Expectations*, e89-e99.

Christine Hine, *Ethnography for the Internet*, Introduction and Chp. 1, 2.

Week 6. March 16 Ethnography and the Internet

Readings:

Christine Hine, *Ethnography for the Internet*, Chps. 3-5

Keith Macdonald, “Using Documents,” in Gilbert, ed. *Researching Social Life*, SAGE Publications, 2001. Chps. 12, 13, pp. 194-223.

Week 7. March 23 Digital Ethnography

Readings:

Murthy, D. 2008 “Digital Ethnography: An Examination of the Use of New Technologies for Social Research”. *Sociology* 42 (5): pp. 837-855.

Christine Hine, *Ethnography for the Internet*, pp. 6,7

Hallet and Barber, “Ethnographic Research in a Cyber Era”, *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 2014, pp. 306-330.

Kozinets, "The Field behind the Screen: Using Netnography for Marketing Research in Online Communities," *Journal of Marketing Research*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (Feb., 2002), pp. 61-72

Week 7. March 30 Visual Media Analysis

Readings:

Victoria D. Alexander, "Analyzing Visual Materials," in Gilbert, ed., *Researching Social Life*,

Nadav Hochman and Lev Manovich, "Zooming Into An Instagram City: Reading the local through social media,"

<http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/4711/3698>

Lev Manovich, Alise Tifentale, Mehrdad Yazdani, Jay Chow "The Exceptional and the Everyday: 144 Hours in Kiev" http://manovich.net/content/04-projects/082-kiev-article/sk219_1225.pdf Also look at <http://www.the-everyday.net/p/introduction.html>

Elizabeth Currid and Williams Sarah, 2010. "The geography of buzz: Art, culture and the social milieu in Los Angeles and New York," *Journal of Economic Geography*, volume 10, number 3, pp. 423–451. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/jeg/lbp032>

*Guest lecture to be announced

Week 8. April 6 Social Networks

Readings:

boyd, D. (2007) Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship. *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication* 13 (1) 210–230.

Rieder, B. (2013). Studying Facebook via data extraction: the Netvizz application. In Proceedings of the 5th Annual ACM Web Science Conference. New York: ACM, 346-355, http://rieder.polsys.net/files/rieder_websci.pdf

Riles, A. (2001) *The Network Inside Out*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press

Murthy, D., "Toward a Sociological Understanding of Social Media: Theorizing Twitter," *Sociology*, Vol. 46, No. 6 (DECEMBER 2012), pp. 1059-1073 (JSTOR)

Rogers, Richard. Digital Methods, "Social Media and Postdemographics," pp. 153-165

Week 9. April 13 Research Projects Workshop

*Students present and discuss project ideas and first attempts at data collection

* **Research Questions/methods analysis assignment due before class meeting, on April 5th at 17:00h.**

Week 10. April 20 Controversy Mapping

Readings:

Noorjte Marres and David Moates, "Mapping Controversies with Social Media: The Case for Symmetry," *Social Media + Society*, 2015, pp. 1-17.

<http://bds.sagepub.com/content/spbds/2/2/2053951715594635.full.pdf>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20150310090045/http://www.mappingcontroversies.net/>

Bruno Latour on mapping controversies:

<https://web.archive.org/web/20150315062615/http://www.mappingcontroversies.net/Home/PlatformMappingControversiesVideoIntroduction>

* **Research Questions/methods peer reviews due April 12th at 17H.**

Week 11. April 27 Issue Mapping

Readings:

Marres, N. (2015) "Why Map Issues? On Controversy Analysis as a Digital Method", *Science, Technology & Human Values*, 0162243915574602.

<http://sth.sagepub.com/content/40/5/655.full.pdf+html>

Marres, N. and R. Rogers (2005) "Recipe for Tracing the Fate of Issues and their Publics on the Web," In: *Making Things Public: Atmospheres of Democracy*. B. Latour and P. Weibel (Eds). (Cambridge: MIT Press): 922-93

T. Venturini, "Building on Faults: How to Represent Controversies with Digital Methods," 2011, http://www.medialab.sciences-po.fr/publications/Venturini-Building_on_Faults.pdf

E. Borra, E. Weltevrede, P. Ciuccarelli, A. Kaltenbrunner, D. Laniado, G. Magni, M. Mauri, R. Rogers & T. Venturini. " [Contropedia – the analysis and visualization of controversies in Wikipedia articles](#)." In *Proceedings of the 10th International Symposium on Open Collaboration (OpenSym 2014)*. New York: ACM, 2014, 2014:34.

Books to consider (not required):

R. Rogers, N. Sanchez and A. Kil. *Issue Mapping for an Ageing Europe*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2015.

Noorjte Marres and Richard Rogers, 2000 *Landscaping climate change: a mapping technique for understanding science and technology debates on the World Wide Web*

* **Practicum and individual project discussions / presentation of data**

May 11-18: Developing research projects. Student teams work on their collaborative research projects under supervision of course teachers. Guidelines will be provided closer to the date.

Week 17 May 25 Final Remarks: Thinking about Big Data

Readings:

S. Niederer and R. Taudin Chabot. [Deconstructing the Cloud: Responses to Big Data phenomena from social sciences, humanities and the arts](http://bds.sagepub.com/content/spbds/2/2/2053951715594635.full.pdf), *Big Data & Society*, 2(2), 2015.
<http://bds.sagepub.com/content/spbds/2/2/2053951715594635.full.pdf>

Rogers, Richard. *Digital Methods*, “After Cyberspace: Big Data, Small Data,” pp. 203-211.

**Final project due 10.06.2017 at 17H (submission online)*