

Project Presentation

Bridget Silha

12/04/2019

Problem Statement and Background

- The Basics:
 - What is the FEC?
 - What is the difference between PACs and SuperPACs?
 - Where am I getting all this data from?

Problem Statement and Background

- The Questions:
 - Are SuperPACs as big of a problem as everyone says that they are?
 - Can you predict what kind of PAC you get based off of variables such as:
 - State?
 - Total Contributions?
 - Total Expenditures?
 - Can I use topic modeling to group PAC names? Will I end up with “concrete” topics?

Problem Statement and Background

- The dataset and its variables

Observations: 7,504

Variables: 20

\$ CMTE_NM

```
$ committee_id
```

```
$ committee_type
```

```
$ committee_type_full
```

\$ party

```
$ party_full
```

```
$ state
```

```
$ candidate_ids
```

```
$ first_file_date
```

```
$ last_file_date
```

```
$ last_f1_date
```

\$ CMTE_TP

\$ CMTE_DSGN

\$ CMTE_FILING_FREQ

\$ CMTE_ST

\$ FEC ELECTION YR

\$ TTL CONTB

\$ TTL RECEIPTS

\$ TTL DISB

\$ ORG TP

<chr> "SERVICE AFTER SERVICE", "U.S. TRAVEL ASSOCIATION PAC", "ISAKSON VICTORY C...

```
<chr> "C00661249", "C00457754", "C00577635", "C00297911", "C00551382", "C0013160...
```

```
<chr> "V", "0", "N", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", ...
```

<chr> "PAC with Non-Contribution Account - Nonqualified", "PAC - Qualified", "PA...

<chr> NA, NA, NA, NA, NA, NA, NA, "UNK", "UNK", "NNE", "UNK", NA, NA, "NNE", NA, ...

```
<chr> NA, NA, NA, NA, NA, NA, NA, "UNKNOWN", "UNKNOWN", "NONE", "UNKNOWN", NA, N...
```

```
<chr> "AZ", "DC", "VA", "TX", "MD", "FL", "VA", "GA", "TN", "VA", "SD", "PA", "D...
```

```
<chr> "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{}", "{...
```

<date> 2017-11-21, 2008-12-12, 2015-04-27, 1994-09-07, 2013-11-04, 1980-07-21, 1...

`<date>` 2018-01-30, 2019-07-31, 2017-04-25, 2019-10-07, 2019-10-24, 2019-11-05, 2...

`<date>` 2018-01-21, 2019-07-26, 2015-04-27, 2017-12-22, 2014-02-05, 2018-04-04, 1...

```
<chr> "V", "0", "N", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", "0", ...
```

```
<chr> "U", "B", "J", "U", "U", "B", "U", "B", "U", "B", "U", "B", "B", "U", "U", ...
```

```
<chr> "T", "M", "T", "O", "O", "M", "O", "M", "O", "M", "O", "M", "M", "M", "T", ...
```

```
<chr> "AZ", "DC", "VA", "TX", "MD", "FL", "VA", "GA", "TN", "VA", "SD", "PA", "D...
```

<dbl> 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 2018, 20...

```
<dbl> 0.00, 906003.16, 0.00, 20555.00, 3449.88, 94181.00, 730.00, 736968.47, 864...
```

<dbl> 0.00, 942452.35, 0.00, 20555.00, 3448.00, 96681.00, 730.00, 736968.47, 876...

<dbl> 0.00, 833986.16, 6911.09, 20668.67, 11954.77, 97178.78, 993.00, 779000.00, ...

```
<chr> NA: "T": NA: "T": NA: "T": "M": "C": "T": "T": "M": "W": "T": "C": "L": "T":
```

Just for fun...

