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Memo 1

To clarify -- for the first memo, please write three paragraphs about 1. Your question and its importance 2. The data you will use to answer your question and 3. Depending on where you are with data collection -- your plan for acquiring the data, some descriptive statistics of the data e.g. number of docs, description of metadata (e.g. how many newspapers do you have, what time period), and extra points for preprocessing the data and creating a wordcloud!

Question:

Disprove or verify some aspects of Herman and Chomsky’s “Propaganda Model” that proposed in their work *Manufacturing Consent.* Namely, they assert that the media (e.g. Newspaper, broadcast, TV) is heavily influenced by the elites, who are the funder of major medias, to achieve the goal of “inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs, and codes of behavior that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society”(*Manufacturing Consent*, Herman and Chomsky).

Of course, text as data method is not the best fit to analyze many aspects of their model. Nevertheless, the analysis on the newspaper data can provide many useful information that either complies with or disagrees with the model. Specifically, throughout the book, they could only dive into a few articles and do some close reading to illustrate their point, yet with the aid of text as data method, one can employ a more comprehensive analysis on the newspapers as a whole. As a start, one can look at the sentiment toward Vietnam War in Major newspapers. Herman and Chomsky point out that the use of Chemical Weapon in the Vietnam War is intentionally overlooked by the media at the beginning of the war. To verify that, one can search through a large corpus of newspapers over time and investigate the number of articles related to Chemical weapons and Vietnam War. As a comparison, one compare that with the media coverage on chemical weapon employed by Saddam Hussein. Another analysis that can be performed is to look at the change in sentiment toward Vietnam War as the war progresses.

The above examples only scrap the surface of their model. Better questions will hopefully emerge during the exploratory data analysis and the close reading of their book.

Data

Data that will be used is from ProQuest, which contains historical data from major sources such as New York Times and the Wall Street Journal, as well as myriad of local newspapers.

Description of the data

10,000+ news articles related to chemical warfare

1,000+ news articles related to the chemical warfare in Vietnam