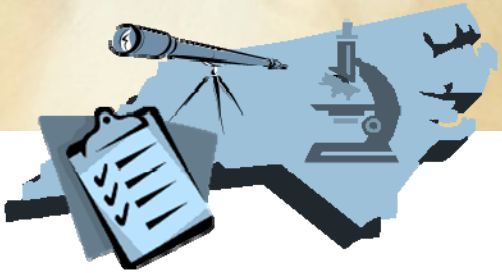

Carolina Observatory on Corporate Reputation

UNC Chapel Hill School of Journalism and Mass Communication

Craig Carroll, Assistant Professor, School of Journalism and Mass Communication

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Research Streams on Corporate Reputation and the News Media

1. Influence of news content on corporate reputation
2. Organizational influences on the production of business news
3. Media reputation as a proxy for corporate reputation

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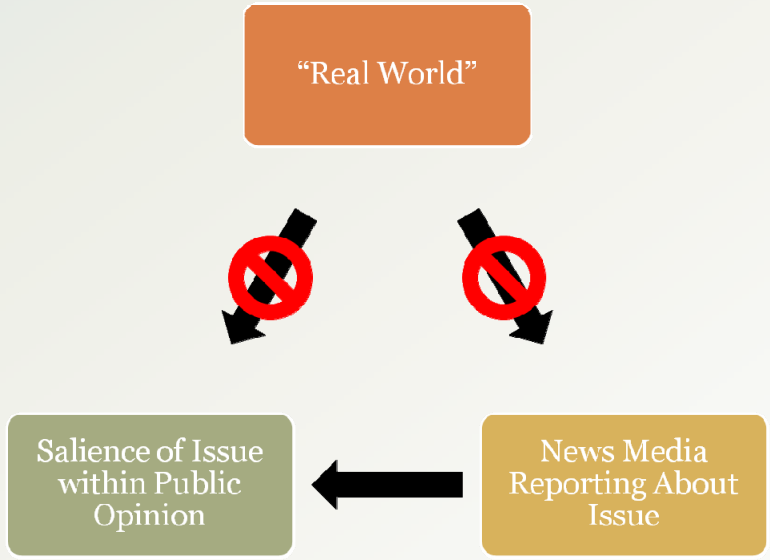
Influences of news content on corporate reputation

Agenda-setting theory:
While the news media may not be successful in telling us what to think, they are very successful in telling us (the public) what to think *about*

Previous Research in Political Communication
1. "Most Important" Public Issues of the Day
2. Political Candidates:
   2a. Name Recognition
   2b. Image of Candidates

My Research on Organizations:
3.Companies'
   3a. Organizational Prominence
   3b. Organizational Image
   3c. Corporate Associations
4. Companies around the world



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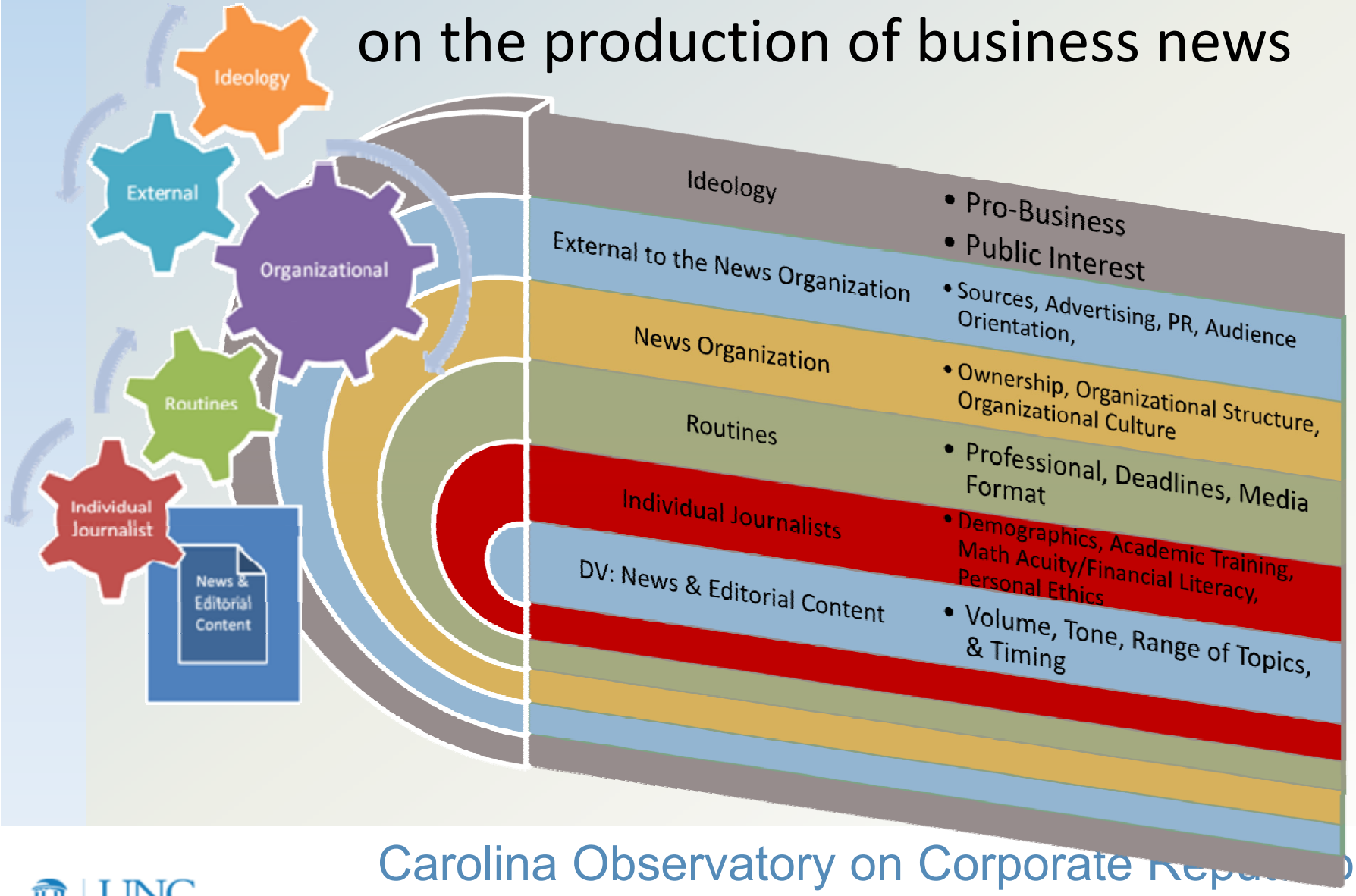
Organizational influences on the production of business news



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Media reputation as a proxy for corporate reputation

Can we:

1. Learn about journalists by studying their content produced and without talking to them?
2. Recognize public relations-generated news based on content alone?
3. Approximate or predict the effects on corporate reputation without sampling the audiences?

Implications for theory, history, and criticism.

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Research Tools

- Media Reputation 2.0
- DICTION 6.0
- Corporate partnerships at $995K since arrival at UNC.

