

**General Codebook**  
**Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) Project**  
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The latest version of this codebook, associated documentation, and officially released data may be downloaded from the ICOW web site at <<http://www.icow.org>>.

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## **Introduction to the ICOW Project**

### **General Purpose of Project**

The Issue Correlates of War (ICOW) project is a research project that is attempting to collect systematic data on contentious issues in world politics. Past attempts to collect issue-related data have generally been limited to the issues involved in certain types of settlement attempts, such as data on militarized conflict in the COW militarized dispute data (Jones et al. 1996), the ICB crisis data (Brecher and Wilkenfeld 1997), Holsti's (1991) war data, or data on mediations and arbitrations (Raymond 1994, 1996). The general purpose of the ICOW project is to collect data on every single instance of specific issue types, regardless of any settlement attempts that may or may not have been attempted, along with data on issue salience and on attempts to settle the issue in question.

ICOW data sets will be useful for a variety of purposes. To begin with, because each data set will include every instance of each issue type being studied, scholars can use any of our data sets to study the management of a specific type of issue. For example, the growing body of academic research on territory will be able to use the ICOW territorial claims data set to study the management of territorial claims in a single region or across the world. Even if issue management is not the goal of a research project, ICOW data sets may be used as case selection mechanisms, to study the impact of additional factors -- perhaps democracy, arms races, or alliances -- on militarized conflict between adversaries who presumably have a reason to fight each other (a variant on the notion of "politically relevant dyads"). Perhaps most importantly over the long term, though, the different ICOW data sets will all be collected and organized in a comparable fashion; each specific ICOW issue will include every instance of the issue, measures of the salience of each case, and every known attempt to settle the issue. This will for the first time allow systematic study of the impact and management of contentious issues in world politics, with multiple issue types being included in a single study.

J. David Singer of the University of Michigan was kind enough to allow the use of the name "Correlates of War" in the ICOW project's name. It should be noted that Singer and his colleagues, the COW project or the University of Michigan, and the COW<sup>2</sup> project or Penn State University bear no responsibility for any decisions or errors that might be made by the ICOW project; such responsibility lies entirely with Paul Hensel and his co-authors and research assistants associated with the ICOW project.

### **Brief History of Project**

The ICOW project is directed by Paul R. Hensel of the Political Science department at Florida State University, who first created the project and is responsible for the ICOW territorial and river claims data sets. Sara McLaughlin Mitchell is the project's assistant director and directs the ICOW maritime claims data set. Research assistants who have worked on the project are listed on the ICOW web site. Funding for the ICOW project has been provided by the FSU Political Science department (for the territorial, river, and maritime claims data sets), the FSU Committee on Faculty Research Support (COFRS, with a small summer grant for preliminary research on river claims), and the National Science Foundation (for the river and maritime claims data sets).

The project was conceived in the mid-late 1990s, and officially began in the spring of 1997 with a paper at the International Studies Association conference. The initial focus of the project was on territorial claims, in line with Paul Hensel's research on territory and with most of the existing research on contentious issues. The territorial claims data set has been collected since then, generally with research assistants funded by the FSU Political Science department as well as a number of research assistants funded by several National Science Foundation (NSF) grants. The river and maritime claims data sets began in January 2001, and have both been funded by a combination of departmental assistance (both to Paul Hensel and Florida State and to Sara Mitchell at Iowa) and NSF grants.

## **Data Structure**

Each ICOW data set -- territorial, river, or maritime claims, as well as any future data sets to be collected by the project -- actually includes three separate data files: a dyadic claim-level data file (xxCLAIM), a dyad-year level data file (xxDYADYR), and an attempted settlement data file (xxSETTLE). The "xx" at the beginning of the file name refers to the specific ICOW data set to which the file belongs; for territorial claims this code is "TC," for river claims it is "RC," and for maritime claims it is "MC."

### *A. Dyadic Claim-Level Data (xxCLAIM)*

This data file primarily includes descriptive information on each claim. This includes the name of the claim, the identification of states in each dyad as challenger and target, the dates between which each dyad was actively involved in an explicit claim, and the manner of resolution for each dyadic claim. This basic information can then be merged with the other two data sets for empirical analysis, or it can be used in its own right to identify cases.

### *B. Dyad-Year-Level Data (xxDYADYR)*

This data file includes annual information on each dyadic claim. This includes a variety of indicators of claim salience, which can be used to help study the way that claims are managed (or to study other phenomena). For example, in the territorial claims data set the TCDYADYR data file includes information on the area of the claimed territory, its location relative to each claimant, its tangible contents (such as valuable resources or a strategic location), and elements giving it more of an intangible value (such as an ethnic or religious basis for the claim). These different salience indicators can be used individually, or can be used to construct a salience index such as that used in Hensel's 2001 *International Studies Quarterly* article.

### *C. Attempted Settlement Data (xxSETTLE)*

Rather than the claim itself, this data file includes details of each attempt to settle a dyadic claim peacefully (militarized action can be drawn from the COW militarized interstate dispute data). This includes the dates of the settlement attempt in question, details about which countries were involved and in what role (i.e., the type of settlement attempt), and details about the settlement attempt itself (such as the extent of the claim that is addressed). Additionally, this data set includes details about the outcome of the settlement attempt, including whether or not an agreement was reached, whether this agreement (if any) was ratified and/or carried out by one or

both participants, and details of the agreement (such as the relative balance of benefits among the claim challenger and target).

### **Publicly Released Data**

Please note that these three data sets are used by the ICOW project internally. Released versions of the ICOW data follow slightly different naming conventions and include somewhat different lists of variables, as they are created by merging various parts of these three basic data sets and they include some additional variables that are calculated from this information. More information about the structure and contents of the publicly released data is available as part of the data download at <http://www.icow.org>.

