# Introduction to the analysis of social connections data

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# Introduction to the analysis of data on social connections

1)	Studying social connections
2)	Practical issues (i):  Dealing with microdata on social connections
3)	Models for individual level outcomes
4)	Association models
5)	Network analysis
6)	Practical issues (ii): Software

## 1) Studying social connections

#### Social connections matter!

- Form of the social structure
  - Structural homophily in occupations, education, etc

[Laumann & Guttman 1966; McPherson et al. 2001]

- Mechanisms of social inequality & social structure
  - Attainment
  - Intergenerational transmission

[e.g. Bourdieu 1984; Devine 2004]



Some images of elite and popular contemporary British culture...!



### Studying social connections?

- Many research methods have been 'individualist'
  - In statistical analysis & explanatory frameworks
- To study empirical data on social connections...
  - Individualist approach: Use data about the alter(s) to inform analysis of the individual
  - Structural approach: Use data about the connections to inform understanding of the structure
  - Today's examples feature both, but mainly we look at two examples of structural analysis using 'network analysis' and 'association modelling'
- In empirical social research...
  - Abundance of large scale, accessible, microdata on social connections
  - Social connections are central to interesting social trends, e.g. in social mobility; homogamy; family relationships; etc
  - In some scenarios, e.g. social history, data on social connections is one of few things recorded on a large scale

# A wider context may be the central interest when studying social connections

- Individuals (nodes) and their attributes
  - David goes skiing with Nick and George
  - George got his job because of friendship developed when skiing with David
- A context in which the individuals operate
  - Firms; Schools; Political organisations; ...
  - Firm A staff have links with B but not C
  - School A is better because its pupils form less isolated social networks

# Occupations, stratification, & personal networks

Analysis of personal connections between occupations helps us to understand both the structure of social stratification, and the mechanisms by which it is generated/sustained

- (1) Broad stability in occupational orders ('Treiman constant') [Treiman, 1977], but some interesting change across countries/time [Lambert et al., 2008]
  - ...changes across contexts which effect social relations of occupations include...
    - Occupational segregation by gender (and ethnic group)
    - Educational expansion & industrial restructuring
    - Changing institutions (e.g. 'key linking occupations')
  - ..can study social positions of occupations (revealed by personal connections),
     not their objective qualities [e.g. Bottero et al., 2009, cf. Rose and Harrison, 2010]

# Occupations, stratification, & personal networks

Analysis of personal connections between occupations helps us to understand both the structure of social stratification, and the mechanisms by which it is generated/sustained

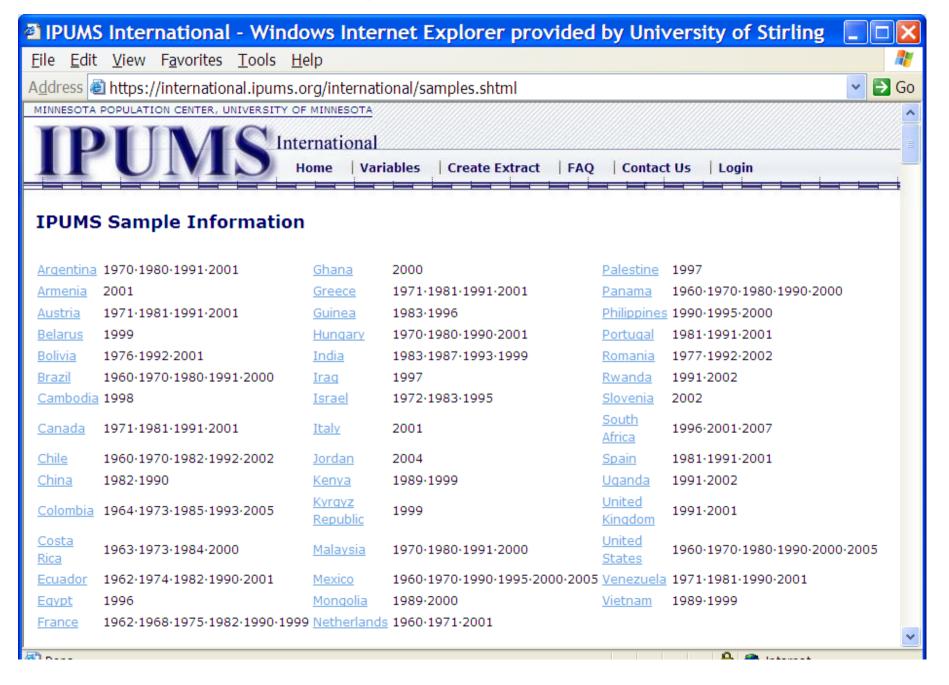
- (2) Exploring interpersonal 'inheritance' in occupations and in stratification advantage/disadvantage
  - Strong empirical trends of occupational homogamy/endogamy [Brynin & Ermisch,
     2008] and inter- and intra-generational stability [e.g. Breen, 2004]
  - The 'principle of kinship' [Young, 1958]
    - Share socio-economic resources: parents/children; spouses; wider family connections; friends
    - Lifelong values and aspirations [e.g. Devine, 2004]
    - Parents use their networks to help their children find work [Jaeger and Holm, 2007]

# 2) Practical issues (i): Dealing with microdata on social connections

Many contemporary (and historical) sources feature microdata on socially connected individuals

- Data on one case plus proxy data on another
  - Friendship/social mobility surveys
  - Social capital surveys
- Data on more than one socially connected case
  - Household sampling survey / census
  - Administrative source or other by-product (e.g. tax and occupational registers; parish registers; genealogical data)

## ..family connections data..



### ..family connections data...

- Complex survey designs measure various connected occupations (e.g. BHPS indvs/hhlds over time)
  - Connections between multiple interviewed adults (e.g. previously coresident siblings now living apart)
  - All interviewed adults also give retrospective data on their parents' occupations and their best friends' occupations

