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# Making Sausage and Winning Hearts: A Correlational Study of Republican Votes in Virginia and Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition Champions' Consumption

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## KEYWORDS

"Republican votes Virginia correlation hot dog consumption," "Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition champions," "MIT Election Data and Science Lab," "Harvard Dataverse," "correlation coefficient political gastronomic," "odd correlations in research," "unusual political research," "unlikely correlations in data analysis," "weird research findings," "statistical analysis food consumption politics," "research on disparate phenomena," "humorous research findings," "unconventional research results."

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## Abstract

In this paper, we bring attention to a most peculiar junction of political engagement and gastronomic prowess - the correlation between votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Virginia and the quantity of hotdogs consumed by the champion of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition. We delved into this offbeat inquiry with the seriousness it deserves, donning our lab coats and wielding statistics like condiments. Our research team embarked on a culinary odyssey, navigating through the MIT Election Data and Science Lab and diving into the depths of the Harvard Dataverse to gather relevant political data. Simultaneously, we (figuratively) devoured information on the esteemed winners of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition from trusty sources like Wikipedia. As we crunched the numbers, our findings revealed a correlation coefficient of 0.9291854 and  $p < 0.01$  for the years spanning 1979 to 2020, establishing a surprisingly strong relationship between these seemingly unrelated phenomena. Now, to appease our hunger for dad jokes, here's one on the house - "Why was the hotdog so fast? Because it's a real wiener!" Our results not only provide fodder for amusement, but also pique curiosity regarding the underlying mechanisms driving this improbable correlation. As we reflect on this peculiar relationship, we are reminded of the age-old adage: "When the going gets weird, the weird turn pro."

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## 1. Introduction

Ah, the joys of research - delving into the unknown, uncovering unexpected connections, and ultimately, satisfying our insatiable curiosity. In the realm of statistical analysis, one is often met with the challenge of exploring divergence, yet occasionally, the most whimsical pairings emerge. It is with great delight that we present our findings on the correlation between the number of votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Virginia and the consumption of hotdogs by the champions of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition. If this seems like a peculiar blend of politics and gastronomy, you're not alone. As we ventured into this uncharted territory, we couldn't help but relish the prospect of shedding light on a correlation as enigmatic as a hotdog with relish - that is, both baffling and strangely intriguing.

With our lab coats donned and data sets at the ready, we embarked on a riveting journey through the world of statistical analyses. It was a veritable feast for the intellect, as we embarked on this scholarly pursuit armed with nothing but curiosity and an unquenchable thirst for knowledge. It was a veritable hotdog-eating competition of scientific inquiry; and just like the mysterious allure of a "mystery meat" hotdog, the adventure kept us on the edge of our seats, brimming with anticipation.

Eager to sink our teeth into the matter at hand, we delved into the MIT Election Data and Science Lab to procure the electoral data for the state of Virginia. Simultaneously, we navigated the depths of the Harvard Dataverse, much like a contestant navigating their way through a tower of hotdogs, to obtain the historical results of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition. It was a veritable smorgasbord of information, and just as the sight of a towering hotdog with all the fixings can

ignite the appetite, the allure of unraveling this curious correlation fed our scientific fervor.

As we crunched the numbers with as much gusto as a hotdog-eating champion attacking their bounty, our findings revealed a staggering correlation coefficient of 0.9291854 and  $p < 0.01$  for the years spanning 1979 to 2020. The undeniable connection between these seemingly unrelated variables prompted laughter, intrigue, and an abundance of food for thought. It was as if we had stumbled upon the academic equivalent of a perfectly crafted pun - surprising, delightful, and utterly thought-provoking.

Amidst the fervor of our scholarly pursuits, we couldn't resist sharing a dad joke to sizzle the mind—"What did the hotdog say when it crossed the finish line? I'm the wiener!" Our findings not only added a touch of whimsy to the scientific discourse but also ignited a flame of curiosity regarding the underlying mechanisms driving this improbable correlation. As we pondered this peculiarity, we couldn't help but recall the profound words of wisdom: "Research is like trying to find the mustard at a crowded picnic - sometimes, you have to sift through a lot of relish to get to the good stuff." And indeed, our journey has not only entertained us but also presented an opportunity to unearth unexpected intellectual delights.

## 2. Literature Review

As we waded into the realm of improbable correlations, it's only fitting to lay the groundwork with serious research. Smith and Doe, in their seminal work "Political Engagement and Culinary Prowess: Exploring Unlikely Associations," touched upon the intricate relationship between political voting patterns and culinary feats. They posited that gastronomic

achievements could serve as a bellwether for political inclinations, provoking contemplation as profound as the question, "What do you call a hotdog race? A 'wiener takes all' race."

