
Media Coverage of AAPI

— Shivani Chowdhry, Sharon Jepkosgei, —
Ryan Rynbrandt and Liberty Smith

Research Questions

Main research questions:

1. Does partisanship of national news outlets influence how they portray AAPI?
2. Did portrayal of AAPI in national news outlets change after the COVID-19 pandemic?

Additional/secondary research question:

3. To what extent do either liberal or conservative outlets perpetuate stereotypes surrounding AAPI?

Background and Literature

Brief Review of the Literature:

- Partisanship of news outlets can influence their coverage of race and ethnicity (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987; Tsai et al., 2020).
- AAPI often stereotyped in media.
 - “Model minority” stereotype was main concern pre-pandemic (Sue et al., 2007).
 - Stereotyped as threats to public health during pandemic (Jang et al, 2021)
- Exposure to negative media coverage of AAPI can negatively affect attitudes toward the group (Santia et al., 2022).

Our Study - two important additions to literature

1. Investigates influence of media outlets' partisan leanings on their portrayals of AAPI.
2. Investigates impact of COVID-19 pandemic on changes in media portrayals of AAPI.

Hypotheses

First hypotheses:

H01: News outlet partisanship has no influence on their portrayal of AAPI

HA1: Conservative and liberal news outlets will portray AAPI differently

Second hypotheses:

H02: Portrayals of AAPI did not change from pre-pandemic to post-pandemic

HA2: Portrayals of AAPI changed from pre-pandemic to post-pandemic

Additional/Secondary hypotheses:

H03: There will be no difference between liberal and conservative outlets in perpetuation of stereotypes about AAPI

HA3: Conservative news outlets will be more likely to perpetuate stereotypes about AAPI than liberal news outlets.

Data

- Collected a corpus of 381 articles about AAPIs from 2 major U.S. newspapers: Wall Street Journal (WSJ) & New York Times (NYT)
- Using the ProQuest LexisNexis Academic database (keywords: “AAPI”, “Asian American”, “Pacific Islander”)
- Published in 2019 (“pre-pandemic”) and 2021 (“post-pandemic public reality”)
- To investigate differences in coverage of AAPIs between conservative & liberal media outlets
- As WSJ widely regarded as conservative (center-right) and NYT as liberal (center-left) news outlet
- Both recognized as having a greater focus on accuracy in reporting than on ideological agenda-pushing

Methods and Results: Word Ratio Analysis

- Word ratio analysis determines relative prevalence of certain words in NYT articles vs WSJ articles in a specific year
- Provides insights into various aspects of the text, including style, tone, topics.
- Use it to study whether first hypothesis holds: whether conservative and liberal news outlets portray AAPI differently?

Word Ratio Analysis: Pre-pandemic (2019)

Words More Prevalent in NYT AAPI-subject Sentences

Ratio	NYT Count	WSJ Count	Word
8.5	17	01	women
6.7	20	02	South
5.5	11	01	three
5.5	44	07	Yang
5.0	15	02	Islanders
5.0	15	02	candidate
5.0	10	01	time
4.1	37	08	Mr
4.0	08	01	think
3.8	19	04	president
3.5	07	01	Congress
3.2	19	05	first
3.0	06	01	professor
3.0	06	01	ways
3.0	06	01	example
3.0	06	01	Times
3.0	06	01	field
3.0	06	01	Native
3.0	06	01	major
2.8	11	03	political
2.7	08	02	Hawaii
2.5	05	01	focus
2.5	05	01	earlier
2.5	05	01	Chinese
2.5	05	01	see
2.5	05	01	in
2.5	05	01	making
2.5	05	01	report
2.4	39	15	said
2.4	12	04	one
2.3	14	05	Asian-Americans
2.3	07	02	Ms
2.3	07	02	Thursday
2.3	07	02	new
2.2	09	03	presidential
2.2	18	07	voters
2.2	33	14	Pacific
2.2	13	05	like
2.0	04	01	considered
2.0	04	01	seen
2.0	04	01	month

- **NYT covers more gender-centric issues** related to AAPI in its news coverage than WSJ (word "women" is 8.5 times more prevalent in NYT vs WSJ)
- NYT has **more mentions of political terms** like "president," "Congress," "political," and specific candidates ("Yang") => More focus on **political issues and political actors**

Word Ratio Analysis: Pre-pandemic (2019)

Words More Prevalent in WSJ AAPI-subject Sentences

Ratio	NYT Count	WSJ Count	Word
9.0	01	18	higher
8.3	02	25	College
7.7	02	23	People
7.6	06	53	York
6.8	03	27	Company
6.1	08	55	New
6.0	01	12	Education
5.9	06	41	University
5.3	02	16	would
5.2	05	31	United
5.0	04	25	organization
4.7	02	14	Hispanic
4.5	01	09	It
4.5	01	09	elections
3.6	04	18	white
3.5	01	07	networks
3.5	01	07	Last
3.3	02	10	school
3.0	01	06	Department
3.0	06	21	AAPI
3.0	01	06	African
3.0	02	09	policies
2.8	05	17	diversity
2.7	02	08	Victory
2.6	06	18	Page
2.5	01	05	White
2.3	02	07	nonprofit
2.3	02	07	number
2.3	02	07	action
2.0	01	04	Party
2.0	01	04	similar
2.0	02	06	according
2.0	01	04	East
2.0	01	04	Black
2.0	01	04	represents
2.0	01	04	difference
2.0	03	08	groups
2.0	01	04	says
1.9	24	47	Americans
1.8	04	09	state
1.8	03	07	high
1.7	02	05	25
1.7	02	05	Florida
1.7	02	05	early
1.7	02	05	data

