THE CANADIAN COMMITTEE FOR HISTORY AND COMPUTING

CITATION RULES FOR MACHINE-READABLE DATA

These rules were adopted by the *Canadian Historical Association* on June 10, 1994. They have also been adopted by the *Canadian Historical Review* and *Histoire sociale - Social History*.

1.) Goals

The purpose of these rules is to define a method of citation for machine- readable data that provides rules similar to those that apply to traditional sources, in order to adapt the historians' scholarly apparatus to the new kinds of sources used in the process of historical enquiry.

As well, these rules allow for scholarly recognition of the scientific work involved in the creation and distribution of data bases of historical material, as the practice already exists in other disciplines.[1]

Finally, the adoption of these rules will enable researchers to meet the requirements of funding agencies (among which the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada) that data made machine-readable through their funding be made available to the scholarly community.

2.) Three Types of Situation

A. Authors use data bases created and distributed by other scholars, by research organizations or by commercial enterprises. References to such data should be made according to the rules defined below.

B. Authors make use of data that they have made machine-readable and these data are accessible to other scholars, under conditions set by the authors; access is available through the authors themselves or through a third party (traditional archives, data libraries, research groups or other organizations).

    Making the data accessible should be considered a form of publication; data thus "published" are to be cited according to the rule defined below.

    Authors are strongly encouraged to turn over to an organization (department, research centre, archives, or other) the functions of producer and distributor for their machine-readable data, under such stipulations as are agreeable to both parties.

C. Authors make use of machine-readable data in the same way as they do research notes on paper and are under no obligation to make their machine-readable accessible to others.

In this situation authors should make reference to the original sources from which machine-readable notes are made. Any substantial transformation of the raw data are explained, either in the body of the published material or in a note, according to the place taken by such data in the argument presented. For instance, one should explain the method by which occupational titles have been classified into categories.

3.) Citation Rules (2)

As much as possible, the information given in references should be taken from the machine-readable document itself or from accompanying documentation.

1. Author: cite in the usual manner.

2. Title: title of the data file or of the data base,(3) without acronyms.

3. Machine-readable documents: to indicate that the document is machine-readable, write the words "[computer file]" in square brackets without using any acronyms.

4. Statement of responsibility, where applicable: "This indicates the responsibility of the person(s) or corporate body named as principal investigator or of other significant parties, such as the department, funding agency, or sponsoring organization."(4).

5. Edition, series, or version, if indicated.

6. Place of production, name of producer, followed by "[producer]", date of production.

7. Place of distribution, name of distributor, followed by "[distributor]", date of distribution.

8. Collection, where indicated.

9. The following additional information may be added:

a. A brief description of contents, within square brackets, if the title does not give sufficient information on this score.

b. Material designation in square brackets; for instance:

[on-line database]

[magnetic tape]

[floppy disk]

[CD-ROM]

c. If the database is periodically updated, give the date when the database was used.

10. Outline conditions governing access, where applicable.

Some examples:

- Centre interuniversitaire de recherche sur les populations SOREP, Base de données SAGUENAY [computer file], SOREP, Chicoutimi: Université du Québec à Chicoutimi, 1992, [on-line database] accessible for research purposes, subject to approval by the SOREP ethics committee.

- CANSIM University Base [computer file], Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1992 [magnetic tape].

- Science Citation Index [computer file], Philadelphia: Institute for Scientific Information, 1989 [CD-ROM].

- IGARTUA, José E., Base de données MEMBERS2 [liste of members of the Canadian Committee for History and Computing] [computer file] Montréal: Département d'histoire, Université du Québec à Montréal, 1992, [on-line database] accessible through the author upon request.

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Canadian Historical Association
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NOTES

(1) See for instance the "Notice to Contributors" in the *American Sociological Review*, 57, 1 (February 1992): iii-iv.

(2) The citation rules outlined here follow those defined by Terry Cook *et al.*, *Archival Citations: Suggestions for the Citation of Documents at the Public Archives of Canada* (Ottawa: Public Archives of Canada, 1983), 13-14. See also Danielle Thibault, *Bibliographic Citation Guide* (Ottawa: National Library of Canada, 1989), 102-103. One may also consult the rules defined by the *American Sociological Review*, as well as the catalogueing methods used in the *Canadian Union List of Machine Readable Data Files* (CULDAT), produced by Edward H. Hanis and described in Edward H. Hanis, "Reference and User Guide for the CULDAT Information System" (London, Ont.: January 1990). The CULDAT project was sponsored by the Government Archives Division of the National Archives of Canada.

(3) A data base is a set of data files linked together by a logical structure.

(4) Cook *et al.*, *Archival Citations*, 13.

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