



Attitudes Towards Terror

Taegun Harshbarger & Swasti Mishra

Historical Context

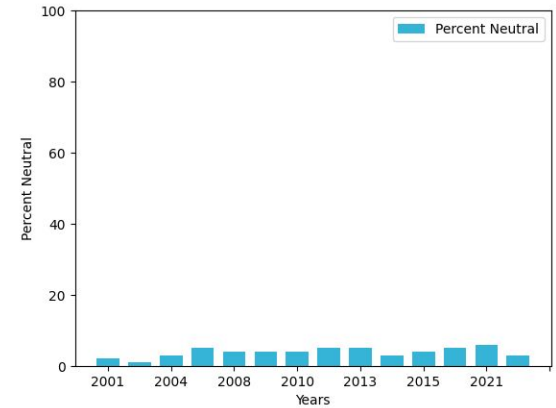
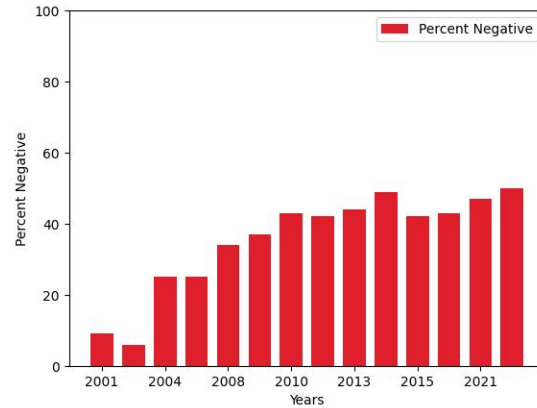
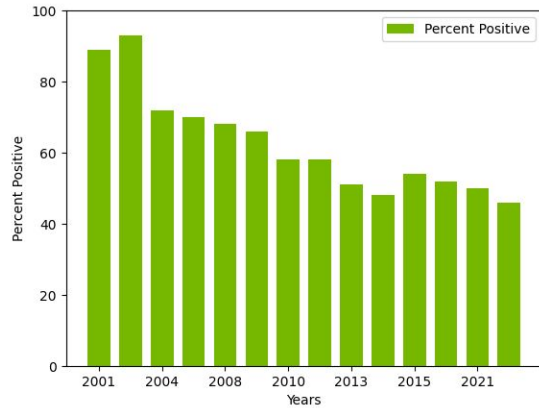
- Older generations witnessed 9/11 and the subsequent war on terror
- Younger generations grew up with the US perpetually stationed and at war in the Middle East
- Apathy towards 9/11 isn't defined by political leaning, but instead by time elapsed.
- Our project studies this in two ways
 - Polling
 - Sentiment Analysis

Polling Method

- Analyzed polling data from the New York Times and Gallup
- Data was taken from surveys with 30+ questions and answers
- Both The NYT and Gallup polls used the same questions, but The NYT skipped years
- The polling spanned from the days following 9/11 in 2001 to 2021

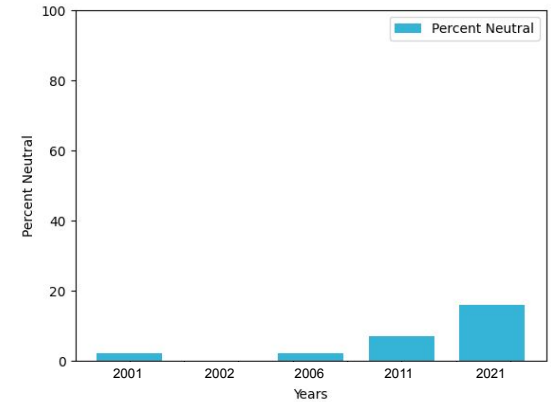
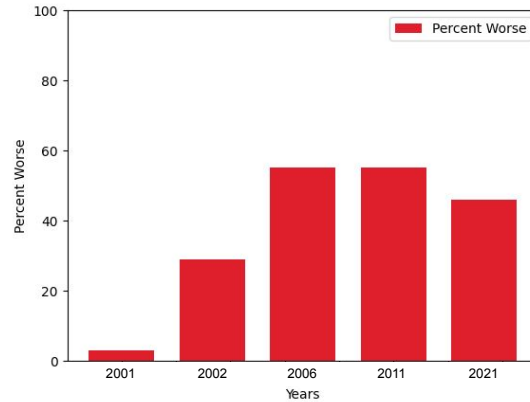
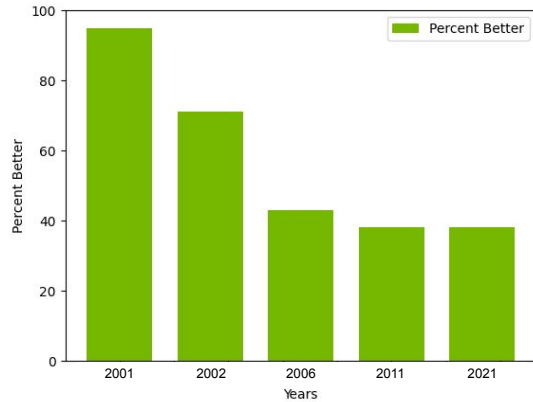
Polling Graphs

Thinking now about U.S. military action in Afghanistan that began in October 2001, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending military forces to Afghanistan, or not?