- Words like "Education," "College," "University", "Company", "networks", "organization", "school", "diversity" are significantly more prevalent in WSJ compared to NYT in 2019
- More focus in WSJ on AAPI's **"model minority" stereotype?**

Word Ratio Analysis: Post-pandemic (2021)

Ratio of words shared between NYT and WSJ in 2021:

Words More Prevalent in NYT AAPI-subject Sentences

Ratio	NYT Count	WSJ Count	Word
54.0	108	01	Times
25.7	77	02	percent
24.0	72	02	3
18.5	37	01	reported
17.7	53	02	Section
16.4	131	07	2021
15.0	30	01	nearly
13.0	26	01	identity
12.0	24	01	politics
10.5	21	01	Kamala
10.4	52	04	voters
9.5	38	03	immigrants
9.0	27	02	10
9.0	45	04	End
9.0	27	02	Reserved
9.0	45	04	Document
9.0	18	01	face
9.0	45	04	States
9.0	27	02	reports
8.8	70	07	Stop
8.5	34	03	increase
8.4	67	07	like
8.2	33	03	Harris
8.2	74	08	Islanders
8.1	57	06	incidents
8.0	24	02	back
8.0	40	04	Copyright
8.0	16	01	much
8.0	16	01	either
7.9	63	07	2
7.8	47	05	among
7.7	23	02	Identity
7.5	15	01	decades
7.5	15	01	took
7.5	15	01	attention
7.5	15	01	physical
7.5	15	01	language
7.5	15	01	five
7.5	15	01	activists
7.5	15	01	surge
7.3	22	02	part
7.3	22	02	Park
7.3	22	02	news
7.0	14	01	February
7.0	21	02	fear
7.0	14	01	analysis
7.0	14	01	attacked
7.0	14	01	Women
7.0	14	01	election

- Words more prominent in NYT coverage: "Identity", "politics", "Kamala", "Harris", "voters", "immigrants"
- Suggesting a **bigger focus on politics and specific politicians in NYT's coverage** of AAPI
- Terms like "incidents," "activists," and "attacked" suggests a **focus on rising incidents or attacks against the AAPI** in the **wake of Covid**

Word Ratio Analysis: Post-pandemic (2021)

Ratio of words shared between WSJ and NYT in 2021:

Words More Prevalent in WSJ AAPI-subject Sentences

Ratio	NYT Count	WSJ Count	Word
52.5	01	105	Street
18.7	02	56	Business
9.5	01	19	Full
8.0	02	24	Executive
7.3	02	22	Minority
7.0	01	14	court
7.0	01	14	Race
7.0	01	14	elections
6.7	02	20	order
6.5	01	13	murder
6.0	01	12	Racial
5.5	01	11	Services
5.0	01	10	adults
4.7	02	14	except
4.7	05	28	Hispanic
4.5	01	09	African-American
4.4	04	22	Violence
4.0	01	08	Chao
4.0	01	08	publication
4.0	06	28	Shootings
3.7	14	55	term
3.5	01	07	judge
3.4	04	17	race
3.3	02	10	Biden's
3.3	02	10	Legislative
3.2	15	52	students
3.2	03	13	policies
3.0	02	09	Legal
3.0	01	06	Editorial
3.0	02	09	districts
3.0	01	06	elite
3.0	05	18	Political
3.0	01	06	similar
2.8	04	14	Education
2.8	08	25	Last
2.7	06	19	People
2.7	02	08	trade
2.7	02	08	Law
2.7	02	08	process
2.7	02	08	R
2.7	02	08	Manhattan
2.7	02	08	Crimes
2.5	01	05	alleged
2.5	01	05	Elaine
2.5	03	10	Bureau
2.4	04	12	Spa
2.3	02	07	Jr
2.3	02	07	city's
2.3	17	41	organization

