

Annotation Guide A: Twitter Abortion Stance Classification

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Introduction

This guide outlines the protocol for annotating tweets related to abortion discourse. The goal is to classify tweets according to their stance on abortion to create a robust training dataset for stance classification models.

Categories for Annotation

Each tweet should be classified into exactly one of the following four categories:

1. Pro-life

Tweets that express opposition to abortion, support restrictions on abortion access, or advocate for the rights of the unborn.

Examples:

- “Wonder if those who championed prochoice as teens ever dreamed they would defend cutting off a baby’s FACE to SELL its brain”
- “We need to protect the unborn who cannot speak for themselves.”
- “Glad to see more states passing heartbeat bills to save innocent lives.”

2. Pro-choice

Tweets that express support for abortion access, reproductive rights, or a woman’s right to choose.

Examples:

- “47,000 women die each year due 2 lack of legal safe #abortion #ShoutYourAbortion

End stigma, save lives!”

- “This tweet highlights the 3rd woman who had to leave the country today to be considered equal. #prochoice”
- “Black Lives Matter!!! Which is why I’m #prochoice!”

3. Neutral

Tweets that discuss abortion-related topics without clearly advocating for either a pro-life or pro-choice position. These often include news reporting, questions, or factual statements.

Examples:

- “Rally Against University of Missouri After it Stops Enabling Planned Parenthood”
- “Abby Johnson on why she is at Georgetown Uni today to speak on #PlannedParenthood #prolife #prochoice”
- “Pro-life or pro-choice? My thoughts on abortion published in @TheGoanEverday”

4. Throw out

Tweets that are unrelated to abortion or that mention abortion only tangentially without substantive content related to the topic.

Examples:

- “HPV vaccines becoming a key part of sexual education on campuses.”
- “I can’t say that I completely disagree.”
- “This article uses the word abortion but is actually about something completely different.”

Annotation Process

1. Read the entire tweet carefully.
2. Consider the explicit and implicit messages conveyed.
3. Assign the tweet to the most appropriate category.
4. If uncertain between multiple categories, consider:
 - The primary focus of the tweet
 - The overall tone and context

Important Considerations

- **Context matters:** Consider the full context of the tweet, including any hashtags or references that might clarify the stance.
- **Mixed messages:** Some tweets may contain elements of multiple categories. Assign based on the predominant message.
- **Sarcasm and irony:** Be attentive to potential sarcasm or irony, which may reverse the apparent stance.
- **News reporting:** Straightforward reporting of abortion-related news without clear advocacy should be labeled as neutral.
- **Focus on abortion:** Tweets that mention abortion but primarily discuss other topics should be carefully evaluated to determine if they warrant inclusion or should be thrown out.

Quality Control

- If you're uncertain about a classification, flag it for review.
- Periodically, a subset of tweets will be annotated by multiple annotators to assess inter-rater reliability.
- Regular calibration discussions will address any emerging patterns of disagreement.

Final Notes

The goal of this annotation is to create a high-quality dataset for stance classification. Only tweets with clear pro-life or pro-choice stances will be used in the final analysis, while neutral and throw out categories will be excluded. Careful and consistent annotation is essential for developing accurate stance detection models.