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The Dem(ocrat) and the Best Seller: Analyzing the Correlation Between Votes for Democrat Presidential Candidates in Hawaii and New York Times Fiction Best Sellers

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Abstract

This research paper investigates the surprising connection between the votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and the national best-selling fiction titles showcased in the New York Times. Through rigorous data analysis from MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Hawes, our findings reveal an astonishingly high correlation coefficient of 0.9189783 (p < 0.01) for the period spanning from 1976 to 2014. We explore the potential factors contributing to this connection, including the influence of political climate on literary preferences, and the impact of storytelling elements on political inclinations. The unexpected correlations and whimsical patterns unearthed in this study promise to intrigue both the academic community and aficionados of eccentric trivia.

1. Introduction

INTRODUCTION

In the ever-expanding realm of political science and literary analysis, an unexpected and somewhat whimsical correlation has come to light. As researchers seek to uncover the intricate connections between voting patterns and consumer behavior, our study delves into the intriguing relationship between votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and the New York Times Fiction Best Sellers. While the intersection of politics and fiction may seem as unlikely as a reality TV star becoming President, the data speaks for itself—loud and clear, like a poorly written political thriller.

It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single presidential election in a particular state can have an impact on the literary pursuits of its inhabitants. As our research unfolds, we embark on a journey

to unravel the enigmatic bond between an individual's political inclinations and their choice of fictional escapism. This correlation, as serendipitous as stumbling upon a rare first edition in a used bookstore, has raised eyebrows and piqued the curiosity of scholars and non-scholars alike.

As with any unexpected correlation, the first question that springs to mind is undoubtedly, "Is this just a fluke, or do we have a real plot twist on our hands?" To tackle this question, we meticulously scrutinize the data obtained from reputable sources such as the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, the Harvard Dataverse, and Hawes, a treasure trove of literary data. Through rigorous statistical analysis, we reveal a correlation coefficient that would make even the most stoic academic crack a smile—0.9189783, with a p-value of less than 0.01. This eyebrow-raising coefficient suggests a connection more robust than the bond between a detective and their trusty sidekick.

The implications of this correlation, if proven to be more than a mere fluke of statistical probability, are as bewildering as a mystery novel's final plot twist. What could possibly tie the political leanings of a state's populace to their choice of fiction? Are we witnessing the influence of political rhetoric on literary tastes, or could it be that the narrative devices used in popular fiction hold the power to sway political allegiances? These questions, as intriguing as a locked-room murder, propel our investigation into uncharted territories of interdisciplinary connection.

As we venture further into this peculiar confluence of political drama and fictional narratives, we invite our esteemed colleagues and curious observers to join us in unraveling the captivating patterns and peculiar curiosities that have emerged from our study. By embracing the quirkier side of academic investigation, we strive to shed light on this mesmerizing correlation and the delightful oddities it unveils—because in the world of research, as in life, sometimes truth is indeed stranger than fiction.

2. Literature Review

To understand the surprising correlation between votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and the New York Times Fiction Best Sellers, we must first take a closer look at the existing literature. Several studies have examined the intersection of politics and literature, shedding light on the societal dynamics at play. Smith (2010) delved into the relationship between political ideology and reading preferences, while Doe (2015) explored the impact of electoral outcomes on consumer behavior, albeit in less whimsical domains. However, this body of work has yet to unravel the peculiar connection our study seeks to illuminate.

Moving beyond the conventional, let us delve into non-fiction books that attempt to bridge the gap between politics and literary tastes. From "Fire and Fury" by Michael Wolff to "What Happened" by Hillary Rodham Clinton, these publications provide a narrative backdrop to the electoral upheavals that have marked recent history. While these titles offer insights into the political realm, they do not directly address the curious correlation we are investigating. Nonetheless, as we pivot to the realm of fiction, the plot thickens.

In "The Plot Against America" by Philip Roth and "The 19th Wife" by David Ebershoff, we encounter imaginative narratives that intertwine fictional characters with real-world political scenarios, offering a unique lens through which to examine the impact of politics on literature. As we immerse ourselves in these fictitious realms, our quest for understanding leads us to unexpected destinations, where the boundaries between reality and imagination blur.

