

Congressional Use of Twitter

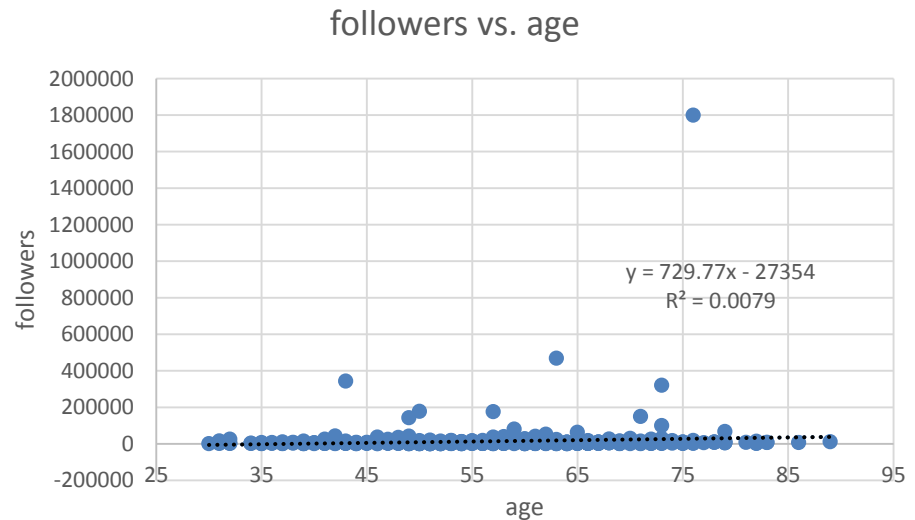
Sohini Khan and Jessica Su

Research question and hypotheses

- How does Twitter usage depend on
 - Congressional demographics (age, gender, party affiliation, House/Senate status)?
 - Voter demographics (age, race, state population)?
 - Leadership roles
- How are non-Twitter users different?
- What can we say about tweet content?
- Important for understanding political processes in the modern age.

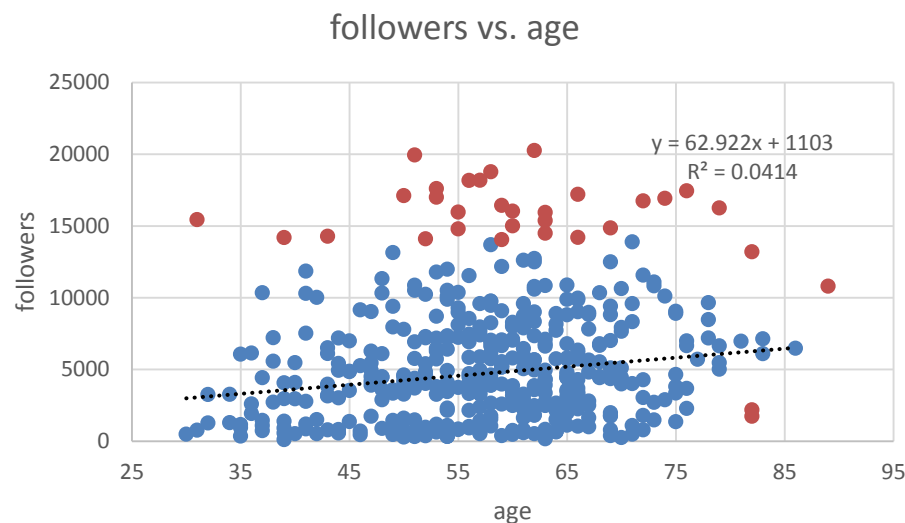
Methods and results

- Twitter data from Twitter API
- Used Python and MySQL to parse the data
- Most results not significant
- Insignificant differences: rural vs. urban states, Twitter vs. non-Twitter users, race demographics, many questions about congressional demographics



