

Codebook - Social Networks of Reporters

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There are no special procedures for preparing content for coding once the dates for coding are selected. We will move through the issues of the newspapers chronologically, issue by issue and page by page. Each time a coder begins a new round of coding, he or she should:

- 1) Read through the “Content Variable Operational Definitions” section of this protocol, to refocus on the categories we are capturing.
- 2) Look through the last two or three articles coded in the last session of coding.

For each article, the coders will:

- 3) Read through the story to identify topics.
- 4) Record the traits of the story and of the reporter(s) of the story.
- 5) Go through the story again looking for sources, organizations, and locations per the operational definitions for each outlined below, and recording information on each as they appear in the story. This information will include the number of times the source is quoted.

Content Variable Operational Definitions

The basic unit of measurement in this study is the news article. This study breaks articles out by publication, publication date, newspaper section, and newspaper page. It then examines the author(s) and source(s). In each article, the coder will identify and categorize the following:

- Traits of the article itself, including publication date, section and page number, and primary and secondary topics.
- The reporter(s) or author(s). If an article is a letter, the author is the person who submitted the letter. If no author is listed, then the author name is left blank but the Author type is set to “news staff”.
- The sources in the story, including organizations and documents.

Article

The basic unit of measurement in this study is the news article. For the purposes of this study, an article is considered any locally produced piece of content within the news sections of one of the selected newspapers. This does not include letters to the editor or op-ed pieces, nor will outside press releases, wire service copy or syndicated articles be counted as part of this study. Articles attributed to the newspaper itself with no specific person mentioned will be included in case they include mentions of sources, but will not be assigned to any reporter.

At the article level, the coder will identify and categorize the following:

- *Unique ID* for the article. For Newsbank articles (articles from The Grand Rapids Press and The Detroit News), this is the Record number at the end of each article.
- The *newspaper* in which the story appeared.
- The *date* of the issue in which the story appeared.
- The *section* in which the story appeared. If there is a topical section listed as well as a simple letter, use the letter (the A in “A2”, for example) instead of the topical section.
- The *page* on which the story appeared, without the letter in front of it.
- The *headline* of the article.
- The *text* (if available and easily captured. If not, forget about it).
- The *topics* of the story (see more detailed information on topics below). This will be a catchall, and is intended to capture higher-level topics addressed, not necessarily all low-level topics. For example, a story on how Lansing’s budget is changing to deal with the economic downturn would have topics like “government” or “economics”, not something specific like “Lansing budget” (this specificity is in some part captured by the combination of topics and locations, for example, and so not needed in topics).
- *Article type*: News, Sports, Feature, Other. For this study, should always be news.
- *Is attributed? Flag*: If left unchecked, that indicates that all information in the story was unattributed, and so there weren’t any sources to code.
- The *reporter(s)/author(s)* of the story (details on this coding are below).
- The *sources* contained within the story (details on this coding are below).

People

In this study, people are captured and given IDs independent of their roles within a given story, so we can more readily tie people together across stories. When you code a person as being either a reporter/author or a source, part of your job as a coder will be to select the person who is serving as an author or source, and if that person has not yet been encountered, to create a person for them.

Before creating a new person in the system, make sure you look carefully to see if that person already exists. We need to be careful to avoid creating duplicates of the same person in the system, as it will corrupt the network data.

When you create a person, you will code the following:

- *The name of the person.* Should capture as much of the name as appears in the article, to make it easier to tie people together across articles. There are separate fields for first, middle, and last name. Fill in each as they are present. If there is a suffix, include it at the end of the last name field.
- *Gender of the person:* male, female, NA. This can be determined by first looking at the gender of pronouns referring to the source (“he” = male, “she” = female), then by trying to identify the gender the first name of the source would normally represent. If gender cannot be ascertained, or if the story is just attributed to the newspaper, enter NA.
- *Title of person:* at the person level, this field is used to hold a brief identifying sketch of a person, to help in differentiating people with similar names. This field could contain a person’s title. It could contain areas of expertise. It could also contain organizational affiliation or topics on which the person is an expert. IT should be kept brief, however. If you want to provide more details, place them in the notes for the person.
- *Notes:* There is also a place for each person to put additional notes. You can use this to hold additional, more detailed information on the person. This field is entirely optional, would probably only be used in the event of confusion between whether two people are actually the same or not.

Organizations

When you encounter an organization for the first time, you will need to record it so you can then refer to it each time a source is affiliated with it. This is intended to allow coders to evaluate and address differences in the ways organizations are referred to as they code, instead of pushing the work of reconciling variations on organization names to the data analysis phase. When an organization is assigned, the coder should first look for the organization among those that have already been used.

