

"All the News
That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times

Late Edition

New York: Today, sunnier yielding to clouds. High 60. Tonight, cloudy, partly rain. Low 49. Tomorrow, early showers, then sun. High 65. Yesterday, high 58, low 44. Details, page D5.

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NEW YORK, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 21, 1999

It beyond the greatest New York metropolitan area

60 CENTS

Whitman Says Troopers Used Racial Profiling

*Minority Groups Faced
Bias on the Turnpike*

By IVER PETERSON

TRENTON, April 20 — Gov. Christine Todd Whitman and her Attorney General conceded today for the first time that some state troopers singled out black and Hispanic drivers on the highway, and that once they were pulled over, they were more than three times as likely as whites to be subjected to searches.

Mrs. Whitman and Attorney General Peter G. Versero made the acknowledgement, after years of denials from state officials, as Mr. Versero released the results of a two-month study of selected motor vehicle stops by state troopers. The study concluded that racial profiling had been conducted by some troopers in their zeal to stop drug trafficking.

The Governor said that while no official policy permitting such racial profiling existed, management styles, coaching of state troopers by superiors and a system that rewarded both aggressive ticket-writing and drug seizures had combined to create an atmosphere that went beyond simple racism to "a problem that is more complex and subtle than we first realized."

She said she was surprised, "To see numbers that indicate that fully

SERBS REPORTED TO PUSH ALBANIANS FROM 2D REPUBLIC

NATO FEARS A WIDER WAR

*Kosovars Seeking a Refuge in
Montenegro Under Pursuit
— Allies Press Attacks*

By ERIC SCHMITT

WASHINGTON, April 20 — NATO and Pentagon officials said today that Serbian forces had begun driving ethnic Albanians from Montenegro, signaling a widening of the Balkan conflict.

The Serbs' actions appeared to be focused on Albanians who had fled to Montenegro, Serbia and Montenegro form what remains of the former Yugoslav federation.

But initial reports were sketchy and could not be confirmed on the ground, or by other agencies monitoring developments in Yugoslavia. Describing the reports at his briefing in Brussels, NATO's civilian spokesman, Jamie P. Shea, said "This is something rather new and distressful if this pattern is now spreading over elsewhere into Yugoslavia. It can only exacerbate the problem, which is already, as you know, of alarming proportions."

The Pentagon spokesman, Ken-

2 STUDENTS IN COLORADO SCHOOL SAID TO GUN DOWN AS MANY AS 23 AND KILL THEMSELVES IN A SIEGE



A 'SUICIDE MISSION'

*Authorities Say Killers
Also Used Bombs —
at Least 20 Injured*

By JAMES BROOKE

LITTLETON, Colo., April 20 — In the deadliest school massacre in the nation's history, two young men stormed into a suburban high school here at lunch time today with guns and explosives, killing as many as 23 students and teachers and wounding at least 29 in a five-hour siege, the authorities said.

The two students who are believed to have been the gunmen were identified as Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, students at Columbine High School. They were found dead of self-inflicted gunshot wounds in the library, said Steve Davis, the spokesman for the Jefferson County Sheriff's Department.

Beginning about 11:30 A.M., the

NEWS AND GUN VIOLENCE: BIAS IN THE WRITING?

By Thomas Plapinger

Agenda



- Problem Statement
- Definition of Mass Shootings
- Description of Data and Exploratory Data Analysis
- Methodology
- Results
- Recommendations
- Moving Forward

Problem Statement

- Are the words used by the New York Times when covering mass shootings directly related to the ethnicity of the shooter(s)?
- If they are or aren't, what words are the strongest indicators of a particular ethnicity.

