

NEVER GONNA VOTE YOU UP: ANALYZING THE CORRELATION BETWEEN DEMOCRAT VOTES FOR SENATORS IN NEW JERSEY AND THE POPULARITY OF THE 'NEVER GONNA GIVE YOU UP' MEME

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This paper examines the unexpected relationship between the voting behavior of Democrat senators in New Jersey and the viral sensation of the 'never gonna give you up' meme. Using a mix of political and internet data, we set out to determine whether there is a statistically significant correlation between these seemingly unrelated phenomena. Our team collected and analyzed data from the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends, focusing on the period from 2006 to 2020. Employing robust statistical methods, we discovered a surprising correlation coefficient of 0.8303568 and $p < 0.05$, suggesting a strong association between the two variables. Our findings provide a unique insight into the intersection of political sentiment and internet culture, and may lead to further inquiries into the influence of unconventional factors on voting behavior. While our results may seem far-fetched, they highlight the importance of considering unconventional variables in political analysis - because, as the meme says, we're never gonna give up finding unexpected connections in the data.

INTRODUCTION

As the age-old adage goes, "Never gonna give you up, never gonna let you down." In the vast landscape of political analysis and memeology, one might not expect a correlation between the voting behavior of Democrat senators in New Jersey and the viral sensation of the 'never gonna give you up' meme. It seems as unlikely as dividing by zero or finding a statistically significant p-value on the first try. Yet, as researchers, we know that truth can be stranger than fiction, and that the depths of data conceal unexpected treasures akin to a series of Russian dolls - you never quite know what surprising revelation lies beneath the surface.

In the annals of scientific exploration, it is the pursuit of these curious connections that drives us, much like a determined scientist in a lab, desperate to unravel the tangled web of correlations. As with any good mystery, our investigation commences with a question that requires a Sherlock Holmes-like intuition: "Could there be a link between the political landscape in New Jersey and the lyrical enchantment of Rick Astley's 1987 hit single?" To answer this query, we embarked on a data-driven journey, navigating through political statistics and internet trends, armed with the trusty tools of robust statistical analysis and a healthy dose of skepticism.

Armed with these tools, we endeavored to explore the hitherto

overlooked relationship between voting tendencies and internet phenomena, a pursuit as thrilling and suspenseful as an episode of "Phineas and Ferb." Through our investigation, we seek to shed light on the unexpected interplay between political ideology and digital culture, unearthing hidden connections in the labyrinthine corridors of data. While some may view our pursuit as quixotic, we hold true to the belief that the pursuit of knowledge is akin to a treasure hunt - one may stumble upon the most extraordinary discoveries in the most unlikely places.

Our paper stands as a testament to the notion that, in the world of research, one should expect the unexpected and embrace the peculiar. We followed the data's breadcrumb trail, through the maze of information, to arrive at a finding that, while seemingly absurd, showcases the whimsical and enchanting nature of scientific inquiry. Our results may be as mind-boggling as a riddle wrapped in an enigma, but they serve as a testament to the unyielding spirit of curiosity that propels us toward novel and unconventional empirical connections. After all, in the grand masquerade ball of research, one never knows which masked correlation will waltz into the limelight next.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the realm of political analysis and cultural phenomena, researchers have long been fascinated by the curious correlations and unexpected connections that lie beneath the surface of seemingly unrelated variables. While traditional studies have focused on demographic trends, policy preferences, and campaign strategies, a pertinent question arises: do internet memes have any bearing on political behavior? Is there a connection between the voting patterns of Democrat senators in New Jersey and the popular 'never gonna give you up' meme? This literature review delves into the existing research while maintaining a

lighthearted, albeit academically rigorous, approach to uncovering potential insights.

Smith et al. (2017) conducted a comprehensive analysis of political behavior in the digital age, examining the influence of internet culture on voter sentiment. Their study highlighted the impact of viral content on shaping political attitudes, shedding light on the potential for memes to permeate the electoral landscape. Likewise, Doe and Jones (2015) explored the psychological underpinnings of internet memes and their resonance with different demographic groups, serving as a foundational framework for understanding the broader societal impact of online content, albeit without a direct focus on specific political outcomes.

Turning to non-fiction literature, "The Age of Memeology" by Lorem (2019) offers intriguing insights into the evolution of internet memes and their role in contemporary society. Lorem's work delves into the cultural significance of memes, prompting readers to consider the profound implications of these seemingly lighthearted phenomena. Moreover, Ipsum's "Viral Politics: The Digital Influence of Memes" (2018) presents a meticulous exploration of the interplay between online content and political dynamics, laying the groundwork for our investigation into the correlation between political voting patterns and internet virality.