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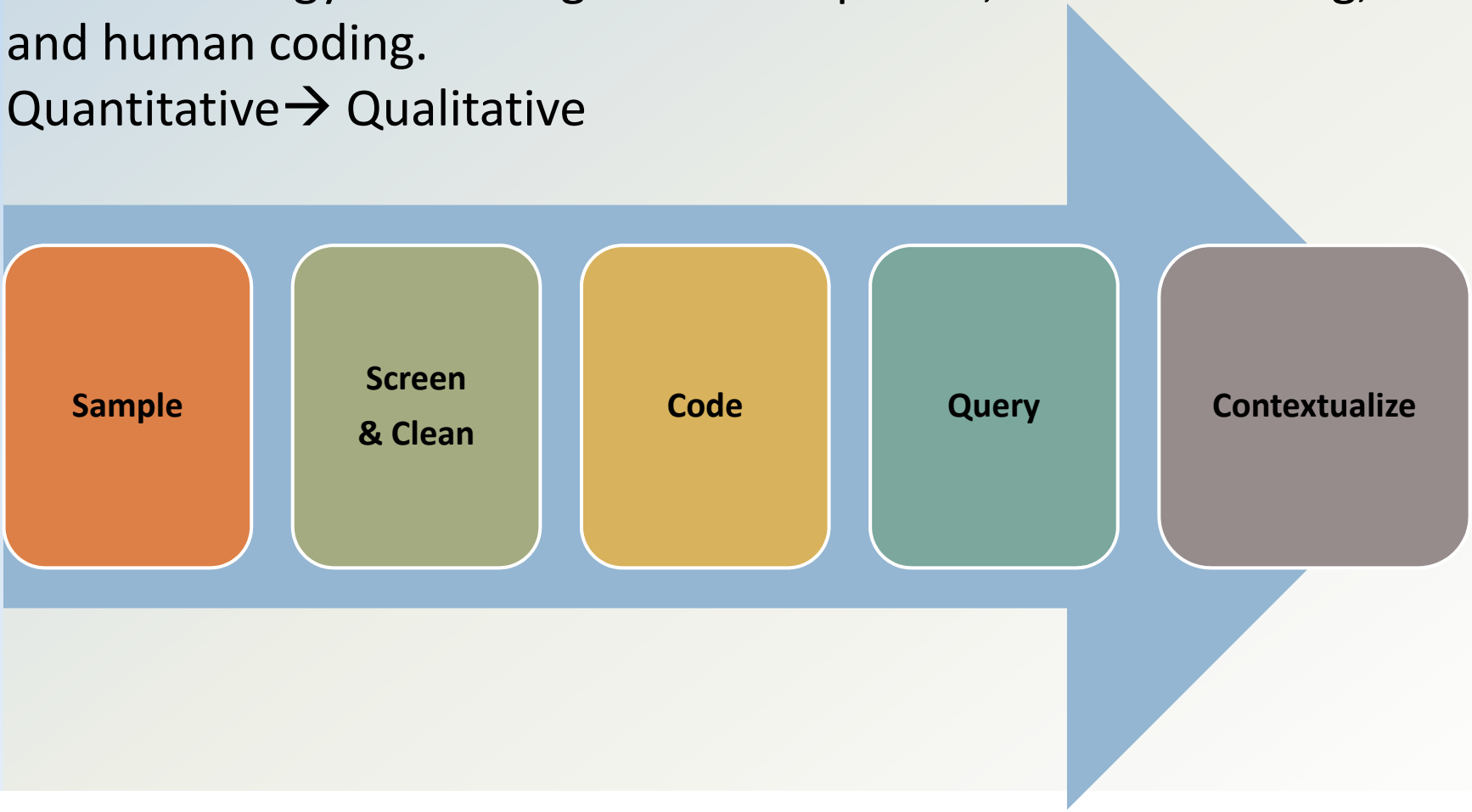
Media Reputation 2.0

A methodology combining relational queries, machine coding, and human coding.

Quantitative→ Qualitative



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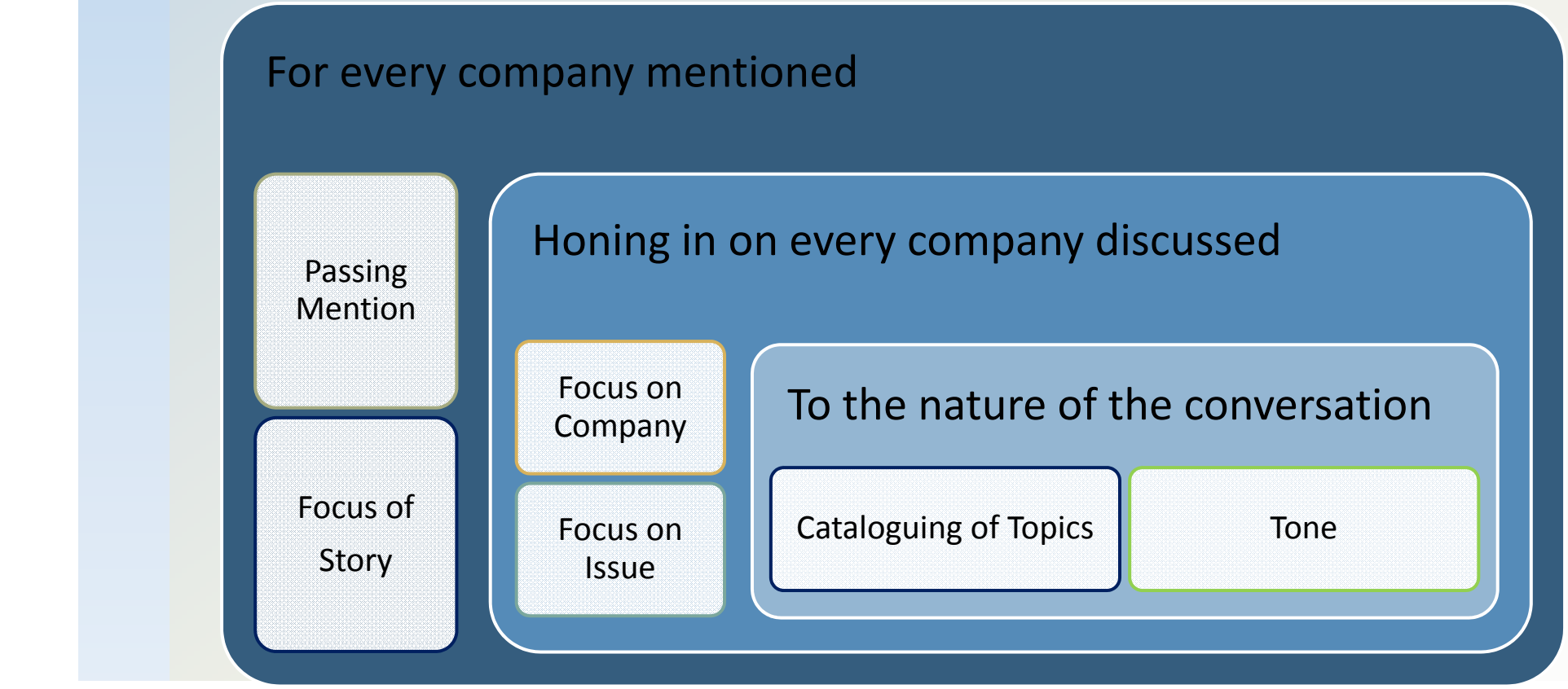
Multiple levels of analysis from the population of newspaper articles developing a list of each company *mentioned*, *discussed*, and *featured*.

Honing in on how organizations are discussed in ways that allow for *retrospective analysis, benchmarking, contextualization, & prediction*.