Definition of a Mass Shooting

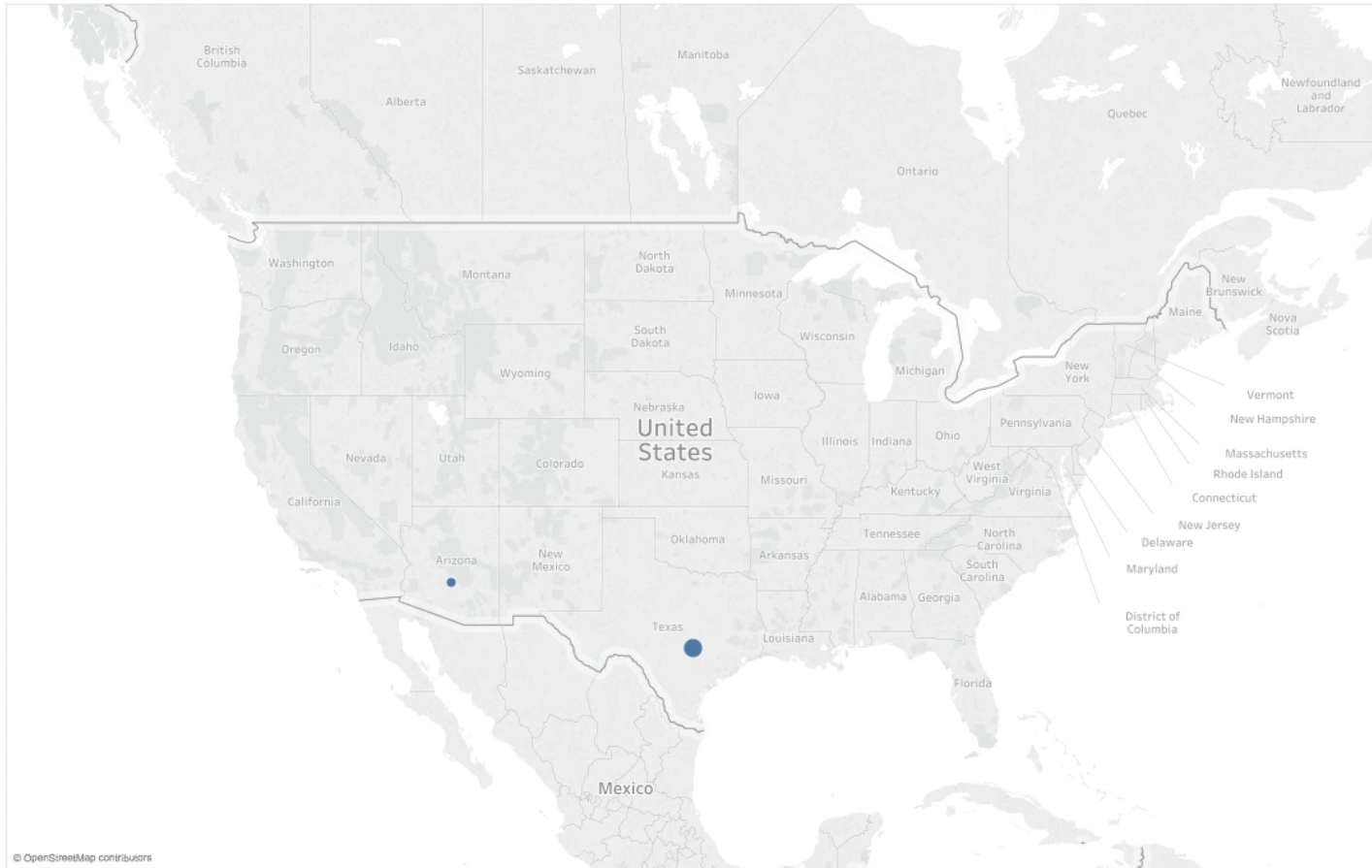
- No Official Definition
- Commonly used definition
 - ▣ A Shooting where four or more people are indiscriminately(excluding gang and terrorist related shootings), not including the perpetrator(s), are killed or wounded.
- Issue – Misclassification of Events

