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The NRA and Gun Control

ADPR 5750 Spring 2016

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Social Media **E**ngagement & **E**valuation

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Executive Summary

- Guns and gun control are a controversial topic in the current election. The two sides are incredibly polarized with few compromises between them.

- We examined 341 tweets that have been made since January 1st of this year to identify key groups, analyzed through Crimson Hexagon and NodeXL.

- The conversation is dominated by conservatives and men currently, but could be larger if other groups were encouraged to speak. An open dialogue opens the chance to change people's minds.

- A shift towards a more positive sentiment could help improve engagement and reach and improve the overall perception of groups like the NRA.

Suggested Goals & KPIs for @NRA

- Increase women's participation in the gun control discussion.
  - KPI Goal: Increase the number of replies/retweets by women by 10%

- Create a more positive image of the NRA.
  - KPI Goal: Increase engagement from positive sentiment tweets to 35% of total engagement.

- Bring Gun Control to the forefront of political debate
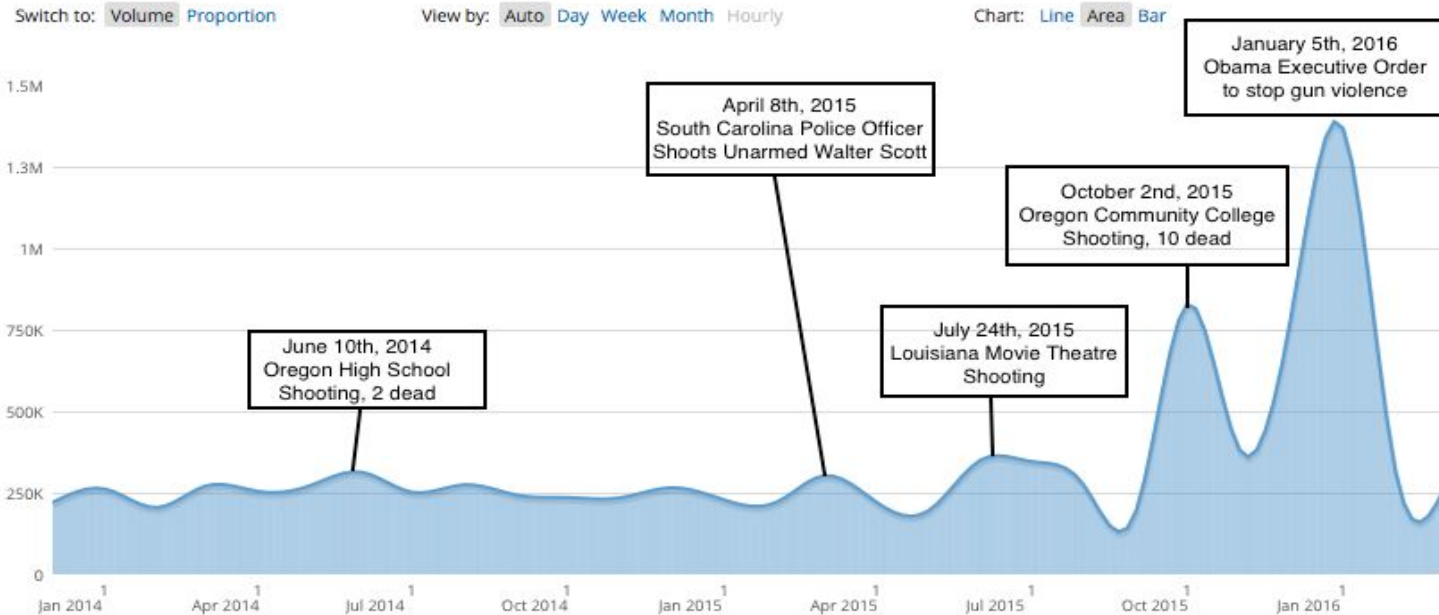 - KPI Goal: Increase proportion of social media posts by people running for office by 30%.

Research Overview

Our research centered around the discussion of gun control across different social media platforms.

Research Objectives

- Determine the subject matter that drives the most engagement.
- Identify key users and which posts about gun control garner most engagement/attention.
- Establish a connection between preferred media vehicles and opinion on gun control issues.

