A (Data) Tale Of Two Faculties

Conference or Workshop Item

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A (DATA) TALE OF TWO FACULTIES

David King (STEM) and Francesca Benatti (FASS)
INTRODUCTIONS

Francesca

Currently Research Fellow in Digital Humanities
Studied Book History and Irish Studies for my PhD
Created my first digital research data for it (an Access database of 1,000 periodical articles)
But far more analogue data
  handwritten notes
  annotated photocopies of microfilms
  marginal notes in books

How can I preserve, organise and use all of this data?
Can I even call it data?
INTRODUCTIONS
David
Currently Visiting Fellow in Computing & Communications
Member of OU’s Digital Humanities Steering Group
Studied International History and Politics for my first degree
…which meant travelling to libraries to read their microfilm
Worked in industry, through computing to management consultancy
…and specialised in document/knowledge management and workflow,
*hence extensive experience sharing data, and responsibilities*
Mature student at the OU for my PhD in Computing, and stayed…
…thesis in ORO, downloaded more than 5,700 times
DATA IN SCIENCE

*Attelabus nitens*
Working in biodiversity, shared data

Biodiversity Information Standards (TDWG)
We are a non-profit organization and community dedicated to developing biodiversity information standards

Historically known as the Taxonomic Databases Working Group, today's Biodiversity Information Standards (TDWG) is a not-for-profit, scientific and educational association formed to establish international collaboration among the creators, managers and users of biodiversity information and to promote the wider and more effective dissemination and sharing of knowledge about the world's heritage of biological organisms.

To achieve its goals, TDWG:

- develops, adopts and promotes standards and guidelines for the recording and exchange of data about organisms
- promotes the use of these standards and guidelines through the most appropriate and effective means
- acts as a community forum for discussion through meetings, online discussions, and publications.

See the About section to learn how TDWG operates and how you can participate. Active Interest Groups are described under Community.
DATA IN SCIENCE

At large - metadata as well as domain specific interest groups
DATA IN SCIENCE
Main resource in biodiversity literature

Inspiring discovery through free access to biodiversity knowledge.
The Biodiversity Heritage Library improves research methodology by collaboratively making biodiversity literature openly available to the world as part of a global biodiversity community.

BHL also serves as the foundational literature component of the Encyclopedia of Life (EOL).
Some hiccups because of funding

BHL-Europe Website closed from 31 January 2018

Biodiversity Heritage Library for Europe
The EU-funded project ‘Biodiversity Heritage Library for Europe’ (BHL-Europe) was launched in May 2009. BHL-Europe continues to be an important regional network of institutions participating in the Global Biodiversity Heritage Library. However, the website developed as part of the project is no longer separately maintained and has been archived. The digital content contributed by BHL-Europe partners will be accessible via the single global BHL website. [Biodiversity Heritage Library]

BHL-Europe content forms a sub-collection within BHL and is discoverable via a BHL-wide search or via a thematic collections search: [https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/browse/collection/bhle]

The history of BHL-Europe
The Biodiversity heritage library (BHL) is an open access digital library for biodiversity literature. It is formed by a global consortium of natural history, botanical and university libraries. Beginning in 2007 BHL has grown from an initial consortium of 9 institutions to over 80 contributors worldwide.

BHL-Europe network was coordinated by the Museum fürkunde Berlin, Germany, and involved 26 European and 2 US institutions including important European natural history museums, botanical gardens, libraries, universities and biodiversity initiatives. The project was funded for 3 years through the European programme eContentplus from May 2009 until April 2012. The main focus of the project was to develop a best practice network, achieve interoperability of existing repositories and to implement technological solutions for search and retrieval and long-term sustainability of digitized objects. The aim of the project was to bring together existing digital collections of biodiversity literature from across Europe and to make that content accessible via a single portal. The BHL-Europe portal formed a regional BHL portal and was also linked to the European Digital Library – EUROPEANA.
ViBRANT: Supporting biodiversity research communities

Virtual Biodiversity Research and Access Network for Taxonomy (ViBRANT) was a European Union FP7 funded project starting in December 2010 and completed in November 2013.

ViBRANT supported the development of virtual research communities involved in biodiversity science. Our goal was to provide a more integrated and effective framework for those managing biodiversity data on the Web.

ViBRANT paved the way towards more interoperable systems and integrated services in biodiversity research. We are already looking into preparing a successor project to support data, processes and communities towards the long term vision of predictive modeling of the biosphere.
EU FP7 Infrastructure projects – Awkward because of commercial aspects
Many data stores – For slides
Many data stores – For code
Many data stores – Github
Many data stores – Contribute, but deleted own github
Data rot – NHM gone, as Drupal migrated
DATA IN SCIENCE

Data rot – OU inaccessible

... Sorry - you are not authorised to perform this operation

Please use 'Back' button and try again.
Data rot – OU gone totally

RefBank

RefBank nodes of the world:

- Plazi - Boston, USA
- ZooBank - Hawaii, USA
- Pensoft - Sofia, Bulgaria (1 100 500)

References stored in RefBank:

1 100 500
That’s how things were…

Delighted (genuinely!) to state that things are different now
ORO, ORDO and Office 365

Less Google Docs and other ad hoc data sharing needed now too

Do these experiences strike a chord?
Four main types of data:

- *observational* (e.g. weather measurements);
- *computational* (e.g. computer modelling or simulation);
- *experimental* (e.g. laboratory studies);
- *records* (e.g. newspapers, photographs, artworks, letters, diaries, books, articles; records of birth, death, marriage; maps)

Scientists generally **create** their own data

Humanities scholars generally **use data created by others**

Plus: “Any record of human experience can be a data source to a humanities scholar”

Minus: records are often constrained by intellectual property and other restrictions
Let’s revisit:

Humanities scholars generally use data created by others

I would argue it depends how you define ‘data’

Francesca can expand on a humanists view on data in a later Data Conversation
THANK YOU!

Download our corpus from ORDO (search for RSVP)
doi: 10.21954/ou.rd.6850865

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