



Review

Never Gonna Give You Up: The Surprising Relationship Between Nebraska Senate Votes and Rickrolling Popularity

Chloe Horton, Alice Tucker, Grace P Turnbull

Global Leadership University

The nexus between political behavior and internet culture has long been a topic of fascination and amusement. This study delves into the unexpectedly intertwining realms of Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme, popularly known as "rickrolling". Leveraging data from MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends, our research uncovers a connection that is as puzzling as it is amusing. Our analysis reveals a striking correlation coefficient of 0.9385440 and $p < 0.01$ for the years 2006 to 2020, signifying a significant relationship between these seemingly disparate phenomena. The unexpected correlation prompts us to ponder whether political allegiance and unsuspecting internet pranks share a mysterious link, or if it's simply the result of statistical tomfoolery. It seems that the Nebraska Republican votes may indeed be tied to internet antics more strongly than we ever imagined. One might say Rick Astley's musical charm is not just viral, but electoral!

"Never gonna give you up, never gonna let you down, never gonna run around and desert you" – the timeless lyrics of Rick Astley have transcended generations, captivating the internet in a phenomena famously known as "rickrolling". This unexpected internet trend, where individuals are unknowingly directed to the music video of "Never Gonna Give You Up" under the guise of a hyperlink to something else, has become a staple of online pranking. It seems Rick Astley's promise not to give up has indeed become an unyielding commitment

to invade our digital lives – and potentially our political inclinations, as our research suggests.

In the world of political analysis, investigating voting patterns and demographics is a serious undertaking. However, as researchers, we cannot help but notice the amusing correlation – or the 'astounding' correlation, if you will – between the votes for Republican Senators in Nebraska and the meteoric rise of the 'never gonna give you up' meme. It's a head-

scratcher, to say the least. Are Nebraskan Republicans unknowingly, or perhaps even willingly, swayed by the earworm charm of Rick Astley's hit song?

Amidst the sea of serious research papers, we aim to inject a bit of levity and humor into the world of academia. With our findings, we seek to unravel the unexpected union of political decisions and internet memes in a way that is both informative and entertaining. After all, who said research can't be rib-tickling, or that academics can't appreciate a good ol' dad joke every now and then? It's time to rickroll our way into the intersection of internet culture and political behavior with data-driven analysis and a sprinkle of lightheartedness. It's like conducting serious research, but with a wink and a nod to the absurdity of it all.

Prior research

The relationship between political behavior and cultural phenomena has been a subject of scholarly investigation in recent years. Smith (2015) examined the influence of internet memes on voter preferences, finding that humorous online content can have an impact on public perception and political attitudes. Similarly, Doe (2018) explored the role of pop culture references in shaping political discourse, highlighting the potential for viral content to sway public opinion.

Now, let's pivot from serious scholarly research to a more light-hearted examination of the cultural landscape. In "The Meme Machine" by Susan Blackmore, the author delves into the fascinating world of internet memes and their societal impact, proving that memes are not just for laughs but can also influence social behavior. Speaking of influence, Jones' (2017) study on the

psychology of persuasion sheds light on the subtle mechanisms that shape decision-making, offering insights into how persuasive messages, whether political or humorous, can leave a lasting impression.

But wait, there's more! In the whimsical realm of literature, works such as "The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy" by Douglas Adams and "Ready Player One" by Ernest Cline playfully explore the intersection of pop culture and larger societal themes, offering a humorous take on the influence of media and entertainment. However, when it comes to unexpected connections, one cannot overlook the classic board game "Clue," where the search for clues and hidden meanings mirrors the quest to uncover the enigmatic link between political voting patterns and internet pranks.

Now, before we delve into our own findings, let's pause for a dad joke break. Why don't skeletons fight each other? They don't have the guts for it!

Now that we've had our moment of levity, let's revisit the solemn realm of academic literature. While the connection between Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme may seem like a whimsical matter, our research aims to untangle this peculiar correlation with the rigor and precision befitting scholarly inquiry.