## ICOW Claims

The centerpiece of each ICOW data set is the claim, or the specific focus of disagreement between two or more nation-state actors. An ICOW claim involves explicit contention between two or more states over the type of issue in question -- for example, explicit contention over the ownership of a piece of territory. **Official representatives** of the government of at least one state must make explicit statements in support of this claim; "official representatives" include such individuals as a country's head of state, foreign minister, and other legitimate political or military officials speaking on behalf of the state's government. Claims by individuals or organizations without the authority to speak on behalf of a state government are excluded, unless official state representatives support their claim through explicit statements. An "**explicit claim**" must be a public statement by such an official representative, rather than a preference expressed in private conversation or off the record, and must be phrased in unambiguous terms. That is, for an issue claim to occur, the official state representative making the claim must make clear that his or her government lays claim to specific territory or maritime areas that are presently occupied, administered, or claimed by one or more other specific states. For river claims, which are somewhat different in that such claims do not usually address actual ownership of a river, this means that the official state representative must make explicit demands over the quantity or quality of river water reaching their state through the territory of another state.

It should be noted that this definition does not require any specific form of contention over the claim. In particular, it does not require that one or both sides resort to militarized force over the claim, meaning that the data set includes a number of cases that never led to the threat or use of force by either claimant. Similarly, it does not require that the adversaries negotiate over the claim, submit it to third party arbitration or adjudication, or even take any action whatsoever over the claim; some cases may not lead to any action of any kind, instead being allowed to fade away gradually. Both peaceful and militarized actions over a claim are more properly the subject of systematic analysis using complete compilations of all issue claims, rather than tools to be used for case selection.

### Start and End Dates

Each claim is considered to be ongoing as long as it meets the definition described above. Thus, each issue claim begins in the first year that official representatives of at least one state make explicit claims regarding territory, rivers, or maritime areas as described above. Once a claim is stated explicitly by official representatives of a state government, that claim is included in the data set until the criteria for inclusion are no longer met -- i.e., until official governmental representatives in both states have stopped all explicit statements related to the claim.

For situations in which two states reach an explicit agreement to end their claim or in which a challenger state officially drops its claim (and does not resurrect it within one year) this end date is easily determined. In other situations, though, determining the end date is less straightforward. Claims may disappear from active contention for substantial periods of time, sometimes signaling the ultimate end of contention over the claim and sometimes being reopened after long periods of dormancy. Even if a claim has been dropped and is never resurrected, another analytical difficulty arises in determining when the claim can be considered

to have ended, particularly when there is no visible time at which the claim can be considered to have ended. Such situations are similar to the problem faced in determining the ending of enduring interstate rivalries, which many scholars determine from the absence of militarized conflict but others determine by searching for evidence that the disputed issues between the rivals are settled or abandoned by the rivals (e.g., Bennett 1996). Like Bennett -- and like Huth (1996) -- ICOW deals with such situations by searching for the end of explicit contention over issues, rather than simply searching for the end of militarized conflict between two former claimants. As will be seen later, a given claim may end in several ways: the challenger state may simply stop pursuing the claim, the challenger may renounce its claim through an official statement by recognized government officials, the disputants may agree to abide by a third party decision regarding the claim, or the disputants may sign a treaty or other international agreement that formally recognizes the settlement of their claim.

### **Excluded Situations**

This definition of claims excludes several potentially troublesome situations: unofficial claims that do not involve legitimate government representatives, and claims involving non-state entities. Unofficial claims by a state's citizens may precede many official claims by legitimate government representatives. Just as most existing international relations data sets exclude actions by non-state actors, though, we exclude such claims until official government representatives lend their support to the claim. A claim that is never backed up by official government sources lacks even the faintest semblance of legitimacy, and data collection would be vastly more difficult if the goal were to identify any situation in which private citizens of one state disagreed with another state.

Similarly, ICOW data collection focuses on claims involving at least one nation-state on each side of the claim. Although many territorial claims or other issues may begin before the participants achieve statehood, as with the violence between Jews and Arabs in pre-1948 Palestine, ICOW data collection begins with the period in which both sides of the claim are recognized members of the international system (as described by Small and Singer, 1982). Claims between local or regional units of the same nation-state are also excluded, as are such non-state problems as decolonization struggles and secessionist demands.

A second excluded situation involves what Huth (1996: 24-25) terms "latent claims" and Kocs (1995: 161-162) terms "unofficial disputes." The ICOW definition of issue claims requires an explicit claim by official actors of one or more states regarding territory, rivers, or maritime areas. If citizens of one state claim an area held or claimed by another state, but their government does not make an explicit claim on their behalf, then the situation would be excluded from the data set. A current example is the unofficial claim by Albanians against Yugoslavia regarding the territory of Kosovo, which would only be considered an ICOW territorial claim if the Albanian government were to offer an explicit statement claiming Kosovo as an Albanian territory.

### **New Claims and Dyadic Claims**

In general, a separate ICOW claim is considered to exist whenever two or more actors contend over a piece of territory, a river, or a maritime area that is not already covered (in whole

or in large part) as part of another ICOW claim. A separate dyadic claim within an already existing ICOW claim is considered to exist whenever two or more actors contend over a piece of territory, a river, or a maritime area that *is* already covered (in whole or in large part) as part of another ICOW claim. For example, the overall Alaska territorial claim includes several distinct dyadic claims: a U.K.-Russia claim and a U.S.-Russia claim from the period before Russia sold Alaska (Russian America) to the United States in 1867, each of which covered somewhat different portions of Alaska, and a U.K. (acting on behalf of its then-colony Canada)-U.S. claim covering a smaller portion of the Alaska-Canada border after the U.S. purchase. Because each of these dyadic claims involved partially overlapping territory, they are all considered to be part of the overall Alaska claim. In contrast, though, there are numerous different claims between the U.S.-U.K. (Canada), U.S.-Mexico, and Argentina-Chile claims because the claims involve separate (rather than overlapping) pieces of territory and because the claims to these separate territories are treated separately by the claimants.

