

Data Sharing Policies for the Empirical Humanities: the Platform for Experimental, Collaborative Ethnography as Pilot Project

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What is PECE?

- Interdisciplinary team primarily located at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, Troy, New York
- **Primary Goal:**
 - Provide a platform for collaborative and distributed interpretive analysis of qualitative data
- **Pilot Projects:**
 - Asthma Files
 - Disaster STS research network
 - Astroanthro.net
- **Free and Open Source, Drupal CMS-based**

PECE and RDA

- PECE researchers are also active **RDA members**:
 - Digital Practices in History and Ethnography Interest Group
 - Meta-data Working Group (pending)
- **New collaboration** with other RDA groups:
 - Practical Policy Working Group

Challenges

- Collaboration in disciplines that are traditionally defined as “solo” research endeavors
- Data sharing grounded in complex ethical and privacy concerns
- Accommodate different understandings of data, data production, and analysis
- Find researchers in humanities and social sciences with expert knowledge with digital technologies and infrastructures

Platform Design

- **Collaborative:**
 - Organized around groups with data sharing for qualitative analysis
- **Experimental:**
 - Challenges non-collaborative research by offering shared workspaces and shared research tools
- **Open-ended:**
 - Accommodates many research designs through flexible schema
- **Inter-connected:**
 - Semantic layer with RDF and SPARQL

Data Management

- Initial stage of **elaboration**
- **Evaluation** of existing digital platforms
- **Evaluation** of existing tools
- Interviews with **historians, anthropologists,** and researchers in humanities about their **data practices**
- **Practical Policies** for PECE:
 - Structure
 - Availability
 - Preservation

Roadmap

- **Implementation** of research tools:
 - Collaborative writing
 - Collaborative tagging of multimedia
 - Collaborative bibliography management
 - Data Visualization
- **New database back-end:**
 - Migrate from standard SQL to NoSQL
- **Documentation!**
- **Support new adopters**