

Archives in The News!

An Examination of Mainstream Media Coverage of Archives

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Purpose of Study

The purpose of this project is to gain a better understanding of how archives are viewed by and represented in mainstream media coverage. The research is intended to answer the following questions:

- How are archives represented in mainstream media?
- What resources do media outlets produce (video, slideshows, articles, etc.)?
- What is considered newsworthy about archives?
- What source types cover archives most frequently, and how?
- How can this data be used?
- What potential products or initiatives could result?

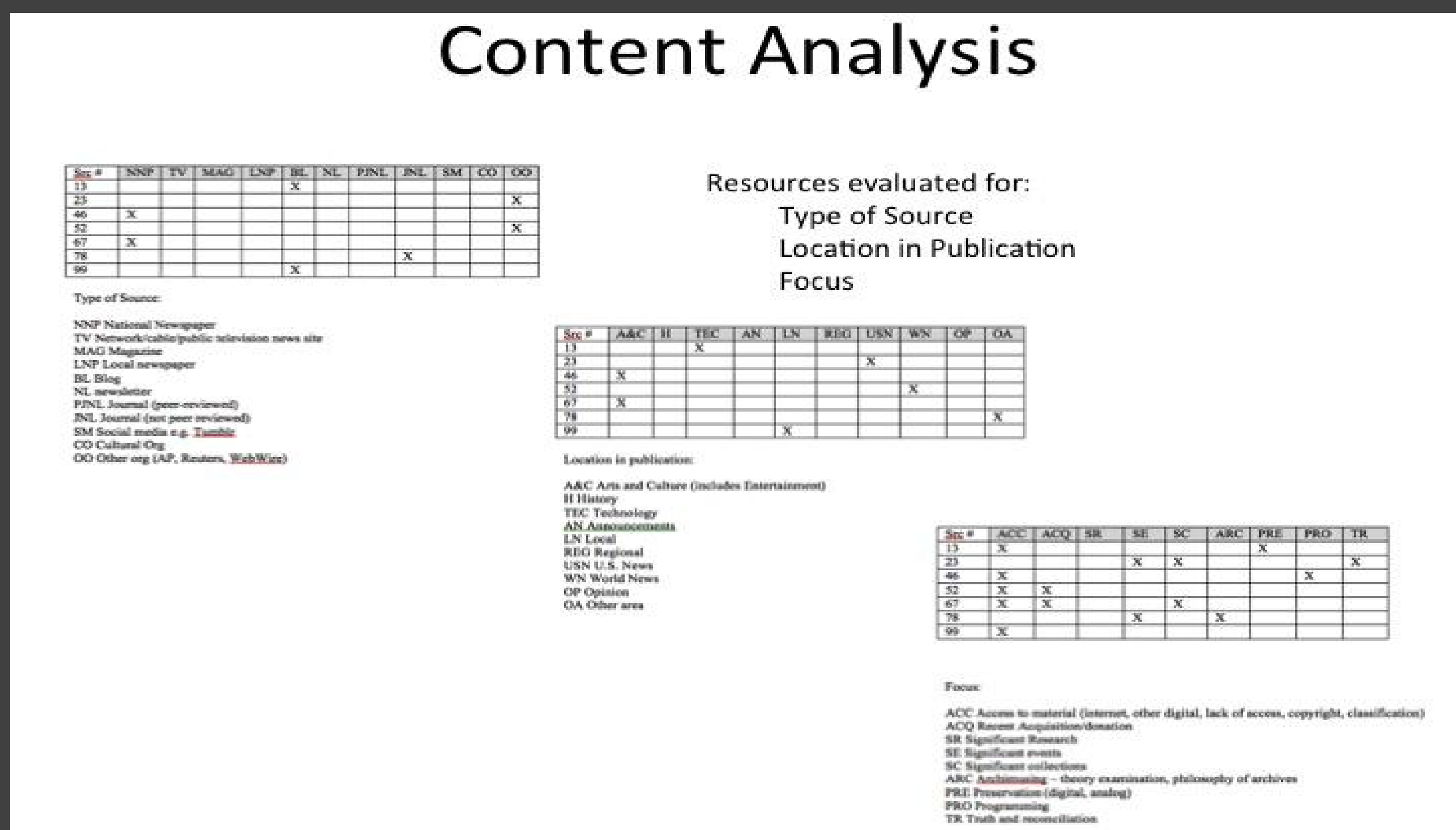
Methods: Mixed Methods Study

- A mixture of:
 - Types of data (qualitative/quantitative)
 - Types of methods
- Combined, has a “best of both” benefit
 - in-depth, contextual, time consuming examination (qualitative) +
 - efficient, predictive power (quantitative)

