

# POWER ELITE DATABASE, 1935-1936, v2.1

This archive contains information about the "power elite" in the United States in 1935-1936, as defined by the boards of directors of the largest corporations, and members and directors of certain influential nonprofit organizations (policy-planning groups and foundations).

This data set was compiled by G. William Domhoff and Adam Schneider of the University of California at Santa Cruz.

In "[The Policy-Planning Capacity of the American Corporate Community](#)" (*Theory and Society*, 2023), Tom Mills & G. William Domhoff examined the power elite in two time frames —1935-1936 and 2010-2011 — so the dataset used ("v2.0") included only a small number of nonprofits (2 foundations and 4 policy-planning groups) that existed in both time periods. *This* version (v2.1) is a slightly expanded version of the Mills & Domhoff dataset; it contains more policy-planning groups and more foundations, and adds some powerful investment banks.

The boards of directors/trustees of the following organizations are included:

- **CORPORATIONS (250):** In 1935, President Roosevelt created the National Resources Committee within the Department of the Interior, and in 1939 the NRC produced a document called *The Structure of the American Economy*, which examined interlocking directorates among the largest 200 non-financial corporations and 50 largest financial corporations in the United States. Using various sources (mostly *Poor's Register*), we obtained the 1935/1936 boards of directors for all 250 of these corporations.  
[Source: <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/001312880>]
- **INVESTMENT BANKS (10):** The top 10 investment banks in the U.S., as ranked in *Investigation of Concentration of Economic Power*, a 1940 report produced by the U.S. Congress' Temporary National Economic Committee; the report's findings were summarized by Vincent Carosso in *Investment Banking in America: A History* (1970).  
[Source: <https://www.worldcat.org/oclc/16691612> (Congressional report) & <https://books.google.com/books/?id=cNgPAQAAMAAJ> (Carosso, 1970)]
- **POLICY-PLANNING GROUPS & THINK TANKS (6):** Three business-oriented policy groups (Business Advisory Council, National Association of Manufacturers, National Industrial Conference Board) and Three other influential policy-planning groups (Brookings Institution, Council on Foreign Relations, National Bureau of Economic Research). For the BAC, NAM, CFR, and NBER, the *full* membership is included, but people's leadership status within the group is noted, so non-directors could be filtered out if necessary.
- **FOUNDATIONS (20):** The top twenty U.S. foundations, as defined by *American Foundations and Their Fields*, published by the Twentieth Century Fund in 1934.  
[Source: <https://indianamemory.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/PRO/id/3823/rec/1>]

## Structure of the database

There are three plain-text files included:

- `people.txt` — A list of people and their organizations. For policy-planning groups, their leadership positions are noted, if applicable.
- `organizations.txt` — Metadata about the organizations: category, corporate sector/subsector, revenue or assets, rank within category, location.
- `combined.txt` — A combination of the two other files: it's a list of people and their seats, with some information about the organizations (category, business sector, rank) included.

— G. William Domhoff & Adam Schneider, <http://whorulesamerica.net/>