

Inferring Political Opinion from Social Media Data

UG4 Project Meeting 1

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Project Task

- Build classifier(s) to predict whether a Twitter user was more likely to be a Yes or No supporter in the Scottish Independence Referendum
- Using data obtained from both the Edinburgh Twitter Corpus and my own mining
- Use classification techniques as described in related papers (e.g. Sentiment Analysis, Clustering, Graph/Network Algorithms) and then adapt/improve

Project Motivation

- Social Media provides insight into users opinions
- Recent Scottish referendum demonstrates how much of the discussion is taking place online
- Considerably easier to aggregate data from social media than to do than in person polling
- Real world applications, politicians want to know the issues that affect their voters

Current Progress

- Read a collection of papers on the topic, in particular, those that have been included in AAAI Conference on Weblogs and Social Media (ICWSM)
- Testing suitability of data from the Edinburgh Twitter Corpus for this task, building a new crawler to improve the suitability of the data for the task

Project Plan

- Tasks to complete:
 - Data Aggregation/Mining (October)
 - Continue research/reading literature (November-Early Feb)
 - Implement techniques covered in literature (November-Early Feb)
 - Improve/implement novel idea (Feb-Early March)
 - Complete Interim Report (23rd January)
 - Write Final Report (March)
 - Submission (April 2nd)

Questions?