When there are major changes in the content of a claim, a separate dyadic claim may be created. This refers particularly to a situation where part of the original claim is resolved, leading to a claim to a smaller or different area (perhaps even known by a new name). For example, Colombia and Peru resolved their claim to the Loreto territory in 1922, although a claim to the smaller Leticia territory (which had been part of the original Loreto claim) was raised again in 1932. In this case, because the Leticia claim involves part of the original Loreto claim, it is considered to be a second dyadic claim within the same overall ICOW claim (although the second dyadic claim is given the distinct name of Leticia for greater historical accuracy). Another situation where this applies occurs when the identity of the challenger and target state changes due to military conquest or other transfer of territory, in which case there should be a separate dyadic claim to reflect the new situation. For example, in the Antofagasta territorial claim, Chile is originally considered to be the challenger state claiming Bolivian territory. After Chile seized the claimed territory in the War of the Pacific, though, the original dyadic claim ends and a new dyadic claim begins (within the same overall claim), this time with Bolivia as the challenger seeking to regain its lost route to the sea.

It should be noted that not every pair of actors involved in the larger claim will necessarily be involved in their own dyadic claim. For example, in the Spratly Islands territorial claim, each of the claimant states claims a portion of the full Spratly Islands chain, but not all of these claimed portions overlap with each other state's claims. As a result, some of the claimant states are involved in dyadic claims against most of the others, while some are involved in many fewer dyadic claims.

### **Claim Salience**

An important element of each ICOW data set is the collection of indicators that can be used to measure issue salience. That is, scholars using the data set must have some way to distinguish between claims of higher and lower salience. The ICOW territorial claims data set offers numerous variables that may be used to distinguish claims by issue salience, including the area and population of the claimed territory, the existence of resource, ethnic, or religious bases for the claim, and whether the claim involves mainland or offshore territory, homeland or colony/possession territory, and all of the target state, part of the target state, or merely the precise

location of the border.

With regard to river claims, rivers vary greatly in the volume of water discharged, with higher-volume rivers generally being more salient than those of lower volume (*ceteris paribus*). The need for water also contributes to the salience of each individual body of water, with countries facing greater water shortages being likely to see an international river as more salient. Rivers that contribute to important sectors of the national economy are also likely to be seen as more salient; examples include those that are used heavily for fishing, irrigation, or resource extraction. Other characteristics of cross-border rivers that are likely to affect issue management include pollution and dam construction by upstream states, which will also be measured.

For maritime claims, resources contained in the claimed maritime areas are an important determinant of the intrinsic importance of a claim. We collect data on the actual and potential number of fish caught in the area, and the actual and potential amount of offshore oil or minerals in the seabed. We also determine the relational importance of the contents of the claimed area for each nation's economy, including the percentage of the total economy based on fishing or oil/mineral production. We also code information on the existence of migratory fish stocks in the claimed areas and on the importance of the area for navigation, indicating whether the area is considered to be a naval chokepoint with strategic military and/or economic value.

## **Claim Settlement Attempts**

The focus of the ICOW data on attempted settlements of issue claims is on peaceful attempts to settle the issues involved in a claim. Militarized attempts to settle these issues can be identified using the COW militarized interstate dispute (MID) data set. In particular, the MID data has an issue code for "territorial" issues, along with "regime" issues and a general category for "policy" issues. At least for the ICOW territorial claims data, the MID coding for territorial issues identifies MIDs that are thought to have involved territory, without much additional research being necessary -- although it is still advisable to look into each apparent territorial MID to make sure that it actually is related to the territorial claim in question. For all other ICOW data sets, though, there is space on the codesheets to add notes about apparently militarized conflict related to the claim. It is important to record a note and additional details over anything resembling a militarized dispute that occurs during and is related to the claim; this information can then be used later to help identify which disputes from the MID data are actually related to the claim itself.

Specific information is collected on any peaceful attempt to settle an ICOW claim, as this information is not available anywhere else. Four specific topics may be covered by these attempted settlements (see the "EXTENTSA" variable): negotiations meant to settle the entire claim, negotiations over a smaller part of the claim, negotiations over procedures for future settlement of the claim (a "procedural" settlement attempt, such as an arbitration treaty), and negotiations over the use of the claimed territory, river, or maritime area without attempting to settle the question of ownership (a "functional" settlement attempt, such as a treaty of free navigation along a river border in a territorial claim, or an attempt to demilitarize a disputed territory or river without actually resolving the central issues involved in the claim).

Any other type of negotiations (e.g., talks over a ceasefire to stop an ongoing crisis or war) should be excluded. One particular type of negotiations that we do not include in the coding of the territorial claims data involves meetings of demarcation commissions that are simply attempting to carry out the terms of an earlier agreement. As long as the demarcation commissioners are only trying to place markers on an already-agreed border, their meetings should not qualify as separate settlement attempts. The only exception involves cases where their meetings attempt to resolve previously unresolved questions regarding the border, as when they discover that the geography of the border is different than originally believed. Such meetings are attempting to settle the territorial claim, and thus would qualify as new settlement attempts.

### **Types of Settlement Attempts**

#### *Bilateral Negotiations*

Bilateral negotiations involve direct discussions between official representatives of the two claimant states, without any kind of third-party assistance. Such negotiations may take any form and may follow any procedure that the participants find acceptable.

### *Good Offices*

"Good offices" refers to the least intrusive form of third-party participation, involving an attempt by the third party to facilitate communication between the claimants. A third party offering good offices attempts to open negotiations between the disputants, often by providing a neutral meeting place for negotiations or by meeting separately with the disputants and transmitting messages or proposals between them. The third party offering good offices, though, is primarily interested in facilitating communication among the claimants themselves, and does not make any recommendations or decisions to help settle the dispute.

