**Media Framing and the Civil Rights Movement**

Sample data set (Emmett Till):

<https://voyant-tools.org/?corpus=c0ecf7f6349c2fa6b2b96a4eed53b84a&stopList=keywords-8268efab3df14dbfff2282409e449bee&panels=cirrus,reader,trends,summary,contexts>

**Pre-reading: (Available on Canvas)**

1. John R. Tisdale, “Different Assignments, Different Perspectives: How Reporters Reconstruct the Emmett Till Civil Rights Murder Trial,” *The Oral History Review* 29, no. 1 (Winter 2002): 39-58.
2. Roy E. Carter, Jr., "Segregation and the News: A Regional Content Study," *Journalism Quarterly*34, no. 1 (Spring 1957): 3-18.
3. Warren Breed, “Comparative Newspaper Handling of the Emmett Till Case,” *Journalism Quarterly* 35, no. 1 (Spring 1958): 291-298.
4. Thomas E. Nelson, “Media Framing of a Civil Liberties Conflict and Its Effect on Tolerance,” *The American Political Science Review* 91, no. 3 (Sept. 1997): 567-583.

**Step 1:**

Identify an event that occurred since 1945 in relation to the struggle for civil rights in America. This event should have occurred on a single day (i.e. the March on Washington) or short period of time (i.e. legalization of same-sex marriage in Massachusetts) and can be in relation to any group of underrepresented individuals. If you’re unsure if your event constitutes “civil rights,” be sure to ask me.

**Step 2:**

Using web-based databases, identify at least **4 articles** about your event *from the same time period in which it occurred*. For example, if using the March on Washington, all of your articles should be from August 1963, and as close to the date of the event as possible.

For best results, look for articles at least 500 words in length. The longer the story, the more data you’ll be able to acquire.

Ideally you should be identifying sources from different *types* of newspapers (national, local/regional, black press, known liberal newspapers vs. conservative papers, North vs. South, etc). Make sure they’re unique articles, i.e. not reprinted stories a local newspaper bought from the Associated Press (AP). *Avoid using editorials and opinion pieces.*

**Step 3:**

1. Copy and paste only the headline and text of each news story to a Word doc or Google doc.
2. If your article is a .pdf, you’ll need to convert it to a doc file. There are many free web-based programs available online that do this. For example, see <https://smallpdf.com/pdf-to-word>. You will probably have to proofread/edit the article since OCR conversion is not perfect.
3. Save each story under a separate file, and name the file by headline (source, date). For example: Trial by Jury (Time, 10.03.55).
4. Save the document and upload it to Canvas under Files/Assignments/Text Mining/News Articles.

**Step 4:**

Go to <https://voyant-tools.org/>.

Once at Voyant’s launch page, upload your articles from your hard drive. (Click “Upload” and choose your news articles). Click the “Reveal” button to create your corpus of data.

For a more thorough tutorial of Voyant and its multiple functions, see <http://docs.voyant-tools.org/>

Remember to manipulate your stopword lists! A stopword list is a set of words that should be excluded from the results of a tool. Typically, stopword lists contain function words that don’t carry as much meaning, such as prepositions (in, to, from, etc.) Depending on your event, you will want to add to Voyant’s pre-determined stopword list.

**Step 5:**

In a 4-5 page paper, report your findings.

Your introduction (can be more than one paragraph) should introduce the reader to the civil rights event and its outcomes. Assume that your reader is unfamiliar with American history. Your introduction will end with your thesis statement.

Your thesis should be supported by at least **two data outputs** (but ideally more) from Voyant such as the “cirrus”, “terms”, “trends”, “collocates”, and “links” analysis.

Questions you may not have been able to answer previously but are now able to because of tools like Voyant might include:

* What are the most frequently used words in a text?
* What words do not appear at all or appear infrequently?
* Do any of these words (or absence of words) represent any sort of theme?
* How is this word choice significant in terms of framing this historic event?
* How does this data compare to the findings of your pre-reading articles? Do your news articles challenge or confirm what other scholars have said about media framing and coverage of the civil rights movement?

In addition to information from the pre-reading essays and quotes from your newspaper articles themselves, use charts imported from Voyant to support your argument. You will need to explain your data, just like one would explain/expound upon a direct quote. In essence, don’t make your reader do the heavy lifting. Additionally, include a caption beneath each table/chart that explains what the visual is trying to illustrate. **Graphs and charts do not count toward your final page count.**

*Citing a dataset*

When citing a dataset that is not yet published, the rule of thumb is to provide in the reference as much information about it as is already known. This should include the creator and title of the dataset. The date of collection should also be included. If the dataset has been deposited but an online record is not yet available, the date can be given as ‘in press’ and the repository given in the publisher position.

Examples:

in-text citation: (Endicott College DLA, “Name of dataset file.”)

works cited: (Endicott College Digital Liberal Arts. “Name of dataset file.” *Media Framing and the Civil Rights Movement*, in press.

Resource: “Writing with Statistics” from Purdue OWL: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/672/01/>

*Formatting your paper:*

* Use 12-point font in one of the standard typefaces (Times New Roman, Times).
* Do not place extra spaces between paragraphs or between the heading and the title or the title and the text
* Your title should be centered, in plain 12-point text, with appropriate words capitalized – no title page is necessary
* All pages should be paginated
* All margins should be one inch (the default margins for most word processing programs)
* Quotations must be enclosed in quotations marks, and MLA citation practices should be observed
* Do not use contractions, jargon, or the first person
* Check spelling and proofread

Refer to the syllabus for information regarding late work and academic dishonesty.

Resources:

1. Me! Office hours on syllabus or by appointment
2. Tech Fellows: peers with a background in digital humanities

Available for drop-in (no appointment needed) Sunday-Thursday in LSB113 from 6-7pm. Students can also make appointments with them as needed.

Contact info:

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