

# WSSR WORKSHOPS ON SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH

## Archival Research

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9:00am – 4:30pm

### Summary

Archival research is one of the longest established data gathering methods in the social sciences. But it is also undergoing major transformation amid the technological revolutions in information storage, access, and transmission of the digital age. This workshop offers an introduction to the specific opportunities and obstacles, advantages and limitations of archival research for social scientists today. We will read methodological pieces alongside selected examples of archive-based research in comparative and international studies. Our goal here is to identify, compare, and evaluate specific choices made by actual researchers in the collection and analysis of source materials. In two of the four sessions we will take advantage of ways in which the digital age is transforming information availability to do hands-on online activities learning about archive procedures and holdings and the interpretation of archival sources. This workshop can either be taken as a stand-alone one-day module, or as a supplement to the two-day workshop surveying “Historical Analysis and Historical Methods.”



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## Schedule of Sessions

### Session 1. Gathering Pre-Existing Materials: Opportunities and Challenges

9.00-10.30

- Diana Kapiszewski, Lauren M. MacLean, and Benjamin L. Read, *Field Research in Political Science: Practices and Principles* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Ch. 5: "Thinking outside the (archive) box" 151-189 <http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?14EF223C>
- M. E. Sarotte, "China's Fear of Contagion: Tiananmen Square and the Power of the European Example," *International Security* 37, no. 2 (2012): 156-182. <http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?u-http%3A%2F%2F0-search.ebscohost.com.mercury.concordia.ca%2Flogin.aspx%3Fdirect%3Dtrue%26db%3Da9h%26AN%3D8244263%26site%3Dhost-live%26scope%3Dsite>

### Session 2. Exercise: Learning about Archive Procedures and Holdings

10.45-12.00

- Marc Trachtenberg, "Appendix II: Working with Primary Sources," online supplement to *The Craft of International History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006). Read sections IV (Archival Sources) and VII (Practical Information) at <http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/polisci/faculty/trachtenberg/methbk/AppendixII.html>
- Cecelia Lynch, "Peace Movements and the United Nations," in *Beyond Appeasement: Interpreting Interwar Peace Movements in World Politics* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1999), Chap. 7 and Archives and Private Paper appendix. <http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?14EEF899>

### Session 3. Using Sources: Traditional Standards and the Transparency Revolution

1.30-3.00

- John D. Milligan, "The Treatment of a Historical Source," *History and Theory* 18, no. 2 (1979): 177-96. <http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?u-http%3A%2F%2F0-www.jstor.org.mercury.concordia.ca%2Fstable%2F2504755>
- Andrew Moravcsik, "Transparency: The Revolution in Qualitative Research," *PS: Political Science and Politics* 47, no. 1 (2014): 48-53. <http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?u-http%3A%2F%2F0-dx.doi.org.mercury.concordia.ca%2F10.1017%2F1049096513001789>
- Elizabeth Saunders, "Transparency without Tears: A Pragmatic Approach to Transparent Security Studies Research," *Security Studies* 23, no. 4 (2014): 689-998. <http://reserves.concordia.ca/ares/ares.dll/plink?u-http%3A%2F%2F0-search.ebscohost.com.mercury.concordia.ca%2Flogin.aspx%3Fdirect%3Dtrue%26db%3Da9h%26AN%3D99777271%26site%3Dhost-live%26scope%3Dsite>

### Session 4. Exercise: Evaluating the Use of Archival Sources

3.15-4.30

- Elizabeth Saunders, *Leaders at War: How Presidents Shape Military Interventions* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2011), Chap. 4. Read chapter as published in the book, or in the "publication view" on the Qualitative Data Repository website (information below).
- Go to the Qualitative Data Repository <https://qdr.syr.edu/>. Under the discover tab go to pilot projects, and scroll down through table to find link to Elizabeth Saunders example. On the next page click "show more" to read full project summary etc and then follow "View Active Citation data project" link at bottom of page to actually view the active citation project. You will be prompted to register. After registering you will be able to access sources used in this articles in our in-class exercise.

\*If you are registered for non-credit and are unable to access these readings, please send us an email at [wssr@concordia.ca](mailto:wssr@concordia.ca) and we will do our best to assist you.

