

## Editorial: The *FQS* Issue on "Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data"

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Dear Readers,

The issue on [Secondary Analysis of Qualitative Data](#) published today is dedicated to a topic we already dealt with in the first year of *FQS*. [Text](#) . [Archive](#) . [Re-Analysis](#)—*FQS* 1(3)—was an overdue attempt to draw attention to the subject of qualitative archiving, data protection, and secondary analysis. The issue also provided brief descriptions of selected international qualitative archives (see MRUCK, CORTI, KLUGE & OPITZ 2000). [1]

More than four years later, *FQS* 6(1) indicates the important progress in the field of secondary analyses, but also the necessity for further discussion. Many researchers are not sufficiently informed about possible methods and technical means for archiving and secondary analysis. In most countries qualitative data and resource centers<sup>1</sup> do still not exist to support researchers—the British [Qualidata](#), participating in editing *FQS* 1(3) as well as *FQS* 6(1)—is still a prominent forerunner. Also the methodological implications of secondary analyses need to be discussed in more details. This refers to questions of anonymization, confidentiality and ethics as well as to valid, creative and resource saving ways of how to ask "new questions from the old data." Hopefully this new *FQS* issue will deliver additional insights and arouse further discussions (see CORTI, WITZEL & BISHOP 2005 for a first overview). [2]

As with previous issues, in addition to contributions relating to "secondary analysis," *FQS* 6(1) also provides articles that belong to various *FQS* rubrics: The *FQS* Debate on [Qualitative Research and Ethics](#), which began in 2004, received ten contributions from American and Canadian researchers (see ROTH 2004 for an introduction to this debate). Furthermore, *FQS* 6(1) contains three articles, belonging to the *FQS* Debate on [Quality of Qualitative Research](#), and nine new [review notes and review essays](#). [3]

From the current perspective, *FQS* 1(3) was meant to be just a starting point. At the end of December 2000, 33,317 hosts had accessed 374,806 HTML files and 19,638 PDF files; the newsletter, providing monthly information on new articles published in *FQS* had about 600 subscribers. By the end of December 2004, the monthly newsletter had reached 4,700 colleagues; from the very beginning until December 2004, 892,278 hosts have accessed 5,662,255 HTML files and

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1 The question of qualitative data and resource centers will be addressed more systematically in the upcoming *FQS* issue.

downloaded 1,227,746 PDF files from our server. By the end of December 2000, 122 articles had been published in *FQS*—not bad for an electronic scientific journal in its first year. At the time of the 17th *FQS* issue, the total number of articles published is over 600 with authors and readers from all over the world and from various disciplines.<sup>2</sup> [4]

*FQS* became what the journal's name intended in the beginning only programmatically: a true *Forum* for the international qualitative research communities. There are several factors responsible for *FQS*' growth; if we had decided to limit *FQS* to the German language, the journal would have been "closed" to most of our readers. Knowledge from the "outside" would not have reached the German audience and knowledge from German authors would not have reached the international audience in a way it currently does.<sup>3</sup> Being an international scientific journal meant having peer review and copy-editing done by native speakers in three of the *FQS* languages to ensure quality. But having a multilingual team and peer review would not have been sufficient. If *FQS* would have charged for access, especially in the beginning, it would not have been attractive for parts of our international audience to buy a journal coming from Germany; others would not have been able to pay for access. Therefore being a part of the international open access movement—and the increasing impact of this movement—was also important for *FQS*' growth and appeal (see MRUCK, GRADMANN & MEY 2004). Providing *FQS* free of cost means not that publishing is free of cost, so the funding provided by the [Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft](#) helped us to meet the publishing costs.<sup>4</sup> [5]

*FQS* received substantial feedback and response from colleagues all over the world. With that said, I would like to thank you very much for your trust and support during the past years—enjoy reading this new *FQS* issue! [6]

[Katja Mruck](#) on behalf of the *FQS* Editorial Team

## References

Corti, Louise; [Witzel, Andreas](#) & Bishop, Libby (2005). Introduction. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* [On-line Journal], 6(1), Art. 49. Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/1-05/05-1-49-e.htm>.

- 2 Contributors to *FQS* 6(1) included 72 authors from 12 countries. Our monthly newsletter is sent to subscribers in over 100 countries.
- 3 Due to the Ibero American team and supported by some external colleagues in the last months an increasing number of text, only available in the German or in the English language, had been translated into Spanish too. Additionally, the impact of *FQS* contributions in some cases is not limited to their being published in *FQS*, but articles, originally published in *FQS* were reprinted in Czech, German, Japanese, Mexican, and Peruvian (print-) journals.
- 4 During the next months together with our partners—especially the [Center für Digitale Systeme](#) here at the Freie Universität Berlin, the [Social Science Information Centre](#) Bonn, and [German Academic Publishers](#), University of Hamburg—we will create tools to improve the editorial and technical workflow, tools available for re-use for other projects. And we will have to manage some next steps of institutionalization and of institutional cooperation (for example with our Canadian and Mexican partners). We will do our very best to continue to work on tools and models, hopefully helpful also for others to use the potentials of the Internet creatively and without any unnecessary barriers.

[Mruck, Katja](#); Gradmann, Stefan & [Mey, Günter](#) (2004). Open Access: (Social) Sciences as Public Good [32 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* [On-line Journal], 5(2), Art. 14. Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/2-04/2-04mrocketal-e.htm>.

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[Roth, Wolff-Michael](#) (2004). Ethics as Social Practice: Introducing the Debate on Qualitative Research and Ethics [22 paragraphs]. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung / Forum: Qualitative Social Research* [On-line Journal], 6(1), Art. 9. Available at: <http://www.qualitative-research.net/fqs-texte/1-05/05-1-9-e.htm>.

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