Description of Data Sources

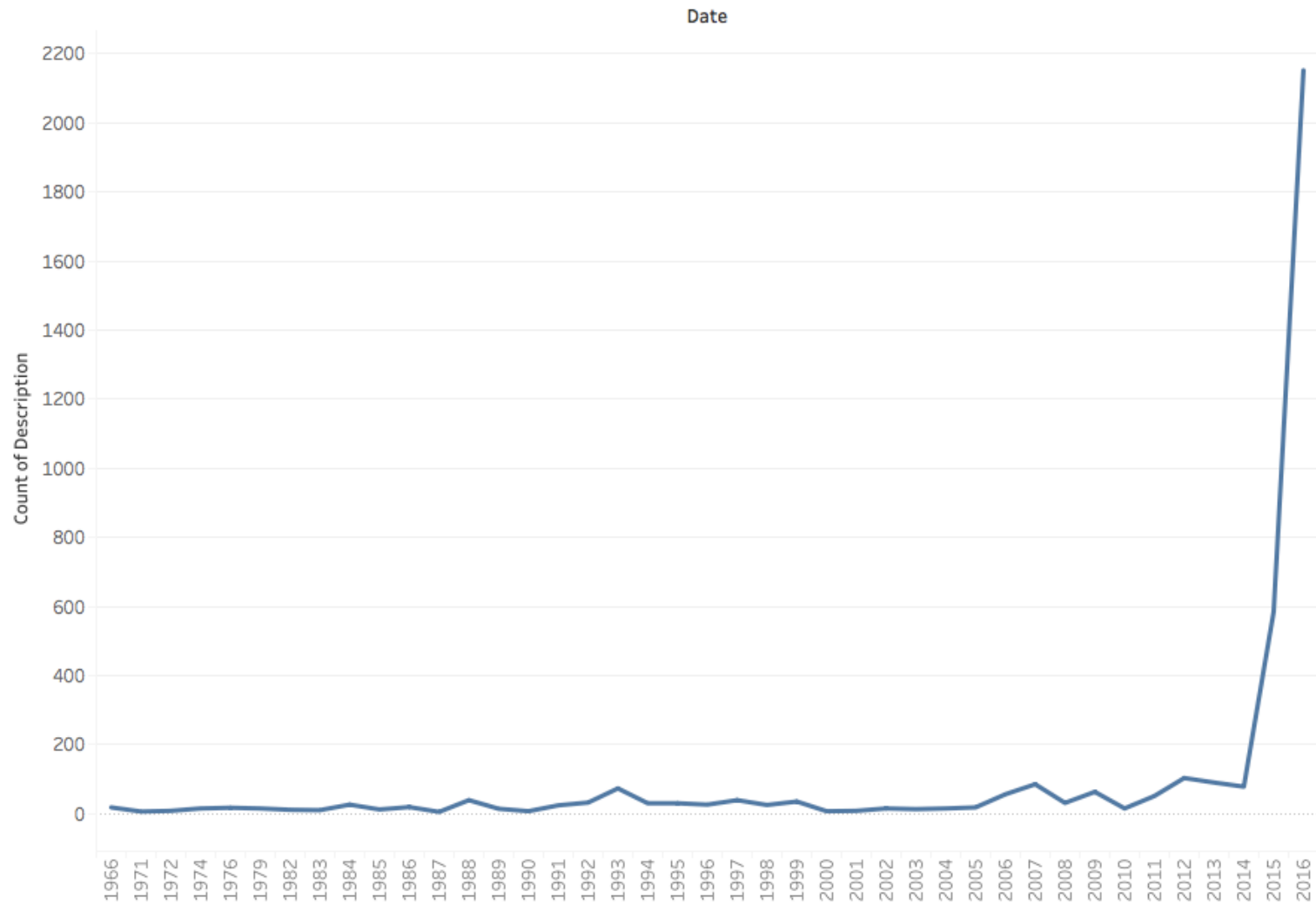
- Stanford Library Mass Shootings in America Library
 - ▣ Begun in 2012
 - ▣ Focus on 1970-March 2016
- New York Times Articles
 - ▣ Total Articles 1053 Articles
 - ▣ Day of Shooting and 6 Days Following