[Lambert and Gayle, 2008] ->

		BHPS Wave 15 (2005)	ID`s/PGP	PGP/HH
			Adult intrv.; em	numerated
Household	НН	Within a wave, all living in same building who share meals or living room	1.80; 2.50	1.00; 1.00
All waves household	XH	All living in any HH's to have shared ID's in any previous wave	2.17; 2.93	0.85; 0.83
Longitudinal	LH	For one selected individual, all indv's who currently share the HH (for w15)	1.80; 2.50	1.00; 1.00
Household	LH	(for w1-15 at w15)	16.4 (min 1, max 61)	0.07 (= 1/15)

# Microdata on households and/or other social connections

- Complex contemporary surveys with longitudinal and household designs often allow interlinking of extra data [e.g. Hill et al. 2000]
  - Current household sharers
  - Previous household sharers (& their new alters)
  - Questions on friends or other alters

	pi d	year	hi d		sppi d	age	sex	educ4	mcamsi s	hl ghq1
3.	10029133	1991	1002449		10029168	29	2. female	2	52. 5	8
4.	10029133	1992	2002019	0. spouse	not in hh	30	2. female	2	52. 1	11
5.	10029168	1991	1002449	·	10029133	38	1. male	. m	38. 1	. m
6.	10040331	1991	1003372	0. spouse	not in hh	38	<ol><li>femal e</li></ol>	1	•	. m
7.	10040331	1992	2002086	0. spouse	not in hh	39	2. female	1	•	8
8.	10040366	1991	1003372	0. spouse	not in hh	20	2. female	2	•	6
9.	10040366	1992	2002086		not in hh	21	2. female	2	•	8
0.	10040404	1991	1003372		not in hh	18	2. female	2	•	4
1.	10040404	1992	2002086	0. spouse	not in hh	18	<ol><li>femal e</li></ol>	2	•	3
2.	10040439	1992	2002086	0. spouse	not in hh	16	1. male	1	•	14
3.	10042571	1991	1003569	0. spouse	not in hh	59	1. male	1		11
4.	10043691	1991	1003658	0. spouse	not in hh	70	2. female	1	25. 6	13
5.	10047069	1991	1003933	-	10047093	30	1. male	3	•	19
6.	10047069	1992	2002507		10047093	31	<ol> <li>male</li> </ol>	3	•	8
7.	10047093	1991	1003933		10047069	29	2. female	2	•	22
8.	10047093	1992	2002507		10047069	29	2. female	2	•	31
9.	10048189	1991	1004026		10048219	47	<ol> <li>male</li> </ol>	. m	38. 9	. m
Э.	10048189	1992	2002728		10048219	48	<ol> <li>male</li> </ol>	. m	36. 3	. m
1.	10048219	1991	1004026		10048189	43	<ol><li>femal e</li></ol>	1	43. 5	7
2.	10048219	1992	2002728		10048189	43	2. female	1	43. 5	14
3.	10048243	1991	1004026	0. spouse	not in hh	21	2. female	3	43. 5	7
4.	10048243	1992	2002728		not in hh	22	2. female	3	43. 5	10
5.	10048278	1991	1004026	0. spouse	not in hh	19	2. female	3	34. 4	14
6.	10048278	1992	2002728	0. spouse	not in hh	20	2. female	3	34. 4	10

### ..friendship data..

Pattern*	Cum.	Percent	Freq.
1	24. 98	24. 98	10309
11. 111	37. 99	13. 01	5369
. 1	50. 26	12. 27	5066
	60. 12	9. 86	4071
	67. 70	7. 58	3127
	71. 41	3. 71	1531
	74.88	3. 47	1431
1	78. 28	3. 41	1406
11	81. 23	2. 95	1218
(other patterns)	100.00	18. 77	7746
XX XX. XXX		100.00	41274

- University of Oxford, & Oxford Social Mobility Group (1978). Social Mobility Inquiry, 1972 [computer file]. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], SN: 1097.
- Blackburn, R. M., Stewart, A., & Prandy, K. (1980). Social Status in Great Britain, 1974 [computer file]. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], SN: 1369.
- University of Essex, & Institute for Social and Economic Research. (2009). British Household Panel Survey: Waves 1-17, 1991-2008 [computer file], 5th Edition. Colchester, Essex: UK Data Archive [distributor], March 2009, SN 5151.

# Data on occupations and personal networks is abundant...

Finally, in this section I have a few questions about your friends.

47. First of all can you think of the people with whom you are most friendly. I am interested in their occupations. Will you think of one of them and give me his occupation?

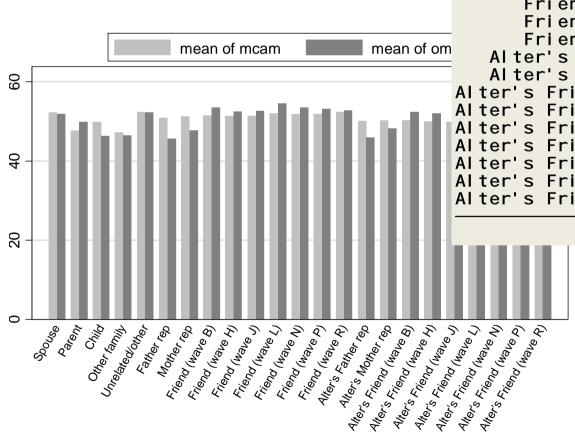
Is he a relative?

Is he a workmate?

Can you give me the occupation of another?

38-41				d	md so on	un	tıl respor	ıder	ıt has gıı	ven	four friends	40	
70 41	1.	Mule	Actual	1	Μα <u>φ</u> Terminal	રૂ	Relative	1	Workmate	١	Close Friend See Q. 48,50		
		Female	_	3	Temale	4.	not	0	not	0	1st = 1   2nd = 2		Social
	Occupation										neuther = 0	ļ	
Le2-6					_ <del></del> P							5م	Status in Great
	Type of Employer											4 (-	Britain (1074)
47-50	2.	Hale	Actual	1	Hale Terminal	2	Relative	I	Workmate	1	Close Friend See Q. 48,56	<u> </u>	(1974)
		Female	_	3	Temale.	4	net.	0	1 not	0	j		
	Occupation												
51-5						-	Jop					<b>ح</b> ود اد	13

