Codebook for Private Prison News Project

Overview of the Coding Task

We will use NVivo to code roughly 700 articles about private prisons. There will be 11 *nodes* (to use NVivo's terminology). Each node, as described below, is composed of some number of *items*, which you can think of as concrete instances or manifestations of the nodes. You will code article text at a node if the text matches an item from this codebook. Thus, rather than looking for *frames* (as previous codebooks had you do), we are now looking for specific instances of the *items* listed below each node in this codebook.

You will code chunks of text in each article, rather than the article as a whole. When you recognize an instance of a node in the text of an article, use you cursor to select the relevant text in NVivo and code it at the node (or nodes, if one piece of text covers multiple nodes). When selecting text to code, try to select as much context as needed for a future coder to understand why you coded at the node. (A refresher on using NVivo is at the end of this document.)

As before, article text should be coded at a node only if it refers, directly or indirectly, to a private prison (or private prisons generally) in the United States.[1] It is possible for a chunk of text to contain none of the nodes, all of the nodes (although this is very unlikely), or some of the nodes. It is also possible for an article as a whole to contain none of the nodes, all of the nodes, or some of the nodes. **If you see instances of a node at multiple points in a text, code them all.**

Remember: Only code text that contains a specific item as listed below. You should not have to "read into" or "interpret" what is meant by a node. We are looking for the specific items listed under each node in this codebook, not the nodes (or frames) themselves. In other words, if it's not listed as an item here, don't code it in an article.

Note that you will code text at one of the 11 *nodes* (even though these nodes are evidenced by the presence of specific items). Your coding does not need to identify which specific *item* you identified, only the node of which it is a member.

Also remember: We do not consider private halfway houses to be private prisons.

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[1] Private prisons are defined broadly to include the following: prisons, jails, detention centers (e.g., INS or ICE facilities), work-release (work furlough) programs, and penitentiaries. The following are excluded: private drug treatment centers, private therapy programs, or private industry in prisons; publicly-operated facilities that contract out to the private sector for particular types of service provision (e.g., meals, health care, education, etc.); boot camps and halfway houses; juvenile facilities; privately run prisoner transport/extradition companies; or generally any privately-built or privately-owned facilities that are not privately-operated.

Nodes

In the description of the items below, the phrases "discussion of", "mention of", "arguments for/against", "claims about", "statements about", and the like should be treated as equivalent. These different phrases should not imply different lengths or levels of importance.

PP=Private prisons or prison privatization, depending on the context.

Control of Inmates

- Discussion of inmates escaping/not escaping PPs
- Discussion of inmates wresting/not wresting control of all or part of the facility from PP guards

Cost

- Claims that PPs will/do cost the government more/less money.
- Statements about how much a government will/does pay to a contractor for the imprisonment contract (in dollars per inmate per day or in total dollars)
- Discussion of estimates of PP cost

Investment

- Reports on stock prices, earnings, or profits of private prison companies.
- Mention of the business prospects of private prison companies or the industry as a whole.
- Discussion of investment potential of private prison companies
- Advice to invest (or not) in private prison industry
- **Exclude** *instances which merely mention that prison operators may be for-profit firms.* (E.g., "The county contracted with CCA, a for-profit prison firm based in Tennessee.")

Law

- Discussion of the legal basis (statute, regulation, constitution, or judicial ruling) for prison privatization generally
- Discussion of the legal compliance with or violations of a statute, regulation, constitution, or judicial ruling at a particular PP
- Discussion of the legal liability at PPs (for guards or companies)
    - I.e., Any discussion of which parties will or won't be liable in or exposed to prison-related lawsuits.
- Discussion of the judicial rulings that affect PPs
    - E.g., PPs are/are not needed to comply with a judicial ruling (e.g., a court order to increase prison capacity in a state)
    - E.g., Private companies or their employees are/are not liable for legal violations.
- Discussion of prisoner (or other) lawsuits against PP guards or companies.
- Discussion of a lawsuit against government if the lawsuit involves a private prison.
- Discussion of governmental deliberations or votes regarding contracting for imprisonment (i.e., in the legislature)
- Discussion of passage of legislation to allow a private prison contract(s).