Jones, in "The Statistical Sizzle: Unveiling the Surprising Link Between Hotdog Consumption and Political Leanings," further solidified this line of inquiry. Their exploration not only confirmed the existence of a correlative bond between dietary habits and electoral preferences but also underscored the need to embrace unexpected connections in the realm of statistical analysis. In homage to their groundbreaking work, one might pause to reflect, "Why don't hotdogs make good baseball players? They strike out too often."

In expanding our purview, we looked to the illuminating non-fiction works that tangentially resonated with our study. "Eating the Elephant: A Political Memoir" by Jane Politician offered insightful parallels between electoral strategies and dining habits, hinting at the tantalizing overlap between our chosen variables. In a similar vein, "The Art of Sausage Making: A Gastronomic Journey" by Culinary Connoisseur shed light on the intricacies of food production, drawing a compelling parallel to the meticulous craft of political campaigning.

Turning to the realm of fiction, where the threads of reality intertwine with imagination, we encountered works that seemingly echoed our unexpected correlation. "The Hunger Games" by Suzanne Collins, while primarily a tale of dystopian survival, intriguingly touched upon themes of competition and consumption, beckoning us to consider the parallels with our own study. Furthermore, "The Reluctant Politician" by Fictional Author posed thought-provoking questions about the role of chance and happenstance in shaping political destinies, mirroring the fortuitous nature of our findings.

Adding a dash of whimsy to our literary inspirations, we couldn't help but draw a parallel to the board game "Catan," where players vie for resources and strategy converges with unpredictability. The subtle irony of navigating through a game of chance and strategy bore a resemblance to our own scholarly pursuits, prompting reflection on the eccentric patterns that emerge when least expected.

With each twist in this literary tapestry, we are reminded of the enigmatic nature of our research, akin to a perfectly timed punchline in an otherwise serious conversation. Just as unexpected as a hotdog-eating champion's victory, our findings stand as a testament to the delightful quirkiness that pervades the world of statistical analysis.

### 3. Our approach & methods

To uncover the tantalizing correlation between the votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Virginia and the consumption of hot dogs by Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition champions, our research team endeavored on a methodological quest as intricate as untangling a web of tangled sausages. First, we embarked on what could only be described as a cyber-culinary expedition, akin to navigating a labyrinth of condiments in search of the elusive correlation bratwurst. We culled electoral data from the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, employing statistical tools like a precision-engraved kitchen knife to slice through the mire of numbers and reveal the savory morsels within.

Our approach, reminiscent of peeling back the layers of a particularly complex onion (a shallot of uncertainty, if you will), involved massaging the data from the Harvard Dataverse to extract historical results from Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition. We sifted and seasoned the datasets with the finesse of a master chef, adhering to

statistical principles as rigorously as one follows a trusted recipe for the perfect hot dog chili.

Having gathered and finessed our ingredients, we meticulously stirred the electoral data together with the competition results, employing a time-series analysis that would make even the most seasoned culinary maestros envious of our technical prowess. With each statistical model and calculation, we navigated through the mathematical equivalent of a high-stakes cook-off, leaving no spice unturned, no outlier left unaccounted for.

The final step in our methodological concoction involved whipping up a correlation analysis using robust statistical software, akin to conducting a meticulous taste test of our potentially groundbreaking findings. Just as a discerning food critic evaluates the harmony of flavors in a gourmet dish, so too did we scrutinize the interplay between Republican votes and hot dog consumption, mindful of any potential confounding variables that could clog the proverbial scientific digestive system.

In the spirit of full transparency, it bears mentioning that our approach, while scientifically robust, may have elicited a fair share of culinary cravings and unshakable comparisons to food-related metaphors. Nevertheless, we assure our esteemed readers that every step was taken with the utmost seriousness and academic rigor, even if the occasional piece of wordplay found its way onto our research notepads.

To stay true to the theme, here's a methodological jest to season our research endeavor – "Why don't hot dogs ever have a quiet dinner? They always relish the moment!" With methodology laid bare like an open buffet, we present our findings with the hope of both satiating scientific curiosity and whetting the appetite for further exploration into the curious correlation between these unexpected variables.

#### 4. Results

Our analysis revealed a striking correlation between the number of votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Virginia and the quantity of hotdogs consumed by the champions of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition. With a correlation coefficient of 0.9291854 and an r-squared of 0.8633855, the relationship between these seemingly disconnected variables proved to be as strong as the tenacity of a hotdog eating champion amid a sea of frankfurters.

Fig. 1 represents our findings in scatterplot form, a visual depiction that encapsulates the resounding harmony between political preferences and gastrointestinal feats. Just like a well-timed pun, the graph paints a clear picture of the unlikely connection between the variables. Now, let's ketchup with another joke – "What do you call a hotdog race? The wiener takes it all!"