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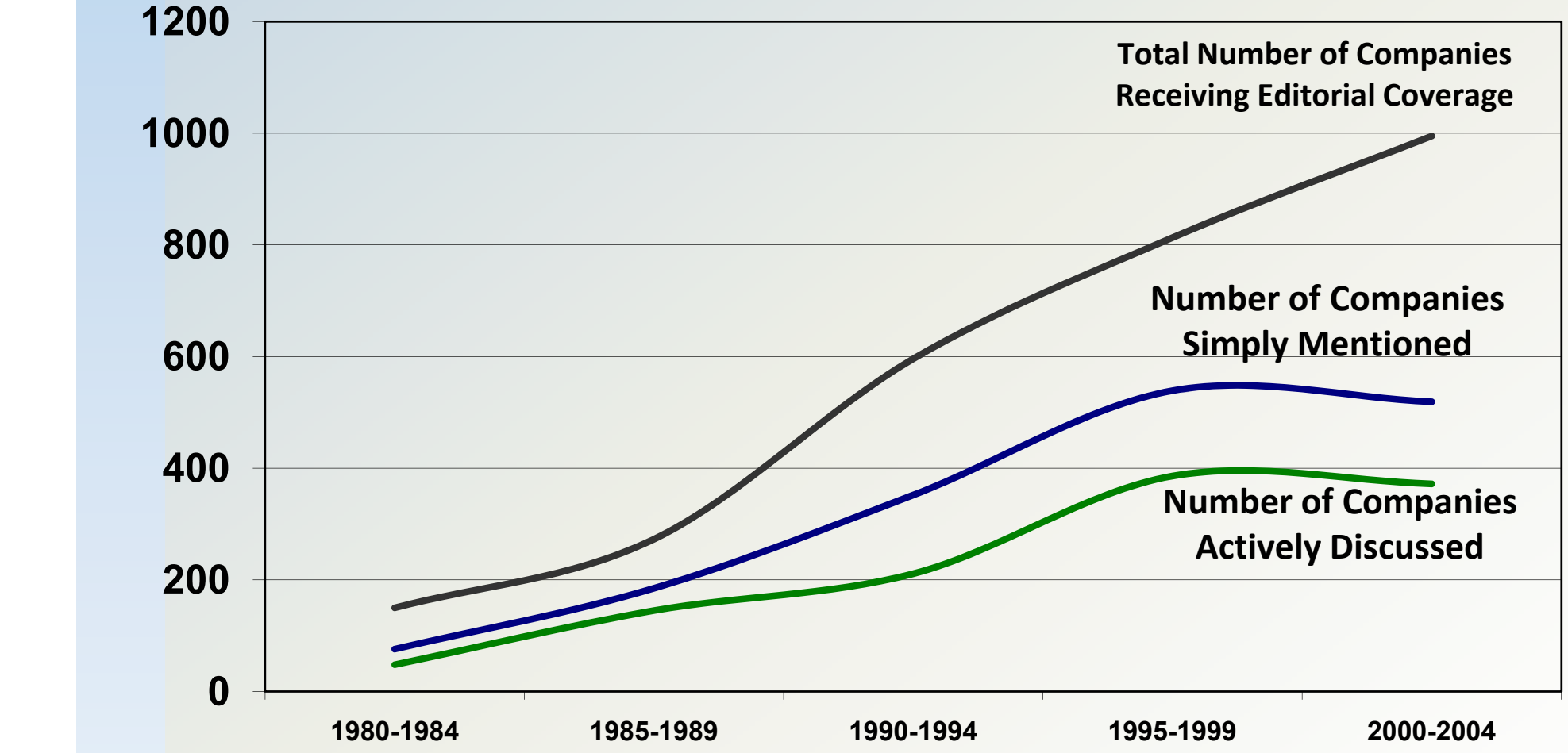
Discussion of Companies & Company Issues in Editorial Coverage



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Backing up for a moment:

What types of coding is or could be done?

- **Manifest:**
  - machine based.
  - Capturing newspaper or TV name, date, location in the paper or time of day on TV, the companies mentioned, journalist name, to the presence or absence of particular topics
  - Black or white; little disagreement in what is captured
- **Patterned:**
  - Most models start with human coding and then programmed into machine coding.
  - Frequency of topic occurrence indicates the degree of presence for companies or their issues
  - Topical Index Terms by Lexis-Nexis or DICTION 6.0
- **Projective:**
  - The New Frontier
  - Requires human coders to verify machine coding.
  - Involves human interpretation to catch humor, irony, or unique expressions
  - Concerns about reliability, validity, and transparency.

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The goal is to get to the point where 4 out of 4 coders agree 9 out of 10 times.
Fire the 5th coder…

An example of inter-rater reliability check using online database with a focus group-style "mirror"

The color indicates the coder. The check mark indicates a "focal company." The lack of check mark means the company was mentioned but is not substantially discussed.

Christopher Stern's June 20 front-page story, "WorldCom Opponents in Sync," lifted the veil from the telecommunications industry-funded campaign to manipulate public opinion by using so-called public interest groups to carry a message to unsuspecting consumers. I challenge Issue Dynamics and Verizon Communications to answer these questions:

* Who will benefit by having one fewer competitor in the market?

* Will long-distance rates increase or decrease if MCI (WorldCom's new name) is put out of business?

* What will happen to the thousands of MCI workers thrown out on the street if the company is shuttered?

The looting at WorldCom harmed investors; now let's not let it affect consumers, too. Instead of spending millions on a campaign to rid itself of a competitor, the industry should lower rates for consumers and challenge MCI to match those rates. That would be in the "public interest."

CHARLOTTE NEWTON

Chevy Chase

Select Companies in Article:

Company:	Coder 1	Coder 2	Coder 3	Coder 4	Coder 5
MCI WORLDCOM	☑	☑	☑	☑	☑
VERIZON	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
ISSUE DYNAMICS	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Is the article more about the compan(y|ies) or about the issue, both, or neither?

- ○ Compan(y|ies)
- ○ Issue
- ○ Both
- ○ Neither

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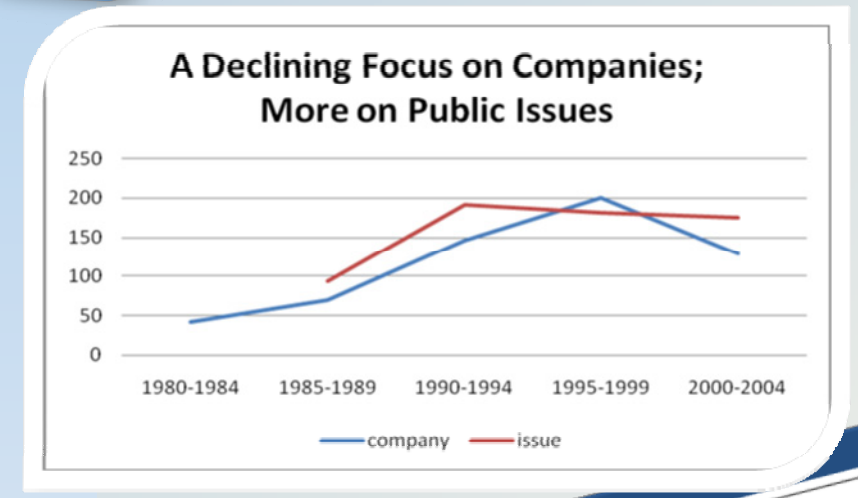