Before creating a new organization in the system, make sure you look carefully to see if that organization already exists, even if it is under a slightly different name from what is in your story. We need to be careful to avoid creating duplicates of the same organization in the system, as it will corrupt the network data. So if Ford Motor Company, Inc. is referred to as simply Ford in a story, you would select Ford Motor

Company, Inc. as the organization, not create a new organization named Ford. If there is any doubt that two organizations are the same, though, make a new organization.

If the organization has already been created, the existing organization should be used. If the organization has not yet been captured and entered into the database, add it, then record the presence of the new organization in the current story. If you have an organization that sounds similar to one that already exists, err on the side of making a new organization whenever there are any doubts that two organizations are the same, and we can clean the data up later.

For each organization, capture as many of the following as are present in the story:

- *Name:* name of the organization. If you are creating an organization for a city, county, township, state, or other geographic area, enter the name as “<city>, City of” or “<township>, Township of”. So for the city of Detroit, you would name Detroit’s organization in this study “Detroit, City of”.
- *Description:* Text description of organization. Optional, but if details are needed to help a coder recognize the organization, include them here.

Reporter(s)/Author(s)

The reporter/author (simply called author for the rest of this section) of a given piece of content will be either the person(s) credited in bylines for the article or the person(s) who authored a letter or op-ed. Every distinct author gets a separate entry. If reporters are credited at the end of an article as having contributed reporting, they too should be included as authors for the purposes of this study.

Before creating a new person in the system, make sure you look carefully to see if that person already exists. We need to be careful to avoid creating duplicates of the same person in the system, as it will corrupt the network data.

For each author, we will code the following:

- *The name and gender of the author.* First, look for the author in the list of People, to see if he or she has already been coded. If so, selecting a pre-existing person will automatically include their name and gender, and so you won’t have to code it. If you don’t find a matching person, then create a person per the section on creating a person, above, and then select the newly created person as the author.

If the newspaper is listed as the author and no specific person is specified, leave this field blank and set the “Author type” to “news staff”.

When you create a new person who is an article author, capture as much of the name as appears in the byline of an article, or in the tagline of a letter to the editor, to make it easier to tie people together across articles.

For gender, you can choose from male, female, or NA. Try to identify the gender

the first name of the author would normally represent. If gender cannot be ascertained, enter NA.

- *Author type*: news staff, editorial, government official, business representative, other organization representative, public. If the story is a news or feature story, then consider the author a “news staff” member. If the story is attributed to the newspaper but not to a particular reporter, don’t choose an author, but choose “news staff” here. If the story is an unsigned editorial, choose “editorial”. If you can’t determine the author’s type, just record them as “news staff”.

Source(s)

Sources in a given piece of content will be any person, organization or document specifically cited as a source of information. To be considered a source, ***the source of information must be directly identified with a verb of attribution***, which is a statement of direct or indirect communication. Direct communication in news stories is determined by verbs or attributions such as "said," "reported," "stated," and "noted." Indirect communication included verbs related to mental states such as "hopes," "feels," and "believes." Phrases like “According to” are also considered evidence of attribution. Each distinct source should get its own separate entry, but we don’t want to have duplicates for the same person, as that will corrupt our network data. In a story where other automobile companies have been quoted as sources, for example, information about a company, even when it’s name is in the sentence, is not attributable to the company unless there is either a direct or indirect verb of attribution present.

Before creating a new person or organization in the system, make sure you look carefully to see if that person already exists. We need to be careful to avoid creating duplicates of the same person in the system, as duplicate people will corrupt the network data.

Specific examples:

- If an organization is cited as a source, it gets its own entry, but if subsequently a spokesman is designated as speaking for that organization, that person becomes the source, and you capture the organization as the organizational affiliation for that person.
- Documents are considered sources only if they are not presented by someone. If a document is noted as having been provided by a person, then the person is the source, not the document, and the document is not counted as an additional source.
- For documents in general, unless you think the document is going to be referred to in other stories, there is no need to make a “Document” record for the document. Just code the source as source type “Document”, put a brief description of the document in the “title” field, enter any additional details in the notes section, and then try to set source capacity and localness as best as you can (if none fit, then set them both to Other).
- Web sites can be sources, as can video cameras in police cars and surveillance cameras. Each of these would be classified a “Document” type of source and details would be captured as outlined above.