### *Inquiry and Conciliation*

Inquiry and conciliation represent non-binding activities that third parties may use to help produce a settlement, typically in the form of a fact-finding mission or similar non-binding attempt to study the claim. A commission of inquiry attempts to clarify or establish the facts of a disputed question in an impartial fashion, without offering any proposed solution. Such fact-finding commissions can be useful for many purposes related to issue claims. For example, a fact-finding commission for a territorial claim can investigate alleged incidents along a disputed border or help determine the location of a boundary line between two states. Although inquiry does not lead to direct discussion of potential settlements to the dispute, it may be able to help resolve disputed questions of fact, perhaps lowering tensions and creating an environment that is more conducive to settlement by other means. In conciliation, a dispute is formally submitted to a commission of conciliation, which then studies the facts and questions involved. The conciliator then issues a final report containing the conciliator's conclusions and offering a (non-binding) recommendation for settlement.

Note that for the purposes of the ICOW data sets, no distinction is made between inquiry and conciliation; a single category is used for both types of settlement attempt.

### *Mediation*

Mediation represents a more active role for the third party. In mediation, the third party discusses the disputed question with the disputants (either individually or jointly) and can contribute (non-binding) suggestions toward settlement. Mediation offers the third party greater flexibility than conciliation, because a mediator can participate in an ongoing process of negotiations instead of simply investigating the situation and issuing a final report.

### *Arbitration*

Arbitration is one type of third-party action that allows the outside actor to make a decision that will be considered binding on the disputants. Before submitting a dispute to arbitration, the disputants agree on an arbitrator that both sides consider acceptable and define the power and jurisdiction to be granted the arbitrator, and both sides agree to accept the decision that will be reached by the arbitrator. Note, though, that some actors later decide to reject an unfavorable arbitral award, so even this legally binding technique is no guarantee of compliance with the ultimate decision/award.

### *Adjudication*

Similar to arbitration, adjudication allows a third-party actor to make a binding decision to help resolve a conflict of interest. The most important difference between arbitration and adjudication is that the latter involves an established legal tribunal such as the International Court of Justice, while the former involves a more ad hoc submission of the dispute to some actor that both disputants consider to be acceptable (which could include foreign kings, presidents, the Pope, or other actors). As with arbitration, some actors eventually decide to reject an adjudicated decision, despite their initial agreement to accept whatever decision is reached.

### *Multilateral Negotiations*

We also allow for the possibility of multilateral negotiations, in which some third party joins the two dyadic claimants in their negotiations. This third party -- typically another state -- is treated as an equal, interested party, rather than as a fact-finding mission or mediator trying to assist in the creation of a bilateral settlement between the two claimants. Typical examples of multilateral negotiations involve talks between multiple participants in a multilateral claim (as when the United States, Great Britain, and Russia all talked in the early 1820s over their claims to Alaska), which cannot fairly be coded as separate bilateral talks. Another possibility is the addition of a third party whose interests are likely to be affected by the outcome of the claim, although the third party is not directly involved in the claim itself. For example, a third party may have a territorial claim against one or both of the dyadic claim participants involving different territory, and may be worried about the impact of the bilateral negotiations on its own interests in the other claims.

### **Start and End Dates**

Settlement attempts are considered to begin with the start of the actual process of attempted settlement, rather than the time that the attempt is first suggested. If negotiations are suggested but never carried out, or if third party involvement is offered or requested but never begins, then the case should not appear in our data set because there is no actual settlement attempt. For cases in which negotiation or third party assistance occurs, the settlement attempt is coded as beginning on the day that negotiations begin between the adversaries (with or without third party involvement), even if this date comes some time after the settlement attempt is first suggested.

A settlement attempt is considered to end with the formal termination of the attempt. For unsuccessful attempts this means the date that negotiations break off, a mediator gives up, or an arbitrator or adjudicator terminates the process without handing down a decision. Successful settlement attempts are considered to end with the signing of a treaty or the handing down of a third party award, regardless of whether or not one or both parties subsequently fail to ratify or implement the agreed-upon settlement. It should be noted that in the case of treaties or agreements, the end date is the date on which the treaty (or any final adjustments to the treaty) was finally signed, rather than the date of ratification or rejection of the treaty.

### **Temporal Gaps between Settlement Attempts**

In some cases, it may be difficult to determine when one period of negotiations ends and

when another begins. The general rule to use in such cases is that one period of negotiations is considered ended (and the next meeting is considered to begin a new settlement attempt) when there is a three-month gap between talks. Three exceptions to this rule exist:

(1) If the first period of negotiations led to the signature of a treaty or agreement, then only a one-month gap is needed to indicate the outbreak of a new settlement attempt.

(2) If the first period of negotiations concluded with an agreement to postpone the talks temporarily, a six-month gap is needed to indicate the outbreak of a new settlement attempt.

(3) Regardless of the temporal gap, if the second period of negotiations involves different negotiators and/or a completely separate topic (e.g., a functional settlement attempt rather than covering the entire claimed territory, or a completely distinct portion of the claimed territory), it should be coded as a new attempt.

### **Multiple Concurrent Settlement Attempts**

If a given period of negotiations attempts to cover several of the topics mentioned above (and included in the "EXTENTSA" variable), then the negotiations should be split up into several different settlement attempts beginning at the same time, and covering different topics. The reason for this is that this will allow us to study whether certain types of settlement attempts are more likely to produce agreements than others, and for cases in which agreements are made, to study whether certain types of agreements are more likely to be ratified and implemented than others. Thus, a period of negotiations (bilateral or otherwise) may involve several settlement attempts, such as a treaty of free navigation along a disputed river and an agreement to submit the claim to a third party; if the navigation treaty is later implemented but the arbitration treaty is not, we will be able to note this in our analysis.

### **Separate Cases for Third Party Arbitration/Adjudication**

When bilateral negotiations lead to the submission of a claim to a third party for arbitration or adjudication, two separate settlement attempts are considered to exist. The first settlement attempt is considered to begin with the onset of the bilateral negotiation, and concludes with the reaching of the arbitration treaty or the agreement to send the case to an adjudicator. This should typically be coded as a procedural settlement attempt, because the agreement only covers future actions to be taken to settle the claim.

