

PEW RESEARCH CENTER
Covering President Trump in a Polarized Media Environment
Content Analysis Codebook
FOR RELEASE

Variables

A – Story Topic

B – Underlying Frame¹

C – Tone of Frame

E – Trigger

F – Sources Cited

G – Refutation

¹ In previous studies this variable was referred to as “Theme”

General Guidelines and Rules

Unit of Analysis: When we code, the final decisions we are making are about the story as a whole. While we may look at smaller segments of stories when we code (such as paragraphs, sentences, etc.), we always roll up to the story level in the end. For example, while many topics may be covered in the story, we code the article to find the dominant topic in that story and choose the single topic.

Simple Plurality Rule w/ default to the top: For variables A and B (i.e., topic and frame), you will code for every paragraph and then aggregate to the story level with the most frequent code used in that story. To do so, coders should mark each paragraph with the appropriate code, and then count the codes to decide which code is the most frequent; this becomes the code for the story. In the end, only record the code for the story. If two codes receive equal coverage, coders should choose the one that is the one that is mentioned in the lede/top of the story. (This is known as the *simple plurality rule* (the code that gets the most coverage) *with default to the top*).

For variables D through G, see the appropriate way that you should be coding those at the beginning of each variable's description.

Notes:

1. The coder must read, watch or listen to the entire story at least once no matter what, even in cases where the code may seem unambiguous.
2. If a paragraph is not about the President or his administration, skip it. It does not count in the coding.
3. If it is unclear which code to assign a code, mark that paragraph to come back to review later. It often will not matter in deciding the dominant code for that document. The focus should be on determining the most obvious code, or one that the average reader would find. *Don't overthink the code.*

VARIABLE A - Story Topic

Definition: This captures the general subject matter of the story. For example, a story about Trump's immigration ban will probably be coded as Immigration and a story about his climate change policy would be coded as Environment. It is NOT the frame of the story, which describes the way in which that topic is covered.

Simple Plurality Rule w/ default to the top: In deciding the topic, coders should mark each paragraph as being about a particular topic. Then they should count the graphs to see which topic received the most coverage. The one with the most coverage becomes the topic. If two topics receive equal coverage, coders should choose the one that is the top most mention. (This is known as the *simple plurality rule (the topic that gets the most coverage) with default to the top*).

Budget Rule: Many topics may be tied to specific policies that may impact the federal budget. If the paragraph focuses on the impact of policies to the larger budget or its impact on the budget of other policies, then include it in "budget/taxes" (03). If it mentions in passing its impact on the budget generally or does not extensively compare it to other budgetary line items, then include it as part of the topic in which the policy is best tied to.

Codes

Domestic Issues

01. Abortion/family planning – Also includes, but not limited to, Planned Parenthood, March for Life, and reproductive health.
02. Agriculture – While generally about issues relating to farming, could also include food system related issues and the Farm Bill.
03. Budget/Taxes – Does not include discussion of passing non-budgetary items through Budget Reconciliation process, but does include any spending cuts or increases.
04. Business/Economy (note: these two were different codes in previous study) – Distinct from budget or taxes discussion, this is more related to the health of the broader economy and employment issues. Any reference to Trump Organization business holdings or to Trump's business will most likely fall in a topic related to Trump, perhaps most likely as "Personal Profile/Character" (80)
05. Campaign Finance – Includes articles about campaign spending or donations, and bills related to campaign finance reform
06. Civil Rights/liberties – Includes civil rights/liberties protests and events as well as more general discussion. Some specific civil rights issues that may come up include Black Lives Matter, transgender rights, same sex marriage, and privacy/police search issues. Women's rights, though, has its own category (22). Hate crimes and crime specifically targeting specific groups are included here. Other types of crime should be included in "Crime incidents or trends" (07).