- If a person is quoted from a letter or press release, even if they are quoted extensively as if the reporter talked with them, they are still not the primary source. The document is. To code a situation like this, make the source of type document, and then still add the person to the source.
- If a person is quoted speaking in court, and then his or her testimony from previous sessions of court are also quoted, that still counts as the person being the source, not court documents. If the person is never actually portrayed as speaking, and if all the information is from the court documents, then the documents are the source, so source type is document, not individual, but put person in the person field.

For each source, we will code the following:

- *Source type*: “Anonymous/Unnamed”, “Individual Person”, “Organization”, “Document”, or “Other”. The source type and the source capacity are interrelated, but are significantly different. The source type describes the actual source itself. When a person is talking, that person is an individual, even if they are speaking on behalf of an organization (their speaking on behalf of an organization would be reflected by also assigning them a source capacity of “Other organization source”). If an organization is quoted **by name** without having a named spokesman, that is an “organization” type source. If a person is later said to be the spokesman for that company, then he or she becomes the source, and the source type would be changed to “individual”. If a group is simply referenced with a general word like “police” or “prosecutors”, then that source would be given a source type of “Anonymous/Unnamed” since you can’t be sure what or who the reference refers to. More examples:
 - If the source is a person, they would be assigned a source type of “individual”. If that person serves as the representative for an organization, they would still have source type of “individual”, but they would also then be assigned a source capacity of organizational representative.
 - The passage "The Vatican said Friday that wine is tasty...", is an example of the “organization” source type.
 - If a document like a press release is cited, it is a source of type “document”, even if a person is then quoted out of the document as if they were in the room with the reporter. You should add the person who speaks to the source record, but the source type should still be “document.”
 - The “document” source type is also a catchall for any non-person sources that contain written or multimedia content. So, video from a surveillance camera would be a “document”, as would video on youtube or content on a web site like pollen.com or tesla.com.
- The *name and gender of the source* if the source is a person. First, look for the source in the list of People, to see if he or she has already been coded. If so, selecting a pre-existing person will automatically include their name and gender, and so you won’t have to code it. If you don’t find a matching person, then create a person per the section on creating a person, above, and then select the newly

created person as the author.

If the source is an organization or document, leave the person field blank. If the source is an organization, select the organization as the Organizational affiliation. If it is a document, place the as much of the title of the document as is present in the article in the title field.

When you create a new person who is source, capture as much of the name as appears in the article, to make it easier to tie sources together across articles.

For gender, you can choose from male, female, or NA. This can be determined by first looking at the gender of pronouns referring to the source (“he” = male, “she” = female), then by trying to identify the gender the first name of the source would normally represent. If gender cannot be ascertained, then enter NA.

- ***Title and More Title:*** Title of source, if given. ***Capture the title exactly as it appears in the story, even if that title is long or imprecise.*** If there is ambiguity or if a given source has multiple titles throughout an article, use the title and organization from that person’s first mention/formal attribution as the title (and that organization as the related organization), and capture all of the subsequent titles in “More Title”. For the main title/organization pair, do not put the organization in the “Title” field. Just capture the title part there, and capture the organization in the “Organization” drop-down. If the first mention is ambiguous or includes multiple roles, capture the title and organization most related to the story as “title” and the organizational affiliation, then enter any additional titles, with their organization, in the “More Title” field. If you run out of room there, put all details in the optional notes area for the source. If a second title is encountered, enter it in the “More title” field. If there are more than 2 titles, place extras in the source notes or in the person’s record.
- ***Organizational affiliation:*** should capture as much information on the source as is possible. If the name is present, capture the name. If affiliation is only spelled out in general terms, capture the description of the organization, and factor this into selection of source capacity. If the organization is so non-specific as to be only categorically defined, select the appropriate Source Capacity and do not set an organizational affiliation. For example, if the source is “Police”, just set the Source Capacity to “Police Source” and leave this field blank.

For spokesmen for politicians (the “spokesman for Mayor Dave Bing” or “spokesman for Senate Majority Leader Mike Bishop, R-Rochester”), you should assign their group affiliation to the most specific group that is manifest that the person for whom they speak is a member. So, for Mayor Dave Bing’s spokesperson, his organizational affiliation would be “Detroit, City of”. For the state Senate majority leader’s spokesperson, his or her group affiliation would be the “Michigan State Senate”. If the person is simply a spokesperson for a private citizen, they would not be assigned an organizational affiliation (and would be

assigned a source capacity of “other”.

Students who are quoted in stories as attending a certain school or university should be considered to be affiliated with that school or university, though they might be speaking their personal opinion, and so not be categorized as an educational source.

- *Source contact type:*

Values: “Direct contact”, “Press conference/event”, “Past quotes/statements”, “Press release/document”, “other”.