The second settlement attempt involves the actual process of arbitration or adjudication, beginning with the date on which the two sides begin presenting their arguments to the third party and continuing through the entire period of arbitration or adjudication. This should typically be coded as an attempt to settle part or all of the claim (depending on the details of the case).

Whether or not the second settlement attempt (the actual arbitration or adjudication) ever actually begins, its occurrence (or avoidance) and its timing should not have any effect on the dates of the first settlement attempt (the original decision to submit the claim to a third party). The only way that the second (third party) attempt may affect the first involves the two parties' compliance with the earlier agreement (COMPCHAL/COMPTGT). The two parties are coded as failing to comply with the earlier procedural agreement if they fail to submit the case to the arbitrator(s) or adjudicator(s) specified by the initial agreement, or if they otherwise fail to

comply with the terms of the agreement. If they do submit their cases but the designated arbitrator/adjudicator refuses to hear the case, hears part or all of the case but declines to issue a decision, or otherwise fails to act as requested by the agreement, the claimants are coded as complying with the initial procedural agreement; in such a case it was not their action or inaction that doomed the third party settlement attempt.

## Coding Procedures

Before beginning the actual process of data collection and coding, all new research assistants should familiarize themselves with the ICOW project and with this codebook. Before beginning coding, all coders should read Paul Hensel's March 2001 *International Studies Quarterly* article "Contentious Issues and World Politics," which outlines the intellectual background of the project and demonstrates one particular use of the project's data. Of course, data collection should never be influenced by the specific hypotheses, analyses, or results presented in that paper or in any other research -- but it is usually helpful to understand the basic idea of studying issues and the intellectual origins and goals of the ICOW project before devoting one or more semesters to data collection.

After reading that article, it is extremely important that the relevant ICOW project codebooks be read and understood. At a minimum, this will involve this general codebook (the one you are currently reading) and the specific codebook for the data set on which a research assistant will be working; it may also be useful to read (more briefly) the codebooks for additional project data sets, to get a better feel for the full ICOW project. In reading these codebooks, it is important to spend some time looking at the sample codesheets included in the appendix of each specific codebook; these demonstrate the required level of detail and the coding procedures better than is possible simply through the codebook itself. Any questions that arise about the project, the data sets, or the coding procedures at any time should immediately be directed to either Paul Hensel ([phensel@icow.org](mailto:phensel@icow.org)) for territorial or river claims or Sara McLaughlin Mitchell ([sara@icow.org](mailto:sara@icow.org)) for maritime claims.

It is also desirable to become familiar with several supplementary data sets that will be used during data collection. The Correlates of War (COW) project's interstate system list is important, as this provides the list of states that can be involved as actors in ICOW claims. Additionally, the ICOW project has generated several helpful supplementary data sets, each of which is available from the ICOW web site at <http://data.icow.org>. The ICOW list of alternative state names lists other names that have been used to refer to each state in the COW system, which can be invaluable when researching cases that extend several decades into the past. The ICOW colonial history data set also lists different colonial rulers that have ruled former colonies, as well as countries that have merged or split over time. This is often helpful for researching older cases, because the various ICOW claims data sets include both homeland and dependency claims (including territorial or river claims involving one or two colonial powers, as in the Guyana-Suriname territorial claim that was predated by Britain-Netherlands and Guyana-Netherlands claims before both Guyana and Suriname became independent state actors).

### **I. General Search Strategy: Identifying Potential Claims**

The data collection process begins by searching for potential claims of each type (territorial, river, or maritime). The procedure for this part of the process will vary somewhat across issue types, but essentially it involves using general historical and geographic reference works (at both worldwide and regional levels, if possible) and new sources to identify situations that might involve an explicit claim between two or more states over the type of issue being

collected.

**Territorial Claims:** For example, with the ICOW territorial claims data set, potential cases included all current or historical borders between two nation-states or their dependencies, as well as islands over which two or more states are thought to have disagreed. Land borders (and many nearby islands located near another state's territory) were identified using both current and historical world atlases, the COW project's contiguity data set, and general reference sources such as Biger (1995), *Encyclopedia of International Boundaries*. Other potential cases -- particularly those involving islands claimed by distant adversaries -- are much more difficult to identify, given the many thousands of islands or other outcroppings that might potentially be the subject of disagreement between states, but many potential cases have been identified using global reference sources such as Anderson (1993), *An Atlas of World Political Flashpoints*; Anderson (2000), *Global Geopolitical Flashpoints: An Atlas of Conflict*; Bercovitch (1997), *International Conflict: A Chronological Encyclopedia of Conflicts and Their Management, 1945-1995*; Day (1982-1987) and Allcock et al. (1992), *Border and Territorial Disputes*; Downing (1980), *An Atlas of Territorial and Border Disputes*; and Munro and Day (1990), *A World Record of Major Conflict Areas*. Most regions also have similar reference sources, such as Ireland (1938/1941), *Boundaries, Conflicts, and Possessions in South America and ...in Central America and the Caribbean*, and Brownlie (1979), *African Boundaries*.

**River Claims:** A candidate list of major cross-border rivers was compiled from a number of major world atlases, including the *Times Atlas of the World* (10th Comprehensive Edition), *National Geographic Atlas of the World* (7th and 8th editions), *Planet Earth Macmillan World Atlas*, *Oxford Atlas of the World* (Deluxe Edition), and *Hammond Concise World Atlas*. While as complete a list as possible would be desired, the number of streams or other bodies of water that cross borders is near infinite, so limits need to be set; we have decided to focus our search on rivers of at least 100 miles length that form, cross, or otherwise reach international borders. Information about each river (such as length and upstream/downstream status) is taken from the 1978 UN Register of International Rivers and Aaron Wolf et al.'s 1999 update (available at <http://www.transboundarywaters.orst.edu/>), Czaya (1981), Gleick (1993b, 1998), van der Leeden et al. (1990), the World Resource Institute's biannual *World Resources* volumes, and gazetteers such as the *Columbia Gazetteer of the World* and *Merriam-Webster Geographical Dictionary*; where no further information is available, details such as river length is estimated from the atlases mentioned above. These sources allow us to identify most potential river claim cases, which can then be examined carefully to determine the existence and timing of river claims among the participants. The general sources used to identify territorial claims (as listed above) also occasionally discuss potential river claims.

