

Interlocking Directorates and Big Business (1816-1969): Inloc Dataset.

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Abstract

The Inloc Dataset (Interlocking Data 1816-1969.col.xlsx), created to identify communities of interest and interlocking linkages, consists of 48,000 directors and officers of 2,600 of the largest U.S. corporations active between 1896 and 1919 and selected other years.

Inloc Dataset

The Inloc dataset consists of 48,000 directors, trustees and top officers of 2,600 of the largest U.S. industrial, transportation, banking, insurance and financial organizations active in selected years between 1816 and 1969, with emphasis on the years between 1896 and 1919. It was created to identify communities of interest as measured by company- with -company and individual- with -company linkages. The project began as part of dissertation research on the rise of Big Business during the Trust Era, centering on 1901 when the 100 largest industrials doubled in size (Bunting, 1972, 1974, 1987). In the spirit of the 1960s and inspired by G. William Domhoff's *Who Rules America?* (1967, 2014), names were compiled to determine the empirical dimensions of the Money Trust and to specifically identify the Masters of Capital (Moody, 1919) who ruled America. This research led to a paper with Jeff Barbour in the *Business History Review* (Bunting and Barbour, 1971) which in turn resulted in a project coordinated by Domhoff that investigated early components of the American corporate network, focusing on interlocking among large banks, railroads, insurance and financial companies in 1816, 1836, 1860, 1871, 1882 and 1891 (Bunting, 1983). Later papers with Mark Mizruchi explored networking aspects of the data and the transfer of corporate control from the Money Trust to its modern form by 1935 and thereafter (Bunting and Mizruchi, 1981, 1982). Ultimately the research was summarized for *Directors and Boards* (Bunting, 1976). A concise overview of research on corporate networks from the early nineteenth century to the present can be found in Domhoff (2014, pp 18-20).

Empirical studies of corporate control and the power structure of the American economy did not find favor within the boundaries of conventional academic economics. The research was criticized as descriptive and nose counting without measureable consequences. Considerable efforts were made to relate interlocking to corporate performance but these failed. Life moved on and other projects were considered. Over the years the data had been shared with various people but had not been made generally accessible for those interested in using affiliation networks (also known as two-mode networks) to do membership network analysis (Borgatti, Everett and Jonhson, 2013; Breiger, 1974). Efforts to facilitate this access were started a few times, but converting computer tape files (DEC-UNIVAC) to a modern form seemed foreboding. However, this obstacle was overcome by the inadvertent discovery that .DAT files could be renamed .XLS without altering file contents, thereby allowing conversion of tape files to an MS EXCEL format without elaborate editing.

Data collection began by first identifying the largest companies in their respective industries ranked by the amount of their capital stock, both common and preferred, and surplus or retained earnings. Companies included were the 100 largest industrial and mining companies, 25 largest railroads, 20 largest banks, 10 insurance companies and a judgment sample of 12 large investment banks and stock brokers. After 1919 companies were included on the basis of their assets. In the years before 1935 many companies disclosed little operating or financial information. However, all but the financial firms were incorporated and required to disclose their officers and directors and amount of their capital stock to maintain their corporate charters. These disclosures were published in newspapers such as the New York Times or financial reporters such as the Commercial & Financial Chronicle, Wall Street Journal and U.S. Investor. They were also collected into financial manuals such as Poor's or Moody's. However, the longest running manual was the now-forgotten Manual of Statistics which began in 1878 and was apparently used as the basis for early Moody Manuals (Bunting, 1971). Additional information on bankers, insurance company directors, and financial firms including investment houses and stock brokers, was found in Stock Exchange Yearbooks, Bankers Directories and Collection Guides and similar directories, almanacs and yearbooks. Newspapers and manuals also included tombstone notices and firm listings with officers and directors. Companies for 1964 and 1969 were taken from Fortune magazine lists. Details on specific sources are found in the papers cited above.

Companies identified as large were assigned a unique identification number and their top eight officers defined as the first eight officers listed in the source used, usually the Manual of Statistics, and all directors were entered on computer punch cards. Name entry was last name, comma, first and middle name initials, e.g., John Pierpont Morgan became MORGAN,J.P. There were of course many name variants such as Jr., De La, von and so on as well as obvious misspellings such as John D. Rockefeller. Rules were created to ensure consistency. Data entry errors and name variants were identified through alphabetical and company sorts, both by year and for spans of years. Specific name and company counts by year and industrial sector are found in Tables 1 and 2. The counts include many duplicates since officers served as directors and both companies and their leaders persisted over time. Variance in company counts are explained by missing data or editing errors.

