Analyzing Dogwhistles on Social Media
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Project Background and Goals

Dogwhistles: appeals of suggestive language that are meant to be only understood by a particular section of society, and thus contribute to an implicit kind of hate speech.

Case studies: “Let’s go, Brandon!” (modern) “Welfare Queen” (classical)

Guiding Research Questions:
1. Are there identifiable recurring themes in language using dogwhistles?
2. How do usage patterns of dogwhistles evolve over time?

Data Collection

- Collected Twitter data using Twitter API v2 and Reddit data using Pushshift API.
- Collected Reddit data between 07.2021 and 02.2022

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dataset</th>
<th>Count</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter “Let’s go, Brandon!” Samples</td>
<td>6856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddit “Let’s go, Brandon!” Samples</td>
<td>7178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Twitter “Welfare Queen” Samples</td>
<td>2943</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddit “Welfare Queen” Samples</td>
<td>3406</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Political Content Modeling

- Hand-verification of N=135 samples
- Model not transferable to shorter form text like Tweets

Sentiment Analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Samples</th>
<th>Negative Samples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Twitter</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reddit</td>
<td>74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Future Work

- Leverage more user history-related features for context
- Experiment with alternative encoding strategies.
- Explore the generalizability and explainability of our model for more dogwhistles.

References

- https://developers.google.com/products/twitter-api