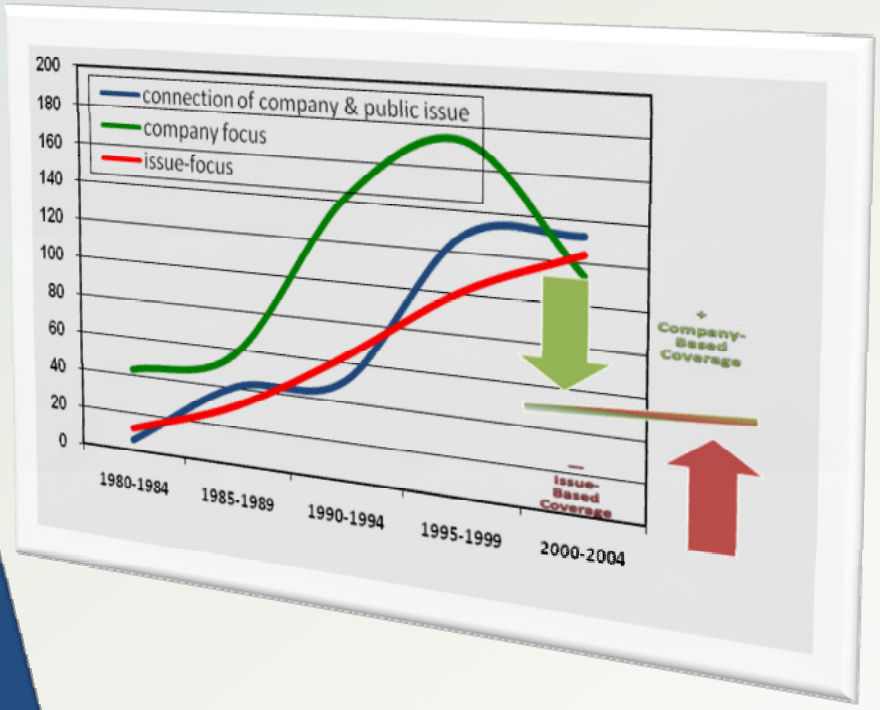

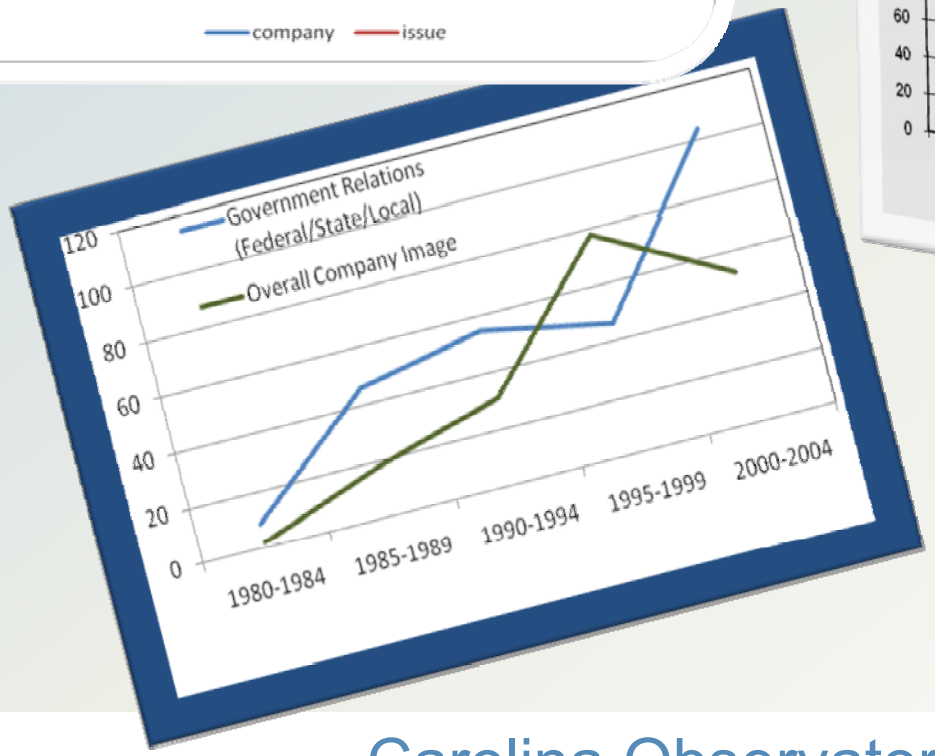

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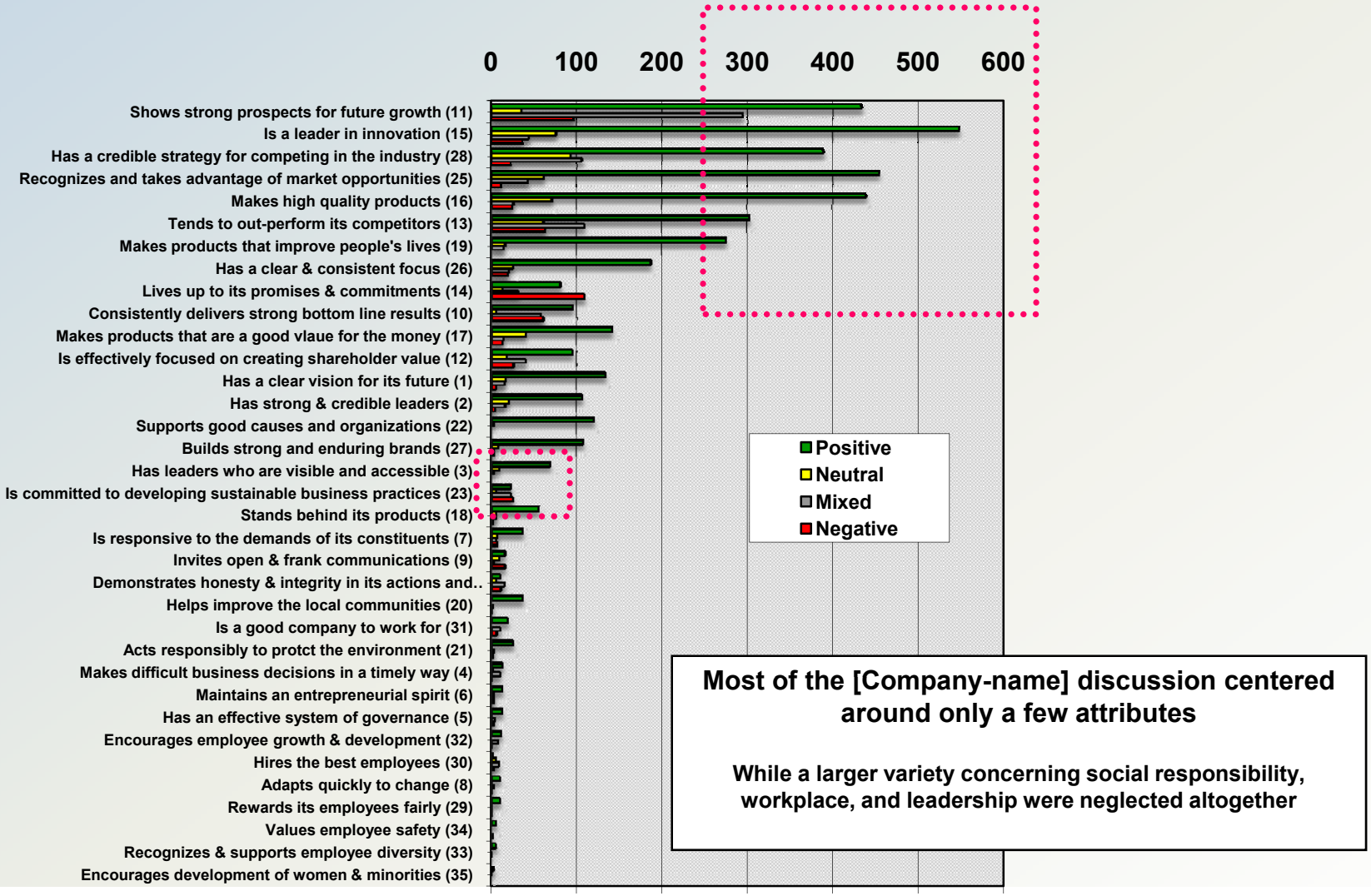
Projective coding can be used to benchmark a organization's news coverage against its core values.



Most of the [Company-name] discussion centered around only a few attributes

While a larger variety concerning social responsibility, workplace, and leadership were neglected altogether

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Using a database of analyzed news & editorials, means that we can examine different rhetorical strategies

News Outlet

- Wall Street Journal
- USA Today
- New York Times
- Washington Post

Letters to Editor in response to news connecting companies to the public interest,

written by…

- Company CEO or PR
- 3rd Party Pro-Company
- 3rd Party Anti-Company

Published in the section…

- Front Page
- Front Pg. Business Section
- Business Section
- Editorial
- Letters to Editor
- Advertorial

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How Much Response-Time Does the Letters' Editor Give for Responding?

Letters Written by Constituents	Letters Written by Company Representatives
Original Content	?
1-5 Days	✗
5- 10 Days	5-10 Days
10 Days to One Month	10 Days to One Month
1- 2 Months	✗

To What Types of Content Are Company-Related Letters to the Editor Published?