Timeline Spikes

Switch to: Volume Proportion   View by: Auto Day Week Month Hourly   Chart: Line Area Bar

January 5th, 2016
Obama Executive Order
to stop gun violence

April 8th, 2015
South Carolina Police Officer
Shoots Unarmed Walter Scott

October 2nd, 2015
Oregon Community College
Shooting, 10 dead

June 10th, 2014
Oregon High School
Shooting, 2 dead

July 24th, 2015
Louisiana Movie Theatre
Shooting

Gun Control Conversation Spikes
12/01/13-Present

Total Volume

*other smaller spikes towards left end of graph were related to political topics other than gun control

Timeline Spikes II

Fox News ✔
July 24, 2015 · 🌐

UPDATE: Lafayette police have identified the movie theater gunman as John Russell Houser, "a drifter" who had wigs and disguises in his motel room.

Police Chief Jim Craft credited law enforcement's quick response for stopping the shooter and asked for the public's help in learning more information about Houser. http://bit.ly/1JiPV9b

👍 Like Page

LAFAYETTE, LA
7:19 AM CT
KRIV
FOX 8 NEW ORLEANS
MOVIE THEATER MASSACRE
POLICE HOLDING NEWS CONFERENCE ON SHOOTING
LERT AL

Philip Bump ✔
@pbump

🐦 Follow

Obama wanted news organizations to put gun deaths and terror deaths side-by-side. We did.
washingtonpost.com/news/the-fix/w…

6:39 PM - 1 Oct 2015

↩ 🔁 12,325 ❤ 6,208

□ Social media spikes on the gun control debate correlate directly with both mass shootings and mention of executive action on guns.

Nicholas Kristof ✔
@NickKristof

🐦 Follow

Some think that Obama's tears about gun violence show weakness. Nope. We should all be crying about 32,000 American gun deaths a year.
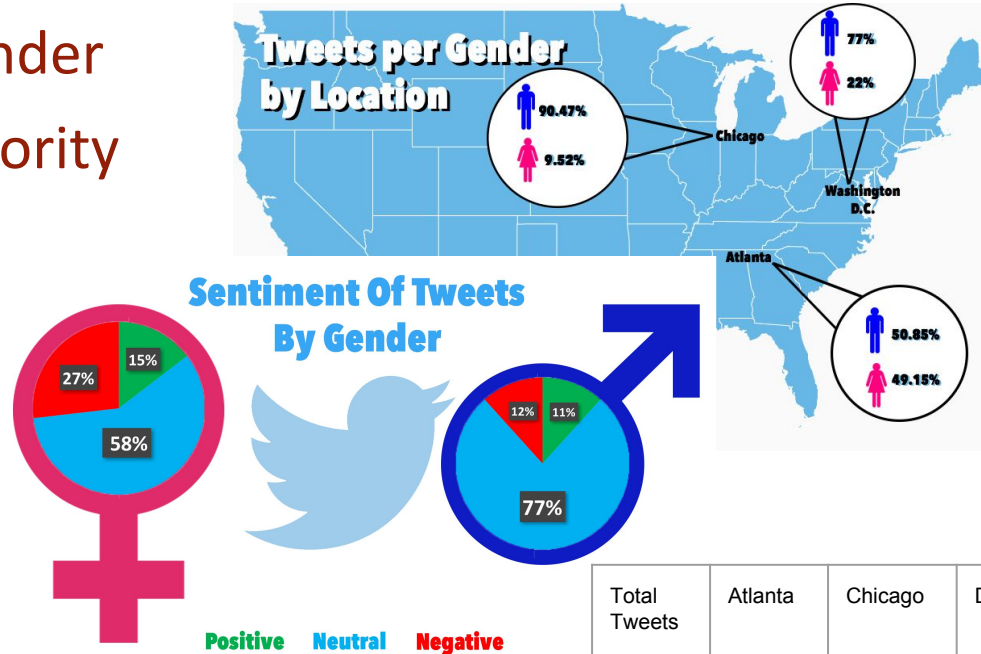
12:23 PM - 5 Jan 2016

↩ 🔁 2,251 ❤ 2,795

Timeline - Actionable Insights

When trying to generate a conversation about gun control the best opportunities arise in times of tragedy or legislative action.