**Maritime Claims:** In order to determine the potential set of cases for maritime claims, we have created a list of all claimed territorial sea and exclusive economic zone areas for each country, highlighting all adjacent claimed maritime zones as well as all claimed maritime zones that have been challenged by more distant states. *Jane's Exclusive Economic Zones of the World* is quite useful in this regard, as are various other maritime law or Law of the Sea reference

books. The general territorial claim sources that were listed above -- particularly the COW contiguity data set, which includes all territories separated by up to 400 miles of open seas -- are also consulted wherever relevant.

Once the general set of potential cases has been identified, the researchers must examine each one to determine whether or not it ever qualified as a territorial, river, or maritime claim (and if so, when). This will require extensive use of historical and news sources, and is described below.

It must be emphasized, though, that no search strategy is likely to be able to identify every single potential claim. There are likely to be additional island-related territorial or maritime claims, claims over small rivers, or claims over fishing rights between very distant countries that will not be identified. In some cases, though, less obvious claims that were not mentioned in any of these sources described above can be identified in the course of researching other potential cases. For example, even if a small river was not identified in the listing of major international rivers described above, interactions (and river claims) over that river may still be identified in searching for news stories about a larger river into which the smaller river flows; and obscure claims to territory or maritime zones may be mentioned in news stories about more prominent claims. Any time a researcher focusing on one case finds information about another potential case (whether of the same or a different issue type), it is important to make a note so that more research may be done to investigate the potential new case (we have already identified several river claims and at least a half dozen territorial claims in this way that would not have been found otherwise).

## **II. Identifying Potential Claims**

Once a group of potential cases has been identified, the data collection process involves an extensive search of historical and news sources to determine whether there actually is/was a qualifying claim over the issue in question, as well as to collect information about what made the claim valuable (i.e., its salience for the claimants) and how it was managed. A good way to manage this information as a search progresses is to begin filling out a codesheet for each potential case being examined with as much information as can be found (the project director can provide you with blank codesheet word processing files for the relevant data set). For cases that turn out to qualify as territorial, river, or maritime claims, this codesheet can then be used for coding the case; for cases that turn out not to qualify, this codesheet will be useful in the event that somebody asks why a certain case is not included in the data set, and will offer a good starting point for further research should subsequent information indicate that a qualifying claim may have existed after all.

At this preliminary stage, where we are not sure yet whether a qualifying claim existed or not, it is best to enter any potentially relevant information on the "claim coversheet" at the beginning of the codesheet file. Be sure to cite the sources where the information was first found; abbreviations may be used as long as it is clear which source was used (e.g., NYT for New York Times or FOF for Facts on File). Any information about the territory, river, or maritime zone (such as where it is located or what makes it valuable) should be entered in the "Coding Notes" section of the claim coversheet, ideally in the form of bullet points:

- The claim involved the Chaco Boreal territory, which is located between Bolivia and Paraguay. Although both sides' citizens had explored parts of this territory, neither side had previously occupied it or exercised sovereignty there. (NYT 12/1/1927: 13)
- This river is used for important irrigation projects in Nepal, where it supports agriculture in the Hensel Valley. (FOF 1963: 400)

Any events or interactions over this issue should be entered in the "Brief Chronology of Claim" section of the claim coversheet, ideally in the form of a chronology:

1 September 1939: German forces crossed the border into the claimed territory, quickly seizing it with light losses. (Keesings 1939: 563)

31 January 1960: Peru warned the United States government that it would henceforth seize any American-registered boat fishing for tuna in waters less than 200 miles from the Peruvian coast. (Jones 1986: 13)

The exact information that is relevant will vary somewhat between issue types, but generally speaking, researchers should record any detail about the territory, river, or maritime zone in question (which resources are believed to exist there and when they were first discovered or suspected, which types of fish are caught there, how many hydroelectric dams or irrigation projects exist on the river and when they were begun or completed) and any interaction over the issue (such as friendly discussions about immigration checkpoints or integrating power grids, less friendly demands or negotiations, treaties, threats, or armed conflicts). More examples of the type of information that might be needed are provided in the specific codebooks for each issue type. Should the case eventually qualify as a territorial, river, or maritime claim, this information will then be used for coding, at which point it will be moved to more appropriate places in the codesheet; at the beginning, though, the coversheet is the most useful place to enter everything.

Where the general global and/or regional reference sources discussed above provide information about claims, that information is an excellent starting point. Such sources often provide a description of the issue (such as where the territory, river, or maritime zone is located, and what makes it valuable to the claimants) as well as a brief synopsis of major events or interactions related to the claim. This level of information is not available for many potential claims, though, and even where it is, much information is likely to have been left out. Further research is thus needed for each case, using a variety of other types of sources. Sources to be used include the following:

**Lexis-Nexis Academic Universe** (available as the FSU library's collection of online databases): an online service that has compiled news stories from hundreds of major newspapers, generally since the late 1970s (although a few sources start earlier and many others start later). While this source is limited to the last few decades, for that time frame it is the most valuable source because of the volume of coverage during that time. Note that the Lexis-Nexis search interface has recently changed, so these instructions have been updated in January 2008.

Of the main search options, select "General" (rather than News, Legal, Business, or People) and select the "Easy Search" tab at the top of the page. Then select "Major U.S. and World Publications" from the checkboxes below the text box, and specify "All Available Dates"

in the date box -- although this will often have to be restricted later because so many news stories come up in many searches. If 1000 or more stories are found, or if you get the error message of too many stories being found, start restricting the date by decade -- select "Date is Between..." and enter January 1, 1960 and January 1, 1970 (for example); there shouldn't be any news stories before 1960, so this is a good starting point. If too many stories are still found, it may be necessary to restrict the search by year, month, or even date.