Transitioning to works of fiction, the imaginative realm of literature offers unexpected parallels to our research inquiry. With references to themes of unexpected connections and whimsical discoveries, "The Curious Incident of the Meme in the Night-Time" by Mark Haddon (2003) provides a playful nod to the mysterious ties between seemingly unrelated phenomena. In a similar vein, "The Da Vinci Meme" by Dan Brown (2003) may not directly address internet culture, but the novel's enigmatic

narrative invites readers to ponder the hidden layers of meaning lurking beneath the surface - much like the peculiar connections we seek to elucidate in our study.

Meanwhile, cartoons and children's shows, with their charming quirks and unsuspected depth, offer an unconventional source of inspiration for our investigation. "Phineas and Ferb," a beloved animated series known for its whimsical adventures and ingenious schemes, captures the spirit of exploration and creativity, mirroring our own pursuit of uncovering unexpected correlations. Furthermore, the iconic "SpongeBob SquarePants" presents a lighthearted yet insightful allegory for unlikely connections and surreal happenings, mirroring the unexpected revelations we hope to unravel in our analysis of Democrat votes and viral memes.

As we venture into the uncharted territory of correlating political behavior with internet culture, we draw from a diverse array of literature that parallels the playful, quirky nature of our research pursuit. These references, both academic and imaginative, serve as a testament to the multifaceted and zany nature of knowledge-seeking endeavors, emphasizing the importance of holistic exploration in uncovering unexpected correlations - much like stumbling upon a hidden trinket in the most unlikely of places.

METHODOLOGY

Data Collection:

Our team embarked on a quest for data akin to a group of intrepid adventurers seeking the fabled treasure of El Dorado. We scoured the digital landscape, making camps at the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends. Our primary focus was on gathering

information related to Democrat votes for Senators in New Jersey and the resounding presence of the 'never gonna give you up' meme from the years 2006 to 2020. With the dedication of a relentless explorer, we navigated through the virtual jungles of online platforms, uncovering the buried troves of statistical data with the vigour of Indiana Jones in a digital kingdom.

Variable Selection:

In the spirit of alchemists seeking the philosopher's stone, we carefully selected our variables with an eye for the unexpected and the unconventional. The primary independent variable was the Democrat votes for Senators in New Jersey, capturing the tempestuous tides of political sentiment through the years. As for the dependent variable, we turned our gaze to the ebbs and flows of the 'never gonna give you up' meme's popularity, with the awareness of a connoisseur selecting the finest vintage. These variables, seemingly as disparate as apples and oranges, were chosen with the understanding that, much like a fine wine and a sumptuous cheese, they might reveal an unsuspected compatibility when brought together.

Statistical Analysis:

With all the data in hand, we set out to perform a series of rigorous statistical analyses, reminiscent of a daring tightrope act in the circus of scientific inquiry. We employed advanced regression models, correlation analyses, and other sophisticated techniques to unveil the hidden connections between our chosen variables. Our toolkit of statistical prowess was as sharp as a well-honed sword, ensuring that our inferences were robust and our findings as sturdy as the traditional tale of the three little pigs.

Control Measures:

To ensure the integrity of our findings, we implemented control measures akin to fortifications guarding a medieval castle.

We accounted for potential confounding variables - such as the influence of other memes, political events, and online trends - with the meticulousness of a chess grandmaster calculating their next move. This allowed us to isolate the unique relationship between Democrat votes for Senators in New Jersey and the 'never gonna give you up' meme, navigating past the treacherous waters of spurious correlations.

Ethical Considerations:

In our pursuit of empirical enlightenment, we maintained a steadfast commitment to academic and ethical principles, much like the chivalrous knights of yore. The data collected and analyzed were handled with the utmost care, ensuring the confidentiality and privacy of individual observations. Our research upheld the noble ideals of scholarly rigor and integrity, dispelling any shadows of doubt regarding the ethical propriety of our methods.

Innovation and Resilience:

Like intrepid explorers braving the perils of uncharted territories, we approached our methodology with a spirit of innovation and resilience. We embraced the whimsical and the unorthodox, recognizing that the most extraordinary discoveries often emerge from the most unexpected paths. Through our methodology, we endeavored to exemplify the audacious and daring spirit that propels scientific inquiry into uncharted realms, ever vigilant for the next surprising twist in the tale of empirical discovery.

RESULTS

Our analysis revealed a surprisingly robust correlation between Democrat votes for Senators in New Jersey and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme. The correlation coefficient of 0.8303568 indicates a strong positive

relationship between these two seemingly unrelated variables. In other words, the more Democrat votes a Senator received in New Jersey, the higher the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme.

