



ANSS CURRENTS

Anthropology and Sociology Section
of the Association of College & Research Libraries

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Triveni Kuchi



Welcome to new and continuing members of ANSS! I hope this message finds you in good health and spirits! I look forward to working with many of you in the coming months.

As we continue to readjust to cope with COVID-19 and in-person interactions at work, some of us in the path of Hurricane Ida have had a trying beginning to the academic year and are still wrestling with the aftermath of its destruction and flooding. Our thoughts are with all of you.

At our last meeting, we received the sad news of the passing of JoAnn Jacoby in April 2021. She was an active ANSS member and a past chair of ANSS (2006-2007). We will miss her energy and jovial personality. *ANSS Currents* is planning an "In Memoriam" column for JoAnn. Stay tuned for the editor's call for participation to share your memories about JoAnn.

ANSS was established in 1971 and this year we will be celebrating its 50th anniversary. What an exciting and proud moment for ANSS! Thank you to all the previous active leaders who came before us and helped us move forward to reach such an important milestone. I hope we can inclusively celebrate to reach all of our members. I and other ANSS committee leaders will be in touch as more plans emerge in the next few months.

In 2021, ANSS successfully participated in an *On Demand* session at the Virtual ALA Annual Conference 2021. *Confronting the Myth of Neutrality: Academic Libraries, Advocacy, and Free Speech* was co-sponsored with ULS (University Libraries Section) and PPIRS (Politics, Policy, and International Relations Section). Please see the program [details](#) and view the [recording](#). Many thanks to the chairs of the Conference Planning Committee for planning and coordinating this well-received event.

Another important accomplishment comes from the ANSS Instruction and Information Literacy Committee who has completed the sociology companion document for ACRL's *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. The ANSS Executive Committee has approved the document and it now moves forward to ACRL for approval. Congratulations to co-chairs Gina Schlesselman-Tarango and Krystal M. Lewis, and to members of the committee for their creativity, hard work, and dedication to produce such a thorough and useful document.

The pandemic has necessitated it, and we now have connected virtually over the last year and half to continue the work of this section. I would like to reiterate that there are many opportunities and ways to participate and contribute in ANSS. If you already are on a committee, talk with your committee chair and volunteer for virtual work. If you are not currently serving on a committee, please consider joining one. There is always so much to be done in a section such as ours, and your ideas, creativity, and contributions are valued. You will also gain from networking with other professionals with similar interests and make lifelong friends! To learn more about the activities of committees, please review the reports below that provide succinct summaries of activities and exciting projects members have been involved with during this past year. Our current vice-chair, Elizabeth Fox, will be making appointments soon. To volunteer, visit [ALA's volunteer form](#) and select ACRL/ANSS. Please note that you need to be a member of ACRL and ANSS in order to volunteer for this section.

To post a message to ANSS please use ala-acrl-anss@connectedcommunity.org and to communicate with your particular groups use [ALA Connect](#). Please ensure you can access messages posted by members to these channels. The [ANSS website](#) and [ANSS Currents](#) continue to be great ways to learn more about this section's work, projects, and events.

While ALA Midwinter will continue to be virtual meetings for ANSS, I hope to see many of you at the June 2022 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C.

All the best,

--Triveni

PRELIMINARY MIDWINTER MEETING SCHEDULE

2022 *LibLearnX*

Virtual

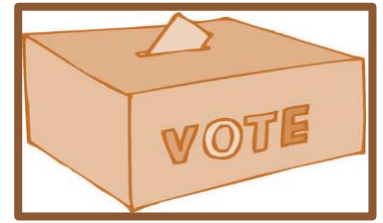
The ALA Midwinter meeting has been replaced by [LibLearnX](#), which will be held virtually. However, ANSS committees can continue as in the past to meet during January or February while avoiding the LibLearnX dates of January 21-24, 2022. Please remember to announce your committee's meeting date, time, and agenda 10 days prior to the meeting and post the meeting minutes within two weeks of the meeting on [ALA Connect](#).

ALA currently plans to hold the 2022 Annual Conference in person in Washington, D.C. There is a survey out to groups to gather more information at this time. Please stay tuned for more information later in the year.



UPCOMING ANSS OFFICE ELECTION INFORMATION

The ANSS Nominating Committee has been busy developing a slate for the section's officers. These positions will appear on the ACRL ballot for the elections that run from March to April, 2022. The candidates' biographical information is listed below in a random order.



VICE-CHAIR/CHAIR-ELECT

Jessica Hagman

Social Sciences Research Librarian & Assistant
Professor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

I joined ANSS upon beginning a new role as the Social Sciences Research Librarian at the University of Illinois in 2019, a move which meant my disciplinary focus changed from communication and media-related disciplines to anthropology, sociology, and geography. Before joining ANSS, I served in several leadership roles in RUSA RSS, including as chair of the PR & Marketing for Reference Committee and the secretary of the Executive Committee.

I have been delighted to find that the committees and discussion groups of ANSS are welcoming and productive spaces where new and experienced members of the profession can come together to share ideas and build structures that support our work with those in anthropology and sociology.

Since joining ANSS, I have been a member and co-chair of the Instruction and Information Literacy Committee. This committee has spent recent years developing Framework companion documents in sociology and criminology and will soon take on the work of an anthropology-focused companion document. Even as a member new to the work of the committee, it has been clear to me that past and current members of the committee have addressed one of the major challenges that come with work in professional organizations: maintaining consistent progress toward goals, even as membership has changed and new challenges have arisen. In addition to working with the IIL Committee, I've served as the co-convenor for the Sociology Librarians Discussion Group, which brings together information professionals working in sociology to discuss issues such as feedback for the proposed

Framework companion document in sociology and how our instructional work can be inclusive of multiple ways of developing new knowledge.

Reading through the committee reports and issues of *Currents*, it is clear that much valuable work happens across the section and through members' engagement with the anthropology and sociology disciplines. I have benefited tremendously from my membership in ANSS as I've transitioned to social sciences librarianship and would welcome the opportunity, as your Vice Chair/Chair Elect, to support fellow information professionals who work in anthropology and sociology through continued engagement with new, potential, and long-term members of the section.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Krystal Lewis

Information Commons Librarian, DePaul University

Thank you to the Nominating Committee for inviting me to run for the Member-at-Large position in ANSS. I'm excited at the prospect of serving the section, promoting its work to support librarians in the disciplines, and bringing new members to ANSS.

I'm the liaison to the anthropology, criminology, sociology, and social work departments at DePaul University in Chicago. When I began, I had little previous experience with these disciplines, so I joined ANSS in 2014 in hopes of learning from other liaison librarians. I had previously been involved with the ACRL Instruction Section and benefited tremendously from the connections I made and from exchanging new ideas and best practices with instruction librarians nationwide. Knowing the support the Instruction Section provided me, I first attended ANSS discussion groups, then joined the Instruction and Information Literacy Committee in 2015. I served on the committee for six years, co-chairing it the last two years, while we

researched, drafted, and revised three disciplinary companion documents to the Framework for Information Literacy. I'm proud to have been a part of the development of the Framework for Information Literacy in Sociology and for moving it through the approval process.

Since I joined ANSS, members have been friendly and welcoming and I would like to help provide a similar experience for new, returning, and potential members. Both early career and experienced librarians have unique perspectives and expertise to contribute to ANSS and I want to ensure that they join and remain members. I am committed to creating a diverse and inclusive section which promotes continuous learning and examines issues of importance to anthropology, sociology, and criminology librarians. In addition, I would welcome the opportunity to work with the Executive Committee to advance the goals and objectives of the section in any capacity needed. I'm grateful to be part of an engaging community of knowledgeable librarians and information professionals and I'd be honored if you would consider me for the position of ANSS Member-At-Large.

MEMBER-AT-LARGE

Rebekah J. Lee

Branch Manager & Senior Librarian, Collin College, Technical Campus

Thank you for the opportunity to run for the position of Member-At-Large with ANSS. I am currently in my third semester for my doctorate degree in sociology at Texas Woman's University. My goal is to eventually teach Introduction to Sociology and Sociological Theory in addition to my work as an academic librarian. I am passionate about the importance sociology plays in our understanding of our communities. I believe that it is through this study that we can begin to understand how to unify society and look for opportunities to address many of the sociological issues we currently face. Librarians are uniquely placed to help disseminate information to others and increase our communication overall. If elected to the position, I would look for

innovative ways to increase membership, as well as opportunities for the committee to contribute to the discipline on a scholarly level through publication.

New Virtual Workshops from ACRL

Bring robust online learning directly to your library, chapter, or consortium with ACRL's virtual Off-RoadShow workshops! Led by expert presenters over multiple days, these online workshops are based on our popular in-person RoadShow workshops and support academic library professionals in tackling the greatest issues facing the profession.

