

A photograph of Donald Trump speaking at a podium. He is wearing a dark suit and has his right hand raised in a gesture. A microphone is visible in front of him. The background is blurred, showing a crowd of people.

# NYTimes Coverage of Trump's Candidacy

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August 17, 2016

# Motivation

- Very unusual candidate
- Media unsure how to cover



**Donald J. Trump** ✓  
@realDonaldTrump



 Follow

The media is going crazy. They totally distort so many things on purpose. Crimea, nuclear, "the baby" and so much more. Very dishonest!

RETWEETS

13,962

LIKES

41,705



2:31 PM - 7 Aug 2016



14K



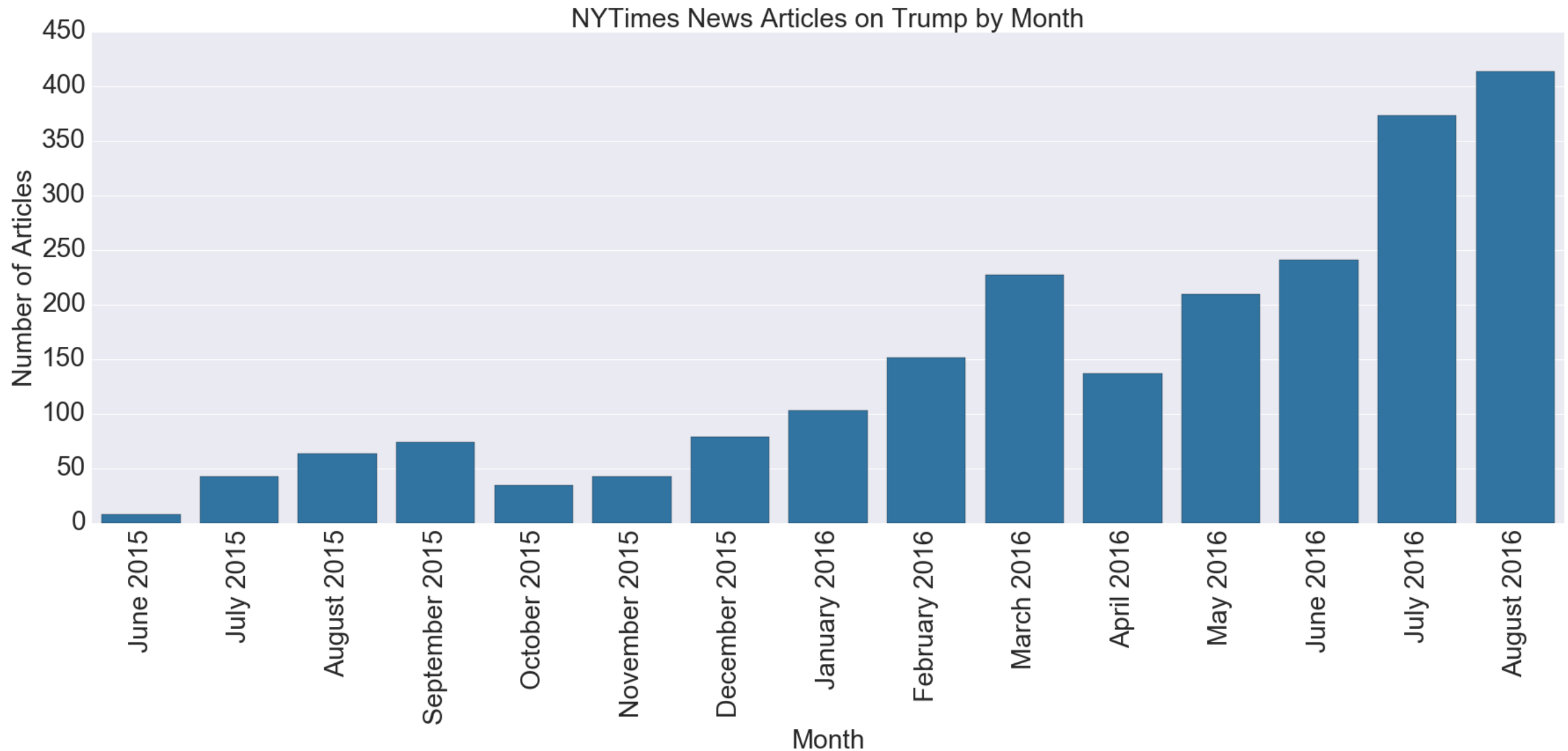
42K



# Creating the Dataset

- **Source:** NYTimes API and Python Newspaper package
- **Selection:**
  - Trump's name must be a keyword
  - Only news articles (vs. Op-Ed, Blog, etc.)
- Final set is approximately **2,200 articles**