# BHPS own, family & friends' jobs



Alter's relation to	sex
ego	1. male 2. female
Spouse Parent Child Other family Unrelated/other Father rep Mother rep Friend (wave B) Friend (wave H) Friend (wave J) Friend (wave L) Friend (wave N) Friend (wave P) Friend (wave P) Alter's Father rep Alter's Father rep Alter's Friend (wave	58, 561       58, 374         21, 029       15, 972         16, 308       19, 657         8, 063       6, 614         4, 079       3, 829         22, 674       22, 732         12, 841       14, 066         9, 525       10, 335         8, 458       9, 031         10, 709       11, 619         9, 947       10, 541         7, 085       7, 934         6, 150       7, 219         3, 676       4, 238         45, 590       41, 846         28, 551       25, 826         21, 481       19, 375         24, 785       22, 599         30, 902       28, 240         35, 537       32, 498         30, 446       27, 585         35, 912       32, 814         28, 843       26, 512
Total	481, 152 459, 456

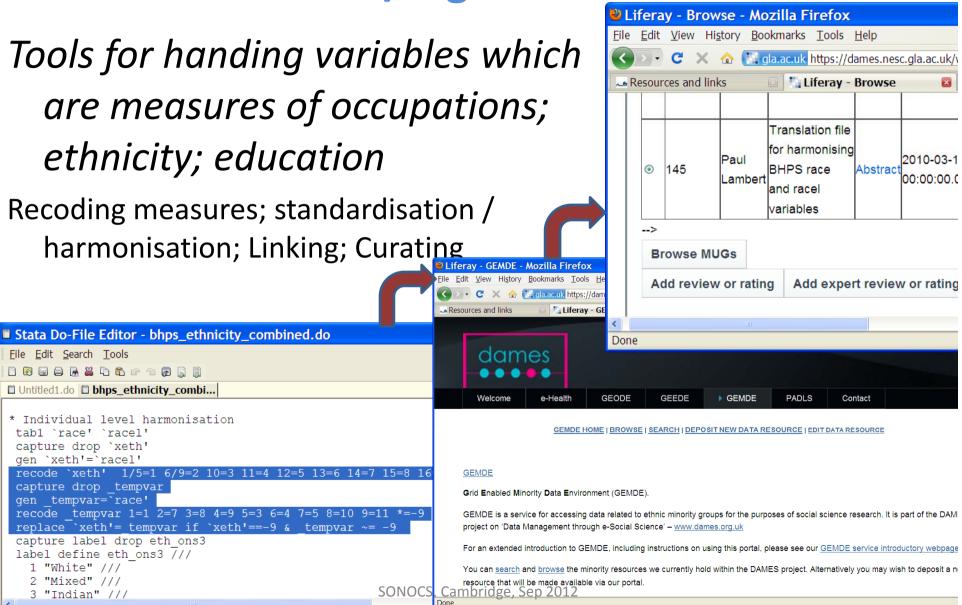
### A major challenge concerns 'data management'

- 'the tasks associated with linking related data resources, with coding and re-coding data in a consistent manner, and with accessing related data resources and combining them within the process of analysis' [...www.dames.org.uk..]
  - Usually performed by social scientists themselves
  - Most overt in quantitative survey data analysis
    - 'variable constructions', 'data manipulations', 'linking datasets'
    - navigating abundance of data
  - Usually a substantial component of the work process

#### Inroads in two areas...

- ➤ Exploitation of software and construction of replicable documentation (see later)
- ➤ Taking advantage of existing metadata / disseminating new metadata

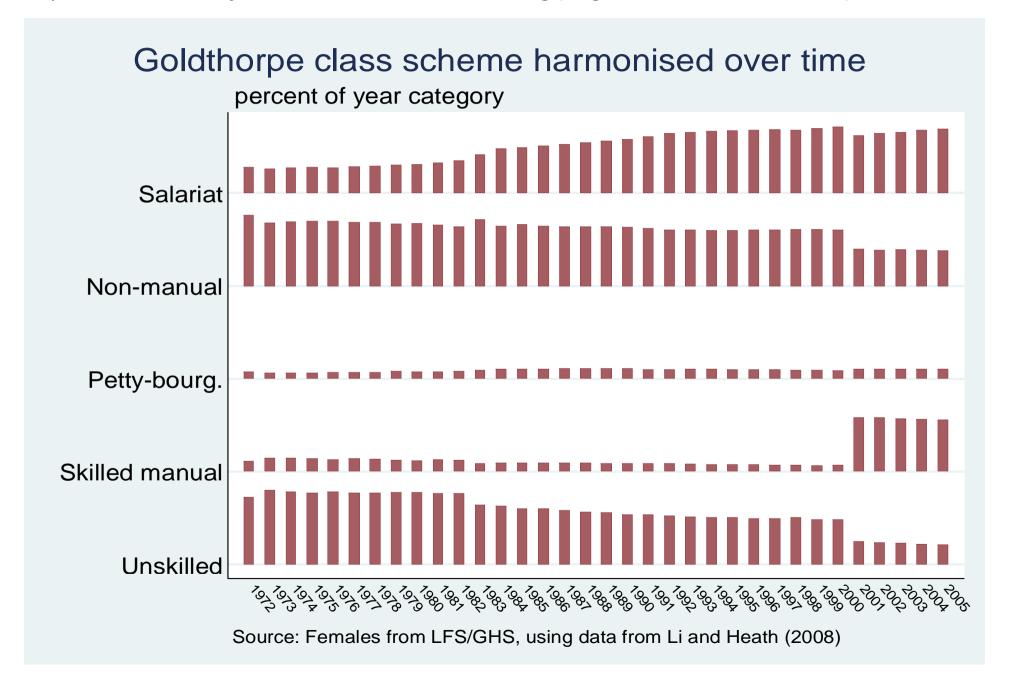
# DAMES 'GESDE' tools: online services for data coordination/organisation