Current virtual workshops cover topics including: [open educational resources and affordability](#); [using the Standards for Libraries in Higher Education to communicate your library's impact](#); [engaging with the ACRL Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education](#); and [building your research data management toolkit](#).

[Schedule a virtual workshop](#) for your library or organization today. Organizational members of ACRL receive a 10% discount off the hosting cost!



COMMITTEE REPORTS

CONFERENCE PROGRAM PLANNING COMMITTEE – WASHINGTON, D.C., 2022

Carolyn Caffrey Gardner and
Melissa Hackman, Co-Chairs



This year our program is being proposed as a collaborative presentation with the Women and Gender Studies Section (WGSS). Together, we are putting forth a conference proposal on how social justice aims can be fostered through critical classification practices. We imagine that this session will be of interest to librarians at all experience levels who do information literacy, reference, and/or metadata work. Panelists will discuss how cataloging is not a neutral process and the ethical implications of categorization for people and identities. They will also speak to putting critical cataloging into action in a variety of settings, and conclude with the future of ethical cataloging and classification.

INSTRUCTION AND INFORMATION LITERACY COMMITTEE

Gina Schlesselman-Tarango and Jessica Hagman, Co-Chairs

The ANSS Instruction & Information Literacy Committee continued its revision process for the [Framework for Information Literacy in Sociology](#) (FILS) throughout the 2020-2021 academic year and presented the latest draft to the ANSS Executive Board at the 2021 ALA Annual meeting. The board endorsed the changes, and the FILS has now been passed along to the ACRL Information Literacy Frameworks & Standards Committee, which will either approve the document or return it to the committee for further revisions.

The committee is also continuing its work on drafting the Framework for Information Literacy in Criminology (FILC) and hopes to send the document to the ANSS Executive Board in Fall 2021 for initial review, after which point it will be distributed broadly to librarians, faculty, and other stakeholders for additional feedback.

Finally, the committee plans to chart a path forward for the Framework for Information Literacy in Anthropology (FILA) during the 2021-2022 academic year. The FILA will be the third and final disciplinary companion document to the Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education that the ANSS Instruction & Information Literacy Committee will produce. The co-chairs heartily thank the many committee members involved over the years who have put much time and effort into these multifaceted projects!

LIAISON COMMITTEE

Tom Diamond, Chair

The Liaison Committee did not conduct a meeting during the virtual ALA Annual meeting. The committee did not fill the liaison vacancy for the Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences. For fiscal year 2022, Celia Emmelhainz will continue as the American Anthropological Association liaison and Christine Slaughter as the American Sociological Association liaison. The Liaison Committee would like to thank Jylisa Doney for her work in serving as the committee chair.

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Hailey Mooney and Jylisa Doney, Co-Chairs

The Membership Committee held a virtual ALA Annual meeting and social event on June 22, 2021. It was a pleasure to spend some time connecting virtually with ANSSers at the social event. We played an amusing competition bracket game to determine the top-ranked snack food in our group. Veggie sticks won the day! Admittedly there was some confusion between whether the snack food in question was Veggie Stix (the potato-based crunchy snack food in a bag) or actual cut-up fresh vegetables. Those in favor of veggie sticks as the winners were voting for the fresh variety. We're a healthy bunch. We hope you'll join us at our next social for more fun and games, and the opportunity to get to know one another better. Looking ahead, we will be discussing and planning virtual and/or in-person socials depending on the current environment.

Our committee meeting was brief, especially given that ACRL had not yet provided new membership statistics. We now have that data to report: As of May 2021, ANSS had a total of 597 members, slightly less than our membership in May 2020 (612 members). In May 2021, 13 new members joined ANSS, 18 members renewed, and 5 members reinstated. Student membership in May 2021 (140 members) was higher than in May 2020 (124 members), while regular membership in May 2021 (359 members) was lower than in May 2020 (380 members). In the coming year, the ANSS Membership Committee will continue exploring ways to recruit and retain ANSS members.

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Steve Rokusek, Chair

The Publications Committee, co-chaired by Steve Rokusek and Mimmo Bonanni, held a virtual meeting on July 27, 2021. Webmaster Nidia Banuelos provided ANSS website statistics, noting that from February 22 to July 27, 2021 the site received 1,906 views. This number was lower than expected, although this might be because users are still visiting the old website instead. Jennifer Joe, who is in charge of social media, reported that ANSS has 848 Facebook followers (slightly down from December) and 256 Twitter followers (slightly up from the previous period).

Mimmo announced that he is rolling off the Publications Committee after five and a half years, and is therefore stepping down as *Currents* editor. Sarah Dahlen is the new editor, a position she takes on after serving several years as a co-editor. This is Sarah's first issue as editor, and we look forward to the exciting changes she will implement over the next several years.

With his departure from Publications, Mimmo has also stepped down as co-chair of the committee and Steve will serve alone as chair. Mimmo will continue to be involved with ANSS in other capacities. We thank Mimmo for all of his great work with Publications over the years, and wish him the best.

RESOURCE REVIEW AND BIBLIOGRAPHY COMMITTEE

Tom Durkin and Virginia Pierce, Co-Chairs

The Resource Review and Bibliography Committee (RRBC) met for the Annual Virtual Meeting via Zoom on June 17, 2021. Regular members in attendance included Laura Berberian, Jylisa Doney, Tom Durkin, Rosalind Fielder-Giscombe, Wade Kotter, Virginia Pierce, and Nikki Tummon. Members discussed Tom Durkin's recent review of the *SAGE Research Methods* database, which was published in the Spring 2021 issue of *ANSS Currents*. The group agreed that the review process had gone smoothly.

Future resource review ideas were also discussed, including a potential review of the *ProQuest Criminal Justice Database*, a roundup of three to five mini reviews of open access resources which could be achieved by contributions from several committee members and other interested individuals, and a review of *Annual Reviews*. Members also considered soliciting reviews from the ANSS member community and how they might spread the word that the RRBC is seeking resource reviews. In July, the committee sent out a call for resource review articles to the ANSS community through [ALA Connect](#). This call solicited interest from an author who is planning to contribute an article for review in September.

We said goodbye to outgoing chair Nikki Tummon whose term ended on June 30. Thank you, Nikki. It has been a pleasure to work with you. The committee welcomed new co-chairs Tom Durkin and Virginia Pierce who will serve for the coming two years. RRBC will have another virtual meeting in January 2022 to plan for the Spring 2022 issue of *Currents*. Contact RRBC Co-Chairs, Tom Durkin (thomas.durkin@wisc.edu) or Virginia Pierce (vpierce@statelibrary.sc.gov) if you have any questions.

SUBJECT AND BIBLIOGRAPHIC ACCESS COMMITTEE

Carolyn McCallum, Chair

On June 21, 2021, the Subject and Bibliographic

Access Committee (SBAC) met virtually for ALA Annual. Committee members brainstormed and scheduled topics for Cataloging Q&As for the remaining months of 2021. Forthcoming topics to be investigated include: Library of Congress subject headings (LCSH) used for works about monuments, statues, and memorials; the Cataloging in Publication (CIP) program; LCSH used for works on traditional folk music or subject headings used for ethnic studies databases; and LCSH used for works on historic

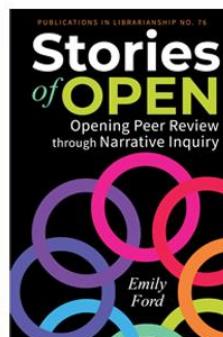
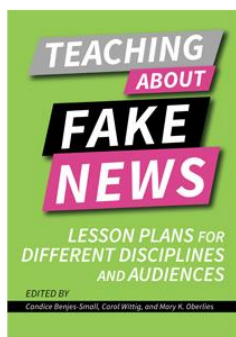
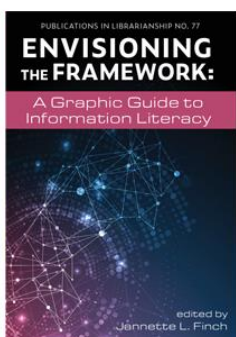
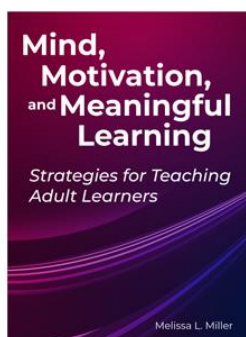
buildings. Recruitment of new members to the SBAC was discussed, and potential outlets to promote the SBAC and advertise for new members were identified. Before the meeting adjourned, the committee decided that Carolyn McCallum would continue as chair for another year.