# How has the Amount of Coverage Changed?



# Topic Modeling

- Chose **NMF** with **TFIDF**
- Got better topics than with LDA (where you can't use TFIDF)
- Almost all the topics were interpretable!  
**Except ...**

# **Problem:** Bad Topics were the Top Two

- **Topic 1: “Relevant”** words that together **don’t mean anything** (e.g. republican campaign party people presidential)
- **Topic 2:** General **article words** (e.g. briefing evening posted eastern email rundown)

# Solutions

- Made a **custom list** of **stop words**
- Decreased maximum documents
- Increased minimum documents

# Final Topics

- **30 Topics**
- Most were unsurprising and interpretable, e.g.:
  - Republican Primary (cruz rubio ted delegates)
  - VP (pence indiana mate gingrich ticket)
  - Fund Raising (fund million donors money raising)
- Some were “**duplicates**” (five about primary)

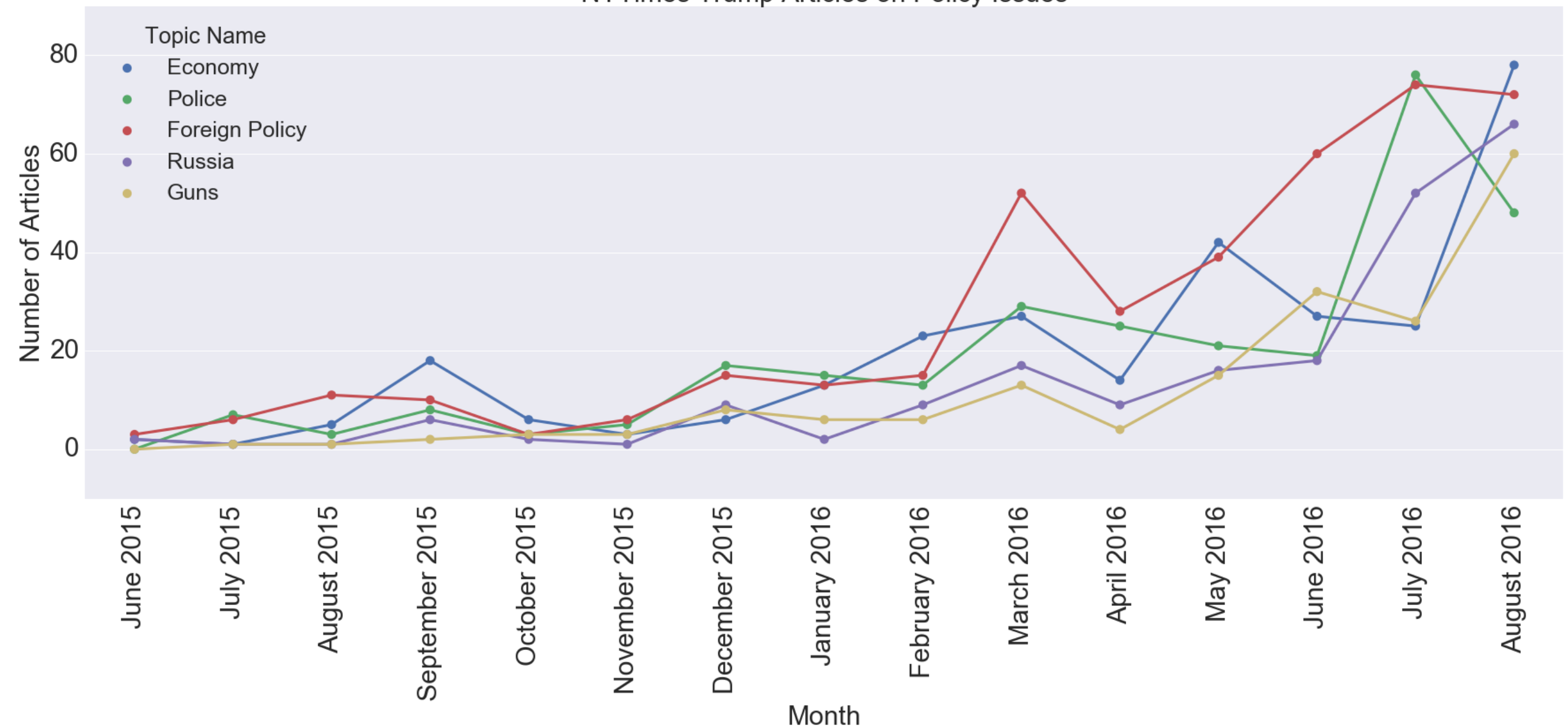


# Articles and Topics

- **Option:** each article has one topic, its “top” topic
  - But that ignores mixture
- **Decision:** if topic representation in an article is non-zero, **count as 1**, ignoring weighting of topics