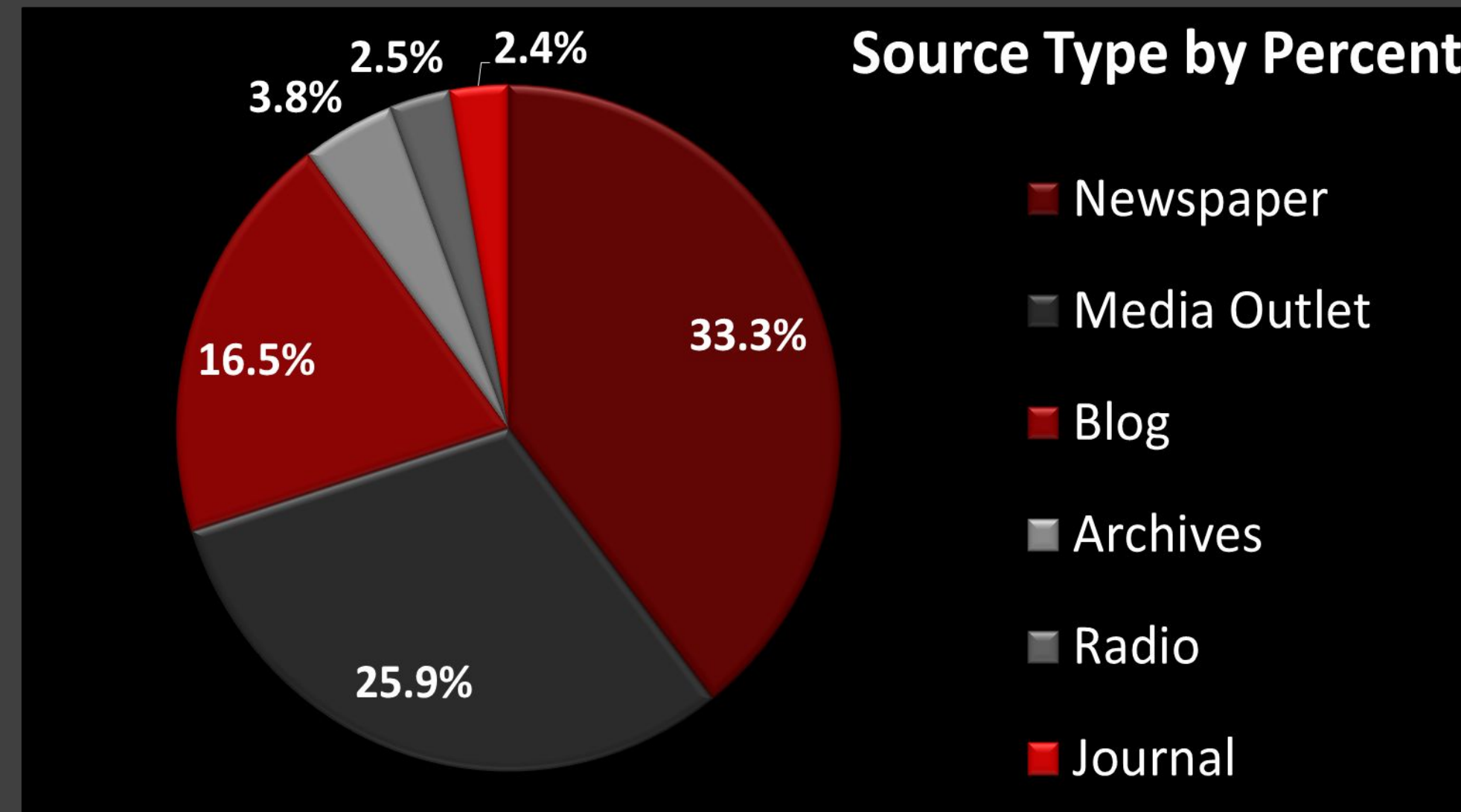
Methods used:

- Content Analysis
- Characteristics Analysis
- Tag Frequency & Tag Weighting
- Data Visualization