- Most significant spikes in engagement occur when an event takes place involving guns or gun rights.
- Posts with most engagement are usually news articles or statistics.
- People pay attention to facts: numbers & news stories are the best way to trigger engagement and attention.
- Facebook users engage more by liking and sharing than commenting.
- Not as much conversation came up about Walter Scott's death on April 8th than did after mass shootings.

User Patterns

- ☐ 66% Identifiable Gender
- ☐ Significant male majority except in Atlanta.
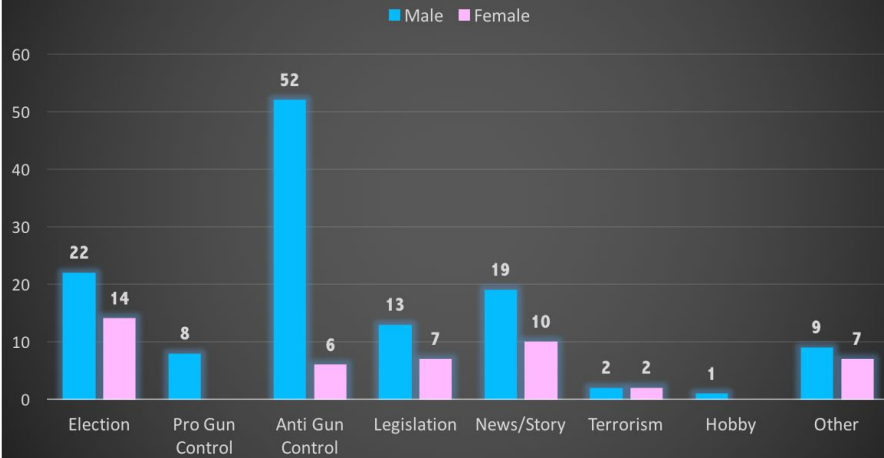- ☐ Women 19% more likely to show sentiment in tweet.

Tweets per Gender by Location

Chicago: 90.47% / 9.52%

Washington D.C.: 77% / 22%

Atlanta: 50.85% / 49.15%

Sentiment Of Tweets By Gender

Female: 15% / 27% / 58%

Male: 11% / 12% / 77%

Positive   Neutral   Negative

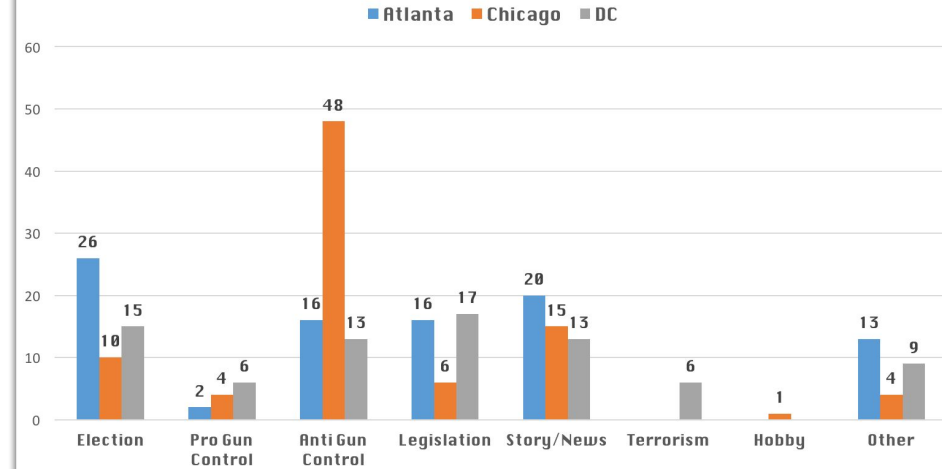| Total Tweets	Atlanta	Chicago	D.C.	Total
Male	30	57	39	126
Female	29	6	11	46

User Patterns II

☐ Men are MUCH more Anti-gun control, connected to Chicago

☐ The presidential election is the second most discussed topic.