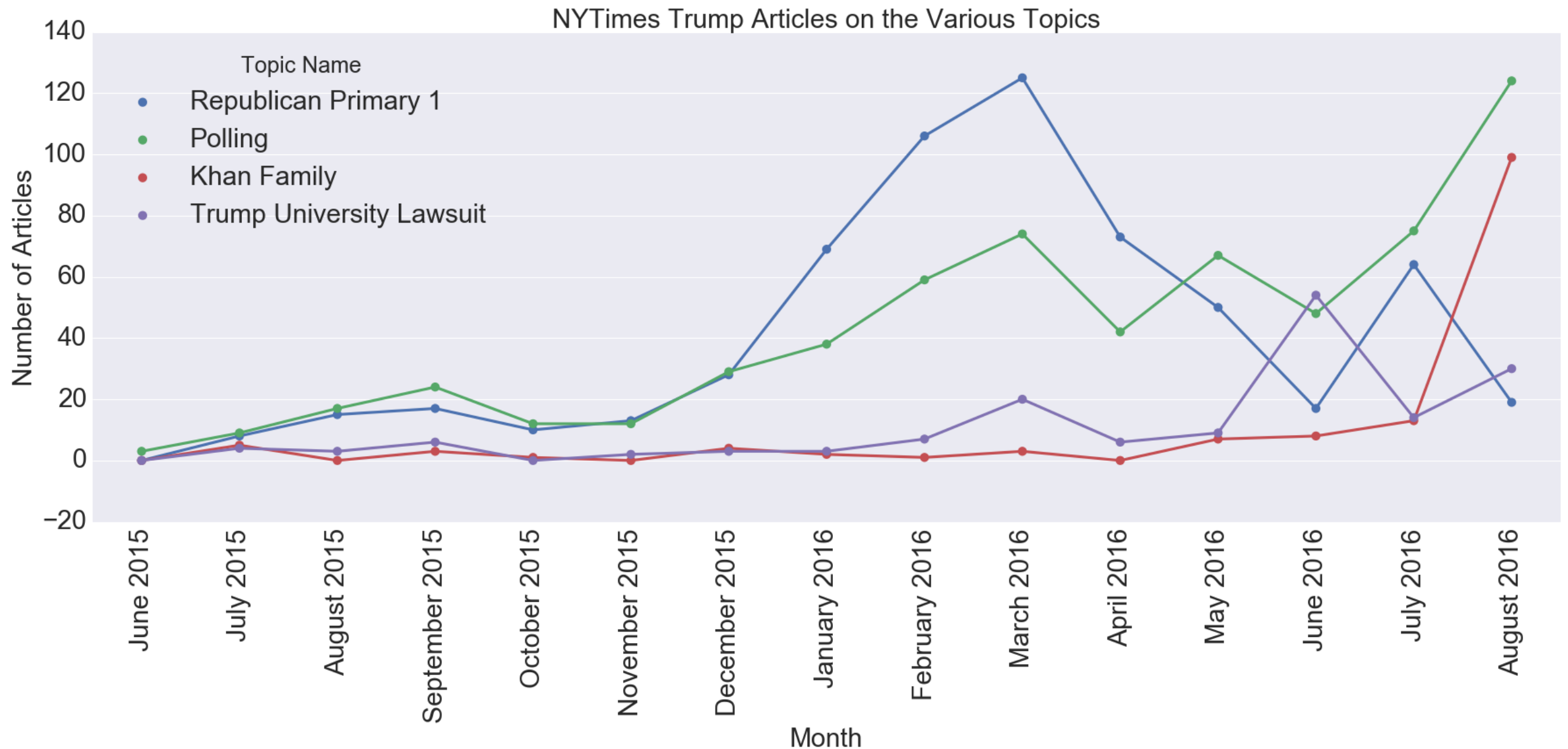
# Topics over Time

NYTimes Trump Articles on Policy Issues

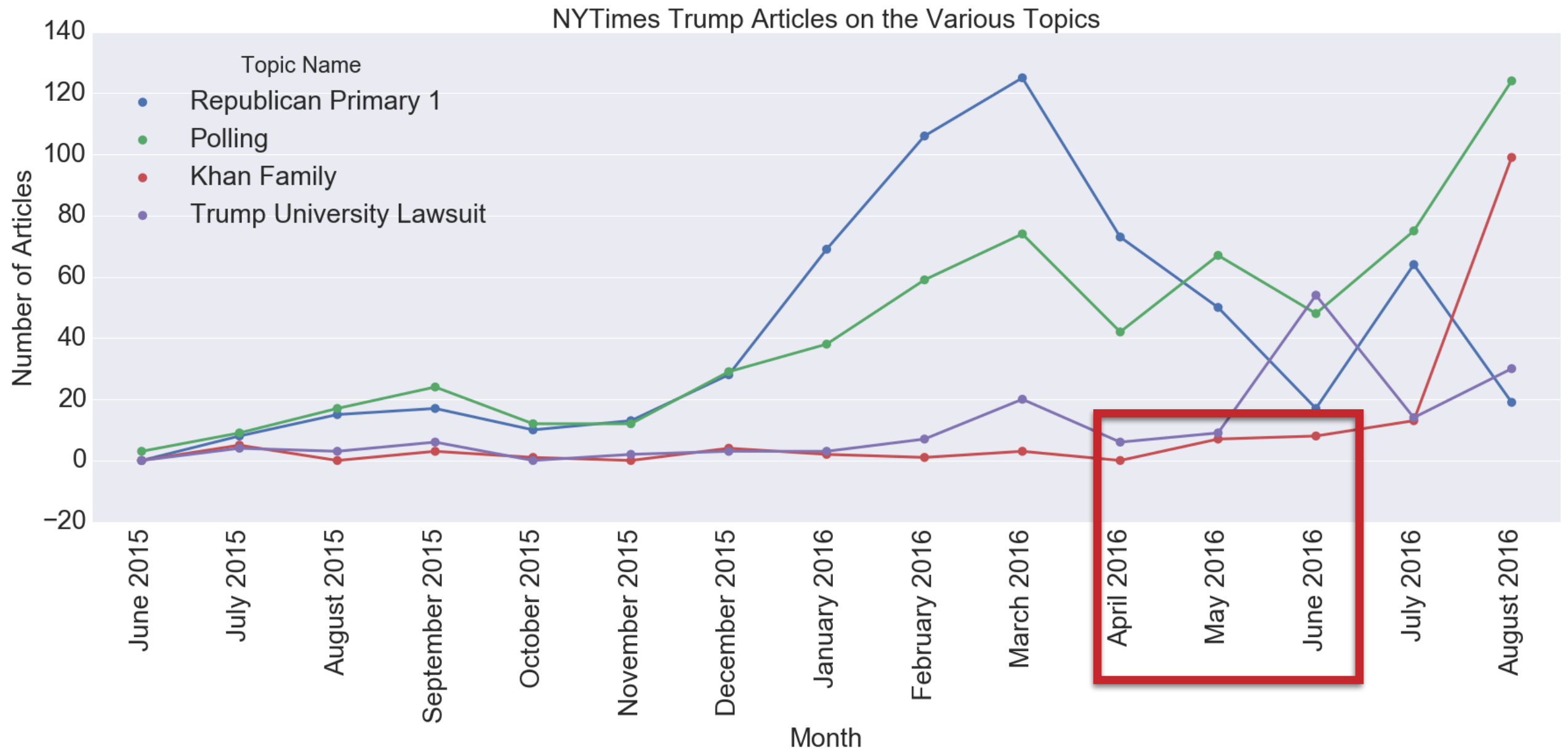


# What Would You Call This Topic?

- **Words:** **khan** khizr khans mccain ghazala captain family muslim son humayun **iraq sacrifice** sen killed soldier army **parents gold star**



- **Republican Primary 1:** cruz rubio ted kasich conservative texas marco primary
- **Polling:** percent poll vote survey margin lead
- **Trump University Lawsuit:** judge curiel university mexican students lawsuit case



- We have “Khan Family” articles ... **before** the incident happened!
- These were articles on **Sadiq Khan**, London’s mayor

# Future Work

- **Sentiment analysis:** has tone of coverage shifted?
- Expanding beyond News articles into Op-Ed, Editorials, etc.
- Compare with other newspapers



A photograph of Donald Trump waving his right hand. He is wearing a dark suit, a white shirt, and a blue tie. The background is dark blue with some faint, out-of-focus text and a pattern of white stars on the left. The text "Thank you!" is overlaid in the center in a large, white, sans-serif font.

**Thank you!**