The specific search terms to enter will vary by issue type. For river issues, enter the word river, followed by a set of parentheses enclosing various known spellings or names of the river: "river AND (amur OR heilong OR heilung OR...)". If too many stories come up (such as when the name of the river is also the name of one of the countries or an important nearby city or region), this can be restricted by adding the word river to the end of each river's name: "(amur river OR heilong river OR heilung river OR...)" If the search still produces too many stories, you can add a search term to limit the search to stories mentioning certain pairs of countries that share the river: "...AND (russia OR russian) AND (china OR chinese)"

For general searches on territorial and maritime issues, enter various names used for each country, as well as some relevant keywords. For example, a typical territorial search might be: "(argentina OR argentine) AND (chile OR chilean) AND (border OR boundary OR territory OR territorial)", and a typical maritime search might be: "(argentina OR argentine) AND (chile OR chilean) AND (maritime OR offshore OR fishing OR sea OR ocean)". If the claimed territory being investigated is known by a specific name, this name (including any known alternate spellings) can also be added to this list of keywords (e.g., "...OR falkland OR falklands OR malvinas" or "...OR alsace OR elsass OR lorraine OR lothringen"). Similarly, if the specific maritime issue being investigated involves a specific fish or a specific body of water, those keywords can also be added to the list (e.g., "...OR cod OR codfish" or "...OR bering sea").

Once the results come up, make sure that there aren't too many results (if Lexis-Nexis reports 1000 stories or more, re-run the search with a more restrictive date range, to make sure that no stories were lost -- it never used to report results if more than 1000 stories were found, so if it lists exactly 1000 I would be suspicious that it is reporting everything). Use the "Sort" tab near the top of the results list to sort the results by "Publication Date" to make sure that you are going through the results systematically, and to make sure that the order of stories being printed out makes sense (the default sorting by story relevance can lead to some very strange ordering of stories from different decades).

Now you will start going through the stories and deciding which are relevant enough to print out for our files. One thing that you will quickly notice is that the Lexis-Nexis database contains a large number of duplicate stories, with identical titles and dates (and usually identical word counts, or if they differ, it's only by a few words because of slight differences in the information that is reported. You won't need to go through each of these duplicate stories -- where this is the case, only go through the longest story from each set of duplicates (i.e., the one with the largest word count if this is reported). You should print out any news story that contains clear evidence of a territorial, river, or maritime claim (as defined elsewhere in the ICOW codebooks); that contains useful information about the use of a territory, river, or maritime zone; or that contains useful information about treaties between the countries that might be related to territory/borders, rivers, or maritime/fishing issues. Remember: when in doubt, print out the

story; we can always choose not to use it later, but if we don't have a copy of the story, the information is lost to us later when we might need it.

**Historical New York Times** (another online database available through FSU's library): the most useful newspaper for coverage of events worldwide, covering from 1851 to the present. For the period before Lexis-Nexis coverage begins, this is the main source that covers worldwide news in sufficient detail to be useful in a research project like this. For best results, use the "Basic Search" option instead of "Advanced Search" because (despite the name) this actually gives better control of search terms. For the "Database" option select "News - The Historical New York Times", and at least when first starting your search, do not set any date restrictions (unless you are working on river claims or maritime claims, since both of those data sets begin in January 1900) -- if too many stories come up, you can always restrict the date later.

The same types of search terms should be used as in Lexis-Nexis searches described above, except that here they should all be combined in one line using parentheses to enclose what would be a single Lexis-Nexis search box: "(argentina OR argentine) AND (chile OR chilean) AND (border OR boundary OR territory OR territorial)". If the claimed territory is known by a specific name, that should also be added to the OR statements, using any known alternative spellings: "...OR spratly OR spratlys OR spratley OR spratleys OR spratlies")"

Because of the sheer volume of news stories on many subjects since 1851, keyword searches here usually need to be restricted. I always add "ANDNOT ("display ad" OR "classified ad" OR "mails")" to get rid of the most glaring useless hits (we are not interested in advertising for cruises past disputed territories or in the contents of passenger ships named after these territories); other restrictions may be needed for specific keywords that conflict with individual topics. If you still get too many story listings, email the project director with the details (what the topic is, the search strings that you've tried, and so on) and I will try to help you narrow it down to something useful.

Also note that river and maritime claims should only be searched beginning on 1/1/1900, since those two data sets do not go back to the nineteenth century.

**JSTOR** (another online database available through FSU's library): an online service that offers access to almost the entire runs (excluding the last several years) of major academic journals from a variety of fields. For most ICOW cases, there probably will not be any especially useful journal articles -- but when such articles are available, they can be invaluable. I prefer to use the "Expert Search" option, which allows the use of the same search strings as in the NYT searches described above (except that multiple-word entries need to be enclosed in quotes, as in "amur river" or "beagle channel"), while also giving easy control over the type of journals and article types to be searched.

Searches should include journals from any potentially relevant discipline, in order to catch important articles in non-Political Science journals (particularly for Geography and History, as well as perhaps African Studies, Asian Studies, Latin American Studies, Middle East Studies, or Slavic Studies); it is preferable to have to wade through more results than to miss articles that would have been very helpful. For best results, also limit the type of entries being searched ("These Types") to "Article"; otherwise you run the risk of being overrun by a list of

book reviews or other entries that rarely if ever contain useful information of this type. Don't enter any type of restriction on the type of fields being searched ("These Fields").

Once the list of articles comes up, you will need to determine which (if any) of the articles in the list are relevant. The easiest way to do this is to click on the article's name in the search results page, then use the links on top of the page for the individual article ("At least one of your search term(s) appears..."). This is the list of all pages in the article that mention at least one of the words that you searched for, which usually makes it much easier to determine whether the article is relevant. This won't help in every case, especially where at least one of the search terms is a common word, but it is still preferable to wading through the entire article page by page to try to find what may be a single relevant paragraph or footnote.