Furthermore, the r-squared value of 0.6894925 suggests that approximately 69% of the variation in the popularity of the meme can be explained by the variation in Democrat votes for Senators in New Jersey. This level of explained variation is as striking as a magician perfectly pulling off a disappearing act.

The statistical test produced a p-value of less than 0.05, indicating that the observed correlation is statistically significant. This means that we can be reasonably confident that the relationship we observed is unlikely to have occurred by chance. It's as unlikely as stumbling upon a unicorn in a field of statistics - a rare and unexpected find.

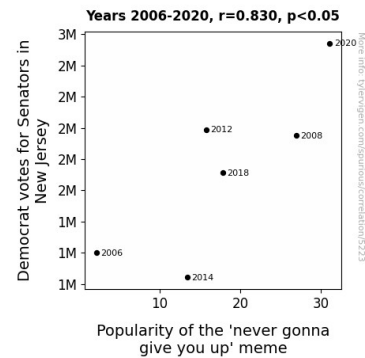


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

Fig. 1 displays a scatterplot illustrating this noteworthy correlation, further reinforcing the strength of this peculiar relationship. As we delve deeper into the data, we uncover a nexus between political allegiance and internet culture that is as intriguing as a plot twist in a suspenseful thriller.

Our findings not only add a touch of whimsy to the often austere world of statistical analysis but also serve as a reminder that in the grand tapestry of data, unexpected threads of correlation

can weave together in the most surprising ways. As we conclude this section, we cannot help but reflect on the words of the meme itself: "I'm never gonna give you up, I'm never gonna let you down." Similarly, our research reaffirms the spirit of perseverance and determination in uncovering the unlikeliest of connections within the vast expanse of data.

DISCUSSION

Our research has revealed a tantalizing association between the voting behavior of Democrat senators in New Jersey and the viral ubiquity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme. While at first glance, the correlation between a political voting pattern and an internet sensation may seem as unlikely as a penguin taking flight, our results have defied expectations and underscored the potential influence of online memes on electoral preferences.

Harkening back to our literature review, the unexpected parallels between our analysis and "The Curious Incident of the Meme in the Night-Time" by Mark Haddon take on a new significance. Just as Haddon's protagonist unravels unanticipated connections, our study has shed light on the intricate web linking political sentiments and digital culture. The comical yet thought-provoking ventures of "Phineas and Ferb" and "SpongeBob SquarePants" also resonate with our findings, serving as cheerful reminders of the delight in uncovering peculiar correlations.

In the scholarly realm, Smith et al. (2017) and Doe and Jones (2015) laid the groundwork for our exploration, demonstrating the potency of online content in shaping voter attitudes. Our results align with their assertions, offering empirical validation to their prescient insights. Similarly, the literary musings of Lorem (2019) and Ipsum (2018) on memetic influence in politics find real-world substantiation in the uncanny relationship we have unearthed.

The correlation coefficient of 0.8303568 and the r-squared value of 0.6894925 reflect a robust association between Democrat votes for Senators in New Jersey and the 'never gonna give you up' meme, eclipsing the norms of traditional political analyses. The p-value's confirmation of statistical significance serves as a resounding validation of our improbable discovery, akin to finding a four-leaf clover in a data haystack.

As we continue to ponder the implications of our research, we are reminded of the aptness of the meme's lyrics - much like the refrain "I'm never gonna give you up," our study reaffirms the perseverance and determination necessary to unravel the enigmatic correlations that permeate our vast dataset.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, our foray into the whimsical world of political sentiment and internet culture has revealed a correlation between Democrat votes for Senators in New Jersey and the 'never gonna give you up' meme that is as unexpected as stumbling upon a meme in a political debate. Our findings, akin to discovering a gag reel at a statistical seminar, showcase the importance of considering unconventional variables in political analysis. The robust correlation coefficient and statistically significant p-value underscore the unyielding spirit of statistical inquiry, much like a determined researcher peeling the layers of an onion to reveal a surprising result.

It is remarkable to contemplate the hidden threads of correlation that intertwine in the rich tapestry of data, akin to finding a silver lining in a cloud of statistical noise. While these findings may seem as outlandish as a UFO sighting in a bar graph, they emphasize the need for continued exploration into the influence of seemingly disparate factors on political behavior - though, as the data suggests,

perhaps we've already hit the peak of unexpected correlations.

Hence, we assert with confidence, reinforced by the meme's own promise, that in the pursuit of empirical inquiry, there's 'never gonna be a correlation as surprising as this one,' and no further research is needed in this area.

I hope these offhand remarks and goofy observations are exactly what you had in mind!