ACRL BOOKS

ACRL publishes a range of books to assist academic librarians in developing their professional careers, managing their institutions, and increasing their awareness of developments in librarianship, providing timely, thought-provoking, and practical content and research to academic and research librarians worldwide. Some recent titles:

- [Mind, Motivation, and Meaningful Learning: Strategies for Teaching Adult Learners](#)
- [Envisioning the Framework: A Graphic Guide to Information Literacy \(ACRL Publications in Librarianship No. 77\)](#)
- [Teaching About Fake News: Lesson Plans for Different Disciplines and Audiences](#)
- [Stories of Open: Opening Peer Review through Narrative Inquiry \(ACRL Publications in Librarianship No. 76\)](#)
- [The Teaching with Primary Sources Cookbook](#)

Interested in writing for ACRL? Contact Erin Nevius, ACRL's Content Strategist, at enevius@ala.org for more information, or visit www.ala.org/acrl/publications/publishing to learn more about our book publishing program and submit a proposal.





DISCUSSION GROUP REPORTS

ANTHROPOLOGY LIBRARIANS DISCUSSION GROUP

Jenny Innes and Erica Carlson Nicol, Co-Conveners

For a long time now, the Anthropology Discussion Group has brought in guest speakers to present to the group and spark discussion. This has led to some highly interesting and productive meetings, but now your co-conveners would like to shift directions to a model that focuses more on conversation between group members. The hope is to create opportunities for colleagues to connect with each other as they engage in lively discussion.

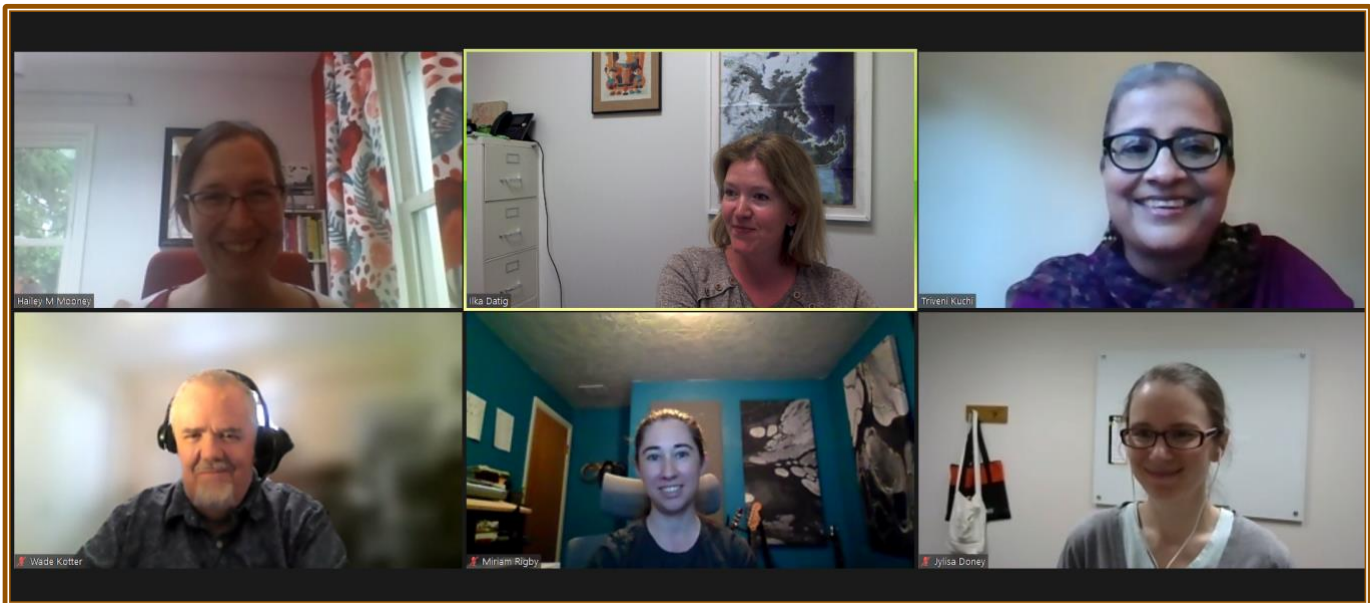
In order to make future discussion group meetings as meaningful and relevant to group members as possible, we are seeking feedback from Anthropology Discussion Group members (and potential members!) about their interests and ideas for future discussions. If you have questions, interests, or ideas about anthropology collections, outreach, library instruction, or future directions in anthropology research, we would love to hear from you! Please take a moment to fill out our very brief [Anthropology Discussion Group – Future Topics survey](#). We greatly appreciate your feedback and suggestions.

SOCIOLOGY LIBRARIANS DISCUSSION GROUP

Stephanie Crowe and Jessica Hagman, Co-Conveners

The Sociology Librarians Discussion Group convened on June 21, 2021 to discuss the role of sociology librarians and information literacy instruction in addressing an “emancipatory sociology,” the theme of this past year’s American Sociological Association meeting. The group discussed the ways in which sociology librarians might integrate the ACRL Framework, and the new Framework for Information Literacy in Sociology, into regular information literacy instruction for sociology classes. We also talked about knowledge created in academic contexts versus alternative viable epistemic paradigms, and how we as librarians should acknowledge the ways we seek, acquire, and process information that lie outside the academic sphere. Finally, the group had a conversation about how much of sociology begins with the mundane, how students often have trouble moving from something they are interested in (for instance, reality television) to a “problematization” of that topic for developing a research question, and how we as educators might encourage students to fully explore these interests.

ANSS SOCIAL



This year's ANSS Social was held virtually on June 22, 2021. Participants included (top left to bottom right) Hailey Mooney, Ilka Datig, Triveni Kuchi, Wade Kotter, Miriam Rigby, and Jylisa Doney.

PROJECT OUTCOME

Project Outcome is a FREE online toolkit designed to help libraries understand and share the impact of essential library programs and services by providing simple surveys and an easy-to-use process for measuring and analyzing outcomes. Participating libraries are also provided with the resources and training support needed to apply their results and confidently advocate for their library's future. Project Outcome's standardized surveys allow libraries to aggregate their outcome data and analyze trends by service topic, program type, and over time. Sign up today at <https://acrl.projectoutcome.org/>.

project | **OUTCOME**
MEASURING THE TRUE
IMPACT OF LIBRARIES



RESOURCE REVIEWS

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FREE TOOLS FOR QUALITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

Reviewed: August 2021

Introduction

Researchers across anthropology and social sciences disciplines frequently use qualitative data in a wide range of research projects and paradigms. Qualitative data is loosely structured, and requires the researcher to engage multiple analytical strategies in order to develop an interpretation of the data. There are a number of tools for analyzing qualitative data, but proprietary tools are often cost-prohibitive for new researchers or those without robust research funding. This review provides an overview of some alternative software options for qualitative data analysis (QDA) that are either free-to-use or open source. While not exhaustive, this guide provides a basic introduction to five open source or free-to-use options.

Using Software in Qualitative Research

While not all projects require the use of software for analysis, programs for analyzing qualitative data offer a number of benefits for researchers. Perhaps most importantly, the software facilitates the mechanical tasks of analysis, potentially leaving the researcher with more time to engage in conceptual work (Silver & Lewins, 2014). Instead of marking up paper or cutting and sorting paper documents, the researcher can organize and analyze digital files and more easily pull together linked data. This may also facilitate projects that use larger amounts of data or that use non-text formats.

Features and capabilities vary across software programs, but some frequently deployed strategies that can be conducted using QDA software are listed here:

Manual coding

Researchers can select segments of the data and assign a code or tag. A major benefit of software use is that codes can be re-named, combined, split, or re-arranged as the researcher moves through the research process, making their analysis less dependent on labels they developed early in the process.

Automatic coding

Some tools allow researchers to search text data for matching text strings or formatting in order to automatically tag data segments. Researchers using transcripts of interviews or focus groups may be able to format their documents in a way that allows for the contributions of each speaker to be automatically coded.

Memo or writing tools

Qualitative researchers are often encouraged to document their developing interpretation of the data. Memoing or comment features allow researchers to collect these writings in the project file and even link memos to specific segments of the data.

Variables

While qualitative work draws largely on unstructured data, researchers may want to incorporate categories into their analysis. For example, by including data about the site where data is collected, researchers can then compare data for participants from different research sites to assess similarities or differences across groups.

Post-coding analysis

Some tools offer researchers advanced analysis features for working with coded data, such as code co-occurrence reports or matrix views of data across codes or categories. These tools support researchers as they move beyond coding to develop a bigger-picture understanding of the data.

