MAT381E-Week 8: Introduction to Web Scraping

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Homework I review

- Turn off warnings and messages in code chunks. It does not look good when you render the documents.
- Do not show whole big data, show a piece of it.
- Do not use View() function in homework/reports since if it forces to open another window.
- library(tidyverse) already involves library(ggplot2) etc. If you write them sequentially, this implies that you do not know the tidyverse ecosystem well.
- Please, do commenting as needed (short comments). The reader does not have to guess what you are doing. You need to navigate the reader.
- Present a well-organized homework/report. This is a sign how you respect your readers.
- Please, do use data science related packages' functions for mathematical operations.
- Please, prefer piping as needed, it increases the code's readability.
- Please, pay attention your project folder design. Keep data related files under data folder, keep image related files under image file etc.
- As in everything, how you present something matters as what you have done.

Outline

- Motivation.
- What is Web Scraping?
- HTML basics.
- Web scraping with rvest package.
- Ethical issues.
- 01-web_scraping.Rmd.

Motivation

Anti-Asian Hate Crime in U.S. **Rises During Pandemic Year** Overall and anti-Asian hate crime reported to police in America's 15 largest cities in 2019 and 2020 2019 2020 -7% 1,845 1.717 122 Overall hate crime Anti-Asian hate crime Overall hate crime totals exclude Cleveland Source: Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism (California State University) statista 🔽

- "A survey of police reports by the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism at California State University confirmed that racially motivated crimes against those of Asian descent in the U.S. have risen in the pandemic year of 2020. While hate crimes against Asians still make up a smaller fraction of all hate crimes reported in America's 15 largest cities, their number rose from 49 in 2019 to 122 in 2020."
- "Separate reports released by the Stop AAPI Hate reporting center confirm that attacks on Asians were highest in the early days of the pandemic, but also show that they have been rising again lately."
- "Stop AAPI Hate said yesterday that verbal harassment was the most common incident recorded by them at 68 percent of all cases, followed by deliberate shunning (20 percent of cases) and physical attacks (11 percent of cases)."

What is a hate crime?

- According to the US Department of Justice: A hate crime is a crime committed on the basis of the victim's perceived or actual race, color, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, or disability.
- The US Department of Justice adds: "Hate crimes have a broader effect than most other kinds of crime. Hate crime victims include not only the crime's immediate target but also others like them. Hate crimes affect families, communities, and at times, the entire nation, as others fear that they too could be threatened, attacked, or forced from their homes, because of what they look like, who they are, where they worship, whom they love, or whether they have a disability."

Source

Why report hate crimes?

According to the US Department of Justice: "The Hate Crimes Reporting Gap is the significant disparity
between hate crimes that actually occur and those reported to law enforcement. It is critical to report hate
crimes not only to show support and get help for victims, but also to send a clear message that the community
will not tolerate these kinds of crimes. Reporting hate crimes allows communities and law enforcement to fully
understand the scope of the problem in a community and put resources toward preventing and addressing
attacks based on bias and hate."

Lacking Hate Crime Data



Source

- "This, of course, ignores the possibility that someone might be motivated by racial hatred and sexism."
- "Unfortunately, most statistics make the same assumption. Hate crime data that is gathered by the FBI is often categorized according to a single motivation (such as religion, sexual orientation, race/ethnicity, gender identity). Less than 3% of the hate crimes that were reported in 2019 recorded multiple biases."
- "Reality is obviously much more complex than these numbers capture. Things get even more complicated when you consider reporting rates. A person's race and gender identity will affect the likelihood that they will report a hate crime to the police."

