

Replication and Reproducibility in Social Sciences and Statistics: Context, Concerns, and Concrete Measures

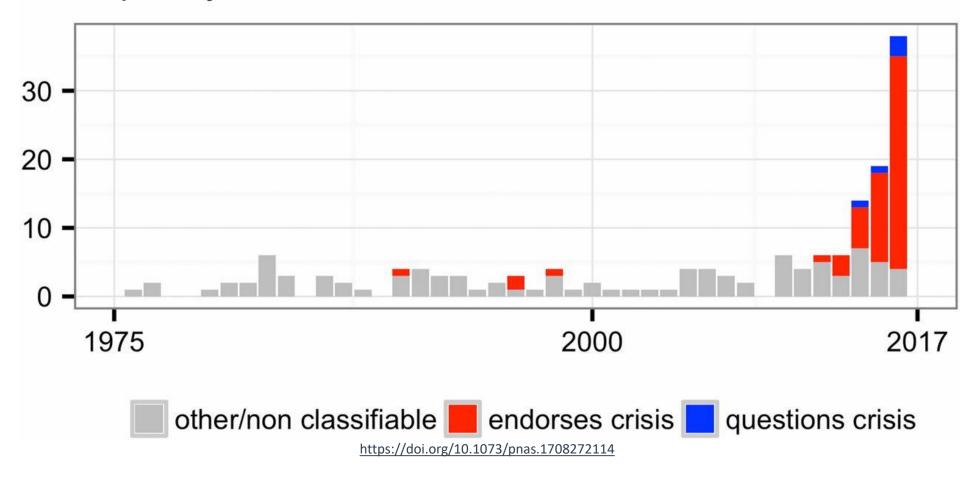
Lars Vilhuber
Cornell University

Partial funding acknowledged under NSF-#1131848 (NCRN) and a grant from the Alfred P. Sloan Foundation. The opinions expressed in this talk are solely the authors, and do not represent the views of the U.S. Census Bureau, the American Economic Association, or any of the funding agencies.



This reproducibility crisis thing....

Frequency of Crisis Narrative in Web of Science Records





The "crisis" in the 60s and 70s

Sterling, 1959; Cohen, 1962; Lykken, 1968; Tukey, 1969; Greenwald, 1975; Meehl, 1978; Rosenthal, 1979

Low power Flexibility in analysis Selective reporting Ignoring nulls Lack of replication Misuse of statistics

Source: Nosek Sackler talk 2017



Efficiency of scholary discourse?

- Early publications (20th century) contained tables of data, and the math was simple (maybe)
 - Data became electronic, was no longer included or cited
 - Math was transcribed to code, and was no longer included

Modern publications thus need the same transparency and completeness as in the old days to facilitate replicability

Replication?



Reproducibility

- Narrow Replication (Pesaran 2003)
- Pure Replication (Hamermesh 2007)
- Verification (Clemens 2015)

Same data	Same code	Same methods	Same context

Reproducibility

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Reproducibility

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Replicability

- Wide Replication (Pesaran 2003)
- Statistical Replication (Hamermesh 2007)
- Reproduction/Reanalysis (Clemens 2015)

Same data	Different code	Same methods	Same context
	or software		



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New data	Same code	Same methods	Same context
collection			

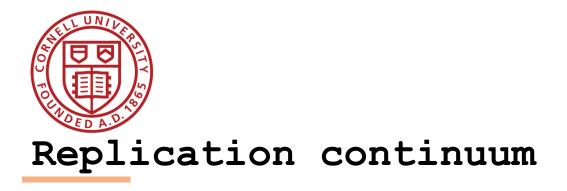


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Generalizability

- Wider Replication (Pesaran 2003)
- Scientific Replication (Hamermesh 2007)
- Reanalysis/Robustness (Clemens 2015)

Different data	Different code	Different	Different
	or software	methods	context or
			country



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Progress



• Replication archives and Data (Code) Availability policies





- Replication archives and Data (Code) Availability policies
- Shared open source software



Statistical Software Components

From Boston College Department of Economics

Boston College, 140 Commonwealth Avenue, Chestnut Hill MA 02467 U: Contact information at <u>EDIRC</u>.

Bibliographic data for series maintained by Christopher F Baum (baum@

Access Statistics for this software series.

Track citations for all items by RSS feed

Is something missing from the series or not right? See the RePEc data c series.

GAPPORT: Stata module to calculates seats in party-list representation

Ulrich Kohler

GCLSORT: Stata module to sort a single variable via ege Philippe Van Kerm

<u>GPROD: Stata module to extend egen for product of obs</u> <u>Philip Ryan</u>



Progress

- Replication archives and Data (Code) Availability policies
- Shared open source software
- Better public-use and shared data















- Replication archives and Data (Code) Availability policies
- Shared open source software
- Better public-use and shared data
- Better ways of accessing preprints/ grey literature







- Replication archives and Data (Code) Availability policies
- Shared open source software
- Better public-use and shared data
- Better ways of accessing preprints/ grey literature
- Pre-registration of trials, experiments, and analyses







More recently...