Maps

As researchers develop an understanding of what they see in the data, they may find it valuable to map relationships among project elements. Some tools include the ability to create maps that are linked back to the original data.

Collaborative analysis

Many research projects are now shared among research teams. Software programs may allow researchers to work on separate files that are merged together. Or, cloud-based programs may permit researchers to work on the same data file that is stored online.

Critiques of Software Use in Qualitative Research

QDA software has not been universally embraced by those who work with qualitative data. While some researchers are content to continue with manual methods of analysis or to use non-QDA-specific software for analysis (see Ose's (2016) description of using Word and Excel documents for an example of this process), there have also been a variety of critiques of software use in general. One major complaint has been that the use of software distances the researcher from their data, which is problematic for methods that emphasize the researcher's close reading and analysis. Critics have also contended that using software has the potential to standardize methodological approaches, to dehumanize analysis in a way that is counter to the goals of qualitative research, and to encourage the quantification of qualitative data in cases where quantification is not relevant to the research paradigm (Jackson, et al., 2018).

Ultimately, whether or not software leads to the feared outcomes depends on the practice of the researchers and their understanding of how the use of the software *supports* their intended methodology and analysis plan. Novice researchers may not always receive sufficient training on the use of software for their analysis in their graduate programs or through the campus research data infrastructure (Schmieder, 2020). Software use also tends not to be described in detail in published research (Paulus, et al., 2017), leaving those new to the use of tools in a situation where they have to develop an analysis strategy that draws on both their developing methodological knowledge and their understanding of the tools available.

QDA Software Programs

There are several dedicated qualitative data analysis software (QDAS) programs that have been built with the intention of analyzing qualitative data. Popular, proprietary tools include NVivo, MAXQDA, and Atlas.ti. While these programs are powerful, there are significant limitations on access given that single-user licenses can cost hundreds of dollars. While cost may be mitigated by university-purchased licenses, reduced fees for student licenses, or lab-based access, the fact remains that access to such tools will continue to remain out of reach for many researchers, especially students, who lack robust research funding. In recent years, we have seen the development of cloud-storage based QDAS that are more affordable and offer a monthly subscription option rather than a single license purchase, such as [Dedoose](#), [Quirkos](#), and [Delve](#). In addition, a new data standard has been developed to facilitate the transfer of codebooks and full project files between programs (Rotterdam Exchange Format Initiative, 2021).

Fortunately, there are also a number of free-to-use and open-source options, though their capabilities vary and are not suitable for all situations. This review offers an introduction to multiple free-to-use and open-source tools for QDA. The review addresses only software that has been developed specifically for the use of QDA, rather than software that has been re-purposed for QDA, such as when researchers use word processing programs or spreadsheet software to complete their analysis.

The programs reviewed include (in alphabetical order): CATMA, QCA Map, QDA Miner, QualCoder, and Taguette. For each program, I provide a brief overview of the creators, how the tool is accessed, and the available support for using the tool. I then describe the data and analysis capabilities for the program, noting any limitations or particularly important features.

Reviews are based on my experiences working with qualitative data as both a teacher and researcher. At the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Library, I teach qualitative workshops in the Savvy Researcher workshop series, which includes workshops on free tools for QDA. During the Spring 2021 semester, I co-taught a doctoral course on the use of software in social sciences and education research, where we explored QDA software capabilities and the use of Taguette. The screenshots included here show example projects using transcripts and recordings of interviews from my own research project around data literacy in a qualitative context.

CATMA

[CATMA](#), is an “undogmatic tool for text analysis and markup,” sponsored by the German Research Foundation as part of their [ForText project](#). The creators draw from the idea of hermeneutic interpretation, which views the analysis process as a circle of movement between understanding the text as a whole and looking closely at individual parts of the text. The creators emphasize that the software does not intend to impose any specific approach to analysis on the project, but instead offers users the ability to build their own schema for analysis.

CATMA is an entirely web-based tool, with data uploaded to servers at the University of Hamburg and “public cloud servers” [per the project FAQ](#). The software should be available to anyone with a major web browser and internet access (though not on touch screen devices). While they describe robust data backup procedures, users are also encouraged to download project files or create clones via Git, an open-source system for version control. The software contains four different modules in which users can manage the project and files, create and edit tags and tagsets, mark up and annotate the text, and analyze the text and coded data using queries.

The features of CATMA are powerful, particularly the ability to conduct text queries and to develop tags with properties and values. However, compared to an option like Taguette, CATMA is not as easy to get started. A lead

researcher or instructor would likely have to spend time teaching novice researchers about the software architecture before diving into analysis.

The CATMA website includes [tutorials](#) on the use of the software as well as documentation on the [use of queries](#), a [glossary of terms](#), and a [compact manual](#). Support is available [via email](#). The project has a [German Twitter account](#) as well as [a newsletter](#).

Data capabilities

CATMA works only with text files, which can be uploaded from the user's device or captured from the web by inputting a URL. Multiple documents can be uploaded at once, and the researchers can add metadata and descriptive data for each file through the data upload wizard. As in other tools, PDFs are converted to plain text, which can lead to formatting problems that may make annotation difficult. Annotations for each document can be exported to a TEI-XML file for use in other programs. The results of queries can be exported to CSV files.

Analysis capabilities

Coding of text in CATMA is done through the annotate module (see Figure 1). Instead of directly annotating the uploaded file, however, the researcher creates a set (or multiple sets) of annotations for each document. Tags are created in tagsets, either in the tags module, or during the process of annotation. Each tag can have both subtags as well as properties/values, which allow for more fine-grained markup of the text. To view data for each tag, the researcher uses a query in the annotation module.

In the analyze module, researchers can use queries to see data associated with each tag, as well as conduct searches for data that match specific criteria. For example, in the example shown in Figure 2, I have conducted a search for the phrase "information literacy" and can see all of the matches for this phrase across the documents in the project in the KeyWord in Context visualization. From this view, I could annotate the results of the search, which can serve as a method of auto-coding query results. The results can also be exported to a CSV file for further analysis. The analysis features are a powerful addition to this open-source tool, but I spent quite a bit of time figuring out how to use the different analysis features and would expect to spend more time if I were to use these tools for a full project.

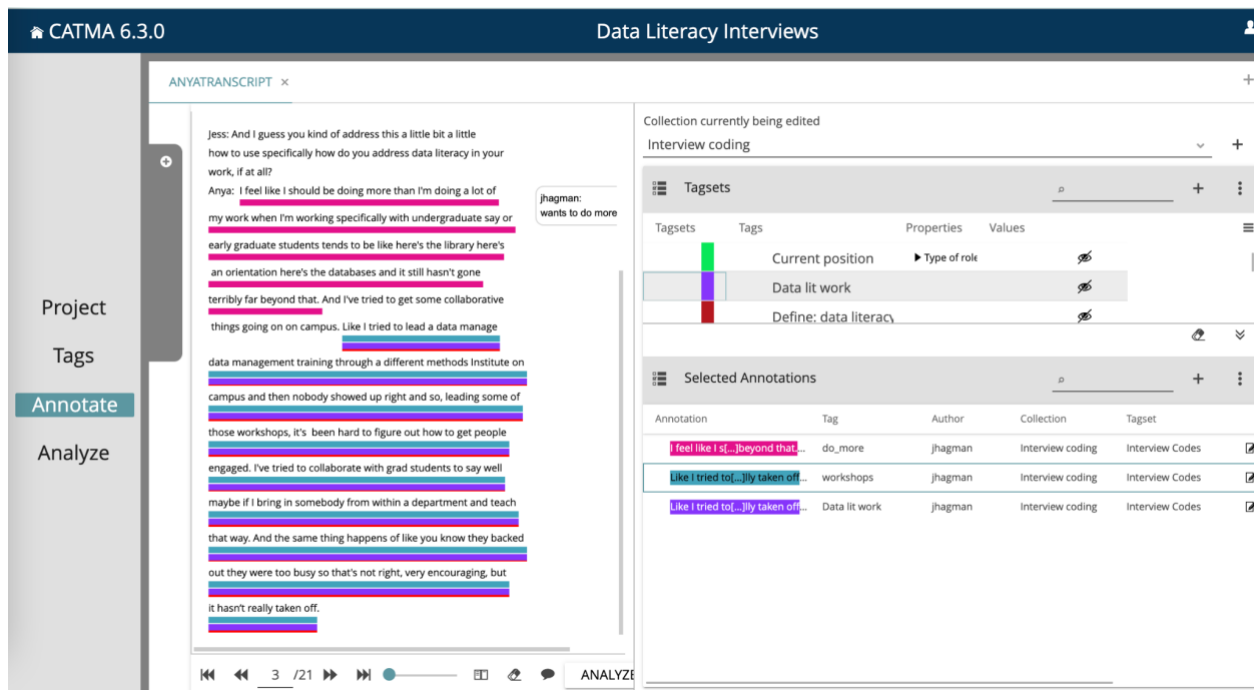


Figure 1: CATMA annotate module, showing an annotation in progress for an interview transcript