Incidents By Year

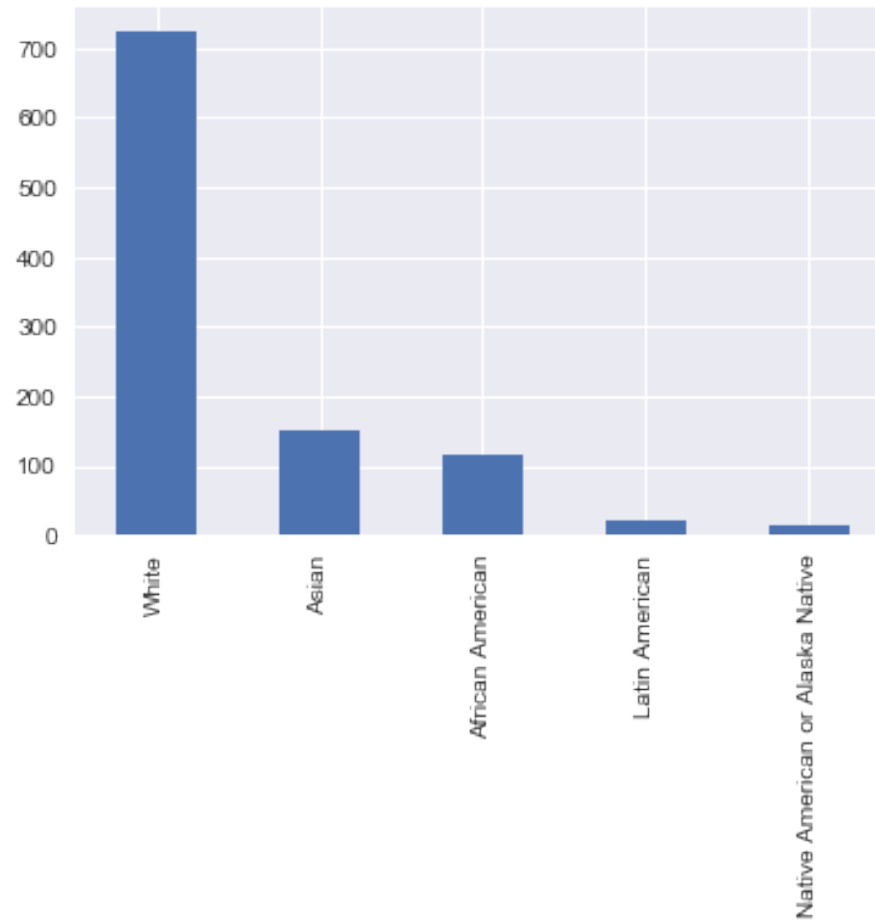
1966



Incidents by Year (cont.)