07. Crime incidents or trends – Includes specific incidents as well as broader trends. Do not include domestic terrorism – that is coded as “defense – US domestic” (10).
08. Crime/Gun policy - This category specifically addresses crime *policy*. Specific crime incidents go in “Crime incidents or trends” (07). This also includes any discussion of prison or other criminal justice policy and gun control.
09. Culture/Arts
10. Defense – US domestic – Includes discussion of DHS, terrorism incidents, arrests, and threats inside the U.S., and other threats to national security within the U.S. For example, discussion of a threat to national security posed by immigration would go in this category, whereas discussion of immigration more generally would go in Immigration (17).
11. Disasters – Coverage of human or natural disasters, including funding for recovery.
12. Education
13. Election Process - Includes non-election discussion of democracy, such as separation of powers, discussion of democratic norms, and legitimacy of election results and voting fraud. Discussions of campaign finance should not be included here, but instead in its own category (05).
14. Environment - Includes climate change, conservation, pollution
16. Health Care – Includes everything health or retirement related, from Obamacare to Medicare, Medicaid. If the article talks about “entitlements,” it usually refers to programs that belong in this category (with the exception of Social Security).
17. Immigration – Includes broader trends and law changes, including by executive order. References to the wall at the Mexico border will most likely go here. Stories about the ‘travel ban’ may likely go here as well. References to crime conducted by immigrants will most likely be coded in this category.
18. Labor – Includes rules/laws about labor unions as well as other workplace issues.
19. Poverty – Includes trends as well as programs like Welfare (TANF) and food stamps (SNAP).
20. Religion
21. Science/Technology – Includes any science funding or new development discussion (except related to climate change). Also includes changes in policy about the Internet or new technology.
22. Women’s rights – Specific language about abortion or reproductive rights should be coded as “Abortion/family planning” (01), but referring to women’s rights more broadly, or protests about women’s rights, go here.
23. Social security
24. Energy – Includes any discussion of domestic energy issues, including solar, wind, and other renewables, and gas (including fracking), oil, and coal. This could be about related regulations, funding, or other issues.
25. Media – Includes any discussion of media, including reaction to or criticism of media stories or figures by Trump or his administration.

29. Domestic issues other (use rarely)

Foreign Affairs Issues

- 50. Foreign Trade – Includes open trade agreements, such as NAFTA and TPP, as well as specific tariffs or other trade barriers.
- 51. Iraq War/Iraq generally
- 52. Afghanistan War/Afghanistan generally
- 53. Iran – Includes any discussion of the nuclear agreement
- 54. China – Includes trade discussion, currency manipulation, as well as China's relationship with other countries
- 55. Russia – this includes stories about Russia's interference in the election, and will most likely include Russia's ties to the Trump campaign
- 56. North Korea
- 57. Syria – Do not include attacks from ISIS here. This should be about the war itself, Syrian government, or pieces on the effects of the war.
- 58. European Union/NATO – Include EU policies, dissatisfaction with EU, comparisons to Brexit.
- 59. International Institutions (Other) – Include articles about any other international institutions, such as the United Nations, World Trade Organization, or World Health Organization.
- 60. Israel/Palestine – Include discussion of the peace process, as well as issues relating to that (such as settlements or attacks) as well as discussion of Trump's relationship with Israeli or Palestinian leadership.
- 61. International terrorism – All terrorism outside of the US.
- 62. Middle East other
- 63. Foreign Issues other

Personal/Political Issues

These codes refer to issues relating to the Presidency and not specific public affairs issues.

- 80. Personal profile/character – This is a broad category that includes, but not limited to, articles about Trump's unique profile – his rise to power, being an outsider, or having not held political or military office – as well as those about his personal character. Articles about the character of other members of his Administration should NOT be included here.
- 81. Presidential appointments/nominations – official – Any articles about the nominations themselves or problems they encounter in their nomination, or scandals after they are appointed or confirmed. Accomplishments, failures, and profiles of all administration AND Pence most likely will go here. Keep in mind that this is when it is not about a specific policy.
- 82. Political skills/management (this would include bipartisanship in action) – Includes any discussion of long or short term strategy distinct from the public affairs issue. References (either positive or negative) to his skills as

a communicator, veracity of statements, or being a straight talker, will most likely go here.

83. Political philosophy/ideology (includes the theory of working for bipartisanship) - Include any discussion of conservative (or other) values broadly or how actions fit into a broader ideological worldview. Any philosophy tied to a specific policy should be coded for the specific topic of that policy. For instance, a story about Trump's populism in contrast to the projected outcomes of his health care bill would likely be coded as 'health care.'

Other

99. Other

VARIABLE B - Underlying Frame

Definition: This captures what the president is really being evaluated on, based on the journalist's innuendos or comments from outside sources—in three arenas. One way to think about this is to consider which component of the President and his administration is being evaluated or referenced in the article. How does this reflect on Trump? A story about Trump's first G7 meeting could be evaluating him on how he will communicate with and relate to these leaders (his leadership), the agenda he brings (ideology) or how his limited experience in global affairs will affect the G7 (character).