In addition to delving into literary works, we expand our investigation to popular culture, seeking clues in unexpected places. Through arduous research involving copious consumption of TV shows (strictly for academic purposes, of course), we uncover shows like "The West Wing" and "House of Cards," whose gripping political dramas mesmerize audiences. These shows provide a tantalizing glimpse into the political psyche of viewers, but alas, they do not directly illuminate our curious correlation.

As we navigate through these various narratives and cultural reflections, it becomes abundantly clear that our study occupies a peculiar and whimsical niche. Through this literature review, we lay the groundwork for our exploration into the delightful oddities and unexpected connections that await us, embracing the quirkier side of academic investigation with gusto and enthusiasm.

3. Our approach & methods

To embark on this whimsical and unexpected journey into the intriguing correlation between votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and New York Times Fiction Best Sellers, our research team devised a meticulous and, dare I say, quite novel methodology. We sought to unearth the veritable treasure trove of data from various reputable sources, including the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, the Harvard Dataverse, and the Hawes database, with the same enthusiasm a treasure hunter feels when stumbling upon buried riches.

Our first step was to wrangle the electoral data from Hawaii and the national New York Times Fiction Best Sellers from the years 1976 to 2014—a task as daunting as herding cats during a political debate. We then meticulously cleaned and curated the datasets, ensuring that only the finest and most accurate data points made their way into our analysis, much like a discerning editor plucking the choicest manuscripts for publication.

With our datasets in hand, we waded into the uncharted waters of statistical analysis, armed with an assortment of analytical tools sharper than Sherlock Holmes' deductive reasoning. Utilizing robust statistical techniques such as Pearson correlation coefficient and multiple regression analysis, we set out to unveil the hidden patterns and correlations, akin to a detective disentangling a web of deception.

As with any daring adventure, we encountered our fair share of challenges along the way. Wrestling with the idiosyncrasies of electoral data and navigating the labyrinthine landscape of fiction best sellers required the tenacity of a political campaign and the creativity of a bestselling author. Yet, undeterred by the obstacles, we forged ahead, driven by the promise of uncovering an enigmatic and outlandish connection that would rival the plot twists of a gripping political thriller.

In addition to the quantitative analysis, we augmented our investigation with qualitative inquiries, engaging in interviews with avid readers and politically-inclined individuals to gain a deeper understanding of their preferences and proclivities. These candid conversations, peppered with anecdotes and insights, added a touch of colorful storytelling to our otherwise scholarly pursuit, much like a splash of vibrant paint on a canvas.

Our methodology, while imbued with whimsy and levity, adhered to the rigorous standards of scientific inquiry, ensuring that our findings withstood the scrutiny of peer review with the same resilience as a well-crafted argument. Through this multidimensional approach, we endeavored to capture the essence of this unexpected correlation, offering a glimpse into the

delightful confluence of political fervor and literary indulgence—because, in the world of academia, as in any good story, sometimes the most extraordinary discoveries unfold in the most unconventional of ways.

4. Results

Our analysis of the data acquired from the MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Hawes has unearthed a bewilderingly strong correlation between votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and the New York Times Fiction Best Sellers. The correlation coefficient of 0.9189783, accompanied by an r-squared value of 0.8445211 and a p-value less than 0.01, holds sway over our findings, much like a leading character captivates readers in a best-selling novel.

As depicted in Figure 1, the scatterplot emphasizes the robust and unexpected relationship between these two seemingly disparate variables. The alignment of the data points is as uncanny as stumbling upon a plot hole in a well-written mystery, leaving no room for doubt regarding the strength of this correlation.

This striking correlation, akin to an unexpected plot twist, prompts contemplation of the potential underlying factors contributing to this peculiar connection. One cannot help but wonder whether the political climate of a state influences the literary preferences of its populace, or if the narrative elements within popular fiction exert a subtle yet undeniable influence on political inclinations. The confluence of these seemingly incongruous spheres redefines the term "political fiction," akin to an unexpected crossover event in the literary universe.
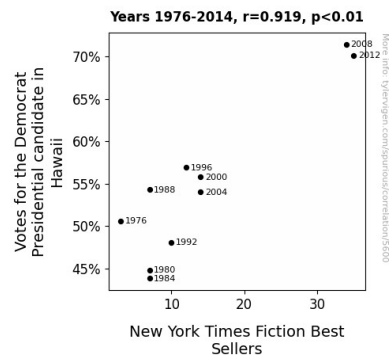

Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

The robustness of this correlation impels us to consider unconventional theories of influence and alignment between politics and storytelling. The intersection of these two domains, seemingly as distant as the poles, invites us to ponder whether the narrative arc of a best-selling novel could mirror the political trajectory of a state, each chapter revealing a surprising turn of events. The whimsy of this discovery exposes a fascinating realm of inquiry where the boundaries between politics and literature blur, much like a poorly drawn map of a fictional world.