Second round (2012-)

- •Greater <u>enforcement</u> of data (and code) availability
 - 2015, AJ Political Science
 - 2016, Data Editor for ASA Software Section
 - 2016, Statistical review added Science
 - 2017: AEA appoints Data Editor, with mandate to do similar activities (also EJ, Restud)



Pre-registration

• "That information is especially helpful in research that emphasizes null hypothesis significance testing.

• A thorough preregistration promotes transparency

and openness and protects researchers from

suspicions of p-hacking."

AEA RCT Registry The American Economic Association's registry for randomized consisted trials	Create Account. Sign
About Registration Guidelines FAQ	Advanced Search SEARCH
AEA RGT Registry currently lists 2268 studies with locations in 125 countries.	REGISTER A TRIAL >
MOST RECENTLY REGISTERED TRIALS	
Tackling sexual harassment: Evidence from India	
Goal 5 of the sustainable development goals adopted by the United Nations in 201 and violence against women in public and private spheres and to undertake reform resources and access to ownership of property. Government of India has identified national priority too. Brutal gargraps of a 25-year-cikl woman in 2012 in the capital towards endemic sexual assault and harassment against women. A UN women's s Deith had suffered from either sexual, visual or verbath harassment. Pervasive sexu psychological, economic and social lives of the	is to give women equal rights to economic ending violence against women as a key of India led to an outcry against public apathy tudy showed that 92% of women surveyed in
Malleability of Sustained Attention	
LAST REGISTERED ON JANUARY 25, 2019	
The economics and education literatures traditionally view human capital as an inc project, we post an additional potential component: the capacity for sustained atta to direct and sustain attention is thought to underlie all activity; conjuliery processes non-cognitive activities (such as exerting self-control) (Chun et al. 2011). In this pr exerting sustained activition is mailtained, but any after the properties of all to low-income Indian primary schools. The platform engages students in sustain activities	ntion. In cognitive psychology, the mind's ability (such as solving a math problem) as well as oject, we examine whether the capacity for novel tablet-based adaptive learning platform



Registered Reports

- https://cos.io/rr
- Chambers (2014)
- Nosek & Lakens (2014)



Close cousin: Results-blind review



Preprints in other sciences

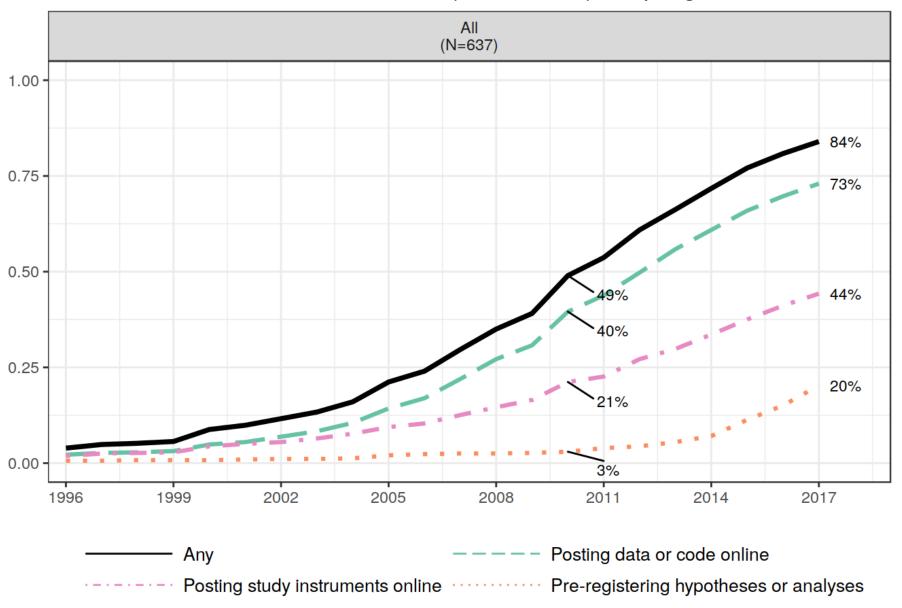
- bioRxiv (2013)
- PsyArXiv (2016)







Share of Published Authors (PhD < 2010) Adopting Practice



Paluck (2018) https://osf.io/kvbnh/

Issues



Economics makes wide use of public-use data

Macrodata:

"We use data downloaded from the Bureau of Economic Analysis..."

Microdata:

"... this paper uses data from the Current Population Survey..."



This should be easy!



Problems Making RELIABLE archives

Many datasets

- Are imperfectly described
 - Very few data citations
- Are badly documented
- Have no (permanent) location defined
 - Even for data from high-profile organizations!
- All of the above



Making USEFUL archives

• From analysis of code from 1996 to 2003 (MMH2006):

"Other authors seem to think that the entire world shares the exact same hard drive layout, with "C:\MYDATA\MYPROJECT\" sprinkled liberally throughout their code. Of course, a would-be replicator has to find and change all these."

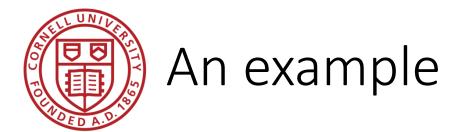
"The author might not realize all the data/subroutine files that his code utilizes, and forget to include said data/subroutine in his replication files."



Still true today...



Let's try and do better...