	Front Page	Other News Page	Front Page Business	Feature Article	Editorial	Letter to the Editor	Column	Guest Contributor	Advertorial
Letters Written by Constituents	✗	Other News Page	✗	✗	Editorial	Letter to the Editor	Column	Guest Contributor	Advertorial
Letters Written by Company Representatives									

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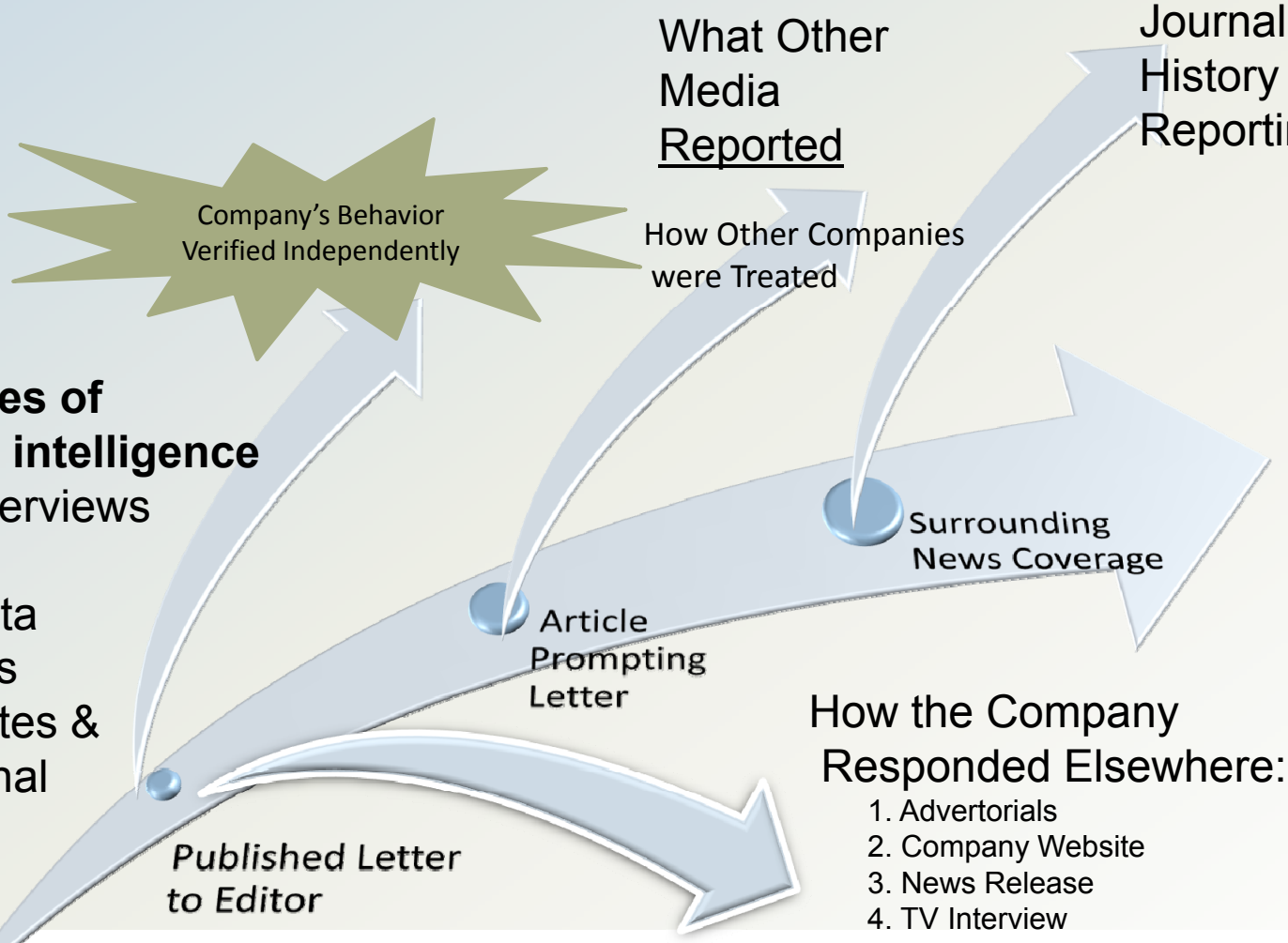
A data based approach means we can link our data (news & editorials) to other data sources…



Other sources of Competitive intelligence

- Personal Interviews
- Market data
- Financial data
- Case studies
- Personal notes &
- Organizational
- Records

How the Company Responded Elsewhere:

1. Advertorials
2. Company Website
3. News Release
4. TV Interview

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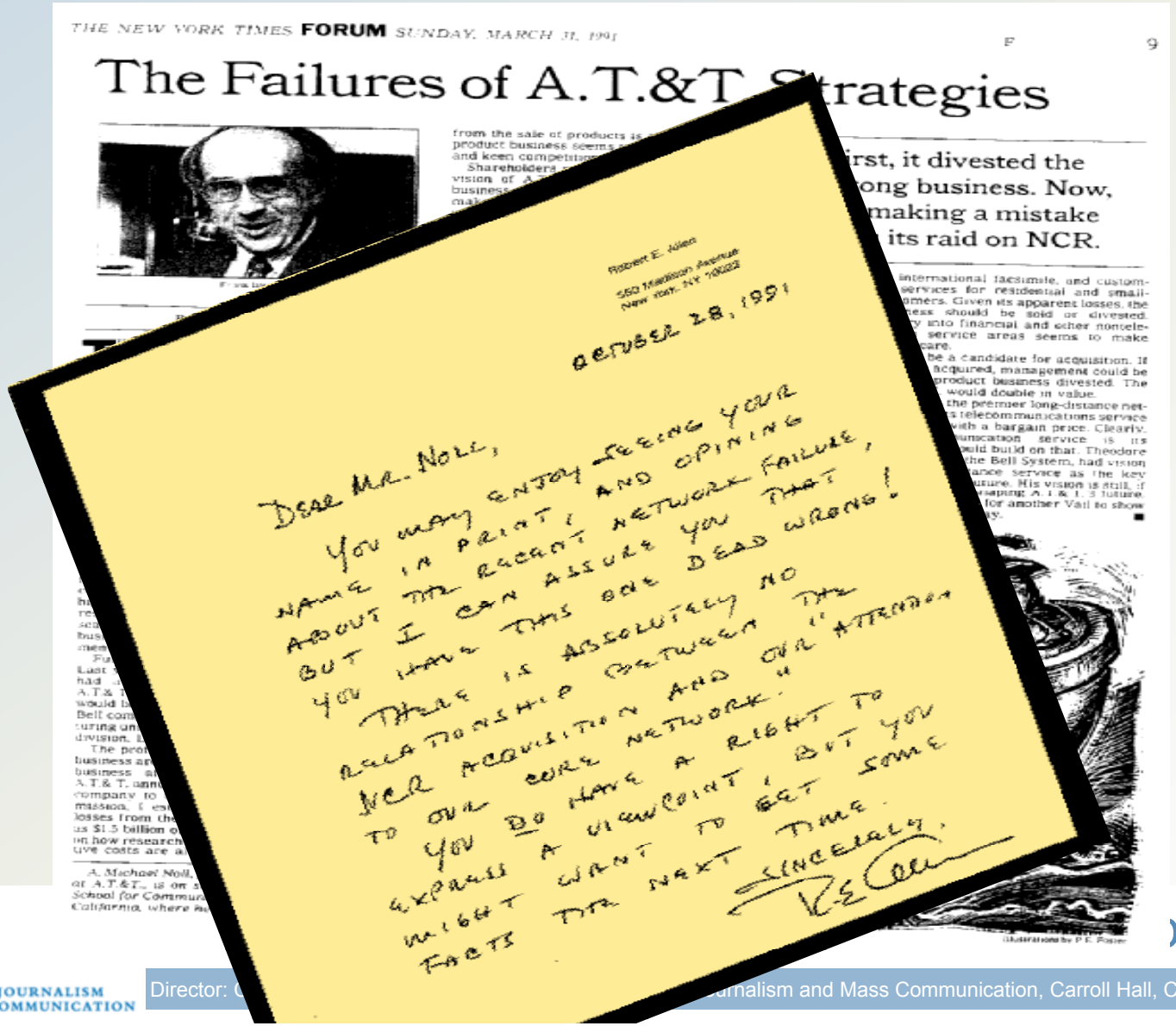
Through additional methods, we can link our news & editorial coverage to other sources of data that are relevant to the case at hand.


THE NEW YORK TIMES **FORUM** SUNDAY, MARCH 31, 1991

F 9

The Failures of A.T.&T Strategies

...irst, it divested the ...ong business. Now, ...making a mistake ... its raid on NCR.