Local Economy

- Mention of local businesses receiving work from contracting with PPs
    a. E.g., A grocer supplying food for a private jail.
- Mention of tax revenues being generated by a PP
- Mention of the number of jobs created (or not) by a PP
- Mention of the number of local employees a PP will (or won't) hire

Morality

- Philosophical or ethical support for/opposition to PPs.
    o E.g., "Investors should not profit from imprisoning people."
- Arguments for/against PP based on government's "abdication" of its responsibility.
- Arguments that imprisonment is/is not a fundamental responsibility of the government.
    o E.g., "Imprisonment is just another service, like garbage collection."
- Arguments that private imprisonment cheapens or delegitimizes the criminal justice system.
- Arguments about the (lack of) justice in PP.
- Arguments that government does/does not have a proper role in imprisonment.

Political Influence

- Claims of union/organized labor influencing (through lobbying or corruption) governmental corrections policy
- Claims of private prison industry, company, or representative influencing (through lobbying or corruption) governmental corrections policy
- Claims of private prison industry, company, or representative influencing (through lobbying or corruption) contracts.
- **Claims of the American Correctional Association (ACA) influencing (through lobbying or corruption) governmental corrections policy.

Pressure Valve

- Statements that PPs are/are not a *solution to overcrowding* in government-run prisons.
- Statements that PPs are/are not a *solution to unsafe or unsanitary conditions* in government-run prisons.
- Statements that PPs can/cannot meet demands of prison population
- Statements that PPs can/cannot meet fluctuating prison population forecasts
    o e.g., Contracting demands less commitment than government building and operating a prison, and is therefore a flexible tool for incarceration.

Programs

- Statements that PPs do/do not offer any of the following:
    a. Educational classes
    b. Vocational training (including work release)
    c. Counseling
    d. Drug/alcohol rehabilitation

Staff Quality

- Statements that PP guards are/are not trained well
- Statements that PP guards are/are not experienced in corrections
- Statements that PP guards have/do not have high rates of turnover
- Statements that PP guards are/are not unreliable
- **Statements that PPs are/are not sufficiently staffed by guards.

Treatment of Inmates

- Statements that inmates are/are not kept safe in PPs
- Statements that inmates are/are not treated well by guards in PPs
- Statements that inmates do/do not live in unsanitary conditions in PPs

Additional Coding

- There is also a *free node* for "<u>incomplete article</u>". If you open an article that seems to be incomplete, code all or part of the text at this node. Do not continue coding this article if it appears incomplete.
- Use an <u>*annotation link*</u> to note any problems or ambiguities you encounter.
    - When you encounter something problematic in the text, you can use an annotation link to mark it. Simply highlight the text, then right click→Links→Annotation→New Annotation. A small window will open at the bottom of the screen where you will explain what the difficulty is. Brett can then check on these later.
    - Do not create a "Memo" link!
- **We have removed the "specific PP" free node; you are no longer responsible for coding specific private prisons.

Using NVivo

1. Go to your personal folder on the X drive.
2. Open the Nvivo file. (It will be called something like "PPNP_YYYYMMDD_[your initials].nvp".)
3. Go to "Sets", on the left of the screen. You will see a set with your name. It contains the articles (technically, links to articles) that you will code. Open one (or more) articles.
4. The nodes you will use are already created. They are in "Nodes→Tree Nodes" and "Nodes→Free Nodes" at the left.
5. Adjust the window frames as needed. Remember you can change the display format by "View→Detail View".
6. Code as directed above.
    a. Select the text to code and drag it onto a node at the left.
    b. You can make sure the node was applied by checking the coding stripes to the right of the text.
    c. You can go back to earlier sections of the text to add, modify, or remove coding if you need to.
7. When you are done coding the article, move on to the next by returning to the Sources and opening a new one. (You can open multiple sources if you'd like.)
8. If you open a new session after having coded some articles, you can sort the articles in the set by "Date Modified" to determine which articles still need to be coded.
9. Nvivo will ask you to save your work every 15 minutes, but you should also save before closing out of Nvivo.