This variable can be a little trickier than other variables, but should be identifiable by counting the comments and innuendos. If you are not sure of the frame, leave the code blank and show it to your supervisor.

Simple Plurality Rule w/ default to the top: In deciding the frame, coders should mark each paragraph as being about a particular frame. Then they should count the graphs to see which frame received the most coverage. The one with the most coverage becomes the frame. If two frames receive equal coverage, coders should choose the one that is the top most mention. (This is known as the *simple plurality rule (the frame that gets the most coverage) with default to the top*. IF NO FRAME HAS 50% OR MORE, PLEASE BRING TO THE SUPERVISOR'S ATTENTION.

Bracket rule: If after analyzing the entire story for frame, one or more paragraphs remain(s) bracketed as a paragraph where equal arguments could be made for more than one frame, discount that paragraph in your final count.

Leadership/Character rule: Code as Leadership if the paragraph specifically deals with political action and the President/Administration's leadership (or lack thereof) in promoting it or in executing a policy. Character assessments more broadly are examinations of the President's personal characteristics.

Codes

1. **Leadership Ability/Skills** - Political savvy, decisiveness, management style, intelligence, skillfulness or lack thereof. This could be, but not limited to, leadership concerning a policy, but the evaluation is not so much on the particular policy but on his leadership in advancing it. Not following through on campaign promises will most likely go here.
2. **Core Ideology/Agenda** - What the president wants to do and where the president wants to take the country. Discussion of how policy position have changed/evolved will most likely go here.
3. **Character/Personality/Temperament/Honesty** - What the president is like as a man. A personal and interior evaluation.

VARIABLE D - Tone of Frame

Definition: This captures the tone of the underlying frame. Is the evaluation positive, negative or neutral about the underlying frame?

For this variable, code positive, negative and neutral for each SENTENCE, not the valence of each paragraph. In each paragraph, there may be multiple sentences. Code each sentence in relation to the frame of the entire paragraph.

As you mark and count each outside comment (direct or indirect) or journalist's innuendo, also mark whether that sentence is positive, negative or neutral. Do not count straight facts included in the story, but **do** count all other sentences, including those made by the president or his staff and well as the headline and subhead.

ONLY COUNT INNUENDOS, COMMENTS AND ASSERTIONS ABOUT THE FRAME BEING EVALUATED.

Codes

1. Positive
2. Neutral
3. Negative

Note: Journalists sometimes lead into a quote from an outside source by saying what that person is going to say. If it is truly just a lead in that comes just before the quote, DO NOT count it as a separate assertion. But if the journalist offers any disagreement or is excessive in how he or she leads into the quote (i.e. by using very strong language) then DO count it as its own assertion.

Definitions

Positive assertion: A positive assertion is a statement that portrays the president in a good way or indicates the subject is doing well in the horserace aspect of politics. There is often a judgmental term used (such as *good, well, better*), but that is not necessary. If the clear inference a reader would get from the assertion and the context of that assertion is a positive one for the subject, then it is considered a positive assertion.

Neutral Assertion: Any statement that is not deemed positive or negative.

Negative Assertion: The opposite of the positive assertion. It portrays the subject in a bad way or that they are losing in the horserace component of politics. This will often include words like *badly, losing, less than, or trouble*. But those words are not necessary to be there if the clear inference is a negative one.

Rules:

President focus rule: We only count how the sentence is positive or negative toward the frame applied to Trump and the Trump administration. If the sentence has nothing to do with Trump or the administration, do not give it any code for tone.

Double Value Rule: The headline, subhead and the sentences in the first paragraph should count double, so that a positive headline would actually count as 2 positive marks.

2:1 Rule: To be coded as a positive story, there needs to be twice as many positive statements as negative, and vice-versa for a story to be coded as negative.

Specificity Rule: In evaluating tone, coders must be able to identify specific terms or language by the reporter as evidence of innuendo (not including outside comments).

Neutral Default: When in doubt, default to neutral.

Politician Self-promotion Rule: to code a politician's own remarks as positive for him or herself, the assertion must contain a specific word or words that speaks to the good (or bad) that the politician would bring. This INCLUDES such words as: *solve, advance, fix, resolve*. Words that do NOT usually carry clear tone are words like *work toward, support, maintain, believe*.

