

DOCUMENTATION: CODING NARRATIVES

June 17, 2014

1 Defining Averted Lynchings

Averted lynchings were selected from the pool of articles turned up from systematic searches of the ProQuest Historical Newspaper database. These newspaper articles are primarily from the *Atlanta Constitution*, *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Baltimore Sun*, and *Chicago Daily Tribune*, and a handful of other papers.

Our search terms when compiling news reports on averted lynchings were “lynch” and “mob.” In each case, a wildcard, “*” was appended to the term, ensuring that all variations of the term would be captured. That is to say, articles are returned not only when a mob has attempted to lynch a prisoner, but when a group of lynchers has mobbed a jail or were suspected of mobbing a man before they lynched him. Using these broader search terms with the wildcard attached also minimizes problems inherent in optical character recognition.

We define an averted lynching as an event in which (1) a mob of three or more individuals has formed – or is perceived by contemporary observers as imminently likely to form; (2) for the express purpose of illegally killing a person under the pretext of service to justice or tradition; and (3) a clearly legible and successful intervention is made with the intent of foreclosing the possibility of mob violence. In other words:

- . if the mob (or the expected mob) is not greater than 3 (not expected to be greater than 3), the event is not an averted lynching;
- . if there is no clear indication of a formed mob (only fear of lynching or rumor of lynching mentioned) AND no clearly legible intervention is taken, the event is not an averted lynching;
- . if the target of the mob is not accused of a crime or of a race-caste norm violation, the event is not an averted lynching;
- . if the entire newspaper report is built on a first-person account (testimony) which is not backed up by any other source, the event is not an averted lynching (this happened in one case in the entire search process).

2 List of Variables

Completed: Binary variable: 1, if it is a completed lynching, 0 if it is an averted lynching.

2.1 Time

Year: Year of the attempt/intervention. A four-digit number between 1882 and 1930.

Mo: Month of the attempt/intervention. A two-digit number between 1 and 12. If missing, 99.

Day: Day of the attempt/intervention. A two-digit number between 1 and 31. If missing, 99.

2.2 Geography

There is a general rule we followed when coding the geographical locations. We wanted to locate these events in physical space on a map; meaning that we put down the *current* name of the closest populated place where the event was reported to happen. In the great majority of the cases these places still exist under the same name. In a smaller minority names have changed or the place does not exist any more. Those instances required more careful attention and research. Where necessary we assigned the name to the nearest existing named place.

ST: Indicator for the state where the attempt/intervention occurred.

1 – Georgia

2 – Mississippi

3 – North Carolina

ICPSRST: The ICPSR id of the state. We merged this data with our data set when using data from the decennial censuses.

44 – Georgia

46 – Mississippi

47 – North Carolina

ICPSRNAM: The ICPSR name of the county. We merged this data with our data set when using data from the decennial censuses. It is a string with all capital letters.

ICPSRFIP: The ICPSR FIP code of the county. We merged this data with our data set when using data from the decennial censuses. It is 5 digit numeric.

NHGISNAM: The GIS name of the county. We merged this data with our data set when using GIS to map events.

mob_imputed_county: The county where the mob arose from. In case this location was not reported directly, we used a multiple step imputation procedure described in the Social Forces paper.

mob_imputed_city: The (nearest) settlement where the mob arose from. In case this location was not reported directly, we used a multiple step imputation procedure described in the Social Forces paper.

latitude2: The latitude of the event. We used GIS to calculate these coordinates and merged that with our data set.

longitude2: The longitude of the event. We used GIS to calculate these coordinates and merged that with our data set.

2.3 Details learned about the victim

Name: There are 17 variables in the database which start with “Name.” All indicate the name(s) of the mob-target(s). **Name1** is filled in all cases. If the mob-target’s name cannot be learned from the newspaper account, it is coded Unknown. In cases where the mob-target is referred to by several different names in different accounts or if the name changes over the course of the same account all names are preserved under **Namei** and **Namei_2**, where i indicates the index of the mob-target in question. In this inventory none of the mob-targets are referred more than two different ways.

Race: There are 17 variables in the database which start with “Race.” All indicate the race of the mob-target. The mob-target is assumed to be white (to avoid false-positive black mob-targets) unless otherwise indicated. The first 5 variables have underscore-versions as well (i.e. Race3_2, which belongs to Name3_2). In this data set there are only black victims reported. Our full inventory contains other configurations. The few cases (4) that contradict that are cases in which the race of the victim was not reported to be black, and was assumed to be white by convention to avoid false-positive identification, but, when we compared our inventory with the Back-Tolnay data set, we merged these events with reported white on black violence.

1 – black

2 – white

3 – other

9 – unknown

Gender: There are 12 variables indexed which start with “Gender.” All indicate the gender of the mob-target.

1 – male

2 – female

9 – unknown

Mob: This variable indicates the race of the mob/expected mob. It is assumed to be white unless otherwise indicated – which is the same convention followed by the Back-Tolnay data set.

1 – white

2 – black

3 – mixed: black and white

Mob2: This variable is either empty, or has a 9 coded in it, which indicates that the mob's race was an assumption, rather than an information stated in the article.

Primary_o and **Secondary_o:** These two variables express the nature of the crime or transgression the mob-target was accused to have committed. Mob-targets may be a accused of more than one crime. If this is the case, the **Secondary_o** takes one of the values below. The ordering of the offenses is done based on the list below starting from physical harm, sex crime, property crime and ending with social disturbance. If more than two crimes are mentioned the least serious one/s (according to this list) is/are discarded. If only one offense is declared **Secondary_o** takes the value 9.

1 – physical harm (ranging from murder to slapping)

2 – sex crime (ranging from rape to complimenting a woman)

3 – property crime (ranging from burglary to theft)

4 – social disruption (ranging from arson to being a “bad character”)

5 – other (family member of the mob-target or someone mistaken for the mob-target)

9 – none indicated

Primary_g and **Secondary_g:** These two variables express the gravity of the crime the mob-target was accused to have committed.

. physical harm:

1 – murder, attempted murder

0 – everything else (i.e. shooting, wounding, slapping)

9 – none indicated

. sex crime:

1 – rape, sexual assault, attempted sexual assault etc.

0 – everything else (i.e. entering a white woman's room, improper proposals)

9 – none indicated

. property crime:

1 – robbery, burglary

0 – everything else (i.e. horse theft, stealing)

9 – none indicated

- social disruption:

1 – arson, riot

0 – everything else (i.e. dispute, being a bad character)

9 – none indicated

This documentation describes the data we used in the Social Forces paper. Our inventory is broader, which we will share upon the publication of the current papers we are working on. Any comments or feedback are welcome by Kinga Makovi (km2730@columbia.edu) and Ryan Hagen (rah2168@columbia.edu)!