Motivating Data

- The data we need to answer a question may not always come in a spreadsheet and be ready for us to read. Sometimes, data can be available on the web.
- For example, following Wikipedia page illustrates **Hate crime statistics by bias motivation in the US** in a html table:

Victims per Year by Bias Motivation^[124] Department of Justice / FBI Hate Crimes Statistics

Bias Motive	1995	1996 ^[127]	1997 ^[128]	1998 ^[129]	1999 ^[130]	2000 ^[131]	2001 ^[132]	2002 ^[133]	2003 ^[134]	2004 ^[135]	2005 ^[136]	2006 ^[137]	2007 ^[138]	2008 ^[139]	2009 ^[140]	2010 ^[141]	2011 ^[142]	2
Race	6,438	6,994	6,084	5,514	5,485	5,397	5,545	4,580	4,754	5,119	4,895	5,020	4,956	4,934	4,057	3,949	3,645	3
Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry																		
Religion	1,617	1,535	1,586	1,720	1,686	1,699	2,118	1,659	1,489	1,586	1,405	1,750	1,628	1,732	1,575	1,552	1,480	1
Sexual Orientation	1,347	1,281	1,401	1,488	1,558	1,558	1,664	1,513	1,479	1,482	1,213	1,472	1,512	1,706	1,482	1,528	1,572	1
Ethnicity/National Origin	1,044	1,207	1,132	956	1,040	1,216	2,634	1,409	1,326	1,254	1,228	1,305	1,347	1,226	1,109	1,122	939	8
Disability	unknown	unknown	12	27	23	36	37	50	43	73	54	95	84	85	99	48	61	1
Gender	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	L
Gender Identity	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	unknown	L
Single-Bias	10,446	11,017	10,215	9705	9,792	9,906	11,998	9,211	9,091	9,514	8,795	9,642	9,527	9,683	8,322	8,199	7,697	7
Multiple-Bias	23	22	40	17	10	18	22	11	9	14	9	10	8	8	14	9	16	1
Total	10,469	11,039	10,255	9,722	9,802	9,924	12,020	9,222	9,100	9,528	8,804	9,652	9,535	9,691	8,336	8,208	7,713	7

Notes: The term *victim* may refer to a person, business, institution, or society as a whole. Though the FBI has collected UCR data since 1992, reports from 1992-1994 are not available on the FBI website. Single-bias victim totals have been calculated for 1995-1998. Race and Ethnicity/National origin were merged starting in 2015.

Web Scraping

- **Web scraping** or **web harvesting** are the terms used to describe the process of extracting data from a website.
- The web pages are written in a text format using hyper text markup language (HTML) code.
- Afterwards, they are rendered by **web browsers** to be viewed.
- To see the HTML source code for a web page we can visit the page on the *browser*, then we can use the *View Page Source* tool to see it.
- Because HTML code is accessible, we can download the HTML files, import it into R, and then write R code to extract the information we need from the page.

• To get an idea of how HTML code works, here we show a few lines of code from the Wikipedia page that provides information on US hate statistics:

```
<h2><span class="mw-headline" id="Prevalence_of_hate_crimes">Prevalence of hate crimes</span><span class="mw-editsection"><span class="mw-editsection"><span class="mw-editsection"><span class="mw-editsection"><span class="mw-editsection"><span class="mw-editsection=laws_in_the_United_States&amp; action=edit&amp; section=14" title = "Edit section: Prevalence of hate crimes"><edit</a><span class="mw-editsection-bracket">[</span></span></span></h2>
The DOJ and the FBI have gathered statistics on hate crimes reported to law enforcement since 1992 in accordance with the <a href="/wiki /Hate_Crime_Statistics_Act" title="Hate Crime Statistics Act">Hate Crime Statistics Act</a>. The FBI's <a href="/wiki /Criminal_Justice_Information_Services_Division">Criminal Justice_Information_Services_Division">Criminal Justice_Information_Services_Division</a> has annually published these statistics as part of its <a href="/wiki/Uniform_Crime_Reports" title="Uniform Crime Reports">Uniform Crime Reporting</a> has annually published these statistics as part of its <a href="/wiki/Uniform_Crime_Reports" title="Uniform Crime Reports">Uniform Crime Reporting</a> program. According to these reports, of the over 113,000 hate crimes since 1991, 55% were motivated by racial bias, 17% by religious bias, 14% sexual orientation bias, 14% ethnicity bias, and 1% disability bias .<sup id="cite_ref-122" class="reference"><a href="#cite_note-122">&#91;122&#93;</a></a></sup> <a href="/wiki /David_Ray_Hate_Crimes_Prevention_Act" title="David Ray Hate Crimes Prevention Act">David Ray Hate Crimes Prevention Act</a> >p>Please note that the figures in the table below do not contain data from all reporting agencies every year. 2004 figures covered a population of 254,193,439, 2014 covered 297,926,030.
```