Robert E. Allen
550 Madison Avenue
New York, NY 10022

OCTOBER 28, 1991

DEAR MR. NOLL,

YOU MAY ENJOY SEEING YOUR NAME IN PRINT, AND OPINING ABOUT THE RECENT NETWORK FAILURE, BUT I CAN ASSURE YOU THAT YOU HAVE THIS ONE DEAD WRONG!

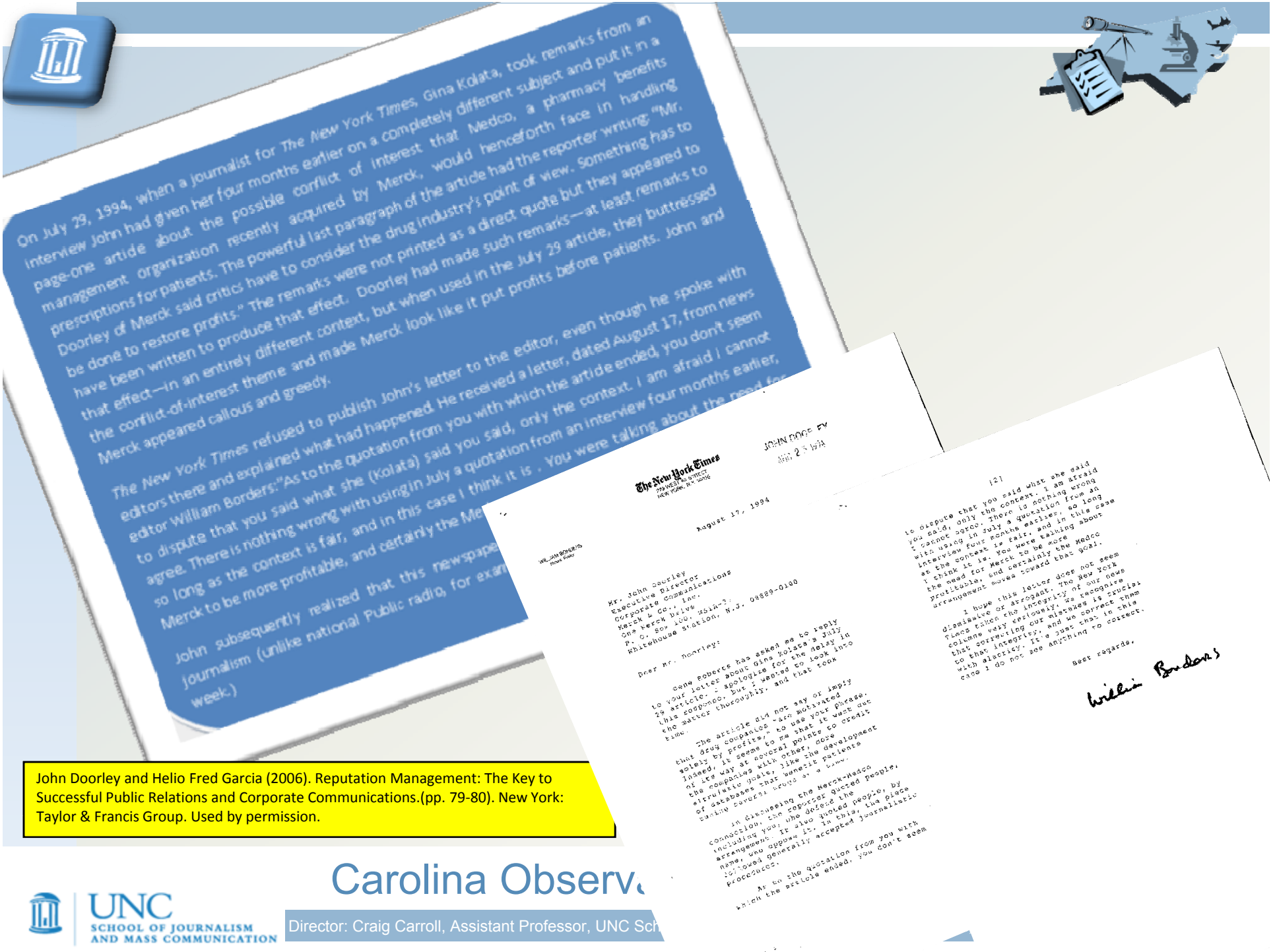
THERE IS ABSOLUTELY NO RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE NCR ACQUISITION AND OUR "ATTEMPTED TO OUR OWN NETWORK."

YOU DO HAVE A RIGHT TO EXPRESS A VIEWPOINT, BUT YOU MIGHT WANT TO GET SOME FACTS THE NEXT TIME.

SINCERELY,

R E Allen

...utation



John Doorley and Helio Fred Garcia (2006). Reputation Management: The Key to Successful Public Relations and Corporate Communications.(pp. 79-80). New York: Taylor & Francis Group. Used by permission.

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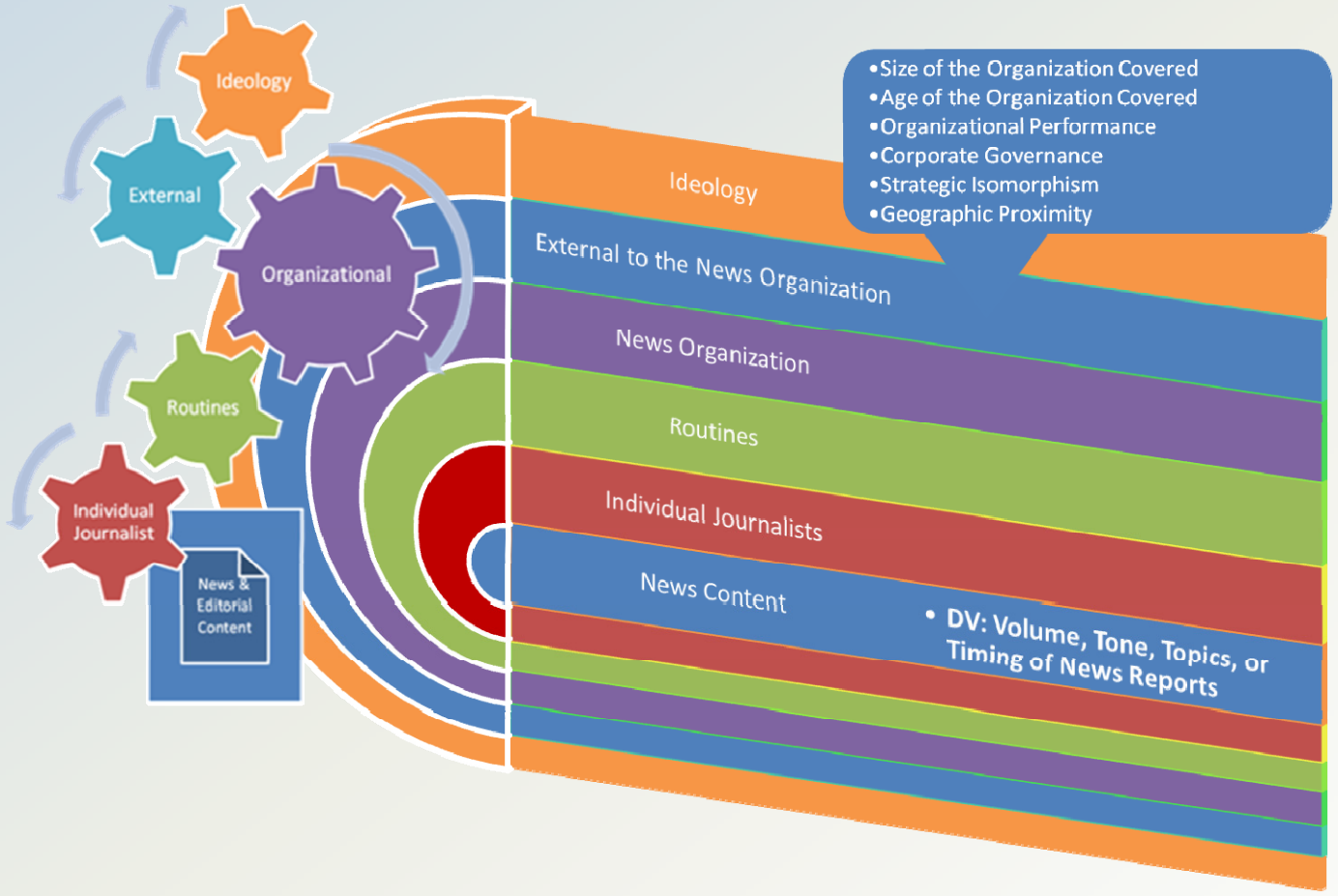

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24,000 U.S. & International News Sources

- Pre-screened database includes the major wires, TV and radio stations, daily and weekly newspapers, trade journals, and magazines, in 18 languages and from 107 countries.