#### 'Variable construction' issues affect all data...

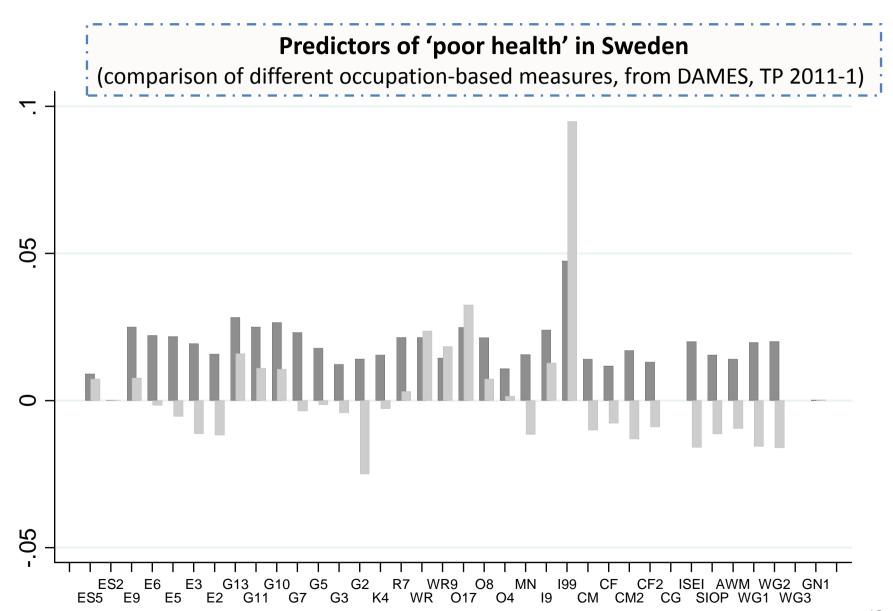
- Major part of the hands-on work of empirical data analysis
- Central to many critiques of research/outputs
- Existing reflections and resources
  - Methodological comments [e.g. Stacey 1969; Burgess 1986]
  - Validity and reliability; harmonisation and standardisation efforts
  - Cross-nationally comparative research into 'equivalence'
    - [e.g. Hoffmeyer-Zlotnik and Wolf 2003; data provider's such as <a href="www.ipums.org">www.ipums.org</a>; www.europeansocialsurvey.org]
  - Attention to variables is marginalised in methodological reviews, which focus on data and/or techniques [cf. Raftery 2001]
  - Reviews/resources on variables often don't give good advice to those conducting complex statistical models of social processes
    - Univariate perspective
    - Inconvenient functional form (sparse and complex categorical measure)

Here, measurement equivalence is compromised by administrative errors, & meaning equivalence is doubtful due to industrial restructuring (orig. occ. codes not available)





Increase in BIC



# Some themes on data issues for social connections data

- Very large scale of some datasets
- Many alternative existing/shared coding schemes
- Problematic aspects of data on social connections:
  - Asymmetry (e.g. far more farmers-farmers than any other connection) (esp. for less industrialised societies)
  - Diagonality (e.g. many cases are in the same category as their alter, which effects statistical analysis)
  - Risk of measurement error (e.g. in census datasets there are many connections to 'teachers' which we suspect are parents or governesses; and many 'connections' between professional jobs and housekeepers/servants)

# We'll now turn to three ways of analysing social connections between units...

- 3) Modelling (e.g. random effects; fixed effects)
- 4) Social Interaction Distance analysis

Variables

✓ hocc

Wocc

🗸 ahaae

gwage

qhaqesd

qwaqesd

🗸 haqe

freq

Variable

5) Social Network Analysis

Variable Information:

513 513. Personal care and related workers

515 515. Other personal services workers

522 522. Shop salespersons and demonstrators

613 613. Ornamental and other plant growers

516 516. Protective services workers

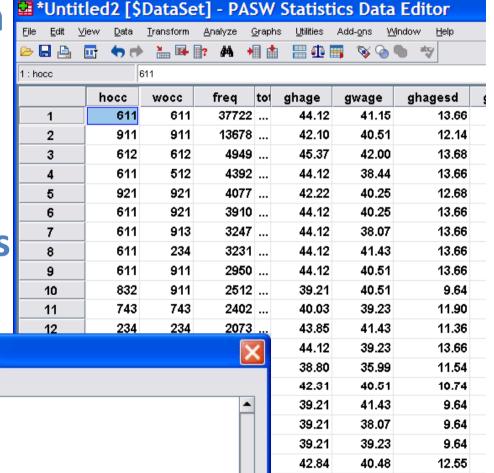
523 523. Stall and market salespersons

521 521. Fashion and other models

611 611. Field crop farmers

612 612. Orchard farmers

514 514. Astrologers, fortune-tellers and related worker



42.31

39.23

10.74

PASW Statistics Processor

### 3) Models for individual level outcomes

- Here, the question is how best to account for data on alter(s) in an individual level model
- Regard the social connection as a 'cluster'
  - Random effects ('multilevel') model
  - Fixed effects model (focus on within-cluster change)
- Regard the alters' information as a variable
  - Usually focus on one or more specific alters (e.g. wife; father)
  - Consider endogeneity of alter's measure & possible use of selection model/sub-population model
  - 'Resources' framework (e.g. Social capital/position generators)