The “source contact type” category is used to capture how a reporter gathered the information from each source included in his or her story. When building a source network, you need to only include people the reporter portrays as having directly spoken to him. If a quote is pulled from a press conference, a press release, or past coverage, then we can’t be sure the reporter actually spoke with the person, and so we should be wary of including that source in the reporter’s network.

For a given source, capture the way the reporter portrays his or her interaction with the source. The values for this category are arranged in decreasing proximity to and directness of contact with the reporter – so, “direct quote” implies that the reporter actually talked with the source in the process of preparing the story; “press conference/event” implies that the reporter was at the event where the source spoke, but might not have spoken personally with him or her; “past quotes/statements” implies that the reporter is quoting from past coverage, or quotes gathered in the past; “press release/document” implies that the reporter quoted the source from a document or press release, but did not talk with them directly; and other implies that either no relationship can be determined or the means of contact doesn’t fit these categories. *If a reporter portrays multiple types of contact with a source, capture the manifest contact type that is most proximal/direct.* So if a person is quoted directly in an article where the reporter also quotes statements the person made at a news conference, you would categorize the source as having contact type of “Direct contact”, even though the reporter also was at the press conference where the source spoke.

And, only code what is manifest. If a story leads with a press conference, and describes one person who spoke via video feed, then proceeds to quote other sources as if the reporter heard them in person without specifying whether he or she heard them at the press conference, code those sources as “Direct contact”, not “Press conference/event”, for example, since the reporter didn’t specify that they were a part of the press conference, and so their presence there is not manifest.

Source contact type - details on each value:

- *Direct contact* - If a source is quoted in the normal way reporters quote sources they actually speak with, either verbatim in quotation marks or in paraphrase, using a verb of attribution as explained above, that is considered contact type of “direct contact”. A source contacted and interacted with via

phone or electronic mediums like email or text message would also be considered a “Direct contact” source.

- *Press conference/event* - If the person is quoted from a presentation, statement, or speech given at a press conference or other public event, code the source as “Press conference/event”. More examples: A ruling read at a court hearing would be considered an event in terms of contact type, as would testimony at a trial that is quoted.
 - *Past quotes/statement* - If a person’s quote is framed in such a way as to suggest it is a statement from a past article, public statement, or interview, code the contact type as “Past quotes/statement”.
 - *Press release/document* – If the person is quoted out of a press release, letter, indictment, or other document, code the source contact type as “Press release/document”. Testimony given in court is considered a document for this category, for example, when it is quoted at a later date.
 - *Other* – If the source contact type doesn’t fit any of these, or cannot be determined, categorize it as “Other”.
- *Source capacity:*
Values: “government source”, “business source”, “labor source”, “education source”, “other organization source”, “expert opinion”, “personal opinion”, “other”.

The “source capacity” category captures the entity on whose behalf a given source speaks (so think of it in terms of “on behalf of whom?”). If it is just an individual speaking, or if it is a letter from a normal person, then this attribute would be set to “personal opinion”. If the person is introduced as an expert on a topic, then they give their opinion, then they would be considered an “expert opinion”. A doctor speaking on a health issue would be providing an “expert opinion”, for example, as would an economics professor speaking on the economy or an attorney speaking about a particular area of law in which they are particularly proficient. If a person speaks on behalf of an organization or company, then his or her source type would be “individual”, but his source capacity would be the capacity value that best matches his organization (“labor source” for a union organizer, “business source” if you work primarily for a business, and “other organization source” for any type of organization without a specific category, or should you not be sure).

If a source in a story serves as a spokesperson for someone else and neither have an organizational affiliation – for example, a spokesperson for Kwame Kilpatrick, private citizen, or the lawyer for a private citizen who is a defendant in a lawsuit – then set the source capacity to “Other”. If a source is a spokesperson for the County Prosecutor, though, she is an employee of the Prosecutor’s office, and so is speaking in an official capacity as an employee of the County Prosecutor’s office, and so is a “Government source”.

Source capacity - details on each value:

- *Government Source* – sources who speak on behalf of the government, or on the behalf of a government agency. Could be from any branch of government

(executive, judicial, legislative). If a source is speaking their own opinion, even if their organizational affiliation is presented, then they are considered a “Personal Opinion” source, not a “Government source”.

