

Close Encounters of the Fourth Kind: working with alien SPSS files

Outline of presentation for ASSESS 2014, York, 31 October 2014

An alternative working title would be: **Pig's Ears and Silk Purses: working with other peoples' SPSS files** as a follow-up to [Old Dog, Old Tricks](#), my 2006 presentation to ASSESS. Thought about using **Old Dog, New Tricks**, but it doesn't carry the same sense of horror and fun.

Start with a re-run of some of the slides and bits from Old Dog, Old Tricks, but extend to cover recent work on other people's files, including a live demo of Jon Peck's Python code at work. Could also include some **new tricks** and demos of things I didn't know SPSS would do until I tried. Need to think more about this as I haven't used PowerPoint since York 2006, but I have found **[Alt][PrintScreen]** and MS Snip incredibly useful for getting screenshots into Word, and they also copy easily into Ppt. I'll be running SPSS live, drawing on my commentaries based on explorations of one or more of:

British Social Attitudes

[Commentary on SPSS file for British Social Attitudes 2011](#)

[Notes on British Social Attitudes 2004 teaching data set](#)

(as used by [Marsh and Elliott, 2008](#))

Understanding Society

[Commentary on Understanding Society 2010](#)

NORC General Social Survey (GSS)

[Commentary on full NORC General Social Survey 2008](#)

[Commentary on subset of General Social Survey 2008](#)

(as used by [Sweet & Grace-Martin](#))

[Commentary on GSS 2008 SPSS files for Babbie et al](#)

(as used by [Babbie, Halley, Wagner & Zaino](#))

I'm still working on a commentary for the:

[Unrestricted Access Teaching Dataset \(ONS Opinions Survey, Well-Being Module\)](#)

(Data set and user guide originally from [Cathie Marsh Centre for Census and Survey Research, Manchester](#))

The Unrestricted Access Teaching Dataset ([SN7146](#)) contains a selection of variables from the April 2011 wave of the ONS Opinions Survey, Well-Being Module, April - August 2011 ([SN 6893](#)) which in turn is part of the regular [Opinions and Lifestyle Survey](#) run in various guises since 1990 by the Office of National Statistics.

The above links are to critical commentaries (**draft only** at this stage) on page [SPSS files and documentation used for tutorials and exercises](#) of my website.

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SPSS start page: www.surveyresearch.weebly.com/1-survey-analysis-workshop