Explanation of Chicago Spike:

Daniel John Sobieski
@gerfingerpoken

Free lance writer, to right of Attila,
#Catholic #prolife #tcot #teaparty #NRA
ΜΟΛΩΝ ΛΑΒΕ #PJNET

📍 People's Republic of Chicago
🔗 americanthinker.com/author/daniel_
...
📅 Joined December 2009

☐ User @gerfingerpoken was responsible for over 50% of sampled tweets from Chicago, and all but 5 anti-gun control tweets.

☐ Massive out-degree, tiny in-degree

☐ Average post frequency of one tweet every two minutes

User Patterns III

☐ Groups divided by political party and preferred candidate.

☐ There is a massive group of isolates that could be encouraged to join the discussion with other key users.

☐ Rednecks and Gunslingers only groups where gun control is the primary discussion.
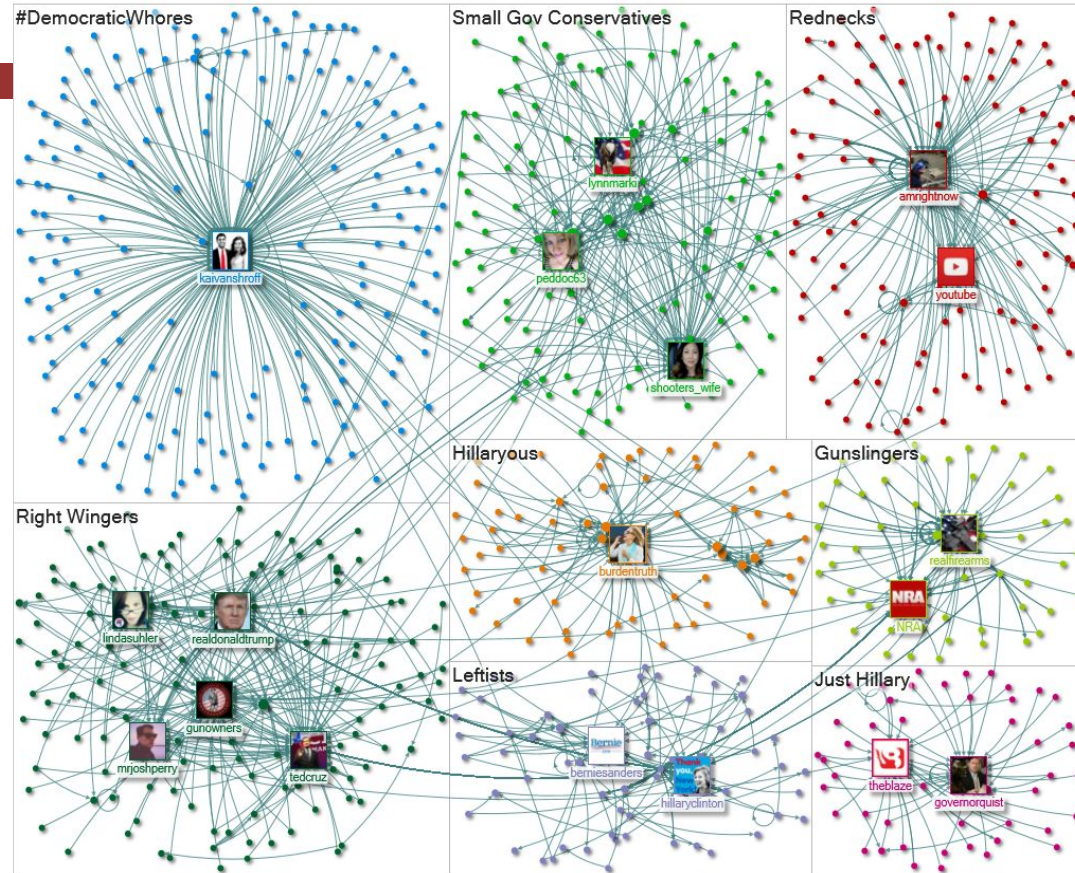
#DemocraticWhores/Hillaryous

- Democratic Infighting

- Kavian Shroff is the only hub of #DemocraticWhores, "Thrilling" only hub of Hillaryous

- Both hubs are pro-Hillary, Kavian attracts more controversy

Leftists

☐ Group Centered around Sanders and Clinton.