J Econom. Author manuscript; available in PMC 2012 Mar 1.
Published in final edited form as:

J Econom. 2011 Mar 1; 161(1): 82–99. doi: 10.1016/j.jeconom.2010.09.008 PMCID: PMC3079891 NIHMSID: NIHMS246950

National Estimates of Gross Employment and Job Flows from the Quarterly Workforce Indicators with Demographic and Industry Detail

John M. Abowd and Lars Vilhuber

<u>Author information</u> <u>► Copyright and License information</u> <u>►</u>

Abstract Go to: ♥

The Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) are local labor market data produced and released every quarter by

No confidential data were used in this paper. All public-use Quarterly Workforce Indicators data can be accessed from http://www.vrdc.cornell.edu/news/data/qwi-public-use-data/. The national indicators developed in this paper can be accessed from http://www.vrdc.cornell.edu/news/data/qwi-national-data/. We are grateful for the comments and suggestions of many of our colleagues, past and present, too numerous to list here and thus listed at the website above and in the working paper version of this article. The opinions expressed in this paper are those of the authors and not the U.S. Census Bureau nor any of the research sponsors.





404. That's an error.

The requested URL /a_cool_website was not found on this server. That's all we know.





An example: not cited...

J Econom. Author manuscript; available in PMC 2012 Mar 1.
Published in final edited form as:

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The Quarterly Workforce Indicators (QWI) are local labor market data produced and released every quarter by

- Press for the NBER; 2009. pp. 149-230.
- Abowd JM, Vilhuber L. The sensitivity of economic statistics to coding errors in personal identifiers. Journal
 of Business and Economic Statistics. 2005;23(2):133-152
- Abowd JM, Zellner A. Estimating Gross Labor Force Flows. Journal of Business and Economic Statistics. 1985;3:254–283

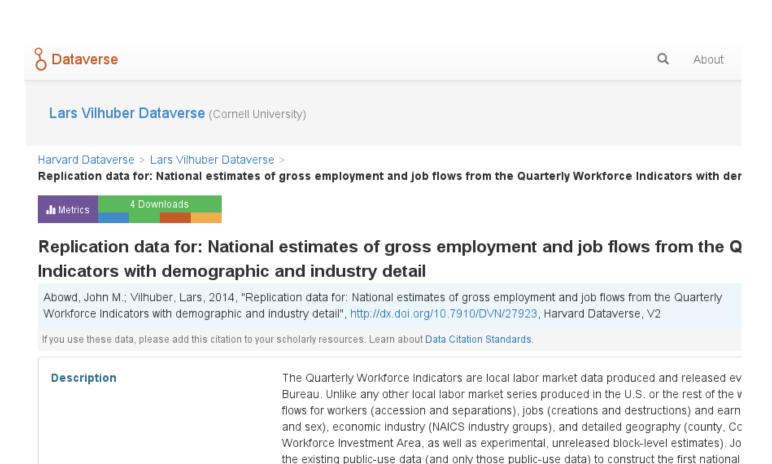


Data not attached to article

- J of Econometrics Data Policy at the time could not accommodate 50MB file
 - Data was not attached to paper.
- Today's J of Econometrics policy suggests using third-party repositories
 - We will get to that later



We went back, archived it



important enhancement to existing series because they include demographic and industry compiled from data that have been integrated at the micro-level by the Longitudinal Emplo



We went back, archived it, linked it back

Keyword Employment Dynamics

Topic Classification Economics

Related Publication

John M. Abowd and Lars Vilhuber, "National estimates of gross employment and job flows from the Quarterly Worwith demographic and industry detail," Journal of Econometrics, vol. 161, iss. 1, pp. 82-99, 2011. doi:

10.1016/j.jeconom.2010.09.008 http://www2.vrdc.cornell.edu/news/data/qwi-national-data/

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John M. Abowd and Lars Vilhuber, "National estimates of gross employment and job flows from the Quarterly Worwith demographic and industry detail (with color graphs)," Center for Economic Studies, U.S. Census Bureau, Wo 11, 2010. http://ideas.repec.org/p/cen/wpaper/10-11.html

Producer

Labor Dynamics Institute (Cornell University) (LDI) http://www2.vrdc.cornell.edu/news/data/qwi-national-data/





But journal and data infrastructure are incomplete

- While Dataverse allows to manually link back...
- ... the article itself (journal website) reveals **none** of that
- True for most journals, and most data archives
 - ICPSR (manual linking to articles)
 - RePEc (no linkage possible)

If article cites data (DOI!)

Infrastructure starting to emerge









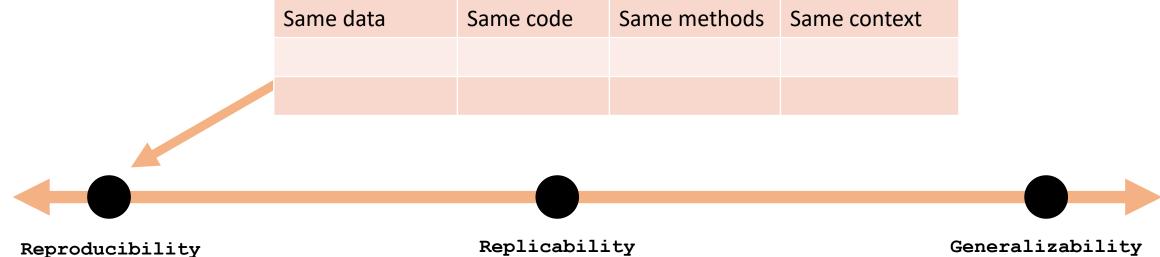




Still true today...

