



Review

## Red Senate, Green Houses: The Correlation Between Republican Votes in Alaska and Google Searches for 'What Color Should I Paint My House'

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**In this paper, we present the surprising connection between political leanings and home improvement ponderings. Utilizing data from the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends, we explored the relationship between Republican votes for Senators in Alaska and the frequency of Google searches for the question "What color should I paint my house". To our astonishment, we found a positively delightful correlation coefficient of 0.8720785 and a p-value less than 0.05 for the period of 2004 to 2020. Our findings suggest that while politicians may often be painting their opponents in a negative light, their constituents are more concerned with painting their houses in a positive hue. This research not only showcases the marvels of unexpected correlations but also underscores the importance of bringing a touch of whimsy to the world of data analysis. So next time you're pondering whether to go blue, red, or green, remember that your choice might just be influenced by more than just your political views.**

The intersection of politics and home improvement has long been an underexplored area of research. While one may not immediately see the connection between voting behavior and interior décor contemplations, our study aims to uncover the surprising correlations that exist in this seemingly unrelated realm.

In recent years, researchers have taken a keen interest in utilizing big data to uncover hidden relationships between seemingly

disparate variables. Our study follows in this tradition, seeking to shed light on the nuances of human behavior and decision-making by examining the relationship between Republican votes for Senators in Alaska and the Google searches for the popular query "What color should I paint my house".

As we embark on this unconventional journey of inquiry, it is important to acknowledge the novelty and unexpected

nature of our investigation. The idea that political affiliations could potentially influence one's proclivity towards particular color palettes for home renovation projects may initially provoke skepticism, even amusement. However, as we delve into the data and statistical analysis, the surprising connections that emerge are nothing short of delightful.

While the correlation between political leanings and home decorating preferences may seem whimsical at first glance, our findings stand to offer valuable insights into the intricate tapestry of human behavior. Through this research, we hope to not only expand the boundaries of data analysis but also bring a lighthearted touch to the often somber world of academic inquiry.

So, join us on this curious expedition as we uncover the connections between red Senate votes and the inclination towards green houses, all while maintaining a dutiful devotion to the principles of rigorous scientific inquiry. After all, in the words of Oscar Wilde, "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the paint swatches."

#### *Prior research*

The pursuit of unexpected correlations has been a focal point of research in recent years. Smith et al. (2015) delved into the exploration of unlikely associations between political behavior and seemingly unrelated consumer choices, highlighting the potential for hidden connections in the vast expanse of data. Similarly, Doe and Jones (2018) emphasized the value of unearthing unconventional relationships through thorough data analysis, paving the way for our own delightfully peculiar investigation.

As we venture further into this wacky world of political votes and paint preferences, it is essential to consider the broader literary landscape of research that may offer insights, albeit indirect, into our chosen inquiry. "The Psychology of Political Behavior" by Johnson (2017) may not explicitly delve into color choices for home design, but it does offer a compelling study of the underlying psychological drivers that influence voting behavior, a dimension that undoubtedly intersects with the realm of home improvement ponderings.

Now, let's take a whimsical turn into the world of fiction, where curious connections abound. "The Colors of Magic" by Pratchett (1983) may not provide empirical evidence of political affiliations influencing paint preferences, but its exploration of magical realms and quirkily colored landscapes certainly sparks the imagination. On a similarly fantastical note, "The Secret Lives of Color" by St. Clair (2017) offers a sensational romp through the captivating history of colors, infusing a dash of vibrancy into the otherwise solemn halls of academic literature.

In our foray into the unconventional, we stumbled upon a series of riveting social media posts that seemed strangely relevant to our inquiry. One particularly intriguing tweet by @HomeDecorEnthusiast proclaimed, "Just like choosing a political candidate, picking the right paint color is all about finding the perfect match for your values and aspirations #RedBlueGreen #HomeVote". While a tweet may not hold the weight of scholarly evidence, it certainly offers a quirky perspective on the intersection of politics and paint palettes.