Prevalence of hate crimes [edit]

The DOJ and the FBI have gathered statistics on hate crimes reported to law enforcement since 1992 in accordance with the Hate Crime Statistics Act. The FBI's Criminal Justice Information Services Division has annually published these statistics as part of its Uniform Crime Reporting program. According to these reports, of the over 113,000 hate crimes since 1991, 55% were motivated by racial bias, 17% by religious bias, 14% sexual orientation bias, 14% ethnicity bias, and 1% disability bias. [122] David Ray Hate Crimes Prevention Act

Please note that the figures in the table below do not contain data from all reporting agencies every year. 2004 figures covered a population of 254,193,439, 2014 covered 297,926,030.

- Once we look at the full HTML source code, we can actually see the text and data along with HTML codes.
- We can also see **a pattern** of how it is stored. If you know HTML, you can write programs that leverage knowledge of these patterns to extract what we want.
- We also take advantage of a language widely used to make web pages look "pretty" called Cascading Style Sheets (CSS).

HTML basics

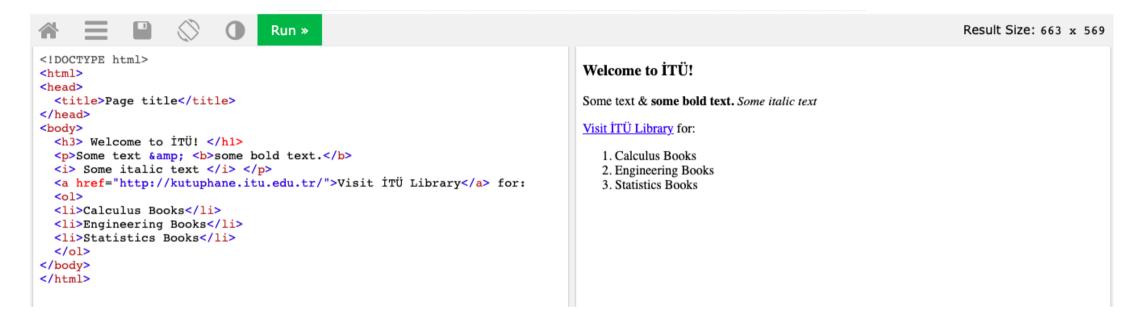
- All HTML documents must start with a document type declaration: <!DOCTYPE html>.
- Every HTML page itself must be in an <html> element, and it must have **two children**: <head>, which contains document metadata like the page title, author etc and <body>, which contains the content you see in the browser.

```
<!DOCTYPE html>
<html>
<head>
 <title>Page title</title>
</head>
<body>
 <h1> Welcome to İTÜ! </h1>
 Some text & amp; <b>some bold text.</b>
 <i>> Some italic text </i> 
 <a href="http://kutuphane.itu.edu.tr/">Visit İTÜ •
 <01>
 Calculus Books
 Engineering Books
 Statistics Books
 </body>
</html>
```

- Each HTML element has a hierarchical structure which consist of a start tag (e.g. <tag>), optional attributes (id='first'), an end tag (like </tag>), and contents (everything in between the start and end tag).
- Block tags like <h1> (most important heading 1), (paragraph), and (ordered list), (list item) form the overall structure of the page.
- Inline tags like (bold), <i> (italics), and <a> (links) formats text inside block tags.
- On the left: The <a> tag defines a hyperlink. The href attribute specifies the URL of the page the link goes to.

- Note: Since < and > are used for start and end tags, we cannot use them directly.
- Instead we have to use the HTML escapes > (greater than) and < (less than).
- And of couse, since those escapes use &, if we want a literal ampersand (and) we have to escape it as &.
- If you encounter a tag that you have never seen before, you can find out what it does at WWW3 school.