Perpetrators by Race 1970-2016



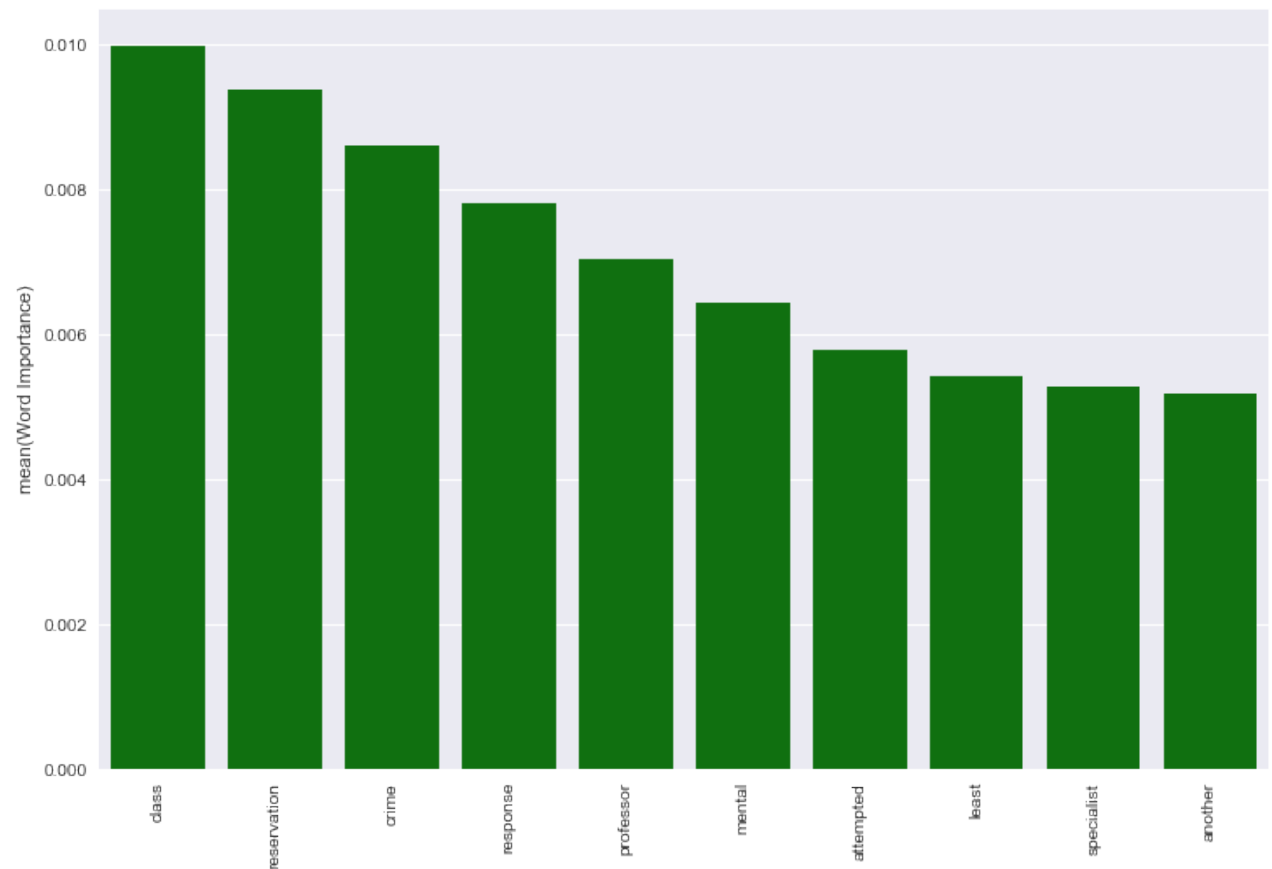
Methodology

- Compiled Data frame with:
 - ▣ Incident Name, Article, Title, Shooter Race
- CountVecotorizer and Word Preprocessing
 - ▣ General StopWords and Custom list
- Random Forest Classification Model
 - ▣ For Top 1500 Occurring Words
 - ▣ Generated General Race Important Features
 - ▣ Generated Additional Feature Importance's by Race
 - ▣ Cross Validation Score – 71%

Results – General List

□ Top Words Indicating to Shooter Race

- Class
- Reservation
- Crime
- Response
- Professor
- Mental
- Attempted
- Least
- Specialist
- Another



Greatest Indicators of Perpetrators

Race

| | White | African-American | Asian | Native American or Alaska Native | Latin American |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| | Dormitory | Crime | Dormitory | Reservation | Specialist |
| | Professor | Passenger | Class | Indian | Immigrant |
| | Class | Hearing | Foreign | Fit | Gathered |
| | Engineering | Avenue | NBC | Nazi | Agency |
| | NBC | Player | Fear | Teacher | Request |
| | Injured | Minority | Islamic | Grandfather | Military |
| | Student | Officer | Terrorist | Posted | Soldier |
| | Immigrant | Waiting | Professor | Study | People |
| | Reservation | Period | Mass | Posting | Chief |
| | Shut | Financial | Terrorism | Sergeant | Murderer |
| Cross-Val Score | .72 | .886 | .861 | .986 | .981 |