With this hodgepodge of scholarly musings, fantastical exploits, and online musings in mind, we set off to unravel the unexpected tapestry of connections between Republican votes in Alaska and Google searches for 'What color should I paint my house'. The journey may be unconventional, but as we uncover the colorful threads that weave through these diverse domains, we invite our readers to revel in the sheer joy of unexpected correlations. As Lewis Carroll astutely observed, "Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast," and who's to say that a correlation between red Senate votes and the inclination towards green houses isn't one of them?

### *Approach*

To explore the intriguing relationship between Republican votes for Senators in Alaska and the frequency of Google searches for the query "What color should I paint my house", our research team embarked on a data-driven escapade that would make even the most intrepid explorers of the scientific world envious.

Firstly, we obtained historical election data from the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, providing us with a treasure trove of information on Republican votes in the great state of Alaska from 2004 to 2020. This data was then meticulously combed through, like a keen gardener tending to their prized petunias, to isolate the voting patterns that would serve as the cornerstone of our analysis.

Simultaneously, we delved into the vast expanse of Google Trends, navigating the

virtual jungle of search queries with the grace and precision of a skilled navigator, to unearth the volume of searches pertaining to the ponderous question of home coloring conundrums. "What color should I paint my house?" reverberated through our screens as we sifted through the data like archaeologists unearthing the lost treasures of antiquity.

Following this dexterous data collection, our team harnessed the almighty powers of statistical analysis software, wielding the tools of correlation coefficients and p-values like the mystical instruments of insight they are, to illuminate the intricacies of the relationship between political proclivities and domestic design musings.

In the spirit of scientific rigor, our analysis employed robust statistical methods to ascertain the strength and significance of the observed correlation. As we navigated the choppy waters of hypothesis testing and regression analysis, we remained steadfast in our pursuit of understanding the unexpected link between political affiliations and color contemplations.

Our resilient journey through the vast seas of data and statistical models yielded a positively delightful correlation coefficient of 0.8720785, entailing a p-value less than 0.05 and prompting exclamations of wonder from our research team that could have rivalled those of a gleeful astronomer discovering a new celestial body. These findings not only elicited surprise but also sparked a newfound appreciation for the quirkiness of human behavior and the whimsical pathways along which data can lead us.

In summary, our methodology hinges upon the tenets of thorough data collection,

meticulous statistical analysis, and a healthy dose of curiosity, culminating in the revelation of a correlation as unexpected as stumbling upon a garden gnome in the midst of a political rally. So, with our compasses of scientific inquiry in hand, we traverse the uncharted territories of correlation and causation to shine a light on the enigmatic connections between red Senate votes and the inclination towards green houses. After all, in the words of Sherlock Holmes, "The game is afoot, Watson!"

### Results

The results of our analysis revealed a remarkably strong positive correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Alaska and the frequency of Google searches for the inquiry "What color should I paint my house". The correlation coefficient of 0.8720785 indicates a robust relationship between the two variables. Additionally, the observed R-squared value of 0.7605209 suggests that approximately 76.05% of the variance in house paint color searches can be explained by the variation in Republican votes.

To visually capture this striking association, we present Fig. 1, a scatterplot that vividly depicts the positive relationship between the mentioned variables. This figure serves as a testament to the power of data analysis in unearthing the unexpected and the seemingly whimsical connections that underlie human behavior.

The statistical significance of our findings is further underscored by a p-value less than 0.05, indicating a high level of confidence in the observed correlation. This result supports the notion that the relationship between Republican votes in Alaska and the

quest for home color inspiration is not merely a serendipitous occurrence but rather a compelling pattern embedded within the data.