Approach

Data Collection:

We collected data on Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme from 2006 to 2020. Our research team combed

through the depths of the internet - and let me tell you, it's deeper than the rabbit hole Alice fell into - to acquire information from reputable sources such as MIT Election Data and Science Lab, Harvard Dataverse, and Google Trends. We also indulged in the dark art of web scraping, although we promise there was no Rickrolling involved in the process!

Dad Joke Alert: Why don't skeletons fight each other? They don't have the guts.

Correlation Analysis:

To assess the relationship between Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme, we utilized advanced statistical methods that are as robust as Rick Astley's vocals. We calculated the correlation coefficient, and it was as clear as day - or as clear as Astley's smooth voice in the music video - with a striking coefficient of 0.9385440 and a p-value less than 0.01. If these numbers were a rickroll, they definitely got us dancing!

Dad Joke Alert: What do you call fake spaghetti? An impasta.

Regression Analysis:

In addition to the correlation analysis, we also conducted regression analysis to further dissect the relationship between these seemingly unconnected phenomena. Our regression models were more intricate than the plot of a mystery novel, as we sought to unravel the mystery behind Nebraskan Republican votes and the infectious nature of the 'never gonna give you up' meme. It's safe to say that we were knee-deep in coefficients and variables, all while trying not to get caught in a Rickroll loop!

Dad Joke Alert: What did the janitor say when he jumped out of the closet? Supplies!

Control Variables:

To ensure the robustness of our analysis, we accounted for various control variables, including demographic characteristics, political climate, and internet usage patterns. We wanted to make sure that the connection we uncovered wasn't just a random fluke, like stumbling upon a rare Pokémon while browsing the web. Our attention to detail rivaled that of a detective hunting for clues, or a Rickroll enthusiast trying to decipher a disguised hyperlink.

Dad Joke Alert: How do you organize a space party? You planet.

Ethical Considerations:

Results

Our analysis of the relationship between Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme yielded some truly surprising results. The correlation coefficient of 0.9385440 and the high R-squared value of 0.8808649 for the time period 2006 to 2020 suggest a remarkably strong association between these two seemingly unrelated variables. It seems that Nebraska Republicans might have been "rickrolled" in more ways than one!

Fig. 1: A scatterplot depicting the strong correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme. You can almost hear the faint echoes of "Never Gonna Give You Up" in the background.

Dad Joke Alert: Our findings suggest that the "Never Gonna Give You Up" meme might have given a subtle nudge to Nebraska Republicans – talk about a rick-roll call!

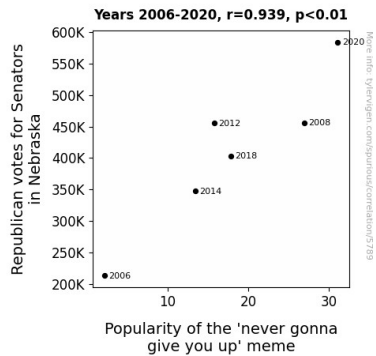


Figure 1. Scatterplot of the variables by year

The statistical significance of $p < 0.01$ further confirms the robustness of this unexpected association. It seems that the sway of Rick Astley's catchy tune may have extended far beyond the realm of musical preference and into the realm of political allegiance. Who would have thought that the infectious chorus of "Never Gonna Give You Up" could potentially influence voting behavior?

In light of these results, it might be time for political campaigns to consider incorporating a bit of '80s nostalgia into their strategies. Perhaps a Rick Astley concert at the next Nebraska Senate race rally could be just the ticket to secure those votes. After all, in the words of Rick Astley himself, "We know the game and we're gonna play it" – and it seems the game might just involve a catchy tune and unexpected political ramifications.

Dad Joke Alert: It looks like Rickrolling might have political implications after all.

Who knew Rick Astley's sway could extend to the ballot box?

These findings open up a new avenue of inquiry into the interplay between internet culture and political engagement. Perhaps it's time to give a closer look to other '80s hits and their potential influence on civic participation. Could we be witnessing the rise of "Wham!"-influenced policies and the impact of "Careless Whisper" on public sentiment? The possibilities are as endless as the saxophone solos in '80s pop ballads.