# Example: Fixed and random effects models on occupational outcomes (BHPS, lab 1)

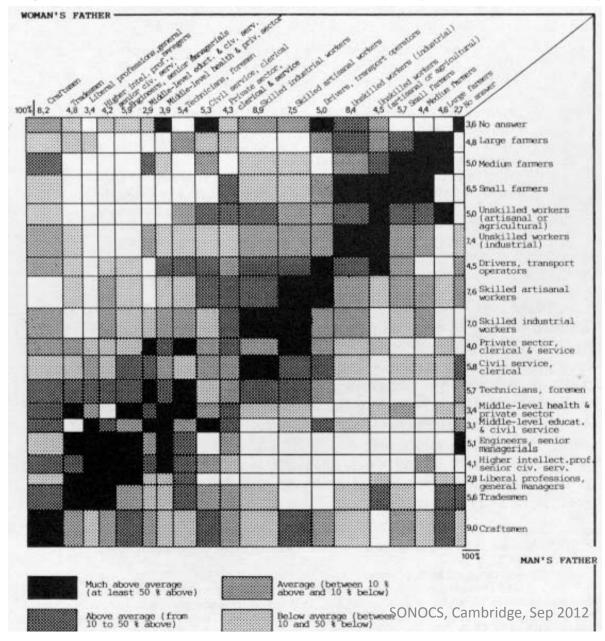
Vari abl e	cam1	cam2	cam3	cam4	cam6
- fem		1. 52***	. 904**		1. 25***
age		. 464***	. 423***		. 398***
age2		00425***	00387**		00368*
cohab		. 179	-13. 1		-1. 19
educ4_1		-8. 01***	-7. 04***		-3. 98***
educ4_3		4. 53***	3. 98***		3. 19***
educ4_4		16. 6***	14. 4***		11. 9***
spmcamsi s			. 186***		
_cons	50. 7***	38. 5***	43. 7***		41***
ncamsi s					
fem				1. 47***	
age				. 452***	
age2				00416***	
coĥab				. 0931	
educ4_1				-7. 73***	
educ4_3				4. 46***	
educ4_4				16. 4***	
_cons				38. 9***	
ns1_1_1					
_cons				1. 43***	
					<del> </del>
nsi g_e					
_cons				2. 41***	
Stati sti cs					
N	11812	11286	6148	11286	11286
bi c	95640	87971	47709	87919	75279
11	-47815	-43948	-23815	-43913	-37602
r2	0	. 263	. 285		. 0898

#### Example – Other random effects models (on related adults in the BHPS)

	Used health services in last year (Y=43%)			 	GHQ	score		
	indv	ср	hh	xhid	indv	ср	hh	xhid
Female	0.63	0.77	0.69	0.65	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.53
Age	0.02	0.03	0.02	0.02	0.13	0.13	0.14	0.14
Age-squared(*100)					-0.12	-0.13	-0.13	-0.13
Cohabiting					-0.58	-0.58	-0.54	-0.59
Ln(household inc.)	-0.09	-0.14	-0.12	-0.11	-0.63	-0.62	-0.63	-0.62
Constant	-0.65	-0.67	-0.59	-0.55	12.9	12.8	12.6	12.6
					! ! !			
ICC L2% (VC)	0	6.3	8.8	7.9	0	22.9	15.8	7.8
Mean cluster size	1	1.4	1.8	4.6	1	1.4	1.8	4.5
L2:sd(cons)		0.61	0.51	0.53	: ! ! !	2.54	1.91	1.15
L2:sd(fem)		2.00	0.82	0.00	! : ! !	2.81	2.32	1.64
L1:sd(cons)	1.81	1.81	1.81	1.81	5.40	4.30	4.76	5.28
-Log-like (-40k)	9648	9625	9624	9632	3529	3383	3410	3512

### 4) Social Interaction Distance Analysis

(www.camsis.stir.ac.uk : correspondence analysis; RC-II association models)



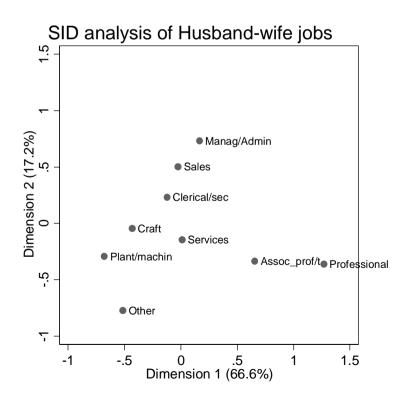
From: Bozon and Heran (1989), 'Finding a spouse: A survey of how French couples meet', *Population,* 44(1):91-121.

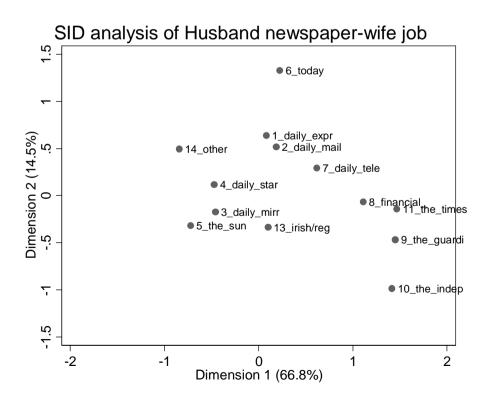
### 'Social distance'

- Usually refers to how far away A is from B, on the basis of {likely} levels of social contact
  - Small social distance between lecturers and lawyers (e.g. they share holiday and leisure pursuits; housing schemes; family members)
  - Big social distance between lecturers and firemen as they have fewer social encounters or mutual friends
  - Even bigger social distance between lecturers and stevedores as they have even fewer social encounters or mutual friends
  - A & B are usually social categories rather than individuals
  - Social contacts need not be restricted to direct links to assess social distance (e.g. links 'bridged' via mutual friends)
  - There is often >1 identifiable 'dimension' to social distance

### 'Social interaction distance'

- About characterising empirical patterns of social distance structure using statistical assessments of the relative frequency of social interactions
  - Social interactions may be measured through various things, e.g.
     friendship, marriage, family (so long as have a criteria which reflects relative scale of connections e.g. closest 3 friends)





### CAMSIS, <u>www.camsis.stir.ac.uk</u>

## Lays out a methodology for analysing social interactions by occupations for the purpose of social stratification research

- Analyse pairs of occupations linked by a social interaction (marriage; friendship; inter- and intra-generational connections)
- Use correspondence analysis (SPSS; Stata) or RC-II association models (Stata; IEM) on pairs of occupations
- Tradition of 'specificity': makes an empirical calculation within a 'context' (country; time period)
- Many other writers are using association models/correspondence analysis for similar structural analytical purposes (e.g. Chan 2010; Bakker 1993; Laumann and Guttman 1966)

### Statistical analysis

- Conventionally, SID analyses explore patterns in the frequency of social connections between *categorical* units (occ1, occ2, etc)
- Commonly used categorical methods are correspondence analysis; log-linear association models; multidimensional scaling
   (esp. Goodman 1981, Clogg 1982; Wong 2010)
- Broad depiction of loglinear 'RC' association model (Wong 2010: 21):