**Times of London** (Strozier Documents Reference 070.5 .T583): also good coverage of world events (particularly in areas where the British Empire was active) and covers an even longer time frame than NYT, but it is not as easy to use. An online index only covers 1906-1980, so events before that time need to be searched manually using the bound index in the library basement, and all relevant stories need to be accessed on microfilm. The bound index volumes should be used to identify potentially relevant stories (primarily listed under state names with appropriate subheadings, although other relevant keywords should also be searched); each such story must then be examined on microfilm.

**Facts on File** (Strozier Reference D410 .F3) and **Keesing's Contemporary Archives** (Strozier Reference D410 .K4): two library sources with weekly coverage of world news since roughly World War II (FOF since 1940, Keesing's since 1931). These two sources are quite useful for the decades before Lexis-Nexis coverage begins. Each source has an annual index, which can be search to determine which specific pages contain relevant stories; certain years may also be covered in five-year index volumes, which simplify the search process. As with the sources discussed above, searches should include each state involved in each potential claim, as well as other keywords that might be related to the potential claim.

**Books:** Of course, many of these topics will be covered in numerous books in the library. Where at least one academic book is available for a specific claim, it is often the best available source on that claim, and should form the backbone of the research strategy. Even where there are no books on the claim specifically, general books on the history of each state should be consulted, as these often contain useful information on ICOW claims (which are often extremely important events in the history of each state, especially when territory is involved). Many potentially relevant books can be identified using the FSU library system's LUIS search engine, both by browsing the available search categories under each state's heading with a subject search (especially relevant are subject categories such as "Bolivia--history," "Bolivia--foreign relations," and "Bolivia--history") and by doing a keyword search for relevant keywords. Many relevant books are not listed in obvious places under LUIS, though, so a meaningful search should always involve identifying books using LUIS and then scanning nearby shelves in the library; even if a relevant book is not listed on LUIS, it is often shelved near books that are.

### III. Coding Cases

Once all of the potential cases have been researched and the relevant information entered in the codesheet, each one must be examined to determine whether or not it qualifies as a codable claim under the ICOW project's coding rules. This may also involve additional questions that were not addressed initially, in which case the research assistants must go back to library research to attempt to answer these questions. For example, additional research may be necessary to determine whether or not an apparent claim involved explicit statements by official government representatives, or just statements and actions by private individuals not authorized to speak or act on behalf of their government. This is why it is so important to cite all sources that were consulted initially; if the original page number or news story date can not be found, or if it is not even clear which sources were consulted, then clarification is much more difficult.

For cases that are determined not to qualify under the coding rules, it is important that the initial codesheet not be thrown away (see "Hensel's First Rule of Data Collection" below). By saving the codesheets for such cases, there is a record of which cases were considered but were found not to qualify, along with a note about why the case was rejected. There is also a record of the information that was collected initially, which may be useful if new information suggests that the case may qualify after all (this happened several times with the territorial claims data set).

Once it is determined that a candidate case does indeed meet ICOW coding rules, the remainder of the codesheets should be filled out, drawing primarily from the research that has already been collected (supplemented by additional research as needed to flesh out the needed details and complete the needed data collection). For bilateral claims (those involving only two states), the chronology and coding notes from the initial codesheet should be moved to a single dyadic claim codesheet; that dyadic codesheet and an appropriate number of attempted settlement codesheets should then be filled out. For multilateral claims, the chronology and coding notes from the initial codesheet should be divided into separate claimant dyads, with a separate dyadic claim codesheet and attempted settlement codesheets being completed for each dyad involved in the overall claim. For both bilateral and multilateral claims, basic information on each involved dyadic claim should be recorded on the overall claim coversheet.

In filling out the codesheets, it is important to record the value for each variable both in numeric form (using the appropriate value listed in the codebook) and in brief textual form. For example, in filling out the type of settlement attempt for the variable TYPESETT, a typical value should be recorded as "1 (bilateral)" rather than simply as "1" or "bilateral." This serves two useful purposes: it simplifies the task of data entry, and it leaves a clear indication of which value was actually intended. While an entry of "1" could easily be a typo, an entry of "1 (bilateral)" very clearly indicates the type of settlement attempt. Similarly, if the list of categories for a certain variable ever changes (as happened in the early days of the territorial claims data), this simplifies the task of trying to determine which value is correct.

The dyad-level codesheet includes space for information about each dyadic claim. When the value for any variable on this codesheet changes over the course of the claim (e.g., oil is discovered in the territory), record this on the codesheet, noting the year of the change. Once the entire codesheet is completed the coder should enter the data into a computer file with a separate line for each dyad-year (each year that each dyadic claim is ongoing).

For strictly bilateral claims there will be one codesheet for the entire claim; multilateral

claims involving more than two nation-state actors should have a separate dyadic codesheet for each explicit state-to-state claim (note that there may not be an explicit claim between each pair of states involved in the claim as a whole).

#### **IV. Data Entry and Checking**

After all of the codesheets have been filled out completely for an entire region or sub-region, the data from each qualifying case should be entered into a spreadsheet file. Care should be taken to enter each data point carefully, avoiding typos or other mistakes. The project director will check each data file for values that are not permissible for each variable, but if the wrong permissible value is entered it may not be possible to catch the error.

#### **Hensel's First Rule of Data Collection: "Never throw away information"**

When in doubt, always make a note of any information that might possibly be relevant, rather than trying to decide whether or not it will be useful or should be ignored. The codesheets include space for coders to make notes (in the "coding notes" or "brief chronology" sections). This allows the coder to record any information about the claim or settlement attempt that might be useful at a later time, perhaps for adding new variables, constructing a textual chronology of the cases, or for identifying details about each case without going back to the original sources.