Polling Graphs

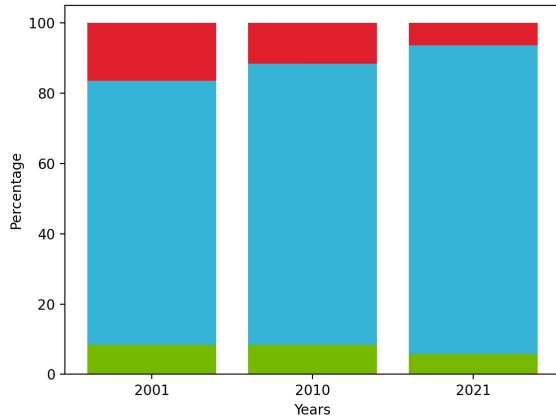
Do you think the events of September 11th, 2001 have changed this country in a lasting way, or not? (IF YES) Is it a change for the better or a change for the worse?



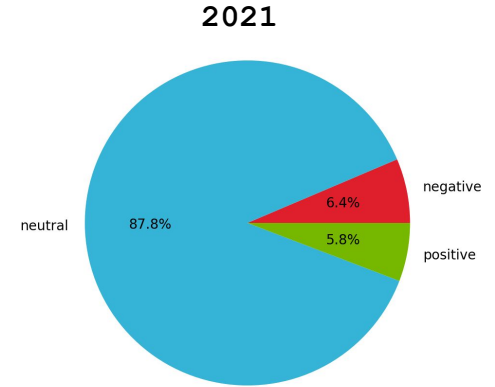
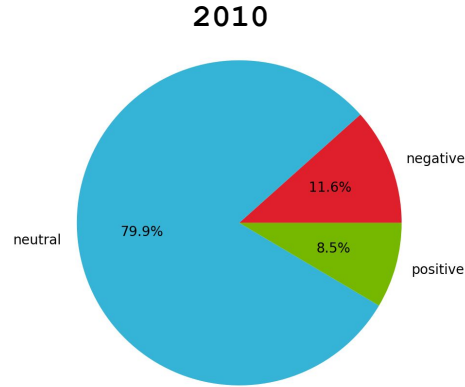
Sentiment Analysis Method

- Conducted a sentiment analysis on three comparable articles from the NYT over a span of 20 years
- Used Python's VADER model from the NLTK library, which divides sentiment into positive, negative, neutral, and compound.
 - Words are scored from -4 to +4
 - Neutral words and phrases are closer to 0
 - "Compound" is the sum normalized between -1 for the most extreme negative and +1 for the most extreme positive

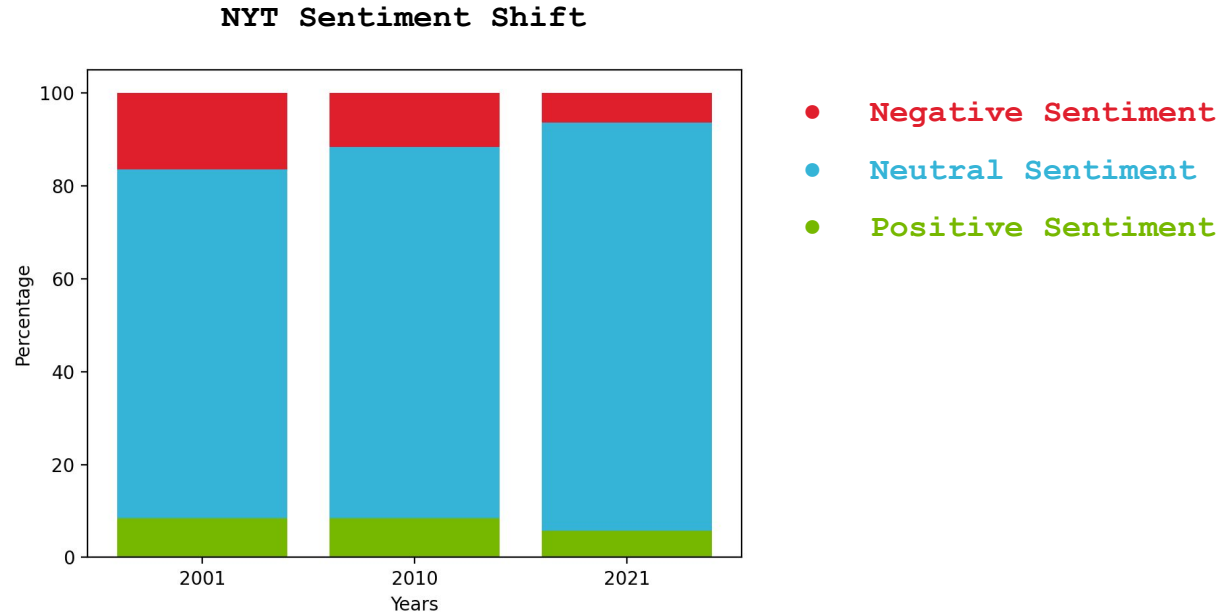
Sentiment Analysis Graphs



NYT Sentiment Shift



Sentiment Analysis Graphs



Analysis

● Sentiment Analysis:

- Some variance in positive versus negative attitudes, but most significantly, increase in neutrality
- Perhaps due to less requirements for vivid language with the development of the internet?

● Polling Analysis:

- The data collected does not show an increase in negative sentiment around 9/11.
- It is mostly a decrease in positive sentiment. The negativity shown is around the aftermath.
- The polling data also shows that neutral sentiment increases overtime.

An aerial photograph of the New York City skyline, featuring a dense cluster of skyscrapers. The One World Trade Center stands out prominently in the center-left, its blue facade and spire clearly visible. The surrounding buildings vary in height and architectural style, creating a textured urban landscape. The sky is a pale, hazy blue, suggesting a clear day. The overall tone of the image is professional and modern.

Questions?