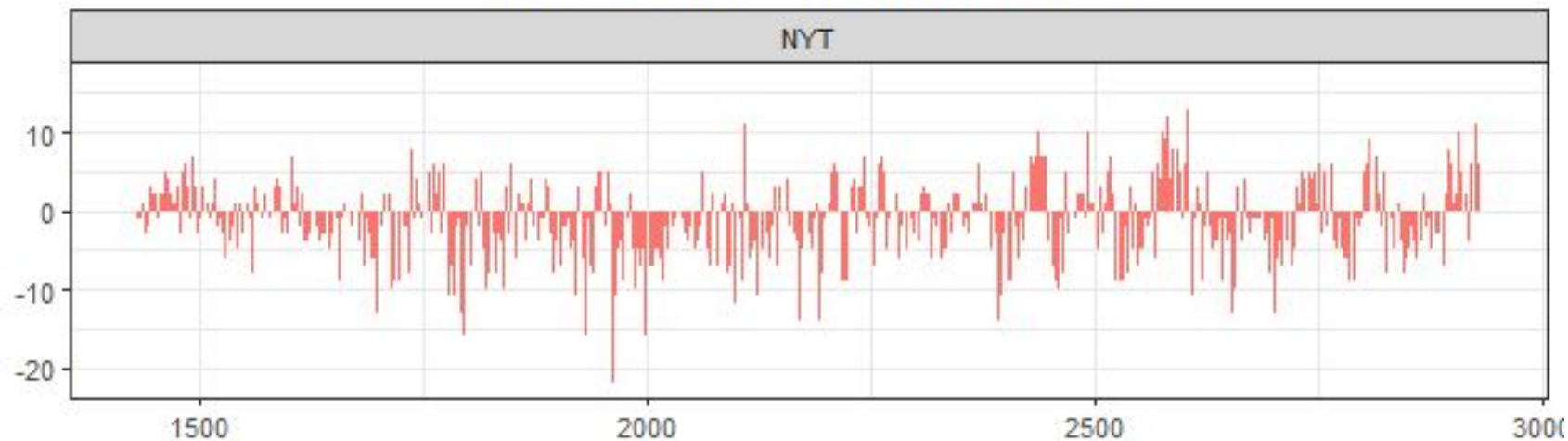
- In WSJ coverage of AAPIs in 2021 – words like "Street," "Business," "Executive," "Minority," "court," "order," "judge," and "Legal" among the top words with very high ratios
- Suggest a **strong business and legal focus** in WSJ's coverage of AAPI in 2021
- Terms like "Race," "Racial", "African-American," and "Hispanic" with high ratios => **focus on racial and social aspects** too!
- Terms like "Education," "People," "students," and "elite" suggest a **focus on educational and cultural attributes** of AAPI in WSJ in 2021 also ("model minority stereotype")

Methods & Results: Sentiment Analysis/Opinion Mining

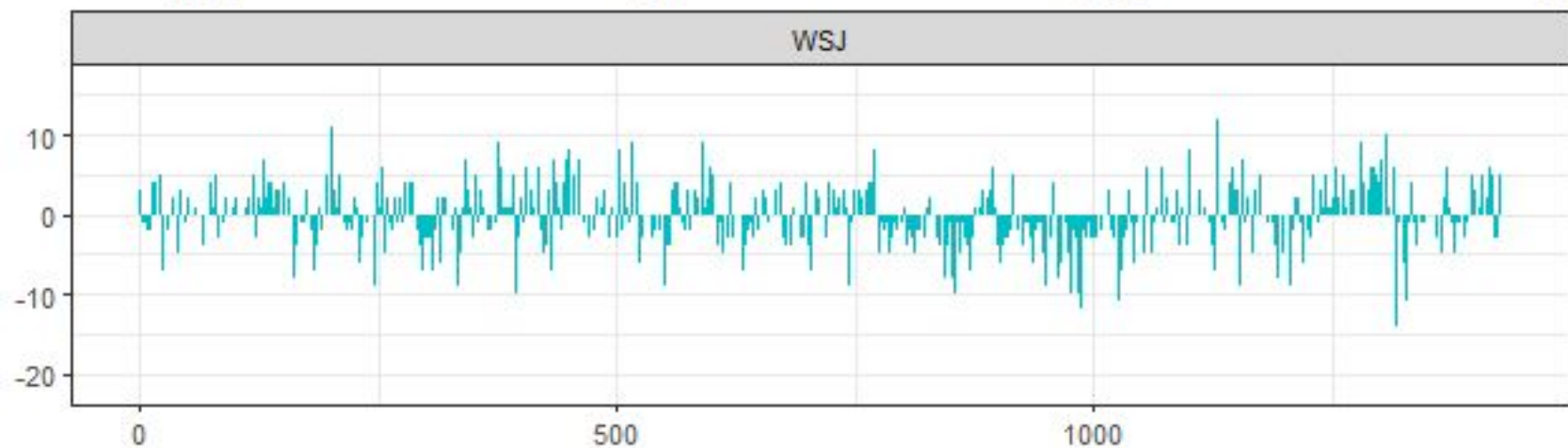
- Sentiment analysis, a form of NLP that evaluates data for neutrality, positivity, or negativity.
- It involves considering individual words and aggregating their sentiments.
- The tidytext package provides access to various sentiment lexicons
- Bing lexicon for emotional intent analysis.
- Bing, structured around single words, assigns negative or positive sentiment to many English words.

