A Hilarious Twitter Account that Rates People's Dogs.

What can we learn from @dog_rates twitter activity from November 2015 to July 2017.

In 2015, Matt Nelson set up a Twitter poll from his personal account asking if he should create a dog rating account; positive responses led him to create the account, which has since then been known for its adorable pictures of dogs, clever captions and dog ratings that almost always exceeds a perfect score of 10.

I have always loved dogs, and I beam with excitement when I hear others talk about these wonderful creatures. I have 12 of my own; It never gets old when a friend comes visiting for the first time, only to find 12 fluffy homeowners alerting us to their intrusion.

I cannot tell which was the best decision: Matt Nelson starting the WeRateDogs account; him sharing the twitter archive data with Udacity; or me applying for the ALX Udacity Nanodegree program. All I know is, I finally got my hands on data that informs me about my most beloved pets ever – Dogs!

After an arduous gathering and cleaning process, I dived into analysis, wanting to know if my own beloved breeds, the German Shepherds, were popular on WeRateDogs twitter radar:
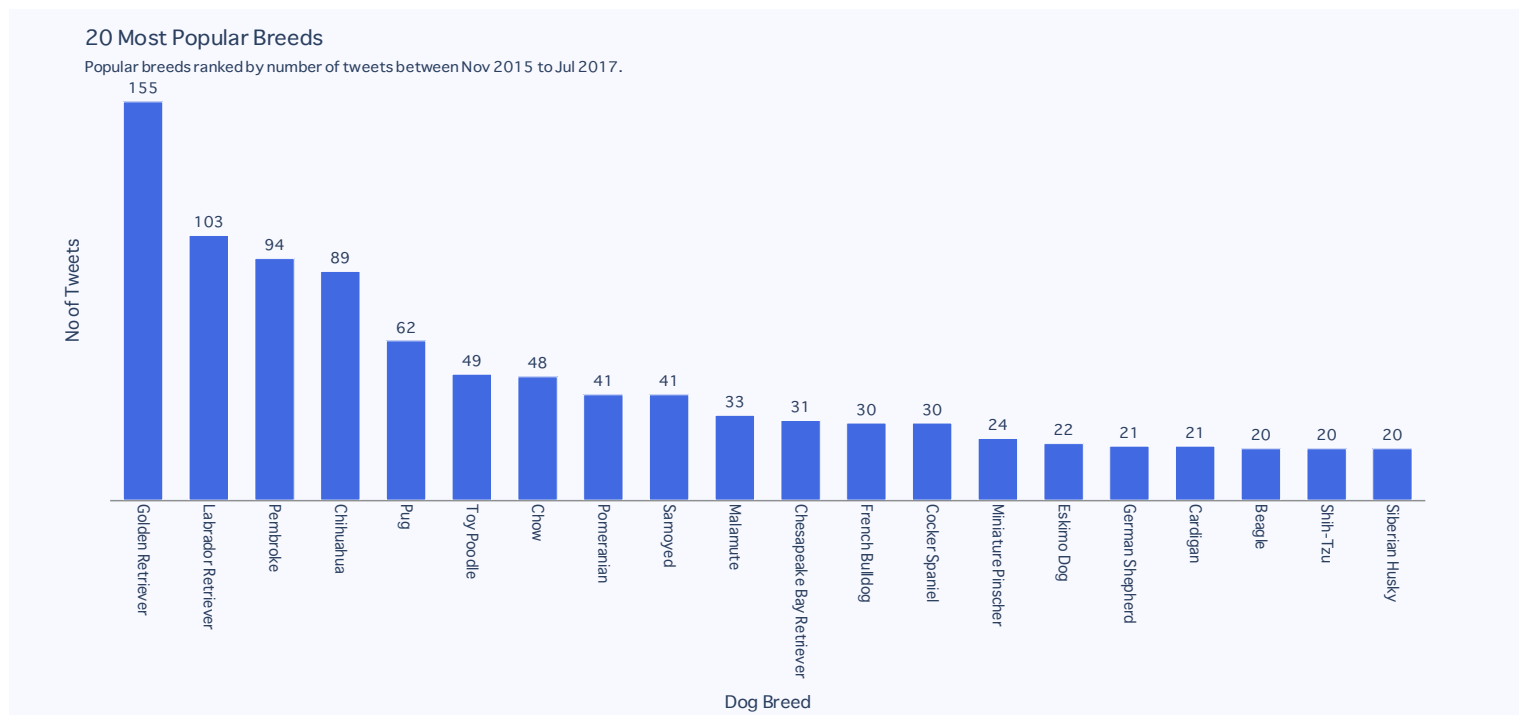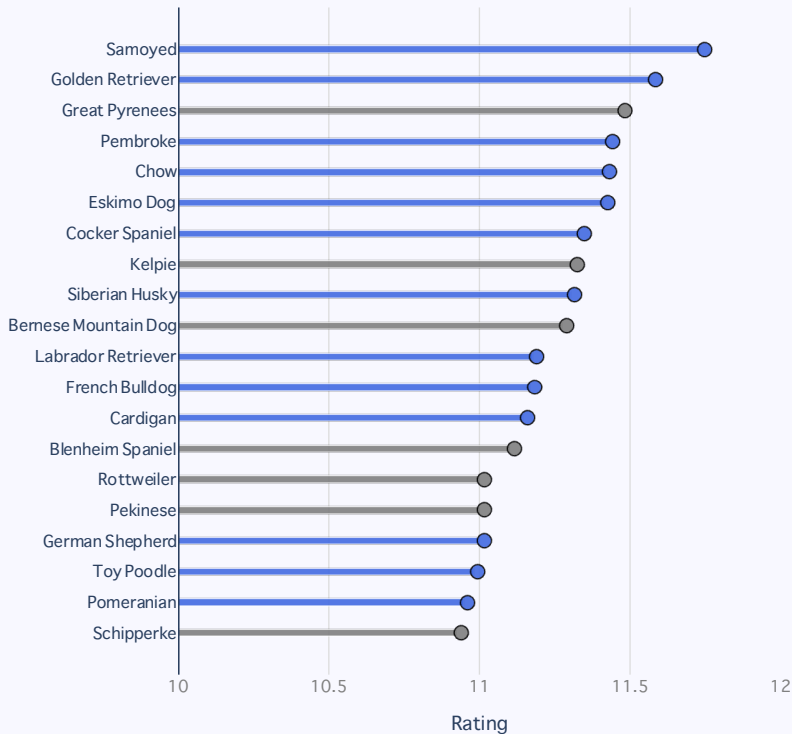