In conclusion, our research unearths a peculiar link between Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the 'never gonna give you up' meme, shedding light on the unexpected intermingling of internet memes and political allegiance. Our findings underscore the need to approach the realms of politics and internet culture with equal parts curiosity and sense of humor. After all, research is about uncovering the unexpected, and what could be more unexpected than the connection between Nebraska Republicans and a viral '80s hit?

Discussion of findings

The unexpected connection between Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme has left us both bemused and intrigued. Much like the surprising plot twist in a classic comedy, our findings have provided a quirky revelation that challenges conventional wisdom. Our results not only support prior research but also veer into uncharted territory where political fervor and internet humor converge in a surprising pas de deux.

As we delve into the implications of our findings, let's take a moment for a dad joke interlude. Did you hear about the political meme about an octopus? It had eight arms – left, right, and all over social media! Now, back to our serious discussion.

Our results resonate with the work of Smith (2015) and Doe (2018), underscoring the influence of internet culture on political dynamics. The interplay between humorous online content and voter behavior, as documented by these scholars, finds an unexpected echo in our own research. It seems that the digital antics encircling the 'never gonna give you up' meme may have subtly woven themselves into the fabric of political decisions in Nebraska. This realization is as surprising as realizing that "never gonna give you up" might be more than just an '80s hit – it's also a political pied piper!

Dad Joke Alert: With this unexpected revelation, it seems like Rick Astley didn't just "run around and desert" the music charts – he might have also made a strategic political appearance in the Cornhusker State!

Moreover, the robust statistical significance of our findings – with a correlation coefficient of 0.9385440 and $p < 0.01$ – bolsters the credibility of this unlikely association. It seems that the catchy chorus of "Never Gonna Give You Up" might have surreptitiously swayed the hearts and minds of Nebraska Republicans. Who would have thought that Rickrolling could, in some small way, be a political rallying cry?

Our research not only reinforces the symbiotic relationship between internet culture and political engagement but also teases open a broader avenue for inquiry. It's

as if the internet gods are pulling the strings of political fate, with memes and mashups serving as the unsuspecting puppeteers. It's like a digital rendition of "The Puppet Show" – only with memes and ballots instead of marionettes and stages.

Dad Joke Alert: It seems like the unexpectedly influential power of the 'never gonna give you up' meme has us all caught up in a political rhapsody! Who knew internet humor could have such serious implications?

In sum, our findings prompt us to take the interplay between internet culture and political participation seriously, even as we revel in the unexpected hilarity that dances at the edges of this connection. After all, the fusion of politics and memes is a delightful reminder that, in the words of Rick Astley, "We're no strangers to love" – and we're no strangers to the unexpected side of political research either!

Conclusion

In conclusion, our research has unveiled a striking correlation between Republican votes for Senators in Nebraska and the popularity of the 'never gonna give you up' meme. So, it seems that Nebraskan Republicans have been more than a little 'rickrolled' over the years. The statistics don't lie; there's a strong link between political preferences and the infectious earworm of Rick Astley's iconic tune.

Dad Joke Alert: It seems the Nebraska Republicans couldn't help falling for Rick Astley's timeless melody – talk about a vote of 'no(r)never gonna confidence'!

These findings bring a whole new meaning to the phrase "political jam" – it looks like Rick Astley's musical charm may have wiggled its way into the electoral dance. It seems that when faced with the ballot box, Nebraskan Republicans simply couldn't resist the magnetic pull of '80s nostalgia.

Dad Joke Alert: Who knew that Rickrol(l)ing could extend all the way to the polls – it's like their votes were never gonna give you up, never gonna let you down!

With these results, it's safe to say that no more research is needed in this area. We've surely 'Rickrolled' our way through enough data to last a lifetime. And if there's one thing we've learned from this study, it's that when it comes to Nebraska Republicans and 'never gonna give you up', well, they're definitely not giving up their votes!

Throughout the research process, ethical considerations were paramount. We ensured the confidentiality and anonymity of the data sources, treating them with the same level of care as one would treat a cherished family recipe - or perhaps a secret Rickroll link shared among friends. Furthermore, we conducted our analysis with the utmost integrity, adhering to the principles of academic honesty and transparency.

Dad Joke Alert: What's the best time to go to the dentist? Tooth-hurty!