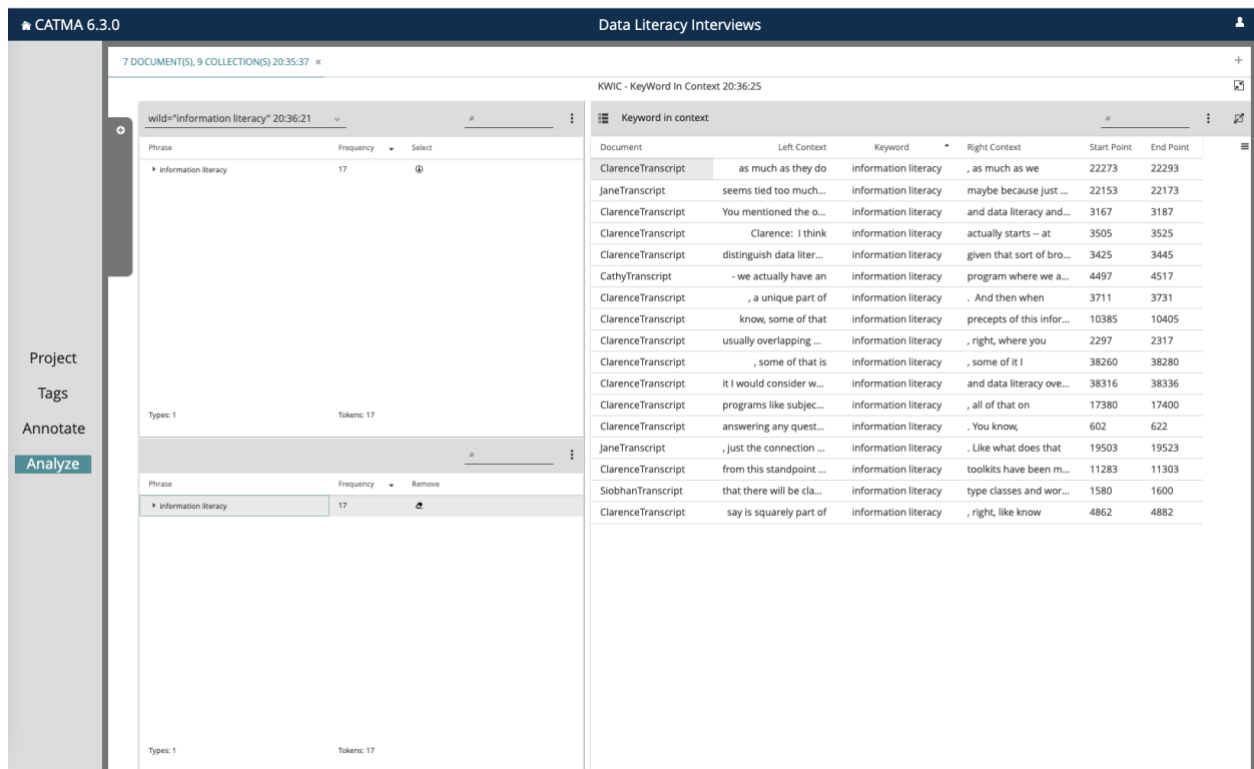


Figure 2: CATMA analyze module showing the results for a query of the phrase "information literacy"

CATMA is a collaborative software tool, with five different [levels of permissions](#) for each user, ranging from owner to student. The student level is intended for use in a research seminar or workshop, which allows for multiple accounts to be created simultaneously, as described in the [typical seminar workflow](#). CATMA does not automatically synchronize changes for all project users, however. Each user works on their own copy of the file until their changes are committed to the project, which can be done manually or automatically when the file is closed.

QCAmap

Unlike the other tools described here, [QCAmap](#) is intended to be used with a specific methodology: qualitative content analysis (QCA). QCA is a highly systematic approach to “describing the meaning of qualitative data” (Schreier, 2014, p. 171). Conducting QCA requires following a set of steps laid out by Mayring (2000), one of the developers of QCAmap (in collaboration with Thomas Fenzl and Florian Letz).

QCAmap is web-based, and should be accessible across devices and browsers. While QCAmap offers a [privacy policy](#), it is not clear where any uploaded data will be located. The program itself advises that data be anonymized before uploading. This lack of detail may pose a problem for those with specific data security requirements for human subjects research or working with sensitive data.

Documentation is available in the form of a PDF handbook, and there are some details on the steps of the QCA methodology embedded in the program itself. Help is available via email.

QCAmap is no doubt a useful tool for those who wish to follow the step-by-step process of conducting QCA, but effective use is likely to require at least some understanding of the logic that underlies the methodology. Researchers not using QCA should expect to spend some time adapting the tool to fit alternative methodologies.

Data capabilities

Users can upload text (including DOCX files) and image files (JPG, PNG and GIF) to QCAmap, with a noted size limit of 5MB. PDFs cannot be uploaded.

Analysis capabilities

QCAmap is structured in line with the QCA methodology. Users are required to indicate a specific research question and the “content analytical technique” (inductive category formation, deductive category formation, or summarizing) that researchers will use to answer the question (see Figure 3). Once the research question requirements have been addressed, users can code their data. Under the QCA methodology, coding is conducted for all documents for an articulated research question and then closed for further analysis (see Figure 4). Once the initial stage of coding has been completed, researchers can use the analysis feature to build conceptual “main categories” and export the text associated with each category.

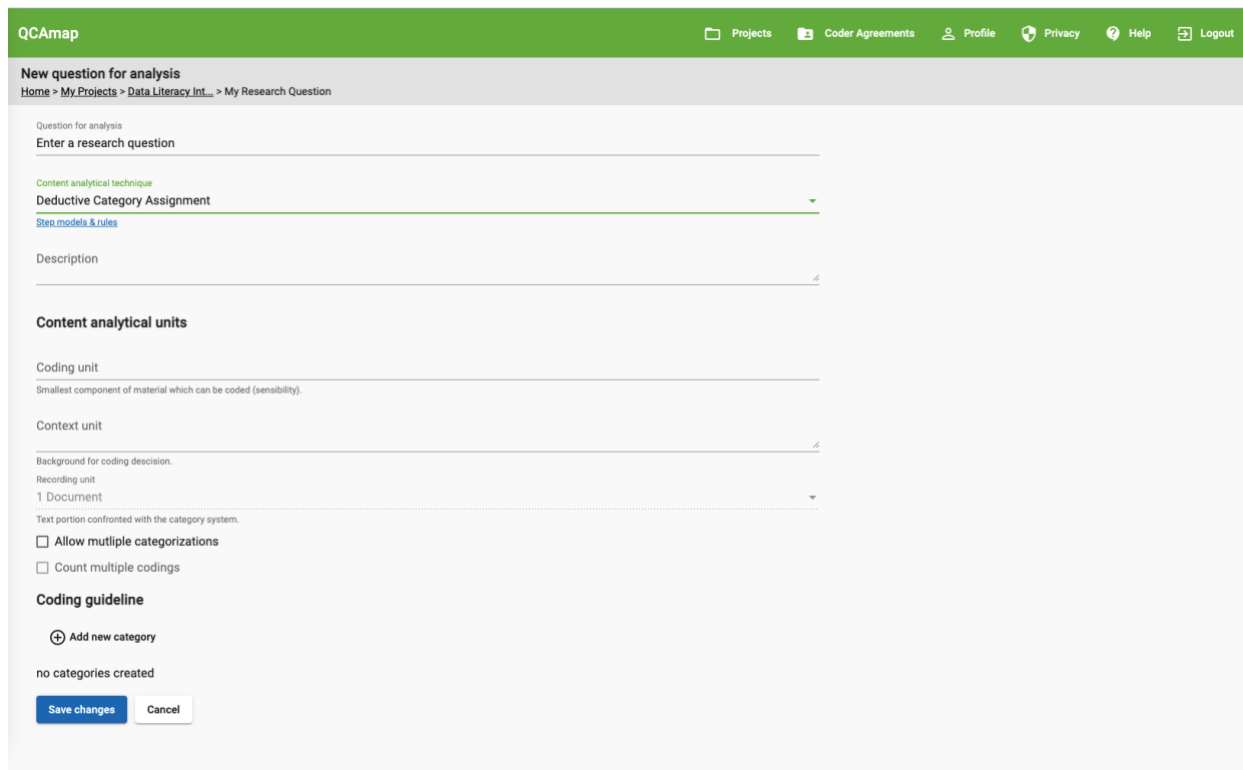


Figure 3: The research question page in QCAmap, showing the directions for conducting deductive category assignment