Sentiments Score Plot by Media Outlet

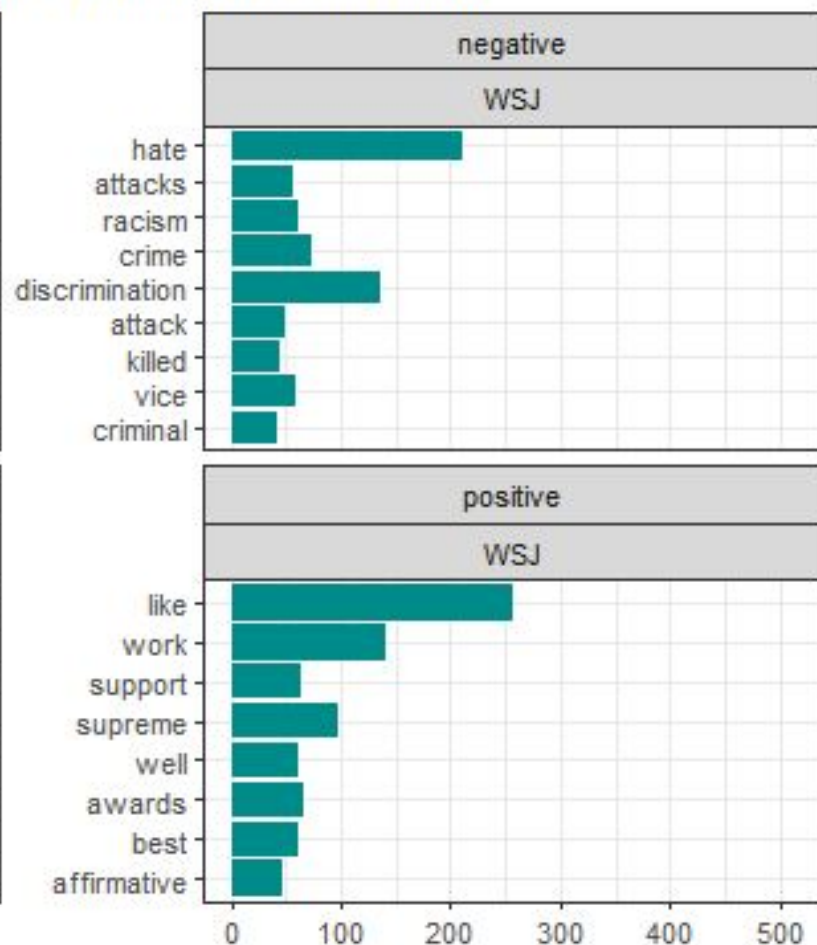
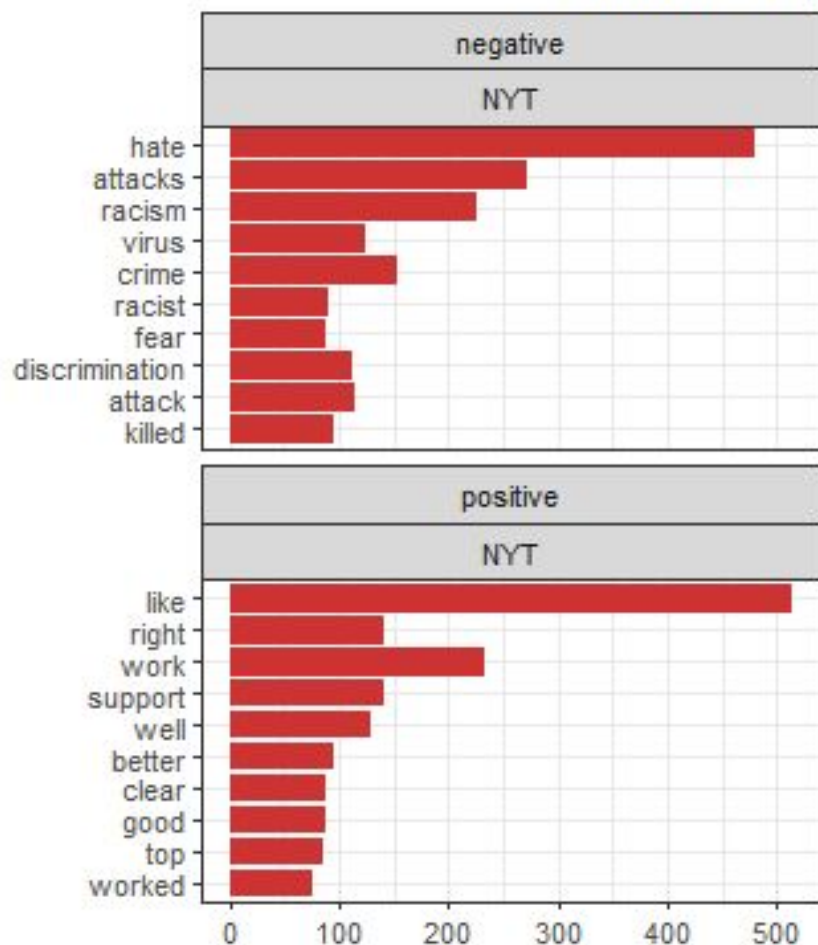
NYT