Not enough articles are reproducible

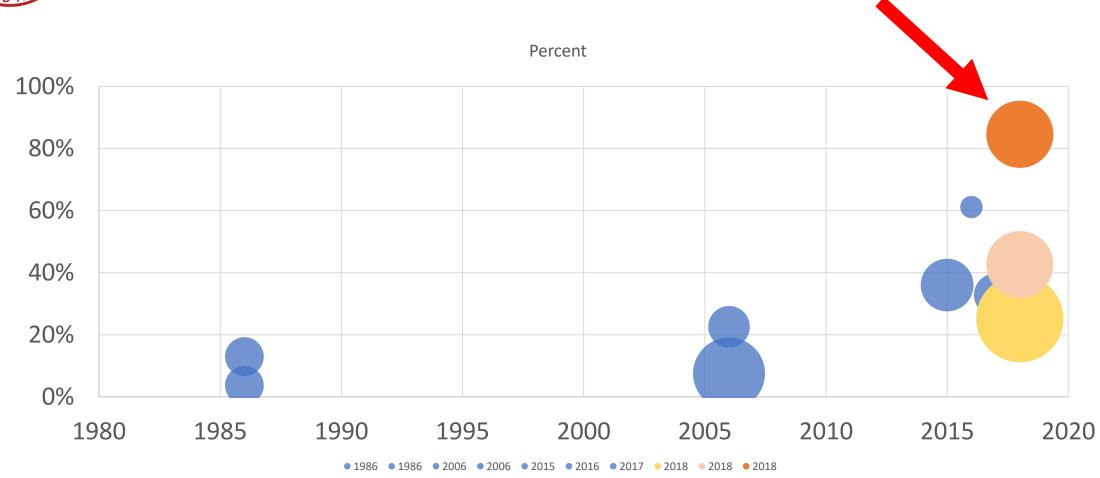
Replication continuum



- Narrow Replication (Pesaran 2003)
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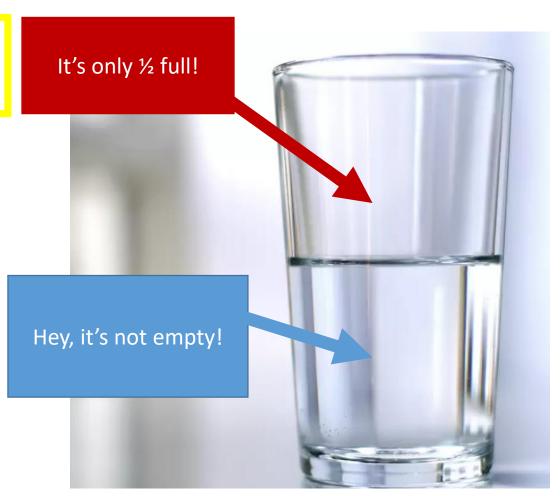
Some key statistics

Study	Year	N	Success	Туре	Type-R	Type- Data	Percent	Field
Dewald Thursby Anderson	1986	54	. 2	Complete	Reproducibility	Avail	4%	Economics
Dewald Thursby Anderson	1986	54	. 7	Partial	Reproducibility	Avail	13%	Economics
McCullough McGeary Harrison	2006	186	14	Complete	Reproducibility	All	8%	Economics
McCullough McGeary Harrison	2006	62	14	Complete	Reproducibility	Avail	23%	Economics
Nosek et al	2015	100	36	Complete	Replication		36%	Psychology
Camerer et al	2016	18	11	Complete	Replication		61%	Experimental Econ
Changli	2047		^^		, ,		220/	Macroeconomi
Kingi et al	2018	274	69	Complete	Reproducibility	All	25%	Economics
Kingi et al	2018	162	69	Complete	Reproducibility	Avail	43%	Economics
Kingi et al	2018	162	137	Partial	Reproducibility	Avail	85%	Economics



In a nutshell

- 40% use restricted-access data
- 25% use public-use data and are mostly or completely reproducible
- 25% use public-use data and are only partially reproducible
- 10% fail to yield useful results



Not enough datais "accessible"



Current Data Availability Policies are Broken

 If the Data is not open-access,

no systematic information is collected ("exemption")

It is not the access that is "broken"



If you used files at the National Archives,

would we ask you to "deposit" them?

It is the description of access that is "broken"



What to do about it?