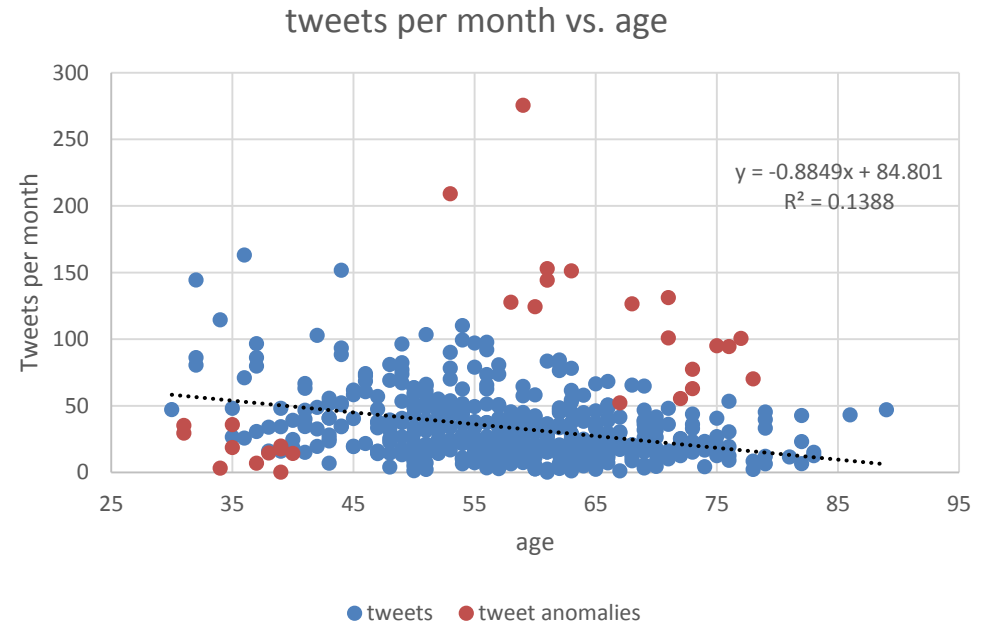
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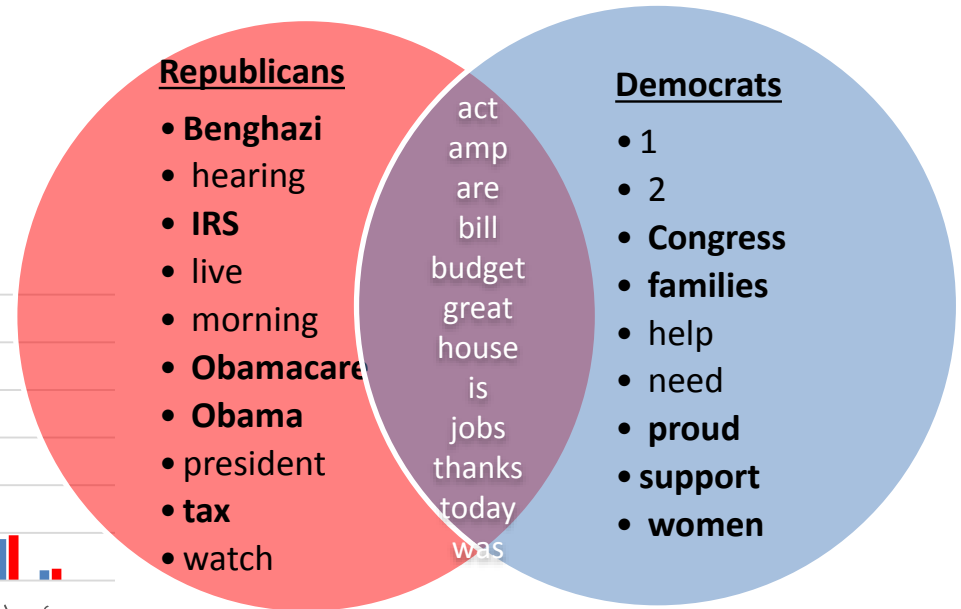
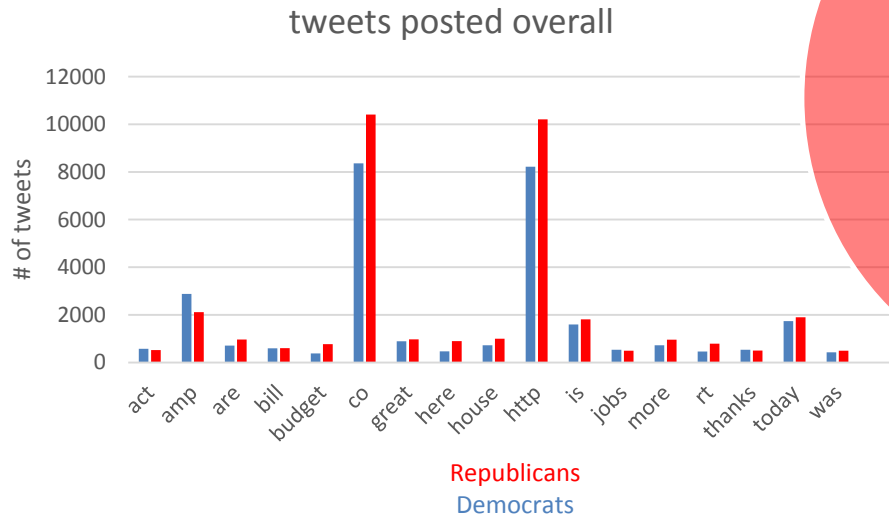
Significant results