7,000 Government Sources

- Government websites from the U.S. government, all 50 states, and the European Union. We also scan the Federal Register and the registers of 39 states.

1,800 Policy Sources

- Websites of state, regional, and national think tanks, trade associations and advocacy groups.

250,000 Blogs

- Weblogs (blogs), including those focused on politics, news and technology.

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Purpose

- To build a body of knowledge about public relations and corporate reputation that assists in the social, moral and economic development of North Carolina.

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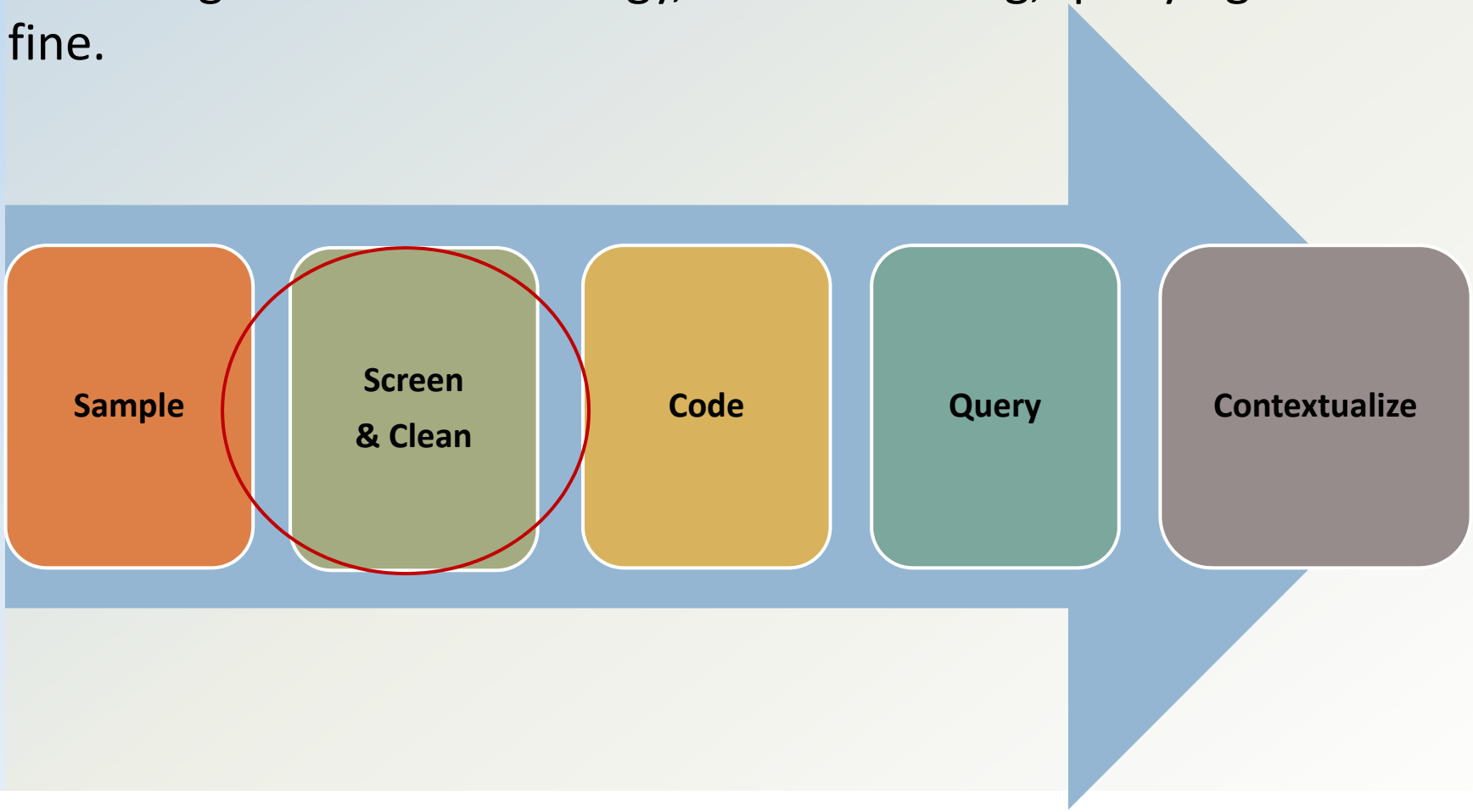
Carolina Companies

- We have selected 100 North Carolina companies that we will be monitoring on an ongoing basis:
  - Fortune 1000 companies HQ'ed in NC
  - Fortune 50 with a significant presence in NC
  - Foreign companies with U.S. affiliates HQ
  - Private Companies

Media Reputation 2.0

Returning to our methodology, contextualizing, querying are fine.



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OCR Membership Roster Fall 2008

Officer	Role	Students	Year
King, Marianna	Senior Editor	Lee, Sun Young	2nd Year Ph.D. Student
Sarah Frazier	Events	Huang, Nell	1st Year Ph.D. Student
Natalie Williams	Asst. Director, Undergraduate Research		
Josh Criscoe	Webmaster	May-Lynne Chen-Contino	Senior
Stephanie Nobles	Historian	Becca Denison	Senior
		CC Glenn	Senior
		Lauren Knight	Senior
		Tyler Williams	Senior
		Kellie Bennett	Junior
		Ariel Cochrane-Brown	Junior
		Meredith Cook	Junior
		Kelsey Crews	Junior
		Annie Ellis	Junior
		Kelcie Glass	Junior
		Leslie Gray	Junior
		Jennifer Mabe	Junior