- Provide more transparency
 - To assist replication efforts
 - By better linking to paper-related resources
 - Public-use data
 - Restricted-access data
 - Code
 - Pre-Registration when available



- Pre-emptively improve code archives
 - By conducting reproducibility checks when we can
 - By working with groups that conduct reproducibility checks
 when we cannot



- Better archives
 - Greater transparency of the code and data archives
 - Better provenance tracking
 - Leave code where it is when appropriate
 - Leave data where it is almost always
 - Display that information



- It is the policy of the American Economic Association to publish papers only if the data used in the analysis are <u>clearly and precisely</u> documented and are readily available to any researcher for purposes of replication.
- Authors of accepted papers that contain empirical work, simulations, or experimental work must provide, prior to publication, the data, programs, and other details of the computations sufficient to permit replication. These will be posted on the AEA website. The Editor should be notified at the time of submission if the data used in a paper are proprietary or if, for some other reason, the requirements above cannot be met.



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 We will assess early, but more flexible.
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 "Sufficient" = "it actually works".

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- Authors of experiment and other repository the data, programs, and other extension the computations sufficient to permit replication. These should be available on the AEA Data and Code Repository or another repository. The Editor should be notified at the time of submission if the data used in a paper are proprietary or if, for some other reason, the requirements above cannot be met.



Action: Encourage Best Practices

Follow robust coding

- Ensure that code reliably produces results (possibly automated)
- Before you finish the manuscript, run all analysis code again (if not too onerous)

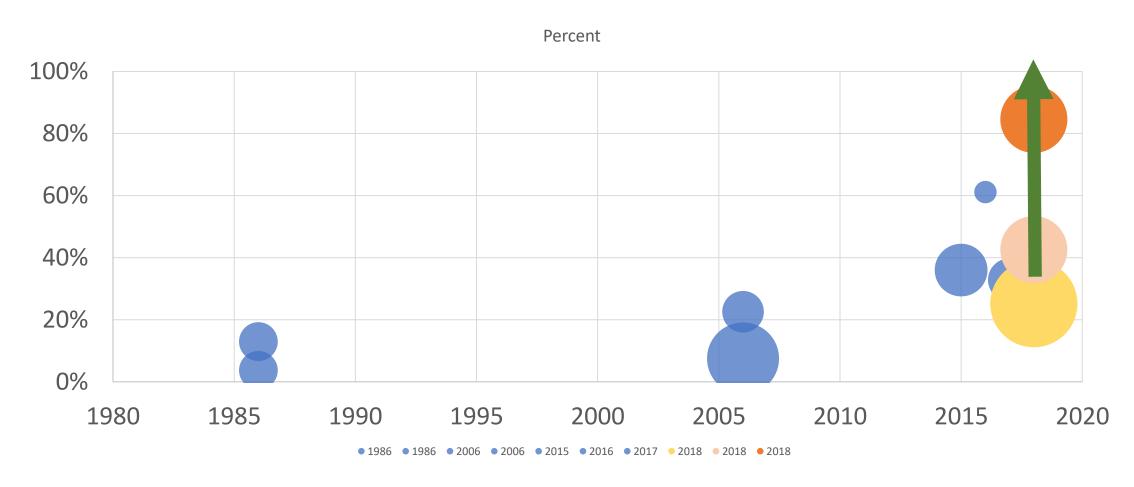


Action: Pre-Publication Verification

- Cornell Replication Lab has been verifying published articles
- Now switching to manuscripts in the submission workflow
- For now pilot
 - Authors have submitted prior to announcement of new data policy



Goal: Improve reproducibility





Action: Verifying Data and Code Deposits

- Check README
 - Legible? Intelligible? Complete?
- Check Code
 - Where is Table 1? Figure 1? Could this work?
- Check Access Rights
 - Can the author provides us with data?
 - Does the data access as described work?



Why do journals like "supplemental ZIP files" and affiliated repositories?

- They can ensure longevity/ persistence
- They can ensure access
- They can ensure availability



But: Encourage Best Practices

Deposit and archive early

 If you collect data, archive it immediately (possibly privately)

• If you finish the manuscript, archive the analysis files (possibly privately)



- More self-deposit repositories in the social sciences
 - Dataverse
 - Figshare
 - openICPSR
 - Zenodo
 - Qualitative Data Repository (QDR)
 - Others...



Goal: Use any repository!

(subject to conditions)



Then: Describe them!

(cite them!)

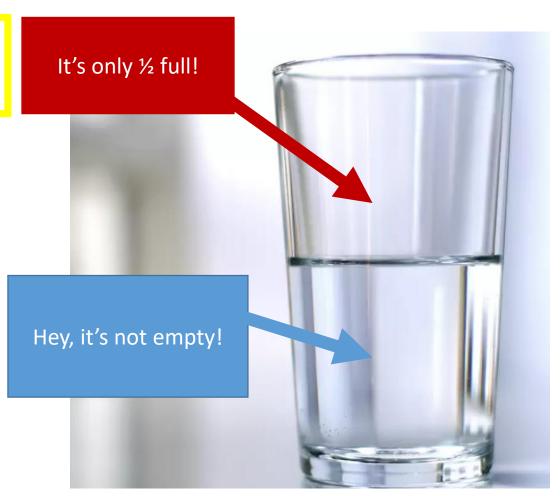


Treat all archives symmetrically!



In a nutshell

- 40% use restricted-access data
- 25% use public-use data and are mostly or completely reproducible
- 25% use public-use data and are only partially reproducible
- 10% fail to yield useful results





Evolving Journal and Data Infrastructure

• More self-deposit repositories in the

social sciences

- Dataverse
- Figshare
- openICPSR
- Zenodo

- CASD
- IAB
- Norway
- US Federal Statistical RDC
- •
- Qualitative Data Repository (QDR)
- Others...