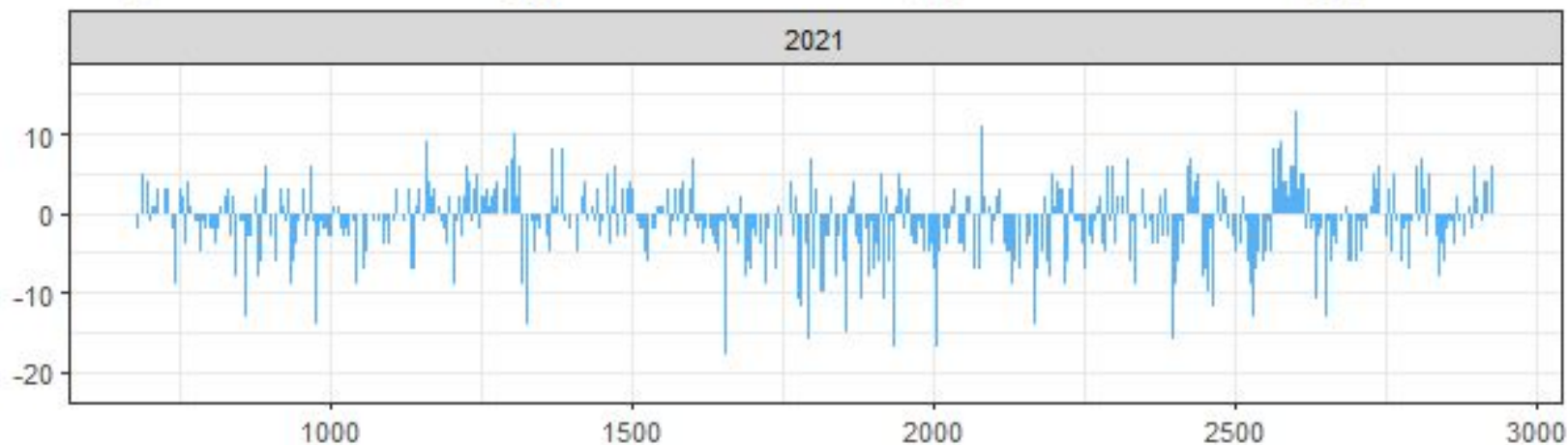
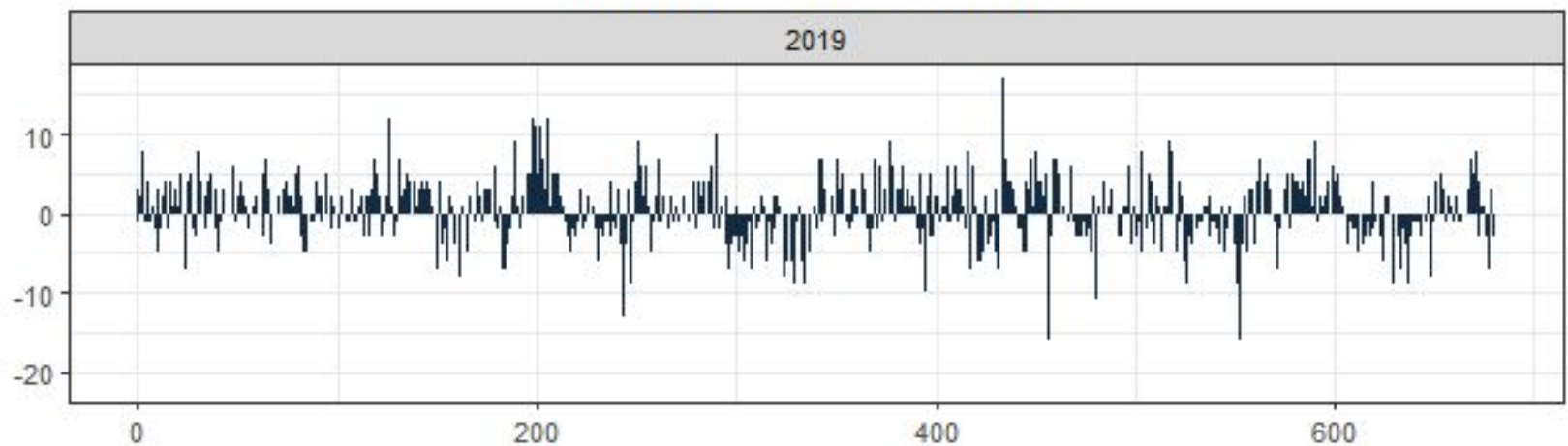
WSJ