The OCR Coding Team Fall 2008

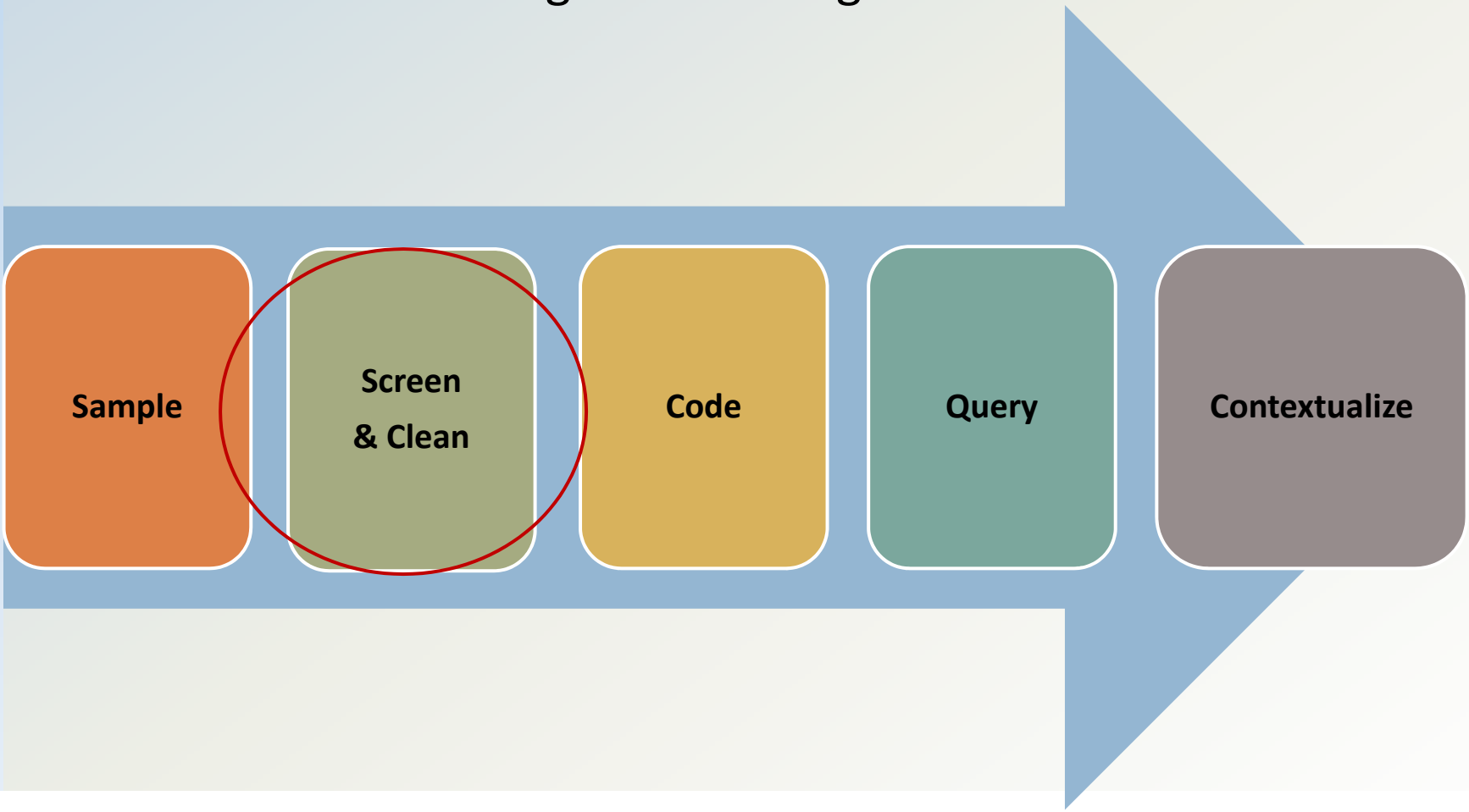
16 Media Analysts (Interns)

Officers	
Natalie Williams, Asst. Director of Undergraduate Research	
Meredith Cook, Intern	

Media Analysts	Major
Miles Cotton	History, Geography, City and Regional Planning
Shirley Delgado	Sociology
Whitney Garrison	History, JOMC-Public Relations
William Green	JOMC-Electronic Communication
Jordan Harris	JOMC-Advertising
Madison Hipp	JOMC-Public Relations
Kelsey Jackson	JOMC - Electronic Communication
Laura Jones	JOMC-Public Relations
Morgan Marshall-Clark	History, Political Science
Amber Kepley	JOMC-Public Relations
J. Sawyer Lucy	Economics, Sociology
Juan Camilo Mendez	History
Emilie Moseley	JOMC-Advertising
Anna Loeschner	JOMC-Public Relations
Jenny Scholl	JOMC-Advertising
KT Wall	JOMC-Public Relations
Emily Widle	JOMC-Advertising

Media Reputation 2.0

Our limitations: screening and cleaning.



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CustomScoop

Daily Clip Report

You can access your clips online at http://my.customscoop.com

3930 clips clips have been indexed since Thursday, August 14th at 8:00 AM ET.

Wachovia Corporation	1767
Bank of America Corporation	1437
Lowes	300
Duke Energy	
BB(and)T	
Nucor	
Goodrich	
Progress Energy	
VF Corporation	
Reynolds American	
Commscope	
Sonic Automotive	

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Daily Clip Report

You can access your clips online at http://my.customscoop.com

4901 clips clips have been indexed since Friday, August 15th at 8:00 AM ET.

Wachovia Corporation	3151
Bank of America Corporation	990
Lowes	468
Duke Energy	265
BB(and)T	115
Progress Energy	43
Goodrich	33
Nucor	33
Reynolds American	16
VF Corporation	8
Commscope	6
Sonic Automotive	3

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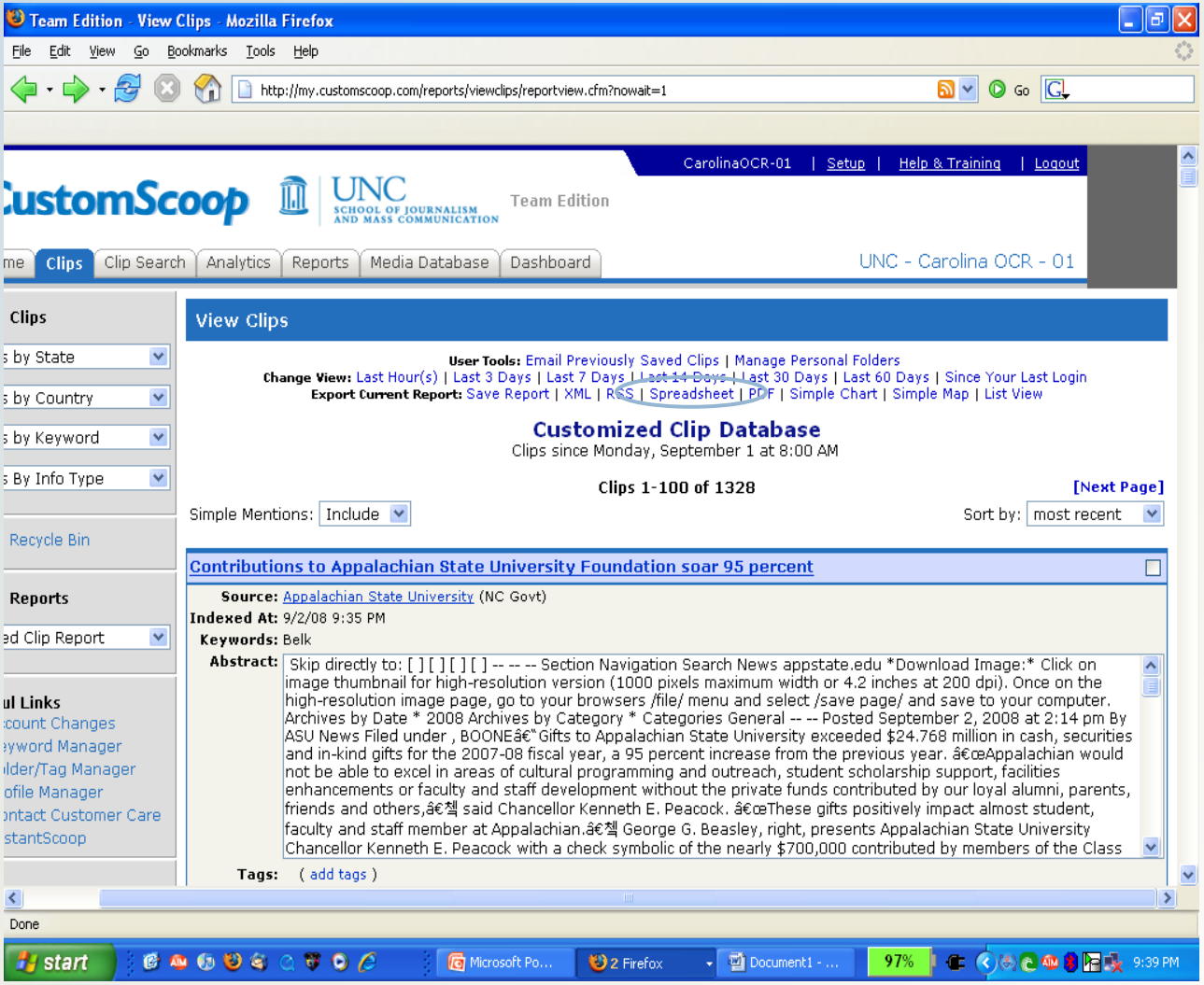

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Limitations

1. 20 Portals to capture daily news content about 150 companies (fine).
2. 7-Day Window for downloading content.
3. Requires daily .xls downloading across the 20 accounts. We can use Heritrix to download content.
4. The Screening and Cleaning

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