- Senators post more tweets per month than representatives ($p = 0.02$)
- Republicans follow more users than Democrats ($p = 0.04$)
- Being in leadership positions matters
 - Leaders have more followers ($p = 0.01$)
 - Leaders follow more people ($p = 8.53 \times 10^{-7}$)
 - Leaders post more tweets ($p = 7.42 \times 10^{-4}$)



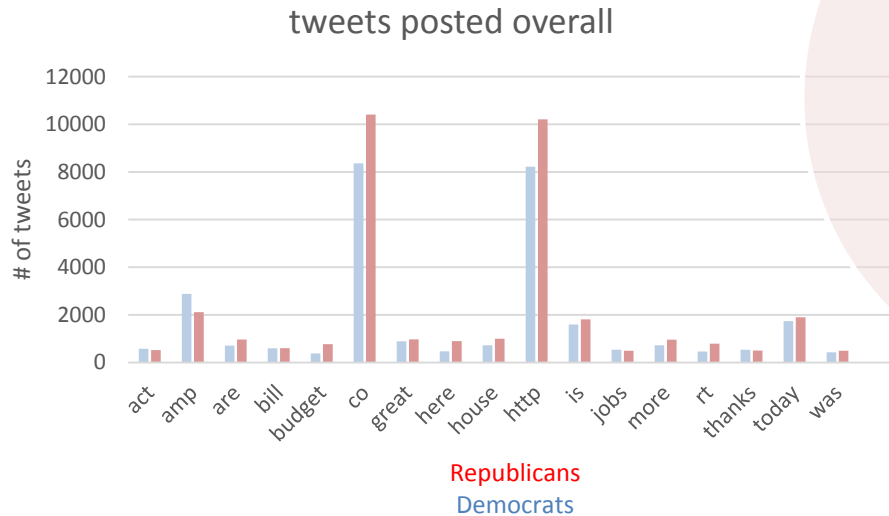
Tweet content

- Overall



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- Overall



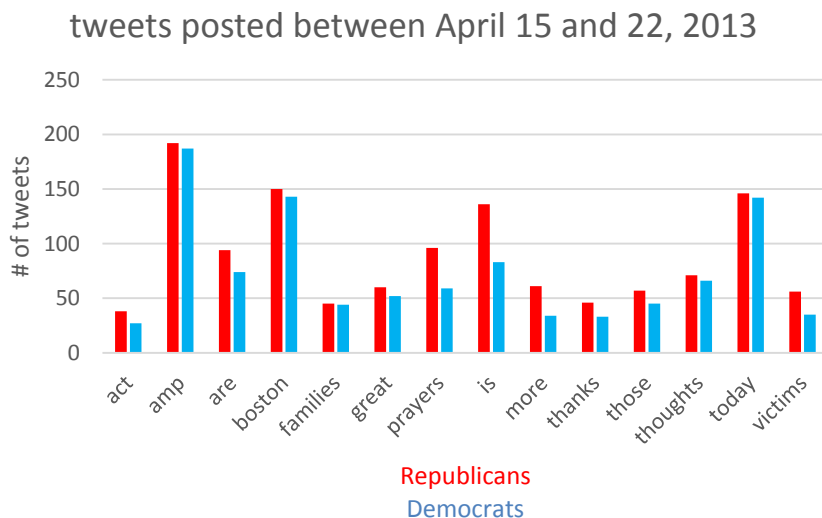
Republicans

- Benghazi
- hearing
- IRS
- live
- morning
- Obamacare
- Obama
- president
- tax
- watch

Democrats

- Congress
- families
- help
- need
- proud
- support
- women

- After the Boston bombing



Republicans

- code
- hearing
- here
- read
- RT
- tax
- taxday
- taxreform
- too
- watch
- west

Democrats

- background
- bill
- CISPA
- gun
- help
- House
- marathon
- Senate
- support
- vote