The Golden Retriever, Labrador retriever, Pembroke, Chihuahua, and the Pug were the top 5 most tweeted breeds. I hadn't even heard of some breeds on this leaderboard before, but I found solace in the fact that the German shepherds surfaced on the list. They were ranked 16th!

Popularity may not always translate to people's actual feelings. Perhaps, a better approach would also consider average rating as a metric. I tried to identify the top-rated breeds on average, computing a list of the top twenty.

Top 20 Breeds by Average Rating
The blue bars represent breeds that are also present on the popular 20 list.

Common denominator

Interestingly, majority of the of the popular breeds were still present on the list. In fact, **13** of the **20** records were popular breeds on WeRateDogs. The Samoyed was the highest rated on average. The Golden retriever, Great Pyrenees, Pembroke, Chow, and the Eskimo dog follow behind closely. **This time, the German Shepherds came 17th!**

The Concept of Dog Stage:
As breeds compete for the top place on WeRateDogs tweets, dogs have also been carving their own niche on the internet, with lovely videos of puppies learning to swim or Chihuahuas wearing flower crowns. Dogs have even been assigned to different live stages: Puppers, Puppos and Doggos (for toddler, teenage and adult-stage dogs respectively). People's preference for dog stages may vary. I particularly find teenage (puppos) and adult dogs(doggos) interesting. My girlfriends consider toddlers (puppers) cute. It would be interesting to visualize how people interact with the various dog stages too. The good news, we have just the data for that!