☐ Very pro-Democrat.

☐ Small hub, gun control is not as big a topic for liberals as it is for conservatives.

Rednecks

- YouTube has a massive in-degree thanks to video sharing

- "American Right Now": Massively conservative and pro-Trump.

- Multiple posts per minute.

American Right Now @amrightnow · 23m
#realdonaldtrump Ohio Gov. John Kasich You're Screwing American Voters bit.ly/1RIyEpt #maga #military

I am Proud to be American

John Kasick You're Proud Of Screwing Americans out Of their Right to Vote For Who They Want For President

You are the Establishment and type Of Politician American's Want to Change

Gunslingers

- Promote positives of gun ownership.

- Hubs are two organizations, interact regularly.

- Guns as a tool and a hobby.

- Only group focused exclusively on guns.

Firearms @realFirearms · 8h
When a woman was armed with a gun or knife, only 3% of rape attacks were completed, compared to 32% when the woman was unarmed. #Guns #2A #…
21   17

Firearms @realFirearms · 10h
#Freedom #2A #Firearm #DontTreadOnMe #MolonLabe #Guns @NRA #2ndAmendment #2ADefenders

Performance Center by Smith&Wesson

NRA @NRA · 15m
.@HillaryClinton couldn't be more wrong #shocker #2A #guns #defendthesecond

"When it comes to guns, we have just too many guns."
-Hillary Clinton
April 20, 2016

Retweet if you think Hillary is wrong!
NRA

111   51

User Patterns - Actionable Insights

- Men are a flame to be kindled, women need the spark.
- More of an issue to conservatives than liberals.

- Spamming Twitter is not effective to drive engagement.
- In most groups, gun control is one of many issues, rarely the primary one.
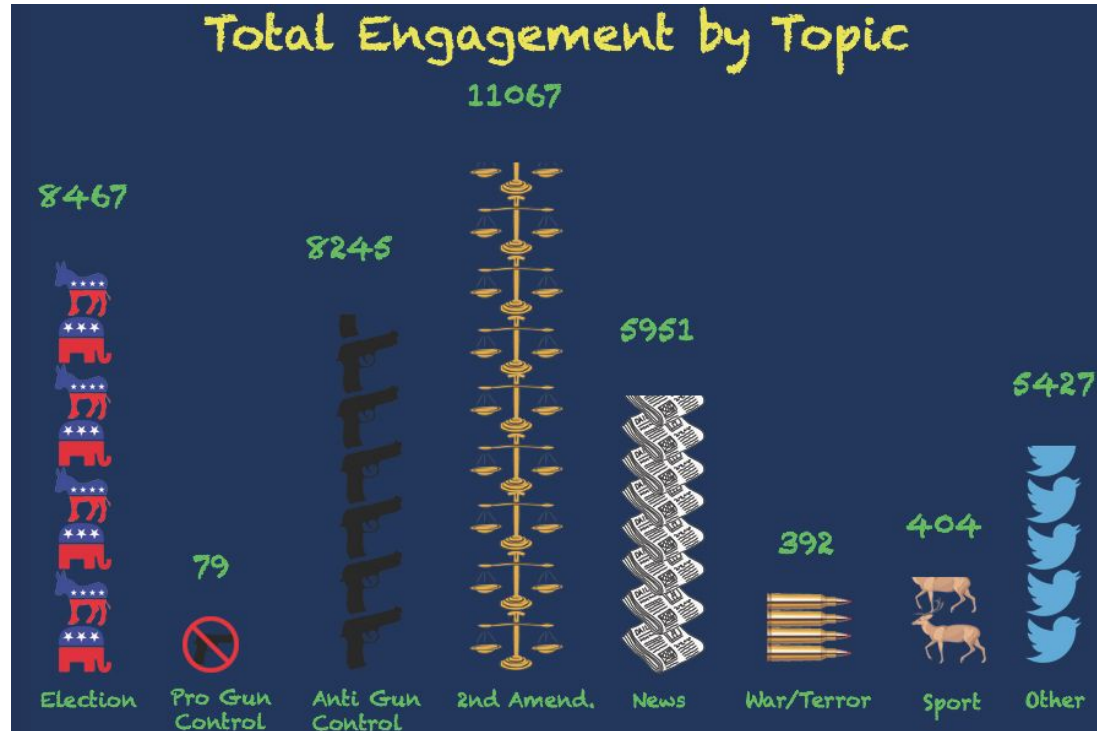
Content Patterns - NRA