• Let's try out our HTML code at WWW3 school:

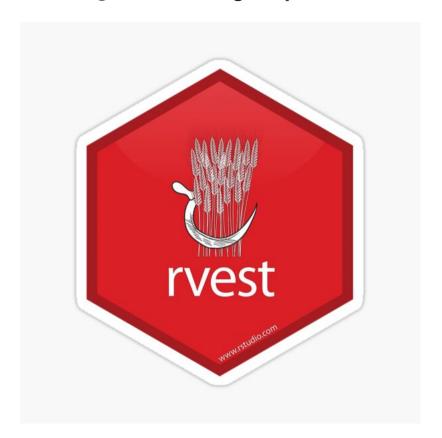


• More on HTML.

• Some elements, like cannot have children. These elements depend solely on attributes for their behavior.

```
<img src='logo/rvest.jpg' width="400" height="400">
```

• Here, src attribute specifies the path (URL) to the image; width and height attributes define the width and height of the image in **pixels**.



Named attributes

- Sometimes, the start tags of HTML elements can have **named attributes** which look like <tag name1='value1'> Content </tag>.
- Two of the most important named attributes are id and class, which are used in conjunction with CSS to control the visual appearance of the page. These are often useful when scraping data off a page.
- Note that attributes are always specified in the start tag.

id attribute

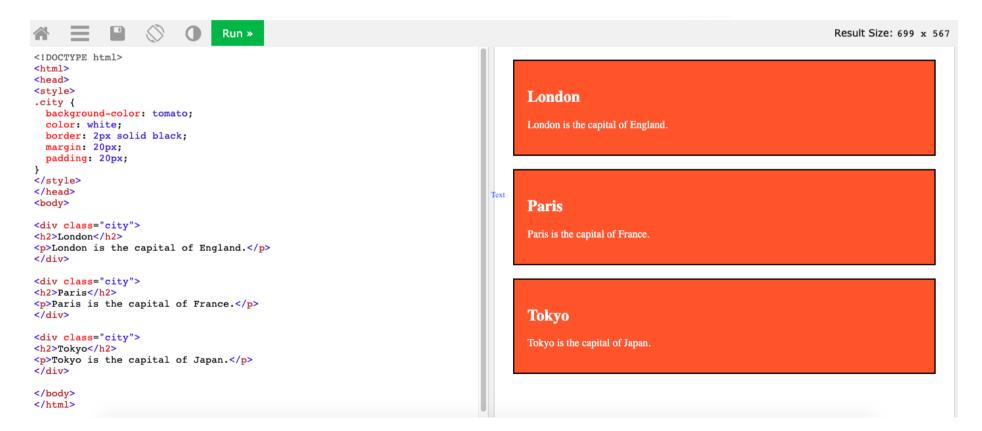
- The id attribute is used to point to a specific style declaration in a **style element within head** and the value of the id attribute must be **unique** within the HTML document.
- The syntax for id is: write a hash character (#), followed by an id name. Then, define the CSS properties within curly braces {}.



Source1 and Source2

class attribute

- The class attribute is often used to point to a class name in a style sheet. Multiple HTML elements can share the same class.
- The syntax for class is: write a period character (.), followed by an class name. Then, define the CSS properties within curly braces {}.



Source1 and Source2

• Note that main difference between id and class attribute is that id is unique in a page and can only apply to at most one HTML element, while class attribute can be applied to multiple HTML elements.

Rvest



The rvest package

• The rvest package provides web harvesting tools within tidyverse ecosystem.

```
# rvest is not within the core tidyverse ecosystem
# library(tidyverse) will not load rvest package
# load rvest package by library(rvest) call specifically
library(rvest)
```

• The rvest manual tells us that it depends on a few other packages including xml2. This enables us to use functions available in these packages as well.

Function	Description
read_html()	takes a string that can be either a path, a url and then creates a HTML document from a webpage.

• Here are basic rvest functions:

Function	Description
<pre>html_elements()</pre>	select specified elements with the specified tags from the HTML document.
html_table()	extract table, to be used after html_elements().
<pre>html_text()</pre>	<pre>extract text within tags, to be used after html_elements().</pre>
html_attr()	extract the value of attribute, to be used after html_elements().