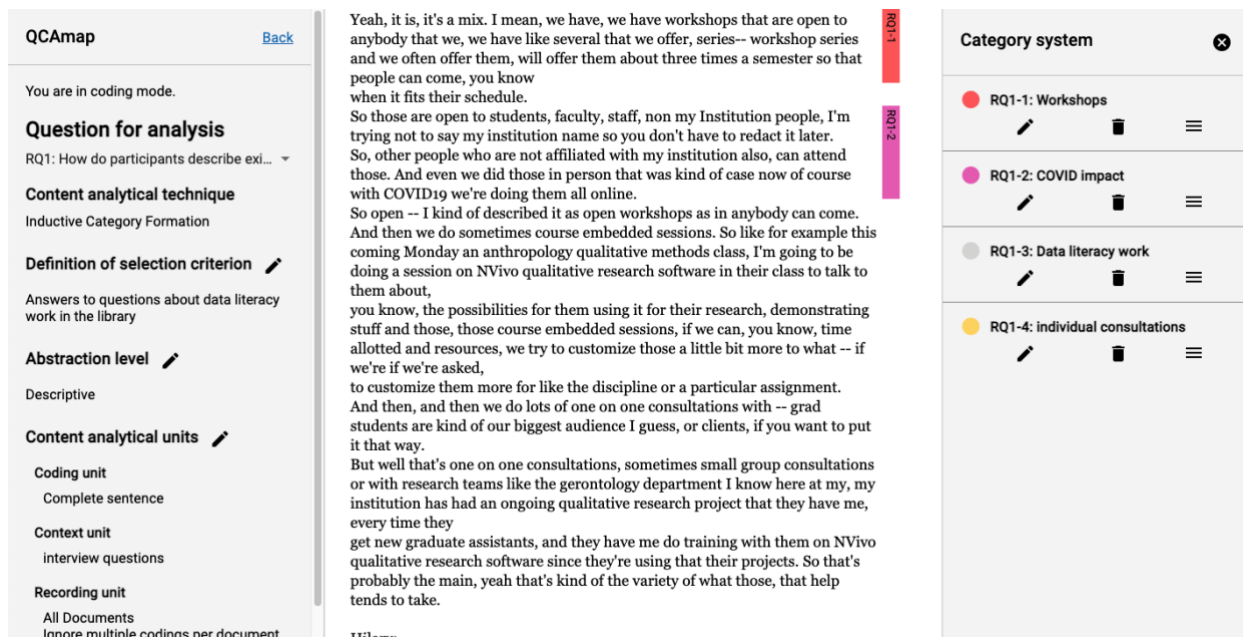


Figure 4: The coding mode screen in QCAmap, showing directions for analysis and the category system on either side of the text

QCAmap does allow collaborative analysis. Team members can be added with either read-only or editing access rights. The software also includes the ability to conduct coding comparisons with other project users, to assess the level of agreement in coding.

QDA Miner Lite

QDA Miner Lite is a free-to-use limited version of Provalis Research's QDA Miner. The Lite version of QDA Miner has fewer features than the full version, but offers sufficient tools to complete a research project. QDA Miner is part of Provalis' suite of text analysis and statistical analysis software. QDA Miner Lite is a PC-only program, with the software installed directly on a device and data remaining in the location specified by the user.

The interface for QDA Miner is somewhat dated and cluttered, which may prove to be a challenge for new users. However, Provalis offers manuals, video tutorials, and a user forum (via LinkedIn). The company also provides updates on their suite of products via their Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Data capabilities

With QDA Miner Lite, researchers can analyze text, spreadsheet, and image files, as well as convert NVivo project files to a version that works with QDA Miner. Files are linked with cases, which can have attributes that allow users to explore data for different groups of participants (or other units of analysis).

Coded documents and report tables can be exported to many different formats including spreadsheets in Excel and CSV. This exporting will support sharing the results of analysis for further work with the data outside of the program.

Analysis capabilities

Coding in QDA Miner Lite is straightforward, though it may be unclear at first that new codes must be placed in a category before they can be created. Coded text can be displayed with a single highlighted color (as shown in Figure 5), but the user has the option to change the display so that coded text is dimmed, hidden, displayed normally, or the text color can be changed to the color linked to the code.

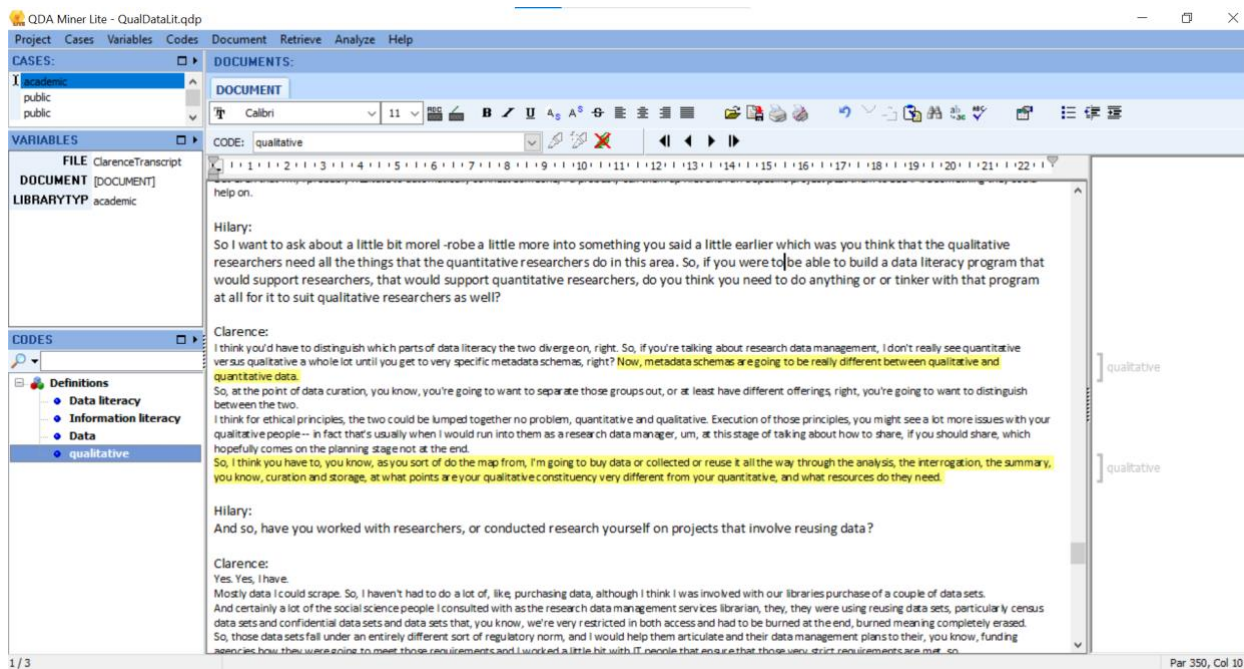


Figure 5: The coding screen in QDA Miner Lite. Coded text is highlighted with applied codes appearing in the right sidebar.

The text retrieval feature adds the ability to search for text across documents and automatically add codes to paragraphs or sentences that match the search (see example in Figure 6). When searching, users can specify whether they want to locate only data that is uncoded or already coded with a specific code or group of codes. This specificity allows for more fine-grained auto-coding than other options described here, and facilitates methodologies that call for all of the data to be coded.