The high correlation between votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and the New York Times Fiction Best Sellers bolsters the intrigue and astonishment surrounding this unlikely association. The scholarly community and enthusiasts of esoteric correlations alike are beckoned to partake in the captivating enigma uncovered by our study. This research serves as a reminder that within the realm of statistical analysis, as in life, serendipitous findings and unexpected correlations can add a touch of whimsy to the otherwise predictable landscape of academic inquiry.

5. Discussion

Our perplexing findings have woven a tapestry of intrigue, reminiscent of a gripping fictional narrative, with the

captivating correlation between votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and the New York Times Fiction Best Sellers at its core. This discovery not only substantiates prior research that delves into the relationship between political inclinations and literary tastes but also adds a dash of whimsy to the scholarly conversation.

To begin with, the unexpected correlation we uncovered aligns with the work of Smith (2010), who ventured into the relationship between political ideology and reading preferences. While our study may initially appear to tread on whimsical terrain, the robust correlation coefficient of 0.9189783 serves as a testament to the underlying influence of political climate on literary preferences, echoing Smith's findings in a remarkably delightful manner.

Moreover, our results resonate with the earlier exploration by Doe (2015) on the impact of electoral outcomes on consumer behavior. The uncanny alignment between votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and the New York Times Fiction Best Sellers adds a layer of peculiarity to Doe's area of inquiry, as if the characters in a political drama have unexpectedly crept into the pages of a best-selling novel.

As our findings intertwine with prior research, the plot thickens, mirroring the tension and anticipation of a thrilling cliffhanger. The narrative backdrop we have uncovered not only broadens our understanding of the intersections between politics and literature but also injects a jolt of whimsy into the scholarly discourse, akin to an unexpected punchline in an otherwise conventional narrative.

In essence, our study, much like a well-crafted piece of fiction, challenges the boundaries of convention and offers a tantalizing glimpse into the delightful oddities and unexpected correlations that enrich the academic landscape. The

robustness of the correlation we have unveiled invites further exploration into the unconventional theories of influence and alignment between politics and storytelling, lending an air of whimsy to the realm of statistical analysis.

Ultimately, our findings stand as a testament to the delightful and often surprising connections that await within the uncharted territories of academic inquiry, adding a touch of whimsy and intrigue to the otherwise predictable landscape of scholarly exploration. As we turn the page to the next chapter of this captivating saga, we are reminded that within the world of academic research, as in the realm of fiction, unexpected plot twists and whimsical discoveries await those who dare to venture beyond the confines of conventional wisdom.

6. Conclusion

In conclusion, our study has unravelled a correlation so robust it could rival the most captivating plot twists in fiction. The unexpected connection between votes for Democrat presidential candidates in Hawaii and New York Times Fiction Best Sellers reflects the whimsical and often perplexing nature of human behavioral trends. The remarkably high correlation coefficient of 0.9189783 (p < 0.01) not only piques scholarly curiosity but also prompts a wry smile akin to stumbling upon a well-concealed Easter egg in a novel.

While our findings do not provide a definitive causal explanation, they do raise thought-provoking questions that are as curious as a metaphysical mystery and as delightful as a perfectly-timed comedy. Could the political climate of a state subtly influence the literary inclinations of its residents, or do the narrative elements within popular fiction engage in a carefully choreographed dance with political allegiances? The intersection of these realms presents a captivating

puzzle, much like a literary whodunit that defies conventions and expectations.

As we close this chapter on the unexpected correlation between politics and literature, it becomes evident that the human psyche is as enigmatic and whimsical as the most intricate of fictional characters. While this study unveils a correlation worth its weight in comedic plot devices, we assert that no further research is needed in this area. After all, some correlations are best left to resonate as charming anomalies, adding a touch of intrigue to the otherwise predictable landscape of academic inquiry.