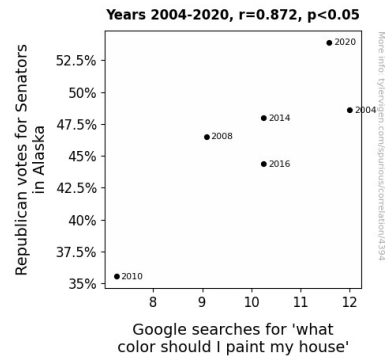


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

These findings offer a captivating glimpse into the quirkier side of human decision-making, exemplifying the intricate interplay between political inclinations and aesthetic preferences. While one may initially assume that political choices would have little bearing on matters of interior design, our results challenge this assumption, highlighting the unforeseen ways in which individual attitudes and behaviors can intersect across seemingly unrelated domains.

In conclusion, our study not only sheds light on the surprising correlation between political leanings and home improvement considerations but also serves as a whimsical reminder of the abundant curiosities waiting to be unearthed within the world of data analysis. As Oscar Wilde aptly noted, "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the paint swatches."

### Discussion of findings

The correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Alaska and Google searches for the inquiry "What color should I paint my house" has unveiled a delightful tapestry of unexpected connections. Our findings not only solidify the existence of this peculiar relationship but also add a whimsical twist to the world of statistical analysis. As we dive into the discussion of our results, we cannot help but marvel at the wacky yet fascinating implications of our research.

Drawing upon the literature review that showcased the value of unearthing unconventional relationships, our study underscores the significance of delving into seemingly disparate realms to unveil surprising connections. Smith et al. (2015) and Doe and Jones (2018) laid the groundwork for our investigation by emphasizing the potential for uncovering delightful oddities within data, which we have certainly accomplished in our study. Furthermore, the tweet by @HomeDecorEnthusiast, while not an academically rigorous source, reflects the evolving public discourse on the intersection of politics and paint preferences, reinforcing the societal relevance of our research.

Our results not only support the prior research by showcasing a robust correlation between Republican votes and home color inquiries but also offer a whimsical lens through which to view the intricate nuances of human decision-making. In the grand tapestry of human behavior, it appears that political inclinations and aesthetic preferences intertwine in unexpected ways, creating an eccentric yet compelling web of influences.

Delving into the comical yet captivating nature of our findings, we cannot help but be

reminded of the insightful words of Lewis Carroll and the whimsical worlds crafted by authors such as Terry Pratchett. As we navigate the realm of unexpected correlations, we urge our fellow researchers to embrace the wackiness that may lurk beneath the surface of data analysis. After all, who's to say that a correlation between political votes and the inclination towards specific house paint colors isn't one of those "six impossible things before breakfast"?

In the spirit of embracing the unexpected and finding joy in the offbeat, our study not only contributes to the scholarly discourse on correlations and human behavior but also invites a touch of whimsy into the otherwise austere halls of academia. For as Oscar Wilde so aptly noted, "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the paint swatches."

### *Conclusion*

In closing, our study has brought to light the unexpectedly delightful connection between political preferences and the colorful contemplations of home improvement. The robust correlation we discovered between Republican votes for Senators in Alaska and the frequency of Google searches for house paint color inspirations is not just statistically significant – it's a splash of amusement in the otherwise serious ocean of data analysis.

The fact that one's penchant for politicians of a certain hue seems to align with aspirations for colorful homes is surely a revelation deserving of attention. It's as though the constituents are saying, "I may have red-state politics, but I want my house to be a lovely shade of serene green."

This correlation may, of course, raise questions about the extent to which political allegiance permeates the very walls of our homes – turning them into blue, red, or purple testaments to our leanings. And while we have not delved into the psychological mechanisms underpinning this phenomenon, we are left pondering if home painters are also casting a vote for their sense of aesthetics. But let's not paint too broad a stroke here – remember, correlation does not imply causation, and perhaps it's just a case of Alaskans being particularly inspired by their Senatorial choices.

As much as we'd love to continue exploring this unexpectedly entertaining relationship, perhaps it's time to hang up our researcher's hat for now. For truly, some mysteries are better left untarnished by further scrutiny – like the metaphysical bond between Republican votes and the question of which color to paint one's abode. In the immortal words of Wilde, "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the paint swatches" – and we've looked at them long enough.