- *Police Source* – person who is speaking on the behalf of a law enforcement agency including police departments, sheriff’s offices, and state and federal law enforcement agencies.
 - *Business source* – sources who speak on behalf of a business. If a source is speaking their own opinion, even if their organizational affiliation is presented, then they are considered a personal source, not a government source.
 - *Labor Source* – sources who speak on behalf of organized labor or unions.
 - *Education source* – source who speaks on behalf of an educational institution, including primary and secondary schools, community colleges, and universities. If a teacher speaks on behalf of his or her school, then they would be an education source. If a teacher speaks on behalf of his or her teachers’ union, then they would be a labor source. A parent, on the other hand, who gives their opinion would be giving their “personal opinion” unless they are speaking on behalf of the PTA, in which case they would be speaking as an “other organization source”.
 - *Other organization source* – sources who speak on behalf of some other sort of organization. Could be non-profit organizations, charitable organizations, etc. If the person is listed as an analyst for a certain company, then that person is an other organization source, not an expert opinion source, since his opinion is on behalf of the company for which he works.
 - *Expert Opinion* – someone who is portrayed as being an expert on the topic on which they speak.
 - *Personal Opinion* – person speaking on their opinion, not related to their affiliation with an organization.
- *Localness of a source*: local, state, national, international, or other. A local source is one who is within the circulation area of the paper, or one in the region of the state the paper serves, even if there are other papers there, too (in Michigan, for example, a source known throughout the Upper Peninsula, for example, or throughout Southeast Michigan, would be considered a “local” source). A state source is one outside the paper’s region of coverage, but within the state in which the newspaper is located (in this case, Michigan). A national source is someone who is located outside the home state of the newspaper, but still in the United States. An international source is any source identified as being outside the United States.

Use other for any source whose localness is not manifest in the story, even if the location of the paper suggests a person is local. In Detroit papers, for example, most auto executives do indeed live and work in Detroit, but you can’t assume that since auto companies these days are multi-national and high-paying people might live anywhere.

Topics

Since there will be a number of article topics encountered in a census of articles gathered for certain time periods, topics bear closer attention here. The goal in this study is to make sure that the articles that cover a given topic are consistently assigned the same topic code. There are 17 topics we will use in this study, based on Brown's 1987 study of source diversity (Brown, Bybee, Wearden, & Straughan, 1987). A given story can have more than one topic. Apply as many topics as you think are covered in the story.

The topics:

- *arts and culture* – This topic includes music, theatre, style, fashion, movies, etc.
- *business/economics* – business stories tend to be about people making money, and about specific businesses or industries. Economy stories tend to be more about the big picture of our economic system. Many stories will include elements of both - a story about the economy that also focuses on key businesses, for example, but a story only needs to have one or the other of these elements to be included in this topic. Stories about real estate and development are usually going to be “business/economy” stories, as are articles that are about the housing crisis, and articles about governments trying to balance budgets that use economics to explain why the budget needs balanced.
- *crime* - crime stories include not only accounts of crime being committed, but also stories about the aftermath, criminal investigations, and criminal trials.
- *disaster/accidents*
- *education* – this topic includes stories about all levels of education, including community colleges and universities. Articles about universities are included in the topic of education. Articles about school board meetings are, too, though they would probably also be included in government. Articles that deal with state interventions in school districts that are struggling academically or financially would be coded both for education and government.
- *energy/environment*
- *government* – government stories are about the workings of government – zoning board meetings, meetings and acts of city council, new laws being enacted or laws being repealed. If the article is about elections or campaigning, then it should be categorized politics. Articles that deal with state interventions in school districts that are struggling academically or financially would be coded both for education and government.
- *health* – the health topic includes stories on illnesses and on health professionals and hospitals. It includes stories about fitness and healthy living. It also would include stories about health education, like medical schools or a pharmacology program at a local university (this would probably also be education, though). Discussion of allergies and allergy season would also be considered a health topic.
- *labor and unions* – the labor and unions topic encompasses any story with labor or unions as a substantial actor. This might be in addition to “education” if a teachers’ union was involved. It might include business if the story is on labor strife.
- *military*

- *politics* – politics stories are generally about machinations of political parties and people running for office, not about the daily running of government. This is not always the case. If someone in a meeting goes out of their way to attack a political foe, that would be politics, and if laws are passed to spite another person or party, that would be politics, too. Representations of political debate where officials of different parties are put in opposition are “politics”, too, even if the story is also about government
- *social issues* – this is a catch-all category that includes any social or societal issues such as abortion, teen pregnancy, and drug and alcohol abuse.
- *religion* – If you code a story as religion, it should be either specifically or substantially about religion. If the only mention of religion in a story is of a person, mentioned in passing, or the mention of a church, the story need not be coded for religion.
- *science and inventions*
- *welfare*
- *miscellaneous* – If you encounter an article that just doesn’t fit any of the topics above, place it in the miscellaneous category. If there are multiple topics that seem to apply, select all you think apply.