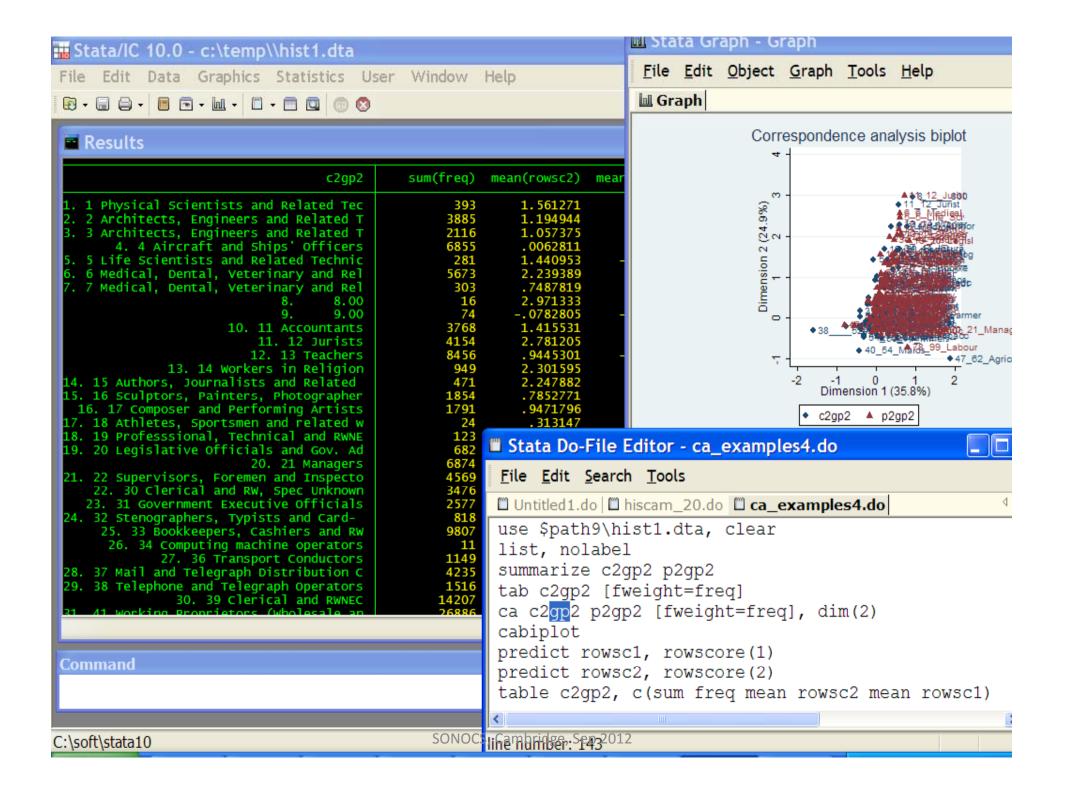
$$Ln(F_{ij}) = \lambda + \lambda^{A}_{i} + \lambda^{B}_{j} + \phi_{m}\mu_{im}\nu_{jm}$$

- ...frequency of occurrences in cell ij is a function of total, i and j, plus to-be-estimated structural feature(s) of the row and column...
- Correspondence analysis is actually a special case of the RC association model

#### **Husband's Job Units**

Occ	Units $\downarrow \rightarrow$		1	2	••	407
	Derived	$scores \downarrow \rightarrow$	75.0	70.0		10.0
Wife's	1	72.0	30	15	••	0
Job	2	72.5	13	170	••	1
Units	••		••	••	••	••
	407	11.0	0	2	••	80

- Derived scores predict frequency of interactions (#cases per cell)
- The scales describe one or more dimensions of a **structure of social interaction**...
  - > ...this turns out to also represent a structure of social stratification...
    - >...resulting in scale scores which measure an occupation's relative position within the structure of stratification.

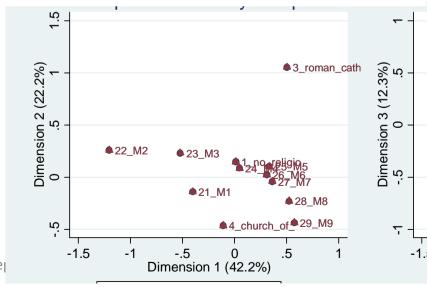


### Analysing social interaction distances

Occupational units have been prominent in SID analyses, but association models can be used constructively in many other ways

- ✓ [Wong 2010]
- ✓ Educational and occupational mobility [e.g. Luijkx 1994]
- ✓ Cultural consumption, lifestyle and social position [e.g. Bourdieu 1984; Bennett et al. 2009]

This exploratory analysis looks at social distance involving mainstream religions and occupational groups in marriage patterns in Britain



## 5) Social network analysis

"..detecting and interpreting the social ties among actors.." [de Nooy et al. 2011: 5]

- Actors ('vertices', 'Nodes') (subjects of analysis)
- Ties ('relations'; 'connections')
  - Directed ('arc')/undirected ('edge') ties
- Network (representation of actors and their ties)
  - Sometimes just study the patterns of connections actors have to others
  - When the Node is a social unit (e.g. occupation) it is possible to characterise connections from unit to unit (e.g. dichotomise by whether disproportionately frequent connections to other units occur)

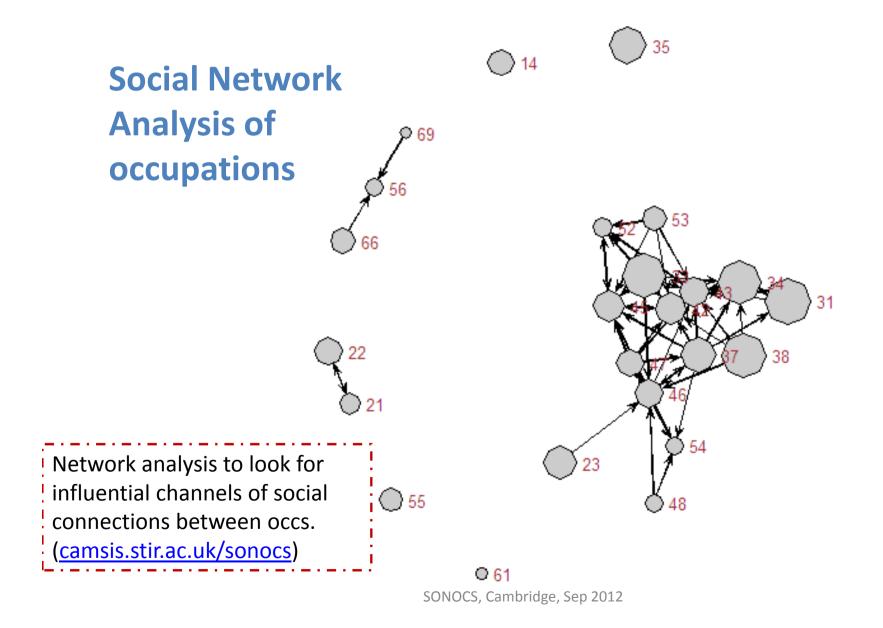
### Graphs or statistics?