Preliminary Data - Content Analysis



Resource Characteristic Analysis



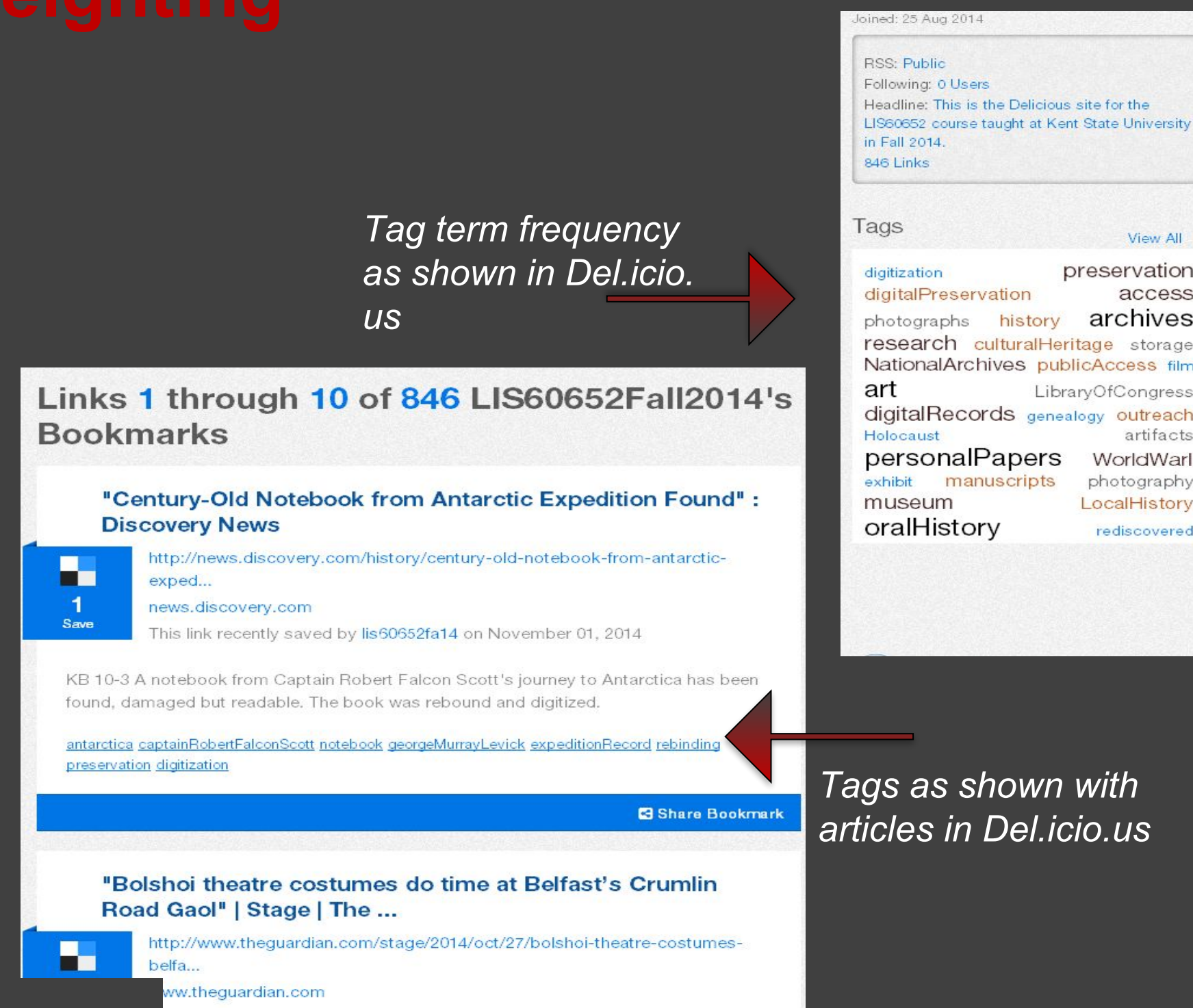
Sources were analysed for their type in order to see where the majority of news coverage was reported

Surprisingly, the majority of the news sources reporting on archives were comprised of global, national and local newspapers. It was thought that perhaps the largest representation of sources would have been comprised of blogs and social media sites especially considering the frequency of reporting on digitization and technology related topics.

*Media outlets are defined as multi-faceted sources combining often television, news, and social media.

Tag Frequency and Weighting

Data gathered using Del.icio.us, a social bookmarking website. Production of a weighted list of keyword metadata. The frequency of a term increases its weight. Keywords, in the form of tags, represent the aboutness of the news article.



Data Visualizaon



Preliminary Findings

Preliminary results from the research reveal through content analysis, the type of resource primarily covering archival topics is national newspapers. The location within the newspaper is most often arts and culture whereas the primary focus for the coverage of digital topics is access

Resource Characteristic Analysis:
 Analysis of the resource types show that newspapers are the primary source covering archives in the news.

Tag Frequencies and Tag Weighting:
 The iteration of tags and terms containing “digital” can tell us that anything digital and technology related is newsworthy

Next Steps

- Continue the Research and Analysis:
 - Incorporate software-assisted qualitative content analysis in order to utilize the entire sample (n=5000+)
 - Expand the longitudinal range by incorporating outside data sets, e.g. Kurlicez' RAINbyte
- Make recommendations for:
 - Additional tools for research
 - Potential uses of the data, and potential products

With thanks to:

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