- Neutral: 84% of sent posts driving 37% of total engagement.
- Positive: 8.2% of sent posts driving 25% of engagement.
- Negative: 6.7% of sent posts driving 38% of engagement.

- Provoking outrage works.

Engagement by Sentiment

25%

38%

37%

- Positive
- Neutral
- Negative
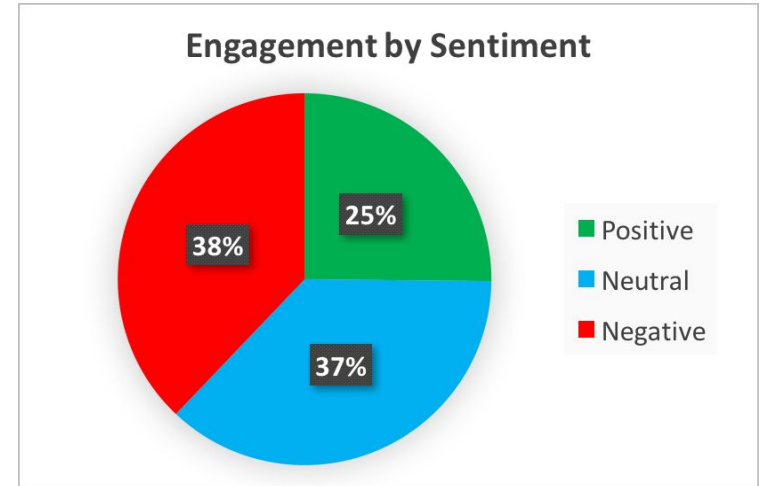
Content Patterns II

- #2A Most important for driving engagement
- The election is also especially relevant
- Few discussions of pro-gun control topics (negativity)

Total Engagement by Topic

8467	79	8245	11067	5951	392	404	5427
Election	Pro Gun Control	Anti Gun Control	2nd Amend.	News	War/Terror	Sport	Other

Content Patterns- Actionable Insights

- Most engagement comes from tweets with a negative sentiment, currently.

- Political posts with clear messaging receive much more engagement than simply "spreading the news"

Suggested Strategy - Female Engagement

☐ Increase discussion amongst women by making more posts directly related to stories about women and guns.

> **Firearms** @realFirearms · 8h
> When a woman was armed with a gun or knife, only 3% of rape attacks were completed, compared to 32% when the woman was unarmed. #Guns #2A #…
>
> ↩   ♺ 21   ♥ 17   •••

☐ Have @NRA retweet and interact more with @NRAwomen, their female counterpart, to drive more engagement with female audiences.

☐ Have more discussion centered on the election.
   ☐ Women tweeted more about this than any other topic

Suggested Strategy - Positive Image

☐ Reduce number of negative tweets, focus on positive sentiment.

☐ Display sympathy after gun tragedies.

☐ Create a more open discussion by reaching out to liberals and other groups not currently focused on the gun debate.

Suggested Strategy - Political Debate

☐ Execute a campaign encouraging followers to demand candidates for office to be more vocal and open about their opinions on gun rights.

☐ Direct tweets towards candidates, speaking *to* them instead of about or at them.

☐ Encourage users to engage in a particular hashtag to promote the brand and increase the discussion across social media platforms.

More Research

- Redo this study on a non-election year to measure the direct impact of the election on gun rights discussion.

- Content analysis of responses to negative-sentiment tweets.

- Monitor top users to see the different types of discussion each hub is driving in their respective groups.

- Have a more effective means of analysis for other social media platforms.

- Refine boolean search for more accurate results.

SUBJECT Report