Challenges?



Verifying Data and Code Deposits

- Not every data repository is created equal
 - Github, Dropbox, etc. are not data or code repositories
 - Is the institutional repository at the University of Southern Venezuela a reliable repository?
 - Is the institutional repository at Cornell University a reliable repository?
 - Is the institutional repository at Harvard University (Dataverse!) a reliable repository?
 - Are the National Archives a reliable repository?



Verifying Data and Code Deposits

- Not every restricted-access repository is created equal
 - The Second Bank of Third City credit card data is not a data/code repository
 - Is the School Board of Third City a reliable repository?
 - Is the JPMC Institute a reliable repository?
 - Is the US Census Bureau a reliable repository?
 - Are any restriced-access repositories reliable archives?



Repositories and RDCs: step up!

 Provide good data documentation

- Provide clear description of impartial access procedures
- Commit to preserving data, code, and access over long periods of time



Users of RDCs: step up!

 Provide good data documentation

- Provide clear description of impartial access procedures
- Commit to preserving data, code, and access over long periods of time

- Provide good data documentation
 - Variable descriptions
 - Summary stats
- How did you get access?
 Describe it!
- Act as if others could access your analysis data and programs!



Users of RDCs: step up!

Provide good data documenta

Provide clea

impartial ad

Provide good data

And encourage your RDC to create/provide this information

 Commit to preserving data, code, and access over long periods of time

• Act as if others could access your analysis data and programs!

ess?

Challenges?



Reproducibility is harder than it should be

- Often done piecemeal
 - At different times
 - By different people
- Software versions
 - Stata 9? 15? 42?
 - rdrobust 2014? 2016? 2018 bug fix?
- Compilers and exotic software

Impossible?



Lots of good examples

- IAB FDZ enforces reproducibility through its access procedures
 - So does the CDER/Statistics Canada
- Some European agencies have excellent data documentation
 - So does (sometimes) Statistics Canada
- Access procedures are often quite formal but impartial
 - US, Canada, France, Germany, etc.



Lots of good examples

- Open source software has practices that ensure reproducibility, but also describe it
- Many papers do an admirable job, and teach the replicator how to proceed
- Tools:
 - Make files and modern replacement
 - Docker
 - Rmd files
 - Maybe Jupyter notebooks (they have some issues)



Lots of bad examples too....



Goal: Confidential data

- Work with Research Data Centers to facilitate transparency and reproducibility
 - Training (secure programming guidelines)
 - Standardize archives within RDCs + transparency
 - Develop guidelines and internal processes for preservation, reproducibility
- Work with researchers to interact with data providers
- Work with private sector data providers to clarify procedures, improve openness



Future efforts

AEA, Social Sciences, elsewhere



Better support for researchers

- Training in methods (with various centers, institutions, etc.)
 - For current researchers
 - For integration into curriculums
- Tools to streamline the process
 - A few technical things (not described here)
 - Coordinate among journals (no duplicate effort)
- Awareness
 - Consider badges/ certification
 - Address issues with confidential data



Full-featured repository



Depositing Data in the AEA Data and Code Repository

The American Economic Association journals require authors to deposit data and materials with a community-recognized or general repositories. The AEA Data and Code Repository at ICPSR serves that purpose. Please see the AEA's <u>Data and Code Availability Policy</u> and data citation guidance at the <u>Sample References</u> page for more details. **Authors are required to include a citation pointing to the deposit in the reference section of the final version of the article sent to the AEA.** The openICPSR repository automatically generates a citation when the data are "published."

Deposits should include all data, annotated program code, command files, and documentation that is needed to replicate the findings from the authors' submitted article.

- Data should be comprehensively documented (see ICPSR's <u>Guide to Social Science Data Preparation and Archiving, 5th Edition</u> for guidance). The author is responsible for removing identifying information from the data to protect <u>confidentiality</u>. Neither the AEA nor ICPSR review submissions for disclosure risk.
- Program code and command files should be annotated to facilitate replication and ensure clear correspondence between code and figures, tables, and analyses in the
 published article.
- Authors retain ownership and copyright to the data and code. Authors are required to affirm that they have the right to publish and redistribute the material. However,
 - o ICPSR requires a license for distribution of data.
 - An **open license** is required by the AEA, in order to allow others to re-use the data and code, in particular for replication. Authors can select from several license options, including CC-BY 4.0 for data and Modified BSD for software and code. If an author would like to use multiple licenses or create a customized license, she should select the "Other" license option and upload a LICENSE file alongside the data and documentation.