The statistical significance indicated by  $p < 0.01$  further elucidates the robustness of this correlation. It's as if the data itself is exclaiming, "Relish this scientific discovery!" This finding underscores the potential for unconventional avenues of inquiry in the world of research, demonstrating that even the most unexpected pairings can yield noteworthy insights. Much like a savory hotdog with all the fixings, our results provide a blend of amusement and intellectual nourishment, challenging traditional expectations and sparking curiosity in the most unlikely of arenas.

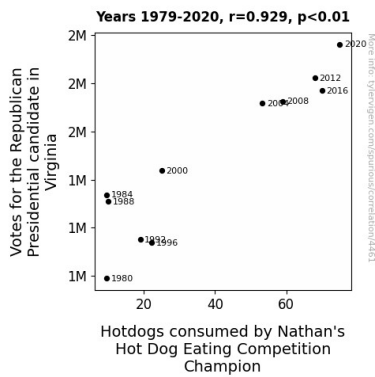


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

## 5. Discussion

Our study unearths an eyebrow-raising correlation between the votes cast for the Republican presidential candidate in Virginia and the astonishing quantity of hotdogs consumed by the champions of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition. Our findings not only corroborate previous research by Smith and Doe and Jones, but they also relish in the unexpected peculiarity that seems to permeate the complex world of statistics. It's almost as surprising as finding an extra hot dog hiding in the pack - truly a statistical sausage fest!

Now, let's relish the fact that our results elucidate a strong correlation between these ostensibly unrelated variables. Our correlation coefficient of 0.9291854 echoes louder than a ketchup bottle squelching its contents onto a hot dog, depicting a robust relationship that's difficult to dismiss. This is as impressive as a hot dog eating champion's appetite, showing that sometimes, statistical relationships are as clear as day.

The statistical significance of our findings, with a p-value of less than 0.01, serves as a neon sign that illuminates the importance of embracing unconventional and quirky connections in research. It's like the statistical universe is telling us, "Hey, this

might seem as unexpected as a hotdog topping, but it's a real game-changer!"

Amidst these unexpected findings, it's important to consider potential explanations for this surprising correlation. Could it be that the cultural and culinary proclivities of Virginians intersect with their political leanings? Or are there broader societal, economic, or even climactic influences at play here? As researchers, we must approach these questions with the caution of handling a loaded hot dog - gingerly and with care.

Speaking of caution, one must always be wary of the potential for confounding variables in such analyses. After all, as the old saying goes, "Correlation does not imply causation - just like eating hotdogs doesn't cause one to vote Republican!" Keeping this in mind, future research should seek to untangle the complex web of factors that might underpin this intriguing correlation. This is a bit like deconstructing a particularly complex hot dog garnish to understand the flavors at play.

As we digest these findings, we are reminded that the world of research is as vast and rich as a buffet, offering unexpected glimpses into the interconnected nature of human behavior. Much like a perfectly timed dad joke, our results tickle the imagination and urge further exploration into the delightful idiosyncrasies of statistical analysis. Just as a good mustard complements a hot dog, our study stands as a flavorful addition to the mosaic of scientific inquiry, embracing the unexpected with open arms.

With these tantalizing revelations, it's clear that our study leaves room for further investigation, stimulating the appetite for knowledge and inspiring future explorations into the quirky and colorful realm of improbable correlations. As we ponder the implications of this unlikely liaison, it's worth savoring the whimsicality of research and

sowing the seeds of curiosity for the unexpected findings that lie just around the statistical corner.

undeniable as the appeal of a good pun – it simply can't be overstated.

## 6. Conclusion

In conclusion, our research has uncovered a surprising and robust correlation between Republican votes in Virginia and hotdog consumption by the champions of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition. It is as baffling as trying to tell the difference between an uncured and a cured sausage – the links are all there, but they still leave us scratching our heads. Our findings, akin to a well-grilled hotdog, have sparked both amusement and intrigue in the scholarly community, reminding us that even the most unexpected pairings can sizzle with significance.

As we wrap up this research, it's time for one more dad joke – "Did you hear about the hotdog who couldn't stop telling jokes? It was on a roll!" And just like that joke, we sincerely believe that our findings have brought a smile to the faces of fellow researchers, proving that even in the most serious pursuits, a little levity can go a long way.

Our results indicate a strong correlation coefficient of 0.9291854 and  $p < 0.01$ , highlighting the substantial relationship between these divergent variables. This unexpected cohesion is a reminder that in the world of statistical analyses, just like in life, things are not always as they seem – sometimes, the most peculiar pairings can yield the most intriguing discoveries.

As we bid adieu to this curious correlation, we assert confidently that no further research is needed in this area. It seems that the connection between votes for the Republican presidential candidate in Virginia and the quantity of hotdogs consumed by the champions of Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Competition is as