People Love and Rate Puppos; Doggos Gather Retweets!
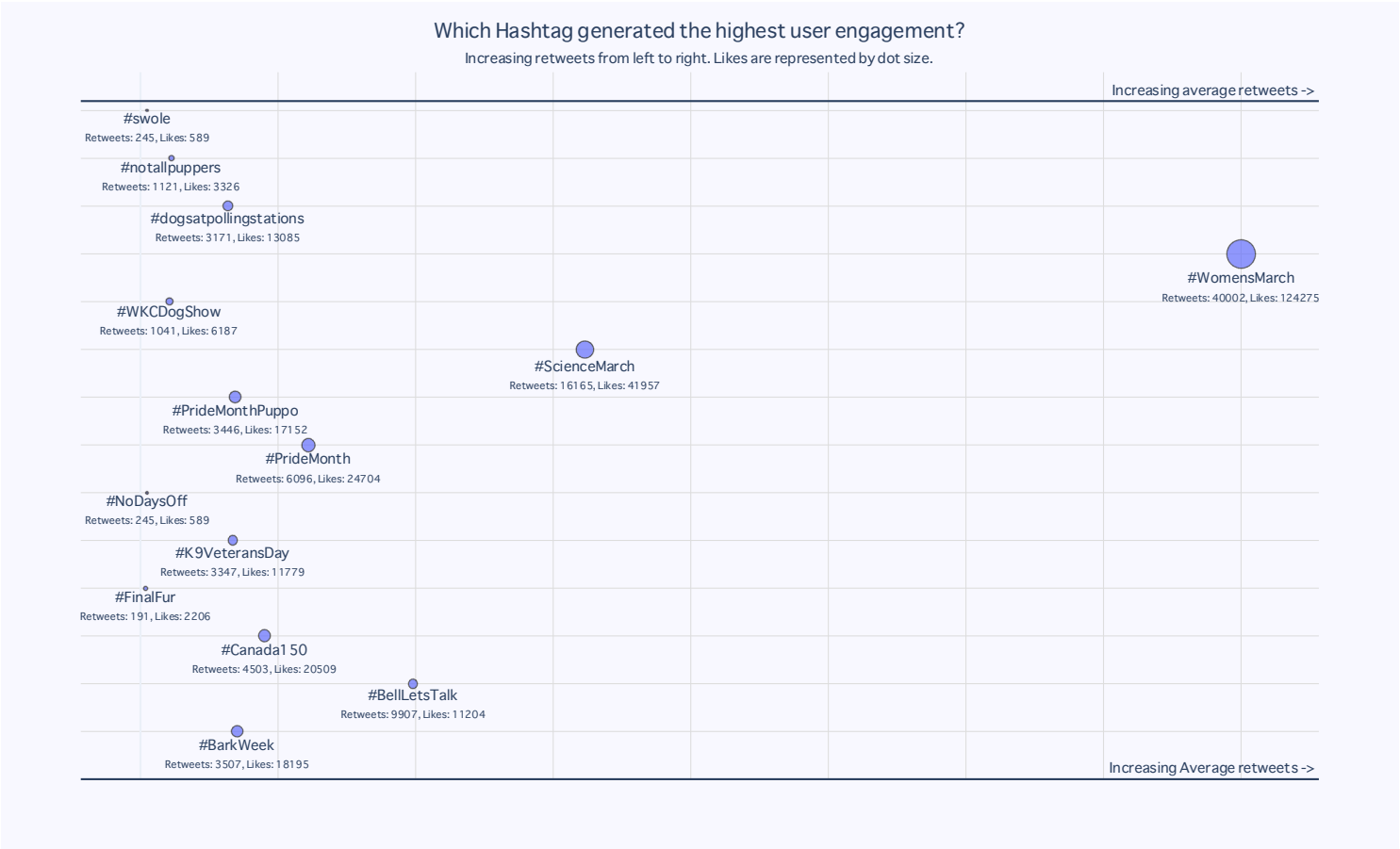User retweets, likes and ratings compared across various dog stages.
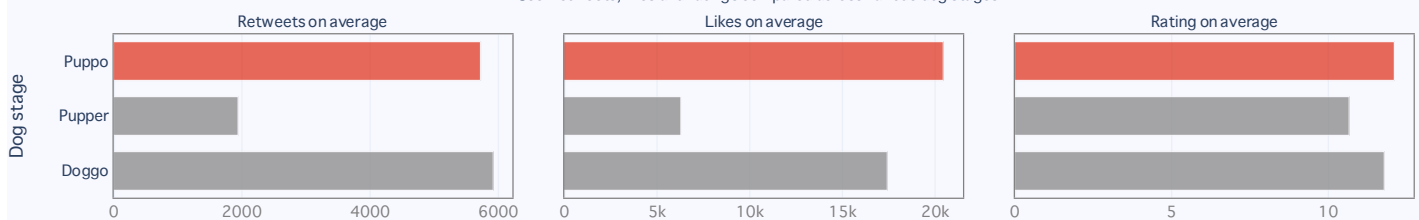
Puppos (teenage dogs) were the clear favorites, dominating in average likes (over 20,000) and ratings (12). Users also seemed to engage more with tweets involving doggos (adult dogs), as they gathered marginally more retweets than Puppos. Puppers received the least engagement on all three levels (retweets, likes and ratings). Sorry girlfriends.

The Use of Hashtags:
Hashtags have been known to help users reach their target audience, because they make it easier for others to find information. Surprisingly, a whooping 98.8% of WeRateDogs tweets did not use any hashtags. On analyzing the remaining 1.2%, I observed that posts with hashtags generated far more tweets, likes and ratings on average than those without. However, I could not make confident conclusions, knowing that 1.2% of our total data was far too insufficient to base any conclusions on.

A better approach was to explore the 1.2% in detail, then try to understand the hashtags that generated the highest user engagements when used:

Which Hashtag generated the highest user engagement?
Increasing retweets from left to right. Likes are represented by dot size.

Increasing average retweets ->

#swole
Retweets: 245, Likes: 589

#notallpuppers
Retweets: 1121, Likes: 3326

#dogsatpollingstations
Retweets: 3171, Likes: 13085

#WomensMarch
Retweets: 40002, Likes: 124275

#WKCDogShow
Retweets: 1041, Likes: 6187

#ScienceMarch
Retweets: 16165, Likes: 41957

#PrideMonthPuppo
Retweets: 3446, Likes: 17152

#PrideMonth
Retweets: 6096, Likes: 24704

#NoDaysOff
Retweets: 245, Likes: 589

#K9VeteransDay
Retweets: 3347, Likes: 11779

#FinalFur
Retweets: 191, Likes: 2206

#Canada150
Retweets: 4503, Likes: 20509

#BellLetsTalk
Retweets: 9907, Likes: 11204

#BarkWeek
Retweets: 3507, Likes: 18195

Increasing Average retweets ->

I found that #WomensMarch and #ScienceMarch generated the most engagements when used in a tweet.