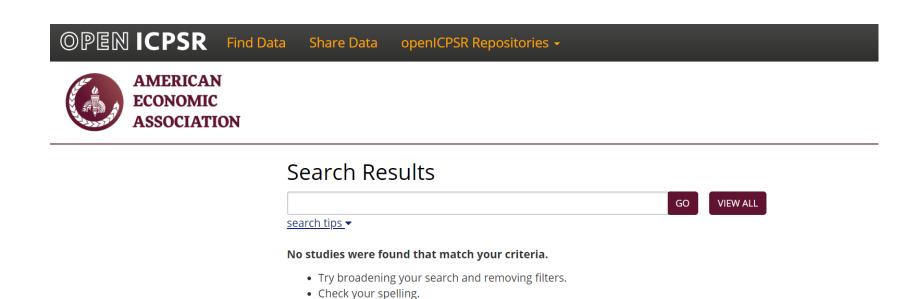
By depositing in the AEA Data and Code Repository, the depositors allow the AEA staff to add keywords and other metadata which are important for proper indexing in linking. Any other changes are subject to the license chosen for the materials.

View more extensive (unofficial) guidance.

Start Your Deposit



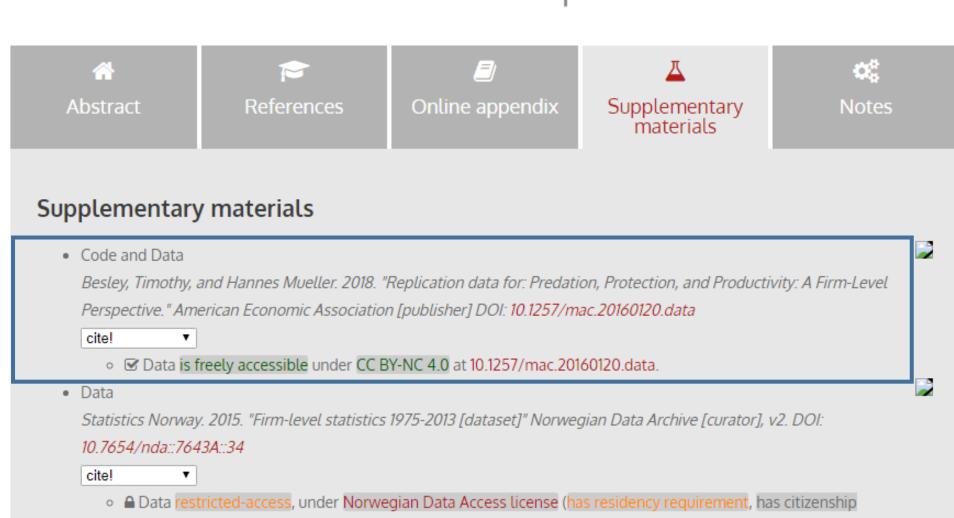
Full-featured repository



• Still no luck? Email help@icpsr.umich.edu or suggest a data collection that we should acquire.



Predation, Protection, and Productivity: A Firm-Level Perspective.



requirement), accessible at Norwegian Data Archive in Oslo, Norway

Collaboration



Any standards, tools, methods: must be transportable across journals (no custom solutions)



Social science "guild"



Data and Code Guidance by Data Editors

Guidance for authors wishing to create data and code supplements, and for replicators.

Authors: Lars Vilhuber

This project is maintained by socialscience-data-editors

Disclaimer

Unofficial guidance on various topics by Social Science Data Editors

Guidance on creating replicable data and program archives

This guidance is for the author wanting to create a replication archive.

See Requested information for the information the Data Editor may request from you, prior to the acceptance of your paper for publication.

Guidance on testing replicability of code

This guidance has two audiences:

- the author wanting to verify whether her code passes muster as a replicable archive
- the replicator wanting to verify the replicability of such an archive

See Verification guidance

FAQ

See our growing FAQ. If you have questions or answers to add, please notify us by creating a new issue.

https://
social-science
-data-editors.
github.io/
guidance/

Challenges?



You...

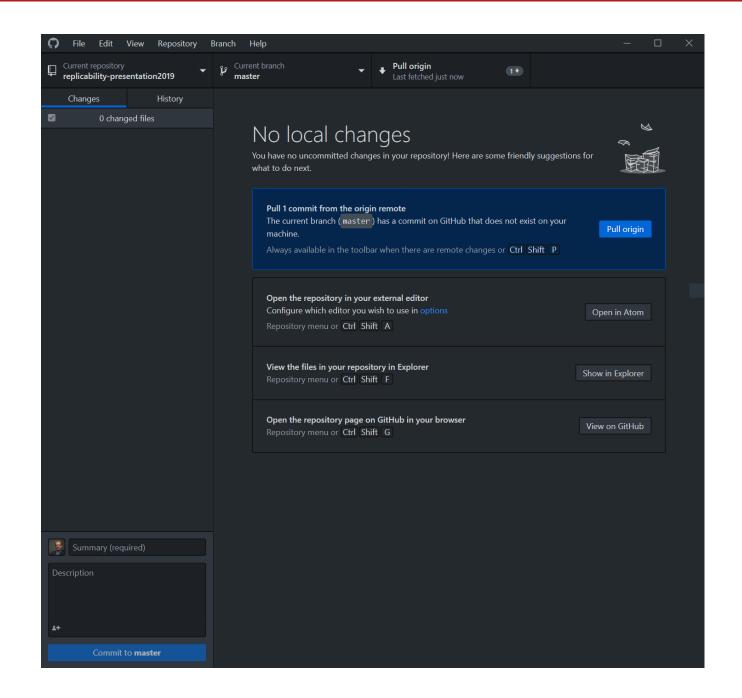


Me...