Inloc data is generally available without restrictions in two EXCEL files which differ only by data organization: Inloc Data 1816-1969.col.xlsx and Inloc Data 1816-1969.card.xlsx. The .col file is 1.7 MB and contains data in single columns, one 31,800 rows long, while the .card file is .8 MB and contains data at four names to a row. The Appendix contains the file codebook.

The Inloc dataset is perhaps the most comprehensive enumeration of Big Business leaders active during the Trust Era, a period when industrial companies developed into their modern form. It also includes an extensive and systematic collection of leaders of large companies in the hundred years preceding the Trusts. The dataset is unique in its coverage across all important business sectors as well as its identification of business leaders on the basis of the significance of their companies rather than by personal notoriety. While it has been used for a number of studies as cited by Domhoff (2014), potential uses still exist. Modern social network theory might provide better measures of influence than direct person- with -company or company- with -company linkages. Questions involving business elites or demographic influences could be investigated with much larger and systematic samples than used for earlier “Robber Baron” studies. Other possibilities await development.

Appendix: Inloc Codebook

Corporation Numbering System and Definitions	
ID	Name
1 - 597	Industrial, mining companies
802 - 1028	Financial companies (1964 + years)
1300 - 1398	Railroads
1400 - 1439	Insurance companies
1900 - 1948	Financial companies, investment bankers, stock brokers
2000 - 2117	Bank or trust with main office city
5000 - 5010	Railroads (before 1896)

Inloc File Contents	
File Tab	Contents
CORPS	ID number, company name, sector number
1816-1891.Rails.Ins.Banks	Data, 5,240 names
1896-1919 all	Data, 31,785 names
35-64-69 all	Data, 11,295 names
README	File details

Spreadsheet Definitions			
Column	Variable	Definition	
A	ID	Corp ID	
B	CORP	Corp name	
C	TYPE		
	1	IND	Industrial, mining corporation
	2	RAIL	Railroad
	3	BANK	Bank, trust company
	4	INS	Insurance company
	5	FIN	Financial house, investment bank, stock broker
D	POS		
	blank, 0, 1	Officer (usually 0)	
	2, 3, ...9	Director (usually 2)	
E	YR	Sample year	
F	N1	Officer or director	
G	N2	Officer or director (.card file only)	
H	N3	Officer or director (.card file only)	
I	N4	Officer or director (.card file only)	

Table 1. Corporation Counts

YR	IND	RAIL	BANK	INS	FIN	TOTAL
1816			10	10		20
1836		10	20	10		40
1860		25	20	10		55
1871		25	20	10		55
1882		25	20	10		55
1891		25	20	10		55
1896	51	25	20	10	13	119
1897	59	25	21	10	12	127
1898	67	25	21	10	12	135
1899	95	25	18	10	12	160
1900	98	25	17	10	12	162
1901	99	25	19	10	12	165
1902	97	24	20	10	12	163
1903	98	25	20	10	12	165
1904	99	25	20	10	12	166
1905	98	25	20	10	12	165
1912	100	25	20	10	12	167
1919	100	25	20	10	12	167
1935	100	25	20	10	12	167
1964	100	25	20	10	12	167
1969	100	25	20	10	12	167
TOT	1361	484	406	210	181	2642

Table 2. Name Counts

YR	IND	RAIL	BANK	INS	FIN	TOTAL
1816			182	195		377
1836		135	316	235		686
1860		505	307	331		1143
1871		508	254	263		1025
1882		528	255	249		1032
1891		500	256	221		977
1896	703	447	254	240	70	1714
1897	772	461	286	234	65	1818
1898	924	463	308	225	64	1984
1899	1565	462	301	237	64	2629
1900	1698	465	283	236	63	2745
1901	1610	487	336	235	64	2732
1902	1666	474	380	236	69	2825
1903	1651	507	400	238	74	2870
1904	1721	538	435	234	75	3003
1905	1667	536	441	222	76	2942
1912	1812	572	516	222	79	3201
1919	1940	572	452	253	105	3322
1935	2037	546	426	236	104	3349
1964	2263	582	496	242	329	3912
1969	2319	583	482	232	418	4034
TOT	24348	9871	7366	5016	1719	48320

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