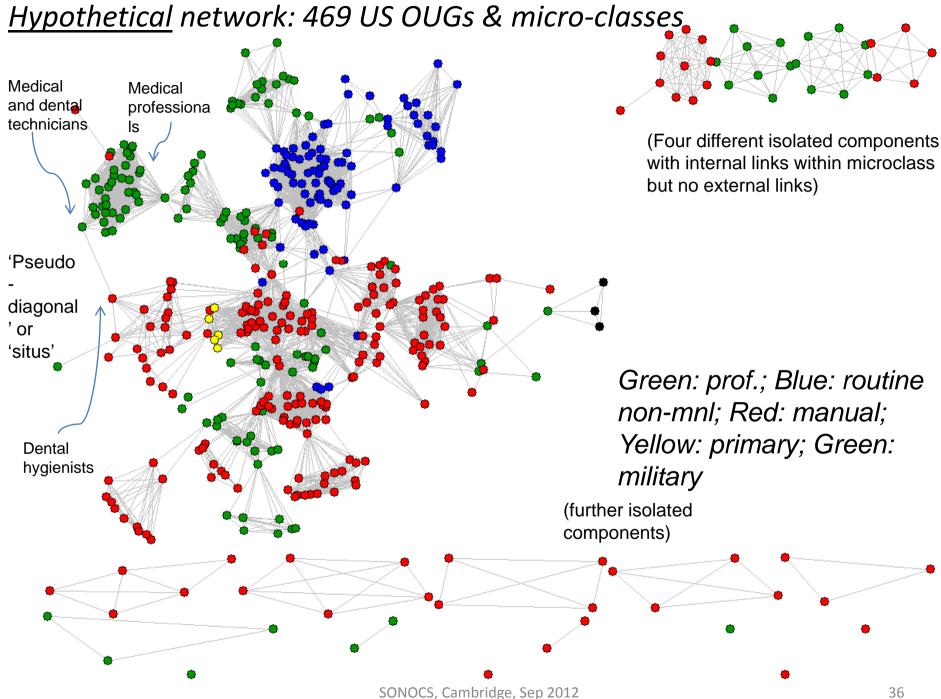
 Various statistical summaries of the structure of connections can be developed:

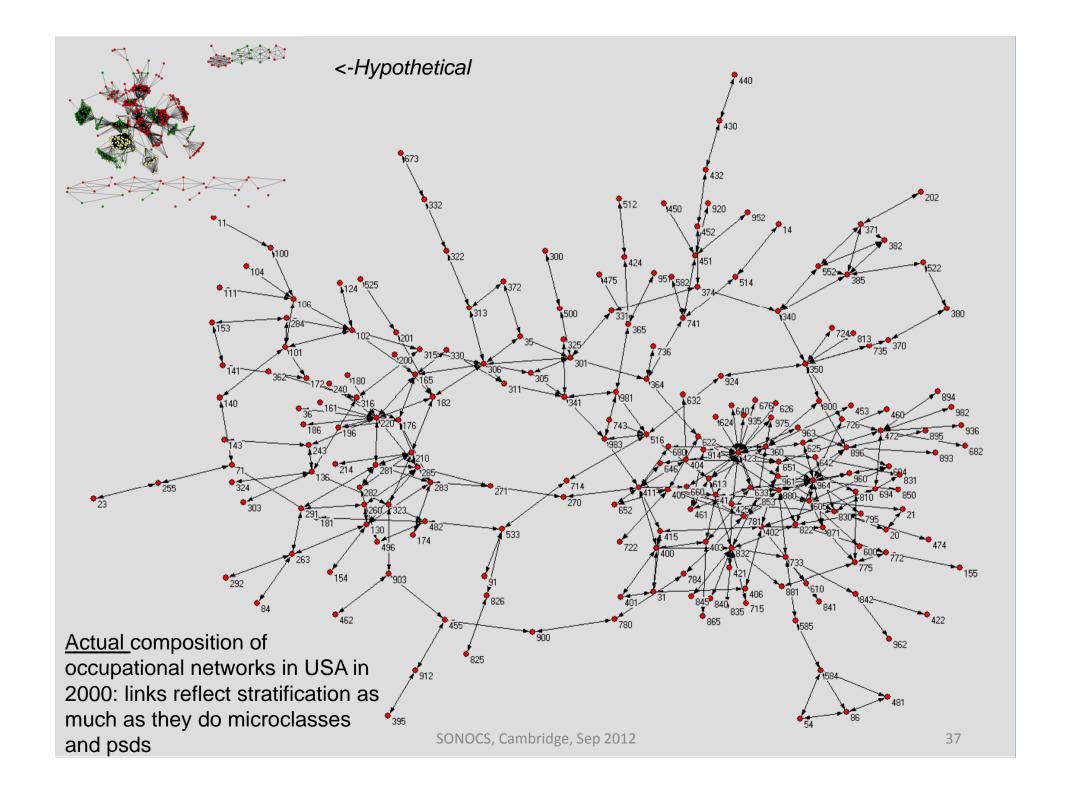
[cf. Knoke and Yang 2008; de Nooy et al. 2011]

	E.g.	: Occs, NAPP-USA, 1881
Cases	Records behind analysis	22,349
Nodes	Units being linked	45 ('microclasses')
Links (Ties)	Number of links occurring (>2 times predicted cases)	208
Strongest bond (* times expectation)	Most disproportionate tie	55
Network: Degree centrality	Percentage of possible links which are actually formed	.18
Network: Closeness centrality	Measure of number of steps required for each node to access all others	.26
Network: Components	Isolated clusters within network	1
Network: Distance	Longest possible path between nodes	5
Network: average distance	Average of the length of the shortest path between each pair of nodes	2.6