Change ingrained habits...



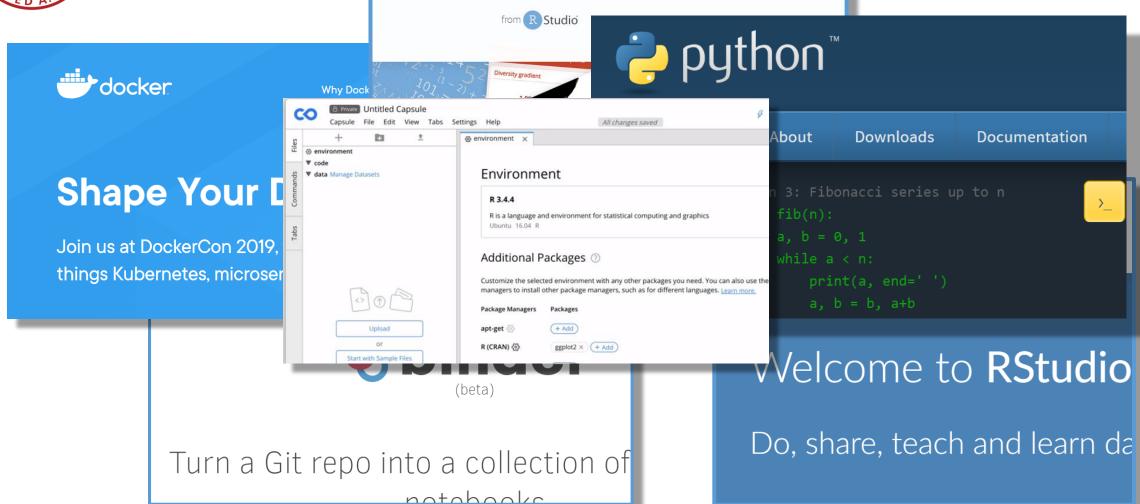




New skills to learn...



R Markdown

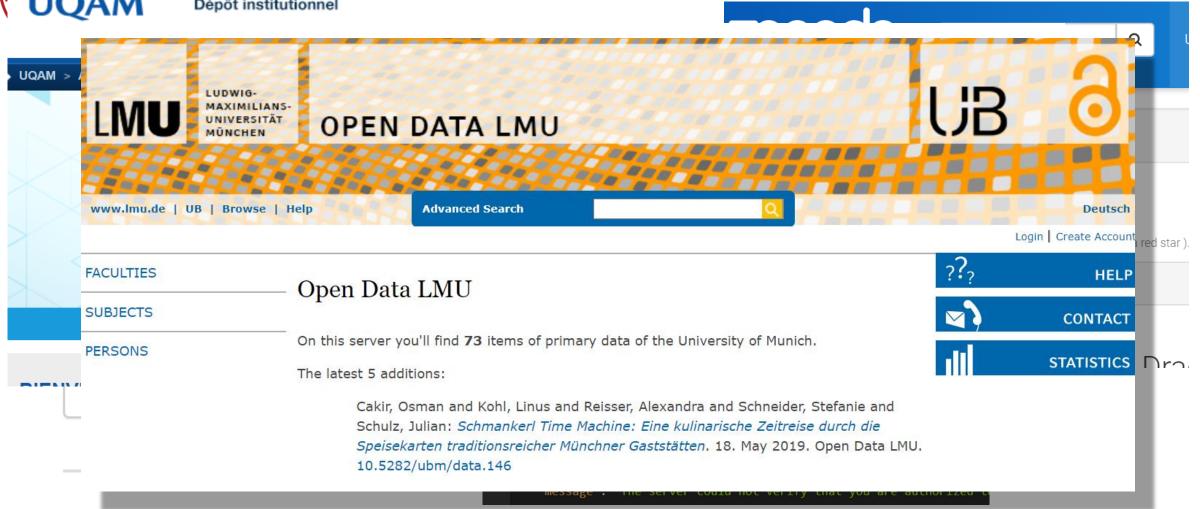




New methods to use ...



Dépôt institutionnel

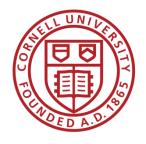




- Ingrained habits
- New skills to learn
- New methods to use



Push for better support...



Researchers: New skills to learn/teach

- How to incorporate reproducible practices into your workflow
- When to pre-register, and when not to
- Document early, and often (better READMEs!)
- How, where, and when to archive data and code
- How to license your contributions!

Glimpses



- Analogy between grant or RDC proposal and pre-registration
- Incentives of stats agencies: transparency = credibility
- Challenges with ad-hoc access (individuals accessing ministry data,
 CD in the back pocket/file drawer, unnamable private company)
- From pre-acceptance verification to pre-submission verification (university or institute services) and the role of contract programming

Summary



Greater transparency

- Equal treatment of public-use and confidential data
- Better computational reproducibility
 - For public data as well as confidential data
- Greater reliance on shared resources
 - Encourage best practices



Challenges for Restricted-Access Data

Verifiability

How can others obtain access?

Documentation

How can others learn about the data?

Persistence

How are data and programs preserved?

Merci!