• The first step in using this package is to import the web page, you are interested in, into R.

• Note that the entire Wikipedia webpage is now contained in h object:

h

```
#> {html_document}
#> <html class="client-nojs" lang="en" dir="ltr">
#> [1] <head>\n<meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8 ...
#> [2] <body class="mediawiki ltr sitedir-ltr mw-hide-empty-elt ns-0 ns-subject ...</pre>
```

- The h object is a *list* (R data type) and the items in the h object correspond to the basic document structure of an HTML document.
- Displaying the h object shows that the first item in the *list* is head and the second item is body.
- Note that these items include the basic component of the HTML document, in other words, the *text, links*, and HTML "stuff" which were scraped from the web page.
- Specifically this stuff is found in the *body* element of the h *list*.

```
library(xml2)
xml_child(h, 1)
#> {html node}
#> <head>
#>
    [1] <meta http-equiv="Content-Type" content="text/html; charset=UTF-8">\n
#>
    [2] <meta charset="UTF-8">\n
#>
    [3] <title>Hate crime laws in the United States - Wikipedia</title>\n
    [4] <script>document.documentElement.className="client-js";RLCONF={"wgBreakF ...
#>
    [5] <script>(RLQ=window.RLQ||[]).push(function(){mw.loader.implement("user.o ...
#>
    [6] link rel="stylesheet" href="/w/load.php?lang=en& modules=ext.cite.st ...
#>
    [7] <script async="" src="/w/load.php?lang=en&amp;modules=startup&amp;only=s ...
#>
    [8] <meta name="ResourceLoaderDynamicStyles" content="">\n
#>
    [9] link rel="stylesheet" href="/w/load.php?lang=en& modules=site.styles ...
#>
  [10] <meta name="generator" content="MediaWiki 1.38.0-wmf.9">\n
#> [11] <meta name="referrer" content="origin">\n
#> [12] <meta name="referrer" content="origin-when-crossorigin">\n
#> [13] <meta name="referrer" content="origin-when-cross-origin">\n
#> [14] <meta name="format-detection" content="telephone=no">\n
#> [15] <meta property="og:title" content="Hate crime laws in the United States ...
#> [16] <meta property="og:type" content="website">\n
#> [17] <link rel="preconnect" href="//upload.wikimedia.org">\n
#> [18] k rel="alternate" media="only screen and (max-width: 720px)" href="/ ...
#> [19] k rel="alternate" type="application/x-wiki" title="Edit this page" h ...
#> [20] <link rel="apple-touch-icon" href="/static/apple-touch/wikipedia.png">\n
#> ...
```

```
library(xml2)
xml_child(h, 2)

#> {html_node}

#> <body class="mediawiki ltr sitedir-ltr mw-hide-empty-elt ns-0 ns-subject mw-editable page-Hate_crime_la

#> [1] <div id="mw-page-base" class="noprint"></div>

#> [2] <div id="mw-head-base" class="noprint"></div>

#> [3] <div id="content" class="mw-body" role="main">\n\t<a id="top"></a>\n\t<di ...

#> [4] <div id="mw-data-after-content">\n\t<div class="read-more-container"></di ...</pre>
```

#> [5] <div id="mw-navigation">\n\t<h2>Navigation menu</h2>\n\t<div id="mw-head" ...
#> [6] <footer id="footer" class="mw-footer" role="contentinfo"> [7] <script>(RLQ=window.RLQ||[]).push(function(){mw.config.set({"wgPageParseR ...
#> [8] <script type="application/ld+json">{"@context":"https:\\/\\/schema.org"," ...
#> [9] <script>(RLQ=window.RLQ||[]).push(function(){mw.config.set({"wgBackendRes ...

Extract a table

- Now, question is "how do we extract the table from the object h?"
- Remember that HTML code has a hierarchical tree structure. The different parts of an HTML code, often defined with a message in between < and > are referred to as **nodes** (in other words, **tags**).
- When we know that the information is stored in an HTML table, we can see this in the HTML code with tags.
- To extract a table from the h *list*, then we need to gather all the HTML code within the tags in the h *list*.
- You can learn more about the tag structure from HTML documentation.