10 STACKS TO THE FIRST MFER WHO HITS DONALD TRUMP WITH A MILKSHAKE

PAC - NONQUALIFIED | ID: C00708131 |

JESUS WAS A DEMOCRAT

SUPER PAC (INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE-ONLY) | ID: C00722140 |

MAKE AMERICA GOLF AGAIN GOLFING COMMITTEE

SUPER PAC (INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE-ONLY) | ID: C00665745 |

VOTE MAMA

PAC WITH NON-CONTRIBUTION ACCOUNT - NONQUALIFIED | ID: C00692137 |

THIS IS WHY WE CAN'T HAVE NICE THINGS

SUPER PAC (INDEPENDENT EXPENDITURE-ONLY) | ID: C00605170 |

Methods I Explored/Considered (Fails!)

① Classification

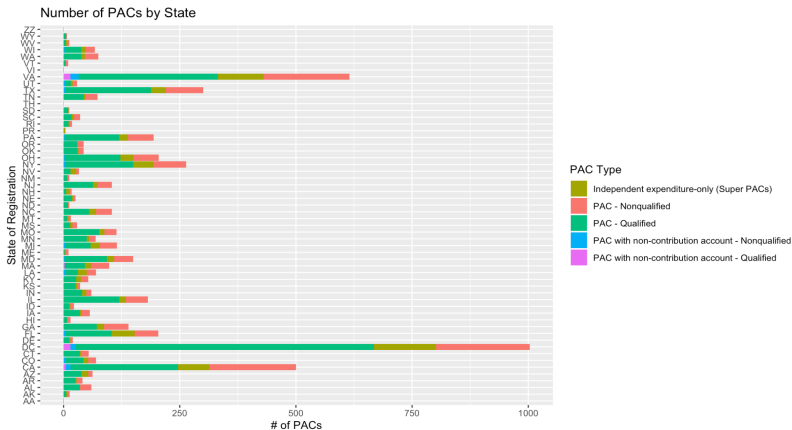
- What I thought about doing: using variables to help the data learn how to classify PACs and their affiliated party
- Problem: Not all PACs register with a party

② Sentiment Analysis

- What I thought about doing: Grouping PACs by their party and then running sentiment analysis to see which party was the most “positive” or “negative”
- Problem: Not all PACs register with a party

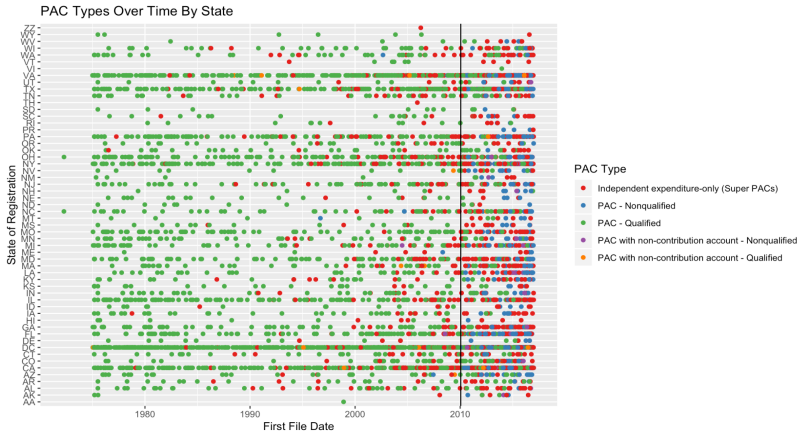
Methods/Tools I Used (Thus Far)

- 1 Merged Excel files together and cleaned data
- 2 Analyzed PACs through the state that they're registered in



Methods/Tools I Used (Thus Far)

③ Analyzed PACs through their “PAC qualification status” over time



Results

- SuperPACs have boomed in popularity since Citizens United case
- The regular suspects (i.e. DC, VA, NY, CA) have the most number of PACs registered within them
- A healthy portion of registered PACs are “regular” PACS, not SuperPACs

Lessons Learned

- Campaign finance is confusing!
- Data wrangling is 99.99% of this project so far and human error sucks
- RColorBrewer package is amazing