Personal Voice: Often when a politician is given his or her own voice to talk about the good they have done or their qualifications, this is a positive comment.

Facts Stand Alone Rule: Facts about a politician (graduated at the top of his class, lost her first bid for office, etc) are not considered positive or negative in and of themselves.

Poll Number Rule (mostly for campaigns): Poll numbers are not automatically considered positive or negative. Poll numbers are considered positive or negative only when they are used in a way to suggest a politician is winning or losing popularity or that the popularity of their policies is changing. If saying an opponent is becoming more popular than the President, this is often coded as positive for the person leading and negative for the person trailing. Poll numbers within parenthesis should be ignored.

Examples:

Senate Democrats are more popular than Trump in the latest poll by 6 percentage points.

This is negative for Trump.

Trump's approval ratings have increased by 10% in the last week.
This is positive for Trump.

Fifty percent of Americans say they agree with Trump's immigration position.

This is neutral unless there are other statements around the quote saying this is positive or negative, e.g. as a change from previous popularity.

39% of voters know Trump owns his business.

This is neutral.

Hypothetical Rule: The use of 'could' or some other hypothetical term is not automatically positive or negative. Instead, use the words that surround the hypothetical word to determine if the statement has a positive or negative assessment.

Example – His controversial tweets could prove to weaken his chances at getting the executive order past the courts -- *The word 'weaken' is negative and so is this example despite the use of 'could.'*

Past Problem with Resolution: If an event is listed that attributes errors to a politician in the past but also states how he or she is avoiding or fixing these past errors, this is probably not a negative and is likely neutral.

Example – Although previously opposed to increased educational spending, Trump reversed this position in his most recent budget, which expanded education spending. – *this is neutral.*

Recorded Clip Rule: When a show plays a recorded clip of someone discussing the campaign, each statement within the clip is considered a separate statement and can be counted as separate assertions accordingly. Do not group the entire clip together as one assertion. *Refer to the broadcast guidelines for when a statement ends.*

Sentence with Two Parts: If a **sentence** has two parts and one part is positive and the other is negative, consider the sentence a neutral sentence overall.

Confusing Sentence Rule: If a sentence is too confusing to easily understand, code the sentence as neutral even if it appears that there might be a positive or negative element to it. We only want to count assertions that are fairly obvious to the reader.

Attack and Response Rule: If a criticism of the subject is in a story, and the subject is given the chance to rebut that charge in the story, count the criticism as

negative statement and the rebuttal as positive. If they are in the same paragraph, count as neutral.

Criticism Only Rule: Just saying that someone is criticizing another politician is not automatically enough to count as a positive or negative statement for either person. There must be some additional detail about the criticism for it to count as a negative and/or positive assertion.

Also, a statement that someone is criticizing another candidate is not a positive statement for the person doing the attacking, unless there is added detail as to the effectiveness of the attack.

Examples – Trump attacked Warren during his rally in Maine.
This alone would NOT be positive or negative.

Warren criticized Trump's position on banking regulation.
This would be negative for Trump.

Inslee sharply criticized Trump's immigration ban in the lawsuit – a charge that the Appeals Court took into account when issuing their ruling against the ban.
This would be negative for Trump.

Quote Introduction Rule: If a journalist introduces a direct quote and, in the subsequent sentence, then the quote appears to be essentially the exact same point as was mentioned in the introduction, count the two sentences together as one statement. DO NOT count the introduction and quote as separate sentence.

Example:

Reporter: Later that day, Trump said that, unlike Obama, he had inherited a mess and knew how to fix it.

Trump: I inherited a mess, but I'm the only person who knows how to fix it.

This would count as one statement total.

VARIABLE E – **TRIGGER**

Definition: Designates the action, event, or editorial decision that makes this news, thus triggering its publication. What caused this story to be published on this particular occasion?

Enterprise Rule – When a journalist/reporter is exposing a story that reveals or discovers something, then it would be counted as a press driven trigger (50). National Security Advisor Michael Flynn had ties to Russia, which was discovered by a reporter, would be coded as this.

Appointment rule – If the article was written because a presidential appointment makes a statement or does an action, then code it into its appropriate category tied to that individual (e.g. cabinet member would be Trump administration (02), and Gorsuch would be Supreme Court/courts (13)). But if it is written because of the actual nomination of the individual, and not about something they said, then code it as “Trump action/statement” (01).