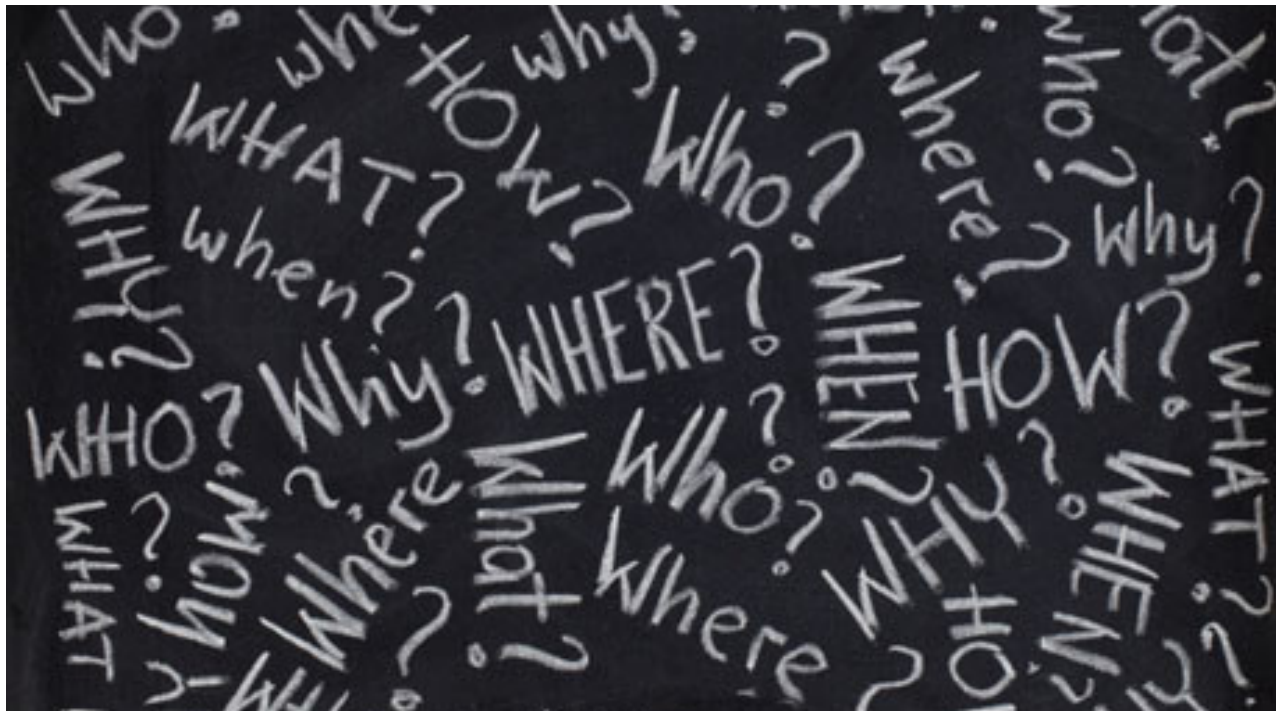
Recommendations and Deductions

- New York Times Uses Different Words Depending on Race
- Some Racially Charged Words Used, but due to Race Classification Errors There is noClear Evidence of Bias Towards Particular Race
- Further Study is Needed

Next Steps

- Gather More Data From
 - ▣ Local Newspaper from Incident Location
 - ▣ More National Newspapers from different regions
 - ▣ Newspapers with diverse political opinions
 - ▣ Online news sources
- Better Racial Distinctions for Latin American and Asians
- Coverage of Other Types of Incidents

Questions?



Related Organizations For Further Information

Brady Campaign



To Prevent Gun Violence



EVERYTOWN

FOR GUN SAFETY | SUPPORT FUND