

The Science ByLiners Project Guide To Counting

Dear Byliners Counters,

Welcome to the count! We hope this guide will be helpful to you. Refer to this list for any questions you may have. If it is not covered on this list, please feel free to contact one of us.

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What We Count

We count **almost everything with a byline** in following magazines: Smithsonian, Discover, Popular Science, National Geographic, Scientific American, and the NYT Tuesday Science Section. That means we do count short front-of-the-book items, infographics, product tests, and so on. We don't count letters to the editor or visual art, even if it's bylined.

We count only science- and technology-related things in the following magazines: Wired, Harper's, The New Yorker, the New York Times Magazine, the Atlantic. How do you know if something is science-related? Just apply the following questions!

Is a story about an explicitly scientific topic: science, the environment/nature, technology?

Is a story about a scientist/technologist?

Does a FOB story quotes one scientist/engineer, or a feature quotes at least two?

Does a FOB story quotes at least one scientific study, if a feature quotes at least two, or references scientific fields of study?

Do the hashtags online for the story use words including and/or about science?

In order to be included in the count, a FOB piece needs **at least one of the five**, and a feature needs **at least two**.

How We Count

Each of you will receive a spreadsheet for your publication, with different tabs for each counter. There are 3 counters for each publication. Get to know your team, but do not copy from each other. We want our count to be as bombproof as possible.

Each spreadsheet has a number of columns, and I'll go through how to put information into each one.

Example from our November dry run:

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1voTfBF3OW6MKPRb0mzt3xbn1jh3mRCdhf9rgBj1iOPE/edit#gid=0>

Name of Article - put in the name of the article. If it's crazy-long, just do your best

Author Name - input the author's name, as listed by the publication.

Page Number - if you have it, please enter. If not, don't worry -- it's for rechecking the info.

Length - We have a few categories that you can choose from a drop-down menu.

For MAGAZINES: LONG FOB is 500 words or more, SHORT FOB is 499 words or fewer. Feature is anything long in the feature well. BOB stands for Back of Book - sometimes there are shorter pieces in the back as well as the front that aren't full features.

For the NYT Science Section, we have different categories: News Short is 0-499 words, News Long is 500-999 words, and News Feature is 1000 or more words.

You will find all the possible options as drop-down boxes to click.

Topic - You get to choose the topic you think fits best. If two topics fit, put the second and third into the adjacent columns. If not, leave them blank. Topics include: physical sciences, social sciences, environment, health/medicine, non-health biology, technology, or other.

You'll find the possible topics as drop-down boxes to click.

Notes - This is where you can let us (and your team members) know why you made your decisions -- if they were difficult to make, let us know here.

Determining Genders

While for some authors and some publications, assigning the M's and F's is fairly straightforward, it is **extremely important that we verify genders online** whenever we come across a name that could be gender ambiguous. Keep in mind that there are male Karens, Lesleys, Lindsays, Terrys, and Danas, and females named Chris, Pat, Wendell, Devin, Darin, and Danny.

While it is important to be as careful as possible, it is also unrealistic to Google every single writer that you count. This means that it is all the more important that you communicate with your teammates-- while two people on your team might have counted, say, Lionel Shriver as a male writer, the other one may have caught that she is, in fact, female.

If, in your research, you find evidence that a writer may be transgender, make note of that. We can try to reach out to writers to see how they would like to be counted.

Finally, we sometimes come across anonymous authors-- for whom the author blurb in the publication will sometimes still indicate gender, and sometimes will not. After doing due diligence, if you still don't know the gender, mark a third "Anonymous" column on your spreadsheet for reconciliation. We include all intentionally anonymous authors and will reach out to the publication as a last resort to allocate gender otherwise.

Brief List of Tricky Names:

Karen	Taylor	Hilary
Lesley	Sam	Ashley
Leigh	Wendell	Kelly
Lindsay	Devin	Sidney
Terry	Darin	Tracy
Ryan	Danny	Hayden
Dana	Jordan	Pat
Chris	Alex	Jamie

Reconciliations

Your coordinators will let you know more about reconciling any differences as we go along. For now, just know that you will be regularly comparing your numbers with the other counters on

your team, discussing and resolving differences with the help of your coordinators.

Asking Questions

Do it! In fact, when you have a question, it's best to email your whole team and Cynthia or Kate so that everyone can make sure to be on the same page as to what is going on. You know the whole, "If you have a question, it's likely that someone else has the same question" shtick? It's so true-- and the more questions you are able to ask and get answered in advance, the easier reconciling numbers tends to be for everyone.

You are all fantastic, and we cannot thank you enough!