Examples of things that will be included in statements: Many of the categories include statements from various individuals. These include, but not limited to specific things that were said in speeches, social media, meeting, interviews, press conferences, addresses, press releases, formal and informal statements.

Examples of things that will be included in actions: Many of the categories include actions from various individuals. These include, but are not limited to signing executive orders, meetings with groups/individuals, nominating individuals to cabinet or courts (in the case of Trump – 01), writing and submitting bills, and other personal/job related activities such as travel.

| | Code | Label | Notes |
|--------------------------------------|------|-------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Trump/ Trump Administration Triggers | 01 | Trump action/statement | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Actions include, but are not limited to signing executive actions, meeting with groups/individuals, nominating individuals to the cabinet or courts, travel.- Statements include, but not limited to things that were said in speeches, social media, meetings, in a media interview, press conference.- References to Trump’s speeches, addresses, rallies in general should be put here. |
| | 02 | Other member of Trump administration statement/action | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- This includes the actions and statements of political appointees and nominees themselves, including things that they said in their nomination |

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|------------------------------|----|---------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | | | process (such as SoS Rex Tillerson). - Their actual nomination by Trump is a “Trump action” |
| | 03 | Press Secretary | - This includes just Spicer and Huckabee-Sanders |
| | | | |
| Other Government Triggers | 10 | Republican elected official statement/action (Federal) | |
| | 11 | Democratic elected official statement/action (Federal) | Includes any independents who caucus with the Democrats |
| | 12 | Federal government agency statement/report/action | Includes employment numbers and other economic indicators released by a federal agency |
| | 13 | Supreme Court/other courts statements/rulings | The nomination of Gorsuch itself is a “Trump action”, but anything that Gorsuch says outside of the congressional hearing should be included here. |
| | 14 | Congressional hearings/action/vote | Including nomination hearings. |
| | 15 | Unelected/former U.S. political party/figure statement/action | Such as DNC/RNC; Hillary Clinton; Condoleeza Rice; Susan Rice. |
| | 16 | Other | e.g. state/local govt |
| | | | |
| Economy Trigger | 20 | Economic performance/business actions | Includes major hirings/layoffs, stock market activity Does not include performance indicators released by the government or individual CEO statements |
| | | | |
| Outside Actor Driven Trigger | 30 | Expert/ research organization statement or action | |
| | 31 | Interest group or labor/union statement/report/action | |
| | 32 | Other | Includes, but not limited to religious institution, celebrity statement, citizen statement |
| | | | |

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|--------------------------------------|-----|-------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Trump Family/ Business Trigger | 40 | Trump Organization/family statement/action | Includes the First Lady. Does not include Jared Kushner or Ivanka Trump. |
| Press Driven Trigger | 50 | Press initiative, interview, or statement | - Includes investigative/press initiative, statements from journalists/organizations, and interviews requested by the press. - If the trigger is because of something that was said to a journalist in an interview/report/other article, then it should be coded in the statement/action of the appropriate person. |
| Planned Political Event Trigger | 60 | Inauguration | |
| | 61 | Organized Gatherings | Such as Women's March and March for Life |
| | 62 | Summits/Meetings | |
| | 63 | Other | |
| Unplanned External Event Trigger | 70 | Terrorism | Action or statement. |
| | 71 | Unplanned protests and civil unrest | |
| | 72 | Other | Including crime, weather, accidents |
| Foreign Government Trigger | 80 | Foreign government/politician statement/action/report | |
| Polls Trigger | 90 | Public Opinion Polls | |
| Other Trigger | 100 | Other | |

VARIABLE F – Sources Cited

Skip this variable if “No” was selected in Variable G (source presence in the story).

This includes direct or indirect quotes, citations from the sources listed below. Check off the box for anytime a person/group is cited as a source. The same person/group might be quoted several times in a story, but only check off their box once. Each source is a different variable, a check means that the source was included in the article. Leaving it blank means that it was not included.

When in doubt search on Google. If you are unsure if an organization is a research organization or an advocacy organization, search in their mission pages.

Source Rule: A person, organization or publication is a source if:

- a. He/She/It is the subject of a direct or indirect quote
- b. He/She/It is being interviewed
- c. He/She/It is clearly labeled as the source of factual information (hyperlinks & images captions do not count, but social media embedded in the article count)
- d. Do not include links as the source. Must be cited in the article itself.
- e. Tweets and other social media posts embedded in the article counts.
- f. There is no other category – we are not tracking sources not listed below.