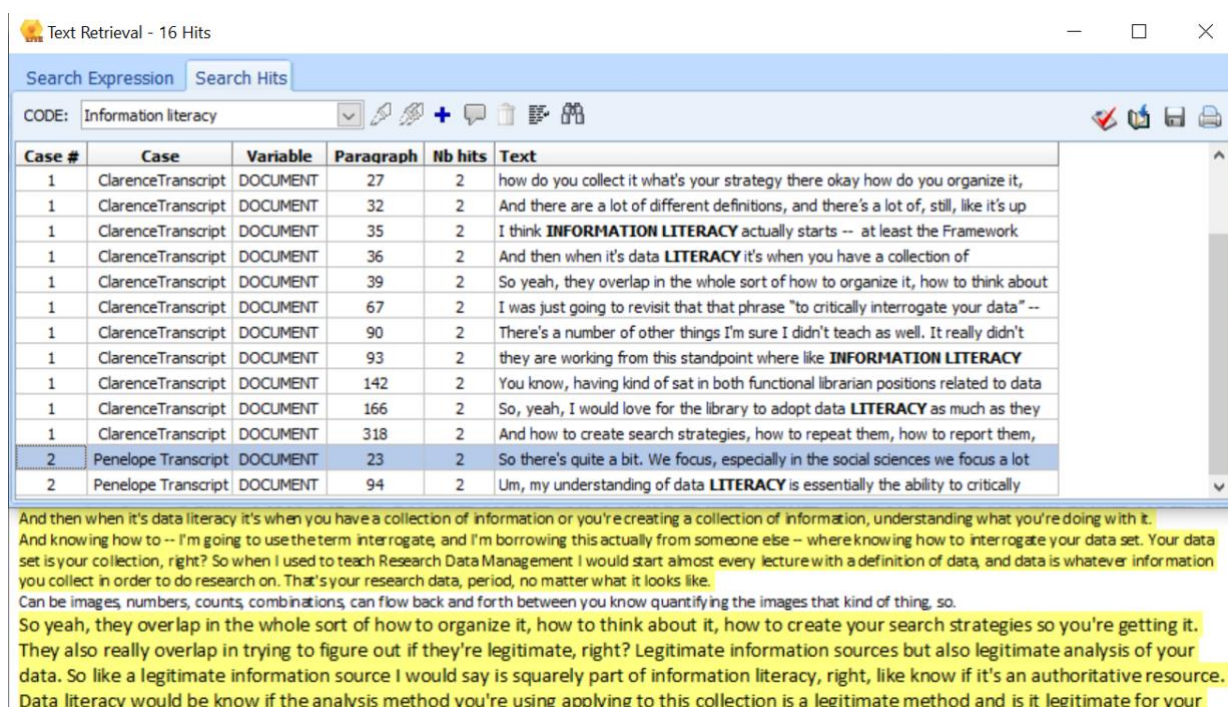


Figure 6: The text retrieval screen in QDA Miner Lite, showing the search results for the phrase "information literacy"

QualCoder

[QualCoder](#) is an open-source program developed by Colin Curtin of the University of Tasmania. The program is based on the Python programming language and can be installed on Windows, Mac, or Linux devices by downloading files from [GitHub](#). Installation is more involved than with other downloadable programs, particularly for using the program on Mac devices. Curtin provides instructions for each type of device and has recently improved the Windows installation process by developing an executable file that installs all of the needed Python modules. This installation process may be beyond the comfort level of some users, however.

Curtin has provided detailed documentation on installing and using the program on a [GitHub wiki](#) and in a PDF manual that downloads with the program. Curtin has also recently developed videos that can be seen [on the project blog](#). Problem reports can be shared via [GitHub issues](#).

Given the extensive features detailed below, QualCoder will be a valuable tool for those who can overcome the initial hurdle of installation and are comfortable with a program that is still under development. Many of the features in QualCoder will be recognizable to those who have used proprietary QDA software programs, particularly NVivo.

Data capabilities

Researchers can use QualCoder to analyze text, image, and video files. As in other programs, PDFs are converted to plain text and may lose the formatting of the original file. Video and audio files can be directly coded using identified segments within the media file, or a transcription can be linked to the video file and the text directly coded. QualCoder can also export and import .qdc codebook files, with full REFI-QDA project import and export to other programs that use this standard available as an experimental feature.

QualCoder includes a case feature, which allows researchers to link uploaded files to a unit of analysis, such as a participant. Cases can be created manually or by uploading a survey file (in CSV or Excel format). Cases can have attributes, which function as variables and can facilitate comparison among groups of participants (or other units of analysis).

Analysis capabilities

QualCoder's analysis capabilities are extensive. Coding is relatively straightforward, with coded text clearly marked in the document (see Figure 7). Codes can also be automatically applied to a single word or phrase as well as any full sentence that contains a word or phrase. In the example coding report in Figure 8, I have automatically coded all sentences that mention the NVivo software. In addition to coding documents, researchers can add annotations directly to text and add memos to coded text.

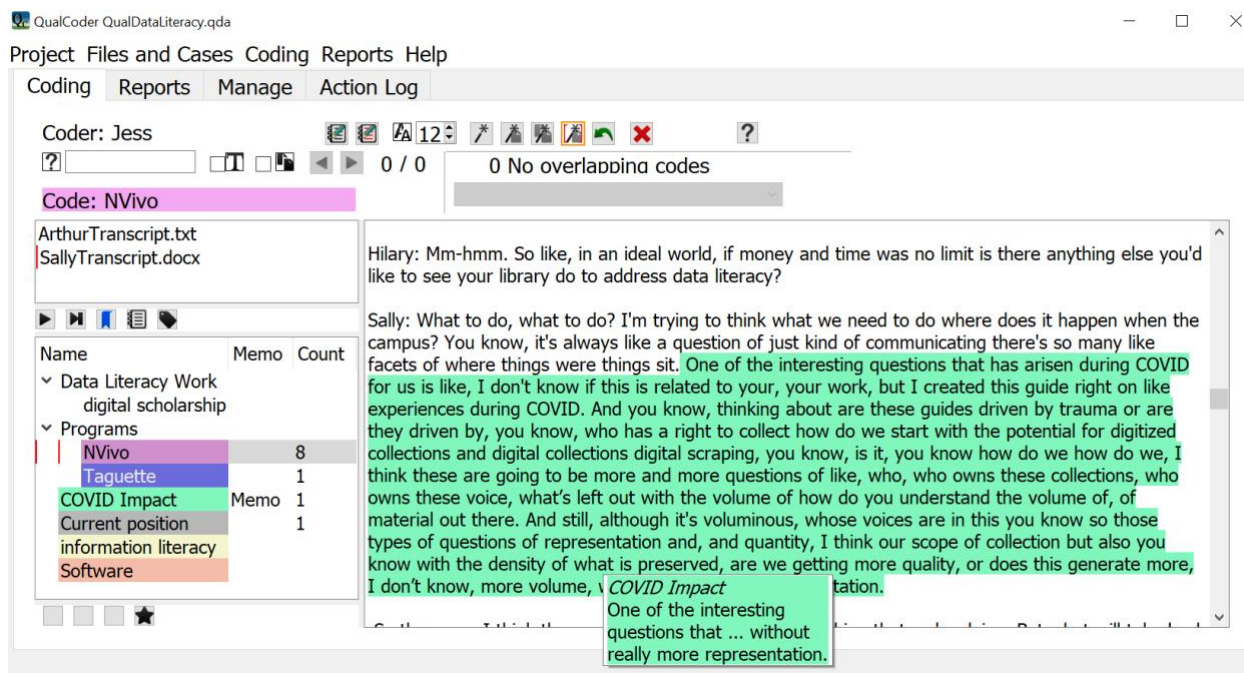


Figure 7: The coding screen in QualCoder, showing a code about the impact of COVID-19 applied to interview text

Once data has been coded, several [reports](#) are available to show how codes have been applied across the project file. A coding report shows the data linked to each code (see Figure 8), while a code frequency report can provide counts for each code, broken out by the user who applied the code. QualCoder even includes a node graph report that visually displays the relationship between codes. All of these features support researchers as they take their analysis beyond coding the data to building a comprehensive understanding of how the data relates to their research questions.

QualCoder can also be used collaboratively. Users can change their coder name in the preferences which then associates their activity with the name of the new coder. I was able to place a project folder in a Box folder and open the project on both a Mac and PC device, even running different versions of the software. A coding comparison report calculates the percentage of agreement for different coders, which can be used to assess the consistency of coding across project members.