• The rvest package includes functions to extract nodes of an HTML document: the function html_elements() extracts all nodes of different type and html_element() extracts the first one. To extract all tables we use:

• Now, instead of the entire web page, we just have the HTML code for the **tables only**:

- But we want the table titled "Victims per Year by Bias Motivation" on the page.
- Looking at the output above it looks like the **table index** is [3]. To extract just the third table the table with the data we are interested in we can type the following:

```
victim_table <- wiki_tables %>% .[3]
# subsetting with square brackets while piping: .[]
victim_table

#> {xml_nodeset (1)}
#> [1] \n<caption>\n< ...</pre>
```

- We are not quite there yet because this is **not a data frame**.
- In fact, rvest includes a function just for converting HTML tables into data frames:

```
View(victim_table_df)
class(victim_table_df) #returns a data frame
```

• We are still not done because this is clearly not a **tidy data set**.

```
str(victim_table_df)
```

• Change the column names properly, replace "unknown" and empty spaces with NA, then remove the commas and turn character variables into numeric.

```
library(dplyr)
table tidy <- victim table df %>%
               setNames(c("Bias Motive", paste(c(1995:2018), sep=""))) %>% #change the column names
               #mutate_at(vars("1995":"2018"), as.numeric) #did not work!help needed #NAs did not
               mutate_at(vars("1995":"2018"), funs(gsub(',', '',.))) %>% #remove commas #discuss!!!
               mutate_at(vars("1995":"2018"), as.numeric) #change the columns except bias motive in
               #na if("unknown") %>%
               #na if("") %>%
#https://github.com/tidyverse/readxl/issues/572
               ###mutate at(vars("1995":"2018"), as.numeric)
# https://stackoverflow.com/questions/46787515/remove-commas-from-character-vectors-based-on-specif
#not desired format, but let's continue!.(Some rows should be empty, not NA)
View(table tidy)
```

• Finally, let's get the final look of the table!..

```
#More on HTML tables: https://haozhu233.github.io/kableExtra/awesome_table_in_html.html
library(kableExtra)
table_tidy %>%
  kbl() %>%
  kable_paper() %>%
  scroll_box(width = "1000px", height = "400px") #add a scroll-box
```

Bias Motive	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Race	6438	6994	6084	5514	5485	5397	5545	4580	4754	5119	4895	5020	4956	4934	4057	3949
Race/Ethnicity/Ancestry	NA															
Religion	1617	1535	1586	1720	1686	1699	2118	1659	1489	1586	1405	1750	1628	1732	1575	1552
Sexual Orientation	1347	1281	1401	1488	1558	1558	1664	1513	1479	1482	1213	1472	1512	1706	1482	1528
Ethnicity/National Origin	1044	1207	1132	956	1040	1216	2634	1409	1326	1254	1228	1305	1347	1226	1109	1122
Disability	NA	NA	12	27	23	36	37	50	43	73	54	95	84	85	99	48
Gender	NA															
Gender Identity	NA															

Exract Text

Data Code

• Let's assume that you want to extract the following unordered list at the US Department of Justice:

knitr::include_graphics('images/offense.png')

Offenses by Crime Category

Among the 11,129 hate crime offenses reported:

- Crimes against persons: 69.6%
- Crimes against property: 28.2%
- Crimes against society: 2.2%

Exract image URL

• Let's say we would like to import the image of "ortanca" at https://www.bitkivt.itu.edu.tr/vt/report.php? sor=665 into the R.