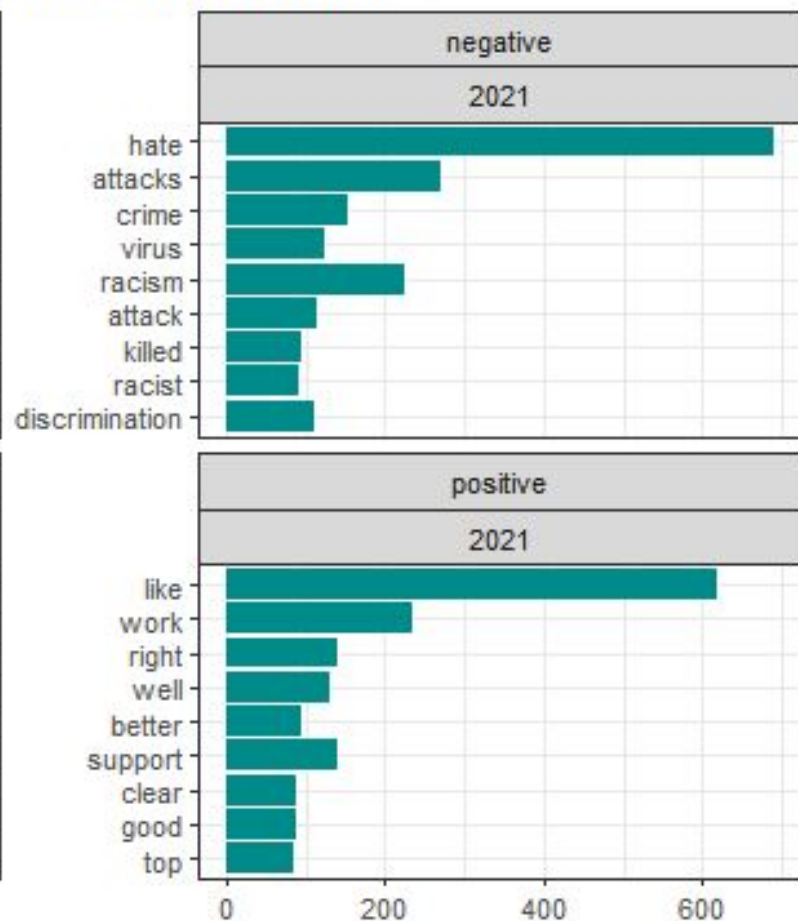
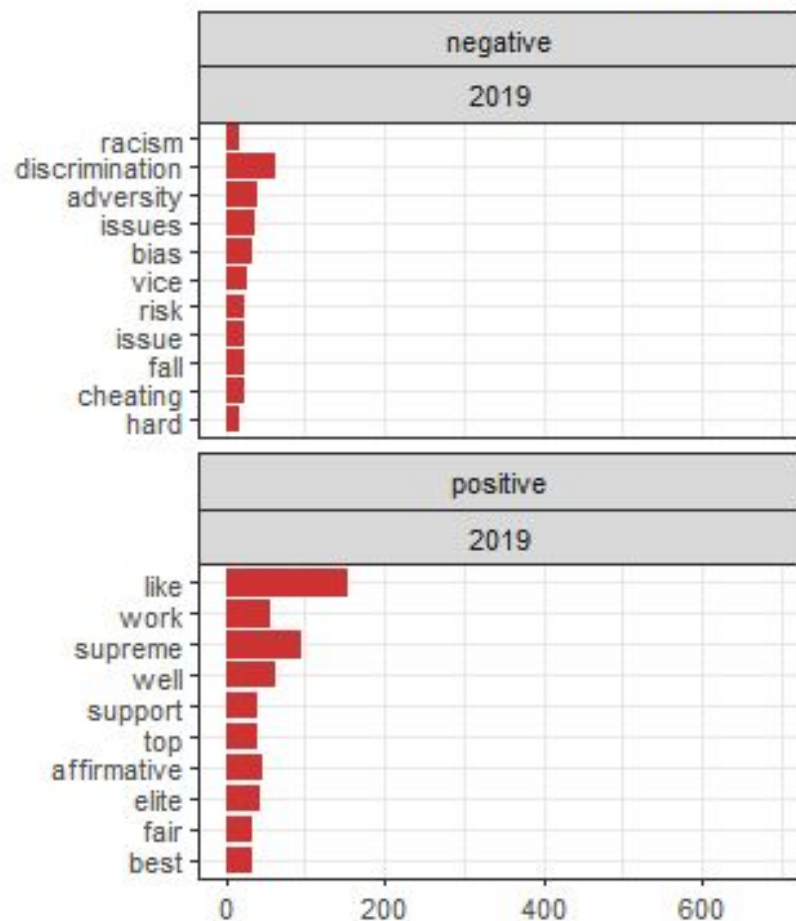
Sentiments Word Analysis by Media Outlet