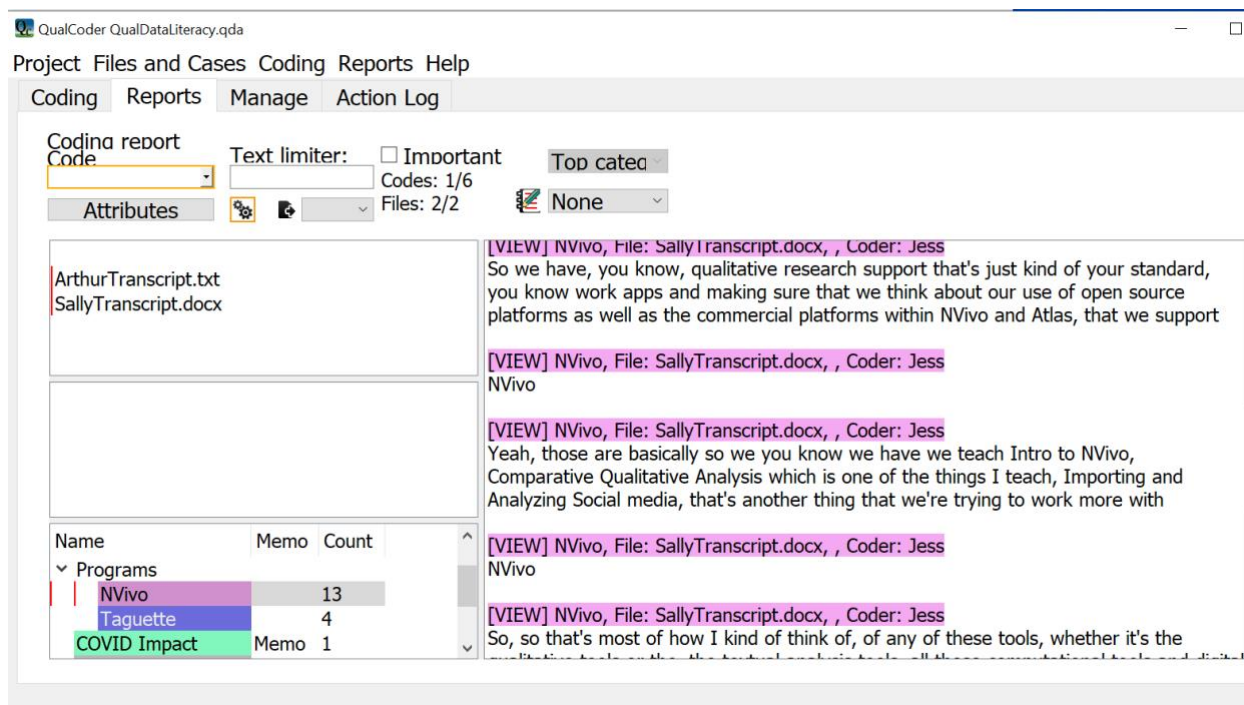


Figure 8: Coding report screen in QualCoder, showing the text linked to the code NVivo

Taguette

[Taguette](#) is an open-source tool that can be installed on Mac, Windows and Linux devices, or on your own server. This local installation option is valuable for data protection, as you have control over the security of the data on your own device or server. You can also use the program on Taguette's servers.

Taguette is developed by Rémi Rampin, Vicki Rampin, and Sarah DeMott. Support for Taguette is available through their [introductory guide](#), [mailing list](#), and bug reports on [GitLab](#). Updates on the tool are shared via the mailing list and through the [Twitter account](#).

Of the tools described here, Taguette is the easiest to get started uploading and coding data. It is an excellent tool for text-based projects where researchers are working with small amounts of data, need to get started quickly on their analysis, or need a simple way to collaboratively code and analyze documents.

Data capabilities

Taguette works only with text files, but several different types of formats are accepted (.pdf, .docx, .txt, .odt, .md, or .html). PDFs will be converted to plain text upon upload, which can make the file difficult to code if the file includes formatting such as columns. Taguette allows both the import and export of codebook files in the .qdc format, which means that researchers could develop a codebook in another software program and then upload to Taguette. Entire projects can also be exported and imported into another Taguette account or instance (such as moving from the Taguette-hosted version to a version hosted on your own server).

Analysis capabilities

Taguette's main capability is coding text through the use of highlights and tags (see Figure 9). Tags can be created before or during the coding process, and it is simple to select text and apply a tag. Once data has been coded,

researchers can view and export all of the highlights associated with each tag (Figure 9) or review and export a single document to show how it has been coded. Within a coded document in Taguette, all of the highlighted segments are yellow. It is currently not possible to assign colors to each tag, which may be a limitation for researchers who rely on color codes to review coded documents (see Figure 10).

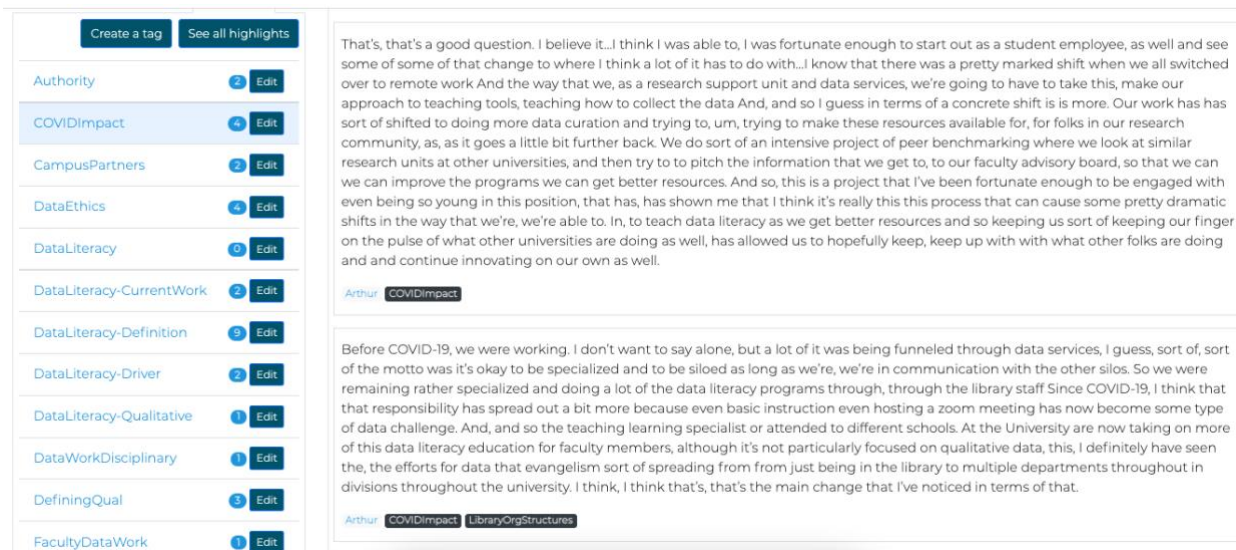


Figure 9: Viewing highlights for a single tag in Taguette

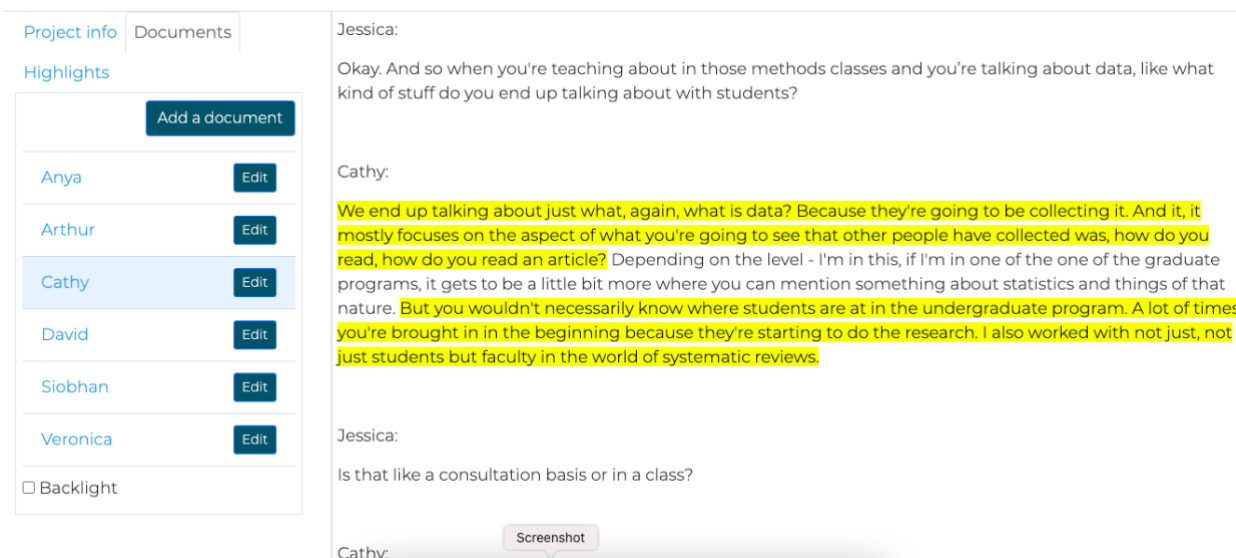


Figure 10: An open document in Taguette in the process of highlighting and tagging

One of the strengths of Taguette is the ease of collaboration on server-based projects. Project owners can easily add anyone with a Taguette account to the project, at one of four permission levels from full permission to view-only. This ease of collaboration would make Taguette a useful tool for introductory methods courses where students and instructors need to work together and share their analysis process.

Given the export features, researchers may find it valuable to use Taguette in combination with other QDA software or with other tools that support their analysis. For example, by exporting highlighted text to a spreadsheet format, researchers could then use Excel or [Google Sheets](#) to compare coding across team members, conduct word frequency counts, or use graphing features to visualize coding counts.

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