News

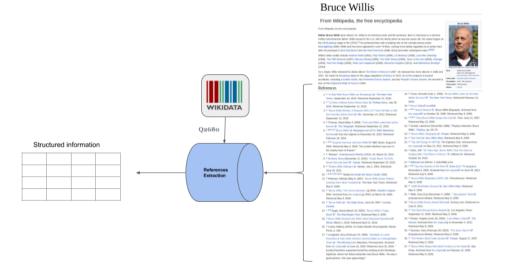


🛍 misinfocon.com/scribes-reference-api-enables-users-to-access-wikipedia... 🎛 ☆ 📋 🔾 🦠

in $f \square$







- Scribe says that:
 - "We, therefore, started the Scribe credibility API. The goal was to make the Wikipedia references not only accessible to anyone but also queryable. We implemented this in two steps: (1) extracting Wikipedia references, and (2) setting up an API to query the references."
 - "We extract Wikipedia references from the Wikipedia dump and enrich it with Wikidata information, such as the entity ID in Wikidata. This data is saved as structured data in the database. We focus on online references, i.e., references that include a URL."
 - YOUR TURN?

Ethical considerations

- Legal Concerns:
 - If internet data is publicly available (e.g., tweets from a public Twitter account), it is **generally considered legal** to collect this data.
 - Research that involves human participants (e.g., surveys, interviews, blood draws) needs to be approved by the Institutional Ethics Committee.

• "İTÜ İnsan araştırmaları etik kurulları Sosyal ve Beşeri Bilimler İnsan Araştırmaları (SB-INAREK) ve Sağlık ve Mühendislik Bilimleri İnsan Araştırmaları (SM-INAREK) olmak üzere iki ayrı kuruldan oluşmaktadır."







Source

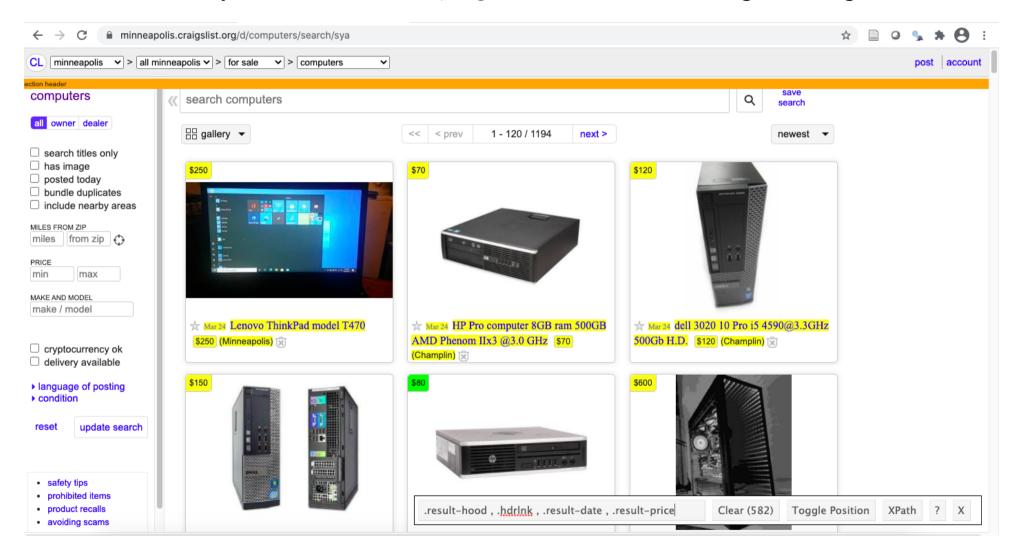
• But it is still not certain whether research about publicly available internet data require Institutional Ethics Committee approval or not.

• User Ethics:

According to this information:

"Just because something is legal does not mean it is ethical. Collecting, sharing, and publishing internet data created by or about individuals can lead to unwanted public scrutiny, harm, and other negative consequences for those individuals. There is no single, simple answer to the many difficult questions raised by internet data collection. It is important to develop an ethical framework that responds to the specifics of your particular research project or use case (e.g., the platform, the people involved, the context, the potential consequences, etc.)."

• Hands-on example: Visit 01-web_scraping. Rmd file for data harvesting from craiglist.



- More on web scraping:
 - https://www.r-bloggers.com/2020/01/web-scraping-with-rvest-astro-throwback/
 - https://www.storybench.org/scraping-html-tables-and-downloading-files-with-r/
 - https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/RSelenium/vignettes/basics.html.

Attributions

- rvest.
- Data Science Labs.
- Ethics.
- CSS Selectors.