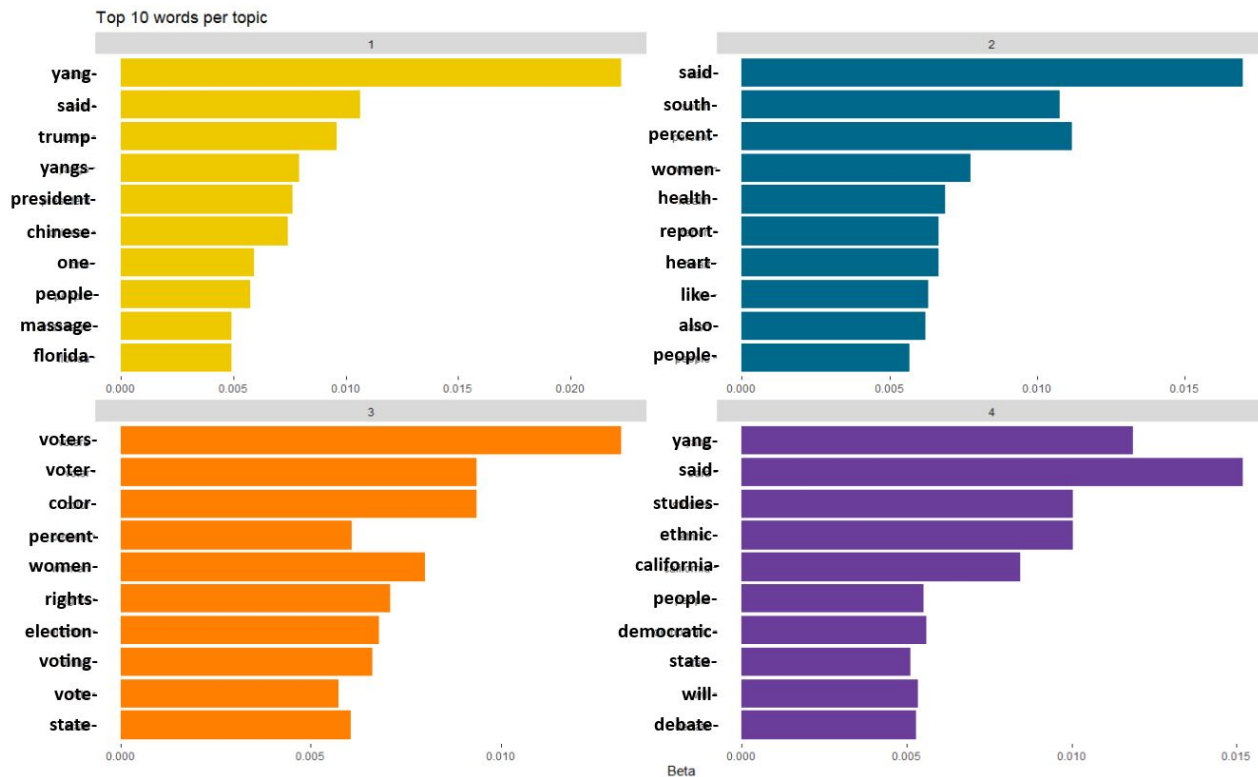
Sentiments Score Plot by Year



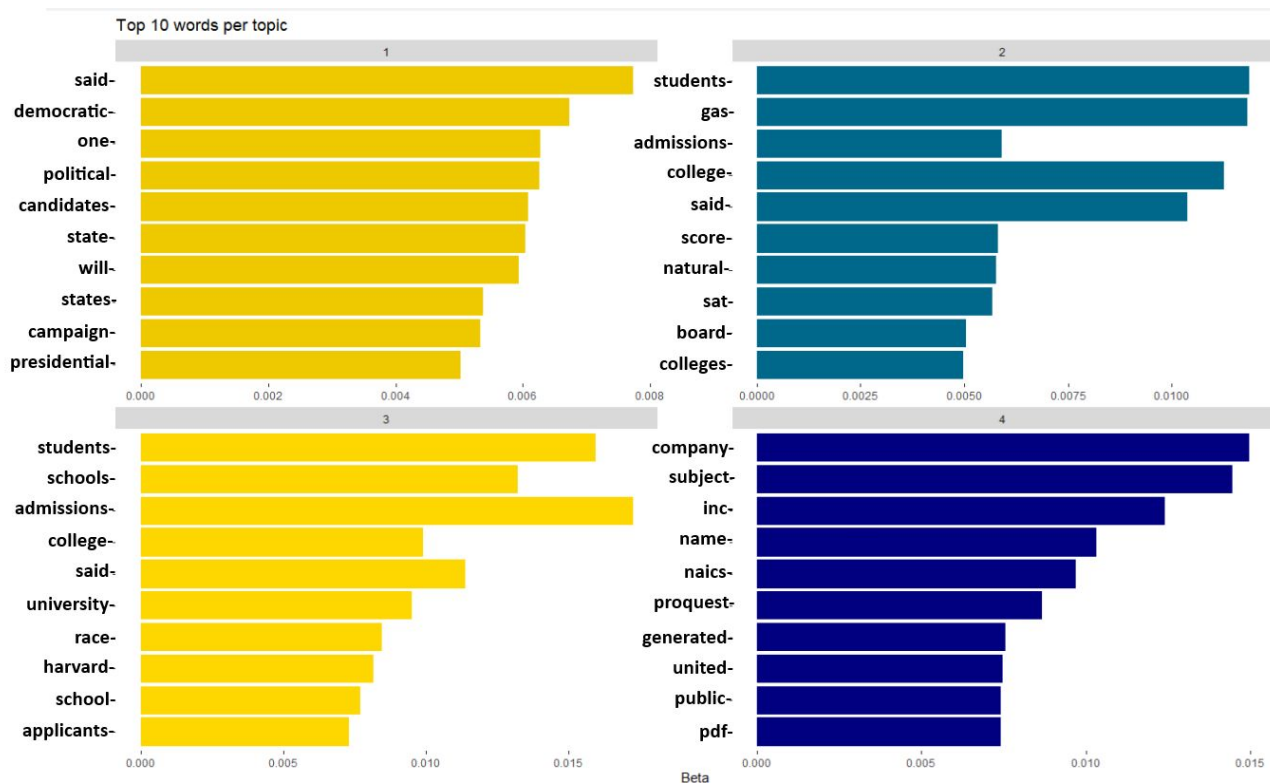
Sentiments Word Analysis by Year



Methods and Results: Topic Modeling - NYT 2019

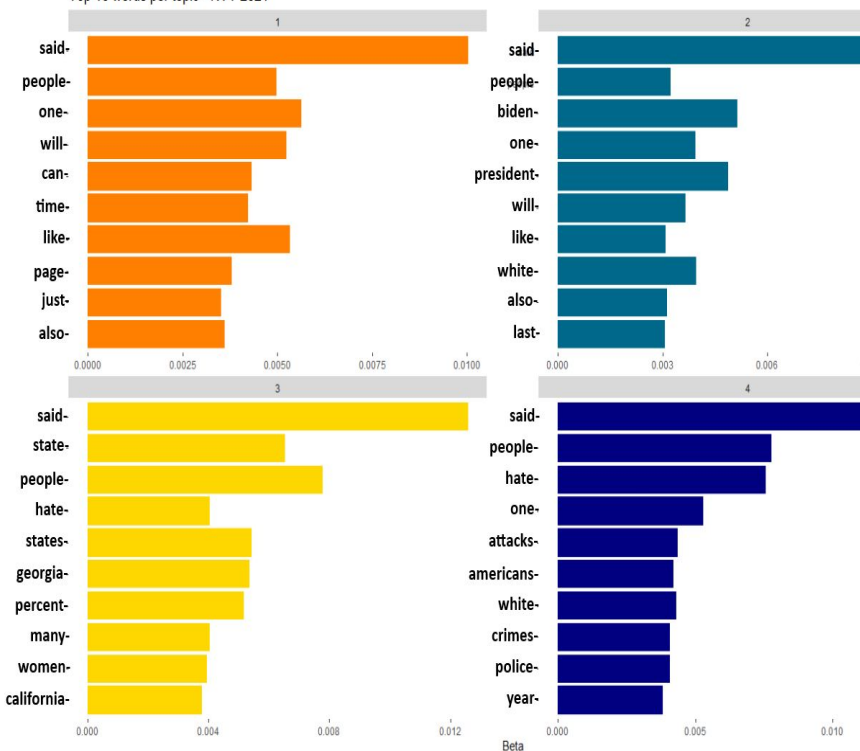


Methods and Results: Topic Modeling - WSJ 2019

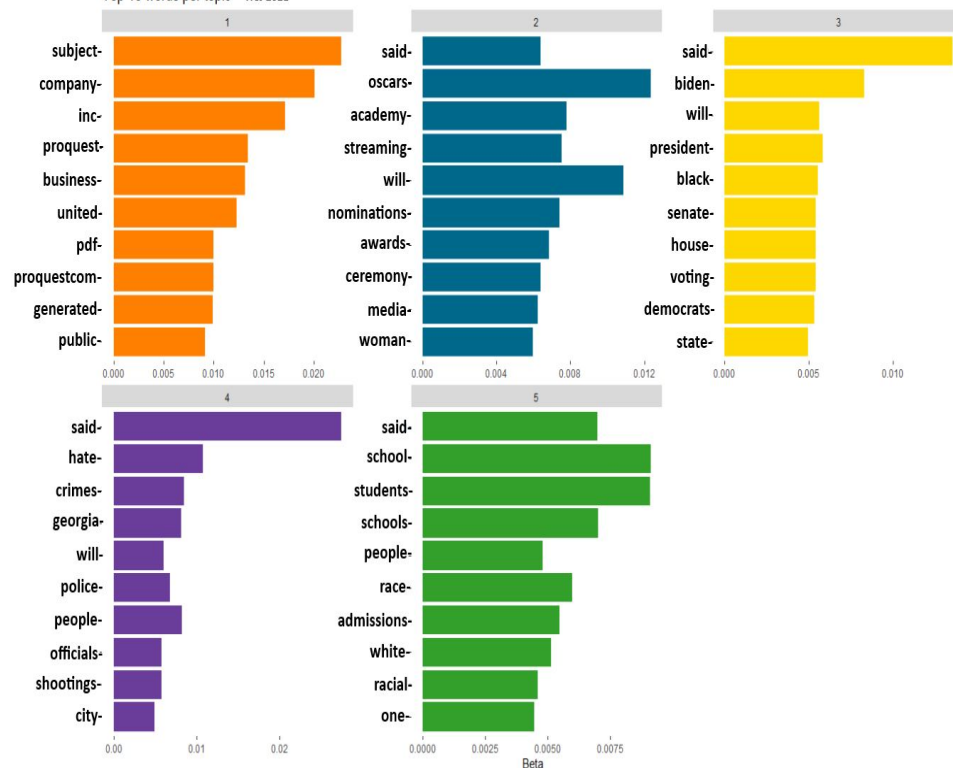


Methods and Results: Topic Modeling - NYT & WSJ 2021

Top 10 words per topic - NYT 2021



Top 10 words per topic - WSJ 2021



Takeaways and Future Research

We find mixed support for all three of our hypotheses:

- Some differences between coverage of AAPI in conservative and liberal news outlets, but mostly pre-pandemic.
- Portrayal of AAPI has changed significantly since onset of pandemic.
- Some evidence that conservative news outlets more likely to perpetuate stereotypes about AAPI than liberal news outlets.

Ideas for Future Research:

- Use larger sample of articles from wider variety of sources to better understand differences in coverage between conservative and liberal outlets.
- Conduct a deeper, more qualitative study of articles from a sample of sources and years to help definitively confirm or disconfirm things like the presence of stereotyping in reporting.
- Analyze sentiment of coverage of AAPIs in other types of media, such as television and film.

Work Cited

- Iyengar, S., & Kinder, D. R. (1987). News that matters: Television and American opinion. University of Chicago Press.
- Jang, S. Y., Wong, Y. J., & Seah, K. (2021). COVID-19 pandemic and the negative media portrayal of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (AAPI). *PLOS One*, 16(11), e0260095.
- SANTIA, M., ODEN, A., SEON-WOO KIM, PINGREE, R. J., WYERS, J., & BRYANOV, K. (2022). The Other Side of the Pandemic: Effects of Racialized News Coverage on Attitudes Toward Asians and Immigrants. *International Journal of Communication* (19328036), 16, 5717–5739.
- Sue, D. W., Lin, A. I., Torino, G., Capodilupo, C. M., & Rivera, D. P. (2007). Racial microaggressions toward Asian Americans: Explicit and subtle forms and their psychological impact. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 54(4), 474-487.
- Tsai J, Phua J, Pan S, Yang C. (2020). Intergroup Contact, COVID-19 News Consumption, and the Moderating Role of Digital Media Trust on Prejudice Toward Asians in the United States: Cross-Sectional Study. *J Med Internet Res* 2020;22(9):e22767 doi: 10.2196/22767