Archival Research
Dr. Robert Adcock
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9:00am – 4:30pm
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Workshop Overview

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 read methodological pieces alongside selected examples of archive-based research in comparative and international studies. The examples enable us to identify, compare, and evaluate specific choices made by actual researchers in gathering and analyzing archival sources. 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 use of archival sources. This course can either be taken as a stand-alone one-day module, or as a supplement to the two-day course surveying “Historical Analysis and Historical Methods.”

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. 4: “Thinking outside the (archive) box”

Session 2. Exercise: Learning about Archive Procedures and Holdings 10.45-12.00

Session 3. Using Sources: Traditional Standards and the Transparency Revolution 1.30-3.00

**Session 4. Exercise: Evaluating the Use of Archival Sources** 3.15-4.30


• Go to the Qualitative Data Repository [https://qdr.syr.edu/](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 link at bottom of page to actually view the active citation project. You will be prompted to register. After registering you should be able to access sources used in this articles in our in-class exercise.