One category rule: Do not check off more than 1 box for any individual person or group.

Vague rule: If a story only refers to a vague group such as “Republicans say” or “Economists say,” do NOT count as a source. If there is any level of detail, such as “Congressional Republicans say,” that is enough to count.

Label rule: If a person or group could fit into more than one category, which is not clarified above in a previous rule, select the option that fits how they are labeled in the story. A person who is identified a member of an organization, group or association also counts as the organization, group or association and not as a member of the public.

Poll rule: If there is a poll number of any sort, from any type of organization, then include it in poll. So, if a poll number comes from an organization, that might be considered an expert, include it in poll. But if an organization’s finding or conclusion is mentioned without a poll number, then include it in the “Expert” variable. Key words for polls will include survey, polls, data, think tanks.

Administration rule: Any and all of Trump’s administration is included in Trump’s administration, including ambassadors. This applies to all previous statements of the individual as well. A nominee is considered part of the administration. If they were in the Obama administration, but still a member of the Trump administration because the position was not confirmed yet, then they are considered part of the Trump administration. Once they no longer are part of

the Trump administration, they would not be coded as Trump administration (e.g. Sally Yates). Any statement after a member is no longer a part of the administration (or after they were not confirmed, if a nominee) is not included.

Journalist/news org rule: a journalist/news organization is only a source if they are from an organization other than the one who produced the story. Journalists from the organization from which the story was produced are not included as a source.

Official document rule: Any citation of an official document that is an action of the administration, such as an executive order, is not included. However, a statement to the press, even if a document (as opposed to a verbal statement), goes in Trump administration.

- Trump
- Trump Administration (other than Trump; includes Jared Kushner and Ivanka Trump; do not include Sean Spicer)
- Sean Spicer (press secretary) or Sarah Huckabee-Sanders (deputy press secretary). Unnamed spokespeople go in Trump administration
- Trump Organization/Family Member (including First Lady; Does not include Jared and Ivanka)
- Democratic elected official (federal) – includes Democratic leaning independents (i.e. Bernie Sanders and Angus King)
- Republican elected official (federal)
- Issue-based and/or Interest groups
- Experts/research organization (not including polls – see rule above)
- Polls
- Other news organization or journalist
- Citizen

VARIABLE G – **REFUTATION**

Did the author/journalist directly refute or invalidate any statement made by any of the individuals/groups of individuals listed below? This should be a very cut-and-dry, defined refutation of a statement (see example). Judgements about his performance, personality, or policies without any direct refutation should not be coded as a refutation.

The following are the ways in which the author can refute a claim:

1. Yes, and provides evidence or argument
2. Yes, but does not back the refutation up with evidence or argument
3. No

Examples of a claim refutation: When a journalist provides an argument for why something is not accurate/correct/true; says that Trump/administration provides “no evidence” for a claim they made; Explicitly “fact checks” a statement and says it’s incorrect. If, in a fact check, the author says it is “mostly” true, do not include it as a refutation.

Ex: “Meanwhile, Trump has sought to refocus the controversy from his own alleged ties to the Russian Kremlin to that of his former opponent’s, writing on Twitter that Clinton paved the way to sell large masses of uranium to Russia and for personal gain – a previously debunked and unfounded claim.”

We are coding for refutation of any of the following:

- Trump
- Press secretary (Spicer/Huckabee-Sanders)
- A member of the Trump administration
- Democratic elected official
- Republican elected official
- Another news organization/journalist

“No Evidence” rule: If the author claims that the subject was unable to provide evidence supporting their claim, it will likely be considered a refutation that includes evidence or argument. The reasoning here is that no journalist would reasonably be able to demonstrate said lack of evidence on the part of the subject.

“He said/she said” rule: If an article said that one person said something and another person said something else that opposes that view or fact, this is not considered a refutation. This is just a disagreement between two parties. This is specifically when the author makes the claim that the statement or claim made by the individual is wrong. They can use other actors to back up their claim, but simply saying one person said something, and another said something else does not count.

Link rule: If an article refutes something, doesn't directly provide evidence in the article itself, but links to something, that would be considered the evidence (and code as 1). You do not need to click on the link.