#### France, 1962, PCS codes with > 2\*expected links

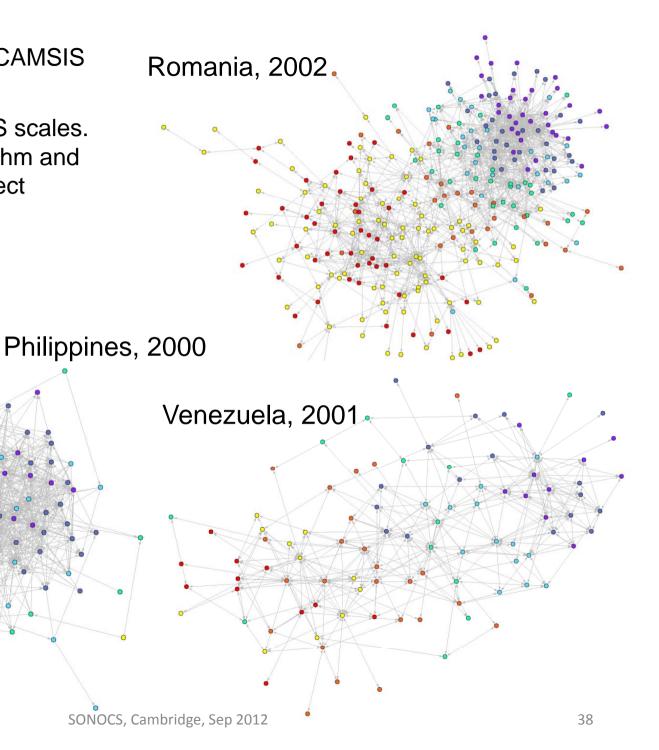






Red to violet for low to high CAMSIS (grouped into 7).

Structures similar to CAMSIS scales. Using Kamada-Kawai algorithm and no manual adjustment (expect removing some occs with no ties/relations)



## 6) Practical issues (ii): Software

#### Organising data on social connections:

- General purpose packages: Stata; R; [SPSS; etc]
- SNA packages for specific SNA formats

#### Analysis of data

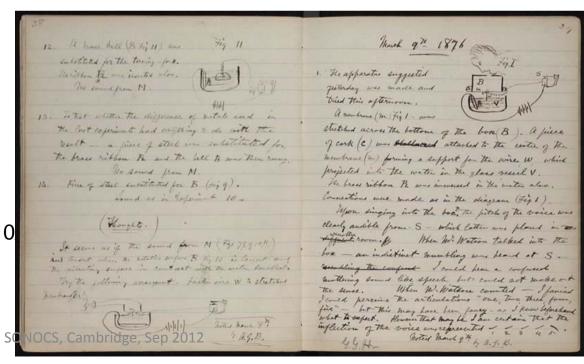
- Statistical models:
  - Stata; R; [E-Stat: see Browne et al. 2012]
- Association models
  - Stata [CA unlimited; RC2 restricted]
  - R [RC2 with standard errors, but slow]
- Network analysis
  - R (libraries include 'sna' and 'statnet'; see Tranmer 2011)
  - Pajek [freeware, wide range of coverage, no syntax]

### 'Documentation' (and its dissemination) is the key...

- By documentation we mean the 'paper trail'
- For scientists, this is the log book / journal / laboratory notebook which provides 'documentation for replication'
  - In the social sciences, there are few agreed standards [cf. Freese 2007]
  - But for quantitative researchers we can store data & syntax files during secondary survey research [Dale 2006]

# Long 2009: Guidelines for effective social science documentation in Stata

Image of Alexander Graham Bell's 1876 notebook, taken from: http://sandacom.wordpress.com/2010/03/11/the-face-rings-a-bell/

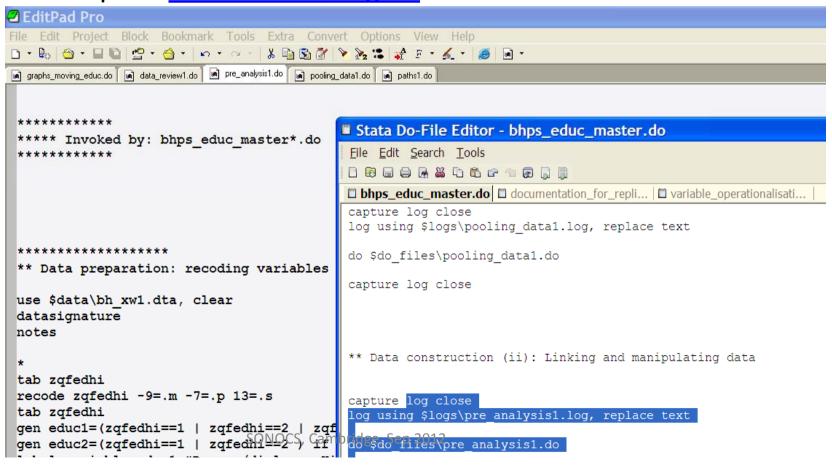


#### In the 'DAMES' project, we wrote a guide for researchers...

 'Software Session 1: Documentation & workflows with popular software packages'

(www.dames.org.uk/workshops/stir10/docs\_workflows\_2010.html)

Dozens of sample command files in SPSS, Stata and R from DAMES
 Node workshops at www.dames.org.uk



### Lab sessions

- Handout features some short notes on packages
  - Syntax files (Stata do-files and R scripts) cover selected examples of data organisation and analysis in those packages, drawing upon example data
  - More extended handout instructions on using Pajek for nominated example dataset
    - Access to Stata: own arrangements
    - Access to R: <a href="http://www.r-project.org/">http://www.r-project.org/</a>
    - Access to Pajek: <a href="http://pajek.imfm.si/doku.php">http://pajek.imfm.si/doku.php</a> [de Nooy et al. 2011]
    - Warning: Large datasets sometimes lead to slow performance in opening and/or processing data

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